

If My Gospel is Hidden

A Revelation of the True Gospel and Hidden Understandings in the Scriptures

By

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Acknowledgements

To Jesus who loves me,
And to Shielda my sister

Table of Contents

Preface- *If My Gospel is Hidden*4
Chapter One – *From The Beginning*.....17
Chapter Two - *The Law*.....32
Chapter Three – *Jesus Both Man and God*.....41
Chapter Four - *Faith ,Grace, and the Resurrection*.....59
Chapter Five – *The Pattern of God*.....78
Chapter Six - *The Resurrection*.....109
Chapter Seven – *Jew and Gentile*.....119
Chapter Eight – *The Truth about Hell*..... 135
Chapter Nine – *The Last Day*.....147

***All Bible quotes and verses taken from King James Version.**

***All italics are mine.**

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Preface

If My Gospel Is Hidden

A Christian is very much like a child in the womb. We are conceived and develop in darkness. Our concept of what lies beyond our small black world is extremely limited. If we make it to term (the resurrection) we enter into a world of light, a world very different from that small dark sack in our mother, that veil of flesh.

We are like seeds in the earth sown in darkness. As we are nourished and watered we start to grow, pushing toward the light inch by inch. One day we reach through the topsoil. Even as the child is delivered from its mother's womb we seeds spring forth into the glorious light of the resurrection. We receive a body ten thousand times more glorious than the seeds we once were ever dreamed. So the mission of the child, the seed, and the Christian are the same. We must all break the ground and live in the light. We must cast off our previous worlds for the next. We must escape the darkness.

Creation is in many ways a metaphor. While existing as it does it contains truths that witness to its creator and the eventuality of the creature. It is a truth in

nature that every seed produces after its kind whether it is a plant, a bird, a fish, or land animal. Every seed must be planted in darkness whether it is in the earth, in the sea, or in a womb. It is by no accident that the nature of things is consistent with the Holy Scriptures. Our Lord Jesus taught us that in order to live we all must first die. Paul clarified this in 1Corinthians 15:36-38:

Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but

bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him,

and to every seed his own body .

As the Apostle Paul affirmed “To live is Christ, to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21).

The truth at the crux of the matter is this: The only way to enter into that world of light is to die to this world of darkness.

To the Christian then there are two realities: The physical and the spiritual, darkness and light. While the Christian is developing in this reality he or she comes to realize that the physical senses are poor instruments for gauging the other reality of the spirit. Even Science with all of its acquired knowledge and technology has in no means pierced this veil of flesh to reveal an inkling of the

spirit. The other realm as far as carnal knowledge is concerned simply doesn't exist. Carnal knowledge is biased to the truths of the things of the spirit because the carnal mind is blind to them. Physical knowledge is different because it does testify to the realm of the spirit. As Paul wrote in Romans 1:18-20:

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

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.”

As those who are born of the spirit Christians should be able to see the truth and reality of God in the things he has made. Our view of creation is no longer limited by sin and its corruption. Man in his carnal state of sin has arrogantly denied this reality. His concepts are based only on what he can see; only what his science can measure. His world is a finite one full of darkness and questions which cannot be answered. Sin has cut him off from the knowledge of

God who is infinite and immeasurable. The carnal man and his thinking are warped and blinded behind the veil of flesh. He says in his heart, "There is no God." He says to others "Don't believe it until you see it." The Christian agrees with Christ and says "Believe only in what you cannot see because only what you cannot see will last forever." And "No man has saw God at any time; but we see him through the eyes of faith".

The Christian doesn't have the same need to justify his or her view of the spiritual. They accept its existence as a fact proven tangibly only in the realm of faith. The carnal man by his sin nature refuses to acknowledge anything that convicts him of moral responsibility. To acknowledge God is to bind himself with a chain that brings the guilt of sin to the forefront of his consciousness. The carnal mind seeks freedom from all restraint. The Christian on the other hand sees his response to the knowledge of God as freedom from the chains of sin. He is no longer bound to the flesh having to obey it in its lusts and appetites. He is free to respond to God having the guilt removed by Christ's sacrifice on the cross. The carnal mind like its father is a rebel and it avoids at all cost any knowledge that would tend to make it face its sinful nature or the reality of God. It chooses not to retain the knowledge of the spiritual.

Flesh pleases self for it has no use for spiritual understanding. It seeks

always to fill its own belly like an unreasoning brute. Its God is its belly. Unlike the child of God the carnal man is in bondage to sin by means of his own desires.

Does this mean that the Christian is completely free from this veil of flesh?

Not at all. We as Christians have not yet been perfected. Like the child in the womb we are still developing. We are conceived literally but we are only fully formed by continuing in faith. In other words just like the child or the seed it does not yet appear what we shall be. Only when we break the grave at the resurrection will we be seen in our perfection. As long as we are behind this veil of flesh (which is Adam's body) we still struggle against the darkness.

Christians are considered born again by faith. We hope earnestly that God will complete the work he began in us. We look ahead to that blessed hope that God will raise us from the dead complete and fully formed spiritually. We hope for a body that is spiritual and yet tangible; even as Jesus was at his resurrection. He is our pattern. What we have now of that life is his Spirit dwelling in us. This Spirit is a token that the Father will indeed fulfill all that he has promised. What we have now we have only by faith.

The Christian considers then the spiritual to be the primary of these two realities. This is because God himself lives in the spiritual and as the Apostle informs us in Hebrews 11:1-3:

I 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.*

By faith we lay hold of that world yet to come in the now. We walk in it,
breath in it, and live in it, all by faith and the grace given us through God's son
Jesus.

The Apostle in his letter to the Romans reminds us however that we are
still on this side of the veil. We are spiritual beings encased in what he termed "this
body of death" (Romans 7:24). A body that is unregenerate; Adam's body of
sin. In this way sin dwells in us. We find the reference to this in Romans 7:18-24:

*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.*

For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

*Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth
in me.*

I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

*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.*

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this

death?

We cannot hope to enter into this unseen world of the spirit in this “body of death”. The Christian looks forward to a new body. This body changed from the carnal and translated into the perfection of the spirit. Adam’s flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

Paul in his discussion of the eternal value of love commented on what would make the transition to the spiritual and what would not. For example there are physical manifestations of the spiritual that are necessary here that will not be when we are perfected. They are pictures of the Spirit. These gifts affect the physical by bringing a communication of the spiritual into the realm of flesh. These are necessary as was the incarnation of the Word of God; Jesus the Christ. Both are revelations of what we can not see of God and his heavenly kingdom. Behind this veil of flesh we have need of these revelations and expressions of things spiritual. They are windows into that other world that are open to us when the Spirit chooses.

Love however is different. We will always have need of it for it is the very nature of God. As the Apostle John wrote “God is Love” (1John 4:8). Love will never end. But what need will we have for the communications of the spirit to this imperfect flesh when we are no longer in this imperfect flesh? We see that these windows are only temporary but love is forever: In 1Corinthians 13:8-10

*Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail;
whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall
vanish away.*

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

*But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be
done away.*

Then when that which is perfect is come (the resurrection of the dead and Christ's return) we will receive our completeness. Only then will we be perfect. There will be no more need for tongues, knowledge, or prophecy, because we will be fully in the light. We will know all and have all. We will stand in the presence of him who was prophesied, of whom the tongues spoke of, the embodiment of all true knowledge. Only now we are still on this side of the veil peering through a clouded window and only seeing glimpses of forever. Not with eyes of flesh but with eyes of the spirit. The very eyes that faith in Christ have opened. Those who think that they have attained a fullness, or are perfect should consider their state of being as the apostle Paul considered his in Philippians 2:9-11:

*“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: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the*

fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

While it is true that Christians have an advantage over those who are strictly carnal it is a sad fact that this advantage is neglected by a large majority. We have these windows into the spirit, our eyes are opened by power of the new birth in faith, yet all too many of us remain ignorant of this advantage. We depend upon scholars and teachers who are trained in carnal methods to interpret the Bible for us. We allow our spiritual lives to be formed by others who have plenty of earthly credentials but little in the way of heavenly insight. We judge by carnal standards like education, apparel, wealth, and the traditions of men. None of the original apostles would past muster with many of our churches. They had no education. They had no money or community status. Only Judas is recorded to have had a formal education of the original twelve. We as God's people need to learn to judge by the spirit. Many of us need to re-examine 1Corinthians 1:29-30:

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak

things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

We must learn to walk spiritually and to think in spiritual terms. We must, as disciples of Christ put away the thinking of the old man. By faith we have the mind of Christ. If we do not start to gravitate toward the mind of the spirit we will not grow and mature in the way God intended. This can only be accomplished God's way: We must simply submit ourselves to him and his mercy. We can only rid ourselves of error by abandoning the methods of the flesh and humbling ourselves before God. The true revelation of Heaven comes not by any logic or sound carnal reasoning so called but rather by the same avenue our salvation came: The supernatural power of a living God. A child of God is totally dependent on the means of the Spirit not on any physical genius or self sufficiency. It is important to point out that there is validity in physical knowledge. It always agrees with the Spirit. In the earth it is clearly seen that the spiritual is the primal. Creation is a mirror of things spiritual. In this mirror we see the truth of

God and his majesty. In later chapters this will be demonstrated. What is important to understand now is that sin has corrupted this creation as well as the thinking of those who seek to understand it. This has produced a carnal knowledge; a perverted view that exalts the creature and denies the creator. The equation is simple: God is creator, Satan is creation. If Satan can lure man into the worship of creation he has lured them to the worship of himself. The carnal man's eyes see nothing except what lies on this side of the fleshly veil.

These simple understandings lay the groundwork for the necessity of the new birth. God is spiritual and he seeks those who will worship in spirit and in truth (John4:23). Only those born spiritually can see the creation as it truly is. Only spiritual people can see the kingdom of God (John 3:3-6).

A man cannot be born of water only (of the flesh in his mother's water sack) but rather born of water and the spirit. Without the birth into the spirit through Jesus and his sacrifice a man will never truly see the kingdom of God. Such a man will never understand the spiritual concepts the Bible lays out for the child of the Spirit. As Paul wrote in Corinthians 2:12-16:

“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.

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.

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.

But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

There is nothing wrong with a physical education but we must realize that it is not a substitute for a spiritual one. Physical methods can never pierce the veil of the flesh. We are a spiritual people first and foremost if we are a Christian. If we are in fact Christians we must allow the Spirit of God free reign in our lives and to allow Him to demonstrate his truth through our lives. Our trials, our failings, and our success, are all of them demonstrations of his spirit. The more we submit to the leading of the spirit the less we are confined behind this fleshly veil. Our goal is to reach beyond this veil to the blessed hope of the resurrection and to be translated even as the figure of Enoch in Hebrews 11:5:

“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.”

Enoch was a picture of this process. This is the only way to escape this darkness; to escape the carnal we pass through the veil of flesh by faith in Christ Jesus. There is no other way.

In this work it is my purpose to both point out this metaphor that reveals God’s pattern and clarify the true Gospel. In the above I have shared a spiritual over view. But what are the specifics? What are faith and grace and the hope of this “Good News”? Please read on and we shall see.

Chapter One

From the Beginning

Webster's Dictionary defines a platitude as a trite, banal, or stale remark. This is what has come to characterize much of Christian teaching today: Trite explanations, banal discussions, and stale doctrinal emphasis. This beautiful "Good News" message has been robbed of its power to set free and uplift because platitude has obscured its relevance. Over used expressions tend to lose their meaning when they are left unexplained. Meaning has been lost to terms like "The Lamb of God" and "The Gospel Message". They are repeated with out clarity in pulpits all over the world every Sunday. When someone says "Jesus died for your sins" do you really know what that means? Do you understand why he had to die? Why only his death could cover your sins? What I am getting at is this: How does a Jewish carpenter living in an obscure Roman province some two thousand years ago affect your life now? How could this man's death on a cross be of any help or use to you today?

Oh, every one has heard that Jesus died for their sins. Many of us accept it simply because we grew up hearing it. It has become platitude.

This is the reason and the driving force behind this book: To bring back the meaning of Jesus and to show the relevance of his life, death, and resurrection. To reveal the Gospel message as it truly is “Good news”. In the course of exploring this Gospel message through the scriptures we find many treasures along the way.

Understandings that enhance this message are hidden from carnal thinking. The diligent seeker is the one to whom God by his Spirit reveals his truths.

Genesis

Our journey to meaning must start at the beginning. The beginning according to the Bible is the book of Genesis. This is where we meet the very first man and woman Adam and Eve. God has a lot to say to us through Adam and Eve and their fall. While the story of Genesis is literal and true in its description of the first man and woman it is also figurative. In Adam and Eve we get one of our first glimpses into God’s pattern of creation and revelation to man.

In examining the origin of man the book of Genesis tells us that Adam was formed first from the dust (his body) and then God breathed in to him the spirit of life (his spirit) and that man became a living soul (Genesis 2:7). In this we see the emergence of a pattern. This pattern that God works by is the thread in the tapestry that weaves all scripture together in its purpose. This pattern is revealed in the concept of “first the physical, then the spiritual”. First was the flesh then the spirit in

Adam's creation. In Christianity we are presented this pattern in the new birth. As Jesus told Nicodemus "That which is born of flesh is flesh but that which is born of spirit is spirit. Ye must be born again." (John 3:6-7). This pattern is the revelation that God's purpose in election for man (what God has chosen or elected to be) was always to be spiritual not just flesh. We see this pattern revealing this truth through out scripture. The Apostle Paul tells us:

1Corinthains15: 44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

First came Adam and then Christ (body and spirit) the physical first and then the spiritual. It is God's pattern. We can apply this to Adam's creation in its order and the way it was stated. The body was created and it came first. The spirit was breathed and it came last. We see the same pattern in Adam and Christ. The first man was created from dust the second man was sent from heaven *like* the spirit breathed from God's nostrils. The order of Adam's creation, his body and then spirit, is the order of Adam and then Christ.

Through the joining of body and spirit together we see man becomes a living soul. The soul is the marriage of body and spirit together. The soul is what makes you uniquely you. We see in the bigger picture the man of the earth (*Adam*) and the man from heaven (*Christ*) joined as one through Jesus; His life, His death, and resurrection. The prophecy of God's purpose was in creation from the very beginning. It was in the pattern.

Adam and Eve

When we examine Adam and Eve together again we see the pattern. We see two parts coming together to make one whole. Genesis tells us that the two cleaved together and became one flesh (Genesis 2:24). Just like Body and Spirit! Eve is a figure for the body. She is the weaker vessel and she was taken out of Adam as he was in a deep sleep. We the Church were figuratively taken out of Christ as he was in a deep sleep. Adam's deep sleep is figurative of Christ's death on the cross. We as the church are his body as Adam and Eve were pictures of body and spirit. As Adam and Eve became one so we become one with Christ who is the last Adam according to the spirit. Adam is a picture of the spirit. He has head ship. Eve like the body was meant to be in submission. Notice that the serpent (Satan) did not go to Adam. Adam was intimate with Eve not a serpent. So it is with man period. Our spirits are intimate with our flesh not any outside influence. We see that the serpent went to Eve and he beguiled her. It is our flesh that is susceptible to outside stimuli.

Genesis 3:4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

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

7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

In Eve we see all of the components of sin. The lust of the eyes, (*that it was pleasant to the eyes,*) the lust of the flesh, (*saw that the tree was good for food*) and the pride of life (*and a tree to be desired to make one wise* (1 John 2:16).

Satan never comes to the Spirit. He comes through the flesh. He went through Eve to get to Adam. Satan goes through your fleshly desires to enslave your spirit.

Adam's desire was for his wife. A man's desire is to please his own flesh.

Eph 2:3 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.

James 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Adam's desire was to please his wife more than please God. He suffered the consequences for his choice. This is man's predicament. He is caught between fulfilling the flesh's desires or the spirit's. Paul commented on this very problem in his first letter to the Corinthians. Paul tells us that a man is caught between pleasing his wife and God (1Corinthians7:32). While we see the physical concern of a man divided between pleasing the Lord or his wife through this we also see the spiritual concern of a man pleasing God or his flesh. Once again in both creation and in understanding we see that the physical is first then the spiritual is next. For every physical thing there is a spiritual thing. For every natural understanding there is a spiritual understanding. This is the pattern of God.

The Nature of Sin

So we see that Adam's sin was to please his flesh (his wife) instead of obedience to God. This is the nature of sin in all men. Now understanding the facts of the garden will define what sin is and what happened that this nature was passed on to all men. Let us list three pertinent facts.

Man has a body and a spirit and these together make a living soul (Genesis 2:7).

As long as man walked with God in obedience he would not die (Genesis 2:17).

Man's corruption began the moment he sinned (Genesis 2:7).

Because spirit is eternal and cannot actually die we must account for this in the duality of man's nature. His body could return to dust but his spirit would exist forever just not in God's presence. God cannot commune with sin.

Ge 3:19 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.

In the moment Adam and Eve ate of the fruit they were spiritually cut off from God's fellowship. Here is the beginning of corruption. Man was made without corruption but he was not incorruptible. This is apparent because after being driven from the garden he began to corrupt until that corruption brought death to his body. As long as he walked with God in that communion he was daily renewed in his flesh. After the loss of that communion he began to corrupt. It is the same with fruit as it abides in a tree. As long as the fruit is in the tree it is nurtured. When the tree flings its fruit it begins to corrupt. The fruit simply rots. The rotting starts on the inside and eventually works its way to the outside. This is the nature of corruption. It started in man's spirit and was manifested to his flesh to bring forth death. Dust returns to dust. The spirit goes to a place (Hell) which is out side of communion with God to await judgment. Because Man is dual in nature so is hell. Hell is the grave for the body and the prison of the spirit. Since All Adam's children were born to him after he lost communion with God so all were born *outside* of that communion and therefore born into Adam's corruption.

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

The whole point of us being made body, spirit, and soul is to be made in the image of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We are triune he is triune. We are one and he is one. God is Spirit so to commune with him we must be spirit. (John 4:24). If the spirit is cut off from communing with God it is as if it were dead. Death in this case is separation from God. This separation was passed on to all men. Adam was cut off spiritually in the moment he sinned. Adam's body died 930 years later (Gen.5:5). When you take into account where the Apostle Peter informs us that a day to God is a thousand years and a thousand years are as a day then you can see that Adam died just 70 years short of a full day (2Peter 3:8). So Adam did indeed die both spiritually and physically in the day he ate of that tree. It was just as God promised (Genesis 2:17).

Original Sin and the Pattern

Within the figurative language of the Bible many of our Christian doctrines are revealed in startling clarity. Matters of truth and dogma which men have struggled with for centuries can now be clearly separated from the error of our traditions that have obscured them. These figures open up to Christianity a new window of understanding into many subjects. Such a subject is this doctrine of original sin. In the concept of original sin we find an excellent example of how the Spirit of God

reveals spiritual truth in physical terms. To see more let us back track a little in the story of Adam and Eve. It makes a good starting point to investigate the nature of man's fall from grace and sin's continuing impact on our lives.

As we have previously noted Adam is the spirit in metaphor because he has headship in the relationship. Eve is the body. As the man prophesied in Genesis:

Genesis 2:23 This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

In a very real sense Eve was Adam's flesh. They were one. They were one in the same way Christ and the church are one. The body as it was created knew no sin. It is the later corrupted spirit of Adam that rules over the body that speaks of the carnal man and so changes the figure. In one vein the flesh is pictured as a woman bound to her husband whom is that corrupted spirit of Adam; the man that our bodies are married to. The woman speaks only of the body itself but the spirit of the flesh is Adam's soul, the carnal man. In the future we shall see how the carnal man dies so that our bodies are then free to belong to another husband: That second Adam who is Christ Jesus. Remember that the promise of the resurrection is the redemption of our bodies, bodies married to a new husband, the spirit of Christ. The carnal man must die for this to happen as Paul reminds us:

Romans 7:1-4 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?

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.

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.

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.

It is the carnal man; that corrupted spirit of Adam that rules over our flesh that is condemned to death by the law. As long as he lives our bodies cannot belong to the new husband, the spirit of Christ. In the Garden of Eden though all this was still yet to come. Adam pictures the spirit and Eve the body. Satan comes to Eve rather than Adam because Eve is the flesh in the situation. Sin always comes through the flesh. This is because he tempts our fleshly appetites. The spirit of man alone has no use for fleshly things and so Adam is not his first choice. Eve however is a different story because she represents our sensual flesh (Genesis 3:6-7).

When Eve was tempted it was just like when our fleshly desires are aroused: As I pointed out before: She saw that the fruit was good for food (*lust of the flesh*), that it was pleasant to look upon (*the lust of the eyes*), and that its fruit was desirable because it would make one wise (*the pride of life*) (1John 2:16). The sensual desires

were aroused in Adams flesh and he was dragged into sin because he regarded Eve his flesh more than he did God's commandment.

The serpent was wise in his designs for Adam would not listen to some strange snake but he would be more likely to listen to his own wife; someone he was intimate with. This is the true nature of sin. Adam chose to listen to his wife instead of God. He gave his strength to a woman; his own flesh. Even now Satan comes to us in the same manner. He lures us with fleshly desires and comes to our flesh to tempt us and so drags our spirits into sin. When we please our flesh we are pleasing ourselves and ignoring the spirit of God. Before sin entered Adam was dependent upon God for his sustenance. Now he was a servant of sin. Adam and Eve hid from God and fashioned for themselves aprons of fig leaves. They knew they were naked. Before when they had no knowledge of sin or guilt and God was the only covering they needed. Now they felt the need to cover their nakedness and hide their sin. Now they needed to justify themselves. When God questioned them they placed the blame on others for their transgression. Adam blamed Eve and she blamed the serpent. Nothing has changed much since then. When we as Christians sin we often say "the flesh is weak" and "the Devil made me do it". No one wants to admit to sin or accept responsibility for it.

The first animal sacrifice occurred when God gave Adam and Eve coats of skins to cover their nakedness and thus showing that only innocent blood could atone for sin. Man was then removed from Eden and Adam was told by God:

Genesis 3:17-19 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; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: 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.

Adam was under the curse of sin and he was forced to slave over the ground for his food; sin is a cruel taskmaster and puts us in bondage. It steals our covering and blinds us to the truth. It condemns us to death. All of the tragedy played out in the lives of the men and women of the Bible can be traced back to this one truth.

The life of Samson was no exception. Samson was a Nazorite from his birth and he was dedicated to God just like Adam was in his creation. A Nazorite may never cut his hair or allow a razor to touch his body. His hair is his covering even as God was Adam's. Without his hair a Nazorite would be "found naked". His hair was a figure for God's spirit which is his strength.

Because of Samson's covering he was strong in the Lord. He over came all his enemies and God used him mightily until he met Delilah. Delilah was a harlot and she seduced Samson for the purpose of finding the secret of his strength. The Philistines hired her to help them to defeat Samson because he had overcome them so many times by reason of his strength. In this figure the Philistines are representative of Satan's emissaries. They used the desires of the flesh to attack the man of God.

Samson went in unto her time and time again. On each occasion she begged him for the secret of his strength and each time he lied to her. She revealed her nature by betraying him on each of these occasions but still he came back. He was hooked. He knew what she was but his desires dragged him to her door each time. Eventually he broke down and told her the secret of his hair. In the end Samson was a slave of sin just as Adam. Delilah had him bound in his sleep and they cut off his hair: His strength and his covering in God. He thought he could escape the consequences of sin while enjoying its pleasures. He was wrong (Judges 13:1-16:30).

The Philistines had taken Samson's covering. Sin reveals our nakedness. They then put out his eyes. Sin blinds us to the truth. Finally they chained him to a millstone forcing him to work and turn the stone like a beast of burden. Sin is a cruel taskmaster. We become its slaves.

The story of Samson in so many respects is the story of man. As Adam gave his strength to a woman so did Samson. When ever we sow to the flesh instead of the spirit we also give our strength to a woman; our flesh.

We all know how the story turns out. This is a portrait of our hope where our strength and God's covering return. Samson prayed and asked God for forgiveness and his strength returned. He pulled down the city on top of himself and the Philistines killing more of them in his death than he had in his life.

In his end we can see Jesus in Samson. Jesus died to his own will and died in our place. In his death on the cross he triumphed over his enemies and our enemies. He overcame the world by his obedience to his Father. He destroyed the works of the enemy Satan. He then arose from the dead to take his seat at the right hand of the

Father. In this he showed us the way to the Father. This is true way that takes us through death. This death is to our own our wills and desires and the things of this world. We like the Israelites before us can walk over death as if on dry land just as when the people of God crossed the red sea. Our enemies like Pharaoh's army cannot follow us. As the Israelites were baptized in the Red sea so we also were baptized into Jesus' death. Paul explains:

1 Corinthians 10:1-4 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

Romans 6:3-6 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

The only path to life is through death. The only salvation from death is through the risen savior Jesus Christ. God's specialty as we shall see is life from death.

The Two Trees

We must not leave this discussion of Adam and Eve and the serpent with out touching upon the two trees in the midst of the garden. One we are told is the tree of life. The other is the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It was through the eating of the fruit of this latter tree that man came to know sin.

These two trees are first mentioned in:

Genesis 2: 9 And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

While we know that there were two trees in the midst of the garden and we believe them to be literal as the scriptures tell us we also understand that they are figurative. The truth is apparent. The Apostle Paul tells us that we only know good and evil by the Law (Romans 7:7). The tree of knowledge of good and evil is a picture of the law. The tree of life is life eternal. Jesus hung on the tree for us (Galatians 3:13). Only through partaking of Christ can we have eternal life. He is the tree of life. In this we see the Law and the redemption from the Law who is Christ. Remember this. It will be important later.

Chapter Two

The Law

Now that we have defined man's nature of sin and his spiritual state of darkness and corruption we can begin to understand the law and God's purpose in it. The law consisted of ten commandments and six hundred and thirteen regulations as given to Moses by God. We immediately have to face the fact that God gave man a law that he could not keep. We are all familiar with scriptures that tell us that all have fallen short of the glory of God. We are told that none are righteous and that all have sinned. The penalty of the Law is death for all who have sinned so all are worthy of death (Romans 3:10). The Apostle Paul goes as far to tell us that righteousness never came by observing the Law:

Galatians 3:11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

So the question springs to mind “Why did God give us a law we couldn’t keep?” It is a fact that man could not keep it for no man ever had. Again “*all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God*”.

From Adam to Moses

To answer the above question and others we must go to the scripture and study how man died from the time of Adam to the time the law was given through Moses. He died because of sin. Remember earlier we defined sin as a fallen nature, a nature of corruption. It starts on the inside and works its way to the outside to bring forth death. Only Adam could remember that sinless state. His children never knew it as they were born after Adam’s sin. Only Adam could really understand that death is not natural rather it is a consequence of sin. His children and grand children and great grand children didn’t understand that death was not natural. All the way down through Noah’s time and through Abraham even until the time of Moses all perceived death as natural. It was merely a part of the concept of “beginning and end” which they saw all around them. Death however is not natural. It is the result of sin in men.

In those days men lived according to their own consciences. The problem with this is that it was a corrupt conscience because sin corrupted man and his thinking. What was wrong or right to one man may not be what was wrong or right to another. Communion with God was cutoff so there was no absolutes to adhere to. The Bible tells us that everyone did what was right in their own eyes.

Another problem was sin was not recognized as sin. Our being cut off from the spiritual communion with our creator left us ignorant of the invisible things like the nature of sin that dwelt in us. There was nothing to identify this nature. This is why

the bible tells us that where there is no law there is no sin. In other words sin was not taken into account where there was no law. So the Apostle Paul tells us:

Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

The point is sin was in us and it was killing us and we thought it was natural. Our consciences were misinformed. It took the Law to show us that sin causes death. When the Law identified sin then finally sin appeared to us in a way we could see it. By the Law sin was not recognized though as a nature, but rather as a transgression of the law. A transgression is the action of sinning itself but true sin in its root was the nature that produced the action. The penalty of death was added because of the transgression. Every law has a penalty if you break it. Death was added as the penalty to show us that sin is going to end in death. This in turn shows us we need God to help us. He must justify us for we are all dead under the Law. We could not justify ourselves. All man could hope to do was hide sin. Adam and Eve tried to hide it with aprons of fig leaves. This shows the need to mix the law with faith. Men should have through faith saw God's plan of redemption through the sacrifices the

Law demanded. Our faith is in the belief God has a deliverance from sin for us. Through faith we run to God with hope he can fix it. Man instead tried to hide from God.

As we said before sin by the law is identified as a transgression of the law. A transgression of the law is the action sin produces in you. This is how it works. The Law says theft is wrong. You then in turn try not to steal based on what the Law says is right. Then you find that you cannot stop coveting other people's things. You are tempted and eventually you give in and steal. You then find that this law which you agree with as be good, shows you how bad you really are. Before you knew it was wrong to covet it never bothered you. But now that the law has said "do not covet" you are identified by this law as a sinner. The action of stealing suddenly appears to you very sinful where before the law it was of no bother to you or your conscience. The law informs our conscience as to what is good and so what is evil. It is absolute and in stone and outside of us (Romans 7:7). The nature of corruption inside you is identified through the actions of a transgression of this law outside of us. You can't actually see that nature but now you know it exists in you through what you do which the Law identifies as sin. The penalty of the Law shows that sin is the cause of death by judging our transgressions of the law worthy of death. It was our nature to sin. Only someone with a perfect man's nature could ever fulfill the Law. By trying and failing to keep this Law written on stone that was on the outside of us, we proved that inside we were hopelessly corrupt. If it is your nature to do right, you do not need a law on the outside to remind you of sin and tell you what it is. You do not have to tell

an apple tree to bear apples. It does so by nature. The Law shows us it is our nature to sin. It also showed us we could never please God of ourselves.

The Law does show us our need for faith in God. It shows us our need for God to change our nature that we may please him. It shows us we need forgiveness for past sins. The Law shows us our need to be redeemed from sin. This is why God gave us a law we could not keep. It is all about a promise of a change of nature from Adam to Christ.

Inside vs. Outside

Through this struggle that the law produces in a man we find further revelation. Inside we agree with the law in our inner man, our spirit, but the flesh still wants its desires fulfilled. It is consumed with lust. Before the law came and informed us of God and his will we were free from righteousness. There was no conflict in us. When the Law came however it brought conflict between the sin nature and our spirit. Our spirit was a slave to sin. It did what its master the sin nature wanted. The spirit was ill treated. The law pointed out this inequity and promised life if we did what was right. But the Law demanded perfection. When your spirit is enslaved to a fallen nature it is impossible to be perfect.

Romans 7:9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

So the spirit began to struggle toward this promise of life by trying to keep this Law it agreed with as good and found instead its chains to the sinful nature's will.

The Apostle Paul describes it in this manner:

Romans 7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

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.

It is a scriptural fact than when we in our inner man agree that the Law is good and commence this struggle against the sin revealed in us then it is truly no longer us that sin. It is sin itself that makes us a captive and a slave. For the first time we see our slavery through the Law. A slave doesn't need to be destroyed. He needs to be freed. The problem is far from solved however. Our struggle against sin is fruitless. We cannot over come this nature of sin ourselves. Even though it is no longer us who sin we are still not forgiven of past sin, and not free from the nature that produces sin. Through the law we do not find life but only condemnation. We have the will to do good but not the means to accomplish it (Romans 7:18-24).

It is at this point that many who find this reality at work in them start down the empty deceptive road of self justification. Adam and Eve tried to hide their sin

behind fig leaves. God however gave them coats of animal skins which cost innocent animals their lives. This is what began sacrifice. Only the innocent blood of another could cover your sin. Someone had to die in your place. These sacrifices were only pictures that were to show us this concept. The concept is that of redemption.

God never took pleasure in animal sacrifice even though the Law required them to be made (Psalm40:6, Hebrews 10:4-8). Animal sacrifices could never cover sin. They were merely a picture of the redemption God would provide. These were all outside pictures about what God who is spirit would provide by the spirit. It is God who would provide the true sacrifice. Only God could justify us. Again we see the need to mix the Law with faith in God. The Jews did not see this. They did not look through the pictures in the law to see the spiritual applications in faith. They looked only at the pictures themselves. They tried as just as Adam and Eve to cover themselves with a justification that was outward and of the flesh. In other words because they could not see sin as a nature but only as transgressions (the actual actions that point to the nature in the same way animal sacrifice could only point to true redemption) They tried to stop sin themselves. They tried to interpret the law according to an outward standard and just change its actions. They could not perceive it was the nature that must be changed and that itself by God because they did not mix the Law with faith in God. They never got the understanding that a person is what he is by nature. Changing his actions does not change who and what he is for all men are sinners. The best they could do was put on an outward show of righteousness. It is the heart; the inner man that must be changed. Man does not in this darkness of the carnal mind acknowledge the things of the spirit. He only walks

by what he sees. That means he would attempt to keep the law from the outside and not even acknowledge there was an inside to change.

Romans 8: 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

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.

When we mix the law with faith we see our need for a redeemer. That is our need for our nature to be changed. That demands a sacrifice that must be more than just an animal. We see our need for God. This is God's mercy.

We who are of faith see the letter of the Law as a shadow of the good things God has promised. The letter of the Law is the pattern of God. The Law itself is the prophecy of a perfect man. He is the one who will fulfill the law. We see also that he is judged of the law to be a perfect sacrifice for sin. His is innocent blood that the law judged to be innocent. He is the true Lamb with out blemish. He is the one sacrifice for all time that will please God. He is the promised redeemer that the Law of God prophesied would come. His name is Jesus and He alone is our redemption.

Chapter 3

Jesus: Both man and God

Jesus is the focal point of both the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament testified to his coming and the New Testament testifies as eyewitness testimony that he did come and that he is coming again. Jesus is the fulfillment of all scripture.

Jesus was not just a good man who did God's will. We must come to the revelation that Jesus was God and man. Let us start with his true origin before he became a man. He was in heaven with God.

Jesus as God

It tells us in the gospel of John in its very first sentence that Jesus was God.

John 1:1 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 any thing made that was made.

Not only does the Bible tell us he was God but that he is the creator of all things. We know that the creator is not creation. We know that as the word says Jesus is God. It tells us that this word “became flesh” (John 1:14). In his letter to the Philippians we see this fact affirmed, with some more detail added by the Apostle Paul.

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

He was of God’s very nature. He created everything. He took on the form of a man and lived as a man dependant on the Father as any created man would have to. Though he was by very nature God he humbled himself to live and walk as one of us. We are told he learned through suffering and that he only said and did what the Father would have him do (Hebrews 2:14-18 , John 8:28, 12:49).

You see even though Jesus was God by nature he could not fulfill the Law as God. The Law was written for man not for God. A man had to fulfill the law: A man born of a woman, born under law. A perfect man; a man that sinful Adam could never produce: A man born of God. As we shall see in clarity through the scriptures Jesus was that man (Galatians 4:4).

This gives us insight as to why Jesus had to be baptized of John. John told Jesus *“I have need to be baptized of you”*. Jesus answered him saying *“Suffer it to be so for now, for it is up to us to fulfill all righteousness”*. It had to be established in front of witnesses that Jesus was a man born under Law. This is when they heard the voice come from the divine glory saying *“This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased”*. God testified with the Law that Jesus was the only man begotten of God. This term *“begotten”* never applied to Jesus as God but only to Jesus as a man for he was the only man begotten of God. Everyone else had Adam as their father (Mark 3:13-17). In this we also see that Jesus in his origin is from Heaven.

Jesus Tempted

After Jesus was baptized by John as a man under law he was led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil. Here see further proof that Jesus was more than a man. All of Satan’s temptations were not the normal kind of thing he would throw at a man but rather the kind of thing he would throw at some one who was both God and man. Jesus could not call upon his own deity for this plan of his father to work. He had to live totally as a man. If Jesus called upon his deity then he would be fulfilling the law as God and not a man. He would be acting independent of God and not in just the simple obedience of a man to his God and Father. The

temptations were designed with this in mind while Jesus was in his vulnerable state as a man of flesh and blood. Satan tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread. As deity it would be a simple feat but as a man is a different story. He tempted Jesus to use his dominion in throwing himself off a mountain for it would draw a thousand angels to protect him. Satan even tried offering Jesus all the kingdoms of the world if Jesus would worship him, knowing that it was God's plan to reconcile all things to himself through Christ. It would have been a shortcut to doing just that with out Jesus having to die as a man. Jesus passed all these temptations with flying colors. Never once did he give in to independent thought. He answered from the word as a man dependant on God's word "It is written". This is why Jesus would say such things such as "No one is good but the Father". He laid aside his deity to live as a man would have to; in dependence upon his God. It is important to understand that Jesus fulfilled the law and God's plan as a man. He was a man who pleased God. No man before had done so. No man born of Adam could. Jesus proved he was begotten of God, the one and only as a man.

The Man from Heaven

Even though Jesus did come to live as a man we must not forget he is God by very nature. He was placed into this creation by the will of the Father as the Holy Spirit overshadowed Mary.

Mt 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

Mt 1:20 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.

Jesus was not the Son of Adam, but rather the Son of God. He was not the man that came from below but the one who came from above. John the Baptist spoke of Jesus in this way:

John 3:31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.

33 He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.

34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.

35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

This is another point in the necessity for Jesus to come as a man. He related the Kingdom of his Father to people who were lost and could not commune as Jesus did with the Father. He testified and the Spirit of God testified with him. They spoke as

one. They spoke to men. Jesus is God speaking to man. As the Law says “The testimony of two is true”.

The Jews however could not understand this. Even to this day despite the scripture many only see Jesus as merely a man. Every time the Jews even got close to understanding what Jesus was saying they tried to kill him. When ever they recognized his clear claim as God’s son sent by God into the world, they considered it blasphemy and sought to stone him by the very law he had come to fulfill (John 10:32-33 , Matthew 5:17). Yet Jesus had told them over and over that he was from God and sent to them. He told them that he was not of this world and “*Where I have come from you do not know and where I am going you cannot follow*”. They thought only in carnal terms. They asked among themselves “*What could he mean we do not know where he comes from? Is this not Joseph the carpenter’s son whom we know*”? They did not understand he was speaking of coming from heaven, and going back to heaven to his Father. Jesus was not the man from Nazareth. He was the man from heaven.

1 Corinthians 15:45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

When one of the Sanhedrin (a Pharisee named Nicodemus) came to see Jesus, then the Messiah once again began to explain his origin. He also explained the need for mankind to be adopted into his origin. Nicodemus came to Jesus at night. He didn't want the others of the ruling religious class to see him with this Nazarene. He told Jesus that he knew he was from God because of the miracles Jesus had been doing. Jesus told him "NO". Nicodemus could not know truly that Jesus was from God in that way. That way depended on man's carnal reason and senses. No: Jesus told Nicodemus instead he must be born again to know any truth of the spiritual.

John 3:3 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.

To truly see one had to be born of the spirit, born of Heaven. Seeing physically was not enough. This had nothing to do with entering this was just seeing!

Nicodemus was perplexed. He asked if a man could get back into his mother's womb. He was thinking only carnally. It was not another physical birth that Jesus spoke of it was a spiritual one. He told Nicodemus.

John 3:5 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.

Born of water is the physical birth. We were all encased in water in our mother's wombs, the physical birth that Nicodemus alluded to. Jesus told him that it was not two physical births that he needed. It was rather a physical birth **and** a spiritual one. "Ye must be born of **water and the spirit**. "*Flesh gives birth to flesh but only spirit can give birth to spirit. Ye must be born again*". Jesus went on to explain to Nicodemus that it is that way with every one born of the Spirit. You don't know where they come from or where they are going. They are born of God just as Jesus was, those who are adopted into him. Jesus in his prayer to the Father said:

John 17:14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

When we receive Jesus we are born of heaven through faith in his sacrifice. We are born again.

John 1:10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

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.

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.

Yes Jesus was more than just a man. He was in the beginning with God. He made all things. Carnal men could only see him as Jesus from Nazareth. We see him through faith not after the flesh. We see him through this new birth into a living hope. Jesus is the revelation of the spiritual to man from God (Ephesians 1:3-10). He is the revelation of the mystery that man should be more than flesh. Man was predestined through Christ to be of the spirit and eternal. This is the revealed mystery of God's Plan through Jesus.

The Law Fulfilled

The Law is Holy. As Paul remind us in Romans chapter seven. It is not sin. It was meant to teach people of the existence of sin. Sin worked like a cancer corrupting our bodies until death was produced. It was hidden in side us. The Law

reveals it. Sin became sin in our consciousness through the Law. In other words sin appeared to us through our actions (transgressions of the Law) so we could see we needed God. As we have noted previously sin is not at its root an act but rather a nature of corruption. All men with this nature of corruption can only be condemned by the law. A righteous man had to come in order to fulfill it.

Jesus told the Jews that he came to fulfill the law and the prophets (Matthew 5:17). What does that mean? It means Jesus is the embodiment of all that God has planned for man. He is all that he has promised to man. Jesus is the man the prophets prophesied would come. He is the messiah (Gen.3:15, Daniel 9:25). He is also the one that the Law itself prophesied would come. Remember earlier we discussed how God gave us a Law we could not keep? Only a perfect man could keep it without breaking it in the least way. Adam could not produce such a man because the law judged us all sinners.

1Ti 1:9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

Fulfillment and Payment

Jesus who was not born of Adam and so sin. He had God for his Father not Adam. He was righteous. The law described a righteous man therefore only a righteous man could fulfill it. Through this set of facts we see that the law is a

prophecy that a righteous man would come. Jesus proved by keeping the Law he was that man. No one else has ever before or since kept the Law: Only Jesus our Messiah. By his keeping so perfectly God's Law he was identified as its fulfillment. This gave Jesus the right by law to lay down his perfect life as a sacrifice for all those judged as sinners under the Law. His death could free those who were held under the law's penalty of death. He is the reality of the Lamb without blemish that the Law identified as a fitting sacrifice.

Exodus 12:5 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.

1 Peter I: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:

20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

And we shall speak more on this lamb whose precious blood satisfies the Law's righteous requirements as we go on. Our purpose here though is to show that Jesus was the true lamb the law prophesied for the blood of animals could never take away sins. The actual slaying of a lamb was only a shadow, a picture of the true lamb that was foretold. This is also within the pattern of God. As we have said "First the physical, then the spiritual".

Hebrew 10:1 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:

And our Messiah came in the body of a man. A body prepared for him. A body meant for sacrifice for all men.

In the Pattern

It is the truth that God has ordered his pattern to reflect his will. In this we see that the temporary comes first because it is temporary. The last is eternal. In the Gospel of John we can see this part of first and last demonstrated when Jesus turned water into wine. We will start our examination in John 2:1-5:

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

Mary informed Jesus that there was no wine for the wedding but his answer was one you might not expect. When Jesus spoke of his hour he wasn't speaking of whether or not it was time to do any miracles as some suppose (up to this point he had done none). He was speaking of the time of his death as in John 7:28-30:

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. But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me. Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

Whenever Jesus spoke of his “hour” in scripture, he was speaking of the time of his death. What did the time of his death have to do with wine? Wine is representative of his blood as seen in Mark 14:22-25:

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. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. 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.

Having established the meaning of the wine and of the Lord’s hour we can now see that in this his first miracle is revealed a picture of Jesus as the lamb of God. The next part of this chapter in John 2 shows us in figure how we are cleansed of sin by Jesus’ blood in verses 6-8:

And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

Notice the water pots that Jesus chose for his water made wine. These were vessels used in the purification rites as described in the Law. If a person touched a dead body or if they were deemed unclean for some reason as pertaining to the Law they would go to the priest for help to be made clean according to the Law (Leviticus 13:6). The priest would give them instructions concerning the washing and the accompanying ceremony.

In these water pots Jesus used to turn water in to wine we can see the blood of Jesus that purifies us of our sin according to the law. It is in the final part of this story from the Gospel of John in verses 9-11 that the concept of “first and last” is expressed:

When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

The ruler of the feast approached the bridegroom to comment on the “good” wine and remarked on how most men serve the best wine first. We know from scripture that Jesus is often called the bridegroom. Though he is literally not the bridegroom at this wedding we can see that the bridegroom is figurative of Christ.

The wine as we have already discussed was figurative of Christ's blood, it is indeed the best wine, and God did save it for last. The blood of animals could be seen as the wine that was 'worse' or cheaper. The blood of animals only atoned for sin but once a year, a temporary measure of the law in dealing with sin. God saved the best wine for last which cleanses us of our sin once and forever. Hebrews 9:7-15 speaks eloquently of the two wines or "bloods" of these two different testaments:

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: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 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; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. 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; Nether 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. 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: 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?

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.

So we have ample scripture in testimony that Jesus was both the fulfillment of the Law and its payment.

Redemption through Christ

Hebrews 9:11 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.

The redemption through Christ is man now eternally restored to right relationship and communion with God through the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. Now where Adam could not enter because of sin we can enter through the righteousness of Christ. That place is the very throne room of God where Christ has ascended to his right hand through the righteousness of a man who pleased God. He laid it all aside as God and earned it all back as a man. Jesus is the rejoining of man to God. On man's side he is man. On God's side he is God. He is eternally now the bridge between man and God. That is why Jesus is the only access to the Father. We have no righteousness to enter in his presence ourselves. We enter in only through the righteousness of Christ.

Romans 5 :1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)

7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

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.

Our salvation in Christ is dependant on faith in his sacrifice and his resurrection as the scriptures proclaim.

Chapter Four

Faith, Grace, and the Resurrection

Faith

There are many misunderstandings where faith is concerned. Faith is not magic. It is not a force of itself. Your faith is only as powerful and steady and sure as the object of your faith is. The object of a Christian's faith is and should be God. God is all powerful. In this way our faith is powerful because God can be depended on.

The definition of faith is found in scripture. The bible tells us that faith is the evidence of things not seen and the substance of things hoped for (Hebrews 11: 1). Faith is spiritual. It like the future and the realm of heaven is invisible. We will not attempt to dissect faith in some carnal way here but we will affirm that it is proof to us that God is real. He places his spirit in us through the death of Jesus. Through this spirit in us we come to know him, and to have fellowship with him, and so believe on him. Without the spirit of Christ in you there is no coming to know him. God is spirit.

Galatians 4:6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

This is what our eternal life is based on: Faith! If you learn about God second hand then your faith is only in what men have told you. Men as we all know are notoriously wrong. No man can establish you in your salvation. The bottom line for faith to be valid is that it must proceed from that communion we have now with God's Spirit through the sacrifice of the blood and body of Christ. Remember our spirits can now enter in to commune with the Father through Jesus' blood.

John3:17 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

There is a big difference between knowing about God and knowing him. He is spirit so you can only come to know him through communion of the Spirit. This is what Christ has first restored to us through his sacrifice. Through his righteousness we can approach God and be heard. We can commune with a living God through the spirit of Christ. We are not dependant on men or their proofs or their intellects or wisdom. We have access to God himself (1John2:27). Your faith proceeds directly from that relationship you build with God through Jesus. It is through the sacrifice of Jesus. The ancient's faith was through sacrifice always. This spiritual communion

by which revelation comes is the rock this church is built upon. This is the sure foundation of hearing from God.

Matthew 16: 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.

Through this we see that true faith is about believing God. That evidence of things unseen is God's Spirit within you. Faith comes by hearing and hearing comes by the word of God. What does that mean exactly? It means that you can only hear by the Spirit. Submission to God's word is agreement with what the Spirit speaks. It is not to those who carnally hear that the truth is revealed. It is to us who have heard the voice of the Spirit through the word and believed it. Our beliefs then are not based on our thinking or perceptions or intellect or on any other carnal means. It is communion through the word (Jesus) with the Spirit of God. Our faith is not based on the wisdom of men but the power of a living God (1 Corinthians 2:4-5). We need the mind of Christ (the Spirit) to renew our minds (Adam). Apart from Christ there is nothing good in us (Romans 7:18). So you see we cannot depend on just a carnal

understanding of scripture. We cannot depend on some man or group's understanding. We must hear from God. Revelation only comes by the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:9 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.

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.

We must learn to walk spiritually and to think in spiritual terms. We must as disciples of Christ put away the thinking of the old man. By faith we do have the mind of Christ. If we do not start to gravitate toward the mind of the Spirit we will not grow and mature in the way God intended. This can only be accomplished God's way: We must simply submit ourselves to him and his mercy. We can only rid ourselves of error by abandoning the methods of the flesh and humbling ourselves before God. The true revelation of Heaven comes not by any logic or

sound carnal reasoning so called but rather by the same avenue our salvation came: The supernatural power of a living God. A child of God is totally dependent on the means of the Spirit and not on any physical genius or self sufficiency.

It is important to point out that there is validity in physical knowledge. It always agrees with the Spirit. Creation is a mirror of things spiritual. In this mirror we see the truth of God and his Majesty.

What is important to understand now is that sin has corrupted this creation as well as the thinking of those who seek to understand it. This has produced a carnal knowledge, a perverted view that exalts the creature and denies the creator. The equation is simple: God is creator and Satan is creation. If Satan can lure man into the worship of creation he has lured them to the worship of himself. The carnal man's eyes see nothing except what lies on this side of the fleshly veil.

These simple understandings lay the groundwork for the necessity of the new birth. God is spiritual and he seeks those who will worship in spirit and in truth (John4:23). Only those born spiritually can see the creation as it truly is. Only spiritual people can see the kingdom of God (John 3:3-6).

A man cannot be born of water only (of the flesh, in his mother's water sack) but rather born of water and the spirit. Without the birth into the spirit through Jesus and his sacrifice a man will never truly see the kingdom of God.

Such a man will never understand the spiritual concepts the Bible lays out for the child of the Spirit.

There is nothing wrong with a physical education but we must realize that it is not a substitute for a spiritual one. Physical methods can never pierce the veil of the flesh. We are a spiritual people first and foremost if we are a Christian.

If we are in fact Christians we must allow the Spirit of God free reign in our lives allow Him to demonstrate his truth through our lives. Our trials and our failings as well as our successes are all demonstrations of his spirit. The more we submit to the leading of the spirit the less we are confined behind this fleshly veil. Our goal is to reach beyond this veil to the blessed hope of the resurrection. To be translated even as Enoch (who was a figure of the resurrection) in Hebrews 11:5:

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.

This is the only way to escape this darkness; to escape the carnal. We pass through the veil of flesh by faith in Christ Jesus. There is no other way. It is by faith. It is by the Spirit. It is through the sacrifice of Christ.

Grace

In the Bible grace is revealed to us as the manifold gifts God has given us through Christ.

2Corinthians 8:7 Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.

1Peter 4:10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

This grace is our acceptance by God through Jesus. It is God's gifts to us through Jesus. It is the time of grace set aside for all to come to him through Jesus. It is favor with God we could never earn but that Christ has earned it for us. It is his unsearchable and immeasurable love to man through Jesus Christ and his righteousness. It is all these things and more. Because of this favor with God we are given time and space to grow in this new nature and become solidified in our character to serve God. It is a space to repent of sin and come to the truth. This grace is available as long as you draw a breath. It is the time for faith and hope to have its way in you.

1 Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

God is able to show us this grace only through Jesus. It is Jesus that has turned his wrath from us and revealed his love. To walk in this grace is to live in his mercy, his power, and grow in his nature. It is in the spirit and not the flesh that we find this blessing.

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

Faith is our only access into this grace and the realm of the spirit where the blessings of God are (Romans 5:1-2). What we have in Christ we have by faith. Our faith is God who has provided the sacrifice that makes us clean and justifies us. Grace is available only through the sacrifice of Jesus. We must be adopted into this grace.

Adoption as Sons.

Many Christians have been taught that salvation is complete the moment you ask Christ into your life and repent. That is an act. That is not a lifetime in God's grace growing in faith. It is a beginning and not the end. We need to understand the difference between saying the pretty words and the reality of our faith. Am I telling

you that when you do ask Christ to come into your life that you are not truly saved?

No. I am telling you that you are saved by faith. Let us look to the scriptures to understand.

Galatians 4: 4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

The Apostle Paul wrote this speaking of what it is we have by faith. We now have God's Spirit in us. We by faith have been adopted into his son Jesus so that by this same faith we are considered his sons. We are also considered heirs now but remember an heir is one who will receive and not one who has. This is the nature of faith. We believe that God will bring to pass all he has promised but until we actually receive the goal of our faith we stand in faith for it. It is in this same chapter that Paul tells us:

Galatians 4:19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

This new birth we have now is one of spirit which cannot be seen so it is one of faith. Faith is the evidence of things that cannot be seen (Hebrews 11:3). Just like a child is planted in the womb and hidden from site until his revealing so is our salvation. If you in fact already had it you wouldn't need to stand in faith for it. The child and the Christian are only complete when they are fully formed. We as Christians are in the womb so to speak of the physical. It is only when we come forth from this womb into the resurrection that we find our completion.

Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

Romans 8:23 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 is the difference between faith and presumption. What we have we do have only by faith. If faith stops is there any more salvation? Of course not. Faith must

be seen through to its end for without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews Heb 11:6).

Romans 11:19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

We must see it as the Apostle Paul saw it. Not presuming it is accomplished but pressing on to our goal of the resurrection; our salvation in faith (Philippians 3:8-15). The Apostle Peter tells us:

1 Peter 1:7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

Our adoption in to Christ Jesus only begins with our faith in him. Faith's end is the true adoption of sons which is the actual resurrection from the dead.

Romans 8:16 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.

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.

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.

The resurrection of the dead is the hope and the end of this Gospel. It is the completion of this salvation. We live these lives in the now based on the hope stored up in us. This world is not our home. We look forward to a new life in a changed glorified body. This world and this flesh is not our home. We are strangers in a strange land and our true home is in the realm of the Spirit of God. We live in it now only through faith which builds this hope through suffering.

Identity in Death and Life Everlasting

When ever we speak of ourselves as “saved” or “born again” we are identifying ourselves with Jesus and what he has accomplished on our behalf. We are counting ourselves with Christ in his righteousness and standing with God. It is not our efforts that merit this grace we have access to now through faith. It is Jesus of whom God has said :

Matthew 3:17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

It is Jesus who has pleased God. No one born of Adam could apart from faith ever hope to please God. It is our faith in Jesus and his sacrifice. Our faith is that Christ's sacrifice was enough to cover our sin. Only through Christ can we enter into this communion and come to know God. Only in Christ can we go boldly before his throne of grace and be accepted (Hebrews 4:16).

Let us not neglect what comes first. We must first be identified with Christ in his death before his life. We must die with Jesus on the cross before we can ever expect to live and reign with him.

Romans 8:15 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 must come to know that fellowship of sharing in his sufferings that we may also share in his glory. All of us who have been baptized into Christ have been baptized into his death. We are considered to be dead to this life of the flesh as he is. We are identified with him in his suffering in the garden of Gethsemane where he once and for all died to a man's will even as we are identified in his crucifixion where

he died to this world. We live this life unto God as he did once we receive him. Through this identity process we obtain the power of God to walk with Christ not only in death, but in a newness of life by the power of his resurrection (Romans 6: 1-6). It is this same mighty working of God's power that rose Jesus up from the dead that is at work in the Christian to bring him or her to a new life of righteousness.

While all of this is true, we must understand that this process is by faith. While we do identify with Christ in both his death and life it is important to know the difference between the actual and what is by faith. For example the scripture tells us:

Romans 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Did anyone one actually come and bury you? Of course not. That body of sin that must eventually be destroyed is still looking back at you in the mirror. In being crucified with Christ did anyone actually come and nail you to a cross? No. All that happened only with Jesus. It has occurred with us only through that faith of being

identified with him in his death so that we may be in his life. The power in this identity through faith is if it is true in our hearts it will be manifested to our flesh in the way we live this life. The death part comes now the resurrection part comes with Jesus when he returns. Both these forces however are demonstrated in us who believe in a tangible way now. If we truly consider ourselves dead with Christ we will not sow to this flesh we consider to be dead and its evil desires. Sin will exist in these bodies we call dead but it will not reign over us. This is due to the fact we also consider ourselves alive to God through the resurrection of Jesus and so we sow to that reality. We sow to the spirit and so to life eternal. Jesus through his death to sin and his resurrection to life have delivered us from sin's bondage so that now we have a choice as to whom we serve. Our choice is either flesh unto death or the spirit unto life eternal. It is no longer a question of the Law, but what nature we sow to. It is either sin unto death or righteousness unto life eternal. Jesus' death and resurrection gave us that choice.

Romans 8:8 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.

10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

So you see we were not crucified with Christ in a literal way but only in the realm of faith. And we are yet to be raised with Christ in a literal fashion. We are raised now with Christ by faith. Salvation then as we know it know is by faith. The words death and resurrection refer to our bodies not our spirits. A spirit does not die and it is not resurrected. You do not crucify a spirit or bury it. All these terms refer to what we believe about God's promises concerning our bodies. It is about our faith in what he has promised us. It is about our faith in what Jesus has brought us through his death and resurrection.

Hope

All of this points to the hope of our Gospel, the resurrection of the dead. If we believe that by faith our spirits have been joined to Christ through his death then we believe our bodies will be joined to him in his resurrection.

Romans 6:22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

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

This hope is being built in us through the spirit and our obedience to it. It is the truth of this Gospel that it is not just for this life we hope. It is for eternity. An eternity that is not just of our spirits but our bodies as well. For Christ Jesus rose

bodily from the grave and his body was no longer mere flesh and blood but a glorified spiritual body.

1 Corinthians 15:42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

As we have had the Spirit of Adam changed by being joined to Christ's spirit so we will see Adam's body changed as it is joined to Christ through the resurrection. Through this we see the truth that Jesus came first to fix the spirit which is the nature of man and the heart of Man. With his second coming he fixes the body. With both redeemed we have our souls. It is God's desire that man become a complete soul in Christ's image and lose the image of corrupt Adam. It is God's order of restoration first the spirit and then the body. Just as it was with Adam, first he lost his communion with God then he died physically some time later. This is because the corruption of sin starts in the inside and eventually is manifested to the outside. So it is with righteousness. Righteousness starts in the spirit which is the heart of man. It

then works through the whole lump just like leaven to be manifested in the resurrection of the body. Everything in its order: First the spirit then the body. Christ's first and second coming is according to this order. What it is we have by faith must be manifested into this reality. Salvation is the complete restoration of the soul in Christ's image, body and spirit together as one and of the Spirit.

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

This is the hope of our Gospel. This is the end of our Gospel.

1Thessalonians 2:19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

Chapter Five

The Pattern of God

The pattern of God for revelation by the Spirit is the same as his pattern in creation. In creation first comes the physical then afterwards the spiritual. Revelation is therefore predicated on first understanding things physically and then its spiritual application. We see this demonstrated beautifully between Adam and Christ.

1 Corinthians 15: 43. It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

44. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

45. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

46. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

47. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

48. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

49. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

50. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

This again is the concept that the “last shall be first and the first shall be last”. Let me reiterate. What come first is the physical in creation. The physical is the pattern, the example. The true (spiritual) is the reality. With this in mind there are several properties of the physical we should take note of.

The physical creation is temporary. It was not made to last.

2Cor.4:18. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

The physical is the seen testifying to what cannot be seen.

Romans 1: 18. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;
19. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath

shewed it unto them.

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 physical is a copy of the unseen, a figure or an allegory. In this way we see Adam as a figure of Christ.

Romans 5:12. Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

13. (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

15. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

16. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

In fact all of the laws, statutes and ordinances of Israel's worship were figures .

Hebrews 9:21. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

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:

The physical creation and the letter of the law that governs it are only examples and shadows of better things to come. This is the difference between that laws that govern the physical and the laws that govern the spiritual. All physical laws work like boundaries. They govern finite properties. The Spiritual is the true. It is infinite and limitless:

Hebrews 10: 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:

Colossians 2:16. 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.

This is great revelation. The pattern of God reveals his will and purpose in mighty ways. For example we see the truth that Jesus was always God's idea for Man. The new man is the real man not Adam. Adam was only the figure. He is the beginning and the physical type. The Spiritual is our final state in creation. (resurrection of the dead).

This brings us to the concept "the last will be first and the first will be last". The flesh exalts itself and is humbled. The spirit humbles itself and is exalted. In Adam we see the attempt to be exalted as God

Genesis 3:4. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

6. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the

fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Then Man is brought low in death. In Christ we see God coming as a humble man and God the Father exalts him through the resurrection even to his throne.

Philippians 2: 5. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6. Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7. But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

In Depth: First and Last

The Spirit expresses truth in the scriptures through the use of physical examples and figurative speech. These examples are usually in the form of true events in the people of the Bible's lives, and the parables Jesus used to teach these truths. Like the

parables the meanings of many of the events in scripture are hidden from those who place no value on spiritual understanding. It is the Holy Spirit who reveals these hidden truths to Christ's disciples even as Jesus himself did when he walked on the Earth as a man. When Jesus walked with his disciples he taught them privately the meaning of his parables. Others were left to marvel at his sayings. Jesus explained the use of parables in Matthew 13:10-17:

And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

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:

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.

But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

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.

These hidden understandings usually have a physical example that expresses them, like the parables of Jesus. The physical is a mirror of sorts: In the creation we see the Creator like an artist is seen in his art. We see wondrous revelation of the Father's nature and plan in his handiwork. In man we see God because he was made to reflect him. Only sin has perverted the picture, muddied the waters if you will. Sin has distorted the picture of God in the Earth. It has also warped our ability to understand the spiritual by what we see in the physical.

The new birth corrects this flaw by giving us a new nature, a spiritual one. As newborn babes our eyes are then opened to a new world. With this new sight we begin to appreciate the scriptures. The Spirit speaks to our hearts just as Christ taught his disciples. God begins to reveal certain concepts that enhance our spiritual life and understanding. These concepts work as keys that unlock the mysteries of God; mysteries of which we as Christians are stewards. Like the parables these concepts are hidden in physical illustrations. The abstraction of "first and last" is one of the more profound.

As Christians we are all aware of the simple truth that first we were born physically and then spiritually. Let us indulge in a little more reflection of this pattern. As I have stated previously the primary part of our lives as spiritual beings came last. Of these two parts of our existence the spirit is to have headship. Our

bodies or flesh must be made subject to the spirit's leadership. In Romans 8: 5-13 we get a close look at the headship of the spirit:

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...Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 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.

This theme of "first and last" is one of the largest in the Bible. It is one of these keys that open many other portions of scripture. With this skeleton key in hand we can enter a door to a broader understanding of God's plan for us. Illustrations of this theme can be found in the book of Genesis in the stories of several sets of brothers.

In the story of Cain and Abel we see one of the earliest examples of "first and last" which is a picture of the relationship between the flesh and the spirit. Cain is figurative of the flesh and Abel of the spirit. The first persecuted the last because he was favored by God. Abel presented a sacrifice of a lamb without blemish, the first fruits of his flock. In this we can see a shadow of Christ the perfect Lamb of God. Cain should have bartered with Abel to present a lamb as a sacrifice as well but instead he chose some of what he raised: The fruit of the ground. His sacrifice was one of self justification. Abel understood that sin was covered only by innocent blood. He greeted the sacrifice of Jesus as man's justification from afar through the sacrifice of a pure lamb. He offered his sacrifice to God in faith. It was a faith based

upon the truth that only innocent blood can cover sin. This the concept of redemption

Cain however thought that if Abel was accepted for his first fruits then his produce should be good enough for God. His understanding of the situation was warped by his lack of faith and his own arrogance. His sacrifice was cast aside by the Lord and Cain in his jealousy of God's regard for Abel, slew his younger brother. The first persecuted the last for his righteousness. The first son sought to justify himself and hide his sin from God. The second son looked in faith for God to justify him. So it is with the flesh and the spirit. Cain like the flesh was rejected. In the Bible this theme is reenacted over and over again. The first son is rejected and the second accepted (Gen.4:1-16)

This same theme emerges in the lives of two other brothers; Ishmael and Isaac the sons of Abraham. Abraham and his wife Sarah were promised a son would be born to them even though Sarah was barren. When Isaac the promised child did not seem to be forthcoming Sarah gave her bond slave Hager to Abraham as a surrogate to bear them a son. This was not God's plan, this was a scheme devised carnally by Sarah. Hagar bore Ishmael but later Sarah gave birth to the promised child Isaac. Isaac was the child brought about by God's spirit (Gen.16:1-16; 21:1-14). Isaac was a picture also of the sacrifice God would provide mankind.

Ishmael persecuted Isaac because Abraham loved Isaac more. Eventually God told Abraham to "cast out the bondwoman and her son "(Gen.21:10-12). The counterfeit of the flesh is always revealed for what it is when the true comes on the scene. The promise of God could not be brought about by any carnal effort but only

by God's spirit. The firstborn was rejected. In John 1:12-13 we see God's method and purpose in election:

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: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

The above verse demonstrates God's way of doing things. He has an order and a manner in which he creates and fulfills. This can be seen in every story in scripture. So it is with the flesh and the spirit. The flesh came first by an act of the flesh but the spirit came about after by God fulfilling his promise: An act of the Spirit. The carnal man is rejected because the flesh cannot worship God in spirit and in truth. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The carnal man cannot act in faith for faith is spiritual. Without faith the Bible says "it is impossible to please God" (Heb.11:6). So again we see the first cast off and the last affirmed by God.

Isaac's sons were no different. Esau and Jacob were born to Rebecca whom also was barren like Sarah. Isaac prayed for his wife to conceive and God gave her twins. As the children begin to grow in her womb they struggled with one another. Rebecca questioned God because she feared that they would kill each other before they were ever born. God answered Rebecca with a prophecy in Genesis 25:23:

And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.

Literally this prophecy spoke of Edom, the people who descended from Esau and Israel the descendants of Jacob. Spiritually it spoke of the flesh and the spirit. The two nations and two manners of people are those of Esau and Jacob; the elder (the flesh) and the younger (the spirit). The prophecy was that the spirit would be stronger than the flesh, and that the flesh would one day serve the spirit.

Esau is the picture of a carnal man in every way. He was a man of the field, a hunter and self sufficient. He lived by the might of his own right arm. Jacob however was a quiet man who lived in tents. The spirit dwells in this tent of the body as Paul referred to it, a quiet man indeed (2Cor.5:1-4). When these twins were born they seemed to come out as one with Jacob holding on to Esau's heel. They were like one man flesh and spirit. Our spirits are attached to these bodies. Together body and spirit make one living soul.

There are plenty of other figures that mark these men for what they represent. For example Esau despised his birth right. He traded it to Jacob for a pot of lentils. He traded something intangible of great value for food to fill his belly. Esau eventually lost his Father's blessing to Jacob. The Bible records how he sought for repentance of this with tears, but could find none (Heb.12:16-17). There is no repentance for the flesh. The spirit is destined for the birth right. It is the right of the last to be considered as first. Again the first son is cast off and the second son accepted.

All of these stories are true as they were recorded in the Bible and they also contain great spiritual truths hidden from the carnal mind. They are pictures and prophecies of Adam and Christ. In 1 Corinthians 15:44-50 Paul tells us that Adam the first man, the carnal man, is rejected. Christ the spiritual man, the “last Adam” is accepted:

It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

There are many more illustrations along this vein. Jew and gentile for example: The Jews were the physical chosen people of God but they were rejected for unbelief. They persecuted the child of promise, the second son Jesus. They showed they were of Adam, the flesh. The largely gentile church received Jesus, but the Jews were blinded from the truth until “the times of the gentiles be fulfilled “ (Luke 21:24). But

just like our bodies which came first there is a promise that the Jew will be redeemed in the end times just as our bodies will be redeemed in the resurrection. We will speak more on this in the chapter on Jew and Gentile but for now we see it is written that God seeks to make one new man out of Jew and gentile. The physical people of God and the spiritual people of God will one day be as one even as our bodies and spirit will be as one. The first and the last will be one even as Christ who is the first and the last (Rev.22:13) is one with his Father. This is a mystery.

A second part of the theme “first and last” gives us another aspect of the same abstract as demonstrated in *Matt. 20:16*:

So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

While this plays along the same lines as the earlier aspect a second theme is added in Mark 9:33-35:

And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?

But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest. 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.

What we have added is the concept of humility to achieve God's favor. If we want to be great in God's kingdom we must humble ourselves and serve even as Christ served. God exalts those who humble themselves. God also brings down everyone who exalts themselves. Again last is considered first and first last.

There is a third concept we should examine in "first and last". It is the truth that God has ordered his pattern to reflect his will. In this we see that the temporary comes first because it is temporary. The last is eternal. In the Gospel of John we can see this part of first and last demonstrated when Jesus turned water into wine. We will start our examination in John 2:1-5:

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

Mary informed Jesus that there was no wine for the wedding but his answer was one you might not expect. When Jesus spoke of his hour he wasn't speaking of whether or not it was time to do any miracles as some suppose (up to this point he had done none). He was speaking of the time of his death as in John 7:28-30:

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. But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me. Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

Whenever Jesus spoke of his “hour” in scripture he was speaking of the time of his death. What did the time of his death have to do with wine? Wine is representative of his blood as seen in Mark 14:22-25:

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. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. 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.

Having established the meaning of the wine and of Jesus’ hour we can now see that in this his first miracle is revealed a picture of Jesus as the lamb of God. The next part of this chapter in John 2 shows us in figure how we are cleansed of sin by Jesus’ blood in verses 6-8:

And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

Notice the water pots that Jesus chose for his water made wine. These were vessels used in the purification rites as described in the law. If a person touched a dead body or if they were deemed unclean for some reason as pertaining to the Law, they would go to the priest for help to be made clean according to the law (Leviticus 13:6). The priest would give them instructions concerning the washing and the accompanying ceremony.

In these water pots Jesus used to turn water in to wine we can see the blood of Jesus that purifies us of our sin according to the Law. While the water washings of Leviticus in chapters 12-15 could cleanse a person ceremonially, Jesus' blood cleanses us in the reality of the spirit as the true Lamb of God. It is in the final part of this story from the Gospel of John in verses 9-11 that the concept of "first and last" is expressed:

When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did

Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

The ruler of the feast approached the bridegroom to comment on the “good” wine and remarked on how most men serve the best wine first. We know from scripture that Jesus is often called the bridegroom. Though he was not literally the bridegroom in this case the bridegroom is still figurative of Christ in this passage.

The wine as we have already discussed was figurative of Christ’s blood and it is indeed the best wine. God did save it for last. The blood of animals could be seen as the wine that was ‘worse’ or cheaper. The blood of animals only atoned for sin but once a year which was a temporary measure of the law in dealing with sin and only symbolic. God saved the best wine for last which cleanses us of our sin once and forever. Hebrews 9:7-15 speaks eloquently of the two wines or “bloods” of these two different testaments:

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: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 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; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. 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; Nether 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. 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: 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?

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.

In this first miracle of Jesus we see the man and his mission to shed his blood for mankind and cleanse them from all unrighteousness. Once again we see the concept of “first and last” reveal a precious truth about our Savior and our salvation. Whenever you go to study the scripture take this key with you.

The Joseph Revelation

This concept of the “last will be first and the first will be last is the key God uses to unlock his revelation within scripture. We will find that in this day of famine for the word of God that God has appointed a “Joseph” over his goods even as Pharaoh did in the book of Genesis. The scriptures are indeed the cities for food in which this Joseph has stored grain against the time of famine. When the people cried to Pharaoh for food in that famine he told them to go to Joseph. Joseph was the one Pharaoh appointed and was second only to Pharaoh as to the throne.

Genesis 41:54 And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

55 And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.

Jesus is the true Joseph. God has appointed him over all his possessions. He is second only to the Father's very throne. He was exalted from a prison as Joseph was to become the highest in the land of Egypt himself not being an Egyptian. Jesus was in death as a man and was exalted through the resurrection. He was not of this world but was exalted above all the world to the right hand of the Father. Joseph correctly interpreted Pharaoh's dream for Egypt even as Jesus interpreted God's will for the earth. As Pharaoh appointed Joseph God appointed Jesus.

Hebrews 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Pharaoh's Dream

With this connection between Joseph as an allegory and prophecy of Jesus established let us examine the scriptures together where Joseph is concerned. We are told that Pharaoh had a dream:

Genesis 41:1 And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river.

2 And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine and fatfleshed; and they fed in a meadow.

3 And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and leanfleshed; and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river.

4 And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke.

5 And he slept and dreamed the second time: and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good.

6 And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them.

7 And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream.

8 And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.

All through his kingdom Pharaoh searched for some one worthy to interpret his dream but none could be found. Finally his wine steward remembered that Joseph had interpreted his dream while he was in prison. We will have more to say about this wine steward later but suffice it to say for now that it was he who brought Joseph to Pharaoh's attention. The bible speaks of another such search where Jesus is concerned.

Revelation 4:1 And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

Notice the two; a dream involving seven years and a book of seven seals. A search is made to find some one able in both cases. Not a coincidence. It is Jesus is appointed by God by proof of his worthiness. The same manner as Joseph was with Pharaoh. The plot thickens.

Joseph Interprets

Joseph is brought before Pharaoh and hears his dream. Now remember it has physical meaning for Egypt but spiritual meaning through Christ. Joseph tells Pharaoh:

Genesis 41:25 And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do.

26 The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one.

27 And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine.

28 This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh.

29 Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt:

30 And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land;

31 And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it shall be very grievous.

32 And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

The best place to start is with verse thirty two when Joseph comments to Pharaoh that the dream is repeated twice, once with cattle and once with grain, he tells Pharaoh that the dream is one. Because the dream is repeated it is certain. So says the law “the testimony of two is true” (John 8:17, Matthew 18:16). These two are the physical and the spiritual. While the kine and the grain do speak of the goods of the land of Egypt they also speak of more in the spiritual sense. Kine are flesh. They stand for the physical meaning Pharaoh received. Grain is the Word. It stands for the spiritual interpretation we receive. Also seven years of plenty are a reference to the old covenant and seven years of famine are a reference to the new covenant.

This is all a picture of the temporary versus the eternal. The things of the physical fills men’s eyes, but the things of the spiritual seem to fleshly men to be nothing. Back in the days when God spoke audibly when He spoke through the prophets and in mountains that quaked there was no famine in the physical for hearing his word. God spoke in many and various ways. It is in these last days though that revelation from God has changed in its character because of the change in covenant. It is a time of famine for those revelations that are purely physical. Now in these last days as the physical creation starts to wane God speaks spiritually through his son Jesus. In the past the voice was outside in the visible with an obvious physical fulfillment. Now

those same revelations speak to us on the inside through the invisible. God speaks through the spirit.

Hebrews 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Pharaoh's dream is to us the testimony that the physical with its blessings are passing away. The time of plenty is over according to the flesh. The time of famine according to the flesh, this time of the physical's passing away, is the time of the beginning of spiritual revelation hidden from the foundation of the world and revealed only through Christ. The seven years of plenty was the complete time of the physical's testimony. The seven years of famine is when the testimony of the physical decreases and the spiritual begins. The time of the spiritual increase is indeed the famine of the physical creation.

Ephesians 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;

9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

This concept is demonstrated dramatically in the testimony of John the Baptist. He may be considered the last of the Old Testament prophets until Christ. In John we see the decrease of the physical revelation and the beginning of the spiritual as the forerunner to Christ. Jesus himself said of John:

Matthew 11:9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.

10 For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

In John we see the transition of one covenant to another, from the physical to the spiritual. No greater man than John was ever born to a woman. In other words no one born physically of Adam was greater than John but even those that are least in the kingdom of heaven (those born again of the spirit) are greater than he. John's testimony was of the old covenant and outside him. Our testimony is the Holy Spirit inside us. In John we see the passing of the physical (time of plenty) to the time of the spiritual, (time of famine) which is the "last days" of creation. Jesus is the revelation of the spiritual. John's baptism was on the outside and one of water. Christ's baptism is on the inside and one of fire.

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.

31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

In John's testimony we see the concept of "the last will be first and the first will be last". John says I come first (the physical) baptizing in water. He comes after me baptizing in fire (the spiritual). But he is preferred first! Soon after when Jesus starts preaching John's disciples complain to him. John explains:

John 3:28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

It wasn't long after this that John was imprisoned and beheaded. So through this we see the testimony of the physical must soon cease when the spiritual arrives. As the testimony of the spiritual increases the testimony of the physical decreases.

Time of Plenty to time of Famine.

Jesus has stored up in his word the grain we need in this time of famine which is these last days of the physical. Even as Joseph said to Pharaoh so Jesus has done.

Genesis 41:33 Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.

34 Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years.

35 And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities.

36 And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine.

37 And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants.

38 And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?

39 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art:

40 Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.

God did appoint such a man this Jesus who is Christ. In the days of plenty the people did not see their need for Joseph just as the Jews did not see their need for a redeemer in the old covenant. They could get revelation without going through Jesus just as the Egyptians could pick food out of the fields with out Joseph. But when the time of famine hit Egypt and the people cried out to Pharaoh for food he told them to

go to Joseph whom he had appointed. When any one cries out now to God for sustenance he tells them “Go to Jesus for He is the one I appointed” (Hebrews 1:1). And as Joseph stored up a fifth of the harvest in the cities for food during the time of plenty in Egypt so Jesus has stored up the revelation of God’s word to be distributed in this time of famine according to the spirit. This is the time of spiritual revelation and it always concerns Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:6 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:

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.

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.

Through Christ we have a revelation now of the spirit. We must go through Jesus to be fed of that heavenly storehouse in this carnal time of famine as this world passes away. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the father but by him (John 14:6). And the Father is spirit!

The Resurrection

Chapter Six

We spoke previously of the resurrection in Christ where our faith and hope were concerned. Now we will examine the subject in a bit more depth. This is a great confusion for many who call themselves Christian. We must come to understand that the resurrection from the dead is the hope of the Gospel and the end of it. If our understanding of the resurrection is fuzzy then we end up with a fuzzy Gospel. Good news is only as good as it ends. The focus of the resurrection is on the redemption of the body. Jesus and his first coming reconciled our spirits and our relationships to God. It was about the heart. But your body is part of the living soul you are. You need it redeemed. It is important to understand that we will share in a resurrection like Christ's. We will be raised as he was. This body that is planted will be glorified in the resurrection at his coming.

John 11: 25. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

Our very hope in the Gospel is the resurrection of the *Just*, those who are *justified* as Christ's own by his sacrifice on the cross. This is the completion of our adoption as sons and the redemption of our bodies:

John 5: 25. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

26. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

27. And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

28. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

29. And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

We see then that there are two resurrections; one at Christ's coming for those who are in Him and one at the end of time for those who are to be judged. Blessed and holy are those who have a part in the first resurrection (Revelations 20:4-7).

Romans 8: 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.

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 is the eventuality of the Gospel, the hope of the Gospel, that we shall share in a resurrection like our Lord's and that we shall be raised as he was raised in the same body we died in; only Glorified and spiritual as his was. His tomb was empty and so ours will be empty when he comes to receive his own at his second coming.

Matthew 28:

1. In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

2. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

3. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

4. And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

5. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

6. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

7. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

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.

As Mary saw the empty tomb and as Thomas touched the wounds of our Lord (John 20: 26-28) it is true we can see that he rose from the dead in the same body he died in. And this is our hope that these jars of clay, that these these earthly tents we wear will also be changed, glorified in the spirit to put on the immortal building whose builder and maker is God.

2 Corinthians 5

1. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house

which is from heaven:

3. If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

5. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

In this promised resurrection this body will be changed into an immortal one and as we have wore an earthly body so we will wear this body glorified; a spiritual building. Part of the mystery of this promise is that star will differ from star in glory. The type of life lived in the body by us as Christians will be judged by Christ himself, and so some will have resurrections that out shine others.

1Corinthians 15: 40. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

41. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.

Phillipians 3:20. 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.

2Corinthians 5:

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.

We are told that all the heroes of faith lived their lives for this one goal of the resurrection of the dead and as Hebrews 11:32-40 tells us none of them have received it yet. Only together with us will they be made whole. When? This will happen when the Lord Jesus returns at the last day, the day of the Lord at the last trump.

1Corinthians 15:51. 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.

54. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory

We do not as Christians sorrow as others or grieve for those in Christ who have passed on. Our faith and hope are stored in heaven awaiting that promised redemption of our bodies.

1 Thessalonians 4:13. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

15. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Then and only then will we all be made whole together, both the living and the dead in Christ. You can see in the above from Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians that the dead in Christ rise first. This is because their spirits have returned with Christ to get their bodies. They at his coming are already in the air with him for their spirits

came back with him, so they get resurrected first. Then we who are still in our bodies rise to join them in the air.

1Thess.4: 14. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

15. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

The very word resurrection has to do with the body. It was sown in corruption (Adam) but it will be raised in glory (Christ). You will be raised in the same body you died in only it will be glorified as a spiritual body even as Jesus who is our pattern. Let no one deceive you in this your true hope. You should keep in mind that this is the eventuality of this Gospel, that our very adoption in Christ is this resurrection.

Roman's 8: 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.

Now we pattern ourselves as Christ did. We live this life unto him and not to ourselves for our true lives are hidden with him. We live as strangers in this world and count all we lay down here as nothing compared to knowing Christ. What we have now is through faith. Then at his coming we will have it in its full. Paul tells us that all who are mature will take such a view of things.

Phil 3:15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

2 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.

If we let the hope of the resurrection focus our lives in this faith then we will truly live as if this was not our home. We can let go of this corruption and temporary joy to grasp an eternal joy that will never spoil, fade, or die. This is the hope offered in our Gospel through the body and blood of our Savior.

Chapter Seven

Jew and Gentile

Here is another confusing subject for Christians. Do the Jewish believers have a separate plan from gentile Christians? The answer from Scripture is a clear no.

Ephesians 2:5 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 fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

We are one body and one church whether Jew or Gentile by birth of flesh. In the spirit we are one. There is no Jew or Gentile but only those who are of his body. We are one new Man in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:15). Paul the Apostle, a Hebrew by birth, said this:

1 Corinthians 12:12 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.

The scripture is clear. There is only one body of Christ. Receive no other teaching in this matter. The new man in Christ is both Jew and Gentile each according to his faith.

The Meaning of Jew and Gentile.

Jesus quoted Isaiah the prophet about the Israelites saying:

Matthew 15:7 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.

Honoring God with their lips was outside. Inside their hearts (spirits) they were far from God. Remember what Jesus told the woman at the well in John chapter four? “God is spirit and seeks those who will worship him in spirit and in truth”. In

not mixing the law with faith the people of Israel's hearts remained far away while they uttered blessings to God with their mouths only. The law had become vain repetition. This was a mere show of righteousness on the outside while inside their hearts were full of hidden sin. It is the heart of man that God must change first and then the outside. By changing the outside picture they never dealt with the nature of sin and its corruption inside them. It was a lot like dressing up a corpse. Jesus spoke about this again and again. He told them they only washed the outside of the cup, while inside it was nothing but vile abominations. He told them they were like whitewashed tombs. Tombs are pretty on the outside but inside they are full of dead men's bones.

Back to the Pattern.

In the pattern of God Jew and Gentile were made to represent this set of circumstances. The Israelites were God's physical people. They came first just like the body did. They were rejected just as the body was because of unbelief. The gentiles are a picture of the heart of man. The heart of man (the spirit) is faraway from God. God chose through Jesus to reconcile the heart of man first which is the spirit and then later the body through the resurrection. So just as the body of flesh (flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God) we see the physical people rejected. Though many Jews such as the Apostles received Jesus We see that most rejected him and still do. They were hardened and blinded just as the flesh is in sin (John 12:40, Romans 11:7-8). Just like the spirit of man we see the gentiles accepted. The spirit made right first, and then the body. The gentiles are the heart that is far away from God. The Jews are the body that praises only with lips. The

Jews were considered near because to them was given the covenants and the Law.
The Gentiles were far way from God with out a covenant.

We all know that the law was for the flesh. It identifies sin in the flesh and demanded pure flesh for sacrifice. God's object is not just to reconcile the spirit (gentiles) but the body as well (Jews). But each in its own turn. First the spirit (the heart) and then the body. First the gentile and then the Jew. Hear what Paul says. About this:

Ephesians 2:12 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;

So when we say that God makes Jew and Gentile one new man we are also acknowledging the one new man of body and spirit. The resurrection of the dead which is the redemption of the body.

The Seed of Abraham.

Abraham is the standard for what the Church is in scripture. The word church is translated from the word ecclesia. "Those called out" As Abraham was called out from his family and country in Ur, so we are called out of the world. The Bible tells us in the letter to the Hebrews:

Hebrews 11:8 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.

We learn that Abraham lived in tents as did his heirs because they were not looking for a physical land but a heavenly one. Tents (tabernacles) are figurative of temporary dwelling places like our spirits live in these bodies of flesh looking for a more permanent dwelling.

2Co 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Through faith they could see God providing redemption for the sin of Adam and they greeted that reconciliation to God from afar. They greeted Christ who is the resurrection (John 11:25). A tent is a figure for a temporary dwelling. A temple is permanent. Abraham through faith received this spiritual promise from God and looked for it to appear.

Galatians 3:16 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.

Isaac was born by God's promise. The scripture tells us that Sarah's womb was barren and that Abraham's body was next to dead. God brought life in to Sarah's womb where there could be no life. In the same way we see the Jesus who is the true child of promise. He and not Isaac is the seed that God promised Abraham. Isaac

was only a figure of this real spiritual promise. Sarah's womb compares to this creation and Jesus the Word was planted in it by God.

*Matthew 1: 18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, **she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.***

1 Corinthians 15:36 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:

38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

Galatians 3:16 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.

Jesus is the true seed of Abraham. He fell into this earth and died thus reproducing after his kind. He was planted in the womb of Mary and so this earth, even as Isaac was planted in Sarah's dead womb. Life planted where there could be no life. Isaiah describes Jesus as a tender plant and a root out of dry ground (Isaiah 53:1-3). On this not we should discuss the concept of barrenness and how it applies.

Barrenness

There is a connection in scripture between this earth and a mother's womb.

In the preface we compared the Christian to a child in the womb and a seed in the soil. All three were in darkness awaiting their time to enter the light. The finite world we live in and the womb are both places of development. Mankind as a whole and a child in the womb are in their beginnings innocent.

We examined the roles of some of the Bible's barren women and how life was produced from barrenness by the working of God's spirit. In the flesh all of these supernatural births were impossible without divine intervention. Just like the seed one may plant and another may water, but only God can make it grow. All of these children born became men of destiny meant to express God's purpose of election as shown in Romans 9: 8-13:

They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son. And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It

was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

God's purpose of election is what God by his sovereign will chose to be.

These sovereign acts interrupt the natural degeneration of this world's carnal eventuality. God by his spirit causes there to be life where there is no life. It is the same operation with which He created this world in the first place; creating the things which are seen out of that which is not seen.

This operation of the Spirit is well represented in an ancient promise of scripture Isaiah.54:1:

Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD .

The natural children of Abraham are not the ones counted for the seed any more than it is the natural man. It is those born by God's fulfillment of his own promise that are counted for the seed. In other words it is those born of the spirit. Natural man and natural Israel were in effect cast off. Those born of the spirit,

specifically by Christ's blood are counted as the children of God.

Paul used these same figures in Galatians 4:22-31 to explain this concept:

For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

Paul told us flat out that this was an allegory. These two women represented two covenants on two different mountains. Let us study these two women closely.

Hagar was Sarah's bond slave and an Egyptian. She corresponds to Mount Sinai because that is where God gave Israel the law. The Law reveals to us our bondage to sin. The Israelites were bound in slavery to the Law of sin and death. They were under Law even as Hagar was under law. The fact that Hagar was an Egyptian plays heavily in the allegory.

Egyptians are figurative of carnal people. They are the people of the world, unregenerate and slaves to sin. We as Christians are pictured as Abraham's children. Our home is not in Egypt but we were in slavery there. God forced Pharaoh (Satan) to set us free. As Spiritual Israelites we wander as strangers in a strange land now. We are tested here in this wilderness. Here our carnal lives meet their death, even as those who rebelled and were faithless dropped dead in the wilderness as recorded in 1Cor. 10: 5-10:

*But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were
overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent*

we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

We hope also for a promised land which is God's heavenly kingdom. The law cannot get us there, only Jesus. Joshua (which is Yeshua, or Jesus) led the Israelites into the promised land. Moses (who was figurative of the law) was not allowed to enter. This tells us that observance of the law cannot get us into Heaven.

So the natural children are like Ishmael, children of Hagar. Flesh judged under law and in slavery to sin. The children of Sarah are born after God's promise. Sarah represents the temple mountain of Moriah in Jerusalem. A place where God's spirit rested in the Holy of Holies. She is the free woman, the Church of Christ. Her offspring came about not like Hagar's through the natural workings of the flesh, but rather the intervention of God's spirit. Isaac is a picture of Jesus the true child of promise. He was born where no child could be born in a barren

womb. Isaiah prophesies his birth like this in chapter 53, verse 1:

*Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD
revealed?*

*For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry
ground: he hath form nor comeliness; and when we shall .there is no beauty that
we should desire him.*

The “arm of the Lord” is Our Lord Jesus. He is God’s right arm with the power to save. He grew up before God as a tender plant, a root out of dry ground. He was in the barren womb of this earth; the only spiritual life in a dead planet. No natural working of sinful flesh could produce this child of promise just as Sarah’s barren womb could not have produced the child Isaac. God produced this child by his Spirit. He was born out barrenness just as God created what is seen out of nothing. God brought life out of death.

This all leads us back to the two Adams. Adam’s children were born of sinful flesh while the offspring of the last Adam were born by God’s spirit. Ishmael is figurative of the fleshly Jews, Abraham’s descendants, and Isaac the spiritual Jews, those who shared the faith of Abraham. Romans 4:12-25:

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. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

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, (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. 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 Sara's womb: He staggered

not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.

God brings fruit out of barrenness, and calls things that are not as though they are, like life out of death. There are many accounts of barren women in scripture and they all witness to this figurative teaching of the flesh versus God's spirit. Read the stories of these women:

Sarah, Rebecca, Tamar, Hanna (the mother of Samuel), Manoah and his wife (the Parents of Samson), and others. All of these are examples of God fulfilling his promises and producing life out of death.

The Truth of Jew and Gentile

So we see the truth of it all. It is not the natural children that are counted for the seed but rather those of the spirit who whether Jew or Gentile are adopted as sons through the sacrifice of Christ. There is one body and it is of Christ by the spirit and not the claims of the flesh which perishes. Remember God seeks those who will worship in Spirit and truth. Also we see God's pattern as it speaks of the rejection of flesh and the acceptance of spirit and the redemption of our bodies through resurrection by the sacrifice of Jesus. All this is expressed in Jew and Gentile.

Chapter Eight

The Truth about Hell

The scriptural facts concerning Hell are very different from the popular conceptions. When most of us think of Hell we picture a dark and fiery cavern somewhere deep beneath the earth where a horned Devil sits on his throne as ruler of the underworld. We imagine a host of demons torturing the souls of the damned in its darkest recesses. It is a fearful picture indeed but it is not scriptural.

In order to understand the truth about Hell we must first understand the truth of our own nature as creatures made in God's image. Mankind was created to exist in two realms: The physical and the spiritual. We abide in both these realms in body and spirit, the two component parts of our whole. Each component has its own realm joining both realms into one being; a living soul.

Genesis 2:7. And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

The spirit can exist in the realm of the physical only as long as it has a body to be attached to. If the body dies then the spirit no longer has a place in the physical and must exist totally in the spiritual. Where it comes to rest in the spirit realm is dependent on God's judgment alone according to the life it lived while in the body.

The body is temporary and the spirit is eternal. We can see in this set of facts that we all die or cease to exist in the physical realm. Though in the spiritual we do not cease to exist but some of us will not be allowed to dwell in God's presence because of sin. This is a spiritual death for God is life. To be put away from Life is death. Those spirits who left the physical realm in right standing with God through Jesus and his sacrifice are whisked away to paradise and God (2Corinthians5:8). Those who disobey the Gospel of Christ are taken to another place in the spirit realm, a place of darkness and deepest gloom, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 8:12).

Since there are two states of being for each one of us we must understand both of their roles in the grand scheme of creation and how one is representative of the other. The physical is typical of the spiritual. This point has been demonstrated in previous studies here in this book and is a central theme throughout scripture. In the biblical picture of Hell this theme is expressed as well. There are two Hells according to scripture or rather one Hell in both realms of the physical and the spiritual. The physical Hell is the grave. This grave is symbolic of the spiritual Hell which is a prison for the disobedient spirits of mankind.

1 Peter 3: 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.

Both body and spirit are shut away from life. The body is shut from the land of the living and the spirit from the spiritual land of the living Heaven; the place of God's throne.

In the grave there is no hope just as in its spiritual counterpart of Hell. Both are a prison of death. These circumstances are different where the Christian is concerned. While the grave is a prison of death for the body of a person who does not know Christ it is considered a bed of hope for those who die in Christ Jesus. They are as dead as the non-believer but the Christian dies with the hope of the resurrection of the dead so he or she is considered to be only sleeping for one day they will get up again (1Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Their spirits are with God and not in the prison of souls known as Hell.

There is however a resurrection for the soul who dies without Christ. It is known as the resurrection for God's judgment (Rev. 20:12-15). Those who enter into this judgment are cast into the lake of fire which is the second death. This is not a resurrection to life but rather to the second and final death. In this resurrection death and Hell give up its inhabitants and is thrown along with them into the fiery lake.

The Apostle told us 1Corinthians15: 22-26:

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

Death is the last enemy. All those in Adam only that is in the carnal will suffer the second death because as the scriptures make clear all those in Adam will die. The Christian is never considered dead and by faith in Christ overcomes death (John11:25-26). Jesus by his death and resurrection overcame sin and death for us all. It is he who possesses the figurative keys of Hell and death because of this victory over sin and death through the cross and the tomb. It is only with this foundation of understanding that we can now explain some of the specifics of Hell.

In chapter 16 in the gospel of Luke Jesus gives us a picture of Hell. In this picture we see two compartments of Hell; a place for the righteous dead and a separate place for the unrighteous dead. These two compartments are separated by a great and fiery gulf also known as the lake of fire.

The place of the righteous dead was known as Abraham's bosom or "Paradise". Before Jesus died all the righteous dead were carried there by the angels (Luke 16:22). It was a good place to be for those spirits who obeyed God in their lives but it was not yet in Heaven. It was not moved to Heaven until Jesus made his sacrifice on the cross and rose again. The law had to first be paid and fulfilled in Christ the Messiah before those considered righteous by faith could gain entrance to Heaven. Their Faith was in that Sacrifice of Christ and it had yet to be fulfilled. This place of waiting was prepared for them in advance of the promised savior who would cleanse them of their sin. Once Jesus accomplished this and he descended into Hell it is reported in the scriptures that he ascended into Heaven to the right hand of the Father leading captives in his train (Eph.4:8-11). The Bible also tells us that when Jesus descended into Hell (1Peter 3:18-22) he preached to those spirits who died in the flood before he took his seat at the right hand of the Father:

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: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. 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: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God;

This is why Jesus told the thief crucified next to him that he would indeed be with him in Paradise that day (Luke 23:43). Jesus was then about to descend to Hell, the prison of the spirits, in which Paradise was located. After three days in the deep Christ rose and then ascended to the Father taking Paradise and all its prisoners with him. We know that Paradise is in Heaven now because Paul told us in 2 Corinthians 12: 2-4:

I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.

And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth; How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

Another compartment of Hell is known as the bottomless pit or *tarteroos* (Rev. 9:11; 20:1-3) this is where the angels who disobeyed God are chained. These are those who left their abodes in Heaven to couple with women of earth (Jude :6-7; 2 Peter 2:4 ; Gen. 6:2-4). In the last days some of these will be loosed to wreak havoc on those who live on the earth (Rev.9:1-11). Hell and the lake of fire was

made originally for the Devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41).

A few different names for this region of lost souls have been presented by scripture. Hell, Hades, Sheol (from the Old Testament), and Gehenna. These names have a wide and varied band of translation among scholars and theologians. It is true however that all these differing labels do have reference to the same general place and the same general theme of damnation and death. Hades and Hell as far as most scholars can decipher concerns the grave and spiritually concerns what the grave represents: The prison of death. Sheol seems to be the Old Testament counterpart to this same concept. Only Gehenna has an added meaning. Gehenna was in short a place where the people of Israel's time took their trash to be burned. This was a spiritual reference to the lake of fire. Jesus often spoke in his parables and teachings of useless things being gathered and burned as in

John 15: 5-6:

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. 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.

There are many misconceptions where the subject of Hades is concerned. Some Christians believe Satan rules Hell. They were taught that the netherworld is his place of residence. This is shown to be error for Satan in the scripture is called the

God of this world and the prince and the power of the air (Eph. 2:2). He resides in the atmosphere of this earth on a spiritual level. He rules his kingdom from the heavenlies. He is that wickedness in high places (Eph. 6:12). In fact Hell is the last place he desires to be for one day he will be bound with a chain and cast into it for a thousand years (Rev. 20:2-3). One verse often quoted concerning Satan's alleged rule of Hell is Matthew 16:18:

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.

It is thought that this verse must insinuate Satan's Kingdom. This portion of scripture is actually a reference to death and the grave. Jesus has the keys to Hell and death because he overcame death and Hell. Hell, this prison of death, could not hold him. It is the same for us His church. Death shall not prevail against us because Jesus rose from the dead!

There are even some who teach things that are even more absurd like Jesus going to Hell and fighting the Devil or taking the keys of death and hell from the Devil. Satan never had the keys of Hell and death. There are no literal keys. This is nothing more than carnal thinking and pagan imagery. Christianity has no Lord of the dead who rules the underworld but pagan religion has many of these. In ancient Greece it was Hades God of the dead and underworld. In Rome it was Pluto. In Canaan it was Mot the death god. In Egypt it was Osirus. One particular doctrine has Jesus suffering in Hell at the hands of the Devil and his demons; suffering for our

sin. This is not only unscriptural but borders on blasphemy.

That Satan had the power of death on this the scripture from Heb. 2:14 is plain :

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;

The manner in which Satan held the power of death is in the fact that we were as sinners sentenced to death and in fear of it and so in bondage to the law of sin and death and in bondage as well to the fear of death. It is by the law that the Devil had the means to accuse us. This is his power over us. Jesus has the keys of Hell and death by virtue of his innocent life, a life that Satan could not accuse according to the law. This was Jesus' key to the pit; the fact that he had fulfilled the righteous requirements of the law. Hell is for sinners not innocent men. It is written 1Corinthians 15:54-57:

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Satan held the power of death through the sting of sin empowered by the law. When Christ removed the law by fulfilling it the Devil lost his power over us. Jesus' resurrection was proof of his triumph over the law of sin and death. It was here that his triumph spoiled the devil of his power to accuse the brethren.

Colossians. 2: 8-15

8. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

9. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

12. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

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;

15. And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

No, Satan does not rule hell. He is the accuser of the brethren. He is a celestial dignitary. That doesn't make him a good guy but mere men should not slander what they do not understand. He is the smith that blows the coals.

Isaiah 54:16. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.

17. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

2Peter 2:

10. But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

11. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

Jude

8. Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

9. Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about

the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

No. Satan does not rule hell. He is going into the abyss one day but it will be in chains. After words he will find himself thrown into the Lake of fire (Revelation 20:2, 20:10). This is the truth about Hell.

Chapter Nine

The Last Day

The “end times” is a subject of much controversy and speculation. It is the aim of this work to sort out some of the misconceptions and guessing games and let the bible speak clearly on this subject in its own context. Many are confused in this area and it is important to address here because the true hope of the Gospel is concerned with how things of prophecy yet to be fulfilled come to pass. This is merely an elementary discussion of biblical facts and only a bare outline of end time understandings. I hope to deal with this subject in more detail in a future work but for now let us clarify the true biblical view of the last day in the bible's own words and context. Our view of the hope of the Gospel needs to be clear in our hearts and minds. Without the hope of the resurrection in its clarity we have an empty Gospel. How things turn out is the eventuality of this good news and therefore our incentive for it concerns eternal life. As the Apostle Paul said concerning this “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable”(1Corinthians 15:19).

Three Questions

I believe the best place to start where the last day is concerned is with Jesus and his Olivet discourse in Matthew 24:1-3. After Jesus remarked to his disciples that not one stone of the temple would be left upon another they were astounded. Later on the mount of Olives they asked him these three questions.

1. When shall these things be? (the destruction of the temple)

2. what shall be the sign of thy coming,

3. and of the end of the world? (Matthew 24 1-3)

We find that Jesus answered all three of these questions in the order they are asked. He begins with a synopsis of events in verses 4-14 before he goes into the specifics of the questions starting in verse 15. He speaks of wars and rumors of wars and nations against nations and kingdoms against kingdoms. He tells us of false messiahs and false prophets, earthquakes and famines in various places. These he assures us are only a beginning to the birth pains. And near the end of his synopsis he focuses on the **end of things**. The great falling away, the persecutions we must endure and the betrayal of many. Then he tells us **the end** will come.

Understanding the End

The end Jesus speaks of in the following verses is not merely his second coming. It is the true end of everything in this world. The end is the “last day”. This day starts with the second coming of Jesus and ends with the great white throne judgment. It is a day that last’s a thousand years. It is the millennial reign of Jesus, an event

which we will address through out this chapter. Defining this “end” is crucial to understanding the Lord’s answer to the disciple’s questions. Jesus answered them in context. The last question was concerning the “**end of the world**” (Matthew 24:3). It is right then to assume Jesus used the “end” in this context. For example see the below his response in the synopsis of verses 4-14

*Matthew 24:6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, **but the end is not yet.***

*13 But he that shall endure unto **the end**, the same shall be saved.*

*14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; **and then shall the end come.***

It is clear that the end Jesus is referencing is the end of the world or the end of the age. In speaking of this end the Apostle Paul wrote:

1Corinthians 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.

*24 **Then cometh the end**, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.*

25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

This is that same end of the world. It occurs at the great white throne judgment where death and hell are thrown in to the fiery lake where all those whose names are not found in the Lamb's book of life are thrown. That is indeed the true end. Jesus himself confirms this in scripture elsewhere in his explanation of the parable concerning the wheat and the tares.

Matthew 13: 37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

*39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; **the harvest is the end of the world;** and the reapers are the angels.*

40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

This context of “the end” is exactly in reference to the disciples final question in Matthew 24:3 “...**what shall be the sign of thy coming...and of the end of the world?** It is after all truly the end of the world where the disobedient are consigned to the lake of fire. (Revelation20:15)

Addressing the First Question.

The first question his disciples asked is “when will these things happen.” In reference to the destruction of the Temple and the persecution of the disciples themselves as well as the desolation of Israel .

Matthew23: 32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

*Matthew 24: 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.

*3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, **Tell us, when shall these things be?** and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?*

It is easy to see what “all these things” the disciples were referring to. Not just the destruction of the physical temple but the very desolation of Israel; a desolation to fall on that generation as well as the persecution of the disciples that Jesus would send them. Much of the Lord’s synopsis of events goes far into the future where he speaks of the persecution they will endure, of wars and future calamities to befall the world,

going well outside of just Israel in their current state. Then he speaks of the end of things.

Question Two: What shall be the sign of thy coming?

As we have noted previously Matthew 24: 4-14 deals with the disciple's first question and a general synopsis of happening through the end of the world. Verse fifteen is where Jesus starts to deal specifically with the signs of his second coming. He starts with an event known in scripture as the "abomination of desolation". This event is what reveals the "beast" of Revelation for whom and what he is (Matthew 25:15, Daniel 9:27, Daniel 8:11-12, Daniel 11:31-36, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4). He sets himself up in the temple and stops the daily sacrifice as he proclaims himself to be God. This according to Jesus starts the great tribulation (Matthew 24:15-21, Daniel 11:31-33, Daniel 12:1-3). Immediately after this great tribulation that comes upon the whole earth then we will see:

Matthew 24:2 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Again in Jesus' own words he describes the events in order of the three questions. These are the events that lead up to the "sign of his coming" in their order. They themselves are signs that his coming is near for he tells them that when they see these things his coming is near, even at the doors (Matthew 24:33).

Question Three...and of the end of the world?

Now these are only surface understandings and we shall return to some of these things in greater detail but our purpose here is to show that in Matthew 24-25 was answering three specific questions. The rest of Matthew 24 and in to Matthew 25 Jesus is still speaking of the signs of his coming and warning his disciples to "watch and pray" and to be "ready". It is not till the end of his sermon on the Mount of Olives that he answers the last question specifically; "and of the end of the world". This answer starts in verse 31.

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

His gathering of the nations before him for judgment happens at the end of the millennium which is the thousand year reign of Jesus that begins with his return to

earth. This millennium is referred to as a day or even more specifically “the day of the lord”. It is the thousand year day (2 Peter 3: 7-10). At the end of this day is the end of the world or “this age”. In it we see the heavens and earth dissolved and all peoples standing before the Judgment seat of God. All who fail this judgment are cast in to the lake of fire which is the second death. No one but the beast and the false prophet are thrown into this lake of fire previous to the end of the world, not even Satan himself.

*Revelation 19:20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. **These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.***

Revelation 20:10 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.

11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

This is the end of the World or “The End of the Age”. No one but the beast and false prophet are thrown into this fire until the world literally dissolves and the Judgment is set up. Notice what Jesus says to the goats:

Matthew 25:41 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:

The sheep and the goats are the nations and they are judged according to how they treated us who are the Lord’s brethren (Matthew 25:40). This judgment is clearly the end of the world. So there we have it: Jesus answered the disciples questions in the order they were asked. Now we will address some of the details of events that lead up to “**the last day**”.

The Great Tribulation and Antichrist

The great tribulation is a period of time where great distress falls upon the earth and signifies the closeness of our Lord's second coming and the resurrection of those justified in him. It is a precursor to the Lord Jesus setting up his kingdom for his millennial reign upon the earth.

Why this time of distress is necessary is clearly shown in scriptures through the comparison with a child's birth and a "woman in travail". Jesus told his followers:

Matthew 24:5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

"The beginning of sorrows" is a reference to birth pains. In many translations this term is written as such. Why Birth pains? What or who is being birthed? The Apostle Paul in speaking of this time says:

1 Thessalonians 5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

*3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as **travail upon a woman with child**; and they shall not escape.*

This tribulation period is in fact a labor that the earth will undergo in revealing the children of God. They are revealed by coming out of the womb of this earth into the Glorious light of the resurrection when Jesus returns. The seed planted in the womb of this earth is Jesus the word of God. The birth pains started back then and now the children are coming to term. The pains get closer and closer together until the labor of the whole earth begins. Through this labor the children of God will spring forth from the womb of this earth, this creation. The unexpectedness of this event will catch many off guard even as a thief does when he breaks into a house. He arrives unexpected just as the day of a baby's birth. This is why babies are born in taxis and elevators. Though we know it takes nine months to deliver a child they still arrive unexpectedly at an "*Hour we think not*".

*Romans 8: 8 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.

Jesus will suddenly appear and we shall meet him in the air and all of us be changed into the people God has created through Christ our lord. This great tribulation is the travail that falls upon the earth that reveals God's children (1 Thess.4:16).

Timing and Length of the Great Tribulation

So when does this great tribulation occur? How long is it? What is the sign it has started? The best place to start to answer these questions is in the writings of the prophet Daniel. He describes this antichrist and a covenant that he will make with many.

Daniel 9:27 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 is the abomination of desolation we previously spoke of where the “beast” or “antichrist” takes his seat in God’s temple and proclaims himself to be God. The covenant or treaty this person makes with many people is for “one seven” (a seven year period). In the middle of this seven years (3 and ½) he causes the abomination. Jesus in his Olivet sermon tells us:

Matthew 24:15 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:)

16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Jesus says when we see the abomination of desolation that will start the great tribulation. That means the sign of the great tribulation is Antichrist taking his seat in the temple. It also means that the great tribulation is three and a half years in duration which is the latter half of that “one seven” Daniel spoke of. This lines up with John’s vision in Revelation for the antichrist is only given power to rule for three and one half years (*forty and two months*) (Revelation 13:5). Daniel speaks more on this “time of distress” and tells us also it is for three and a half years.

*Daniel 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: **and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time:** and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.*

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.

3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

*Daniel 12: 6 And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, **How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?***

*7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever **that it shall be for a time, times, and an half;** and when he*

shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.

Time is one year, Times is two years, and half a time is three years. Three and one half years of tribulation.

The Apostle Paul confirms that the Antichrist whom Paul calls the “Son of Perdition” will set himself in God’s temple and proclaim himself God. This is what begins the great tribulation. This must first take place before Jesus returns and his people be gathered to him through the resurrection of the dead. Notice also that the coming of Jesus and our gathering to be with him are both components of the Day of the Lord. This will be important later.

2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

*2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that **the day of Christ** is at hand.*

*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.***

5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

The Gathering of the Elect

This brings us to the Gathering of those in Christ, both those dead and living.

Jesus told his followers:

Matthew 24:29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Immediately after the great tribulation Jesus returns to gather his elect. We go to meet him in the air to be changed, these bodies changed in to a glorious body like his.

Philippians 3:20. 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 gathering is the resurrection of the dead in Christ and all of us who are left alive on the earth. The Apostle Paul tells us that Jesus will bring the dead in Christ with him when he returns. They are resurrected first for their spirits are already in the air with Christ at his coming. Then we who are left alive are caught up to meet them (1Thessalonians 4:14-17, 1Corinthians 15:51-54). Here we are changed to the form of Christ's resurrection. A glorified body that is tangible yet Spiritual. This is the beginning of the "Day of the Lord" or as it is also called "the Day of Christ". It starts with His return and our being gathered to him. On that "day" he comes to both punish those who disobeyed the Gospel and be glorified through the resurrection in his holy people (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3).

The Timing of the Gathering of the Elect

This subject is one of controversy for many Christians but still the scripture is clear in its placement of this event. In Matthew we read where Jesus says the "elect" are gathered at the end of the tribulation (Matthew 24:29). Jesus goes on in this context and explains that this event (his coming and our being gathered to him) occurs as a "thief in the night". It is easily understood then that where ever this phrase "thief in the night" is used henceforth in scripture it must fit in to the context of the Lord's reference to it "immediately after the tribulation of those days". As Jesus continues his Sermon on the Mount let us keep in mind several references he makes concerning his second coming.

The beginning of sorrows or “birth pains” (Matthew 24:8)

Coming in the clouds with a trumpet call (Matthew 24:30-31)

The thief in the night analogy (Matthew 24: 43-44)

The sleeping servant (Matthew 24: 43-44)

The drunken servant. (Matthew 24: 48-50)

The Apostle Paul in speaking of this same event in his first letter to the Thessalonians covers these exact same points and so making it clear he is quoting from Jesus and his sermon on the mount and so referring to the same event which is the second coming of the Lord.

1Thessalonians 4:13But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

*15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the **coming of the Lord** shall not prevent them which are asleep.*

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

1Thessalonians5:1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

It is plain that Paul touched on these five points that Jesus used in his sermon and so showing that they were both speaking of the same event. The timing of this “gathering” is at his “coming” and not before. This occurs “immediately after the tribulation of those days” (Matthew 24:29).

The Day of the Lord

As we have previously stated the “Day of the Lord” is the thousand year reign of Christ on the earth. The Lord’s return and our being gathered to him (the elect) are the events that begin this thousand year day.

2Thessalonians 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

*2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that **the day of Christ** is at hand.*

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.

5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things

This Day of Christ as we can see from Paul cannot come until the antichrist is revealed. What reveals him is the abomination of desolation (Matthew 24:15). There is no imminent return of Christ.

When Jesus comes and raises us it is to rule and reign with him over the nations for a thousand years, all of us who as the elect have a hope of being judges and co-rulers with Jesus during this thousand year day which is the Sabbath of God. For us it is rest but for the nations and the earth it is a day of judgment. In fact this day ends with the “great white throne judgment (Revelation 12:5).

Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.

This is the first resurrection.

6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Peter speaks of this day and his testimony compares exactly with John's in Revelation. He tells us that this Day of the Lord comes as “a thief in the night” and that this day is where the heavens and earth are dissolved and the elements melt in a fiery heat. His testimony is that this present heaven and earth are reserved for the fire against that day of judgment (2 Peter 3:7-10). He also tells us that a day with God is

as a thousand years and a thousand years are as a day in reference to this day of Judgment. He speaks of the destruction of the earth and heavens and declares the promise of a new Heaven earth. This day of the lord ends with this event.

2Peter 3: 12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

John tells us that it is in the end of that day that this will happen:

*Revelation20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face **the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.***

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Revelation 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

Yes this “Day of the Lord “is a thousand years long. It starts with the return of Jesus and the gathering of the elect (the resurrection of those in Christ) and it ends with the destruction of the heavens and the earth at the great white throne Judgment. The scriptures make it clear in their own context.

This has just been a bare bones study in to the things of the last day. I encourage you to study it out more fore yourself and the scriptures will set it out before you in a clear and concise manner. I hope this was helpful in clarifying some of the main points of bible prophecy.

Summation

This book is merely a brief outline of the basic Gospel as it is expressed in the scriptures. It is also a sample of the kind of Revelation God has for you the reader in the scriptures. The pattern of God spoken of in this work is apparent only through the scriptures and by the Spirit of Grace. I pray that the reader will go on to study the Bible prayerfully for themselves and let the scriptures confirm the things laid out in this work. May you be ready for that day.

Yours in humility and fellowship of Christ Jesus,

R.S, Neaville

If My Gospel is Hidden
By R.S. Neaville

171