

A Bible School Course in

BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS

By: William B. Hallman

INTRODUCTION

The following notes were first compiled while I was pastor of the First Evangelical Free Church at Minneapolis, Minn.

I was invited by Dr. Robert L. Moyer, then Dean of Northwestern Bible School, to teach Biblical Hermeneutics at their evening school. At first, I hesitated because I had not had any full course on the subject. But Dr. Moyer insisted that I should come. He said that he would have his secretary come to his class, take down his complete lecture, and have it typed for me. I could then use them as a basis for my notes and teaching. With this kind offer, I could not very well refuse. So during the years 1932-33, I taught Biblical Hermeneutics at the school founded by Dr. Wm. B. Riley.

I have always counted it as one of the greatest blessings in my early ministerial years, to have known and worked with this excellent Bible student, expositor, and kind friend.

During the years my original notes have been revised and enlarged to their present form. Besides Northwestern Bible School, I have also taught this subject at The Evangelical Free Church Bible Institute at Chicago, Illinois; Milwaukee Bible Institute at Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and now most recently to my Thursday night Bible Class held at The Southwest YWCA at Hales Corners, Wisconsin.

Besides Dr. Moyer, I am also indebted to such Bible scholars as Dr. Arthur T. Pierson, Dr. Ethelbert W. Bullinger, and Dr. W. Graham Scroggie for helpful hints on this important subject.

If you receive the same help in understanding the Sacred Scriptures from these notes as I have, all the time and effort put forth in compiling them will have been well repaid.

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BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS

or

(The Science Of Interpretation)

LESSON # 1 - GENERAL INTRODUCTION

INTRO:

1. Definition: “Hermeneutics – The science of interpretation and explanation; esp., that branch of theology which defines the laws applied by exegesis” – Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary.

Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation. It is derived from the Greek word Hermes, who was a messenger of the gods; the interpreter of Jupiter. Every hermeneus was therefore an interpreter, as he was supposed to inherit some of the mystic qualities of this god of philology (fond of learning), this patron of eloquence. Sacred or Biblical hermeneutics is the science of interpreting the Scriptures. In Acts 14:12 the pagans at Lystra designated Paul by the name Hermes (the Roman Mercury).

2. Orientation: The whole field of Biblical Studies may be presented in outline form as follows:

Hermeneutics

<u>Hebrew</u>	<u>Higher Criticism</u> Or Biblical Intro. Isagogics. Study of literary & ex- ternal history	<u>BIBLICAL</u>
<u>Aramaic</u>	<u>Lower Criticism</u> Or Textual criti- cism. Study of ex- act words of the original text.	<u>THEOLOGICAL</u>
<u>Greek</u>		<u>HISTORICAL</u>
		<u>PRACTICAL</u>

Biblical Hermeneutics should be distinguished from other branches of Theological science. It is to be distinguished from Biblical Introduction, Textual Criticism, and Exegesis. Biblical Introduction or Isagogics (from Greek eisagoge – way into) is devoted to the historico-critical examination of the different books of the Bible. It inquires after their age, authorship, genuineness, and canonical authority; tracing their origin, preservation, and integrity; and exhibiting their contents, relative rank and general character and value. This is called Higher Criticism. Textual or Lower Criticism ascertains the exact words of the original text. It collates and compares ancient manuscripts, ancient versions, ancient Scripture quotations; and by careful and discriminating judgment it sifts conflicting testimony, weighs the evidences of all kinds, and thus endeavors to determine the true reading of every doubtful passage.

It is at this point that Biblical Hermeneutics begins, and seeks to establish the principles, methods, and rules which are needful to unfold the sense of what is written. Exegesis is the application of these principles into the various fields of Biblical, Theological, Historical, and Practical application.

3. Right Division – 2 Timothy 2:15 is a basic verse for all interpretation of Scripture: “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” The word translated “rightly dividing” is orthotomounta. It is made up of two Greek words “orthos” (right) and “temno” (to cut). The word is used in two places in the Septuagint Version of the O.T. In Prov. 3:6 it is translated “direct thy paths” and in Jer. 36:23 “he cut it with the penknife”. So “cutting” and “dividing” are essential ideas of the original word. This is what is meant by dispensational study of the Bible. Paul admonishes the Philippians to “try the things that differ” (1:10).

Miles Coverdale the English Bible translator (1488-1569) wrote this very helpful suggestion: “It shall greatly helpe ye to understand Scripture, if thou mark, not only what is spoken, or written, but of whom, and to whom, with what words, at what time, where, to what intent, with what circumstance, considering what goeth before, and what followeth.”

Let us then look at some Scripture under the headings of several interrogatives: WHOM? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? and WHY?

I. TO WHOM IS IT WRITTEN?

It is true that “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16); and that “whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning” (Rom. 15:4). But it is also true that all things were not written TO us. It is one thing to directly interpret truth to us, and another to make an application of truth to us. It is possible that all of us have opened a letter without looking at the address on the envelope, and found that the contents were not written to us. There may be things of interest for us in the letter, but the letter as such was not directed to us.

Isaiah 1:1 tells us that this book is “The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.” In many bibles when the chapter spoke of judgments, it was designated to Israel; but when the chapter spoke of blessings, it was designated to the church. This is wrongly dividing the word of truth.

James 1:1 tells us that he is writing “to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad.” In this Epistle “Pure religion and undefiled ... is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction”; also it says that anointing with oil together with the prayer of faith will heal the sick (James 1:27; 2:24; 5:15). This epistle is not written to the Church of the One Body, but is set in the Kingdom of Heaven, and written directly for the Jews. However, there are many practical truths here for us.

1 Pet. 1:1 tells us that he is writing to “the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithnia.” These of course were Peter’s own brethren, the Jews. The church is not “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people” for this is a quote from Exod. 19:5-6. So it is important to see to whom the letter is written.

Eph. 2:11-12 indicates that this Epistle is written, not to Jews only, but more so to Gentiles. He writes to “Gentiles in the flesh, who are called the Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands.” At that time Gentiles were: “Without Christ”, “Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel”, “Strangers from the covenants of promise”, “Having no hope”, “Without God in the world.”

In Rom. 9:3-5 we see the contrast to this: “My brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh who are Israelites”, “To whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came”.

II. WHAT IS WRITTEN?

Not only is it important to note to whom a book or chapter is written, but also what is written.

Concerning the Church – The Greek word translated “Church” and “Assembly” is the word ekklesia. It is made up of two words: ek “out of” and kalein, “called or summoned.” It is the common name for a meeting of the ekkletoi, those summoned to discuss the affairs of a Free State, the body of citizens summoned together by a herald or crier, called a kerux. So the word itself simply means “a called out company.” Hence it will be important to note the context in which the word is used to determine what kind of an assembly it is that is called out. We shall now list the usages of the word in the N.T. –

1) “The Church in the wilderness” (Acts 7:38). This refers to Israel who received the law at Mt. Sinai, the redeemed nation of Israel.

2) An assembly of people called out by a civil magistrate or simply an assembly of people (Acts 19:32,39,41).

3) The Church related to The Kingdom of Heaven, and entrusted to Peter (Matt. 16:18). Those on the Day of Pentecost were added to this church (Acts 2:47) and composed of “Jews out of every nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5,22). There were no Gentiles in this church.

4) The “Church of God” which Paul persecuted (Acts 8:1,3; 20:28; 1 Cor. 1:2; 11:22; 15:9; 2 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:13; 1 Thess. 2:14; 1 Tim. 3:5). This was no doubt the church started on the Day of Pentecost.

5) The Churches which came under the ministry of Paul, at Antioch, Galatia, Thessalonica, Corinth, Macedonia, and Cenchrea (Acts 11:26; 13:1; Gal. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; 16:1; 2 Cor. 8:1; Rom. 16:1).

6) The groups of believers referred to as “the church in the house” (Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Phile. 2).

7) The Seven Churches of Asia (1 Cor. 16:19; Rev. Chs. 2-3).

8) The Church which is called “The Body of Christ” (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18; 1:24). This church came by special revelation to the Apostle Paul. The full revelation of the church came while Paul was a prisoner at Rome (Eph. 3:1). All the above churches were foundationally Jewish with Gentiles added to them. This Church of the “one body” is foundationally Gentile with Jews added on an equal basis, and so making “one new man” (Eph. 3:14-16).

From this we see how important it is to always ask What Church?

Concerning the Gospel – Many believe that there is but one gospel, namely the Gospel of the death and resurrection of Christ. Therefore let us see what the Scriptures say concerning the gospel:

- 1) Gospel of the Kingdom (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 24:14; 28:19-20; Mark 1:1; 1:14; 1:15; 8:35; 10:29; 13:10; 16:15).
- 2) Gospel of the Burial of Christ (Matt. 26:13; Mark 14:9).
- 3) Gospel of the Circumcision (Gal. 2:7).
- 4) Gospel of the Uncircumcision (Acts 15:7; Gal. 2:7).
- 5) Gospel of the Grace of God (Acts 20:24; Eph. 2:5,8,9).
- 6) Gospel of God (Rom. 1:1; 15:16; 15:29; 2 Cor. 11:7; 1 Thess. 2:2; 2:8; 2:9; 1 Tim. 1:11; 1 Pet. 4:17).
- 7) Gospel of His Son (Christ) (Rom. 1:9,16; 15:19; 1 Cor. 9:12; (:18; 2 Cor. 2:12; 4:4; 9:13; 10:14; Gal. 1:7; Phil. 1:27; 1 Thess. 3:2; 2 Thess. 1:8).
- 8) My Gospel (Rom. 2:16; 16:25; 1 Cor. 15:1-8; 2 Thess. 2:14; 2 Tim. 2:8).
- 9) Abrahamic Gospel (Gal. 3:8; Gen. 12:3) New Covenant.
- 10) Everlasting Gospel (Rev. 14:6).
- 11) Gospel of the Unsearchable Riches of Christ (Eph. 3:8; 1:13; 2:4-9; 3:6).

These different designations of the Gospel do not mean that there are eleven different gospels; neither does it mean that all these refer to one Gospel. Here one must “rightly divide” the Word concerning the Gospels. There are at least four or five distinct Gospels set forth in the N.T. Scriptures.

(1) The Gospel of the Kingdom – This Gospel announced that the “Kingdom of heaven was at hand” (Matt. 4:17). It was first proclaimed by John the Baptist, then by Christ and His Apostles (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 10:5-14). This was limited in the first place “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. 10:6). It is apparent from Matt. 16:21 that this Gospel did not contain the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It was proclaimed during Christ’s earthly life.

(2) The Gospel of God and His Son Jesus Christ – This was the Gospel proclaimed during the Acts period; and also called “The Gospel of the Circumcision”, “The Gospel of the Uncircumcision” and Paul’s “My Gospel”. It was a prophesied Gospel concerning the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:36; 13:27-34; 17:18; 23:6; 26:23). There was also during the Acts period “The Gospel of the Circumcision” as proclaimed by Peter and “The Gospel of the Uncircumcision” proclaimed by Paul. Paul proclaimed his Gospel in the context of the New Covenant (2 Cor. 3:6).

(3) The Everlasting Gospel – (Rev. 14:6-7). This will be a universal gospel proclaimed during the Tribulation. It speaks only of creation and judgment. It cannot be preached today because the death and resurrection of Christ are not included. Those who recognize that creation will find it easy to accept Him when He returns in power and glory (Rev. 19:11-16). Antichrist will no doubt rid the world of a personal Creator Christ.

(4) The Gospel of the Grace of God (Eph. 2:5,8-9).

The Gospel of the Unsearchable Riches of Christ (Eph. 3:8).

The Gospel of the Grace of God as set forth in Ephesians includes not only the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, but also the seating with Him in the heavenlies (Eph. 2:6). It includes a complete identification with Christ. This Gospel is only found in this “dispensation of the grace of God” (Eph. 3:2).

The Gospel of the Unsearchable Riches of Christ is a distinct dispensational relationship with Christ for members of the Body of Christ today. The word translated “preach” in Eph. 3:8 is the Greek word euaggelidzo meaning to proclaim a divine glad-message. This message is called a “secret” (mystery) that “hath been hid in God” (Eph. 3:9).

So when we come to the word Gospel it is well to ask What Gospel? And then search and see what the Scriptures reveal concerning the Gospel.

III. WHEN IT IS WRITTEN

A distinct time element is revealed in Scripture in two different expressions of the word katabole translated some ten times “foundation”. Whether we translate katabole “foundation” or “overthrow” it has no bearing on the time element, except that “foundation” may refer to Gen. 1:1, while “overthrow” would refer to Gen. 1:2.

Seven times we have the time element apo katabole – “from the foundation or overthrow” (Matt. 13:35; 25:34; Luke 11:50; Heb. 4:3; 9:26; Rev. 13:8 and 17:8).

Three times we have the time element pro katabole – “before the foundation or overthrow” – John 17:24; Eph. 1:4; 1 Pet. 1:20.

From these passages we see there were certain things that took place “from the foundation of the world” such as, Kingdom parables, Kingdom prepared, Blood of prophets, Creation works, Suffering endured, Lamb slain, Names in the Book of Life.

There were also certain things that were ordained “before the foundation or overthrow” – Christ loved before, Members of the Body of Christ chosen before, and Christ foreordained before to be a Lamb.

In 1 Cor. 2:7 the Apostle Paul speaks of a “secret, the hidden wisdom which God predetermined before the ages”. This predetermined secret had to do with Christ and the cross as the context reveals. He is contrasting this wisdom of God with the wisdom of men who reject the essential place of the cross (See 1:20; 2:6,8; 3:19).

Matt. 24:15,16,21; Col. 3:4; 1 John 3:2 make it plain that there is a time for the fulfillment of every promise or prophecy. So what may be truth at one time may be error at another. Eccl. 3:1 says: “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven”.

Another little word that enters distinctly into the time element is the word “now”. Note its place in such passages as Acts 26:17; Rom. 3:21; 5:9; 8:1; 2 Cor. 6:2; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:13; Heb. 11:16. Here the time element is important in determining matters of doctrine and practice and calling.

IV. WHERE or THE SPHERES OF FUTURE BLESSING

The Scriptures set forth three distinct future spheres of blessing, namely: The Earth, The New Jerusalem and The Heavens. Nothing but confusion must result from inattention to the different spheres of blessing associated with their respective callings.

All of God’s callings rest upon the one sure foundation: “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 3:11). “Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). However, all have not these blessings in the same place. These three spheres are seen in 1 Kgs. 8:27; Deut. 10:14.

1. THE EARTH

(Matt. 5:5; 25:31-34; Dan. 2:44-45). Some day there will be a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. This former sin-stained creation will then pass away (Isa. 65:17; Matt. 24:35; 2 Pet. 3:7-18; Rev. 21:1). The earth will be peopled by nations over which kings will reign.

2. THE NEW JERUSALEM (The Heavenly Calling)

This is known as that “better country” (Heb. 11:16) in which is situated the city for which Abraham looked (Heb. 11:10), the hope of the “heavenly calling” (Heb. 3:1); Jews and Gentiles blessed with faithful Abraham (Gal. 3:9,14); Heirs according to the promise (Gal. 3:16,18,29); The Israel of God (Gal. 6:16); Citizens of the Heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22; 13:14) which is above (Gal. 4:26), the Bride (Rev. 21:2,9,10).

3. THE HEAVENLIES

The church which is His Body is “Blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavens in Christ” (Eph. 1:3). This is the place where Christ is seated today (Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1) and where we too are seated (Eph. 2:6). Christ is Head now to the One Body in the heavens. It is because of Christ’s present Headship members of His Body may partake of the “out-resurrection from among the dead” (Phil. 3:11). When He is then manifested in glory we too shall be manifested with Him (Col. 3:4).

Those of the Thessalonians calling sleep until the Lord Himself shall descend and the dead in Christ shall be raised to meet Him in the air (1 Thess. 4:16). Then His feet shall stand

upon Mount Olivet (Zech. 14:4) and there will be deliverance for Israel from their enemies, who will be destroyed with the brightness of His coming. This is the stone which shall smite the image on the feet (Dan. 2) and the Times of the Gentiles will end.

“Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light” (Col. 1:12).

V. WHY WAS IT WRITTEN?

An answer to this question is not as easy and simple as answers to the other interrogatives. God is sovereign in all His ways. He is the Creator, we the creature; He is infinite, we are finite; He is absolute, we are relative (Rom. 9:15-24).

God has a purpose – “the purpose of the ages” (Eph. 3:11). It begins with the Creation “in the beginning” and leads on to “the end” (1 Cor. 15:24) when God shall finally be all in all (1 Cor. 15:28). See also Rom. 8:28; 9:11; Eph. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:9).

The Scriptures reveal that His purpose is redemptive to deliver His people, and to destroy His enemies.

LESSON # 2 – THE LITERARY STRUCTURE

INTRO:

1. Definition: The principle under which God superintends the literary structure of the Bible so that it is constructed in parallelisms, correspondences, alternations, introversions, and combinations of the last two.

2. Historical Background

The Lord has been pleased to reveal Himself to mankind. He has used, not the words of angels, but the words of man, words pertaining to the earth. These words are “pure words” and they are perfectly constructed. Sometimes they are put into peculiar forms or figures for the purpose of special emphasis. They are always pure and perfect.

The phenomena connected with structure have been observed from earliest times. However, the first to put it in print was Azariah De Rossi a learned Jew of the 16th century, who published a vast amount of ancient Jewish learning bearing on the sacred text. He demonstrated and illustrated parallelism in his work entitled Meor Enayim (The Light of the Eyes). Mantua, 1574-5. He was followed in England by Bishop Lowth (1778) who translated Isaiah Ch. 60 and published it in his Translation of Isaiah. It deals with the construction of words and lines. He also developed the doctrine of Parallelisms. Here he showed in two or more lines how word answers to word. He divided these into three classes:

(1) Synonymous or Gradational

“My soul doth magnify the Lord:

My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour” (Luke 1:46-47).

We see here that “spirit” answers to “soul”, “rejoice to magnify” and “the Lord” to “God my Saviour”.

(2) Antithetic or Opposite

“Faithful are the wounds of a friend;

But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy” Prov. 27:6.

“Deceitful” is here the opposite of “faithful”, “kisses” the opposite of “wounds” and “enemy” the opposite of “friend”.

(3) Synthetic or Constructive

Here the parallelism consists in the similar form of construction.

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul:

The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart:

The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever:

The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether”. (Ps. 19:7-9).

Bishop Lowth was followed in England by Bishop Jebb (1820) who in his Sacred Literature carried the principle a step further. He extended the doctrine of parallelism with reference to the O.T. applying its principles to the N.T. in which he grouped a number of lines into paragraphs or stanzas. This led him to a fourth class of parallelisms, which he called Introversion.

However, it was reserved for Thomas Boys of Trinity College, Cambridge, England (1824) to fully develop and apply the principles which the others had formulated. He applied them now to long passages, arranging whole chapters and books, as Bishops Lowth and Jebb had arranged verses. He discarded the word Parallelism and chose the word Correspondence. In 1824 he published his *Tactica Sacra*.

Correspondence is of three kinds: (1) Alternation (2) Introversion. (3) Complex; which consists of a combination of the above two together. These paragraphs, which are called members, are indicated by letters for the sake of convenience and reference.

1) Alternation – This is of three kinds:

Simple – consisting of two subjects and four members:

A-1. ----
 B-1. ----
 A-2. ----
 B-2. ----

Repeated – when the two subjects are repeated more than once:

A-1. ----
 B-1. ----
 A-2. ----
 B-2. ----
 A-3. ----
 B-3. ----

Extended – when consisting of more than two subjects:

A-1. ----
 B-1. ----
 C-1. ----
 D-1. ----
 A-2. ----
 B-2. ----
 C-2. ----
 D-2. ----

2) Introversion – The Correspondence is called Introversion where there are several subjects, and the first corresponds with the last; the second with the penultimate; the third with the antepenultimate, etc.

A-1. ----
 B-1. ----
 C-1. ----
 D-1. ----
 D-2. ----
 C-2. ----
 B-2. ----
 A-2. ----

3) Complex – Combined Alternation and Introversion consists merely of a combination of the above two simple forms of correspondence.

A-1. ----
 B-1. ----
 a-1. ----
 b-1. ----
 c-1. ----
 d-1. ----
 B-2. ----
 a-2. ----
 b-2. ----
 c-2. ----
 d-2. ----

Everything that God does is perfect. That is true in nature as well as in His Word. God is not the God of imperfection. Physical creation all around us bears the mark of His handiwork. Every little dew drop is perfect, every blade of grass is perfect, and every snowflake is perfect. As many as 10,000 snowflakes have been photographed and no two found exactly alike. They are all built on the same plan and structure and yet unlike and beautiful. Someone has written about the snowflakes as follows: "Of all the displays of fathomless skill with which the Divine Artificer subdues to awe the soul of man, what can equal the snow-crystal! Let the reader imagine, if he can, what countless billions of snowflakes can fall during one short hour upon a single acre of ground, and then reflect that each crystal is a different creation of God possessing an individuality all its own, and treasures of artistic design little dreamed of, until the invention of the microscope and the camera enables man to see and permanently hold the record of these fleeting forms of loveliness". So when you are out in a snow storm you are being pelted by God's perfection and loveliness, frail, fragile snowflakes.

I. EXAMPLES OF BIBLICAL STRUCTURE

Concerning correspondence, Dr. E.W. Bullinger says: "The importance of this great pervading principle is evident and its use is manifold: 1. The sense generally reads on from one member to its corresponding member; thus practically putting the intermediate members within a parenthesis and producing order and sense out of apparent confusion. 2. As the subject of one member is sometimes only implied, and in the corresponding member it is specifically named, it affords a key to the interpretation. 3. Corroborative evidence is thus sometimes obtained for the support, or otherwise, of a various reading. 4. As the scope of a passage is the key to the meaning of the words, so is the Structure of a passage the key to its scope. The Law of 'Correspondence' is therefore an important, but sadly neglected branch of Biblical study. This Law of Correspondence extends to every part of God's Word; and is thus the 'Hall-mark' (so to speak) which distinguishes the silver of the 'pure words' of God from the vain words of man (Ps. 12:2,6)". Things to Come, January 1905.

The following are examples and illustrations of the five forms of Correspondence. The fifth admits of almost endless variety.

1. Simple Alternation:

- A-1. Cursed is the man that trusted in man, etc.
- B-1. For he shall be like the heath, etc.
- A-2. blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, etc.
- B-2. For he shall be as a tree, etc.

Jer. 17:5-8

- A-1. A new heart also will I give you.
- B-1. And a new spirit will I put within you.
- A-2. And I will take away the stony heart out of you.
- B-2. And I will put my Spirit within you.

Ezek. 36:26-27

2. Repeated Alternation:

- A-1. Praise promised (1-2).
- B-1. Praise offered (3).
- A-2. Praise promised (4-7).
- B-2. Praise offered (8-9).
- A-3. Praise promised (10-12).

- B-3. Praise offered (13-20).
- A-4. Praise promised (21).

Psalm 145

- A-1. Appeal – Men of Judea (14-15).
- B-1. Reference to Joel (16-21).
- A-2. Appeal – Men of Israel (22-24).
- B-2. Reference to Psalm 16 (25-28).
- A-3. Appeal – Men and Brethren (29-33).
- B-3. Reference to Psalm 110 (34-36).

Acts 2:14-36

3. Extended Alternation:

- A-1. I have planted.
 - B-1. Apollos watered.
 - C-1. But God gave the increase.
- A-2. So then neither is he that planteth anything.
 - B-2. Neither he that watereth.
 - C-2. But God that giveth the increase.

1 Cor. 3:6-7

- A-1. Her husband (10-12).
- B-1. Her occupation (13-19).
 - C-1. Her character (20)
 - D-1. Her household (21).
 - E-1. Herself (22).
- A-2. Her husband (23).
- B-2. Her occupation (22-25).
 - C-2. Her character (26).
 - D-2. Her household (27-28).
 - E-2. Herself (28-31).

Prov. 31:10-31

- A-1. Commission (1:1-2).
- B-1. Disobedience (1:3).
 - C-1. Consequences (1:14-17).
 - D-1. Prayer (2:1-9).
 - E-1. Deliverance (2:10).
- A-2. Commission (3:1-2).
- B-2. Obedience (3:3-4).
 - C-2. Consequences (3:5-10).
 - D-2. Prayer (4:1-3).
 - E-2. Discipline (4:4-11).

Book of Jonah

4. Introversion:

- A-1. For my thoughts are not your thoughts.
 - B-1. Neither are your ways my ways.
 - B-2. For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways.
- A-2. And my thoughts than your thoughts.

Isa. 55:8-9

- A-1. Visitation (68).
- B-1. Salvation (69).

- C-1. Prophets (70).
- D-1. Enemies (71).
- E-1. Covenant (72).
- E-2. Oath (73).
- D-2. Enemies (74-75).
- C-2. Prophets (76).
- B-2. Salvation (77).
- A-2. Visitation (78-79).

Luke 1:68-79)

- A-1. Praise.
- B-1. Reason.
- B-2. Reason.
- A-2. Praise.

Psalm 117:1-2

5. Complex Structure (Compound Correspondence)

- A-1. Hallelujah (1).
- B-1.
- a-1. Praise ye the Lord from the Heavens (1).
- b-1. Enumeration of the things in Heaven (2-4).
- c-1. Injunction to Praise (Yehalelu) (5).
- d-1. Reason (Ki) (5-6).
- B-2.
- a-2. Praise ye the Lord from the earth (7).
- b-2. Enumeration of things on the Earth (7-12).
- c-2. Injunction to praise (yehalelu) (13).
- d-2. Reason (Ki) (13-14).
- A-2. Hallelujah (14).

Psalm 148

- A-1.
- a-1. And when He was come into His own country.
- b-1. He taught them in their synagogue.
- B-1. Insomuch that they were astonished, etc.
- C-1. And said, Whence hath this man this wisdom,
and these mighty works?
- D-1. Is not this the Carpenter's son?
Is not His mother called Mary?
- D-2. And His brethren, James and Joses, and Simon
and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us?
- C-2. Whence then hath this man all these things?
- B-2. And they were offended in Him.
- A-2.
- a-2. But Jesus said unto them, a prophet is not without honor,
save in his own country, and in His own house.
- b-2. And He did not many mighty works there because of
their unbelief.

Matt. 13:54-58

6. Septiform Structure (Seven-fold perfection of Scripture)

The number seven has been recognized by many as a perfect Biblical number. This heptadic structure as applied to Scripture proves beyond doubt that the Bible is of more than human origin. “Every part” says Dr. A.T. Pierson of the Word “exhibits a unity of character and design. It has a symmetry unaccountable, except as behind all the forty human writers and more than sixty books one architectural mind planned it and carried the plan to perfection. Its proportions, like those of an ideal structure, are mathematical, and display a mathematical mind. However many human pens contributed to its contents, there must have been someone independent of the bounds of time and space, and above the reach of all that changes, Who is its original, responsible Author.”

We wish to apply this seven-fold framework to Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians.

Chapter 1:3-14

- A... CHOSEN IN CHRIST – By God the Father unto adoption, “To the praise of His Grace (3-6a).
- B... FULLNESS OF REDEMPTION – “Accepted in the Beloved”, “The Riches of His Grace (6b-7).
- C... GOD’S WILL REVEALED – The Secret according to His Purpose (8-9).
- D... REDEMPTION CENTERED IN CHRIST – “in Heaven and on Earth”, Keystone Of Redemptive History (10).
- C... GOD’S WILL REVEALED – The Inheritance according to Purpose (11).
- B... FRUIT OF REDEMPTION – Prior hope – “To the Praise of His glory” (12).
- A... SEALED IN CHRIST – By God, the Spirit, Unto Final Redemption, “To the Praise of His Glory” (13-14).

Chapter 1:15-23

- A... RELATIONSHIP – The Savior and the Saints, Faith and Love, Condition for the Prayer (15-16).
- B... ENLIGHTENING THE SAINTS – The Father of Glory, Revelation (17-18a).
- C... TO KNOW THE HOPE OF HIS CALLING – Contrast, “The course of this world” (18b).
- D... RICHEs OF THE GLORY OF HIS INHERITANCE – In the Saints (18c).
- C... TO KNOW THE GREATNESS OF HIS POWER – Contrast, “The lusts of the flesh” (19).
- B... EXALTING THE SON – The Father of Glory, Resurrection (19-21).
- A... RELATIONSHIP – The Head and the Body, Climax of the Prayer (22-23).

Chapter 2:1-10

- A... DEAD IN WICKED WORKS – “Children of wrath” (1-3).
- B... RICHEs OF GOD’S MERCY – Great Love to us out of Christ (4-5).
- C... QUICKENED TOGETHER WITH CHRIST – From Depths of Guilt (5).
- D... THE GIFT OF GOD – Salvation by Grace thru Faith, Not of Works (5).
- C... RAISED TOGETHER WITH CHRIST – To Heights of Glory (6).
- B... RICHEs OF GOD’S GRACE – Great Gift to Us in Christ (8-9).
- A... ALIVE IN GOOD WORKS – “Created in Christ” (10).

Chapter 2:11-22

- A... YE WERE GENTILES IN THE FLESH – The Old Sphere (11).
- B... BEING FOREIGNERS AND STRANGERS – Alienated from Israel’s Commonwealth.
Without God (12).
- C... BUT NOW IN CHRIST JESUS FAR OFF MADE NIGH – By Blood of Christ.
Both One, He is our Peace, Abolished Enmity (13-15).
- D... THE DIVINE PURPOSE UNION IN CHRIST – One New Man. Thus making
Peace (15).
- C... SO NOW IN THE CROSS HAVING SLAIN THE ENMITY – Preached peace
To far and nigh. One Body (16-18).
- B... NO MORE STRANGERS AND FOREIGNERS – United in Heavenly Citizenship.
God’s Household (19-20).
- A... YE ARE A SANCTUARY IN THE SPIRIT – The New Sphere (21-22).

Chapter 3:1-13

- A... TRIBULATION FOR YOU GENTILES – A Prisoner of Jesus Christ for His glory (1).
- B... THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST MADE KNOWN UNTO ME – Less Than the Least (2-4)
- C... THE FACT OF THE MYSTERY UNKNOWN IN OTHER AGES – Revealed
By the Spirit of God (5).
- D... THE MYSTERY OF THE AGES – Gentiles Fellow-Heirs, and Fellow-Members
Of the Body and Fellow-Partakers of the Promise in Christ by the
Gospel (6).
- C... THE FACT OF THE MYSTERY MADE KNOWN IN THIS AGE – Revealed
By the Servant of God. Unsearchable Riches (7-9).
- B... THE WISDOM OF GOD MADE KNOWN UNTO ALL – The purpose of the Ages.
To Principalities and Powers (10-12).
- A... TRIBULATION FOR YOU GENTILES – Prisoner of Jesus Christ for Your Glory (13).

Chapter 3:14-21

- A... BASIS OF THE PRAYER – Father of whole family in Heaven and earth. Riches of glory.
Strengthen with might (14-16).
- B... CHRIST IN WHOM ALL FULLNESS DWELLS – Dwell in you by faith (17).
- C... THAT YE BEING ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE – May comprehend
With all the Saints (17-18).
- D... THE SPHERE OF REDEMPTION – The length, Depth, Breadth, and the
Height of Love (18).
- C... THAT YE COMPREHENDING WITH ALL SAINTS – May know the love
That passeth knowledge (19).
- B... YOU IN WHOM CHRIST DWELLS – Filled with fullness of God (19).
- A... CLIMAX OF THE PRAYER – My God and your God. Unto Him be glory through the
Power working in us (20-21).

Chapter 4:1-16

- A... EVERY MEMBER OF THE BODY WALKING WORTHILY – Forbearing one
Another in Love (1-2).
- B... GUARDING THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT (3-6).
- C... CHRIST THE HEAD GIVING GRACE TO PERFECT THE MEMBERS (7).

- D... CHRIST THE HEAD DESCENDED TO LOWEST AND ASCENDED TO THE HIGHEST TO PROCLAIM VICTORY (8-10).
- C... CHRIST THE HEAD GIVING GIFTS TO PERFECT MEMBERS (11-12).
- B... GROWING INTO THE UNITY OF THE FAITH (13-15).
- A... EVERY JOINT IN THE BODY WORKING EFFECTUALLY – Upbuilding one another In Love (16).

Chapter 4:17-32

- A... THE OLD LIFE – Walk not as Gentiles in the vanity of your mind. Man Hard-hearted. Understanding darkened (17-18).
- B... THE OLD WORKS ENERGIZED BY THE CARNAL MIND – The flesh Working that which is evil (19-21).
- C... PUT OFF THE OLD MAN WHICH IS CORRUPT (22).
- D... BE RENEWED IN THE SPIRIT OF YOUR MIND (23)
- C... PUT ON THE NEW MAN WHICH IS CREATED (24).
- B... THE NEW WORKS ENERGIZED BY THE SPIRITUAL MIND – The Spirit Working that which is good (25-30).
- A... THE NEW LIFE – Walk in the new mind. Men tender-hearted. Forgiving one another (31-32).

Chapter 5:1-2

- A... THE WALK IN THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT CONTRASTED (1-5).
- B... WARNING TO ESCAPE THE WRATH OF GOD (6).
- C... BE NOT PARTAKERS WITH THE WORKERS OF DARKNESS (7).
- D... WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT – Bearing fruit of the Spirit (8-10).
- C... HAVE NO FELLOWSHIP WITH THE WORKERS OF DARKNESS (11-13).
- B... ENTREATY TO AWAKE TO LIGHT IN CHRIST (14).
- A... THE WALK IN THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT CONTRASTED (15-21).

Chapter 5:22-23

- A... WIVES SUBMIT TO YOUR HUSBANDS – The husband is the head of the wife. Even as Christ the Head of the Church (22-24).
- B... HUSBANDS LOVE YOUR WIVES – Even as Christ the Church. Purchased by Him (25).
- C... HIS HEART’S DESIRE – That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the Washing of water by the Word (26).
- D... HIS PRE-EMINENT PURPOSE – That He might present it to Himself A glorious Church (27a).
- C... HIS HEART’S DESIRE – That it should be holy and without blemish in His sight (27b).
- B... HUSBANDS LOVE YOUR WIVES – Even as the Lord the Church. United to Him (28-30).
- A... WIVES REVERE YOUR HUSBANDS – The husband joined to the wife. I speak Concerning Christ and the Church (31-33).

Chapter 6:1-10

- A... CHILDREN OBEY IN THE LORD – Mayest live long on earth (1-3).
- B... FATHERS PROVOKE NOT YOUR CHILDREN – Knowing that your Father is in Heaven (4).
- C... SERVANTS BE OBEDIENT – Unto Christ, not as men pleasers (5-6).
- D... DOING THE WILL OF GOD FROM THE HEART – As Christ, “I delight to do Thy will Oh my God” (6).
- C... SERVANTS BE WILLING – As to the Lord and not men (7-8).

- B... MASTERS THREATEN NOT YOUR SERVANTS – Knowing that your Master is in Heaven (9).
- A... BRETHREN BE STRONG IN THE LORD – That ye may stand and withstand in the Heavens (10).

Chapter 6:11-24

- A... FINAL EXHORTATION TO THE BRETHREN – Put on the whole armor. For strength in the strife (11).
- B... WRESTLING IN POWER – Power of His might. Against Satan’s emissaries. Powers of darkness. Stand in evil day (12-13).
- C... THE ARMOR OF LIGHT – The girdle of truth. Breastplate of righteousness. Feet shod with Gospel of peace (14-15).
- D... ABOVE ALL – THE SHIELD OF FAITH – To quench all the fiery darts of the wicked One (16).
- C... THE ARMOR OF LIGHT – Helmet of salvation. Sword of the Spirit, The Word of God (17).
- B... WATCHING IN PRAYER – For all saints, and for Paul. To make known the Secret of the Gospel (18-20).
- A... FINAL SALUTATION TO THE BRETHREN – Comfort for the conflict, Peace, Love, Faith, Grace. (21-24).

LESSON # 3 – THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

INTRO:

“Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of Jehovah doth man live” (Deut. 8:3).

The words of Jehovah as given to us in Holy Scripture constitute the sustenance of the New Nature. As it is in the natural, so it is in the spiritual. The desire for food is always the sign of either natural or spiritual health. Many seek unnatural stimulants in the spiritual, as they do in the natural when there is a low condition. Man becomes a prey for all kinds of religious fanaticism, and cultist religions when there is a low spiritual condition.

The Bible is not understood, and hence it is not enjoyed. It is the purpose of Hermeneutics to make the Bible understandable, and hence enjoyable. The end result is that we may be strong in the Lord growing in grace and knowledge of the Lord. Here the interrogation of the Ethiopian Eunuch, and the answer of Philip are important: “Understandest thou what thou reatest? How can I, except someone should guide me” (Acts 8:30-31).

I. DESIGNATIONS (Names and Titles of the Bible)

1. The Bible – This is the most familiar title of the Sacred Scriptures. It was given to the Book by John Christison, who was a patriarch of Constantinople about 398-404 A.D. It is derived from the Greek words Ta Bible. It is a diminutive of the word Byblos, an ancient Phoenician city from whence papyrus was exported. Papyrus was a tall sedge plant, which was cut in strips and pressed into a writing material. The word biblion occurs some thirty-two times in our N.T. and the word biblos some thirteen times. These words are translated into English by such words as “writing”, “bill”, “book”, “scroll”.

“Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do Thy will O God” (Heb. 10:7).

Luther said: “There is but one book, the Bible; but one Person, The Christ”. On his death bed Sir Walter Scott said to his son-in-law, “bring me the Book”. Lockhart said: “Which book?” “There is but one book, The Bible” said Scott. The Bible is THE BOOK, not a book. It is the only perfect Book in the world.

2. The Word of God – Next to the word Bible, this is the most familiar title. It is most significant and impressive. It distinguishes The Bible from all other books. It is God’s Word, His revelation to man. This title is found over four hundred times in Jeremiah alone. “... holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21) to write this Word of God. This means that this Book is not a Book of mistakes, contradictions, or errors, but a reliable Book.

Bob Ingersol was to hold a series of lectures on “The Mistakes of Moses”. Mark Twain heard about this and said he would give \$5,000 to have heard Moses lecture on “The Mistakes of Ingersol”.

3. Scripture and Scriptures -The designation “Scripture” occurs once in the O.T. (Dan. 10:21) where it is the translation of the Hebrew word Kethab. Once in the N.T. (2 Tim. 3:15) it is the translation of the Greek word gramma; and some fifty times it is the translation of the Greek word graphe. It has come down to us from the Latin, meaning “writings”. In the O.T. it is combined with the word “truth” and twice in the N.T. it is called “Holy Scriptures” (Rom. 1:2; 2 Tim. 3:15). See Matt. 22:29; Mark 12:10; Luke 4:21; 2 Tim. 3:16.

4. The Old and New Testaments – The Word of God comes to us in two parts: one written originally in Hebrew and Aramaic, the other in Greek. Only in the versions are these two combined and bound together into one book. The only thing that separates these two testaments is the four hundred years between Malachi and Matthew.

Up to the Second Century A.D. the term Old Covenant was used by the Greeks to describe the Hebrew Bible. This passed into the Latin Vulgate Version as the “Vetus Testamentum” from which our English words “Old Testament” were taken. By way of distinction from the Old, the Greek portion was called “The New Testament”. These terms are not divine in origin, except that the N.T. speaks of both the Old and New Covenants (Matt. 26:28; Heb. 8:7-13). It is to be remembered that The Old Testament contains more than the Old Covenant, and the N.T. contains more than the New Covenant.

The New is in the Old contained; the Old is in the New explained.

5. The Oracles – This designation originally had reference to the place where the Word of God was kept or from whence it was communicated. From this usage came the word Oracle in relation to the Word itself.

The word is used seventeen times in the O.T. Once it is the translation of the Hebrew davar, meaning “word” and sixteen times from the Hebrew word debir meaning “speaking place”. Its first use is in 2 Sam. 16:23. It is used four times in the N.T. translated from the Greek word logion (Acts 7:38; Rom. 3:2; Heb. 5:12; 1 Pet. 4:11).

6. Other Designations – (See Psalm 119). In Psalm 119 the Scriptures are designated by nine different names as follows: “Law”, “Testimonies”, “Ways”, “Precepts”, “Statutes”, “Commandments”, “Judgments”, “Word”, and “Truth”.

II. DIVISIONS OF THE BIBLE

1. Into Testaments

a. The Old Testament, b. The New Testament.

2. Into Books

Our present division of thirty-nine books in the O.T. was not the original Hebrew division. The change came about when the first translation of the O.T. into Greek, called the Septuagint Version (LXX) was made. This was supposed to have taken place at Alexandria in Egypt around the year 285 B.C.

a. Hebrew Division of the O.T. (24 books)

Josephus, who was influenced by Alexandria, had twenty-two books. He combined Judges-Ruth, and Jeremiah-Lamentations. There are twenty-two consonants in the Hebrew alphabet.

The order of the O.T. that Jesus gave in Luke 24:44 is “The Law, the Prophets and the Psalms”.

(1) THE LAW (Torah)

Genesis – Exodus – Leviticus – Numbers – Deuteronomy – Called the Pentateuch.

(2) THE PROPHETS (Neviim)

Joshua – Judges – Samuel – Called “the former prophets” (Zech. 7:7).

Isaiah – Jeremiah – Ezekiel – Minor Prophets. Called the latter Prophets.

(3) THE PSALMS (Kethuvim)

Psalms – Proverbs – Job – Song of Songs – Ruth – Lamentations – Ecclesiastes – Esther – Daniel – Ezra – Nehemiah – Kings – Chronicles.

Called also The Writings.

b. Greek Division of the N.T. (27 books)

(1) The Gospels

Matthew – Mark – Luke – John

(2) The Acts (By Luke)

(3) The General Epistles

James – 1 & 2 Peter – 1 & 2 & 3 John – Jude

(4) Paul's Epistles

Romans – 1 & 2 Corinthians – Galatians – Ephesians – Philippians –

Colossians – 1 & 2 Thessalonians – 1 & 2 Timothy – Titus – Philemon –
Hebrews.

(5) The Revelation (By John)

3. Into Chapters

There are 929 in the O.T. and 260 in the N.T. At first this chapter division was attributed to Hughes De St. Cher (Hugo de Sancto Caro). He was provincial to the Dominicans in France, and afterwards a Cardinal in Spain. He died in A.D. 1263. But it is now believed that the chapter division was the work of Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died in 1227 A.D.

4. Into Verses

Hugo made use of Langton's chapters and added subdivisions which he indicated by letters. This was done in 1248 A.D. Robert Stephens finding these letters inadequate introduced numbers in their place in his Greek Testament of 1551. This was the origin of our verse divisions. They were first introduced into the English Version known as The Geneva Bible (1560), and from that into our Authorized Version of 1611. The Revised Version of 1881 does not have the verses divisions.

It is thus seen how very modern, human, and devoid of all authority are the chapter and verse divisions which are in our Bibles. Though they are useful for purposes of reference, we must be careful not to use them for purposes of interpretation. They often break up the structure and sense of Scripture.

III. DEVELOPMENT OF THE WRITINGS

This has to do with the canon of Scripture. There are a number of statements made in the Word of God concerning the command by God relative to writing and preserving of the Sacred Text. Note the following Scriptures: Exodus 17:14; Numbers 33:2; Deuteronomy 17:18; Joshua 1:8; 24:26; 1 Sam. 10:25; Isaiah 8:16; 8:20; Jeremiah 36:2; Daniel 9:2; Nehemiah 8:1. In these passages we are told how God commanded holy men to write and to preserve the writing in a book kept by the priests.

IV. DECLARATION OF INSPIRATION

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16).

“...Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21).

The Greek word translated “inspiration” in 2 Tim. 3:16 is theopneustos, literally God-Breathed. It occurs only here in the N.T. So the Scriptures are God-inspired.

1. Its Meaning

a. More than Human Genius – We have heard of the inspiration of Shakespeare. But his was not inspiration, but human genius. Inspiration is found only in the Bible. Shakespeare quoted from the Bible some five-hundred times.

b. More than Illumination – This refers to the influences of the Holy Spirit in a believer’s life. It enables one to understand spiritual truth.

c. More than Revelation – There are two kinds of records in the Bible:

(1) Record of truth directly revealed by God.

(2) Record of events occurring in the writers or another’s experience. Inspiration superintends the communication of all truth.

d. It means “God-breathed” – In every instance God superintends the human instrument through His Holy Spirit. The exact manner of inspiration cannot be explained. But we believe it because God has said so.

2. Its Extent

The Bible is a full or Plenary Inspiration. The Bible does not merely contain the Word of God, It is God’s Word.

All Scripture is God-breathed which means that no Scripture is more inspired than any other Scripture. Daniel wrote words given him by Divine inspiration which he did not understand (Dan. 12:8-9). In 2 Sam. 23:2 we read: “The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue”.

3. Its Proof

There are many things that indicate that the Bible is a unique Book, inspired of God:

a. Its Preservation down through the ages.

b. Its transforming power in human lives.

c. Its Unity in the presentation of Redemption.

d. Its accurate fulfillment of prophecy (See Psalm 22 and Isaiah Ch. 53 as examples).

e. Its archaeological corroboration. Some 5,000 places mentioned in the Bible have been found by archaeologists.

V. DEMONSTRATION OF ITS UNITY (a Biblical Digest)

In Eph. 3:11 we read of “The eternal purpose” or “The purpose of the ages”. We learn from this that God has a plan worked out during the ages. He is not working in the dark. He is not meeting emergencies with last minute judgments or restorations. Revelation is progressive in its unfolding. The following is a digest by introversion:

A-1. GOD’S FIRST CREATION (Gen. 1:1). Heavens and earth.

“The world (Gk. Kosmos) that then was” (2 Pet. 3:6).

B-1. SATAN’S FIRST REBELLION (Gen. 1:2).

The earth became waste and a ruin (Heb. Tohu va vohu). God created it not a ruin (Isa. 45:18; Jer. 4:23).

C-1 EARTH’S FIRST RESTORATION (Gen. 1:3 – 2:25)

“The heavens and the earth which are now” (2 Pet. 3:7). The original universe was restored by the One Who is not only Creator but also Re-creator. Six days for restoration; one rest.

D-1. SATAN’S INTRUSION AND SIN’S CONDEMNATION (Gen. Ch. 3)

The one who brought sin into the universe now brings it into the restored earth. The Old Serpent enters the garden, tempts Eve to transgression and brings condemnation upon all.

E-1. MANKIND’S UNIVERSAL CONSIDERATION (Gen. Chs. 4-11)

Here we have one people, one tongue, no nations. We see the development of sin in Cain and his posterity. We also see the development of righteousness in Seth and his posterity.

F-1. ISRAEL’S RECEPTION, REJECTION, RESTORATION (Gen. Ch.12 – Mal. Ch. 4).

This section deals with God's Chosen People, Israel. From Abraham God begins a new nation to bless all nations. But this nation fails God, is sent into dispersion among the Gentile nations with the promise of ultimate restoration.

G-1. CHRIST'S FIRST REVELATION (The Four Gospels)

Micah 5:2; Zech. 9:9; Rom. 15:8; Gal. 4:4-5)

Here we see Christ in His Pre-existence, Incarnation, Temptation, Ministration, Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension.

H-1. THE CHURCH (Its Jewish Aspect – Peter)

(Acts, General Epistles, Paul's Pre-prison Epistles, Rev. Chs. 2-3).

“To the Jew first and also to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16). This is Called “The Church of God” (Acts 20:28).

H-2. THE CHURCH (Its Gentile Aspect – Paul)

(The latter Pauline Epistles or his Prison Epistles). Called “The Church which is His Body” (Eph. 1:22-23). “Where there is neither Jew nor Greek” (Col. 3:11). The Secret (Eph. 3:1-10).

G-2. CHRIST'S SECOND REVELATION (Isa. Ch. 11; Joel 3:9-16; Zech. Ch. 14; Matt. 24:25-31; Mk. 13:24-27; 1 Thess. 4:16-5:11).

Ushered in by The Great Tribulation, Great Destruction, Transformation of the saints, Resurrection of Overcomers. This is “The Day of the Lord” (1 Thess. 5:2).

F-2. ISRAEL'S SEPARATION, SALVATION, SANCTIFICATION

(Isa. Chs. 60-62; Jer. Chs. 30-31; Zech. 12:13-14; Acts 15:16; Rom. 11:11-36).

Israel called from her long period of exile, to be cleansed and given life (Ezek. Ch. 37). Heart of flesh (Ezek. Ch. 36).

E-2. MANKIND'S UNIVERSAL CONSIDERATION

(Joel 3:2,12; Matt. 25:31-46; Rom. 15:8-12).

D-2. SATAN'S SUBJUGATION AND SIN'S RETENTION (Rev. 20:1-3)

Satan bound for a thousand years. Christ rules with a rod of iron (Ps. 2:9). Righteousness will be reigning.

C-2. EARTH'S SECOND RESTORATION (The Millennium)

(Isa. Chs. 2,11,35; Micah Ch. 4; Rev. 20:4-6).

The earth will again become very productive. The curse will be removed.

B-2. SATAN'S FINAL REBELLION (Rev. 20:7-10)

Satan will be loosed for a little season. Will go out upon the earth to deceive men. Fire will come out of heaven to destroy all the wicked and Satan will be cast into the Lake of Fire. This will be followed by the Second Resurrection, The Great White Throne judgment (Rev. 20:11-15).

A-2. GOD'S FINAL CREATION (Isa. 65:17; 66:22; 2 Pet. 3:12-13; Rev. Chs. 21,22).

This is “The Day of God”. This brings New Heavens and New earth. Righteousness will now be dwelling.

Lesson # 4 – THE ETHNIC DIVISION PRINCIPLE

INTRO:

Definition: Ethnology is the science which treats of the division of mankind into races; their origin, distribution, relations, and the peculiarities which characterize them.

Biblical Ethnology is that principle by which the Word of Truth is rightly divided as to the three classes: The Jew, the Gentile, and the Church.

Someone has said: “God, who is no respecter of persons, is beyond doubt a regarder of classes”.

1 Cor. 10:32: “Give none offence neither to the Jew, nor the Gentile, nor to the Church of God”.

In this study we will concentrate our study on the Gentile Church, called “The Church which is His Body” (Eph. 1:22-23) rather than on the Jewish Church, called in the above Scripture: “The Church of God”.

In Genesis 1:1–11:9 we have a united race. There is no line of demarcation among The Jew, Gentile, and The Church. All were the off-spring of Adam and all spoke one language.

In Genesis 11:10–Mal. 4:6 the Jew is primarily in view, the Gentiles only mentioned as they come in contact with the Children of Abraham and the nation of Israel. The Church revealed to Paul is nowhere found in the O.T. So from Gen. 11:1 the Jew and the Gentile are distinct. In the O.T. the Jew is seen in a Patriarchal Period, then a Tribal Period, then a National Period, then a Dispersion Period, and finally a Restoration Period.

In the Gospels the Jew is primarily in view. The word “church” occurs twice (Matt. 16:18; 18:17). These references are to the Jewish Church, or synagogue assemblies. The Gentiles are not dealt with at all, rather shunned and set aside (Matt. 10:5-6).

In the Acts and Paul’s earlier Epistles God deals primarily with the Jew or The Church of God. Gentiles are brought in to share the blessings of the Gospel, but it is always to the Jew first and then to the Gentile (Rom. 1:16).

In Paul’s Prison Epistles God deals primarily with the Gentile in The Church which is His Body. Jews are brought in to share these blessings on a par with Gentiles (Eph. 2:14,16).

In the Book of The Revelation God deals with both Jew and Gentile.

So it is important to locate truth according to this Ethnic Principle. James Brookes said: “Even in preaching, the children’s meat is constantly thrown to the dogs and passages that relate only to unbelievers are addressed to believers, and the Jew and the Gentile, and the Church are all mixed up without the slightest discrimination”.

I. THE JEW (Romans 9:4-5)

1. “The Adoption” – Their adoption is national. God took one nation to Himself out from among all the nations of the earth. Israel is distinctly God’s nation among the nations (Exod. 19:5-6).

2. “The glory” – This has reference to the Shekinah Glory which led them through the Wilderness, in the Cloud and Pillar of Fire. It resided later in the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle and Temple. (Exod. 16:10; 29:43; 40:34-35; 2 Chron. 5:14; 7:1-3).

3. “The Covenants” – God made covenants with Abraham, with Moses, with David and promised the New Covenant in Jeremiah. (See Gen. Ch. 17; Exod. Ch. 19; 2 Sam. Ch. 7; Jer. 31:31-37).

4. “The Law” – To them alone was given the Law to Moses on Mt. Sinai by the mediation of angels. Exod. Ch.20; Jn. 1:17; Gal. 3:19).

5. “The Service of God” – They were given the way of approach unto God by means of the Levitical Ritual in the Tabernacle and Temple.

6. “The Promises” – The Coming of the Messiah in His first and second Advents is clearly revealed through Israel’s prophets (Heb. 7:6). The “Promises” are closely tied in with the “Covenants”.

7. “Whose are the fathers ... concerning the flesh Christ came”.

Such fathers as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph together with their faithful priests, prophets and kings belong to Israel. Christ was born of Mary who was a Jewess.

8. “The Oracles” – It was unto the Jewish race that God deposited His revelations. They were the custodians of His Holy Scriptures (Rom. 3:1-2).

There are mainly three reasons why God chose Abraham and his race:

a. That they might be a witness of the true and living God.

(Deut. 6:1-6) God said often in the O.T. (Isa. 43:10-12; 44:8) “Ye are my witnesses”. God did not choose Israel because they were better than any other nation, but to be His witnesses. It was in this that Israel failed God. She will in a coming day fulfill this purpose of God in and through her witnessing.

b. That He might have a channel through whom Christ could come in the flesh (Matt. 1:1; Rom. 1:3). Christ was born of the virgin Mary of the seed of David, under the Law. He was truly a Jew in the flesh.

c. That He might have a nation to whom He could commit His oracles. God chose Israel and gave them His Scriptures. It was to this nation that He gave His oracles and through them they were preserved.

II. THE GENTILE

1. Their Past and Present (Rom. Ch. 1; Eph. 2:11-13; 4:17-19).

Here we have a graphic picture of the Gentile world in sin and condemnation, in rebellion and rejection of God.

Their condition is one: Without Christ, Without the Promises, Without the Covenants and without God and Hope in the world.

2. Their Future

In the coming Millennial Kingdom many nations shall be blessed by Christ (Micah 4:2-3; Matt. 25:31-46).

III. THE CHURCH (The Body of Christ)

(Eph. 1:3-14; 21-23; 2:14-15; 3:1-12; 5:29-33).

Here God presents a new thing that was not revealed in the O.T. neither in the Gospels nor the Acts. Here is “One New Man” created in Christ and embracing both Jew and Gentile on an equality.

The Jew is a member of a nation; the believer in this Church is a member in The Body. God spoke to Israel as a nation and of her relationship to the earth. If obedient to His Law, they would be blessed with riches and glory here on earth; if unfaithful, they would be scattered to all the ends of the earth. This is not the revelation to the Church. God speaks to the Church of heavenly blessings; her citizenship and blessings are in the Heavens, “far above all”.

CONTRASTS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND CHURCH

ISRAEL

CHURCH

The Selection of Them

Neh. 9:7; Deut. 7:6
Israel is a chosen nation, called in Abraham and established in Christ their King when He sets up the Kingdom.

Eph. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:9
The Church is a chosen Body in Christ before the foundation of the world.

ISRAEL

CHURCH

The Election of Them

Gen. 12:2; Num. 23:9
In connection with Israel God's purpose is to establish a nation. She is never reckoned among the nations.

Eph. 1:21-22; 4:12-13; Col. 1:18
To the Church, God's purpose is to create a new body, and to build a temple as His dwelling place. Christ is the Head of this Body.

The Dominion of Them

Isa. 60:12
Israel as a nation will have supremacy over all the other nations of the earth.

Eph. 1:21-23; 3:10
The Church, His Body will have supremacy in the Heavens over all principalities and powers.

The Constitution of Them

Gen. 17:5-6; Isa. 48:12
God called Israel, in Abraham to be the father of a great multitude.

Eph. 1:10,18; 4:4; Col. 3:4
God called the Church, out of both Jew and Gentile, for unification. In the Church many are called to be one.

The Revelation to Them

Gen. 12:1-3; Deut. 8:7-10
God made known to Abraham that He would be the father of a great Nation (Ps. 149:2; Zech. 14:9-17; Matt. 1:1. Christ is King

Eph. 3:3-4; Col. 1:25
God made known to Paul the revelation of this Church. Christ is not spoken of as King of the Church, but Head.

The Obligations to Them

Lev. Ch. 11; Ex. 12:20; Lev. 3:17; Deut. 14:3. Nothing leavened; Neither fat nor blood; no abominable thing; a strict diet.

Col. 2:16; 3:17
Let no man judge you in what you in what you should eat or drink.

The Blessings to Them

Deut. 28:1-12
The blessings promised Israel are conditional upon their obedience to God's commandments.

Eph. 1:3
The blessings promised to the Church are unconditional. They are spiritual blessings in the Heavens.

The Culmination of Them

Isa. Chs. 2,11; Zeph. 3:14-15
Rom. Ch. 11
Israel will inherit the land promised to Abraham, and enjoy her millennial blessings.

Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 3:1-4 Eph. 1:12
The Church will be manifested in glory at the manifestation of her Head. The Church will share in all the glory of Christ.

Lesson #5 – THE FIRST-MENTION PRINCIPLE

INTRO:

Definition: The First-Occurrence Principle is that principle of Divine revelation wherein God indicates by the context of the first occurrence of any fact, His mind concerning the truth of that fact in Holy Scripture.

The presence of this principle in the Word of God has been frequently noted by Bible students:

Arthur T. Pierson refers to this principle, calling it “The Divine Law of Firsts”.

Benjamin Wills Newton said: “I find in Scripture a principle of interpretation on which I believe, if conscientiously adopted, will serve an unfailing guide to the mind of God as contained therein. The first mention, the very words of any subject of which the Holy Spirit is going to speak are the keystones of the whole matter”.

Another says: “This is the law we long since noticed, and have never yet found to fail. The first occurrence of a word, or an utterance, or an expression is the key to its subsequent meaning, or at least a guide as to the essential point connected with it”.

Clifton L. Fowler says: “The use of the First-Mention Principle unlocks many hidden treasures in God’s Holy book. This is the peculiarity of the principle – that when it is accurately employed it uncovers the most amazing wealth of unguessed meanings. It makes the Bible a surprise box. Passages that abound in symbols, the significance of which are utterly unknown to the soul, yield up messages of unsurpassed beauty when the First Occurrence Principle is employed and the meanings of the symbols drawn forth from the Word of God. The First Occurrence Principle makes the Bible self-explanatory. Because of the presence of this remarkable principle, it is no flight of the imagination to say that not only is the Bible God’s revelation, but because the Bible is self-interpreting, the Bible is indeed and in truth its own Unabridged Dictionary. Mere mentality cannot interpret Bible symbols. If the symbols employed in the Word of God actually possess a specific meaning, then there could be no absurdity quite so complete as the absurdity of seeking the significance of these symbols in the books produced by the intelligence of man, no matter how creditable or highly respected that intelligence may be. The only logical place to seek for the significance of the symbols which occur in God’s Word is in God’s Word itself. Where is there the man, who, outside of God’s own revelation, could have any knowledge of the meaning of celestial symbology?”

If this principle is workable, and we believe it is, the first time a fact is mentioned in Scripture there will be a revelation of truth that will be consistent all through the Word. There is but one Author in the Word, only one controlling and governing mind. In Heb. 1:1-2 we read: “God, who at sundry times and divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son”. Therefore, no matter when the message was given, or how, God was the speaker. Since there is only one Author He knows from the beginning what He is going to say.

EXAMPLES OF THE PRINCIPLE

1. The Holy Spirit

“And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” (Gen. 1:2). The Hebrew word translated “moved” is merahephet and means “hovering” or “brooding”. It is like a hen brooding over her nest of eggs. She has a continual quivering of her feathers in order to bring life. So the first thing said about the Holy Spirit is that He is a “brooding or life-giving Spirit”. This first occurrence will apply to the H.S. in Scripture. He brings life and light and liberty out of death, darkness and bondage.

Psalm 104:30; Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:35; John 3:5; 1 Cor. 2:10; 2 Cor. 3:3,6; John 14:26; 16:13.

2. The Devil, Satan

“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord had made” (Gen. 3:1).

The serpent here is none other than Satan, also called the Devil (Rev. 12:9).

The first mention concerning Satan is his subtility (2 Cor. 11:3). All the way through the Word this characteristic of Satan is predominant.

Matt. 4:1-10; Luke 4:1-13 – This is the record of the temptations of Christ. God had just declared at Christ’s baptism that He was “The Beloved Son”. “Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” (Gen. 3:1). Satan’s first temptation of Eve was in the matter of food.

First Temptation of Christ was in the Wilderness. Here it was a matter of hunger. Make bread out of stones, commands Satan. Note Christ’s answer in verse 4.

Second Temptation was on the temple. Satan challenges Christ on the basis of Scripture. Note Christ’s answer in verse 7.

Third Testing came on a mountain. Worship is what Satan now desires. Note again what Christ answers in verse 10.

3. The Ministry of Christ

“Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business” (Luke 2:49). In this first recorded utterance of Jesus we have the sum and substance of His whole life here on earth. In His ministry of both message and miracle it was the Father’s glory. His messages were directed to His glory and His miracles over disease, demons, and death were likewise.

John 7:18; 8:49-50; Luke 22:42.

4. Sanctification

“And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it” (Gen. 2:3).

The word translated “sanctified” is the Hebrew word godesh. Together with the Greek word hagios it is variously translated, such as, sanctify, consecrate, dedicate, holy, holiness and sanctification. The basic meaning of sanctification is “to set apart”. This separation is always for the service and glory of God.

Exod. 19:23; 28;1-3; Joel 1:14; Zech. 8:3. Thus whether of persons or things it always means “to set apart for God”. Only when used of God Himself (Lev. 11:45), or of the holy angels (Dan. 4:13) is any inward moral quality necessarily implied.

Matt. 4:5; 7:6; 23:17,19; 27:53; Acts 6:13; 21:28; Rom. 1:2 7:12; 16:16; 1 Cor. 9:13; 16:20; Col. 2:16; 2 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 9:12; 2 Pet. 1:18; Rev. 22:11.

5. “The Son of Man”

“What is man that thou art mindful of Him and the Son of Man that thou visitest him? (Ps. 8:4) This expression or designation always refers to Jesus Christ, His dominion and rule over the earth (Heb. 2:8-9).

Adam forfeited this rule by the Fall and no mortal man has been able to fulfill it. Only the Second Man, the Last Adam will fulfill this Rulership (1 Cor. 15:45). This expression occurs some 88 times in the N.T. but never in the Church Epistles.

Matt. 8:20; 9:6; 10:23; 12:8; 16:13,27; Mark 2:10,28; 8:31,38; 10:33; 13:26; Luke 5:24; 6:5,22; 7:34; 11:30; 18:8,31; John 1:51; 3:13-14; 5:27; 8:28; 13:31; Acts 7:56; Heb. 2:6; Rev. 1:13; 14:14.

6. The words “believed”, “counted”, “righteousness”.

“And he believed in the Lord and He counted it to him for righteousness” (Gen. 15:6) – (Abraham). The righteousness of God is neither an attribute nor the changed character of the believer, but Christ Himself, Who is by the act of God imputed unto us. Righteousness is always imputed to man on the basis of faith.

Rom. 3:22; 4:3,5; Gal. 3:6; Phile. 17-18; James 2:23

7. The Sword

“So he drive out the man, and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life” (Gen. 3:24).

Adam and Eve had been expelled from the Garden because of their transgression. The purpose of the expulsion is to debar them from eating of the Tree of Life. Thus God placed the cherubim and the flaming sword to keep the way of the Tree of Life. So the task of the sword was to keep the way of the Tree of Life. It “turned every way”. Not natah (aside) or savav (about) or sug (back) or panah (toward), but haphak (every way), effectively preserving the way.

Eph. 6:17; Rev. 19:15. The Word of God conquers all.

8. The Trumpet

“When the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come to the mount” (Exod. 19:13).

The trumpet is always connected with a gathering of God’s people. It may be a gathering for blessing, for war, or for judgment. It is associated with Israel and the Lord’s Second Advent to set up the Kingdom.

1 Kings 1:39; Matt. 24:31; 1 Thess. 4:16; Rev. 1:10; 4:1; 8:2; 8:6; 8:13; 9:14.

LESSON # 6 – THE DISCRIMINATION PRINCIPLE

INTRO:

Definition: The Discrimination Principle is that principle by which we should divide the Word of Truth so as to make a distinction where God makes a difference.

In Philippians 1:10 Paul says: “That ye may approve things that are excellent” (A.V.). A better translation of “approve things that are excellent” would be “TRY THE THINGS THAT DIFFER”. There are many things in Scripture which seem like each other, but which are actually different. If a distinction is not made only confusion and error will ensue.

I. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CREATURES OF GOD AND CHILDREN OF GOD

There is an expression widely used in Christendom which says: “The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man”. They mean that God is the Father of all men, and hence all men are brothers. But all men are not the children of God; they may be the creatures of God.

1. There is more than one father – John 8:38-44 speaks of those who “are of your father the Devil”. There are two kinds of seed in the Parable of the Tares and Wheat: “the children of the Kingdom and the children of the Wicked One” (Matt. 13:24-30; 36-43). There is Abel the “righteous one” (Heb. 11:4) and there is Cain “who was of that wicked one” (1 John 3:12). 1 John 3:10 speaks of “the children of God ... and the children of the Devil”. See Elymas (Acts 13:8-10).

2. Creation then re-creation – God’s process is natural, physical creation first, then spiritual regeneration or recreation. We become the creatures of God by being in Adam; we become the sons of God in a new creation by being “in Christ” (2 Cor. 5:17). The Sons of God nature does not run in the blood. We are not begotten as children of God. We are by nature “the children of wrath” (Eph. 2:3). God does a new work when we get the Divine nature (1 Pet. 1:3; 2:pet. 1:4). So Adam is the Head of the Old Creation; Christ is the Head of the New Creation. Creaturehood dates back to creation, but childhood or sonship dates back to re-creation. God only created one man, Adam, and gave to him the power of procreation. But in this new creation God deals with every man. In creation God operates by the natural law of generation, but in the new creation by the supernatural law of Divine regeneration.

3. Acts 17:24-29 – This is a favorite passage with those who speak of the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man. But here Paul is speaking about God as Creator of mankind. He begins his discussion with these Athenians on the basis of God the Creator and then moves into the spiritual (Vrs. 30-31). The passage must be seen in the light of the whole context. The only Fatherhood of God that exists is that which exists with His spiritual children and the only brotherhood of man is that which exists in Jesus Christ.

II. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ACCEPTED AND THE ACCEPTABLE

All believers are accepted by God, but all believers may not be acceptable to God. There is a difference and so we should make a distinction.

Eph. 1:6 – “To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted (echaritosen) in the Beloved”.

2 Cor. 5:9 – “Wherefore we labor that whether present or absent, we may be accepted (euarestoi) of Him”.

In these two verses we have two “accepted”. In the English they are spelled the same, but not in the Greek. In Eph. 1:6 the word means “to grace much, to make lovely or acceptable”. In 2 Cor. 5:9 it means “to become well-pleasing or acceptable”.

The first is an instantaneous act done by God the moment we accept Christ. The second is a process and becomes a fact as we daily walk with Him. The first is done by God without us; the second is done by God with us as we yield to His will.

1. Acceptance – This truth as set forth in Ephesians 1:6 means two things:

a. Representation – Christ represented us when He went to the Cross. He was delivered for our offences (Rom. 4:25); He was made to be sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24). Christ was our Representative in Whom God fully dealt with our sin. He is also a Representative in glory before the face of the Father, always making intercession (Heb. 7:25). He is our Head at the right hand of God.

b. Identification – We are identified with Christ to such an extent that all the experiences of Christ are reckoned by God to the believer (Rom. 6:6-8; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:5-6; Col. 2:12). This means that I died in Christ, was raised in Christ, ascended with Christ and am seated with Christ. Potentially all this is mine in Christ at this moment; experientially my glorification in resurrection and manifestation will be future.

The words “crucified”, “dead”, “quicken”, “raised”, “sit together”, and “buried” in the verses above are all in either the aorist or perfect tenses indicating a past completed work.

“Near so very near to God, Nearer I cannot be,
For in the Person of His Son I am just as near as He.
Dear, so very dear to God, Dearer I cannot be,
For in the Person of His Son, I am just as dear as He.”

So from these experiences of death, burial, resurrection, ascension and seating which came to Christ, we now live in Christ. God reckons all this work of Christ to the believer the moment he accepts Christ as Savior. As a believer we are positioned in Christ, and His perfection is our perfection. This is what we call “Positional Christianity”. This is not to be confused with our present condition and conduct. That may at times be very imperfect.

We are also told that “Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption” (1 Cor. 1:30).

2. Acceptable

After God has “accepted us in the Beloved” we are then to live such lives that we become acceptable or well-pleasing to Him (2 Cor. 5:9). We are admonished: “Study to show thyself approved unto God” (2 Tim. 2:15). Christ received the attestation from His Father at the baptism that He was well-pleasing (Matt. 3:17).

a. It is possible to be saved and yet suffer great loss

When the fiery test comes, then the wood, hay, and stubble will be swept away; only gold, silver, and precious stones will endure (1 Cor. 3:11-15). Only that which is built on Jesus Christ and the Word of God will endure. Let us therefore take heed how we build.

b. It is possible to be saved and yet become a “castaway” or disapproved 1 Cor. 9:27)

Some folks get very excited over this verse. They think it means saved today and lost tomorrow. But the context is our guide. It speaks of obtaining a corruptible crown. Paul is not speaking of salvation, but of service and reward. If we have ever been on a farm we have seen under a big old tree a lot of rusty farm machinery. It looks like it might still be usable, but the farmer had discarded it as useless.

The Greek word translated “castaway” is adokimos and means “unapproved, that will not stand proof”. See also Prov. 25:4; Isa. 1:22).

c. It is possible to be saved and yet be chastised (Heb. 12:5,7,11).

The Greek word here is paideia and means “the bringing up of a child, its training, teaching, and education”. Believers are not punished in the sense of judgment. Punishment has in it the thought of penal suffering; chastisement the thought of remedial suffering. We are chastised as children in a family; not as criminals in a penal institution.

d. It is possible to be saved and yet live in the flesh (Gal. 5:7-8; Col. 3:25)

Only a saved man can sow to his flesh and also to his spirit. Sowing to the flesh reaps “corruption” but sowing to the Spirit reaps “life everlasting”. Paul deals exhaustively with this matter of flesh and spirit in Rom. 8:1-13. They that walk “in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom. 8:8). We always reap what we sow: carnality in the flesh and spirituality in the spirit.

Here then is the difference between acceptance and acceptable. Our acceptance “in the Beloved” is once for all; our acceptableness is conditioned on our consistent Christian living. Accepted has to do with faith; acceptable with faith and works. Our acceptance is always complete in Him; our acceptableness is often imperfect and partial.

The Bible has much to say about our walk; “Walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4); “Walk honestly” and decorously (Rom. 13:13); “Walk in the Spirit” (Gal. 5:25); “Walk in good works” (Eph. 2:10); “Walk worthy of the vocation” (Eph. 4:1); “Walk in love (Eph. 5:2); “Walk circumspectly” (Eph. 5:15); “Walk worthy of the Lord” (Col. 1:10); “Walk in Christ” (Col. 2:6). See also Col. 4:5; 1 Jn. 1:7; 3 Jn. 4.

III. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRUE POSSESSORS AND MERE PROFESSORS

There is a world of difference between a possession of Christ and a mere profession of Him. The classic illustration in Scripture is that of the twelve apostles of Christ. The Lord called twelve apostles and one of them was Judas Iscariot (Matt. 10:1-4). He gave them power to cast out unclean demons and to heal all diseases. Yet one was an apostate, a traitor to the Lord; of whom the Lord said: “one of you is a devil” (John 6:68-71). He is called “the son of perdition” (Jn. 17:12) and went “to his own place” (Acts 1:25). From these passages it is evident that Judas was a mere professor and not a real possessor.

A person may fail the Lord at times, but that does not mean that such a one was a mere professor. Peter failed the Lord but he never ceased to be a possessor.

Cain is another example of a mere professor. He made an altar and brought an offering before the Lord the same as Abel. He was not an idolater. But John tells us “Cain was of that wicked one and slew his brother” (1 Jn. 3:12). The parable of the Tares and the Wheat is another example of mere profession. The tares look so much like the wheat that only in the harvest can one tell the difference (Matt. 13:24-30). One may have “a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof” (2 Tim. 3:5).

It is possible for a so-called Christian worker to be popular and have statistical success and yet never be a real possessor of Christ.

POSSESSORS

1. Have had a real experience.
2. Have an inner force of godliness.
3. Is Christ-centered.
4. Inner faith in God under all circumstances.
5. Has a deep desire to study and know God’s will in His Word.
6. Is a true child of God.
7. Shall inherit all the blessings (Matt. 25:34).

PROFESSORS

1. Have had a mere psychological, emotional experience.
2. Have an outer form of godliness.
3. Is self-centered.
4. Outward show of faith in good circumstances only.
5. Has a deep desire for human experience and outward show.
6. Is a mere creature of God.
7. Shall suffer the loss of all blessing (Matt. 25:41).

IV. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FAITH AND WORKS

Eph. 2:8-9 – Here we see that faith and works are both by Divine appointment. They are both to be found in the life of the believer. Without faith one cannot be saved and without works there can be no evidence of salvation. Each one has its own place and purpose in the Christian life. There must be no confusion between the two. A confusion here can only lead to legalism and to formalism which would frustrate the grace of God.

What is Faith? Heb. 11:1 says: “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”. The word translated “substance” is hypostasis and means “a placing underneath”, hence a “foundation”. So faith is “the foundation of things hoped for”. The word translated “evidence” is elenchos and means “proof or conviction”; hence faith is also “the conviction of things not seen”.

“Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17). God has spoken and when faith believes what God has said, it becomes a “foundation” and “conviction” that the record is true.

1. Faith Becomes the Means of Salvation

When faith is applied to the record of God’s redemption in Jesus Christ it becomes the means to sonship and spiritual life (John 1:12; 3:16,36; Acts 16:31; Eph. 2:8). If we do not believe the record we make God a liar (1 Jn. 5:10).

Faith is absolutely necessary (Heb. 11:6). A person may be cultured, refined, respectable, and moral in every way, but he cannot please God except by faith. Faith must be a heart assent, not merely a head assent (Rom. 10:9-10). Head assent is merely a passive, mental acceptance; while a heart assent is an active acceptance. (I may believe that a man can push a wheelbarrow across Niagara Falls on a wire. That is head assent. But if I am willing to sit in the wheelbarrow while he does it, that would be heart assent).

2. Works Bring the Merits of Salvation

First we are saved, but then we are saved to serve. We are never saved by works (Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:5; Rom. 3:20; 4:5; 5:1). The good works that God desires do not bring salvation but are the result of salvation. But man is so prone to put works at the wrong end of his salvation. Every spurious religion puts works first and last. Works belong to the new creation in Christ Jesus (Gal. 6:9-10; Tit. 2:11-14; Heb. 13:16). So works belong to the saved man and give evidence of his salvation (Eph. 2:10; Tit. 3:8).

Good works will be rewarded at the Second Advent of Christ (Rom. 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:8).

The unsaved man is a sinner and can be likened to a leper. Nothing that the leper does can be accepted. So all the works of the natural man are leprous. They are sin-covered, marred and marked with leprosy.

Salvation comes by faith alone and is free; rewards are merited and are the result of good works. Salvation is a present possession; rewards are a future possession. Salvation can never be lost; but rewards may be lost. In salvation the best service is useless; but under rewards the least service is remembered (Matt. 10:41-42). Salvation is now depending on what God has done; rewards are future depending on the good works which we have done.

V. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LAW AND GRACE

“For the Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ” (Jn. 1:17).

By Law we mean that legal system instituted by God unto Moses through angels at Mt. Sinai (Exod. Ch. 20).

By Grace we mean that unmerited favor of God bestowed upon all men in Jesus Christ at Calvary.

Broadly speaking, Law belongs to the O.T. record; while grace belongs to the N.T. record.

Grace is a bestowment of Divine mercy apart from any human merit. It is Divine help to the helpless apart from any human effort. It means Divine justification for the condemned apart from any human satisfaction. It means salvation to the lost apart from any human deed.

Scripture never mingles law and grace. They are always and ever kept distinct. Law is a ministry of condemnation; Grace a ministry of consolation. Law curses; Grace redeems from the curse. Law kills; Grace makes alive. Law shuts every mouth before God; Grace opens all mouths in praise. Law says: "Hate thine enemy"; Grace says: "Love your enemies" (Matt. 5:43-44). Law says: "Do and live"; Grace says: "Believe and live" (Deut. 4:1; 5:32-33; 6:1-3; 8:1; Jn. 3:16; Acts 16:31). Law is a system of probation; Grace is a source of provision.

1. They have different principles

Law in its principle demands righteousness from man; while Grace in its principle gives righteousness to men (Rom. 3:21-22). It is a righteousness apart from the Law and apart from all human effort; bestowed on all who believe (Rom. 3:28; Phil. 3:9). The Law in its principle demands works; Grace in its principle asks for faith. The Law blesses the obedient and the good; Grace saves the disobedient and the sinner (Exod. 19:5; Eph. 2:5).

2. They have different purposes

3.

The Law was never given to save men, but that men might know the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the exceeding helplessness of all human effort; and hence lead to Christ (Rom. 7:7,13; Gal. 3:24). Before the Law was given there was sin in the world; but when the Law was introduced it made sin a transgression and the sinner a transgressor (Rom.4:15; 5:20; Gal. 3:19). (When I post a sign on my lawn, Stay Off The Grass, then when you trespass, it becomes a transgression and you a transgressor. But before the sign, it was wrong to trespass; but it was not a transgression).

The Law never made a bad man good nor a good man perfect. It is only adapted for perfect beings. Grace, on the other hand, is adapted only for imperfect beings, for sinners.

The Law is not an enemy. It is not sinful. The Law is "spiritual" it is "holy and just and good" (Rom. 7:14,12; Ps. 19). We hate the Law because we are not perfect; we are imperfect.

The Lord summarized the Law in a twofold way: (1) Supreme love to God; and (2) Supreme love to man (Mark 12:29-31). The Law was given to show what man really is – carnal, sinful, and disobedient. Grace was given to show what God is – merciful, forgiving, loving, "rich in mercy" (Eph. 2:4). The Law could reveal sin, but cannot remove sin. It is like a plumbline to show us how much we are out of perpendicular. The Law is a looking-glass revealing our need of cleansing; it is not the soap, water, and towel.

The Law reveals the heart of man; Grace the heart of God. It isn't difficult to get men to realize that they are saved by grace; it is hard to get them to see that they are saved by grace alone.

God demands perfect, but the Law is not able to give man that perfection. The Law commands man to be perfect and then curses him when he fails. If we fail in one point, we are guilty of all (James 2:10).

Grace is given to keep us from stumbling and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory. The Law could not save us because it was weak through the flesh; but God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and condemned sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us by the Spirit (Rom. 8:3-4). The Law was not sinful, but it was weak through the flesh. (We might illustrate with a fork that is thrust into a piece of roast that is

too well done. It cannot therefore pick it up. There is nothing wrong with the fork; it is the meat. So the Law is weak and cannot operate because of the weakness of our flesh).

We are not under Law, but under Grace (Rom. 6:14-15). Being under grace does not mean that we are free to trample upon Law and live like spiritual anarchists. The Spirit and love of God is shed abroad in our hearts enabling us to live lawful lives. The believer in Christ does not need the Law. He lives by the higher law of love and Christ.

(There is a law in our State that parents must take care of their children. Are there then thousands of mothers who care for their children because of this law? Not at all. Most parents care for their children out of the higher law of love.)

As believers today we should not need the legal system. We live by the higher law of grace which makes us obedient to all of God's laws. We are to take our eyes off of Sinai and put them on Calvary.

In studying Law and Grace we must always keep in mind that God in Grace has imputed all the perfection of the Law through faith in Christ. We are given a perfect standing in perfect obedience to the Law, because Christ fully obeyed God's Law. A marvelous transaction takes place in salvation. God imputed all our sin unto Christ; and in turn imputes all the righteousness of Christ unto us (2 Cor. 5:21).

3. The Enemies of Grace

a. Law is an enemy – When anyone attempts to be saved or kept by the Law he nullifies God's grace. Law-keeping opposes Grace. To put oneself under Law is to fall from Grace (Gal. 5:4). Law becomes therefore an opponent of Grace.

b. Works is an enemy – He who seeks to attempt any kind of works for salvation nullifies God's grace (Rom. 4:4-5). The many religions and cults have a works program, endeavoring to get to Heaven by their own works.

c. Character is an enemy – This is the sum of all good human qualities. Many substitute character and culture for the Word of God. There are no good men in the sight of God, outside of Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:10-23). Unitarianism, Christian Science and Modern Liberalism all seek to save men by character.

4. The Grace of God

We have abundant grace (Rom. 5:15,17,20); riches of grace (Eph. 1:7); exceeding riches of grace (Eph. 2:7; 2 Cor. 9:8,14); grace to the humble (James 4:6); manifold grace of God (1 Pet. 4:10). Noah found grace; Moses sought grace; Joseph found grace; the children of Israel found grace in the Wilderness (Gen. 6:8; Ex. 33:12-13; 39:4; Jer. 31:2).

LESSON #7 – THE TYPOLOGY PRINCIPLE

INTRO:

1. **Definition:** A type is a divinely appointed illustration of a Scriptural Truth; a shadow of the substance (Col. 2:17; Heb. 10:1).

2. The word “type” is derived from the Greek word “tupos” and it occurs some 16 times in the N.T. It is translated in the A.V. by “print” (Jn. 20:25); “figure” (Acts 7:43; Rom. 5:14); “pattern” (Tit. 2:7; Heb. 8:5); “fashion” (Acts 7:44); “manner” (Acts 23:25); “form” (Rom. 6:17; “example” (1 Cor., 10:6,11; Phil. 3:17). The general idea is that of “likeness”.

The Greek word “tupos” means “a die” (as something struck). It is derived from the verb tupto “to thump” or “to hammer with repeated blows of the fist or palm”. By implication it came to mean a stamp or scar, and from this by analysis it was used for a shape, a statue, a style or resemblance. It may have, therefore, the sense of a model or standard; the mark or impression of something; or a figure or representation of something to come. In the Bible a type may be a person, a thing, or event, so fashioned as to resemble another – the antitype is the thing it resembles.

Three other N.T. words are considered by many to have much the same meaning: (1) “Shadow” (skia) Heb. 10:1; (2) “parable” (parabole) Heb. 9:9; and (3) “copy” or “pattern” (hupodeigma) Heb. 9:23.

3. Two extremes must be guarded against in studying O.T. Typology: (1) The tendency to confine it only to those types so spoken of in the N.T. This procedure assumes that the N.T. exhausted the types of the O.T., whereas they but give the key to the study of O.T. types. (2) The other extreme is found in certain of the Fathers as Origen, Ambrose, and Jerome and in certain modern writers of The Plymouth Brethren, who find in every least incident some profound type.

4. Typology is not only one of the most important subjects for Bible students, but also one of the most delightful. Those unacquainted with the subject can have no idea of its absorbing interest. But all who, guided by the H.S., have considered the types and have seen how wonderfully they bring out the different aspects of the antitypes, will agree as to the enormous amount of pleasure and of profit to be derived from this subject.

John Bunyan in his book, *The Holy War* contains the following paragraph on the O.T. types: “Emmanuel was for entertaining the town of Mansoul with some curious riddles of secrets drawn up by his Father’s secretary, by the skill and wisdom of shaddai; the like to these there is not in any kingdom. These riddles were made upon the King Shaddai himself and upon Emmanuel His Son, and upon His wars and doings with Mansoul. Emmanuel also expounded unto them some of those riddles Himself; but, Oh! How they were lightened! They saw what they never saw; they could not have thought that such rarities could have been couched in so few and such ordinary words. I told you before whom these riddles did concern; and as they were opened, the people did evidently see it was so. Yea, they did gather that the things themselves were a kind of portraiture and that of Emmanuel Himself; for when they read in the scheme where the riddles were writ, and looked in the face of the Prince, things looked so like the one to the other, that Mansoul could not forbear but say: “This is the Lamb! This is the sacrifice! This is the Rock! This is the Red Cow! This is the Door! And this is the Way!”, with a great many other things”.

“In all the types, Christ is partly revealed and partly veiled. No single type sets Him forth fully. Take them all together and we have a life-size portrait of the Redeemer” – J. Norman Case.

“Many parts of the Old Testament, as Exodus and Leviticus in particular, are as a sealed book to one who has no understanding of the types; the whole New Testament is but a large and full exposition of those types. They are full of light and glory, since they are full of Christ” – Cotton Mather.

5. Typology Reveals: (1) Agreement of thought; (2) Change in God's revealed order; (3) Impotence of time; (4) The Bible as a miracle; (5) The key to the N.T.; (6) Christianity as reality; (7) Shadows done away in realities.

6. "The Scriptures ... testify of Me" (Jn. 5:39). So said the Savior, speaking of the O.T. He is set forth therein by promise and prophecy, but also by picture or type.

It is said that all the rituals having to do with the Law are shadows, but the body which casts the shadow is Christ (Col. 2:17). As a person walks away from the sun his shadow is cast before him. It precedes him. "God is Light and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 Jn. 1:5). The Lord Jesus left God, Who is the Light that came into this world; and as He came away from God into this world His shadow was cast before Him. In the N.T. one meets the body of Him who cast his shadow in the O.T.

7. Distinctive features of types: (1) They must be a true picture of the antitype containing well-defined features; (2) They must be prophetic, prefiguring something future, not past; (3) They must be complete, the antitype always being of a higher category. There must be similitude, but not identity. Hence it follows that there must be disparity or dissimilitude between the type and the antitype as well as analogy. Not everything about the type may be taken as depicting the antitype; (4) It must be appointed by God, that is, there must not simply be resemblance between things, but that resemblance must be designed; (5) A type must never be used to teach doctrine, but only to illustrate a doctrine elsewhere explicitly taught (John 3:14; 1 Cor. 5:7; 2 Cor. 5:21).

8. In discussing Examples of Types, McClintock and Strong says: "In tracing out who and what typified or shadowed forth Christ and His salvation under the Antediluvian, Patriarchal, and Mosaic Dispensations, we must be careful not to substitute the suggestions of our own imaginations for the intimations of Scripture. We must endeavor to learn the mind of God as to what actually constitutes a type, either by the express declarations of Scripture, or by the obvious analogy which subsists between things under the Gospel and its antecedent dispensations. Thus guarding ourselves, we may notice the various types by which God was pleased at all times, in a sense, to preach the Gospel to mankind."

9. A TYPE MAY BE:

(1) A Person – Before the Law: Adam (Rom. 5:14), Enoch, Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, and Joseph were eminently typical of Christ, but only in certain relations. Under the Law: Moses, Joshua, Samson, David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the High Priest were in many points singularly types of Christ.

(2) Orders of Persons – The Nazarites, prophets, priests and kings were typical orders of persons.

(3) Things – Jacob's Ladder, The Burning Bush, The Pillar of Fire and Cloud, The Manna, The Rock, The Brazen Serpent, and The Veil of the Temple a type of the Body of Christ (Heb. 10:20).

(4) Events – The events of the Exodus (1 Cor. 10:11), such as: The Deliverance out of Egypt, The passage over the Red Sea, The passage over Jordan, The entrance into Canaan and the restoration from Babylon.

(5) Rites or Ceremonies – Passover, a type of the sacrifice of Christ (1 Cor. 5:7), Circumcision, Sacrifices, and sundry purifications.

(6) An Institution – Jewish High Priest, a type of the High-Priesthood of Christ (Heb. 10:11).

(7) Places – The Land of Canaan, The Cities of Refuge, The Tabernacle and The Temple.

The above types were designed to shadow forth Christ and the blessings of His salvation; but there were others, such as ceremonial uncleanness, revealed in leprosy, a type of natural pollution.

10. Typical References in the N.T.

In addition to the verses in the N.T. where the actual word “*typos*” is used we see the study of types upheld in many other ways. Christ Himself used them (Luke 24:27). Expressions like “the Lamb of God”, “destroy this temple”, “Christ the firstfruits”, “As Moses lifted up the serpent”, “the bread of life”, “the water of life”, “the true vine”, “Christ our passover”, etc. all take us back to the O.T. types. An outstanding application of a type is Melchizedek in Hebrews Ch. 7. There is a type in the “ashes of the heifer” (Num. 19:1-10; Heb. 9:13). The narrative of Hagar and Ishmael is used in Gal. 4:24). The word “allegory” comes from two Greek words: allos (other) and agora (assembly). It is a symbolical representation, an emblem. A type is the impress of a seal, the stamp of a coin; hence the pattern or model after which a thing is made. A parable means a placing beside, or side by side for the purpose of comparison. It conceals from the one what it reveals to the other. Moses becomes a type on the ground of Deut. 18:15; Adam on the bases of 1 Cor. 15:22,45; Abel, the first shepherd, because of Heb. 12:24; Jonah because of Matt. 12:40.

From all this it can readily be seen that a study of types forms an important part of a true Bible research. Those who do not pursue such a study lose much. Many N.T. portions cannot be understood apart from an understanding of types. Let us be faithful in proclaiming this whole counsel of God.

I. ADAM – A STUDY OF TYPE BY CONTRAST

<u>A D A M</u>		<u>C H R I S T</u>
	<u>Rom. 5:12-21</u>	
One Offence		One act of righteousness
Death		Life
Disobedience		Obedience
Many sinners		Many righteous
Law		Grace
Sin – Death		Grace - Life
Sin abounds		Grace superabounds
Condemnation		Justification
	<u>1 Cor. 15:21,22,45-50</u>	
Death		Resurrection
All die		All made alive
First Adam		Last Adam
Living soul		Quickening spirit
Natural		Spiritual
Earth		Heaven
Earthly image		Heavenly image
Corruption		Incarnation
	<u>Ephesians Ch. 2</u>	
Dead in sins		Alive unto God
Children of wrath		Children of God
Far off		Made nigh
Without God		Brought to God
Enemies		Reconciled

No hope Blessed hope
Galatians Ch. 4
 Bondage Liberty

II. NOAH AND THE ARK (Gen. Chs. 6-9)

“And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind and a covert from the tempest” (Isa. 32:2).

Both Noah and the ark are typical of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. In His Name

Noah was the son of Lamech and father of Shem, Ham and Japheth. He died at the age of 950 years. He was the tenth from Adam through Seth and was born 126 years after the death of Adam and 14 after that of Seth. He was contemporary with Enos for 84 years, with Terah for 128 years, and with Abram for about 50 years.

Noah means “rest or comfort”. His name foreshadowed Christ. He was a rest giver and provided comfort in time of sorrow incurred by the curse of sin (Matt. 11:28-30). Isaiah predicted: “His rest shall be glorious” (11:10).

2. In His Nature

“Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord” (Gen. 6:8). This does not mean that Noah had innate grace; but the grace of God was his portion. Of our Lord it was said: “the grace of God was upon Him”, and also that he was “full of grace” (Luke 2:40; John 1:14). God looked upon Noah with favor and delight as He did His Son (Matt. 3:17).

“Noah was a just man” (Gen. 6:9). His being “just” was because of an imputed righteousness, but this was not true of Jesus Christ. He had an inherent holiness and righteousness (Heb. 7:26). Noah was accounted righteous.

“Noah walked with God”. This is said of only two men, Enoch and Noah (Gen. 5:22,24). “Can two walk together except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3). The word translated “agreed” is the Hebrew word yaad. This word occurs also in Exod. 25:22 where it is translated “meet”. It literally means that they have met together by appointment (of time and place). The Lord Jesus and His Father always walked together. In the beginning of His ministry He said: “I must be about my Father’s business” (Luke 2:49). And at the end of His earthly ministry He could say: “I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do” (John 17:4). From eternity to eternity He walked with His Father. The only time when this fellowship was broken is on the cross when “Jesus cried with a loud voice ... My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46). It was the awful sin of humanity that severed this fellowship on the cross.

“Noah was perfect in his generations”. The Hebrew word translated “perfect” is tamin and means without blemish as to breed or pedigree. All flesh except Noah and his family was corrupt (Gen. 6:11). “I have seen thee righteous before me in this generation” (Gen. 7:1). The evil and corruption seen here is caused by the fallen angels, called “sons of God” co-habiting with fallen daughters of men (Gen. 6:2). For Christ see Heb. 2:14-16.

3. In His Work

“By faith Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith” (Heb. 11:7).

God gave Noah a work to do which is singular and saving in its effects. No mere man was ever given such a task as that given to Noah. And no one else was given such a singular and saving work as that given to Jesus Christ. They were both given the task of preserving representatives of creation from the wrath of God. The deep waters are always an element of danger and destruction and speak of sorrow, suffering and death. They typify the waters of

judgment through which the Lord Jesus passed in suffering and death for us. It is in this connection that waters are often spoken of in the Psalms – (Ps. 88:7; 42:7; 69:1,2,14,15; 36:6). Noah was preserved in safety and the waters of the Flood touched him not, because he was safe in the ark; but the ark must pass through the waters and the waves must beat upon it. This speaks of Christ, our ark, who met the storm for us and became our place of safety.

Another interesting comparison between Noah and the Lord is that they were both carpenters. Of Christ it was interrogated: “Is not this the carpenter’s son?” (Matt. 13:55); and “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?” (Mk. 6:3). If God set Noah to build the ark 120 years before the flood, he began to build before a son was born. That means that for 20 years he was preparing an ark for his household (See Gen. 5:32; 7:11). So Christ “was foreordained before the foundation of the world” to be God’s Lamb (1 Pet. 1:20). And we were “chosen in Him before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4). Christ performed His work of salvation alone, as Noah was alone the prime mover in the building of the ark. On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest did the work alone; no man could help him. When Christ was on the cross there was His mother standing near by and His Father was in Heaven, but neither of them could help Him.

The ark was made of gopher wood and speaks of the Lord’s humanity. Gopher wood is slow to decay. The Lord had a sinless perfect body. Mary’s body became the channel for the Holy Spirit’s conception of the body of Christ (Luke 1:35). The ark was made with three stories and one window, which went all the way around the ark. It had only one door. They entered by that one door. The tabernacle and the sheepfold had each their one door. Jesus said: “I am the door” (John 10:9). Many have been troubled about just one window in that big ark. But they think of a window about three feet square. That window was one cubit wide and 700 cubits long. It isn’t what people read in Scripture, but what they read into Scripture that causes trouble. The ark had three stories. These three stories denote a threefold salvation for body, soul, and spirit (1 Thess. 5:23); and for the past, present and future (Eph. 2:1-6; 2:8,13; 2:7).

The ark was also a refuge from Divine judgment. It was a place of safety provided by God when death threatened all. It was the only place of deliverance from the wrath to come just as Christ is our only refuge from the wrath of God against sin (Rom. 5:9; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:9). With this thought of safety comes sacrifice. Noah was told “pitch it within and without with pitch”. Thus the ark had a double protective covering. The Hebrew word translated “pitch” is kopher or kaphar. This word is translated “atonement” in Exod. 30:10 and in some dozens of other O.T. passages. So the ark was a place both of safety and security; safe from the flood and secure for all future blessing. That ark could not sink. Noah and his family were in that ark, but so was Christ in the loins of Shem. This ship lacks mast, sails, helm, rudder, chart, anchor and compass. Noah sailed by faith and not by sight.

There is another blessed type in this story – a type of the resurrection. We are told that “the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat (Gen. 8:4). When God was to institute the Passover, He chose the seventh month, changed the calendar, making it the first month. The Passover lamb was slain on the 14th day. Jesus Christ was crucified on the 14th day of this new month. Three days later on the 17th He came forth in resurrection. So the ark rested on the 17th day of the Passover month. That ark was built on the dimensions of a coffin and when the eight souls came forth from the ark it was like coming out of a coffin. That is resurrection, and that is where we are today “raised up together with Christ” (Eph. 2:6).

The invitation of God to Noah was not a command but an invitation: “come into the ark”. This is the first occurrence of the word “come” in Scripture. It is found some 500 times more. God did not say “Go” but “Come”. “Come unto me ... and I will give your rest” (Matt. 11:28). God invites us to come and meet Him in Jesus Christ. It is always a personal and individual invitation. Salvation is always individual through faith in an Individual.

III. MELCHIZEDEK – A STUDY OF TYPE BY COMPARISON

Gen. 14:18-20; Ps. 110:4; Heb. Chs. 5,7.

Melchizedek and Christ are the only two personages who have fulfilled the offices of Priest and Potentate. This mysterious personage has been the object of much speculation and vain discussion. But Scripture does not tell us who his parents were.

1. The Historical Figure (Gen. 14:18-20)

This historical record tells us that he was “king of Salem” and “the priest of the most high God”. He brought “bread and wine”, symbols used by the greater Melchizedek, the Lord Jesus, centuries later as He instituted His memorial service. “Bread and wine” symbolize His body and blood (Matt. 26:26-29; Mk. 14:22-25; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

There have been many guesses as to Melchizedek’s parenthood and ancestry. Some thing he was Shem. Shem was alive at this time and lived for some sixty years longer. It says of Melchizedek that we do not know about his parentage nor his descendents (Heb. 7:3). We know about Shem’s father and his descendents. Others think he was Christ in an O.T. Christophany. But we are told that Melchizedek was “made like unto the Son of God” (Heb. 7:3) and, that Christ’s priesthood is “after the similitude of Melchizedek (Heb. 7:3,15). Again, he has been thought of as a celestial being. But it says that he was a “man” (Heb. 7:4). However, this matter is not important for the truth and type of the record. Abraham receives from Melchizedek “bread and wine” the fruit of Salem and rejects the spoils of Sodom.

2. The Prophetical Forecast (Ps. 110:4)

Here we learn that the Lord is a priest “after the order of Melchizedek”. The important word here is the word “order”. It occurs seven times with reference to Christ and Melchizedek (See also Heb. 5:6; 5:10; 6:20; 7:11; 7:17; 7:21). So it is the manner or arrangement of his priesthood that is important, not his parentage.

3. The Typical Fulfillment (Heb. Chs. 5,7)

Melchizedek is also set in contrast to Aaron and the Levitical Priesthood here in Hebrews. Melchizedek is a King-Priest. Aaron was only a priest and of a different order, that of Levi. Christ in contrast to Aaron was from Judah and thus is compared to Melchizedek. The Melchizedek type of priesthood was: (a) A Royal Priesthood. He was called “King of Righteousness”, “King of Salem”, and thus “King of Peace”. He combined both the kingly and priestly. This was God’s original order and this is what Christ will be. Israel too will be a kingdom of priests (Exod. 19:6; 1 Pet. 2:5,9; Rev. 1:6). (b) A Righteous Priesthood. The name Melchizedek means: “King of Righteousness”. The prophet Jeremiah speaks of “The Lord our Righteousness” (23:5-6). (c) A Peaceful Priesthood. Melchizedek was the “King of Salem” which means “King of Peace”. So in His titles Christ unites righteousness and peace (Ps. 85:10; Isa. 32:17; Rom. 5:1; 14:17; Col. 1:20). God’s order is first righteousness, then peace. (d) A Personal Priesthood. This priesthood was not inherited. It was inherent in Melchizedek as it is in Christ. Aaron was followed by descendents. (e) An Age-abiding Priesthood. “... abideth a priest continually”. “... ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:3,25).

IV. ISAAC – A TYPE OF CHRIST BY COMPARISON (Gen. Chs. 21-27)

ISAAC

In Person and Character

A child of promise (Gen. 15:4; Gal. 4:28)
Birth pre-announced to Sarah by an angel
(Gen. 18:10)
Name given before birth (Gen. 17:19)
Birth contrary to nature, Sarah being
barren (Gen. 21:2; 11:30)

CHRIST

A Child of promise (Isa. 7:14)
Birth pre-announced to Mary by an
angel (Luke 1:30-31)
Name given before birth (Luke 1:31)
Birth contrary to nature – begotten
by the H.S. (Matt. 1:20)

ISAAC

In Person and Character

Birth gave great joy (Gen. 21:6)
Emphatically called “an only son”
(Gen. 22:2; Heb. 11:17)
Descended from Abraham (Gen. 21:2)
Mocked and persecuted by Ishmael,
his brother (Gen. 21:9-10; Gal.
4:28-29)

In Suffering and Death

Went to the place of death as a
sacrifice (Gen. 22:2)
Went to the place of death in
obedience to God (Gen. 22:3)
Carried the wood on which he was
to die (Gen. 22:6)
Went willingly to the altar (Gen. 22:9)

In Resurrection and Glory

Rose from the place of death in
resurrection (Heb. 11:17-19)

CHRIST

Birth gave great joy (Luke 2:10-11)
Emphatically called “An only Son”
(John 3:16)
Descended from Abraham (Matt. 1:1)
Mocked and persecuted by the Is-
raelites, His brethren (Matt. 27:29;
Acts 2:23-24)

His death was a sacrifice (Eph. 5:2;
1 Tim. 2:6)
Died in obedience to God (1 Jn. 4:14;
Phil. 2:7)
Carried the cross on which He
was to die (John 19:17)
Went willingly to the cross (Jn.
10:17; Tit. 2:14)

Rose in glorious resurrection
from the dead (Matt. 28:6)

V. JACOB’S LADDER – A TYPE OF CHRIST (Gen. Ch. 28; John 1:45-51)

“And he dreamed a dream and behold a ladder set up on the earth and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it” (Gen. 28:12).

“And he saith unto him, verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man” (John 1:51).

Isaac at 137 years of age, infirm and blind, determined to bestow the patriarchal blessing upon his favorite son, Esau, then 77 years of age. Overhearing the proposal, Rebecca counterplotted in order that her favorite son, Jacob, might win the coveted benediction instead of his twin brother. The deception part in her plan was unjustifiable, but it turned into the current of the Divine purpose, and so overruled for good in the blessing of millions yet to be.

However, the perpetrators of this scheme had to suffer the penalty of separation and exile. Jacob had to flee his home because of his enraged brother whom he had cheated out of the birthright. Jacob set out with the blessing of his parents toward Haran, his mother’s home. The distance from Beersheba to Haran was about 550 miles. Jacob now comes to the Land of Luz, and it is night. He makes a pillow out of the rocks and goes to sleep. It is in the course of his sleep that he has the dream of the ladders set up on earth and reaching unto Heaven and the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. There is no other ladder mentioned in the O.T.

Jacob was the slyest, trickiest, and most deceitful character in the Word of God. He has now become a fugitive and exile because of his trickery. But as a contrast Jesus said of Nathanael: “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile” (Jn. 1:47). One could translate this: “Behold an Israelite in whom there is no Jacob”. Here is one in whom “there is no Jacob.” Jesus then adds: “Hereafter ye shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man (Jn. 1:51). As Jesus here makes reference to the ladder of Jacob, He indicates that He is speaking of the Son of Man in type.

There is a Dispensational Principle here. The vision has to do with the future of Israel. Israel today is like Jacob a fugitive and full of guile. God has promised them blessing only in the land. Hence Jacob must come back to Bethel before he receives the blessing. Nathanael being “an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile” is a picture of what Israel will be in the future. The

Lord speaks about Jacob's stairway to Nathanael and says that in the day of the manifestation of the Kingdom every Israelite will be like Nathanael, confessing the Messiah and dwelling under the open Heavens of blessing. Jesus Christ, Israel's Messiah, will link Heaven and earth together.

However, some day the ladder idea will be done away for Paul says in Eph. 1:10: "that in the fullness 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".

1. The Ladder Indicates A Great Separation

The ladder shows what a great gulf there is between God and man. Sin causes separation between God and man, heaven and earth. Jesus Christ reveals how far short we are in this type of the ladder. We "were by nature the children of wrath" and "of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2-3).

2. The Ladder Indicates A Great Salvation

"I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6) said Jesus; or better "I am the true and living way". A way supposes two points – from which and to which. Christ alone is the "Way" from man's sin to God's salvation; from man's guilt to God's grace and glory. God came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ; by way of the virgin birth. Angels mediated God's blessing to Jacob; but now Christ mediates not only to Israel, but to all mankind. God was on earth in Jesus Christ and man is in Heaven in Jesus Christ. Both Stephen and Paul saw Him in glory. When Jacob realized God's presence in the ladder, he said: "This is the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:17).

3. The Ladder Indicates A Great Satisfaction (Gen. 28:15)

Jacob, the sinner and fugitive now receives a fourfold blessing which brought satisfaction to his soul.

a. As seen in the Divine Presence – "I am with thee."

b. As seen in the Divine Protection – "And will keep thee."

c. As seen in the Divine Preservation – "And will bring thee again into the land."

d. As seen in the Divine Principle – "I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

All this will be possible, not only for Jacob, but also for the redeemed and restored nation of Israel. God will keep His covenants made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with David, and given to Jeremiah in the New Covenant.

V. JOSEPH – THE PERFECT TYPE OF CHRIST (Gen. Chs. 37-50)

Joseph is a perfect type of Christ in two respects: first, there is not a recorded flaw in his long life, and secondly, there is in Joseph a most complete life typifying Christ in every detail.

JOSEPH

CHRIST

In Relation To The Fathers

Feeding the flock (Gen. 37:2)

The Good Shepherd (Jn. 10:11,14)

Loved by his father (Gen. 37:3)

My Beloved Son (Matt. 3:17)

Sent to his brethren (37:13)

I will send my Beloved Son (Luke 20:13; Jn. 3:16)

Here am I (Gen. 37:13)

Lo, I come (Ps. 40:7-8)

Bring me word again (Gen. 37:14)

Now come I to Thee (Jn. 17:13)

He came to Shechem (Gen. 37:14)

To a city of Samaria called Sychar (Shechem) (Jn. 4:4-5)

Wandering in the field (Gen. 37:15)

The field is the world ... Not where to Lay His head (Matt. 13:38; Luke 9:58)

In Rejection By The Brothers

Hated by his brethren (Gen. 37:4-5)

Hated without a cause (Jn. 15:25)

JOSEPH

Not believed (Gen. 37:5)
Shalt thou indeed reign over us?
(Gen. 37:8)
Envied (Gen. 37:11)
Seeking his brethren (Gen. 37:16-17)
Conspired against him (Gen. 37:18)
Stripped (Gen. 37:23)
Twenty pieces of silver (Gen. 37:28)

In Reception By the Egyptians

Into Egypt (Gen. 37:36)
Servant to Potiphar (Gen. 39:1;
Ps. 105:17)
The Lord with Joseph (Gen. 39:2,21)
The Lord made all to prosper in his
hand (Gen. 39:3)
All put into His hand (Gen. 39:4,8)
Blessed for Joseph's sake (Gen. 39:5)
Well-favored (Gen. 39:6)
How could I do this wickedness
(Gen. 39:9)
He served them (Gen. 40:4)
A man in whom the Spirit of God is
(Gen. 41:38)
None so discreet and wise (Gen. 41:39)
Bow the knee (Gen. 41:43)
Thirty years old (Gen. 41:46)
What he saith to you, do (Gen. 41:55)

In Restoration to his Family

He knew them (Gen. 42:7)
They knew him not (Gen. 42:8)
He turned himself and wept (Gen. 42:24)
Joseph commanded to fill their sacks
with corn (Gen. 42:25)
Other money have we brought down
(Gen. 43:22)
God hath found out the iniquity of thy
servants (Gen. 44:16)

CHRIST

Neither did His brethren believe in
Him (Jn. 7:5)
We will not have this man (Luke
19:14)
Delivered for envy (Mk. 15:10)
Come to seek the lost (Luke 15:4;
19:10)
Took counsel against Him (Matt. 27:1;
Jn. 11:53)
They stripped Him (Matt. 27:28)
Thirty pieces of silver (Matt. 26:15;
27:9)

Out of Egypt...called my Son (Matt.
2:14-15)
A Servant of rulers. The form of a
servant (Isa. 49:7; Phil. 2:7)
The Father is with Me. (John 16:32)
The pleasure of the Lord shall
prosper in His hand (Isa. 53:10)
Hath given all things into His hand
(John 3:35)
Blessed in Christ (Eph. 1:3; 4:32)
Increased in favor with God and man
(Luke 2:52)
Yet without sin (Heb. 4:15)
I am among you as He that serveth
(Luke 22:27)
Anointed with the H.S. and power
(Acts 10:38)
All the treasures of wisdom and
Knowledge (Col. 2:3)
That in the name of Jesus every knee
Should bow (Phil. 2:10)
About thirty years of age (Luke 3:23)
Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it
(Jn. 2:5)

He knew all men (Jn. 2:24-25)
The world knew Him not ... His own
Received Him not (Jn. 1:10-11)
He beheld the city and wept over it
(Luke. 19:41)
Of His fullness have we all received
(Jn. 1:16)
Going about to establish their own
righteousness (Rom. 10:3; Isa. 55:1)
Convince the world of sin (Jn. 16:8-9)

JOSEPH

CHRIST

In Restoration to his Family

Joseph made himself known (Gen. 45:1)	Their eyes were opened, and they knew Him (Luke 24:31)
At the second time he made himself known (Acts 7:13)	They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced (Zech. 12:10)
I am Joseph your brother whom ye sold (Gen. 45:4)	I am Jesus whom thou persecutest (Acts 9:5)
Come near to me (Gen. 45:4)	Made nigh (Eph. 2:13)
By a great deliverance (Gen. 45:7)	Who delivered us from so great a death (2 Cor. 1:10)
Not you ... but God (Gen. 45:8)	By the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God (Acts 2:23)
Come unto me and I will give (Gen. 45:18-19)	Come unto me and I will give (Matt. 11:28)
God meant it unto good ... to save much people alive (Gen. 50:20)	In bringing many sons unto glory (Heb. 2:10)

VII. THE PASSOVER (Lamb) (Exod. Ch. 12; 1 Cor. 5:7)

It is said that an oil company was directed to the discovery of oil in Egypt by a single verse in the Bible which told how Moses' mother saved her son by making an ark, "and daubed it with slime and with pitch" (Exod. 2:3). In like manner a single verse in Scripture often leads the Bible student to the discovery of rich truth in other parts of Scripture – "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7). That the Passover Lamb was a type of Christ the Scriptures plainly teach.

The drama of The Lamb covers the length of Revelation. In Gen 4:4 – The Lamb is Symbolized: In Gen. 22:8 – The Lamb is Typified: In Exod. 12:3 – The Lamb is Applied: In Isa. 53:7 – The Lamb is Prophesied: In John 1:29 – The Lamb is Identified: In Rev. 5:9 – The Lamb is Magnified: and in Rev. 22:1 – The Lamb is Glorified.

In 1 Pet. 1:18-21, the H.S. brings together five great facts concerning The Lamb: (1) The Foreordination of the Lamb; (2) The Manifestation of the Lamb; (3) The Resurrection of the Lamb; (4) The Glorification of The Lamb; and (5) The Redemption through The Lamb.

In Gen. Ch. 4 we have the Lamb for an individual; In Exod. Ch. 12 we have the Lamb for an house; In Lev. Ch. 16 we have the Lamb for a nation; and in John 1:29 we have The Lamb for the world.

1. It Prophesied the Perfection of Christ

The Passover required a lamb
(Exod. 12:3)

Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God
(Jn. 1:29,36)

The words of John the Baptist look back to that far-away day in Egypt of the Passover. These words set Jesus Christ apart from all the sacrifices that had preceded Him. The others were but shadows; He was the substance.

The Passover Lamb must be
without blemish (Ex. 12:5)

Jesus Christ was without sin
(Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 1:18-19)

Our Savior must be a perfect Savior without spot or blemish. He mingled with sinners and ministered to them, yet was without sin "holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners".

2. It Presaged the Circumstances of the Death of Christ

In the circumstances under which the Passover Lamb was killed, a clear prophecy is seen of the circumstances of the death of Christ.

Preceded by three days of darkness (Ex. 10:21-23)

Preceded by three hours of darkness in the case of Christ (Mark 15:33)

It is more than a coincidence that both the slaying of the Passover Lamb and the death of Christ were preceded by a period of supernatural darkness and in each case it was a period measured by three.

The whole assembly of the house of Israel was to kill the Passover lamb (Ex. 12:6)

Whole assembly of the House of Israel responsible for the slaying of Christ (Matt. 27:25)

3. It Pictured the Salvation of the Sinner who accepts Christ

The blood of the lamb sprinkled In the form of a cross (Exod. 12:7,22)

The blood of Christ shed from a cross (Col. 1:20)

The blood of the Passover lamb was sprinkled on the side posts and on the top of the door, making three cardinal points in the form of a cross.

The sprinkling of the Passover Blood secured the firstborn from Death (Exod. 12:13,23)

Faith in the shed blood of Christ secures the soul from God's judgment (John 5:24; Eph. 1:7)

"When I see the blood I will pass over you." None under the protection of that blood suffered God's judgment. The word "Passover" does not mean to pass by and not smite, but to pass over to cover and protect.

It marked the beginning of months (Exod. 12:2)

All things become new for those under the blood (2 Cor. 5:17)

4. It Prefigured the Blessings of the Believer in Fellowship with Christ

They fed on the Passover Lamb (Exod. 12:11)

By faith the believer feeds on Christ (Jn. 6:35,51)

The Israelite not only enjoyed immunity from death; but received nourishment and strength for the journey. Our strength comes from feeding upon the Word of Christ. Jesus said: "I am the Bread of Life" (Jn. 6:48,51). "He satisfieth the longing soul and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Ps. 107:9).

The lamb must be roasted with fire and eaten with bitter herbs (Exod. 12:8)

Jesus satisfies the hungry soul by suffering the bitter anguish of God's fiery wrath (1 Pet. 3:18; Ps. 89:38,46)

Note that the Passover lamb must be roasted and eaten with bitter herbs, which typifies the fact that apart from suffering our Lord, The Lamb of God, could never satisfy our souls (Heb. 2:10).

The Passover delivered from Bondage (Ex. 12:30-42)

Death of Christ delivers from bondage of sin (Rom. 6:6,14; Gal. 6:14; Eph. 6:12-18; Col. 2:15)

5. It Portrayed God's Will for the Believer in Christ

The people were to eat the Passover with their loins girded for a journey (Ex. 12:11)

Believers in Christ are strangers and pilgrims in this world (1 Pet. 2:11)

We are strangers and pilgrims first because we are not perfect as yet; and, secondly, because we are not home as yet (Phil 3:13-14).

They were to eat the Passover with Unleavened bread (Ex. 12:14-20)

Those who have trusted in Christ are called to separation (1 Cor. 5:6-8)

Leaven in Scripture is a symbol of sin, and must be purged out as a symbol of separation to God. So God demands of us a complete separation from the thoughts and works of this evil age (Gal. 1:4).

VIII. THE MANNA (Exod. 16:1-36)

“Manna! What is this?” Thus did the Children of Israel exclaim one to another as they looked and beheld the “small round thing as hoar frost” (Ex. 16:14) lying on the face of the wilderness. Never before had they witnessed such a sight. Their surprise when they saw it gave rise to its name, as it is written:

“And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, Man Hu” meaning literally “what (is) that?”: for they “wist not what it was” (Ex. 16:15).

Scriptures: Exod. Ch. 16; Num. 11:6; Deut. 8:3,16; Josh. 5:12; Neh. 9:20; Ps. 78:24; John 6:31,49,58; 1 Cor. 10:3; Rev. 2:17.

The Scriptures declare that this manna which fell in the wilderness was “Angel’s food” sent down from heaven to nourish and sustain the Children of Israel (Ps. 78:23-25).

That this manna or “Angel’s food” was a type of Christ is clearly presented in the Word of God. The characteristics of manna set forth in type the characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ – God’s greater provision for His people (John 6:32,41).

1. ITS HISTORICAL SETTING

Manna was God’s provision for the temporal needs of His chosen people. The occasion which gave rise to this phenomenal fall of “Angel’s food” from Heaven is recorded in Exod. ch. 16. Israel had left Egypt, crossed the Red Sea and was now in the “Wilderness of Sin” on their way to Canaan. This wilderness was a dreary, desolate waste of land lying between Elim and Sinai. When they came to this inhospitable, trackless desert the provisions brought from Egypt were exhausted. They were in dire need of food.

Instead of calling upon God Who had so marvelously dealt with them before, they exhibited pitiful faithlessness. Their pressure of hunger led to murmur and complaint against Moses and Aaron. They forgot completely the gracious hand of Jehovah, Who had so recently delivered them from the land of bondage and the hand of Pharaoh; the God Who caused them to walk dry shod in the midst of the Red Sea, and separated them from their enemies. It was in this historical setting that we read Exod. 16:12.

What a display of unbelief and human blindness coupled with Sovereign grace! Had God dealt with them according to their sin, He would have sent fire down from heaven to consume them.

Christ is our Bread from Heaven (John 6:32-33). He is God’s provision for the spiritual needs of His children. When we were yet “dead in sins” (Eph. 2:5), “without strength” (Rom. 5:6), God looked down upon us, beheld our hopeless estate, and sent down to earth “His only begotten Son” (John 3:16), “the true Bread from heaven” that we might eat and be filled to the full (Jn. 6:51).

2. THE SUPERNATURAL SOURCE

The manna came down from heaven (Ps. 78:23-24). In contradiction to the critics, who attempt to explain away the Divine source of this miraculous manna, the Scriptures declare that it came from above. Manna has been explained by some critics to be a natural product produced by an insect pricking the tamarisk plant – thus causing the sweet sap to come forth. When this comes in contact with the air it congeals and becomes hard, falling to the ground in the form of small round balls. If this had been manna, Israel would have recognized its natural source. However, this tamarisk product is a drug and not a food, and is not subject to speedy corruption.

Manna fell every morning except on the Sabbath; a double portion having been provided on the preceding day and was miraculously preserved over the Sabbath. This provision continued all during the forty years of the wilderness wanderings. When they reached the Land of Canaan, the manna ceased and they were commanded to eat the ripe corn of the land.

The Lord Jesus Christ too came down from heaven (Jn. 6:33,35,38). Like the manna He bore some resemblance to the natural product, the physical Man of earth, in that He was manifested in flesh (Phil. 2:7).

3. ITS TYPICAL SUBSTANCE

The characteristics of this “Angel’s food” which nourished and satisfied the hunger of the Israelites in the wilderness are typical of the characteristics of Jesus Christ.

(1) The manna is described as being “a small thing” (Ex. 16:14). This is typical of the humility of Jesus Christ. In the eyes of His contemporaries in Palestine He was indeed a humble person and rather insignificant coming from Nazareth of Galilee (Jn. 1:46; Isa. 53:5; Matt. 11:29; Phil. 2:6-8).

(2) The manna is described as being a “small round thing” (Ex. 16:14). It resembled a circle. It speaks to us of Christ’s perfection; a true sphere is perfect in form. He was perfect as a babe, as a boy, and as a man – being the God-Man. He perfectly meets the need of every soul. He alone can save, sustain, and satisfy. It speaks of the deity and eternity of the Lord. The line which describes a circle, in its circumference, has neither beginning nor end (Rev. 1:8,17).

(3) The manna was like coriander seed – white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey (Ex. 16:31; Num. 11:6-7). The white speaks of the purity and holiness of the Lord. He was absolutely pure, undefiled, the spotless One (Heb. 7:26). He was like a “sardine stone”(Rev. 4:3) which is white in color. The manna was sweet to the taste, reminding of Ps. 119:103; 34:8.

How strange that the Children of Israel should despise such food and desire instead the leeks, the onions, the garlic of Egypt. There are those today who neglect the Bread of Life.

(4) The manna was manifest when the dew was gone up (Ex. 16:14). The dew is typical of the work of the H.S. Dew is associated with heavenly blessings (see Gen. 27:28,39; Deut. 33:13,28; Zech. 8:12). In John 16:13 we learn that it is the H.S. who reveals the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word (1 Cor. 2:14).

IV. ITS SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The manna provided for Israel that which they could not possibly provide for themselves. They were guilty of the sin of murmuring (Ex. 16:2); they received the gracious provision of God (Ex. 16:4) and they saw in it all the glory of God (Ex. 16:7).

Manna was a miraculous gift (Ex. 16:4; Ps. 78:24); it was a mysterious gift (Ex. 16:15; Ps. 78:25a); and it was a marvelous gift (Ex. 16:35; Ps. 78:25b).

1. Manna was a free gift

God gave manna to Israel at a time when they were murmuring against Moses and Aaron and deserved judgment. Christ is God’s free gift to the undeserving (Rom. 3:23-24).

2. Manna met all their needs

All fed on it and were satisfied. There were no exceptions made, in spite of the differences in their tastes. God in sending His only begotten Son to die on Calvary made no exception. As all have sinned, so all need a Savior (Ex. 16:18; Ps. 107:8-9).

3. Manna was the only food

They must eat this food or die. There was no other provided from heaven. Unless we accept the Lord Jesus Christ there is no other “Bread of Life”. Without Him we must perish.

4. Manna could not be hoarded

It had to be gathered daily. The Christ life is a daily life. We must feed upon Christ and His Word daily in order to grow in grace and the knowledge of Him. We cannot rely upon yesterday’s blessing to suffice for today’s testing.

5. Manna reminds of Jehovah-Jireh

“Jehovah will provide” (Gen. 22:14). Manna was the great provider. When man was undone and helpless God provided a Savior in the person of Christ.

6. Manna is laid up for a memorial

Moses told Aaron to take a pot full of manna and place it in the ark to be kept as a memorial unto future generations (Exod. 16:32-34; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Heb. 9:4).

IX. THE SMITTEN ROCK (Exod. 17:1-7; John 7:37-39)

The smitten rock at Horeb (17:6) is both typical and prophetic in its meaning, application, and interpretation. It foreshadows the great event at Calvary where Christ was smitten and was made a “curse for us” (Gal. 3:13) and where He was “made sin for us Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor. 5:21).

1. The Historical Setting

Again we see the complaint of the people (1-3). Israel had now entered a land of dry brooks, desert sands and dusty cliffs. When there was no water the people took to murmuring again against Moses. It was their fourth murmuring (see Ex. 14:10-12; 15:24; 16:2, and now 17:2-3). Then Moses cries unto the Lord (4). Moses takes the complaint of the people to God, as they are about to stone him. They were again challenging the mercy and might of God. Then the Lord commands Moses (5-6). Again Moses’ rod is to function and this time to smite a rock in which there were living waters. So water came forth and the people were satisfied. The place is then called Massah (trial or temptation) and Meribah (chiding or strife).

Note that in verse six it says: “I will stand ... upon the rock”. God Himself was there upon the smitten rock. This reminds of 2 Cor. 5:19 – “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself”.

Christ is the Rock (1 Cor. 10:4). From the smitten rock came forth water (Ex. 17:6). Water is a symbol of the H.S. (Jn. 7:37-39).

The God-given waters satisfied the Children of Israel in the wilderness (Exod. 17:1-7; Num. 20:1-11). Therefore, they could say to the Edomites and the Amorites, as they passed through their lands: “We will not drink of the waters of the well” (Num. 20:17; 21:22). After God gave Israel water out of the rock, they sang: “Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it” (Num. 21:17).

The smitten rock was the source of the rivers of water. Therefore the Psalmists could sing: “thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasure” (Ps. 36:8); “There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God” (Ps. 46:4); and “the river of God which is full of water” (Ps. 65:9).

2. The Typical Significance

The event at Horeb foreshadows Christ as the Rock (1 Cor. 10:4) and the water coming forth as the Holy Spirit (Jn. 7:37-39). It all typifies the crucifixion of Christ at Calvary and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Christ crucified is the rock smitten that the H.S. might be poured out and given to believers. To believers, Jesus Christ, the smitten rock, became the “foundation”, “chief corner stone” and “living stone” (1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:4). To the unbeliever this Rock, Christ Jesus became a “stumbling stone” and a “stumbling rock” (Rom. 9:32-33; 1 Cor. 1:23). “He came to His own and His own received Him not” (John 1:11). To the remnant of Israel He will be the “Headstone” at His coming to establish the kingdom (Zech. 4:7). To the wicked world-power of the end time He will be the “Stone” that shall crush, consume, and replace all the kingdoms of Satanic origin (Dan. 2:34,35,44,45). He will be the crushing Stone of judgment (Matt. 21:44).

a. As Seen in Christ’s Changelessness

The Israelites knew nothing of the beginning nor the end of that rock. This rock had been there since the creation, throughout the ages. So God provided Him a Rock (Christ Jesus) long before Adam was created. He is “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8) and He will stand as a Lamb in the ages to come (Rev. 5:6).

b. As Seen in Christ's Convenience

The rock was there just when the people needed water and it supplied exactly what they needed. Jesus Christ and His salvation is always at hand – “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2). “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his innermost shall flow rivers of living water” (John 7:37-38).

c. As Seen in Christ's Companionship

Paul tells us that “they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ” (1 Cor. 10:4). God told Moses: “My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest” (Exod. 33:14). The N.T. echoes the same thought: “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee” (Heb. 13:5). The Psalmist found that “in thy presence is fullness of joy” (Ps. 16:11). Christ is our daily Companion, Counselor, and Provider.

X. THE TABERNACLE (Exod. Chs. 25-40; John 1:14)

Someone has called the types of the O.T. “the kindergarten part of the Bible, the Spirit given object lessons for babes in Christ”. Many fail to understand Christ and His work as revealed in the N.T. because they have not understood God's appointed means and methods of instruction in the O.T.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine (teaching, R.V.) for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16).

“Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope” (Rom. 15:4).

When the Lord told Moses how to build the tabernacle, He described its parts from within outward. He began with the Ark, and concluded with the Gate, except for the description of the Golden Altar and the Laver given in connection with the priestly ministry in chapter 30 (Exod. Chs. 25:10-27:16). The purpose of God in describing the tabernacle in this order is to reveal His grace in coming out from where He dwells in the Most Holy Place and opening a way for every believer to come into His presence. However, sinful man enters from the gate. There was no hope for mankind until God in the Garden came down to Adam and Eve, and there is no hope for sinful humanity until Christ came down from Heaven and died upon the cross. God Himself through Jesus Christ is always the Seeker and the Savior (Gen. 3:8-9; Luke 15:4,8; 19:10).

From the Scriptures we gather that the Tabernacle was a pattern of things in the heavens and was to be the dwelling place of God on earth (Heb. 8:5; 9:11-12; 10:11-14).

The purpose of the Tabernacle was that God might have a temporary dwelling place among His people (Ex. 25:8) and the purpose of the coming of Christ was that God might have a permanent dwelling-place among all mankind who receive Him (Jn. 1:14,11-12). The purpose is further seen in – (1) The provision of a means of redemption and reconciliation for a people separated by sin; (2) To provide a means of sustaining fellowship; (3) To be a witness as to the nature and will of God; (4) To be a testimony to the separation of the Chosen People of God from other nations; and (5) To illustrate in type and figure the coming redemption of Christ.

1. ITS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE

Jehovah designed His own sanctuary and set it up in the midst of Israel's camp as His dwelling place, meeting place and revealing place. From His Tent, canopied by the Cloud and enclosed by the Court with its hangings of fine twined linen, the Redeemer of Israel looked east toward the tents of the priests, the family of Aaron, encamped immediately in front of the Tabernacle to guard and guide it as the Sacred Dwelling Place of the Holy One of Israel, and to minister in it. Eastward in the rear of the priest's camp was the camp of Judah, with the tribes of Issachar and Zebulon (Num. 3:38-39; 2:1-9). ON the right, to the south, the Kohathites pitch their tents that they might be near to minister. As one of the families of the tribe of Levi, separated unto Jehovah for the service of the Tabernacle instead of the firstborn of Israel, they

had charge of the vessels of the sanctuary (Exod. 32:25-29; Num. 3:5-20, 27-32). South of the Kohathites was the camp of Reuben, with the tribes of Simeon and Gad (Num. 2:10-17). In the rear of the Tabernacle, to the west, was the camp of the Gershonites, who had charge of the tent and its coverings and the hangings of the Court with the Gate and the Door (Num. 3:21-26). West of the Gershonites was the camp of Ephraim, with the camps of Manasseh and Benjamin. North of the Tabernacle were the tents of the Merarites, who had charge of the boards, bars, pillars, sockets, pins and cords of the Tabernacle (Num. 3:33-37). To the north of the Merarites was the camp of Dan together with the camps of Asher and Naphtali (Num. 2:25-31).

It was indeed with unsearchable wisdom and marvelous grace that God grouped His people about Himself as Worshipers, Workers, and Warriors. The worshippers (the priests) and the workers (the Levites) were encamped close about the Tabernacle to minister and to care for Jehovah's Tent. The camps of the warriors were outside the camps of the worshippers and workers to guard them. (Under this Dispensation of the Secret, the Church which is His Body, are Worshipers, Workers, and Warriors – Eph. 2:21-22; 2:10; 6:10-17).

When the pillar of cloud gave the signal to march (Num. 9:16-17), Judah was the first to set forth (Num. 10:14). Then followed the framework and coverings of the Tabernacle, in the charge of the sons of Gershon and Merari (Num. 10:17). The division of Reuben march next (Num. 10:18) followed by the sanctuary in the charge of the Kohathites (Num. 10:21). The division of Ephraim and Dan marched after the sanctuary (Num. 10:22,25) See also Ps. 46:5).

A. Names of the Tabernacle

a. The House of the Lord – Hebrew, Beth (Ex. 23:19; 34:26) and Greek, Oikos (Matt. 12:4; Mk. 2:26; Luke 6:4).

b. The Tent – Hebrew Ohel, refers to the two outer skins. A word connected with the common life of man, and used of the tents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Suggests a shelter, a dwelling-place (Ex. 26:14; Num. 3:25; 9:15). This word is also translated “tabernacle” (see Ps. 84).

c. The Tabernacle – Hebrew, Mishkan, to settle down or dwell, a dwelling place or habitation (Exod. 25:9; 26:1; Lev. 8:10; Num. 1:50), and the Greek skene (Acts 7:44; 15:16; Heb. 9:2,3,6,8,11,21).

d. The Sanctuary – Hebrew, miqdash, a place set apart (Ex. 25:8; Lev. 12:4; Num. 3:38; 1 Chron. 22:19). Suggests a consecrated place.

e. Tabernacle of the Congregation – Hebrew, moed, a meeting place; the meeting itself (Ex. 27:21; 28:43; 40:2).

This Tabernacle was built according to the “Pattern” shown to Moses in the Mount (Exod. 25:9,40; cf. Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:2,5). The purpose of the structure is given in Exod. 25:8 – “Make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them” and where He could “commune” with them (Ex. 25:22). The Temple had the same purpose as the Tabernacle.

As the God of Israel the Tabernacle was for Jehovah a sanctuary, a place set apart, a holy place, the dwelling of Him Who is absolutely and eternally holy. It is in His sanctuary we may understand His way, and obtain help (Psa. 20:2; 73:16-17; 96:6).

As the Leader of His People the Tabernacle was Jehovah's Pavilion, in which His redeemed might hide in the day of trouble (Ps. 27:5).

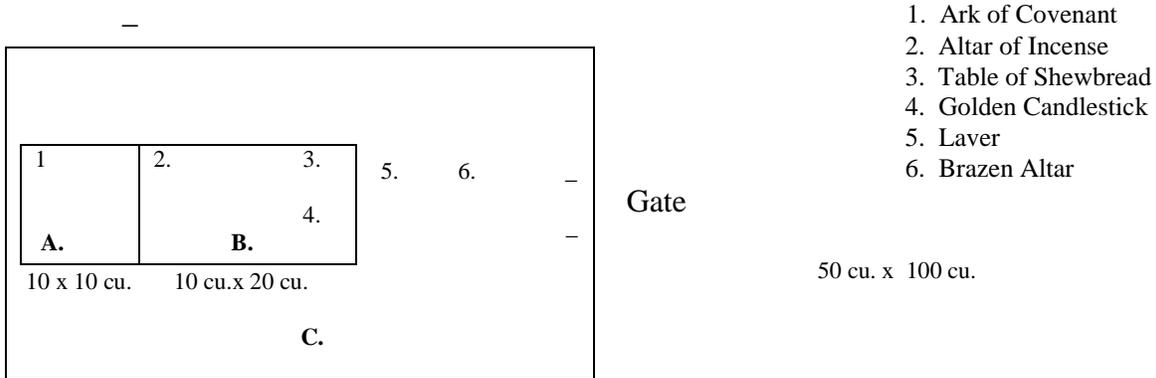
As the King of Israel Jehovah was enthroned in the Tabernacle as His Palace. From the glorious King, Who dwelt between the Cherubim over the Mercy-seat, Moses and the High Priest received the statutes for Israel (Ex. 25:22; Psa. 80:1; 99:1; Isa. 43:15).

As the Father of His People the Tabernacle was the House of the Lord, in which His children might enjoy fellowship with Him (Deut. 32:6; 1 Chron. 29:10; Ps. 27:4).

So Jehovah dwelt in the midst of His people whom He had redeemed and brought near to Himself. His presence, manifest in the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, guided and protected them and illuminated their pathway all through the wilderness journey from Egypt to Canaan (Neh. 9:18-19; Ps. 78:14).

B. Nature of the Tabernacle

- A. Holy of Holies
- B. Holy Place
- C. Outer Court



1. The Court or White Linen Wall.

In approaching the building we notice first the Court or white linen wall. This was 5 cubits high, 100 cubits long and 50 cubits wide (Ex. 27:18). At the east side there was a gate or entrance 20 cubits wide (Ex. 27:14-15), in the form of a curtain or screen. It was composed of four different colors – blue, purple, scarlet and white.

2. The Brazen Altar.

Immediately inside the gate or screen was the altar of brass where the sacrifices were made. It was made of heavy boards of acacia wood 5 cubits square and 3 cubits high and overlaid with heavy plates of brass (Ex. 27:1-8). To this covering of brass was added other plates of brass made from the censors of the men who sought the priesthood in the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram (Num. 16:32-40). A grating of network of brass was placed in the midst or half-way up the Altar on the inside and held firmly by rings of brass. The Horns on the four corners of the Altar were made of the same piece as the Altar and overlaid with brass. See Num. 4:13-14 for the covering of the Altar on the march.

3. The Laver. (Ex. 30:17-21; 38:8).

The Laver stood in the Court of the Tabernacle between the Brazen Altar and the Tabernacle (Ex. 40:7). The form and measurements are not given. It was made of polished brass from the looking-glasses or mirrors of the women. It was so constructed that it was convenient for the priests to wash their hands and feet before entering the Tabernacle.

4. The Door of the Tabernacle. (Ex. 26:36-37)

The materials out of which this was made were the same as those of the Gate of the Court, namely, “of blue and purple and scarlet and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework”.

The hanging of the door had five pillars (Vr.37). The hanging of the gate of the court had four pillars (see 27:16). These five pillars were made of the same material as the boards, of acacia wood overlaid with gold and set in sockets of brass. (v. 37, cpr. 15, 29).

5. The Candlestick (lit. Lampstand). (Ex. 25:31-40; Lev. 24:1-4).

The Candlestick with its main stem and six branches was made of a talent of pure gold, beaten out as were also the ornamentations. The golden ornaments consisting of knops or ornamental knobs, flowers and fruit-like almonds, were likewise made of beaten gold. Pure olive oil, beaten for the light, was burned in the lamps continually (Lev. 24:1-4). The trimming of the wicks with the golden snuffers and refilling of the lamps with oil was a ministry performed by the high Priest every morning (Ex. 30:8) when he burned incense on the Golden Altar. The Candlestick revealed beauty and glory. A blue cloth with a badger's skin covering protected the Candlestick on the march (Num. 4:9-10).

6. The Table of Shewbread. (Ex. 25:23-30)

This Lord's Table was made of acacia wood, two cubits long, a cubit wide, and a cubit and a half high. It was overlaid with pure gold, hence the name "Pure Table". There were two crowns of gold about it, with a hand-breadth of gold between. These adorned the Table and kept the vessels and loaves in place.

7. The Golden Altar (Altar of Incense) (Ex. 30:1-10; 34-38)

That the priests might worship Jehovah acceptably, He commanded Moses to make an altar to burn incense upon. It was made of acacia wood, a cubit long, a cubit wide, and two cubits high; and overlaid with pure gold. A crown of gold and four horns adorned the top of the altar. Upon the horns, once a year, the High Priest sprinkled the blood of the sin-offering. The position of the altar was before the Veil, in front of the Ark of the Testimony. The incense was made of sweet spices – stacte, onycha, galbanum, and pure frankincense. A covering of blue and badgers' skins protected the Altar and its vessels on the march (Num. 4:11-12).

8. The Veil (Exod. 26:31-35)

The Veil consisted of a hanging of blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen, with the figures of the Cherubim embroidered upon it. It hung upon four pillars of acacia wood, which were overlaid with gold and rested upon four sockets of silver. It separated the Holy Place from The Most Holy Place. It shut out the priests from the presence of Jehovah, and shut in his glory, which was revealed to the High Priest alone once a year.

9. The Ark of the Covenant (Exod. 25:10-22; Heb. 9:3-5)

The Ark was made of acacia wood, two cubits and a half long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high. It was overlaid, within and without, with pure gold. A crown of gold adorned the top and held the Mercy-seat in place. The Ark was the only permanent piece of furniture in the Most Holy Place; the Golden Censer was brought in by the High Priest (Heb. 9:3-4). The Ark was a chest which contained the second tables of the Law (Deut. 10:1-5), also a plate of manna and Aaron's rod that budded (Heb. 9:4). Staves of acacia wood overlaid with gold were placed in the four rings on the sides of the Ark, for the Levites or priests to bear it. When the Ark was later placed in the Temple, these staves were removed (1 Kgs. 8:8).

The Mercy-seat was a lid of pure gold made to cover the Ark and thus to cover the Law within (Ex. 26:34; 30:6; Lev. 16:13). The blood of the bullock and goat was sprinkled upon the Mercy-seat by the High Priest, once a year, on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:14-15). Above the Mercy-seat, between the Cherubims, Jehovah manifested His presence in the Most Holy Place. The Mercy-seat was thus His throne, "the throne of grace" (Heb. 4:16).

The Cherubim on the two ends of the Mercy-seat were beaten work of one piece of gold with the Mercy-seat. The faces of the Cherubim were toward one another and toward the Mercy-seat; their wings covering the Mercy-seat. Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, dwelt in between the Cherubim, over the Mercy-seat. In Ezek. 10:20 they are called "living creature".

2. ITS SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The things of the Mosaic economy are called in the N.T.: (1) Shadows (Gr. Skia) or reflections of the substance (Col. 2:17; Heb. 8:5; 10:1). (2) A Figure (Gk. Antitupon – Heb. 9:24; and parable – Heb. 9:9; 11:19) or an outline or sketch. (3) A Pattern (Gk. Tupos – Heb. 8:5, and hupodeigma – Heb. 9:23), or a drawing plan. (4) Examples (Gk. Tupos – 1 Cor. 10:6), a type.

Foreseeing the failure of His people in the Covenant of Law into which Israel entered in self-confidence, Jehovah makes provision for their failure in the Tabernacle and Priesthood (Lev. 4:1-14).

King Solomon asked in eager wonder: “Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded? (1 Kgs. 8:27). It was only because of God’s grace and glory (Ps. 84:11). God’s habitation in the tabernacle and the temple is therefore a type of Christ in His Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection and Glorification. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself” (2 Cor. 5:19). The Tabernacle with its furniture, priesthood and offerings was a shadow of that heavenly substance (Heb. 8:5; 10:1).

A. The Liberal Offerings (Ex. 35:4-29)

When Moses commanded the people to make offerings for the building of the Tabernacle and its furniture, it says: “And they came both men and women, as many as were willing hearted” (Vr. 22). Then they brought their offerings of “gold and silver and brass and blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen and goat’s hair and ram’s skins dyed red and badger’s skins and shittim wood and oil for the light and spices for anointing oil and for the sweet incense and onyx stones and stones to be set for the ephod and for the breastplate” (4-9). What a contrast this is to Zech 11:12-13 – “So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver”. In their early history they lavished their gifts for a passing type. Now they prized the reality in their midst for only thirty pieces of silver. In the very House of the Lord itself, adorned with costly stones, lay thirty pieces of silver; a witness of the shameful price at which they valued God’s most precious gift (Haggai 1:3-6). There are other instances in Scripture of a liberal heart – Mk. 14:7-9; Luke 21:1-4; 2 Cor. 8:1-5; Phil. 4:10-19; 2 Tim. 1:16-18. But the greatest of all is God’s liberality (John 3:16; Rom. 8:32).

B. The Materials for the Tabernacle

(1) The Gold – A type of the deity and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, as Son of God.

(2) The Shittim – Acacia Wood – A type of the perfect humanity of Jesus Christ. Translated in the Septuagint Version “incorruptible wood”. Jesus Christ, the incorruptible Man.

(3) The Silver – By its use, silver is a type of redemption (Ex. 30:13-16).

(4) The Brass – This typifies Divine manifestation in judgment (Num. 21:9). Christ bore our penalty for sin and was thus judged by God (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24).

(5) The Blue Hanging – Blue is a heavenly color. Christ is the heavenly One. The ribband of blue (Num. 15:38-40) was sewn on the garment to remind Israel of God and His commandments and not seek the ways of man and earth.

(6) The Purple Hanging – This is a type of royalty (Judg. 8:26; Esth. 8:15; Dan. 5:7; Jn. 19:2; Luke Ch. 16).

(7) The Scarlet Hanging – Seems to speak of suffering and sacrifice (Isa. 53:3-6; John 1:29). It is the blood color. Rahab put a “scarlet thread” in the window” (Josh. 2:18).

(8) The Fine-twined Linen Hanging – This is a type of righteousness (Rev. 19:8). Christ is made unto us righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30).

(9) The Coverings of Badger Skins – (Ex. 26:14). These stand for the perfect character and walk of Christ (Ezek. 16:10).

(10) The Coverings of Ram's Skins – (Ex. 26:14). These red skins stand for Christ perfect sacrifice on Calvary. He was the true burnt-offering, a “sweet-smelling savor” unto God (Eph. 5:1-2).

(11) The Coverings of Goat's Skins – (Ex. 26:7-13). These hid all the others from view. Reminds of the goat that carried the sins of Israel into the wilderness – the scapegoat (Lev. 16:20-22).

(12) The Oil for the Lamps – (Ex. 37:29). The oil is a type of the H.S. Who takes the things of Christ and reveals them unto us (John 14:26; 16:7-14).

(13) Spices for the Sweet Incense – (Ex. 30:34-35). A type of prayer and thanksgiving (Ps. 141:1-2; Rev. 5:8).

(14) The Stones set in the Ephod and Breastplate – (Ex. 28:9-12; 17-21). These would shine forth the beauty and glory of the High Priest. They are typical of Christ's glory (Phil. 2:9-11).

C. THE GATE OF THE OUTER COURT (Ex. 27:16)

Surrounding the Tabernacle there was a court with a wall. The only opening in this wall was by a gate at the east end. The wall represented the righteousness which God demanded in the law. It kept all men from His presence because they were all guilty (Rom. 3:19-20). This barrier was both unmovable and insurmountable. The only entrance to the court and tabernacle was through this gate. This gate is a type of Christ the only way to God (John 14:6; Hebr. 10:19-20).

D. THE BRAZEN ALTAR (Ex. 27:1-8; 38:1-7)

Immediately inside the gate or screen was the Altar of Brass. It was here the sacrifices were offered. Five different sacrifices were made of bullocks, sheep, goats, turtledoves and pigeons (Lev. Ch. 1). The fire upon this altar came from God and was ministered by the priest. There was no strange fire to be used on this altar (Lev. 9:24; 10:1-2). The words translated “altar” in the Bible are: Hebrew – harel or “Hill of God”; ariel or “Lion of god; madbach and mizbeach or “Slaughter Place”; Greek – bomas or “raised place”; thusiasterion or “A place of sacrifice”. So this altar was a high place of sacrifice. It is a type of Christ lifted up on the cross, like as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness (Num. 21:7-9; John 3:14-16). Christ is the true sacrifice (Ps. 40:6-8; Phil. 2:8; Heb. 9:11-14; 10:5-7). The Brazen Altar was one of the most important vessels of the Tabernacle. Apart from its use there could be no acceptable approach into the holy presence of the Holy One of Israel. It was called “an Altar most holy” and “whosoever toucheth the Altar shall be holy” (Ex. 29:37; Matt. 23:19). This altar was so built that it could endure the devouring fire of God's wrath. About 490 years after it was built by Bezalel, Solomon offered a thousand burnt-offerings upon it (2 Chron. 1:5-6). As such it is a type of Christ as the only One who was humanly and divinely able to bear the wrath of God against sin and the sinner. On this altar the innocent bore the judgment of the guilty. Here the animal sacrifice took the place of the guilty sinner, as Jesus Christ did on the cross of Calvary (Isa. 53:3-6; Rom. 4:25). It was here Jehovah met Israel (Ex. 29:42-43). This Altar was a place of meeting. The sinner can only meet God at the Cross of Christ (Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; Eph. 2:12-18).

The blood was poured out at the bottom of the Altar. This is a type of Christ pouring out His soul unto death (Isa. 53:12; 2 Cor. 8:9). The ashes were carried out to a clean place (Lev. 6:10-11; Num. 19:9). So the dead body of Christ was laid up in a new tomb, outside the city (Luke 23:53). The fire was never to go out. It was a type of God's holiness in manifestation (Heb. 12:29).

E. THE LAVER (Ex. 30:17-21; 38:8)

The Laver is not included in the Divine setting forth of the construction of the Tabernacle in Exod. Chs. 25-28. It is added after the atonement (Ex. 30:11-16). The Laver comes after the Altar of Sacrifice. The Altar is for sinners who need redemption and regeneration; the Laver was for the priests, and has to do with worship and work. The N.T.

counterpart is found in John 13:1-10. Here Jesus said: “He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet”.

Paul tells us that Christ is not only made unto us “redemption” but also “sanctification” (1 Cor. 1:30).

For us today, as members of the Church, the Body of Christ, the typical meaning of the Laver is found in Eph. 5:25-26. Here we read: “Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water by the Word”. “Washing” here is the translation of the Greek word for Laver. “The washing of regeneration” in Titus 3:5 is the same word.

The means of cleansing in the N.T. – (1) The Blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:18-19; 1 Jn. 1:7,9; Col. 1:13-14; Rev. 1:5); (2) The Word of God (John 15:3; 17:17; Eph. 5:26; Ps 119:11); (3) The washing of regeneration and renewing of the H.S. (Eph. 5:26; Tit. 3:5).

F. THE DOOR TO THE TABERNACLE (Exod. 26:36-37)

This door gave entrance to the Tabernacle. It gave entrance to the Holy Place or outer room. This first division of the Tabernacle was called “first Tabernacle” (Heb. 9:6). It contained the three pieces of furniture – The Golden Candlestick, The Golden Altar, and the Table of Shewbread. No one was permitted to enter this Gate but the priests.

This Door is a type of Christ Who said: “I am the Door” (John 10:7). Christ as the Door, is the One through Whom we have “access into this grace wherein we stand” (Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18). Many of God’s children have entered into the Gate for redemption and regeneration at the Brazen Altar and The Laver; but have never entered the Door to the fullness of blessing in Christ.

1. Christ is the Only Door – There was only one door of access to the Tabernacle; so Christ is the only Door to salvation and sanctification. Christ is the only Savior (Matt. 1:21; Luke 19:10; Acts 4:12). He is the only way of access unto the Father (Jn. 14:6). There is only One Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus (1 Tim. 2:5). No One else can give men admittance into the presence of God, but Christ Jesus. All others are imposters. “Christ is all and in all” (Col. 3:11).

2. Christ is the Open Door – He is the open Door for “whosoever”, “all men” and “whole world” (Jn. 3:16; Tit. 2:11; 1 Jn. 2:1-2). This Door has always been open, from the days of Adam to the present moment. Day and night, old and young, this Door is always open. “Now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2).

G. THE CANDLESTICK (lit. Lampstand) Ex. 25:31-40; Lev. 24:1-4

This Golden Candlestick or Lampstand had to do with light. It was made to give light in the Sanctuary. God made lights in creation (Gen. 1:16). “God is light” (1 Jn. 1:5) and Christ is the “Light of the world” (Jn. 1:4,7-9; 8:12). The Word of God is also a light (Ps. 119:105,130; 6:23). We also read of “the seven spirits” before God’s throne (Rev. 1:4) and the “seven lamps of fire” which are “the seven Spirits of God” (Rev. 4:5). We also read of “the seven eyes of the Lamb” (Rev. 5:6) which are “the seven Spirits of God”.

Israel was to be a light in the world (Matt. 5:14) as is also the Church (Phil. 2:15). Our oneness with Christ in glory, as light-bearers, is typified by the branches. They were one with the main stem and were beaten out of the same piece of pure gold. We are so completely identified with Christ that it can be said that we were crucified together with Christ and we are raised and seated together with Him in the Heavenlies (Rom. 6:6; 8:30; Eph. 2:5-6). We are therefore to shine forth unto “the praise of the glory of His grace” (Eph. 1:6; 1:12,14).

The Candlestick was a seven-branched Lampstand with a central stem and three branches on each side. The oil represents the Holy Spirit (1 Sam. 16:13; Jn. 16:14; Acts 1:8; 10:38). The H.S. is the Great Illuminator. As the Spirit of the Lord shone through Christ there were seven things that shine forth: “Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Might, Knowledge, Fear of the Lord, and Quick Understanding” (Isa. 11:2-3). As Aaron’s rod that “budded”, “bloomed

blossoms” and “yielded almonds” (Num. 17:8-9); so the Candlestick with its bowls made like almonds is a type of Christ “the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25).

H. THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD (Exod. 25:23-30; Lev. 24:5-9)

The Table stood on the north side of the Holy Place (Exod. 40:22-23). Christ called the bread upon the Table “shewbread” (Matt. 12:4). The Table got its name from the bread placed upon it. The word “shewbread” is in the Hebrew: “Bread of faces”, “faces” being put for presence. So this Table of shewbread was actually the table of Divine Presence. It always stood before the face of Jehovah. It reminded Israel that “Every good and perfect gift is from above ... from the Father of Lights” (James 1:17).

The twelve loaves, like the twelve stones on the breast plate of the High Priest, referred to the twelve tribes of Israel. In the continual shewbread, the memorial of Israel’s acceptance before Jehovah, the whole nation was represented before the Lord (Lev. 24:8).

The bread is a type of Him Who is called: “The Bread of God”, “The Bread of Life” and “The Living Bread” (John 6:33-58). The loaves made of fine flour, with sweet-smelling frankincense upon them, are typical of Christ presenting Himself to God as food for man.

The eating of the shewbread, by the priests in the Holy Place (Lev. 24:9) typifies the fact that this bread was not only “Shewbread” but also satisfying and sustaining bread. Priests thus nourished by the Bread of God have strength to serve before the Lord in behalf of others. What food it is for our hearts to feast upon the grace and glory of our Head, Whom God has honored above every being in the universe (Eph. 1:18-22; Phil. 2:8-11). We are saved by His grace at Calvary and sustained by His glory in the heavenlies. So Christ is the spiritual food which his people are to labor for (John 6:27). He is the “corn of wheat” (John 12:24) planted in the soil of humanity to suffer, die, and be resurrected to bring much more fruit.

I. THE GOLDEN ALTAR (Exod. 30:1-7; 34-38; 37:25-28)

The Golden Altar was a type of Christ as The Great Intercessor (John 17:1-26; Heb. 7:25). This Altar stood before the veil, directly in front of the mercy-seat in the Holy Place (Ex. 30:6). It stood near the place of meeting. In the Brazen Altar we have a type of Christ meeting the need of the sinner in gracious salvation (Ex.27:1-8); in the Golden Altar we have a type of Christ meeting the saint in glorious security (Heb. 7:25). This Golden Altar was also taken into the Most Holy Place (Heb. 9:4).

Perpetual incense was burned on this Altar by the High Priest, but no strange incense nor burnt-offering, nor meal-offering, nor drink-offering was offered upon it. How simple and yet necessary was each piece of furniture in the Holy Place: A Candlestick for light; a Table for food and an Altar for worship. This Altar overlaid with gold and crowned with gold, is a type of our Lord now crowned with glory and honor (Heb. 2:10).

David understood the symbolical meaning of the incense, for he wrote: “Let my prayer be set forth as the incense before thee” (Ps. 141:2). The Holy Spirit uses type and fulfillment in Luke 1:10; Rev. 5:8; 8:4). Before Christ, the High Priest, entered with his own blood the presence of God; He covered the Mercy-Seat with the cloud of His intercessory prayer (Jn. Ch. 17).

God has called some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists and some pastors and teachers, but He has called all of us to be intercessors (Eph. 1:16-19; 3:14-21; Col. 1:9-17).

J. THE VEIL (Exod. 26:31-33; 36:35-38)

The Hebrew word translated “vail” is paroketh, and means “a separation” or “curtain”. It was a screen between the Holy Place and Holy of Holies. The veil differed from the hanging of the door (Ex. 26:36). “Hanging” (Hebrew – masak), means a covering to hide. The door or hanging hid the Holy Place from the court and public gaze.

The veil is typical of the “flesh” of Christ (Heb. 10:20). The Veil of the Temple was rent in two from top to bottom when Christ died on the cross (Matt. 27:51). The body of

flesh in which Christ dwelt was the veil which shut in His glory as the only begotten Son of God (Jn. 1:14). On the Mount of Transfiguration, the veil became transparent and the glory within shone through (Matt. 17:1-8; 2 Pet. 1:16-18). When the flesh of Christ was rent on Calvary, then the veil of the Temple was rent, so that now all may come boldly into the Most Holy Place (Heb. 4:16; 10:19-20).

The veil shut God in and shut man out. God's sinless presence was kept from man's sinful presence.

The rent Veil meant an open and free access to God. It is only in Christ Jesus our Lord that we have boldness to enter into God's presence (Eph. 3:12). The rent veil meant the end of the Law for righteousness (Rom. 10:4). We are justified by faith in Christ Jesus. Any attempt to put either sinner or saint under the Law is Galatianism (Gal. 1:6-9). The rent veil meant the abolition of all Jewish ordinances (Col. 2:14). The rent Veil removed the barrier between Jew and Gentile. God has now made of the two "one new man" (Eph. 2:14-18). "Christ is all and in all" (Col. 3:11).

K. THE ARK OF THE COVENANT (Exod. 25:10-22; 37:1-9)

The Ark of the Covenant, with its propitiatory aspect, was a type of God's gracious meeting with His people. The judgment seat became a mercy seat, when sprinkled with blood.

The Ark with its materials, acacia wood (a desert growth Isa. 53:2) and gold typifies the two sides of salvation: the human and Divine character of Christ.

The Mercy-seat was a lid of pure gold made to cover the Ark (Exod. 26:34; 30:6; Lev. 16:13). The blood of the bullock and goat was sprinkled upon the mercy-seat by the High Priest, once a year, on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:14-15). The key to the typical meaning of the Mercy-seat is given in Heb. 9:5 and Rom. 3:25. The same Greek word translated "Mercy-seat" in Heb. 9:5 is translated "propitiation" in Rom. 3:25. Christ is therefore the One whom God has set forth as the Mercy-seat. Christ as the Mercy-seat covered the Law, or satisfied its just claims. Christ by His own blood satisfied every demand of the Law against the sinner. The Mercy-seat was God's meeting-place with Moses for atonement and communication (Ex. 25:22). First God has redeemed us from sin, or delivered us out of the market by setting us free by paying the price (Rom. 3:24). Then He has "set forth" (Rom. 3:25) Christ to be "a propitiation", Mercy-seat or satisfaction. So in Christ both the blood of redemption and propitiation and the place of propitiation meet in One.

In connection with the Ark and Mercy-seat there were the Cherubims (plural for cherub). They are called "Living Creatures" (Ezek. 10:20). From their first appearance in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:22-24) they seem to represent God's justice and mercy. Here they had a flaming sword (God's justice) with which they guarded the way to the tree of life, lest sinful man eat and live forever (God's mercy). So now in the Mercy-seat both the justice and mercy of God meet in marvelous propitiation or satisfaction. Later these Cherubim appear in Solomon's Temple (1 Kgs. 6:23-29; 2 Chron. 3:10,13). Here they looked inward toward the house all covered with gold. Then they appear in Ezekiel's vision of the glory of the Lord (Ezek. 1:3-28). In Ezek. 11:22-25 they carried the occupant of the throne up and away from Jerusalem and Israel because of their sin. They finally appear in John's vision of the throne (Rev. 4:1-11). The Cherubim facing each other over the Mercy-seat are symbolic of Psalm 85:10 – "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other".

The Ark of the Covenant contained the Law (Exod. 25:16,21); 40:20; Heb. 9:4). The Law is called "The testimony which I shall give thee". The "I" here denotes their Divine authorship and authority. It was The Law of Jehovah. These tablets of the Law were the unbroken Law. Man broke the first tablets. Christ was "made under the Law (Gal. 4:4) and fulfilled it to the letter (Ps. 40:8; Heb. 10:7-9).

The Ark of the Covenant contained the Pot of Manna. The manna was laid up before the Lord, for a memorial to Israel's future generations of how God fed them from Heaven

in the wilderness (Exod. 16:33-34). It was a type of Christ as “The Bread of Life”. Christ is not only the Giver of eternal life, but the sustainer as well.

The Ark of the Covenant contained Aaron’s rod. It was his rod that budded, bloomed, and bore almonds (Num. Ch. 17). The almond tree blossoms in Palestine in January, the first tree to announce that winter has passed and spring has come. It speaks of Him Who said: “I am the resurrection and the Life” (Jn. 11:25).

The following outline is from Outline Studies of the Tabernacle, by Ada R. Habershon. THE ARK:

A TYPE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Made of shittim wood (Ex. 37:1)	The human nature of our Lord (Heb. 2:14)
Overlaid with pure gold (Ex. 37:6)	His deity (John 1:1,14)
The Mercy-seat pure gold (Ex. 37:6)	“Set forth to be a propitiatory” (the same word) Rom. 3:25
The Law placed in it (Deut. 10:1f)	“Thy law is within my heart” (Ps. 40:8)
Going before to search out a rest (Num. 10:33)	“He goeth before them” (Jn. 10:4)
In the midst (Num. 2:17)	Rev. 1:13; Matt. 18:20
Going down into the river of death (Jordan) and thus enabling the people to go over dry-shod (Josh. 3)	Rom. 6:3,4; Col. 3:1-4
“When ye see the Ark...go after it” (Josh. 3:3)	“Looking unto Jesus” (Heb. 12:1-2)
Bringing down strongholds (Jericho) Josh. 6	2 Cor. 10:14; 1 Jn. 5:5; Phil. 3:21
The place of confession (Josh. 7:6)	Heb. 4:16
Taken by the foe 1 Sam. 4:11; Ps. 78 60-61 (“the affliction of the Tabernacle” 1 Sam. 2:32)	Mark 14:46; Acts 2:23
Israel flees; the Ark deserted 1 Sam. 4:10	“They all forsook Him and fled” (Mark 14:50)

XI. THE GREAT DAY OF ATONEMENT (Lev. Ch. 16; Heb. 9:11-12)

The Seven Great Feasts of the Lord are: Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, Day of Atonement and Tabernacles. The first three occurred in the first month of Nisan; the fourth in the third month of Sivan; and the last three in the seventh month of Tishri.

The word “atonement” is the translation of two Hebrew words: “kippurim” meaning “coverings” and “kaphar” meaning “to cover”. This same word “kaphar” is used for the word “pitch” that covered the ark (Gen. 6:14). For the nation of Israel, Jehovah provided atonements or coverings with the blood of bulls and goats. Atonement is not the same as justification. The sins were covered, not taken away. “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (Heb. 10:4). Atonement is not a N.T. word. Reconciliation is the correct translation for Rom. 5:11. Paul proclaimed Justification, Reconciliation and Redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins” (Eph. 1:7). Not even in his Epistles to the Hebrews does Paul use the word atonement.

The Day of Atonement was an holy day or “holy convocation” in which they were to “afflict their souls” (Num. 29:7). It was a Day of National Humiliation. The special offerings for this day were: (1) A young bullock for a sin-offering for Aaron and his house; (2) Two goats for a sin-offering for the people; (3) A ram for a burnt-offering for Aaron and his house; and (4) A ram for a burnt-offering for the people.

Much is said about “sin-offering”. It was a day of sin’s expiation, “all the iniquities, all their transgressions, all their sins” (Lev. 16:21). Abel’s lamb redeemed one man; the Passover lamb one family; The Day of Atonement lamb one nation and The Lamb of Calvary the whole world.

There were also other atonements beside the Day of Atonement, such as tax money atonement, or an atonement to halt a famine, or to stay a plague (See Exod. 30:11-17; 2 Sam. 21:3-15; Num. 16:46-48). For the great crime of rejecting and slaying their Messiah, the nation must make an atonement – “an offering made by fire unto Jehovah”. They will go through the 1260 day Tribulation fire. The saints that meet the Lord in the air – caught up in the middle of the 70th week to the Heavenly Jerusalem escape the affliction. But to the Seven Churches, waiting for the earthly kingdom, it is Jacob’s trouble (Jer. 30:7). Many will be killed for refusing the mark of the beast. It will also be true in that day: “Whatever soul that shall not be afflicted in that same day he shall be cut off from among his people” (Lev. 23:29).

1. The Physical Features

a. The High Priest did all the work (See Lev. 16:3,4,6,7,8,9,11,17).

This was a real labor day for the High Priest. There is just one man all the way through; none of the priests nor the people helped him. It is typical of Christ (See Hebr. 1:3). Around the Cross were great crowds, but none could help him, not even His mother nor His Heavenly Father. “Alone upon the cross He hung, that others He might save, Alone the crown of thorns He wore, Alone His life He gave. Alone, Alone, He bore it all alone; He gave Himself to save His own. He suffered, bled, and died alone, alone”.

b. The High Priest laid aside his garments of beauty and glory

The High Priest for the work of atonement put on linen clothes, a coat, breeches, girdle and mitre. That is exactly what Jesus Christ did when He stooped down to perform His work of redemption (Phil. 2:5-8). After His completed work He took again His robes of glory (Jn. 17:5).

c. The High Priest had to cleanse himself with water (Vrs. 4,24)

Aaron must take a bath before and after. He must be cleansed with water. The High Priest must be wholly clean and pure. While Aaron needed cleansing, Christ did not need any cleansing. He is said to be “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners” (Heb. 7:26).

Aaron also had to make an atonement for himself and then the people. Every priest taken from among men needed cleansing. Not so the Heavenly Priest. He had no sin and needed no cleansing either by water or blood.

d. The High Priest had to offer sacrifices

Aaron’s sacrifices were plural (bullock and ram). Jesus Christ never offered sacrifices. He offered one sacrifice once for all (Heb. 10:12).

The ritual of the Day of Atonement was different from any other day. Two goats were taken. Aaron cast lots upon them, one lot for the Lord and the other for the “Scapegoat” or Azazel. The one goat was killed for a sin-offering. The Day of Atonement gives prominence to the sin-offering and not the trespass offering. We are not only wrong in what we do, but also in what we are. The sin-offering was for our sin; the trespass-offering for our sins. So two offerings take care of the needs of sinful men; one for his nature and the other for his deeds.

The two goats form but one offering. The slain goat showed that a perfect sacrifice had been made and the living goat sent away to Azazel showed that perfect expiation and forgiveness had been made. Both of these goats were sin-offerings.

Aaron lays both hands on the live goat, confesses all the iniquities, transgressions and sins of Israel on the goat’s head and sends him away into the wilderness (Lev.16:21). Azazel is supposed to be the name of a malignant demon who together with other demons inhabited the waste places (See Isa. 13:21-22; 34:14; Matt. 12:43; Mk. 1:13). The sending of the live goat laden with sins to Azazel signified the complete removal of the sins of the people and brought to

the ones to whom they belong, namely the evil spirits. This rite would certainly counteract any disposition to honor or worship evil spirits (Lev. 17:7).

2. The Typical Features

a. Complete ruination through sin

“...all the iniquities, all their transgressions, all their sins” (Lev. 16:17). Sin has a universal character. Israel was commanded to continually offer sacrifices for sin; but on the Day of Atonement it was a once a year expiation for all sin (Rom. 3:23). Sin has also a penetrating character. It defiles the heart, it degrades the mind, it degenerates the conscience and it deludes the will. Sin has a deadly character (See Lev. 10:1-2 – Nadab and Abihu).

b. Complete Restoration through Sacrifice

“...from all your sins before the Lord” (Lev. 16:30). “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” (Rom. 5:20). There is blood for every iniquity, trespass and sin.

It is a type of substitution. The offering of all the animals and the sending away of the live goat all speak of substitution for the sins of the people. “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:21). It was a day of solemn imputation in Israel as Aaron placed his hands on the live goat and confessed all the sins of the people over him.

It is also a type of complete separation. After this solemn imputation the live goat was lead away from the fertile fields and babbling brooks to the distant and dreary wilderness.

So Christ divinely chosen by God was led away into the solitary land – “And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice saying Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani, which is being interpreted, My God, My God why hast Thou forsaken me?” (Mk. 15:34). (See also Ps. 103:12; Isa. 38:17; Micah 7:19; Heb. 10:17).

It is also a type of complete satisfaction. It is to be a day of jubilee – “Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound” (Lev. 25:9). It is to be a day of liberty – “and proclaim liberty throughout all the land” (Lev. 25:10). It is to be a day of rest and peace – “It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you” (Lev. 16:31).

This type of the redeeming work of Christ gives us a deeper insight into the essence of sin and the complete redemption of its removal.

XII. THE BRAZEN SERPENT (Num. 21:5-9; Jn. 3:14-15)

There can be no question concerning the typology of the Brazen Serpent. It is the only type of the Cross mentioned by our Lord in the N.T. We come for the fulfillment of this type to John’s Gospel. In his first chapter John fulfills three distinct types: (1) God said “Let there be light” (Gen. 1:3). John said: “That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (1:9). (2) Abel sacrificed a lamb unto God (Gen. 4:4); John says: “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (1:29). (3) Jacob saw a ladder with angels ascending and descending upon it (Gen. 28:12); John records Jesus saying to Nathanael: “Hereafter ye shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man” (1:51). When we come to the third chapter of John we are come to the wilderness experience and the fulfillment of the type of the Brazen Serpent. So the experience of physical healing in the wilderness is a type of the greater spiritual healing through Jesus Christ and the Cross.

1. The Serpents of Sin

“And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, and much people of Israel died” (Vr. 6). These people had already been saved from Egypt, from Pharaoh and from all their bondage. They had been saved by the sprinkled blood and the power of God. They had already come a long way on their journey to the Land of Promise and prosperity. But now they hinder that journey by another act of sin (Num. 4-5).

a. Its Reasons (5)

The reasons seem to be threefold: (1) They murmured against God. After all of Jehovah's miraculous acts, they still murmur against Him. It was the work of the flesh rising up against the spirit. They preferred the satisfaction of the soul and flesh to the profit of the spirit, and found it easy to murmur. (2) They murmured also against Moses. Murmuring against the will and way of God usually leads to murmuring against His servants. (3) They murmured against God's food and drink. (See Exod. 16:15). If we live by that which merely satisfies the soul and flesh we will despise God's spiritual food – the riches of His grace and glory in Jesus Christ as revealed in the Word of God.

b. Its Results (6)

God now sends a curse among the people in the form of fiery serpents. Satan appears in the form of a serpent (Gen. 3:1-15; 2 Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9). Many of the people died because of the bite. The Lord lays down here the fundamental fact of sin – the power and poison of Satan.

2. The Serpent of Salvation (Vr. 9)

a. It was Divinely Appointed

“Make thee a serpent. And Moses made a serpent of brass.” The remedy was as singular as it was effective. Purely of human origin. Men have prescribed many fomentations, concoctions and operations for serpent bites, but none have been as effective as this one. Man can invent no remedy for the satanic serpent bite. The incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of Christ are entirely of God and remedial. “Salvation is of the Lord.”

b. It was Divinely Appropriate

In form it was the same. The brazen serpent was made like the fiery serpents that bit the people. “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor. 5:21). The serpent of brass had done no sin but was made in the likeness of the poisonous snakes with their fiery venom. In essence it was not the same. The brazen serpent had no poison in its fangs. “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth” (1 Pet. 2:22). (See 1 Pet. 2:24)

c. It was Divinely Applicable (Vr. 9)

“...when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.” None looked in vain. It mattered not how many or how few, it worked for all. “He that believeth in Him hath everlasting life (John 3:16,36). They were to look at the serpent on the pole. A look is the simplest thing. It needs no education, no set age, no money, no not even natural eyes, for we are to look by faith and believe the record that God has given of His Son.

The bitten Israelites said to Moses: “Pray unto the Lord”. (Vr. 7) But prayer alone would not help. It might take the serpents away, but not the killing poison in their veins.

Brass is typical of judgment in Scripture. It holds and binds as a fetter. Brass is seen in the Brazen Altar (Ex. 27:1-2); Samson was bound with brass (Judg. 16:21); Nebuchadnezzar bound Zedekiah with brass (2 Kgs. 25:7); Israel's heaven became brass (Deut. 28:23); The feet of the glorified Christ were like fine brass (Rev. 1:15). At Calvary we certainly have a judgment scene where Christ was judged for our sins. “There is therefore no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1).

XIII. THE RED HEIFER (Num. Ch. 19; Heb. 9:13-14; 10:22; Ezek. 24-25; Hag. 2:13-14; Zech. 13:1)

“This chapter being found in Numbers and not in Leviticus shows inspiration. Had this sacrifice of the red heifer been invented by Jewish priests, as some affirm, they would have placed it in the Book of Leviticus” (Williams Commentary).

The Children of Israel were on their wilderness journey to Canaan. They had left Egypt, passed through the Red Sea, drank at the wells of Elim and from the smitten rock, ate the

heavenly bread and had been at Sinai to receive the Law, the pattern for the Tabernacle and its ritual.

The type of the Red Heifer is not so much the once for all forgiveness for sin as seen in The Great Day of Atonement, but the continual process of purification from death and dead works along the pilgrim pathway. Both the Sin and Trespass offerings were closely allied to this offering. Israel had been in contact with death and dead souls (Num.14:28-30). All those numbered who came out of Egypt and were twenty years and older perished (14:29); Korah, Dathan, and Abiram and their company had perished (16:31-32); 14,700 had died in the plague (16:49). This water of purification and separation dealt with all those who had come in contact with death and dead souls (19:14-19).

This offering is a type of the work of Christ as seen in Heb. 9:13-14 and 10:22.

1. Preparation for the cleansing (Num. Ch. 19)

Christ's work of salvation was twofold, like the types of the O.T. The Brazen Altar with its bloody sacrifice stood for redemption by blood; the Laver with its water stood for regeneration and restoration. It is the latter we have here.

a. It was Divine in Origin (1-2)

Only God Himself could have thought out and perfected this way of purification. Under the Old Covenant God had extended ceremonial purity to those defiled, who came to Him through the High Priest on The Day of Atonement by means of blood; or those who were sprinkled with the ashes and water of the Red Heifer.

b. It was Perfect in Character (2)

It was to be a red heifer from hoof to horn. If two hairs were black or white it was outlawed. Red is the color of blood, which is the token of life (Lev. 17:11). The word "Adam" means red; so the animal as well as Christ identified with man (Heb. 2:14,16). It was to be a female animal (heifer). Sacrificial animals were usually males. The use of a female here may symbolize the imparting of new life in the place of death. The female would symbolize humility, fertility, life-giving. It was also to be "without spot" and "no blemish". It was to be as perfect as the human eye could detect. Of Christ it was said: "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:19). And it was to be without any bondage. (2) The "yoke" stands for bondage. Our Lord was never under bondage to the Law. The Law had no claim upon him as a debtor because there was no sin in Him (Heb. 7:26).

c. It was Sacrificial in Nature (3-10)

The sacrifice was without the camp (See John 19:17; Heb. 13:12-13). This heifer was usually slain upon Mt. Olivet eastward from the temple, across the valley of the Kedron. From here the priest could behold the Sanctuary where in his duties he was to sprinkle the heifer's blood. So Christ had to suffer outside the camp, both in Gethsemane and at Golgotha. The blood of the heifer was taken by the priest and sprinkled before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times (Vr. 4). Seven is the number of perfection. The blood of Christ is perfectly efficacious. Also on the Day of Atonement the blood was sprinkled seven times before the mercy seat (Lev. 16:14). So the life of an innocent victim was substituted for the life of the one defiled (Num. 19:9,17). It was also a complete burnt-offering (Vrs. 5-6). Everything must be incinerated in the fire. The greatest (cedar wood), the smallest (hyssop), and the worst (scarlet). All must go into the fire. All pride, false humility, glamour; all creation represented by cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet wool had to be burned to ashes. So that ashes was all that was left. The ashes were then collected and kept without the camp in a clean place (Vr. 9). The ashes of the heifer were good for many years, some say centuries or until the captivity. But this seems unlikely. It has been said that eight heifers were slain between the time of Ezra and the destruction of the second temple – 500 years.

"The water of separation" is literally: "The water of impurity." The ashes mixed with water were laid up for purifying purposes for the cleansing of defilement in the realm of

death. The priest that burned the heifer, the cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet wool became unclean; so a clean person had to gather the ashes (7-9).

The Jews say: “It is a mystery which even Solomon could not understand, that this sacrifice should pollute those which were clean and purify those who were unclean”. Those who put the Lord Jesus Christ to death became guilty for the act, and yet this act could make all the guilty clean.

2. Purification By the Cleansing (11-22)

The purification was for those who had come in contact with anything that was dead – a dead body or soul, all in the tent of a dead body, a bone, or a grave. We are in a dying world. There is defilement everywhere, everything we touch is dead.

a. It was a personal cleansing (11-13)

“He shall purify himself. Note here the very personal element both in the matter of defilement and purification. “He shall de-sin himself.” There is great emphasis here upon defilement. He that is defiled defiles everything.

b. It was a perfect cleansing (19)

Both the numbers three and seven are perfect numbers. It is thought that three stands for the resurrection and seven for the Lord’s return. Isaiah speaks of sins as scarlet (1:18). He did not say sins as blue as heaven, or green as an olive tree, or even black as night – but red.

c. It was a perpetual cleansing (21)

The “water of impurity” became a perpetual means of cleansing as the ashes of the heifer were mixed with water from a stream or spring and sprinkled on the unclean.

Our counterpart to all this is found in Eph. 5:25-26. Here we have the blood – “gave Himself for it” and the water – “of water by the word”. See again Heb. 9:13-14.

Was water baptism a must for Israel because they had crucified the Lord Jesus Christ and in this way as a nation come in contact with death (Acts 2:38)?

XIV. THE TWO BIRDS (Lev. 14:1-9)

This is the record of Leprosy and the Two Birds. The birds were sparrows (Vr. 4 margin). It was to these sparrows undoubtedly that the Lord had reference when He said: “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing” (Matt. 10:29). He speaks of Himself in the Psalm as a sparrow: “I watch and am a sparrow alone upon the housetop” (102:7). A sparrow is a small and insignificant bird and equally insignificant and unattractive did the Son of God appear to those for whose sake He came. “He was despised and we did esteem him not” (Isa. 53:3).

There were two birds: the one was killed and the other one sent away alive. They are typical of Christ’s death and resurrection – “Who was delivered for our offences and was raised again for (or because of) our justification” (Rom. 4:25). The main emphasis is upon the living bird, but both aspects are necessary.

The sparrows must be clean – “two birds alive and clean” (Vr. 4). Pure and sinless was the Son of God – “without sin” (Heb. 4:15). “Cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop” were used in the ritual. “Cedar wood stands for fragrance and sturdiness: “Christ also hath loved us and hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor” (Eph. 5:2). Scarlet stands for blood and sacrifice: “without shedding of blood is no remission” (Heb. 9:22). Hyssop is the weakest thing in nature. It takes hold for life and sustenance on the rock. It speaks of Christ’s humanity: “He came down from heaven” (Jn.3:13). He was on earth: “The Man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 2:5). “And he (Solomon) spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall” (1 Kgs. 4:33).

The priest went outside the camp (Heb. 13:12). The priest did everything, the leper nothing (Tit. 3:5; Eph. 2:8-10; Rom. 3:28; Acts 4:12).

One bird was killed in an earthen vessel. This vessel is a type of the body (2 Cor. 4:7). Our Lord was slain in an earthly body. It was by the will and command of God (Phil. 2:8; Rom.

8:32; Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:10). The bird was killed over running water. It was running or living water. Water is typical of The Word and The Spirit (Jn. 15:3; Eph. 5:26; Jn. 7:38-39). Christ offered Himself according to the Word and through the eternal Spirit (Heb. 9:14).

The living bird was dipped in the blood of the dead bird and was thus identified with it, bearing its marks and stains. In resurrection Christ bears the marks of the death of the cross. He rises in the body in which He dies (Luke 24:40; Zech. 13:6). The living bird is then let loose. Christ died once for all. In resurrection He was freed forevermore from judgment and death (Rom. 6:9; Heb. 9:12).

The blood is then sprinkled seven times on the leper (1 Jn. 1:7).

1. Leprosy is a Symbol of Sin

Leprosy is the only disease pronounced unclean under the Law. The leper must present himself, not to the physician, but to the priest. The underlying thought was not so much sickness, as guilt.

a. It is a disease of the vitals

If it appeared on the surface of the skin only, the priest could not pronounce it leprosy. It is a disease from within (Mk. 7:21-23).

b. It is an inherited disease

Three or four years may elapse before it breaks into sight. So lapse of years invariably reveals in an infant, lying guileless on its mother's breast, the deadly legacy of Adam (Rom. 5:12).

c. Leprosy can be a fatal disease

A leper may exist for many years, but it can be a living death. If not arrested, it eats away slowly until death ensues. "The soul that sinneth it shall die."

There are three different words used to describe leprosy: "a rising or swelling", "a scab" and "bright spot" (Lev. 13:2). The characteristics according to Kellog are: (1) Loathsome, (2) Almost imperceptible beginnings, (3) Progressive, (4) Affects the whole man, (5) Victim becomes insensible, (6) Incurable, (7) Shuts out from fellowship.

2. The Leper a Symbol of the Sinner

This is seen in the whole process of cleansing.

a. He was helpless, but not hopeless – He was outside the camp. The priest had to come to him. No other leper could do the work, only the priest could cleanse him. Paul gives the sinner's condition when he says: "...without Christ,...having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12).

b. He was condemned, but curable – This disease was loathsome and separating, but cleansing was possible in God's way and by God's person. The leper was kept outside the camp, away from all social contacts and religious ceremonies. "Clothes rent, head bare, covering upper lip, cry unclean, unclean" (Lev. 13:45). But God sent His Son to us in our miserable condition and by His death and resurrection has brought new life and liberty.

c. Passive, but not forgotten – The leper could do nothing, only give himself to the priest. The priest inspected the leper and gave the verdict. If necessary he made the offering and sprinkled the blood (Ex. 14:13; Ps. 46:10; Phil. 2:13).

3. The Birds a Symbol of the Sin-bearer

Two clean birds are taken and the one is slain over running water; then the living bird, together with cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop is dipped in the blood of the dead bird.

a. Christ's redemption in the dead bird

"Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor. 15:3). We have "redemption through His blood" (Eph. 1:7).

b. Christ's restoration in the live bird

The live bird ascends in the air and flies away. "He arose again according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:4). Seven times speaks of complete cleansing. From cedar wood, to scarlet and hyssop, all our sins are covered by the blood of Christ and taken away by Him.

Water was an important element in this whole cleansing process (Lev. 14:5-6). “Running water” is mayim hayim, and means “living water”. No stagnant, dead water was to be used.

The leper is never spoken of as being healed, but cleansed – see Matt. 8:3; 10:8; 11:5; Mk. 1:40,41,42; Luke 5:12-13; 7:22.

XV. THE CITIES OF REFUGE (Num. 35:6-28; Josh. 20:7-8; Heb. 6:18; 2 Sam. 22:2-3; Ps. 46:1; 94:22; Isa. 26:1; Acts 4:12)

Among the most beautiful and expressive types of Christ are the six cities of refuge. They set forth the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ and they also picture Gospel promises and privileges. They embody in themselves truths of highest importance concerning the salvation of God and the provisions of His grace. To the Israelite of old they were an object lesson on the meaning of sin, of the punishment which it deserves, of the only means of grace, refuge, and escape for the sinner. Christ is the believer’s city of refuge, the only sanctuary for distressed and doomed souls. “Other refuge have I none, Hangs my helpless soul on Thee.”

The cities of refuge were ordained of God. They were divinely instituted and provided because of the sanctity of the life of man. They were places of ransom and redemption. They were places where judgment and justice were properly exercised. They were intended to shelter them who committed homicide (manslayer – from homo, man, and caedere, to cut) unintentionally and accidentally, or as the Scripture says, “unawares”.

They were prepared for refuge from the enemy, and thus, they typify salvation; which is ordained and provided by God, in which we find refuge from the enemy of our souls. They were evenly distributed on each side of the Jordan and were thus accessible points. They were appointed, not only for Israel, but also for the stranger (Num. 35:15). The accessibility of the refuge cities speaks of Christ as accessible to all (Jn. 14:6).

These cities were places of absolute safety. Instantaneous security was obtained the moment the killer entered the gate. His cause was taken up by the elders of the city and there was no charge against him (Num. 35:25). This speaks of the believer’s security in Christ. The slayer as soon as he entered the city of refuge was made a fellow-citizen, and so we have been made “fellow-citizens of the holiest of all” (Greek text Eph. 2:19). At the death of the High Priest the slayer was set free to dwell in his own land (Num. 35:28). He was a prisoner of hope. These cities were the only places of absolute safety from the avenger (Num. 35:26-28). So Christ is the only safety for the sinner (Acts 4:12). Christ is the only “strong tower” unto Whom we can come for safety from our enemy.

Those west of the Jordan are given first: they are from north to south as follows – Kedesh, Shechem, and Hebron. Those on the east side of Jordan are, from south to north – Bezer, Ramoth, and Golan.

1. KEDESH – Christ our Sanctuary

The first city mentioned is Kedesh in Mt. Naphtali. The name means “sanctume” or “sanctuary”. The sanctuary was a consecrated place, a place for the Lord to dwell (Ex. 25:8). But it was also a place of refuge and protection. In the sanctuary was the altar and at the corners of the altar were four horns overlaid with brass. A person seeking refuge could flee to the tabernacle and take hold of the horns of the altar (1 Kgs. 1:50-51; 2:28). Horns are symbols of power. Christ is our true Sanctuary. He is the true Kedesh, willing and mighty to save (Prov. 18:10). Christ tabernacles among men (Jn. 1:14) and is the meeting place between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5). Both “strength and beauty” are found in His sanctuary (Ps. 96:6). “Power and glory” are also to be seen in His sanctuary (Ps. 63:2). See Col. 1:11

2. SHECHEM – Christ our Strength

The second city is named Shechem, which means that part of the body which is inclined for the carrying of a burden – “the shoulder”. This city was located about seventy miles south of Kedesh. The shoulder is a symbol of strength. So Shechem is a type of Him Who is our strength, assuring us of a safe position and provision.

Shechem is a type of Him Who bears our burdens. He bore the weight of our sin at Calvary and He bears the burden of our earthly load of sorrow and suffering. As the shoulder is fitted for the earthly burden, so Christ is fitted for all our spiritual needs. He is a “strong habitation” (Ps. 71:3). He is “clothed with strength” (Ps. 93:1). There is strength in His right arm (Ps. 89:21). We read of the Lord that He is “my strength” (Ps. 18:1-2; 19:14; 22:19; 28:7; 118:14-16; Isa. 12:2). The way of victory is by appropriating His strength (Phil. 4:13).

The Lord as strength, the Man at God’s right hand is coming back and “the government shall be upon His SHOULDER” (Isa. 9:6). The “key of the house of David” shall be upon His shoulder (Isa. 22:22). He will reign in authority and power.

3. HEBRON – Christ our Friend

The name Hebron means “company, fellowship” or “friendship”. Christ is our Hebron, our true Friend. Friendship is very precious in the hour of trial and bitter loss (Ps. 66:12; Isa. 43:2; Jn. 14:18).

The friendship of Jesus Christ is marked by reality. It knows no change; it is undying constancy. Christ is a faithful friend (Ps 89:33; Lam. 3:23; 2 Tim. 2:13). His friendship is proof against the shocks of time and the fluctuations of human life.

4. BEZER – Christ our Fortress

It was necessary because of the natural division of the land by the river Jordan, to provide cities on both sides of this river. Then no person who sought refuge would be at a disadvantage in the race for safety and protection. Thus we have three cities on the east of Jordan.

The southernmost of these was Bezer, in the wilderness. The name Bezer means: “a place enclosed”, hence a “fortress”. The main object of a fortress is to provide a place of defense for the weak against the strong; a place secure from every enemy. Jesus Christ is such a fortress (2 Sam. 22:2; Ps. 18:2; 31:3). “A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing.” He is our refuge and strength, our mighty defense (Ps. 9:9; 46:1; 57:1; 62:6-8; 59:9; Isa. 25:4). “The only sure foundation Thou, The only fortress made, Invincible to hostile powers. The only sun and shade.”

In Christ there is security against sin, its fatal power, its evil influence, its terrible inroads, its awful punishment (Rom. 13:14).

5. RAMOTH – Christ our Standing

The name Ramoth means “heights” and indicates the most ample and perfect security. Christ is today in the highest heaven (Eph. 1:20). He has been raised from the dead and is exalted at God’s right hand (Acts 5:31). The Church has all blessing “in the heavenlies (Eph. 1:3). The church is called unto the heavenly places (Phil. 3:20-21). That is our goal and destination. Our standing is in the heavenlies now (Eph. 2:6; Col. 1:13). Marvelous is our identification with Him! So vital is our union with Christ that God cannot look upon us without seeing Christ. “So near, so very near to God, Nearer I cannot be; For in the person of His Son, I am as near as He.” Christ is our standing and since we are in Him, He cannot stand before God apart from us. The Heavenlies is our Ramoth of security. On the Cross He did not die apart from us; from the grave, He did not rise apart from us; and in the Heavens He does not appear apart from us. In Christ we have unquestioned acceptance, untarnished righteousness, unapproachable completeness, and

unbounded bestowment of spiritual blessing (2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 1:3,6; Col. 2:10). Perfect is our identification.

6. GOLAN – Christ our Joy

The last named city of refuge is Golan, meaning “fruitful”. Some say the word has the idea of “embrace”. We have fled to Christ for refuge and Christ has embraced us, made us fruitful and consequently given joy.

There is no doubt that the fleeing slayer as soon as he arrived within the precincts of the city of refuge would be joy-filled. The awful dread and fear would be gone. Here he had perfect safety and the flood-tide of joy would burst upon him.

Christ is our joy in salvation (Ps. 13:5-6; 20:5; 51:12). “O happy day, that fixed my choice, On thee my Savior and my God! Well may this glowing heart rejoice, And tell its raptures all abroad.”

Once we were strangers and aliens – but now we are made nigh, justified fully, freely and forever. A full provision has been made at the Cross for all our sins. Christ is an all-sufficient, complete Savior.

Christ is our joy in fellowship (1 Jn. 1:3-4). Joy is multiplied when we enter into fellowship and partnership with Christ. He is also the key to our joy in fellowship with one another. There is no joy apart from Christ. He is our joy in service (Phil. 2:17; 1 Thess 3:9). He is our joy in intercession (Phil. 1:4). He is our joy in occupation (1 Pet. 1:8).

“Simply trusting Thee, Lord Jesus, I behold Thee as Thou art, And Thy love, so pure, so changeless satisfies my heart. Satisfies my deepest longings, Meets, supplies my every need; Compasses me round with blessing, Thine is love indeed.”

Christ is indeed our joy. He makes life both sweet and fragrant. In summing up the typical teaching of the cities of refuge, we can draw only one conclusion – Christ is the all-sufficient Savior. He is our Sanctuary Whom God hath set apart for our worship; He is our Strength in all times of weakness and need; He is indeed our unfailing Friend; He is our strong Fortress; He is our Standing; and He is our Joy. Christ is all!

XVI. SOLOMON – A study in Comparison and Contrast

Matt. 12:42; 1 Kgs. Chs. 1-11; 1 Chron. Chs. 23-29; 2 Chron. Chs. 1-9.

INTRO: - “And Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom and the Lord his God was with him and magnified him exceedingly” (2 Chron. 1:1).

The greatness and glory of Solomon are very prominent in the aforementioned chapters, particularly his building and dedication of the temple. He is a glowing type of our Lord in His regal splendor, as the One who shall soon “build the temple of the Lord and He shall bear the glory and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne and the counsel of peace shall be between them both” (Zech. 6:13). “The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:15).

In comparing and contrasting David and Solomon with Christ Ada R. Habershon says: “David and Solomon give us different aspects of his kingly character. David, the shepherd-king who had been the slayer of Goliath, who was the fugitive and wanderer, and afterwards the conqueror of all his enemies, speaks to us of the sufferings and rejection of God’s anointed and finally of His conquests; Solomon, whom the Lord refers to in Matt. 12 as a type of himself, in his glory, his wisdom, his riches, and reign of peace, typifies the millennial reign of our Lord. Although the prince of peace, when Solomon comes to the throne, he gathers out of his kingdom, in the persons of Adonijah, Joab, and Shemei “all thing that offend, and them which do iniquity” as the greater than Solomon will do when He comes in His glory (Matt. 13:41).”

Solomon was made king over Israel, by David his father, when he was but a young man, probably not more than twenty-years of age (1 Chron. 23:1; 28:4-5). David called together the

princes, captains, stewards, his sons with the officers and the mighty men, when the accession of Solomon to the throne was confirmed and he was anointed a second time (1 Chron. 28:2-9; 29:22-23). Similarly both Saul and David were anointed a second time when they publicly received the homage of the people (1 Sam. 10:1; 11:15; 1 Sam. 16:13; 2 Sam. 2:4; 5:3). Solomon is the third king of Israel. He is the king of peace and prosperity. David was a king of war. Christ will first bring His enemies to nought and then reign in peace and prosperity like Solomon.

When David was aged and feeble, Adonijah tried to usurp the kingdom. But Zadok the priest, Benaiah, and Nathan the prophet succeeded in frustrating this act. So while Adonijah was feasting, Solomon was anointed king (1 Kgs. 1:5-40).

We need the magnificent reign of Solomon, the Prince of Peace, to complete the picture of Christ as King. The Lord said to David: "Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about; for his name shall be Peaceable, and I will give peace and quietness in Israel in his days" (1 Chron. 22:9). So Solomon reigned over his father's kingdom, from the river Euphrates unto the land of the Philistines and unto the border of Egypt (1 Chron. 18:1-13). He also went beyond the boundaries of the Promised Land, and cultivated the friendship of other nations.

1. As Seen in His Wisdom (1 Kg. 3:4-14; 2 Chron. 1:7-12).

Solomon withdrew himself to be alone with God at Gibeon. Here he brought a sacrifice of one thousand offerings. God now does an extraordinary thing. He gives him an opportunity to ask for a favor. His prayer is very humble in that he recognized his inability and need of God's guidance. It was a simple prayer, brief and to the point. Later he made a very lengthy and elaborate prayer at the dedication of the temple (1 Kgs. 8:22-53). It was a sincere prayer: he wanted an "understanding heart".

Because Solomon did not pray for "long life, neither riches, nor the life of his enemies" God gave him "a wise and an understanding heart". Solomon thus became the wisest man who ever lived outside of Jesus Christ. It was Solomon who wrote: "Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud" (Prov. 16:19). The Book of Proverbs is indeed a Book of Wisdom. There are some fifty-three references to Proverbs on wisdom. See 1:2; 2:6; 4:7; 8:11; 23:23; 31:26.

Of Jesus Christ it was said: "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8) and "In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3).

The Queen of Sheba came from a far country to see the wisdom of Solomon (2 Chron. 9:1-9). When she had seen the wisdom and wealth of Solomon she said: "And behold, the one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me: for thou exceedest the fame that I heard".

2. As Seen In His Wealth (2 Chron. Chs. 8-9).

Solomon was fabulously rich in gold, silver, ivory, spices, horses, changes of raiment, servants and ministers.

But a greater than Solomon is Jesus Christ. He is both the Creator and Conserver of the universe (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16-17). And the kingdoms of this world belong to Jesus Christ who will take them and reign over them (Rev. 11:15).

Psalms 72 is a Psalm of David for Solomon. It describes the glory of his kingdom; but it finds its fulfillment only in the reign of One greater than Solomon, who shall indeed one day "have dominion from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Vr.8). We need the magnificent reign of Solomon, the Prince of Peace, to complete the picture of Christ as King. The Lord said to David: "Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about; for his name shall be Peaceable and I will give peace and quietness in Israel in his days." (1 Chron. 22:9). And David says in the 72 Psalm: "In his days shall the righteous flourish: and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth" (Vr. 7). Isaiah calls Jehovah: "The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6); and Paul echoes the same: "For He is our peace" (Eph. 2:14).

3. As Seen in His Workmanship (1 Kgs. Chs. 5-8; 1 Chron. Ch. 28; 2 Chron. Chs. 2-7)

It was given to Solomon to build the temple. It was located on Mt. Moriah (2 Chron. 3:1). It was 90 feet long, 30 feet wide and 45 feet high at 18 inches to a cubit (1 Kgs. 6:2). The porch in front of the building was the width of the temple, or 30 feet, and the height of it was 180 feet (2 Chron. 3:4). The temple contained – The Brazen Altar, Molten Sea, Ten Lavers, Ten Candlesticks, Ten Tables, a hundred Basins or bowls, The Golden Altar, and the Ark (2 Chron. Chs. 4-5). Gold was plentiful both in the temple and the articles of furniture.

The temple was indeed a Creation of Wisdom. It was patterned after the pattern given to David by Jehovah and perfected after the specifications (1 Chron. 28:11-19). It was also a Crown of Workmanship. No building ever constructed was as unique and magnificent as the temple. In origin of plan, in beauty of design, in method of erection, and in choice of situation it was superb. 183,300 workmen were employed for seven years in the building of the temple (1 Kgs. 5:13-18; 6:38). God is building another temple, the Church, which is “fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord” and “We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (Eph. 2:21,10). The temple was also a Center of Worship and Witness. The Temple was “a House of Prayer for all nations” (Mk. 11:17; Isa. 56:7). All nations came to worship at its shrine. It witnessed to the redemptive purpose of God, a way in which sinful man could have fellowship with a sinless God. In Jesus Christ there “dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9). So as the Temple of old stood for God’s way to Himself; Christ now is our “way, truth, and life” (Jn. 14:6). The temple was finally a Chamber of Welcome. As Solomon was a king of peace and rest; so Christ bids all: “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28).

XVII. JONAH (A Typical Study of Christ and Israel) Matt. 12:40; Luke 11:29-30; Book of Jonah

INTRO:

No book of the Bible, no person, and no experience has been as much ridiculed as the prophet Jonah and his whale experience. Jonah and the great fish have been a synonym for an overworked imagination, in which they have been spoken of as: “The biggest religious fiction” and “The comic strip of Scripture”.

It is not our purpose to prove the historicity of this narrative. The fact is we must accept this book as being verbally inspired or reject the truthfulness of Jesus Christ and all of Scripture.

Dr. John R. Sampey says: “Our Lord referred on two different occasions to the sign of Jonah the prophet (Matt. 12:38-41; Luke 11:29-32; Matt. 16:4). He speaks of Jonah’s experience in the belly of the fish as parallel with his own approaching entombment for three days, and cites the repentance of the Ninevites as a rebuke to the unbelieving men of his own generation. Our Lord thus speaks both of the physical miracle of the preservation of Jonah in the body of the fish and of the moral miracle of repentance of the Ninevites, and without the slightest hint that he regarded the story as an allegory.”

Regarding the whale or fish which swallowed Jonah, it is sufficient to say in the language of Scripture: “Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah” (1:17).

The name Jonah means “a Dove”. He was the son of Amittai, of Gath-Hepher in Zebulun, in the days of Jeroboam II. He was the first Hebrew prophet sent to a heathen nation, BC. 825. The proof of Jonah as a historical character is seen in 2 Kings 14:25-27; Tobit 14:4-8; III Macc. 6:8; Jos. Ant. 9-10; Matt. Ch. 12; Luke Ch. 11.

The book of Jonah is a miracle book. There are at least ten great miracles recorded here: (1) The storm at sea; (2) Selection of Jonah by lot as the guilty one; (3) The sudden subsiding of the storm when Jonah was cast overboard; (4) The great fish prepared to swallow Jonah; (5) The preservation of Jonah in the fish; (6) The ejection of Jonah on the shore; (7) The repentance of the entire city of Nineveh; (8) The gourd which grew in a night; (9) The worm prepared to destroy the gourd; (10) The sultry east wind to finish the chastening.

This book does not only set forth typically the death and resurrection of Christ and the commission, disobedience, repentance, and ultimate obedience of Israel, but also great doctrinal truths. They are (1) God's Sovereignty, in Jonah's call and commission and the salvation of the Ninevites; (2) God's Grace, in that the Ninevites had no merit whatever; (3) God's Omnipotence as seen in the ten great miracles; (4) God's Omnipresence, as seen in God's presence on the sea, in the boat, and in the fish (Ps. 139:7); (5) God's Judgment as seen in His ability to overthrow Nineveh.

I. THE DIVINE COMMISSION

First of all, in the Book of Jonah, we are given his Divine call and commission. Jonah was a prophet of God. A prophet had a twofold message: He was a foreteller and a forthteller; he predicted or prophesied and he proclaimed a present message.

1. The Historical Record (Jonah 1:1-2; 3:1-2)

"Arise, go to Nineveh" is the command of God to Jonah. God has a right to regulate our lives, our time and activity. He was to go to Nineveh, the proud city of Assyria. This city was known for its moated ramparts; its tower-guarded walls some sixty miles around; its triumphal arches and winged bulls, and its pagan temples. Yes, for Jonah it was Nineveh; for Peter it was Bithnia (1 Pet. 1:1); and for Paul it was Macedonia (Acts 16:9). The character of this commission is seen in the words: "Preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee". The message was God-appointed. Scripture has such familiar phrases as: "Thus saith the Lord" and "Preach the word".

2. The Typical Revelation

Jonah is here distinctly a type of Israel, as well as of Christ. "There shall no sign be given, but the sign of the prophet Jonas" (Matt. 12:39). He intended that that nation should be three things: (1) A repository for the truth (Rom. 3:1-2); (2) A channel for the Promised Seed (Gal. 4:4-5); (3) A lighthouse to enlighten the Gentiles (Isa. 2:2-3; 42:6; 49:6; 60:3). All families of the earth were to be blessed in Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3). The call came to Israel: "Arise shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee" (Isa. 60:1).

II. THE HUMAN DISOBEDIENCE

Both Jonah and Israel failed in God's first attempt to make them a witness to the nations.

1. The Historical Record (Jonah 1:3)

Step by step the disobedient prophet consummates his purpose: (1) He "rose up to flee"; (2) He "went to Joppa"; (3) He "found a ship"; (4) He "paid the fare"; (5) He "went down into it". Man's wisdom is a worthless guide.

2. The Typical Revelation

The first call of the Triune God to Israel failed. She rejected the message of Jehovah God in the O.T. (Isa. 6:9-10). She rejected the message of the Son in the Gospels (Matt. 13:14-15). She rejected the message of the Holy Spirit during the Acts period (Acts 28:25-27). So Israel completely failed in her God-given mission.

III. THE DIVINE CONSEQUENCES (1:4-2:10)

It could be that the main cause for Jonah's disobedience was a deep-seated patriotism as seen in 4:2. Jonah knew that God was going to use Assyria as a tool to punish his disobedient people. Hence he reasoned that if he ran away, Nineveh would not hear and be destroyed. But this could never excuse his disobedience.

1. The Historical Record (1:4-5; 2:2)

Jonah is first seen in the ship in great tranquility. But as soon as Jonah stepped into the boat God stirred up the sea into a tempest. The mariners struggled against the raging waves, trying to keep the boat afloat, while Jonah slept undisturbed in the boat. But Jonah is soon found in the big fish in great tribulation. The mariners cast lots and found their trouble to be Jonah. So Jonah is tossed into the sea. But God had prepared a big fish which swallowed Jonah (2:1-6). And Jonah is bottled up in the fish's belly, tangled among the sea weeds and the gastric juices.

2. The Typical Revelation

The sea is a type of the nations (Rev. 17:15). The sleeping Jonah is a type of the Jewish nation in peace and prosperity among the Gentile nations. But the mariners ask some very pertinent questions: "What is thine occupation?" "Whence comest thou?" "What is thy country?" "What people art thou?" This to remind Jonah and every Jew of their God-given task. Two important passages to be noted: Luke 21:24 and Rom. 11:20-21. Since the days of Nebuchadnezzar the world has been living in "the times of Gentiles". The Jews have ever since been trying to get back in governing the world; which is the cause of all world problems since that time. The great fish with Jonah inside is a type of the Jews in tribulation (Matt. 24:21). The "times of the Gentiles" will culminate with a time called "Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7-8). Moses and all the prophets predicted that Israel would suffer like Jonah in the fish until she repented and God put her back on the land to do His bidding.

Jonah is the only Old Testament Book to teach both by figure and word the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the type chosen by Christ as the great sign of His death and resurrection.

LESSON # 8 – THE DISPENSATIONAL PRINCIPLE

INTRO:

Before beginning a study of the various dealings of God during the ages of the past, present and future, we want to think about an important passage in the light of progressive revelation. God did not reveal truth to mankind all at once, nor has He done so in the same manner. While God's nature, attributes and attitudes toward sin, salvation and service have been the same, His dispensational dealings have changed from age to age. We must learn to "rightly divide" between the Old and New Covenants; Moses and Christ; Moses and Paul; the Twelve Apostles and Paul; and between Paul's earlier ministry and his latter.

In Acts 26:16-23 Paul rehearses before King Agrippa his life, and ministry. He tells Agrippa that there are "these things" and "those things" (Vr. 16). His former ministry is set forth in verses 22-23. His latter ministry is set forth in Ephesians Ch. 3. Under his former ministry he labored under the New Covenant (2 Cor. 3:6). At this time there were judgments (1 Cor. 5:3-5; 11:29-30); there were miraculous signs – tongues (1 Cor. 14:18); Gifts of Healing (1 Cor. 12:28,30); Water Baptism (1 Cor. 1:14-16; Acts 16:33). Under Paul's latter ministry all these are gone (See Eph. 4:4-6; Col. 2:9-17).

Jeremiah says: "Thy words were found and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of Hosts" (15:16).

Paul says: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). Let us analyze this latter verse and note its meaning.

(1) The Process "Study." The word "study" is spoudason and means "to make haste" as manifested in diligence, earnestness, zeal. It is used in Eph. 4:3 and translated "endeavoring". Dr. W. Graham Scroggie says of this word that it means "brain sweat". The Bereans are an example here. They "searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). The Bible was never meant to be a book of easy reading. It is a book that requires "study".

(2) The Purpose "to show thyself approved unto God." Dr. Robert Moyer points out forcefully that it doesn't say: "Study to show thyself". The purpose is to stand "approved unto God". The word "approved" is dokimos and is the positive of reprobate (tit. 1:16) and has the idea of being qualified or accepted after due testing.

(3) The Product "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." The word "workman" is ergates and is translated "laborer" in 1 Tim. 5:18. We are to be unashamed workmen whose work does not bring dishonor or disgrace to God. God is not so interested in our endeavor to make results, as to make us the result. If God can only make us what He wants us to be, the results will ensue. "We are His workmen, created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. 3:10).

(4) The Principle "rightly dividing the Word of Truth." The word translated "right dividing" is orthotomounta and comes from two Greek words, orthos meaning "straight" and temnein "to cut"; hence "to cut straight". The word occurs nowhere else in the N.T., but twice in the LXX Version, the Greek translation of the O.T. In Psalm 119:128 it is translated "right" and in Prov. 3:6 it is translated "direct". In 1 Cor. 10:32 we have an example of right division; in 1 Cor. 1:11-12 we have an example of wrong division. There are principles in Scripture which never change; but God's manner of dealing with these principles may change. For example, faith is a universal principle which does not change; but the method or manner in which it is exercised may change (see Heb. 11:4 with 11:7).

The Word is the "Word of Truth" and when "rightly divided" there are no contradictions or errors. Augustine said: "Distinguish the ages and the Scriptures will harmonize." Dr. W.H. Griffith Thomas said: "Not least of all we should think of what has rightly been called Dispensation Truth; because, while all Scripture is written for us, all Scripture was not written to us" (Rom. 15:4).

Hebrews 1:1-2 sets forth God's procedure of communication:

(1) From the creation of man to the call of Moses at the burning bush, Jehovah spoke directly to individual man, without any human instrumentality or agency. Adam, Abel, Cain, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all had direct communication with Jehovah.

(2) From the call of Moses to the First Advent of Christ, God spoke by human agencies, namely, "unto the fathers by the prophets". Moses was the first of these and John the Baptist the last and greatest of them (Matt. 11:11).

(3) From the First Advent of Christ to His ascension in glory, God spoke directly through His Son. It was still God speaking, for the Son spoke the Father's words Who sent Him (Deut. 18:18-20; John 7:16; 8:28; 8:46-47; 12:49; 14:10,24; 17:8). The Son spoke here personally and directly.

(4) Since the Ascension of Christ, God has spoken directly through His Son by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13-14). Peter, James, John, Jude, and lastly Paul received the messages and wrote them down.

Note the method used in Abraham's salvation (Gen. 15:4-6; then the method used by John the Baptist and Peter (Mk. 1:4; Acts 2:38); then by Paul (1 Cor. 2:2; Eph. 2:8-9).

Note also the distinctions in Matt. 10:5ff with 28:19-20; Luke 9:2-3 with 22:36; Matt. 6:12 with Eph. 4:32; Luke 10:25 with Eph. 2:8-9.

Definition of Terms:

(1) Age and Ages – The Hebrew word which is usually translated "everlasting" and "forever" is *Olam* or *Alam*. It means a duration of time and should be translated "age". The word comes from a root meaning "hidden or secret" (See Psalm 19:12 – "secret faults") and it indicates a period of undefined limits. In Ecclesiastes the word "Olam" is used seven times and translated by four different English words (See 1:4,10; 2:16; 3:11; 3:14; 9:6; 12:5).

The Greek word of the N.T. is *aion*. It also occurs in the plural and in the progressive form – "the ages of the ages" (Gal. 1:5). In the A.V. the word *aion* is given the following renderings: "age" (2); "beginning of the world" (2); "course" (1); "world" (32); "eternal" (2); "world began" (1). In conjunction with *eis* (unto or for) it is translated "forever" (27); "for evermore" (2); "ever" (1); "while the world standeth" (1). Followed by the genitive: "forever and ever" (21); "for evermore" (1). *Aionios*, the adjective is translated "eternal" (42); "everlasting" 25; and "forever" (1).

The word *aion* occurs seven times in Ephesians and is translated by five different English expressions (See 1:21; 2:2; 2:7; 3:9,11,21; 6:12). The words are: "world", "course", "ages", "beginning" and "without end". This Greek word *aion* means "to blow, breathe, the life which hastes away in the breathing of our breath; life as transitory". It is not a word which means "eternal or indissoluble" as we think of these terms. The word *akatalutos* (Heb. 7:16) is the only true word for "eternal" or "indissoluble" and it is said of Christ.

There seem to be at least five (5) well defined ages revealed in Scripture: (1) The Creative Age (from Creation to the Fall); (2) The Antediluvian Age (From the Fall to the Flood); (3) The Present Evil Age (From Noah to the Millennium); (4) The Millennial Age (1,000 years); (5) The Age of the Ages (New Heavens and Earth).

(2) Dispensation – This is a translation of the Greek word *oikonomia*, a word known in our English words economy and economics. The word *oikonomia* is made up of two Greek words – *oikos*, "house" and *nemo*, "to administer, deal out, distribute". The word *oikonomia* was employed by Plato for the management of a household. "The Greek word rendered dispensation is *oikonomia* and refers to the act of administering" (E.W. Bullinger).

This word occurs in three forms: *oikonomeo*, *oikonomia*, and *oikonomos*, and is found in Luke 12:42; 16:1,2,3,4,8; Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 4:1,2; 9:17; Gal. 4:2; Eph. 1:10; 3:2; 3:9; Col. 1:25; 1 Tim. 1:4; Tit. 1:7; 1 Pet. 4:10. This Greek word has been translated in our A.V. by

such words as “steward”, “stewardship”, “dispensation”, “Godly edifying”, “chamberlain” and “governors”.

There seem to be ten distinct dispensational dealings of God to the human race down through the ages. They are: (1) The Edenic Dispensation (From Creation to the Fall); (2) The Adamic Dispensation (From the Fall to the Flood); (3) The Noahic Dispensation (From the Flood to Confusion of Tongues); (4) The Abrahamic Dispensation (From Abraham to Moses); (5) The Mosaic Dispensation (From Moses to Christ); (6) The Pentecostal Dispensation (From Pentecost to End of Acts Period); (7) The Secret Dispensation (From Acts Ch. 28 to the Tribulation); (8) The Tribulation Dispensation (A Seven year period or less); (9) The Millennial Dispensation (1,000 years); (10) The Fullness Dispensation (The Age of the Ages).

(3) Covenant – In the O.T. the word is berith and occurs some 267 times. The first occurrence is at Gen. 6:18. It means “a coming together” hence “an agreement”. It also has incorporated within it the idea of “cutting” and also that of “eating”. A feast was often observed afterwards. Gen. 15:9-21 is a good example of the making of a covenant.

In the N.T. the word is diatheke and occurs some 33 times. It means any arrangement made by a superior for the acceptance and observance of an inferior. It has the idea of will or testament. In every covenant there are three things: (1) The Covenanter; (2) The Covenantee; (3) The Covenant Stipulations. The Old Covenant (Testament) extended from Exodus Ch. 19 to John Ch. 21. The New Covenant (Testament) began at the Cross and will extend into the “Father’s Kingdom” (Matt. 26:29). It is made with “the house of Israel and Judah”, so has distinctly an earthly character (Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:8). There is no covenant made with The Church, The Body of Christ.

Covenants are of two kinds: (1) Conditional: Its formula, “If ye will” – see Exod. 19:5. (2) Unconditional: Its formula, “I will” – see Gen. 9:11. There are eight Covenants: (1) The Edenic Covenant (Gen. 1:28-30; 2:15-17; Hos. 6:7); (2) The Adamic Covenant (Gen. 3:14-19); (3) The Noahic Covenant (Gen. 6:18; 8:20 – 9:17); (4) The Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-14); (5) The Mosaic Covenant (Exod. Chs. 19-31; Gal. 3:17-25); (6) The Palestinian Covenant (Deut. Ch. 29-30:10); (7) The Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7:4-17); (8) The New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-13).

I. THE EDENIC DISPENSATION (Innocence) Gen. Chs. 1-3)

The Dispensational Principle of this age runs from The Creation of the World to The Expulsion from the Garden. The length in time is unknown.

A. Its Commencement

1. By A Divine Prediction – We see this first of all in relation to creation in general: “God created”, “God said”, “God made” and “God saw that it was good”. We see it also in relation to man in particular (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:7,21-22). Here was not an evolutionary process, from the scum of a pond to perfect man, but a direct creation after God’s image and likeness. God formed man’s body of the dust of the ground and gave him a soul through the breath of lives (2:7).

2. By A Divine Program – This is seen first of all in Man’s Domination (1:26). Man is king of the earth (2:20). It is seen in His Occupation (2:15). Man’s first occupation was to be a gardener, a dresser of the garden and a keeper of the same. It is seen also in man’s restriction (2:17). Adam was in a state of probation. He was created sinless, but not perfect in holiness; innocent but not knowledgeable in good and evil. He had not developed character, although he was created a free moral agent. It was therefore necessary for God to make at least one restriction for man. So Adam was created without sin but capable of sinning. Adam did have a great amount of intellectuality as is seen from Gen. 2:19-20. But he was ignorant of good and evil by experience.

3. By a Divine Protection – Adam and Eve had a favorable environment in every way (2:8-10). The Garden of Eden was beautiful, healthful, enjoyment, satisfactory in every way.

4. By a Divine Provision (2:8-16,18) – Here we see how God provided for all man’s need. He satisfied his need for food, for a home, for satisfaction in the aesthetic or beauty in nature. And God also created for him a helpmate.

B. Its Continuation

1. By Probation of man (3:1-6) – Here we meet first of all The Tempter (3:1). The being here called “The Serpent” which lent itself as a tool in Satan’s hand must have been the most intellectual as well as beautiful of all God’s creatures.

The serpent in its present form is a result of the curse (Gen. 3:14). In his original state he no doubt walked upright. Satan took abode in this creature of God and through him tempted Eve. Then we meet the Temptation (1-5). Temptation is always the incitement of the natural desires to go beyond the bounds set by God. It is (1) a desire to enjoy things; (2) to get things; and (3) to do things. There is first appetite, then acquisition, and finally achievement. The method is threefold: (1) Doubt – “Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” (2) Denial – “Ye shall not surely die”; (3) Deception – “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”. The mistake that Eve made was listening to Satan instead of to God. This has ever been man’s mistake. Then Eve tampered with the word of God by means of (1) Omission – eliminated “freely” (3:2 with 2:16); (2) Addition – “touch it” (3:3 with 2:17); (3) Alteration “lest ye die” (3:3 with 2:17). All temptation whether past, present or future is along these same lines. Eve saw, she desired, she took, she ate and she gave. In 1 John 2:16 we read about the list of the flesh, the eyes, and the pride of life.

2. By Production of Sin (3:7) – The halo of glory that had enshrouded Adam and Eve in their state of innocency is now lifted, and they became morally and physically naked. They became destitute of fellowship with God, estranged from the Divine presence, hiding among the bushes of the garden (See Ps. 104:2).

C. Its Consummation

1. By an Intervention of God (3:8-13) – God now comes upon the scene and finds Adam and Eve hiding from His presence. Sin always makes man hide from the presence and righteousness of God. Darkness and cover are man’s plight in sin. But God calls to Adam: “Where art thou?” Adam explains his condition and blames Eve; then Eve in turn blames the serpent. Thus it is always with sinful man; he finds it difficult to acknowledge his sin.

2. By Retribution From God (3:14,16-19) – First upon The Serpent as an animal (14); then upon him as Satan (15) See Rev. 12:9; Rom 16:20). Then upon the woman (16–pain-subjection). Then upon the man (17-18 – cursed ground & sorrow). Finally upon them both (19,23-24 – physical death and expulsion from the garden).

3. By an Exhibition of Mercy (3:15,21) – We have here the earliest prediction of a Savior (15). The “Seed of the woman” would ultimately crush the head of the serpent. There is also The Provision of Clothing (21). An animal or animals are slaughtered and from their skins God makes clothing to cover their nakedness. Here we see provision through substitution.

II. THE ADAMIC DISPENSATION (Conscience) Gen. Chs. 3-7)

The word conscience comes from two Latin words “with knowledge”. This Dispensational dealing of God with mankind begins with The Expulsion from the Garden to the Great Deluge (1656? Years).

A. ITS COMMENCEMENT

1. By a Divine Promise (3:15) – This Divine Promise in the beginning of this dispensation points to Christ and is the first promise concerning Him, Who did come to destroy the works of the Devil (1 Jn. 3:8).

2. By a Divine Program – God will now test man under a two-fold program: (1) By the light of creation (Rom. 1:20). See Psalm 19:1-6. It is thought that in this early day the heavens taught men the Gospel, at least the power and God-head of the Almighty. (2) By the light of conscience (Rom. 2:15). Their conscience became the judge between good and evil, right and wrong.

3. By a Divine Protection – There is first the beginning of family life (4:1). This would be the foundation of protection and blessing. It was through the Seed of the woman that the Redeemer would ultimately come. Then there was the beginning of industry (4:2). Cain we are told was “a tiller of the ground” and Abel “a keeper of sheep”. Through industry man would be protected against hunger, nakedness and cold.

4. By a Divine Provision – This provision is manifested in the coming of sin. Sin reveals itself at the two offerings of Cain and Abel (4:3-7). The offerings and their results issued out in murder (4:8). Then God said to Cain: “If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door”. The word translated “sin” here is in the Hebrew hattath. This same Hebrew word is also translated “sin-offering” (See Exod. 29:14,36; 30:10). In Cain and Abel we have two types: Cain, the religionist and Abel, the righteous.

B. ITS CONTINUATION (4:16 – 5:32)

1. By a Prolongation of Time – This is one of the longest of the dispensations, some 1656 years or more. The duration was sufficient time to test man and give him ample opportunity by his conscience and creation.

2. By a Production of Evil and Good – There is the development of sin in the descendants of Cain (4:16-24). It develops into a life of polygamy, murder, and the joy of committing such acts. There is also the development of Godliness in the descendants of Seth (4:25-5:32). The two great examples are Enoch and Noah. It is said of Enoch that “he walked with God” and of Noah that he “was a just man and perfect in his generations”. Enoch was a prophet (Jude 14-15) and Noah was “a preacher of righteousness” (2 Pet. 2:5).

3. By a Prohibition of Judgment – God does not interfere with man during the time or course of his probation, but lets him alone until the consummation. The silence of God during the ripening of iniquity is one of the mysteries of a dispensational outworking.

4. By a Preservation of the Righteousness – God will never let His purpose and promises miscarry. Therefore Enoch is translated as he walked with God and Noah is preserved during the building of the ark and also saved from destruction in the flood. There are two reasons for this: (1) To prevent the miscarriage of God’s program; and (2) To preserve His own people.

C. ITS CONSUMMATION (Gen. Chs. 6-7)

1. Demonstration of Brevity – The Flood began in the 600th year of Noah’s life, on the second month and the 17th day, and ended about a year later when Noah went out on dry land (See Gen. 7:11; 8:13-14).

2. Acceleration of Evil (Gen. 6:1-7,11-13) – “The wickedness of man was great in the earth, ... every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (6:5). The moral and social conditions were hopelessly corrupt. Violence filled the earth. The co-habitation of fallen angels with daughters of men brought on the “giants” or “Nephilim” (6:4). God had to wipe out this demonic progeny.

3. Intervention of God (Gen. 6:14 – 7:1) – We read that “God looked upon the earth (6:12). This brought His prophetic utterance: “My Spirit shall not always strive with man.” “I will destroy them with the earth” (6:3,13, 7). Then follows the Prophetic Fulfillment: “And all flesh died that moved upon the earth” (7:21-22).

4. Exhibition of Mercy – This is seen first of all to the ungodly (7:4; 1 Pet. 3:20). After God had pronounced them beyond redemption, He waits seven days in a complete exhibition of His mercy before He shut the door to the ark (See Exod. 34:6; Rom. 9:22; 2 Pet. 3:9). He shows His mercy also to Noah and his family – “Come thou and all thy house into the ark” (7:1).

We see God's love in providing for man's blessing during this age. We see His righteousness and mercy in bringing judgment to bear upon sin. We see His mercy in saving Enoch from the Flood and Noah and his family through the Flood.

III. THE NOAHIC DISPENSATION (Human Government) Gen. 8:1 – 11:9

This dispensational dealing of God with the human race took place from The Flood to The Tower of Babel, or Confusion of Tongues. This dispensation under which God tested man under a new environment with new laws took its beginning with Noah and his family and closes when God dispersed mankind in a confusion of tongues. The period lasted about 430 years.

A. ITS COMMENCEMENT (Gen. Chs. 8-9)

1. By a Divine Promise (8:21) – "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake." This Divine Promise comes in connection with Noah's offering. It was this act of faith and obedience on Noah's part that brought from Jehovah this two-fold promise: (1) No general curse of the ground. There would be no universal Flood again. (2) No general destruction of all living. The flood took the animal kingdom that could not survive the water, as well as all the wicked men.

2. By a Divine Program (9:1-6) – The program is to be three-fold: (1) Replenishment of the earth (Vr. 1). God's program for Noah and his family was to "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth"; (2) Dominion over the animal kingdom (Vr. 2). Man is to have complete dominion in the air, the land, and the sea, a dominion in fear; (3) Government over man (Vrs. 5-6). God now invests into man's hand the responsibility of government and expects that man shall exercise his right and power. The highest function of government is the judicial taking of life. All other governmental powers are implied in that. God gave to man the right of capital punishment.

3. By a Divine Protection – This is seen first in a cleansed earth (7:23). Man's environment had now been freed from the curse of man. The Flood had swept from the earth the filth and iniquity that had corrupted the world in the previous age. It is also seen in a New Covenant (9:11-17). God now establishes a covenant with man, and gives him a visible token of His faithfulness to this covenant – The Rainbow in the Cloud.

4. By a Divine Provision – This is first seen in respect to the order of nature (8:22). Here God establishes the seasons. There may have been no seasons before the Flood; but now they are necessary. They are a blessing to nature and to man. It is further seen in respect to the new diet of food. Permissible food is first given (9:3). Man is now given meat as an added food. Meat is needed to make man self-governing and help him command respect over his subjects. It would also protect him from the animals. Man has now been placed under a new physical environment and his body cells break down faster. Meat is a quick restorer of the body cells. Then the non-permissible food is given (9:4). Here is strict prohibition against blood. This to show man the sacredness of life, and also to keep him from becoming blood-thirsty like the animals.

B. ITS CONTINUATION (Ch. 10)

1. By a Prolongation of Time – Some 430? Years. This seems long enough to prove man under the now existing conditions.

2. By a Production of Good and Evil – There is rebellion and sin represented in Nimrod (10:8-12). It says of him that "He was a mighty hunter before the Lord" (9a). The thought here is that he was a hunter of souls. He was the founder of the city and kingdom of Babel (10:10). He was the son of Ham. On the other hand we see obedience and faith in Abram. Abram was from the stock of Seth through Eber and it is through this line that righteousness is promulgated.

3. By a Prohibition of Judgment – Again we see that God is silent as long as the dispensation lasts and lets man test out the principles of life. God only moves in when He sees that His program is apt to be frustrated.

4. By a Preservation of the Righteous (9:26-27) – This is seen in the prophetic utterance by Noah: “Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant”. “God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.”

C. ITS CONSUMMATION (11:1-9)

1. By a Demonstration of Brevity (11:5) – When judgment is ripe, then God comes down in haste” “And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower.”

2. By Acceleration of Evil – There was open rebellion (Vr. 4). God had told them to be fruitful and replenish the earth (9:1), but instead they are attempting to reach heaven by amassing together in one place and building a tower whose top is heaven. If a man cannot govern himself, he will find it difficult to govern others. If a man cannot walk in the path of righteousness himself, he will have a hard time to get anyone else to do it. This is the failure of man in Gen. 11:1-4. The descendants of Noah in the line of posterity rebelled against God and became guilty; and thus could not be trusted with the authority of human government under God. There is now an organized political and religious revolt against God. Human nature was unchanged by the Flood. When sinful unification becomes blasphemous, then judgment will come. There was also idolatry as seen in the ancestry of Abraham (Josh. 24:2). No doubt idolatry brought on the building of the tower.

3. By Intervention of God (Vrs. 7-8) – “Go to, let us go down and there confound their language.” The confusion of language is therefore a result of rebellion and disobedience to God. Up to this time there was a universal language. Language now becomes a vehicle for the carrying of evil. “By language evil is disseminated, and also words are wings to carry the Gospel.” So God sent judgment. What trouble and confusion the language barrier has brought!

4. By Exhibition of Mercy – This is seen in a negative source. You will find Divine mercy operative in the fact that there came a dispersion instead of destruction.

Thus we see that man failed to carry out God’s plan and thus proved incapable to stand the test of the age.

IV. THE ABRAHAMIC DISPENSATION (Promise) Gen. 11:10 – Exod. 15:20

God’s dispensational dealing at this time began with the Calling of Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees to become the father of a new nation, until the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea. It is a period of about 500 years.

A. ITS COMMENCEMENT Gen. 11:10 – 12:9

1. By a Divine Promise (Gen. 12:2-3) – Here we have an election. God calls Abram and he is elected by God, and the nation that came from him was an elect nation. God’s change in this age comes with the setting aside of the peoples of the earth, permitting them to go on under human authority while He elects a certain man and nation. We are not warranted that this choosing was because of any superior endowment possessed by Abram or by the nation Israel; but because of God’s purpose to be wrought out through them (Deut. 7:7). Election is never for the purpose or benefit, primarily to the elect, but for the glory of the Elector. Here there is the promise of a great people, name, blessing and protection.

2. By a Divine Program – The program for Israel was threefold: Separation, Sanctification, and Service; in that they were to be a separate, distinct people, a holy sanctified people and a people serving the Lord. See Gen. 12:1; Lev. 19:2; Deut. 14:2; Gen. 12:2).

3. By a Divine Protection (Gen. 12:3) – Both blessing and curse have taken place during the ages. It is particularly seen with: Abram in Gerar and in Egypt; Isaac in Gerar; Jacob in Haran and in Canaan during famine; Joseph in Egypt; Israel in Egypt, wilderness, and in Canaan.

4. By a Divine Provision (17:19) – God’s whole program for Abraham and his people would be summed up in an heir. Abraham being childless would mean that God’s purpose during this age would be defeated. God would thus have to make a supernatural provision for Abraham and Sarah to provide this heir. This He did in the coming of Isaac, and ultimately in Christ.

B. ITS CONTINUATION (Gen. 12:10 – Exod. Ch. 11)

1. By a Prolongation of Time – The period covers about 500 years, which is sufficient time to test the generations of Abraham.

2. By a Production of Good and Evil – We see first the development of sin in Ishmael and Esau. They became a constant menace to Abraham’s seed in Isaac. The Ishmaelites were the roaming nomadic Arabs of the desert, and the Edomites were the followers of Esau. But we also see the development of Godliness in Abraham and his descendants. Numerically they became a great nation (Exod. 1:7,9,12; Num. 2:32-33). Spiritually, we see how faith developed in Abraham, weak at first in respect to Egypt, Gerar, and Hagar, but perfected in the offering of Isaac. Jacob was at first imperfect, but with a changed name and nature became a man of faith. The sons of Jacob lived by intrigue and injustice, but changed in Egypt when they knew Joseph. Joseph a perfect man of faith.

3. By a Prohibition of Judgment – Again we find that God permits good and evil to develop without interfering. Not until sin has reached its climax does God interfere (See Gen. 15:16; Exod. 2:24-25).

4. By the Preservation of the Righteous – This is seen: In Abraham (Gen. 12:17; 20:7); in Isaac (Gen. 26:24); in Jacob (Gen. 28:15; 31:42; 35:5; in Joseph (Gen. 37:21; 39:2-21); of all the seed (As seen in Egypt).

C. ITS CONSUMMATION (Exod. Ch. 1-15)

1. By a Demonstration of Brevity – When God came down to save His people and destroy the Egyptians, He did short work of it. The length of time is not known.

2. By and Acceleration of Evil – There came an increasing conflict between Israel and the Egyptians (Ex. Ch. 1). Israel is in a bitter bondage in Egypt. However their moral and spiritual condition was extremely low. They turned to idolatry, worshipping the gods of the Egyptians (See Ezek. 20:5-9). It was a lack of faith that led them to Egypt and they lived by sight instead of faith in Egypt.

3. By the Intervention of God – God now sends by the hand of Moses, ten plagues. These culminated in the death of the first-born. Then God destroyed Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea as they were pursuing Israel.

4. By an Exhibition of Mercy – This is seen first in the miraculous preservation of Israel during the ten awful plagues by the power of Moses and also from the sure defeat and death at the hand of Pharaoh and his army at the Red Sea. This is without a doubt the greatest demonstration of God’s mercy, outside of the Cross of Christ, in human history.

V. THE MOSAIC DISPENSATION (Law)

This Dispensation began with the Exodus from Egypt and runs to the Crucifixion of Christ at Calvary. There are two kinds of Covenants: The Unconditional Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 17:6-8). Here God was the only actor. This made every promise sure. Note the fivefold repetition of “I” (Number of Grace). The other kind is illustrated by The Conditional Covenant with Abraham’s seed (Exod. 19:3-8). It was by mutual agreement; fulfillment being dependent upon obedience. Note the words “if” and “then”. The Mosaic Dispensation lasted almost 1500 years.

A. ITS COMMENCEMENT

It began with a mutual agreement between God and Israel (Exod. 19:1-8). It ended with the death of Christ on the Cross (Matt. 27:31). This signified that a new way to God was now opened (Heb. 10:20). The death and resurrection of Christ opened “a new and living way” as against the dead way of sacrifices under Law.

1. The Divine Prediction (Exod. Chs. 3-4) – In this Divine Prediction God reveals to Moses that he is going to save Israel from Egypt and bring them into the Land of Canaan (3:7-10).

2. The Divine Program (Exod. Chs. 19-40) – This program was given to Israel at Mt. Sinai. It is a program in three parts:

a. The Moral Law (Exod. Ch. 20) – This was the mind of God relative to private life. It embraced the Ten Commandments (Deut. 5:22).

b. The Civil Law (Exod. Chs. 21-24) – This was the mind of God relative to public life. This included the administration of justice (Deut. 7:11).

c. The Ceremonial Law (Exod. Chs. 25-40) – Also the Book of Leviticus. This was the mind of God relative to religious life. The manner of worship (Lev. 7:37-38).

These three divisions are one whole (Deut. 7:11). The center of all Jewish life was in The Tabernacle, which God gave to Moses on the Mount. God proposes the Law and they accept it (Ex. 19:8) and God imposes the Law and it becomes their responsibility.

3. The Divine Protection (Exod. 13:21) – This is seen in the visible “pillar of cloud by day” and “by night a pillar of fire”.

4. The Divine Provision (Exod. Chs. 15-18) – God provided water, manna, and quails. He manifested His providential care in all His dealings with Israel.

5. The Divine Purpose – The giving of the Legal System was to Israel (Deut. 4:7,8; 5:1). It was not given to Gentiles (Rom. 2:14). A Gentile could become a proselyte (Acts 2:10). It was added to the Dispensation of Promise (Gal. 3:19). This was because of transgressions. It put sin to one’s account (Rom. 5:13). It could not give righteousness nor life (Gal. 3:21). It was called a “ministration of death” and “condemnation” (2 Cor. 3:7-9). It was Israel’s leader to Christ (Gal. 3:24). Note the verb “was” and the pronoun “our”. It was given to bring to Christ. It was a temporary dispensation (Gal. 3:19). This is indicated by the “till”.

B. ITS CONTINUATION

1. By a Prolongation of Time – For approximately 1500 years God gave His people the time to live and be tested under Law. God always gives sufficient time to thoroughly test man. The Law was reiterated for the new generation (Deuteronomy). First, by an appeal to the past (Chs. 1-4); then, by a restatement of the Law (Chs. 5-26); and thirdly, by the unveiling of Israel’s future (Chs. 27-30); and finally, by a charge and appeals (Chs. 31-34).

2. By a Production of Good and Evil – Side by side we notice how these two develop:

a. Development of Good – We see the good developed in such men as Moses, Joshua, The Judges, Prophets and certain Kings.

b. Development of Evil – The people murmured against Moses and God and spent 38 years in The Wilderness. Under the time of the Judges we read: “Every man did that which was right in his own eyes”. During this time we find rebellion, ruination, and then repentance and restoration. Under the Kings we have: apostasy, chastisement, revival, and restoration (2 Kg. 17:7-20). We have the prophecy of the blessings and the curses fulfilled (See Lev. Chs. 26 and Deut. 28). They entered into a seventy years captivity when Rulership was taken from them and given to the Gentiles.

Innocency had failed, conscience had failed, human authority had failed, even God’s promise had failed to teach them obedience, and now “Thou shalt and thou shalt not” is thundered down from Mt. Sinai, and again they fail.

3. By a Prohibition of Judgment – God is gracious, longsuffering and patient. He does not hastily bring judgment to pass. He chastises them time and time again to bring them to repentance, but finally judgment must come.

4. By a Preservation of the Righteous – God preserved His own until their time was fulfilled – Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, the Judges, Prophets and Kings.

C. ITS CONSUMMATION

1. By Acceleration of Evil

a. Corruption – This is most vividly depicted in Romans Chs. 1-2. Here is seen the low moral and spiritual condition of both Gentile and Jew.

b. Crucifixion – The crucifixion of the Messiah was the culmination of man's wickedness in this dispensation (Rom. 4:25; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13).

2. By Exhibition of Mercy (Luke 23:34) – Here at the Cross forgiveness for their sin is granted, making the way possible for repentance and restoration.

VI. THE PENTECOSTAL DISPENSATION

This Dispensation began with the Crucifixion of Christ on the Cross and ended with the Destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70.

A. ITS COMMENCEMENT

1. By Divine Promise

a. Prophetically (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:25-27; Joel 2:28-32) – This promise is connected with the New Covenant. The Dispensation should have led to the Great Tribulation, and the coming in of the Millennial Kingdom. But Israel rejected the message of the Apostles through the Holy Spirit and so the program was nullified and postponed until a future day.

b. Historically (Matt. 16:18; Acts Ch. 2) – The Pentecostal Assembly was built upon the Rock (Christ) that Peter confessed. Peter became the leader and spokesman for this Assembly.

c. Experientially (Acts 2:4; 4:29-31; 5:12; 6:7-8; 7:55-56; 8:6-8,14-17; 8:37-38; 9:17-18; 10:44-48).

The Pentecostal Gospel spread throughout the land and was embraced by many outside of Palestine (Acts 2:9-11) through the ministry of Peter, James and Phillip. Paul and his companions also had experience in proclaiming this Pentecostal Gospel (See Acts 14:3; 15:12; 19:1-6).

2. By Divine Program – This Pentecostal Program is found in the book of Acts, James, Peter, John and Jude; also in Paul's Pre-Prison Epistles, Romans, Corinthians, Galatians and Thessalonians. The Great Commission given in Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:14-20 was carried out by all these Apostles during the Acts period.

a. Included Repentance, Believing, Water and Spirit Baptisms (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38,41; 3:19; 5:31; 8:22; 11:18; 19:4; 20:21; 26:20).

b. Included speaking in tongues (Acts 2:4; 2:11; 10:46; 19:6; 1 Cor. 12:10,28,30; 14:5,6,18,22,23,30).

c. Included gifts of healing and divers miracles (1 Cor. 12:7-11; Acts 3:1-8; 5:1-10; 5:15-16; 6:8; 8:6-7; 9:17-18; 9:36-41; 12:4-11; 13:6-11; 14:8-10; 14:19-20; 16:25-28; 19:11-12; 20:9-10; 27:34; 28:3-9).

3. By Divine Protection – God promised them power through the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8) and that He would be with them to the end of the age (Matt. 28:20). This miraculous power and protection are manifested throughout the Dispensation.

B. ITS CONTINUATION

For some forty years God permitted this program to go forward both among Jews and Gentiles. It was sufficiently long for Israel to repent and accept the message. God used the

Gentile believers during this time to “provoke Israel to jealousy” and “to emulation” (Rom. 11:11,14).

C. ITS CONSUMMATION

1. Paul at Jerusalem (Acts 21:30) – After Paul’s last visit to Jerusalem and the Temple, they took Paul and wanted to kill him. But he was rescued by the Roman officer in charge. It was at this time that it says so significantly: “the doors were shut”. These were the doors to the temple. This was a physical act, but seems to have typical significance too. Jerusalem no longer receives a message or a messenger.

2. Paul at Rome (Acts 28:17-31) – Here Paul calls the “chief of the Jews together” (Vr. 17) and after hearing Paul’s message, they rejected the same. Paul then pronounces upon them the judgment of Isaiah 6:9-10 (Vrs. 25-27). This ended the Dispensation of the Pentecostal message.

VII. THE SECRET DISPENSATION

This Dispensation of the Secret or Mystery had its beginning, historically, some time in the latter ministry of the Apostle Paul and will end when the last member of The Body of Christ is added to this Assembly. It will then be revealed with Christ in glory (Col. 3:4).

This Dispensation is called “The Dispensation of the Grace of God” (Eph. 3:2) and “The Dispensation of the Mystery (or Secret) (Eph. 3:3,9). This Dispensational dealing of God with Jew and Gentile being distinctly heavenly, rather than earthly, its time element is found, not in the historical record of the Acts, but in the spiritual revelation of Paul’s Prison Epistles.

A. ITS COMMENCEMENT

1. Eternally (Eph. 1:4; 3:9) – This Dispensational dealing of God with men had its inception in the eternal counsels of the Godhead. It was God’s eternal purpose before the foundations of this planet were laid.

2. Historically – The revelation of the Secret Dispensation was given to Paul exclusively (1 Cor. 12:1,7; Eph. 3:3) and then communicated to others. But the exact time is not revealed. Paul said: “which is given to me” (Eph. 3:2). That is why he could say: “be followers together of me” (Phil. 3:17). It was not known in any other generation (Eph. 3:5). Contrast this with Peter’s message at Pentecost. He said: “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel” (Acts 2:16). Paul’s message is called “unsearchable” or “untraceable” (Eph. 3:8). It cannot be traced through the Scriptures. It was “hid in God” until revealed to Paul (Eph. 3:9). It was not hid in the Scriptures as Peter’s message. The full revelation of this Secret is given in Paul’s Prison Epistles, especially Ephesians and Colossians.

3. Experientially (Eph. 2:5-9; 2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 2:16; 3:6) – The purpose is to save us by grace, and “create one new man” (Eph. 2:15). This of Jew and Gentile on an equal basis (Eph. 2:16). This fulfills the pre-historic purpose (2 Tim. 1:9). The purpose is to form a new union with Christ (Eph. 1:21-23) and to complement and complete the full glory of Christ (Eph. 1:23; Col. 2:10). The Church, the body of Christ is the fullness, meaning “to fill up a rent”.

B. ITS CONTINUATION

1. By a Divine Program

a. Spiritually – Man’s condition by nature is set forth in Romans Chs. 2-3 and Eph. Ch. 2. After stating man’s sinful condition Paul concludes: “There is none righteous, no, not one” and “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:10,23). It is, therefore, one complete reign of grace (Rom. 5:20-21). Of this grace, Paul was the special minister (Eph. 3:7-8). So salvation is by grace, apart from all works (Eph. 2:8-9). All that is demanded is by grace, apart from all works (Eph. 2:8-9). All that is demanded is faith, with nothing added, all else excluded. These saved ones constitute the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:23; Col. 1:18). This takes place by a Divine identification in Christ, in which its members are Buried, Risen, Quicken and Seated with Christ (Col. 2:12; Eph. 2:5-6). It gives the members

identification in the Heavens with every spiritual blessing (Eph. 1:3). This Body is joined to the Head, Christ Jesus, and all to fulfill the purpose of His grace and glory.

b. Morally and Ethically – This is expressed by the word “walk” – peripateo, meaning “to walk around”. We are exhorted to “walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4); “walk honestly” (Rom. 13:13); “walk by faith” (2 Cor. 5:7); “Walk in the Spirit” (Gal. 5:16); “walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called” (Eph. 4:1); “Walk in love” (Eph. 5:2); “Walk as children of light” (Eph. 5:8); “Walk circumspectly” (Eph. 5:15); “Walk in wisdom” (Col. 4:5). On the negative side we are not to “Walk after the flesh” (Rom. 8:1); “not walking in craftiness (2 Cor. 4:2); and not according “to the course of this world” (Eph. 2:2); and “not as other Gentiles walk” (Eph. 4:17).

c. Socially – The members of the Body of Christ are in this world and thus partake of the social and family life of the community. Paul speaks of human society in a threefold way: (1) Husbands and wives (Eph. 5:21-33); (2) Children and Parents (Eph. 6:1-4); and (3) Servants and Masters (Eph. 6:5-9).

d. Martially (Eph. 6:10-18) – “Fight the good fight of faith” (1 Tim. 6:12). “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might” (Eph. 6:10). We are to have “loins girt about with truth”; “breastplate of righteousness”; “Feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace;” “Shield of faith;” “Helmet of salvation;” “Sword of the Spirit;” “Prayer;”

2. By a Divine Provision

a. A Plenitude of Power (Eph. 5:18) – “Be filled by the Spirit.” We have at our disposal the fullness of the Spirit of God. The Spirit is referred to some ten times in Ephesians.

b. A Profit in Prayer (Eph. 6:18) – “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.” The resource of prayer at the Throne of God’s Grace is always ours. We have free access unto the Father (Eph. 2:18; 3:12).

3. By a Divine Prolongation – This Assembly of the Body of Christ has been in the world some 2000 years. It has become one of the longest dispensational dealings of God with man. Such is God’s supreme grace.

4. By a Production of Good and Evil – In 2 Tim. 3:1-17 we have a graphic description of the good and evil of this age. On the evil side we are told that there will be: “perilous times” (diabolical); “men lovers of self, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of the good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than God;” having “a form of godliness, denying the power;” “women laden with divers lusts”. In all this the heavens are silent; it isn’t God’s time to intervene. On the good side we are told to “continue in the things which we have learned” and to rely on the Holy Scriptures which made us “wise unto salvation” and are “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”. This will make “the man of God ... thoroughly furnished unto all good works”.

5. By a Divine Preservation (2 Tim. 2:19; Rom. 8:35) – “The Lord knoweth them that are His”; “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” Like an Enoch or a Noah God will preserve us until His purpose is complete. Satan can never frustrate or do away with God’s purpose in the Church.

C. ITS CONSUMMATION

1. By a Prior Resurrection (Phil. 3:10-11; Eph. 1:12) – “...an out-resurrection from among the dead” (Phil. 3:11). “Who first trusted in Christ”, or better, “Who had a prior hope in Christ” (Eph. 1:12). This resurrection will be prior to the “First Resurrection” of Rev. 20:5-6).

2. By a Pre-eminent Manifestation (Col. 3:4; Titus 2:13; Rom 8:19) – When our Lord shall be manifested in glory, then we shall be manifested. It will be at the epiphanea “of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ”.

3. By a Perfect Presentation (Eph. 5:27) – It will be “a glorious church” with “no spot, wrinkle, or any blemish; holy” in His sight.

VIII. THE TRIBULATION DISPENSATION

Jer. 30:7; Dan. 12:1-3; Joel 2:2; Zech. 14:1-3; Matt. Ch. 24; Luke Ch. 21; Book of Rev. This dispensation is called: “The Great Tribulation” (Matt. 24:21); “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7); “the Day of the Lord” (Joel 2:1).

This Dispensation begins when God takes up His prophetic program again with Israel and closes with the Lord coming to the Mt. of Olives in power and great glory. He will then destroy all His enemies, save His people Israel and set up the Millennial Kingdom.

A. ITS COMMENCEMENT

1. With a Divine Promise (Matt. 24:21; Dan. 12:1)

It will be a time of terrible trouble, especially for Israel, but the whole world will more or less feel its impact. It is especially called “The time of Jacob’s trouble”. Both the heavens and the earth will be in utter commotion and confusion.

2. With a Divine Program

a. By a Sealed Ministry (Rev. 7:4-8) – There will be the sealing of 144,000 Israelites, 12,000 from each of the tribes. Dan is omitted (see Gen. 49:17) and Ephraim (see Hosea 4:17). They will endure the Great Tribulation.

b. By a Kingdom Message (Matt. 24:14; 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-20; Acts 2:38)

This message included repentance with water baptism for remission of sins and reconciliation to God. It was accompanied by Divine miracles of physical healing and the releasing of demon possessed persons.

c. By Divine Judgment – The program will also include the most severe Divine judgments (Rev. Chs. 6-8). These judgments are symbolized under Seals, Trumpets, and Vials. These will be troublous times for the human race.

3. With a Divine Protection

“Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age” (Matt. 28:20).

“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” (Matt. 24:13).

“And to wait for his Son from Heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come” (1 Thess. 1:10). See Rev. 9:4.

4. With a Divine Provision

This is manifested in the sealing of the 144,000 out of the twelve tribes (Rev. 7:4-8). They will pray the prayer: “Give us this day our bread from heaven” (Matt. 6:11). God will send them miraculous food as he did their forefathers in the wilderness. It will also be seen in the power and manifestation of the Two Witnesses (Rev. 11:3-6). God will provide strength and sustenance.

B. ITS CONTINUATION

1. With a Prophesied Period of Time – It will be the final week of Daniel’s “Seventy weeks” (Dan. 9:24-27). It will be approximately a period of seven years. Our Lord spoke of shortening the days of the Tribulation for the elect’s sake (Matt. 24:22).

2. With a Production of Good and Evil – Evil will culminate in the Two Beasts of Rev. Ch. 13, the first representing the Antichrist, and the second, the False Prophet. Satan will climax his evil work by these two beasts.

Good is seen in the great multitude who will not take the mark of Satan and thus be martyred for their faith (Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9-17). It is seen in the sealing of the 144,000 and the preservation of the Two Witnesses (Rev. 7:4-8; 11:3-12).

C. ITS CONSUMMATION

1. With a Demonstration of Brevity – When God comes finally upon the scene in the person of Jesus Christ, riding on a white horse (Rev. 19:11-21) judgment will be meted out swiftly. Also the time of the Tribulation will be shortened (Matt. 24:22).

2. With an Acceleration of Evil

1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-8. Godlessness and Lawlessness will be rampant. Evil will culminate in the rule of Antichrist and the False Prophet. “In the last days perilous times shall come” (2 Tim. 3:1). These will be days of fierce demon possession.

3. With an Intervention of God

a. By Christ coming to the Mt. of Olives (Acts 1:9-12; Matt. 24:30; Zech. 14:1-5; Isa. 63:1-6) – The wicked armies will muster their forces at Armageddon and come down the Valley of Jehoshaphat toward Jerusalem (Joel 3:2) where the Lord will battle against them and cause the slaughter to be so great that the blood of the slain will come up to the bridles of the horses.

b. Doom of the Antichrist and False Prophet – These two, who have brought about such satanic error and destruction, shall be taken alive and cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:20).

c. Doom of Satan – The archfiend and enemy of all mankind and Christ shall be taken and cast into the Bottomless Pit, to be incarcerated for one thousand years (Rev. 20:1-3).

4. With an Exhibition of Mercy

The sealing of the 144,000; the preservation of the Two Witnesses (Rev. 7:4-8; 11:3-13); and the saving of a remnant (Isa. 10:20-27; 11:11-16; 1:9; Rom. 11:5; Zech. 14:1ff).

IX. THE MILLENNIAL DISPENSATION (Rev. 20:1-15)

This Dispensation and Age begins with Christ’s Coming to the Mt. of Olives, and closes with The Great White Throne judgment. It is a period spoken of as “the thousand years” (Rev. 20:4-7). This kingdom is the burden of Old Testament prophecy. The prophecy of the angel Gabriel in Luke 1:32-33 speaks of David’s throne and of Christ’s reign over Israel. Christ came as a King and died as a King (Matt. 2:2; 27:11,29,37).

The Kingdom is spoken by Christ: The Nobleman (Luke 19:11-17); The Twelve Thrones (Matt. 19:28); The Twelve Tribes (Rev. Ch. 7); The Transfiguration (Luke 9:26-32; 2 Pet. 1:16-18). In the Book of Acts we have the following concerning the Kingdom: 1:3 – Talked concerning the Kingdom; 1:6-7 – The restoration of the Kingdom; 2:29-35 – David’s Throne, Necessity of Resurrection, Final triumph; 3:21 – Times of restoration of all things; 15:16-18 – Rebuilding of David’s tabernacle; 28:20 – Hope of Israel.

A. ITS COMMENCEMENT

1. With a Divine Promise – This is seen in the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7:14-16). The angel’s message to Mary reveals the coming of Christ to reign (Luke 1:32-33).

2. With a Divine Program – (Isa. Chs. 60,61,62; Zech. 14:9-21; Micah 4:1-8). It will be an age of glorious reign with Christ as King over all the earth.

a. For Israel (Exod. 19:6; Deut. 28:12-18; 30:1-10) – Israel “a kingdom of priests and an holy nation”.

b. For The Nations (Micah 4:2-3; Rev. 19:16) - The nations will be taught the Law of the Lord, will learn war no more, and be ruled by the “King of Kings, and Lord of Lords”.

c. For the Church (2 Tim. 2:12) – God’s heavenly people will reign with their Head.

d. For all Creation (Isa. 35:1-2; Amos 9:13; Rom. 8:21) – The creation will come back to its pristine glory and will bear its fruit abundantly; its groaning and corruption being over.

3. With a Divine Protection (Rev. 20:1-6)

Satan will be bound, the curse removed, the earth cleansed and ruled by Christ.

4. With a Divine Provision (Micah 4:4-5)

There will be universal prosperity in the whole earth. The seven Edenic perfections will prevail during the age and dispensation of God’s heavenly kingdom on earth.

- a. Perfect life – In a new body (Ezek. 37:1-14; Matt. 10:8; John 11:23-27; Acts 9:36-43; 20:9-12).
- b. Perfect Health (Isa. 35:5-6; 58:8; Mal. 4:2; Matt. 10:8; Mk. 16:16-20; Acts 5:12-16; 14:8-11).
- c. Perfect Intelligence and Knowledge (Isa. 35:8; Jer. 31:34; Isa. 11:9; Luke 5:21-22; Acts 5:1-5; 1 Jn. 2:27).
- d. Perfect Sinlessness (Isa. 26:2; 60:21; Ezek. 36:27,30; 37:24; 1 Jn. 3:5-9).
- e. Perfect Prosperity (Ezek. 34:26-27; 36:29-36; Hos. 2:14-22; Micah 4:4; Matt. 6:25-34; Mk. 6:32-44; John 21:1-14).
- f. Perfect, face to face, communion with God (1 Cor. 13:12; Rev. 22:4).
- g. Perfect communion between man and man (Isa. 2:4; Micah 4:3).

B. ITS CONTINUATION

1. By a Prolongation of Time – This period will cover a thousand years (Rev. 20:6).
2. By a Production of Good and Evil (Ps. 2:9; 8:1ff; Micah 4:3) – There will be no overcoming rebellion for righteousness will rule with “a rod of iron”. Yet all men will not inwardly turn to God. When the thousand years are over, Satan will be loosed and will gather his forces of “Gog and Magog” together to battle the saints.

C. ITS CONSUMMATION

1. Demonstration of Brevity – Satan will be loosed for just a short season (Rev. 20:3).
2. Acceleration of Evil – As many “as the sand of the sea” will gather to destroy the saints (Rev. 20:7-9).
3. Intervention of God – (Rev. 20:9-15). A baptism of fire. Doom of Satan to the Lake of Fire. Doom of wicked dead into Lake of Fire. “Death and Hades cast into the Lake of Fire.”
4. Exhibition of Mercy – Saints who follow the Lamb will enter into the New Heavens and the New Earth.

X. THE FULNESS DISPENSATION

“That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth; even in Him” (Eph. 1:10).

This Dispensation begins with the cleansing of the heavens and the earth by fire (2 Pet. 3:12-13; Rev. 20:9-15) – the Great Renovation. It brings the New Heavens and the New Earth (Rev. 21:1-5). It ends with God being “all in all” (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

A. A NEW PHYSICAL UNIVERSE (Rev. 21:1-2,9-21; 22:1-5; 2 Pet. 3:10-13)

1. With a New Heaven – This does not mean the Throne of God, but the atmospheric and spirit-controlled heavens which have been defiled by Satan and his fallen angels – the evil principalities and powers (Eph. 6:12). The former heavens and earth were defiled by Satan and his fallen angels and the curse of God.

2. With a new Earth – This present earth is to be renovated by fire as the former was by water (2 Pet. 3:5-7). A regenerated and rejuvenated earth will God bring forth. We sometimes speak of the end of the world. This is an erroneous statement. There is the end of the age but not of the earth or world.

3. No More Sea (Rev. 21:1) – The sea shall finally pass away. The sea is a type of separation and turmoil. We read about “the raging of the sea” (Ps. 89:9; Isa. 5:30; 57:20).

4. A New City – “...the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Rev. 21:2). This is the city that Abraham looked for (Heb. 11:10). This city will be 1500 miles square. It will contain twelve gates, and

contain both the River of Life and Tree of Life. There will be no night and no need of the sun (Rev. 21-25).

B. A NEW SPIRITUAL UNIVERSE (Rev. 21:4-6)

1. No more tears – Tears have been the lot of the human race ever since the curse came upon this earth (See Ps. 6:6; 42:3; 56:8; 80:5; Eccl. 4:1; Isa. 25:8; Jer. 9:1; 14:17; Lam. 2:18; Mal. 2:13; Acts 20:19,31; 2 Cor. 2:4; Rev. 7:17; 21:4). Of our Lord it is said: “Jesus wept” (Jn. 11:35).

2. No more death – (Rev. 21:4) – Death beds, death scenes, funerals and open graves have been the lot of the human race since the death of our first parents. But this will cease for “death and hades” will be finally cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:14).

3. No more sorrow – Sorrow, like tears and death, have stalked the human race since its inception. Our Lord knew sorrow as no one else (Lam. 1:12; Matt. 26:37). God promised both Adam and Eve that they would experience sorrow (Gen. 3:16-17).

4. No more crying (Rev. 21:4) – Crying too has been the lot of the human race (Ps. 69:3; Isa. 22:5). Our Lord experienced “strong crying” (Heb. 5:7).

5. No more pain (Rev. 21:4) – There will be no sin, hence no pain. All the former things are passed away. Pain has been a part of labor and birth since the days of Eve (Isa. 13:8). Pain will intensify at the end (Rev. 16:10-11).

C. A New Physical and Spiritual People

1. “He that overcometh” – The overcomer is mentioned many times, especially in John’s writings (1 Jn. 2:13-14; 4:4; 5:4,5; Rev. 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21; 11:7; 12:11; 13:7; 17:14; 21:7). There is a battle to win, sin to conquer, and the flesh to subdue. There will be an overcoming, spiritual company

2. No “fearful and unbelieving” (Rev. 21:8) – All apostates will be gone. These will have been put in the Lake of Fire.

3. All immoralists will be gone – “the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, ... and all liars”. These are those who have commerce with unclean spirits and lying demons. Men of the flesh

4. And all “idolaters” – Idol worshippers will find no place in this new earth. These too will find their doom in the “lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death”.

DISPENSATIONAL CONCLUSIONS

We have thus made a survey of the ten (10) dispensational dealings by God during the ages – The Edenic, The Adamic, The Noahic, The Abrahamic, The Mosaic, The Pentecostal, the Secret, The Tribulation, The Millennial, and The Fullness.

These all represent the different forms of government under which God was and is proving to man that he cannot work out his own salvation. The test is always made under

conditions which are suitable to the economy given. At the close of each dispensation, God lets man go his own way and the trend in each dispensation is away from God.

The responsibility of man is the same in each dispensation - - acceptance and obedience for blessing; or disobedience and judgment.

We must therefore “rightly divide” the “Word of Truth” in relation to the different dispensations. Distinguish the dispensations and there will be understanding of the Scriptures. There are certain truths that belong to certain dispensations. These must be seen in the light of that age. There are some very clear lines of demarcation in the Bible, as the expression “to rightly divide” means “to cut a straight line”.

1. Distinguish truth within an age

a. Matthew 10:5-6; cf. Matt. 28:16-20; Mk. 16:15. Here we have the same age, the same Lord; but different commands: “Go not”, “Go ye”.

b. Matthew 10:9-10; Luke 9:3; cf. Luke 22:36. Here we have another double command: “Take not” and “Take ye”.

2. Distinguish truth within different ages

a. Isaiah 2:4; cf. Joel 3:10. The first speaks of the Millennial Age, but until then Joel is applicable.

b. Isaiah 2:4; cf. 2 Tim. 3:1. In the Kingdom Age there will be peace but until then in this age there will be “perilous times”.

c. Psalms 58:10; 137:8-9; cf. Romans 12:17-19. The first two are under Law, the second is under grace.

d. Luke 11:13; cf. Rom. 8:9; Eph. 1:13. Here we have the ministry of the Spirit under Law and under the Pentecostal and Secret Administrations. Since Pentecost the Spirit dwells within the believer; under Law He came upon believers.

e. Psalm 51:11; cf. John 14:16; Eph. 1:13. Under Law the H.S. came upon men and could also leave them (See the case of Saul – 1 Sam. 10:10; 11:6; 16:14), but under this dispensation He abides with men.

f. Matt. 12:31-32; cf. Eph. 1:13; 4:30. The so-called “unpardonable sin” was spoken by our Lord to His people. It was a national sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. It culminated in the stoning of Stephen by the leaders of Israel (See Acts 7:55). No such sin can be committed today.

g. Matt. 24:13; cf. Eph. 2:8. Here is a dispensational distinction to be noted. The first is a kingdom truth; the second God’s method under grace.

h. Prov. 16:7; cf. 2 Tim. 3:12. The first indicated that if we live Godly our enemies will be at peace with us; the second promises persecution. The former is under Law, the latter today.

i. Romans 11:26; cf. Romans 11:28. During the Pentecostal era and today the Jews are more or less enemies to the Gospel; but at the end of The Tribulation “all Israel shall be saved”.

j. Deut. 6:24-25; cf. Rom. 3:20-21; Gal. 2:16. The first Scripture was given under the Mosaic Dispensation; the second under the Pentecostal Dispensation.

It is a sad commentary upon Christendom, since the time of Christ, that so many still perpetuate laws and rituals which belong to past ages. How few “rightly divide the Word of Truth” and practice truth for today. This is the main cause for so many different denominations. It indicates immaturity among believers. Dispensational Truth will make for maturity and perfection in our faith.

LESSON # 9 – THE PREDICTIVE PRINCIPLE

INTRO:

1. DEFINITION: The Predictive Principle of Bible Study is that principle which deals with the interpretation of predictive prophecy. Prophecy is history written before-time or in advance of the actual fulfillment.

Many think that all prophecy is predictive and that a prophet must always predict. See Gen. 20:7.

The Bible is unlike other books of a religious nature in that it basis its authenticity, authority and inspiration on Prophecy.

The Bible gives us the office and definition of a prophet. In Exodus 7:1-2 and 4:15-16 we find that Moses by Divine appointment is to take God's place to Pharaoh. Aaron, his brother, is to be the prophet of Moses. Aaron was to receive from Moses the message which he in turn is to deliver. The Word of God comes to Moses and Moses is to deliver the message to Aaron and Aaron takes it and delivers it to Pharaoh. "Aaron ... shall be thy prophet (7:1); He shall be thy spokesman" (4:16). A prophet then is God's spokesman. Aaron was Moses spokesman – his prophet.

So a prophet was essentially God's spokesman or the one who spoke the Word of God. He speaks for God, the message of God.

2. That prophecy is history written in advance proves the foreknowledge of God. Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar: "The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter and the dream is certain and the interpretation thereof sure" (Dan. 2:45).

Prophecy is twofold: Descriptive and Predictive. The prophets were both Forth-tellers and Foretellers. They had both insight and foresight. The prophet does not only predict concerning beasts, horns, images, etc. but he also comes to the people with exhortation, instruction, correction, and reprobation.

Prophetic utterances were not the product of human reason but imparted by the Holy Spirit: "For the prophecy came not in old times by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21).

3. John the Baptist was the greatest prophet that ever lived (except Christ – Luke 7:28). Yet he predicted nothing. He was the forerunner of the Lord: "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand". John never wrote like Daniel, yet he was the greatest prophet. He was God's spokesman. Moses also was a great prophet (Deut. 34:10) not because he foretold future events, but moreso because he spoke directly to the people. Dr. Scofield speaks of a prophet as one who was a revivalist, a patriot. Elijah and Elisha were such prophets in Israel.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPHECY

The importance of the study of The Prophetic Scriptures is seen in the fact that two-thirds of the Bible is prophetic; either in type, symbol or direct statement. More than one-half of them are yet unfulfilled.

If we want to know the mind of God concerning the future we must study prophecy. Or else we must remain in that class that the Apostle Peter speaks of as being "willingly ignorant" (2 Pet. 3:3-8). We are indeed living in a dark world, morally, politically and economically. In this darkness "the sure word of prophecy" is a true light (2 Pet. 1:19). When men see that God has a plan in the ages, they must take heart and not be discouraged by the things that are taking place.

"...no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation" (2 Pet. 1:20). It cannot be interpreted by itself. It must be interpreted in the light of all Scripture. Neither is it to be interpreted to suit the theory of any cult. Neither are the prophecies to be allegorized or spiritualized. God has expounded it by literal fulfillment in its every detail. Take for example the

prophecy God made to Abraham in Gen. 15:13-14. Compare this with Exod. Chs. 1-12. There was nothing allegorical in the whips of the Egyptians nor spiritual in the double tale of bricks.

The Glorious Theme of prophecy is found in Rev. 19:10 – “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”. This is true whether the prophecy is direct as to Christ or indirect; whether it has to do with the Gentiles or the Church of God. Christ is really the center of prophecy and all its predictions are related to that center. The mystery of God’s will is seen in Eph. 1:10 – “The administration of the fullness of times; to head up all things in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth” (Eph. 1:10).

The two great themes of prophecy concerning Christ in the O.T. are:

- (1) “The sufferings of Christ”; and
- (2) “The glory that should follow” (1 Pet. 1:11).

The sufferings of Christ have all been fulfilled. The glory of Christ is yet future as to its manifestation.

The O.T. in which are found these two great themes spoken of by Peter, present Christ to us – (1) The Pentateuch gives us the FIGURES of Christ; (2) The Psalms give us the FEELINGS of Christ; (3) The Prophets give us the FORETELLINGS of Christ. Whether they are Figures, Types, Symbols, Feelings or Foretellings, all are prophetic.

The N.T. gives us the fulfillment of the O.T. – (1) The Gospels give us the FACTS of Christ; and (2) The Epistles give us the FRUITS of Christ. Christ is the great Figure in history. He is the incomparable, the infinite, the eternal.

II. THE INITIATION OF PROPHECY

Prophecy had its birth or initiation in failure. A prophet and his prophecy always came in a time of apostasy and declension. There was absolutely no place for the ministry of the prophet until there was failure of the priesthood. When the priests became absorbed in their ritual until it became mere formalism, then God sent the prophet. One of the missions of the priest was to teach the people. In Exodus and Leviticus we have the arrangements for the priesthood, but not a single provision for a prophet.

As soon as man failed in the Garden of Eden, God sent His message of prophecy (Gen. 3:15).

A prophet was a specially chosen man who received from God a special message to be delivered to the people on particular occasions.

A king ascended the throne by right of birth but a prophet did not hold office by right of birth. The priest held office because of his birth. Aaron and his sons constituted the priesthood. So a man could become a priest if he sprang from Aaron and ascend the throne if born in the royal line. On the other hand, a prophet entered his work because of a Divine commission. The true prophet was always the spokesman of God, and always gave the message that God had given him.

Primarily, the prophet was commissioned to speak concerning the social, moral, spiritual, and national conditions among his own people, in his own land, in his own time. This is fundamental in our study of Predictive Prophecy. A prophet was first and foremost a FORTH-TELLER before a FORE-TELLER. Only a small portion of the prophet’s work had to do with fore-telling.

The first prophets, such as Elijah and Elisha, did not record their prophecies. They spoke only to the nation in the time in which they lived. But when God had sent a long line of prophets, and the people did not repent and turn to God, it was evident that judgment would come in the form of dispersion. Then, and not until then, did the prophets begin to speak of the future – and hence came Predictive Prophecy.

Predictive Prophecy has to do with Israel and Judah, and only with the Gentile nations as they came in contact with Israel. However the Book of Daniel is an exception. It deals with the Gentiles and only with Israel as she came in contact with the Gentile nations.

What did the Prophet see and predict:

1. His own time.
2. 70 years captivity.
3. Restoration from Captivity.
4. The Messiah.
5. World-wide Dispersion.
6. The Great Tribulation.
7. The Coming Kingdom.

1. The prophet speaks first to his own people in his own day. He denounces, rebukes and exhorts them and seeks to woo them back to Jehovah.

2. Then the prophets begin to speak of a 70 years captivity in Babylon (Jer. 25:11). A great deal of prophecy along the line of judgment is given in Isaiah and Jeremiah relative to this captivity.

The prophets who prophesied before, during, and after the captivity are as follows:

A. The Pre-Exilic Prophets

a. To Israel (10 Tribes)

Jonah – Amos – Hosea – Micah

b. To Judah (2 Tribes)

Joel – Isaiah – Micah – Zephaniah – Habakkuk – Jeremiah

B. The Exilic Prophets

Obadiah? – Ezekiel – Daniel. Ezekiel prophesied “by the river of Chebar, in the land of the Chaldees” (Ezek. 1:1,3). Daniel prophesied in Babylon.

C. The Post-Exilic Prophets

Haggai – Zechariah – Malachi. Malachi is called by the Jews the “seal of the prophets”. Then there are four hundred silent prophetic years or the time of probation for the nations. This time ends with the voice of John the Baptist, who was the last of the O.T. prophets and also the forerunner of Christ.

3. The next line of prophecy is the restoration after the 70 yrs. Captivity (Jer. 29:10; Dan. 9:2). Daniel in Babylon discovered by reading the prophet Jeremiah that his people would endure 70 years captivity and afterwards be restored. Thus he gives himself to prayer and supplication.

4. The next line of prophecy has to do with the First Advent of Christ – the Messiah. The Book of Isaiah is filled with this prophecy (See 7:14-16; 8:10; 9:6-7; 11:1-3; 61:1-2). There are some three hundred prophesies in the O.T. concerning Christ.

5. Another line of prophecy covers the time of world-wide dispersion (Amos 9:9). Moses also gave a vision of this (Lev. 26:14-39; Deut. 28:15-68).

6. The Tribulation is the next line of prophecy (Jer. 30:4-7; Dan. 12:1). It will be “the time of Jacob’s trouble” and is called in Matt. 24:21 the “great tribulation”.

7. The Kingdom or the thousand year’s reign of Christ (Rev. 20:4-7) is the next prophecy. It includes the Second Coming of Christ (Isa. Chs. 2,11; Amos 9:14-15).

In the study of predictive prophecy, the prediction was not the greatest part of the prophet’s work. It was by far the minor part and given only when it was apparent that the people rejected the present message of the prophet. Then God began to tell through the prophet what would transpire in the future – destruction, dispersion and deliverance.

Predictive prophecy is one of the infallible proofs of Scripture. Someone has said: “We have proven the Bible to be the Word of God in a twofold way; man could not write the Bible if he would and man would not write the Bible if he could”.

God predicted some three hundred years before his birth the name of the king Josiah, and a specific deed that he would perform (1 Kgs. 13:2; cf. 2 Kgs. 23:15). Only God is Omniscient

(Isa. 41:21-29; 42:9; 44:6-8). God challenges other religions to predict the future. Only He alone can tell exactly what is to happen.

The criteria of Prophecy – The following is taken from Dr. A.T. Pierson's book: *The Scriptures God's Living Oracles*. He says that a satisfactory criteria must include:

1. Remoteness of Time – There must be a separation between the prediction and fulfillment so that the prophet can have no power, directly or indirectly to influence the result. Noah prophesied concerning his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, but never lived to see or influence the outcome of his prediction (Gen. 9:25-27). Moses gave predictions concerning Israel that have taken place all during the centuries long after the prediction (Lev. Ch. 26; Deut. Ch. 28).

2. Minuteness of Detail – The particulars of the prophecy must be so many and so minute that there shall be no possibility of any accounting by shrewd guesswork for the accuracy of the fulfillment. The prophecies concerning Christ are an example. About twenty-five prophecies were fulfilled at His crucifixion alone.

3. Novelty of Combination – There must be nothing in previous history by which it would be possible to forecast a like event. There must be something new in the combination; something fresh, startling and original in the prediction and method of its fulfillment, to prove its intervention. When Moses predicted in Lev. Ch. 26 and Deut. Ch. 28 that Israel would be scattered among all nations, it was something new and original. Nothing like that had ever happened before.

4. Mystery of Contradiction – When the prophecy is examined carefully, it shall present such paradoxes or apparent contradictions, that it is impossible to understand the prophecy fully until all the events have supplied the key to its mysteries. 1 Pet. 1:10-11 is an example. Here we have an apparent contradiction. The prophets predicted Christ's sufferings and then His glory; but could not reconcile the time element in the two. John the Baptist, in prison, sends and asks if Christ is the One or if they should look for another. He evidently did not understand or see the long interval between suffering and glory. Many Jews believed that two Messiahs would appear; one, ben Joseph to suffer and another, Messiah ben David to reign. Seeming contradictions!! But time has passed and now the prophecy is intelligible to all who would know.

5. Clearness of Forecast – When the event occurs it shall correspond without question to the original prediction. It was predicted of Christ that he would be born of a virgin, in the city of Bethlehem of Juda, and that He shall not fail in any undertaking (cpr. Isa. 7:14; Micah 5:2; Isa. 42:4 with Matt. 1:23; Luke 2:4,15; 4:40).

There were not less than sixteen detailed prophecies in reference to Christ's First Advent that were literally fulfilled during the last week of His life on earth: (1) Sold for thirty pieces of silver (Zech 11:12); (2) Betrayed by a friend (Ps. 41:9); (3) Forsaken by His disciples (Zech 13:7); (4) Accused by false witnesses (Ps. 35:11); (5) Dumb before His accusers (Isa. 5:7); (6) Spit upon and scourged (Isa. 53:5); (7) Hands and feet pierced (Ps. 22:16); (8) His garments divided by lot (Ps. 22:18); (9) Mocked by His enemies (Ps. 22:7-8); (10) Given gall and vinegar (Ps. 69:21); (11) Prayed for murderers (Isa. 53:12); (12) Not a bone broken (Ps. 34:20); (13) Crucified with thieves (Isa. 53:12); (14) His forsaken cry (Ps. 22:1); (15) His side pierced (Zech. 12:10); (16) Buried as a rich man (Isa. 53:9). Here we have different prophets during a period of some 600 years and half of them one thousand years before Christ was born.

III. THE INTERPRETAION OF PROPHECY

Prophecy is of three kinds: Direct Prophecy; Typical Prophecy; and Biographical Prophecy.

Direct Prophecy includes all direct statements as to future events. The first instance is found in Gen. 3:15 – “It shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise His heel”. This was literally fulfilled when Satan was instrumental in putting Christ on the Cross; but Christ arose on the third day; and through death and resurrection destroyed the Devil who had the power of death (Heb. 2:14).

Typical Prophecy – All types are prophetic in character. God clothing Adam and Eve with skins of animals is typical of the garments of righteousness provided by Christ (Gen. 3:21; Rev. 19:8). The word “atonement” means to “cover”.

The Passover was prophetic for we read “Christ our passover is sacrificed for us (Exod. 12:11; 1 Cor. 5:7).

The tabernacle and its services, is typical of Him Who came and tabernacled among men (John 1:14).

The temple in all its wealth and glory is typical of Him Who was God manifested in flesh (Matt. 12:42).

These all typified Christ and were prophetic of His deity, humanity, life, death, resurrection and glory; also of the sinner’s approach to God and the believer’s fitness for worship in His presence.

Biographical Prophecy – Such Biblical characters as Adam, Isaac, Joseph, David, Solomon and others are types in prophecy of Christ.

Adam – The head of the first creation is prophetic of Him Who is the Head of the new creation (Rom. 5:14).

Isaac – Was prophetic of Him Who was truly sacrificed on Mt. Moriah (Gen. 22:9-10; 1 Cor. 5:7; 15:3).

Joseph – Is typical and prophetic of Christ in that he was loved by his father, hated by his brethren, sold for twenty pieces of silver, passing through death and resurrection in the prison and finally exalted to power (Gen. Chs. 37-50; 49:22-26).

David – Is typical and prophetic of Christ, especially in His rejection and humiliation (1 Sam. Chs. 22-27; 2 Sam. Chs. 15-24; Isa. 53:3; Mk. 8:31; 12:10).

Solomon Is typical and prophetic of Christ in His exaltation (2 Chron. 1:11-12; 9:6; Matt. 12:42).

Simple Rules for Interpretation:

1. Let the prophet give his own interpretation – Much confusion and misinterpretation could be avoided if one lets the prophet give his own interpretation.

Ezek. Ch. 37 – The valley of dry bones is interpreted by verse 11: “these bones are the whole house of Israel”. The interpretation belongs to Israel, only application could be made to Church.

Jeremiah 18:1-10 – The Potter’s House. Verse six says: “O house of Israel”. Here again it is given to Israel and not to the Church.

Dan. 8:3-8 – Here we have a ram with two horns and a he-goat with a notable horn between his eyes. Verses 20-21 tell us that the ram with two horns represent Media and Persia, and the rough goat is the king of Grecia.

John 2:19-22 – Here we have Jesus speaking about destroying a temple and building it in three days. When the Jews falsely accuse Jesus, they said He would destroy the physical temple and build it in three days (Matt. 26:61). But He spoke of His body (Jn. 2:21).

Matt. 13:3-9 – Parable of the Sower. Jesus gives the interpretation in verses 18-23. “The good seed are the children of the Kingdom” (Vr. 38). He is speaking here about the mysteries of the Kingdom Gospel during the absence of the King.

So in studying predictive prophecy one will often find the interpretation in the immediate context.

2. Facts of History often give Interpretation

Joseph and his dreams – He had two dreams concerning his brothers and his parents. He dreamt that sheaves arose in a field and did obeisance to his sheaf (Gen. 37:5-8). He also dreamt that “the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance” (Gen. 37:9-11). About 21 or 22 years later these dreams were fulfilled (See Gen. 42:6,9).

Noah and the Flood – God told Noah that because the earth was corrupt and full of violence he would destroy it by a flood and told Noah to build an ark (Gen. 6:11-22). Some one hundred years later God sent the Flood and destroyed all as He said to Noah (See Gen. 5:32 with 7:6). It was a historical fact.

Judgment upon Tyre – In Ezek. Ch. 26 we have a prophecy of judgment upon the city of ancient Tyre. Here we have a graphic picture of its siege and capture by Nebuchadnezzar. The following is taken from Urquhart’s book, *The Wonders of Prophecy*, pages 15-17. “The powerful fleet of Tyre swept the sea and prevented the complete investment of the city; but, after a siege of thirteen years, it was at last taken by the Chaldean army. With this part of the prophecy, however, we do not concern ourselves. The genuineness of the Book of Ezekiel will not be questioned, but still it would be difficult to prove that the prophecy was uttered before this event took place. More, however, was predicted. After describing the vengeance which the King of Babylon will inflict, the prophecy proceeds: “And they shall lay thy stones, and thy timber, and thy dust in the midst of the waters” (Verse 12). Notice the word “They”. Let the change of person be noted. Having spoken of what Nebuchadnezzar will do, it is added: “And they shall” as if others were to be joined with him in the work of destruction. Light is thrown upon this distinction in the third and fourth verses. God will cause many nations to come up against Tyre, “as the sea causes his waves to come up”. Shock will succeed to shock, till she is utterly desolate, “and they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her and make her like the top of a rock”. Previous to the fall of their ancient city, the tyrians had removed the bulk of their treasure to an island in their possession, half a mile from the shore. Taught now by bitter experience, they resolved to trust themselves no more within walls, which had not round them the defense of a watery girdle. Tyre was mistress of the sea and could defend herself there. The old city was therefore deserted and no attempt was made to rebuild it after the Babylonian army had retired. So Tyre was the fulfillment of prophecy thus far, but only thus far. Tyre was overthrown and spoiled; the noise of her songs and ceased; the sound of her harps was no more heard; the great and joyous city was abased and desolate. But the ruins still stood. The words which declared that the stones and the timber should be cast into the sea, and the very dust be scraped from the city’s site, had not been fulfilled; and it seemed most improbable that they ever would be. What could the words mean? Nebuchadnezzar had taken full vengeance, but he had never thought he might be at the long continued resistance. Who then would be found to wreak such unheard of vengeance upon the unoffending ruins? More than two hundred and forty years rolled on and there was no answer. For two and a half centuries those words of Scripture seemed a vain menace. Then the fame of Alexander’s swift and all-conquering career sent a thrill of alarm through the East. The Tyrian ambassadors, who hastened to meet him, were favorably received. It seemed as if this storm-cloud was about to pass harmlessly over them. But suddenly the conqueror expressed a desire to worship within their city. They knew only too well what that request meant. Alexander would not enter alone; and once there, those who came as worshippers would remain as masters. The Tyrians resolved to abide the issue of war, rather than tamely hand over their city to the Macedonian King. Alexander’s army marched to the seashore, and there, with half a mile of blue waters between them and it, stood the city they had come to attack. How could it be taken? Alexander’s plan was speedily formed. He determined to construct a causeway through the sea, over which his forces might advance to assault. And now this word, which had waited so long, was at last LITERALLY FULFILLED. The walls and the towers and the ruined houses and palaces and temples of the ancient city were pulled down; and the stones and the timber of Tyre were laid “in the midst of the water”. Her mounds of ruins were cleared

away and so great was the demand for material in this vast undertaking that the very dust seems to have been scraped from the site and laid in the sea. Though centuries had passed after the word was spoken and had seen no fulfillment, it was not forgotten and the event declared that it was His word whose judgments, though they may linger long, come surely and fall at last with resistless might". And so ancient Tyre was made "like the top of a rock; thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more" (Ezek. 26:14). So the passing of years and of history give the interpretation.

Nebuchadnezzar's Great Image – (Dan. Ch. 2:31-45) give the interpretation. Here can be applied the two rules: first, the prophet gives his own interpretation, and secondly, the facts of history give the interpretation. This prophecy tells of four great world empires; and, history knows of only four great world empires. In His prophetic discourse our Lord said: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). "The times of the Gentiles" is thought to be the time when Jerusalem is politically in the hands of the Gentiles. It began with Nebuchadnezzar.

The First Kingdom: The Babylonian, the Head of Gold (Isa. 14:4; Jer. 51:7; Dan. 2:38).

The Second Kingdom: The Medio-Persian, the Breast and Arms of Silver (Dan. 2:39; Ch. 5).

The Third Kingdom; The Grecian, the Thigh parts of Brass (Dan. 2:39 Ch. 8).

The Fourth Kingdom: The Roman, the Legs and Feet of Iron and part Iron and part Clay (Dan. 2:40-43; Luke 2:1). One thousand years after the prediction was made the Roman Empire split into its Eastern and Western divisions corresponding to the two legs of the image.

So much has been historically fulfilled. The final phase of the Roman Empire; and Christ as the Stone cut out of the mountain remain to be fulfilled (Matt. 21:44; Eph. 2:20).

3. Other Scripture may give the Interpretation

Concerning Judas Iscariot (See Psalm 41:9 with John 13:18-19).

Concerning Christ and His Death (See Psalm 16:10-11 with Acts 2:25-28).

Concerning the Judicial Blindness of Israel (See Isa. 6:9-10; with Matt. 13:14; Mk. 4:12; Luke 8:10; Jn. 12:39-41; Acts 28:25-27).

Concerning God's strange work during Israel's rejection (Hab. 1:5; Acts 13:40-41).

4. Resemblance of Things Compared give the Interpretation

Isa. 53:7 – Christ is likened to a Lamb, gentle, humble, submissive and meek.

Rev. 5:5 – Christ is likened to a Lion, fierce, devouring, swift and strong.

When Christ came in His First Advent He was the Suffering Servant, the Lamb. At His Second Advent He will be the Reigning Sovereign, the Lion.

Gen. Ch. 49 gives us some sharp resemblances to Jacob's twelve sons, the Children of Israel. Issachar is a strong ass, a slow plodding beast of burden (14-15). Dan is a serpent, treacherous, poisonous (17). Naphtali is a deer and fleet (21). Joseph is a fruitful bough by a well (22). Benjamin is a wolf, a wolfish man and tribe (27).

5. General Scope of Scripture gives the Interpretation

Ezek. 36:25 speaks of sprinkling with clean water for cleansing purposes. So cleansing in Israel was by means of washing, laving and sprinkling. Both water and blood were used in sprinkling. The word "sprinkling" occurs 7 times in Exodus; 26 times in Leviticus; 7 times in Numbers; 3 times in Ezekiel; 6 times in Hebrews; and 1 time in 1 Peter. This reveals the scope of Scripture on this subject.

THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST

INTRO:

1. Together with the prophecies of the First Advent, they form the greatest subjects of prophecy. After the first three centuries (A.D.) it became a lost doctrine until about one hundred and fifty years ago when it was recovered. World events of the last fifty years have given rise to a new interest in this subject of Christ's Second Advent. There are various interpretations of the doctrine; but the most emphasis is upon what is called: "The Rapture of the Church". There is much disagreement as to When He Comes: Will it be before or after the Tribulation? There is also disagreement as to whom He comes.

2. There are three "elect" companies set forth in the Word of God.

(1) God's Earthly People – Israel (The Wife) (Isa. 45:4; 65:9; Matt. 24:22,31).

(2) God's Heavenly People – (The Bride) (Rom. 11:5; 1 Thess. 1:4; 2 Pet. 1:10).

(3) God's Super-Heavenly People (the Church which is His Body (Eph. 1:4; Col. 3:12).

3. Because of God's dispensational dealings with humanity it becomes necessary to pay close attention to such Scriptures as 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Tim. 2:15; and Acts 17:11.

4. The Second Advent of Christ has by some been scoffed at (2 Pet 3:3); by others it has been spiritualized to mean He comes at conversion, or He came at Pentecost or the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

5. The Bible sets forth three distinct spheres of blessing:

(1) The Earth – for Abraham's natural seed – the Wife of Jehovah. Represented by the "dust" and "sand" seed (Gen. 13:16; 22:17).

(2) The New Jerusalem – for Abraham's spiritual seed – the Bride of Jehovah (Gen. 22:17; Rev. Ch. 21).

(3) The Heavenlies – for the Church, the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:3; 2:6; 3:10; Col. 3:4).

Each of these spheres has its own hope relative to the Second Advent:

(1) The Sphere of the earth (Deut. 33:2; Ps. 68:17; Zech. 14:4; Matt. Ch. 24; Acts 1:11).

(2) The Sphere of the air (1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:16-17).

(3) The Sphere of the heavens (Eph. 1:12; Phil. 1:23; 3:20-21; Col. 3:4; Titus 2:13).

I. HIS APPEARANCE IN GLORY

A marked dispensational crisis occurs in Acts 28:25-28. This same pronouncement is given at three different times:

(1) In the O.T. when Israel rejected the Father (Isa. 6:9-10).

(2) In the N.T. when Israel rejected the Son (Matt. 13:14; Mk. 4:12; Luke 8:10; John 12:40; Rom. 11:7-8).

(3) In the end of the Acts' Period when Israel finally rejected the H.S. (Acts 28:25-28).

When Israel finally rejected the message of God through the Holy Spirit she became "Lo-Ammi" (Hos. 1:9) which means "Not My People". With this rejection went her earthly and heavenly hopes for the Kingdom. This included everything connected with the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New Covenant hopes.

After Paul's pronouncement of judgment in Acts 28:26,27 he wrote seven Prison Epistles – Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Tim., Titus and Philemon. These Epistles set forth a

new revelation which is fully given in Ephesians and Colossians. This new revelation was “The Secret” (mystery) concerning “The Church, the Body of Christ” (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18).

When Israel was “cut off” in A.D. 70, Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed and the nation scattered among the Gentiles. Thus the world was left without a witness, for “Salvation is of the Jews” (Jn. 4:22). Had Israel repented, according to Peter’s message (Acts 2:38; 3:19-21), Messiah would have returned and fulfilled the two spheres of blessing connected with His Second Advent, namely coming to the air and to the Mount of Olives on earth.

God was not to be left without a witness during Israel’s time of rejection. He gave to the Apostle Paul a new message never given before (Eph. 3:5,9). This revelation of the “Secret” unfolded God’s purpose for reaching the Gentile and the Jew during Israel’s time of rejection and with it came a new hope relative to Christ’s Second Advent.

1. Revelation of a New Dispensation

“The Dispensation of the grace of God” (Eph. 3:2).

“The Dispensation of the Secret” (Eph. 3:9).

This dispensation has some very distinct features, not given to any other dispensational dealings of God with human kind.

a. A Special Blessing (Eph. 1:3).

b. A Special Sphere of Blessing (1:3). (There are three distinct spheres of blessing as we have seen: The Earth (Matt. 5:5); The Air or Heavens (Heb. 11:16; 12:22); The Super-heavens, the right hand of God, far above all heavens (Eph. 1:3,20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12).

c. A Special Choice (Eph. 1:4).

d. A Special Time (Eph. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:9).

e. A Special Adoption (1:5). There are three adoptions in the N.T. – (1) Israel, after the flesh (Rom. 9:3-4); (2) Israel, after the Spirit (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5); (3) Church, the body of Christ (Eph. 1:5). This brings a change of family, name, home, status, and responsibilities.

f. A Special Inheritance (Eph. 1:6; Col. 1:12).

g. A Special Minister (Eph. 3:1; Col. 1:25).

h. A Special Revelation (Eph. 3:3).

i. A Special Equality (Eph. 3:6). See for contrast Acts 15:20-21; 21:17-24; Rom. 9:11.

j. A Special Witness (Eph. 3:10).

k. A Special Fullness (Col. 1:25). This new revelation completes the Word of God and gives the members of His Body a fullness never known in other ages (Col. 2:9-10).

2. Revelation of a New Destination

a. The Hope of His Calling (Eph. 1:17-18)

“...that ye may know what is the hope of His calling”.

If the hope given by Paul presents the same as that of the Acts period why the need for such a prayer?

This is the hope of redemption by grace without works (Eph. 2:5-8).

It is the hope of identification with Christ – “quickened”, “raised”, “sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:5-6).

It is spoken of as the “one hope of your calling” (Eph. 4:4).

It is spoken of as “the hope which is laid up for you in heaven” (Col. 1:5), as distinct from heavenly hopes given on earth.

b. The Hope of His Glory (Col. 1:25-27; 3:1-4; Phil. 3:20-21; Titus 2:13).

The Greek word translated “appear” in Col. 3:4 is phaneroo and means “to make manifest, make apparent, show forth”. The resurrected and seated Christ has not been manifested as yet. This He will be at His Second Advent. It will be the first move in this great dramatic and climactic event. This will take place in glory and this first event we share with Him.

If we are to be manifested with Him then we must be where He is. In Col. 3:1 Christ is said to be seated “on the right hand of God”.

The hope of Israel as a nation was to meet Christ on the Mt. of Olives (Acts 1:11-12).

The hope of the overcoming remnant, the Bridal Company was to meet Christ in the air (1 Thess. 4:17).

Some contend that the word “glory” in Col. 3:4 is simply the character of His manifestation. But Paul has already clarified the fact that “Christ sitteth on the right hand of God” (Col. 3:1). In verse 2 it is set over against “the earth”.

We conclude that sometime before this manifestation of Christ, members of His Body have already been brought to glory; in a secret, silent rapture.

II. HIS APPEARANCE IN THE AIR (1 Cor. 15:23, 51-58; 1 Thess. 4:13-18)

Many fundamental Bible teachers and churches hold that the reference to the Second Coming in First Corinthians and First Thessalonians refers to a silent, secret, pre-tribulation rapture of the Church. We shall endeavor to show that what Paul sets forth here is an elaboration of what Jesus said in Matthew Chapter 24.

Christ’s coming to the air and meeting a group of believers, both the dead and alive, is nothing more than a prelude to His coming to earth.

F.F. Bruce in the New Bible Commentary, pg. 1159 says: “When a dignitary paid an official visit or parousia to a city in Hellenistic times, the action of the leading citizens in going out to meet and escorting him on the final stage of his journey was called the “Apantesis” (meeting): it is similarly used in Mt. 25:1,6; Acts 28:15; 1 Thess. 4:17. So the Lord is pictured as escorted to the earth by His People.”

The theme of the Thessalonian Epistles is: The Kingship of Jesus Christ (see Acts 17:7). Both Epistles are set in the context of The Day of the Lord (see 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Thess. 2:2). Paul tells the Thessalonian believers very distinctly what must take place before “the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him” (2 Thess. 2:1). These two expressions are both found in 1 Thess. 2:19 and Matt. 24:31. Now notice what must take place before the Lord comes in The Day of the Lord: (1) A “falling away” (apostasy) must first come; (2) The “Man of sin” (lawlessness), “the Son of Perdition” must be revealed, (this may be the Antichrist); (3) Satanic power, signs, and lying wonders will be manifested; (4) The “Wicked one” will be revealed (this may be the false prophet). Note that this “Wicked One” also has a parousia – “even him whose coming (parousia) is after the working of Satan...” (2 Thess. 2:9). It is only when all these things take place that the Lord will come to the air. This takes us back to 2 Thess. 1:7. All this must take place in The Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21; Dan. 12:1).

There are six distinct passages in First Thessalonians that speak of the Second Advent: 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:1-9) and 5:23. Let us now look at them as true Bereans. Three of these passages (1:10; 2:19; and 5:23) merely state the fact of the Second Coming without adding any details as to when or how. One passage (5:1-9) deals with “The Day of the Lord” and obviously has its setting at the close of The Great Tribulation and the ushering in of the Millennial Kingdom. This passage certainly cannot teach a silent, secret, pre-tribulation rapture. The remaining two passages (3:13 and 4:13-18) add details which must now be examined in the light of the context and the whole of the Epistle:

3:13 – “... at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.” Paul is here quoting from two O.T. passages: Deut. 33:2; Zech. 14:5, see also Jude 14. These passages conform to the Thessalonian letters in that they have their setting in the Day of the Lord (Zech. 14:1). Jude 14 speaks about the Day of the Lord, when He shall come to “execute judgment”. It is impossible for this passage to teach a silent, secret, pre-tribulation rapture.

4:13-18 – is the final passage in this Epistle on the Second Coming and it is reputed to be the N.T. classic on a silent, secret, pre-tribulation rapture. Before setting this passage in the light of other N.T. passages, let us ask a very sane question: Would Paul or the Holy Spirit in this

same context of the Day of the Lord give the Thessalonians another hope of a rapture coming seven years before the Lord's coming to the earth?

John 14:3

“I will come again.”

“And receive you unto myself.”

“That where I am, there ye shall be also.”

Matthew Ch. 24

“They shall see the Son of Man coming” Vr. 30.

“His angels with a great voice” Vr. 31.

“With a great trumpet” Vr. 31.

“They shall gather His elect” Vr. 31.

“In the clouds of Heaven” Vr. 30.

1 Thess. 4:16-17

“The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven.”

“Then we ... shall be caught up to Meet the Lord in the air.”

“And so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

1 Thess. Ch. 4

“The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven” Vr. 16.

“With the voice of the archangel” Vr. 16.

“With the trump of God” Vr. 16.

“Caught up together with Him” Vr. 17.

“In the clouds to meet the Lord” Vr. 17.

We note here the parallels – angels, voice, trumpet, congregating and clouds. If Matthew, which is certainly a Kingdom Coming, sets forth a spectacular splendor of His outward, public coming; how then can First and Second Thessalonians using the very same phrases and symbols teach a secret, silent, pre-tribulation rapture?

1 Cor. 15:52 says: “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump”. The “last trump” of first Corinthians is found recorded in Rev. 11:15: “And the seventh angel sounded”. This is the last trump because in Rev. 8:6 it says: “And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets”. The seventh trumpet ushered in the “seven last plagues” which “filled up the wrath of God” (Rev. 15:1-2). So that those who are taken up into the air to meet the Lord will escape the wrath of God poured out in the vials (1 Thess. 1:10). So this last trump will not only save the faithful remnant – the Bride of Christ, but will bring on the wrath of God. This was prophesied by Isaiah 26:20-21.

Many Bible interpreters have seen the problems arising out of 1 Thess. 4:15-18 when it is interpreted to be a silent, secret, pre-tribulation rapture. One such interpreter has tried to absolve the problem as follows: (1) The shout is given by the Lord and is the resurrection call to the Church (John 11:43); (2) The voice is that of the archangel, who is Michael, and has special connection with Israel (Dan. 10:21; 12:1); (3) The trumpet is the “trump of God” and has to do with judgment and that relates to the nations (Rev. Ch. 13). This is indeed a fanciful interpretation and has no Scriptural warrant whatever. It is but the figment of the interpreter's imagination.

We conclude that the hope of First Corinthians Ch. 15 and First and Second Thessalonians was the hope of The Church of God during the Acts period, which hope ended with Israel's great dispersion in A.D. 70. This hope will come again in the Tribulation Period.

III. HIS APPEARANCE ON THE EARTH (Mount of Olives)

(Zech. 14:4-9; Matt. Chs. 24-25; Mark 13:1-10; Luke 21:5-28; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; Rev. 19:11-16; Acts 1:9-12)

There are several Greek words used in the N.T. with reference to the Second Advent of Christ: Apokalupto (Luke 17:30); Apokalupsis (1 Cor. 1:7; 2 Thess. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:7; 1:13; 4:3; Rev. 1:1); Epiphaneia (2 Thess. 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 1:10; 4:1; 4:8; Titus 2:13); Erchomai (Matt. 24:30; 25:31; Mk. 13:26; Luke 21:27; Jn. 14:3,18,28; Acts 1:11; 3:19; Rev. 1:7); Phaneroo (Col. 3:4; 1 Pet. 5:4; 1 John 2:28; 3:2); and Parousia which we will now analyze more fully.

The Greek word parousia occurs some 24 times in the N.T. It is translated “coming” 22 times; “presence” 2 times. It refers to the Second Advent of Christ 16 times – Matt. 24:3,27,37,39; 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1,8; James 5:7,8; 2 Pet. 1:16; 3:4; 1 Jn. 2:28. It refers to the Coming of the Day of God, once 2 Pet. 3:12. It refers to the personal presence of individuals seven times: Stephanas (1 Cor. 16:17); Titus (2 Cor. 6:6-7); Paul (2 Cor. 10:10; Phil. 1:26; 2:12); Wicked One (2 Thess. 2:9).

This word parousia means: “the being or becoming present, hence presence, arrival, a permanent dwelling”.

The O.T. closes with a book entitled: “The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi” (1:1). Then there is presented a grave indictment of Israel’s moral and spiritual condition. Israel is charged with hypocrisy, contempt of God’s Law and apostasy. This called for judgment and Malachi pointed to the crisis which the nation had reached.

Malachi is linked with the N.T. in these words: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord” (4:5). The N.T. opens with the fulfillment of this promise in the person of John the Baptist, who came calling upon the nation to repent: “Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 3:2). The “Messenger of the Covenant” (Mal. 3:1) Himself declared concerning John: “If ye will receive him, he is Elijah who is about to come” (Matt. 11:14). The purpose of the coming of this “Messenger of the Covenant” was not to found a church, but to save the faithful remnant and judge the apostate nation. The gold and the silver are to be refined and the dross burned up (Mal. 3:3). The jewels are to be gathered (3:17) and the stubble burned up (4:1). The sons are to be spared (3:17) and the wicked trodden down (4:3). In the midst of the darkness and distress for the wicked, “the sun of righteousness would arise with healing in His wings” (4:2) for the faithful.

After four centuries from the time of Malachi “the day of His coming” drew near. The Dispensation marked by the parousia had come. There were those who were “waiting for the consolation of Israel” (Luke 2:25) and “that looked for redemption in Jerusalem” (Luke 2:38); and others who “waited for the Kingdom of God” (Mark 15:43); who trusted that the Crucified One “had been He that should have redeemed Israel” (Luke 24:21).

The parousia marked the Four Gospels and carried over into the Acts period. We wish now to see how this parousia, the Coming of the Lord, was the expectancy of that Dispensational dealing of God with His people.

1. THE TIME OF THE PAROUSIA (Acts 1:3,6)

During the forty days between the resurrection and the ascension the Lord taught concerning, “The things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3). The Lord taught nothing else. They need to be wise and quick to understand (Luke 24:25). They believed in His glory, but not His suffering. So they invented two Messiahs: one, “Messiah, the Son of David” who would reign and, “Messiah, the son of Joseph” who would suffer.

John the Baptist sent to Jesus two disciples and asked: “Art Thou He that should come or are we to look for another?” (Matt. 11:3). The word “another” is heteros – one of a different kind; not allos, of the same kind. The Lord did not answer “yes” or “no” but quoted the

prophesies of Isa. 35:5-6; 42:6-7 (See Luke 24:26). The prophets left only one difficulty with Christ's Second Advent (1 Pet. 1:11); and that was the question of time (1 Pet. 1:11). It was this same question that perplexed the apostles in Acts 1:6.

The "time" of Christ's Second Advent and the "restoration" depended upon the fulfillment of other prophesies (See Lev. 26:40-42; 1 Kings 8:46-53; Ezra 9:15; 10:11; Neh. 9:26-36; Dan. 9:4-19; Hosea 14:1-4,9). Now see also Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Acts 2:37-40; 3:19-26.

All of these appeals went unheeded. Peter's testimony is rejected, Stephen is stoned, Peter is put in prison and Paul ends his testimony at Jerusalem in a riot and his final ministry in prison at Rome.

The temple and the city of Jerusalem are finally destroyed and the Jews scattered (A.D. 70). Since that day they have never made national repentance of their national sin. They have bewailed its consequences of calamities but not their crime. So the key to the "restitution of all things" is "repent ye therefore and be converted" (Acts 2:21,19).

2. THE THEME OF THE PAROUSIA

a. The Message of the Angels (Acts 1:11)

This message deals with the facts of Christ's Coming, not so much with the time. They are reminded of Zech. 14:4. They had no idea that some nineteen plus centuries would elapse before this promise is fulfilled (See John 16:16-22).

The salient features of the angel's message are: (1) This same Jesus would return; (2) He would return in like manner as they had seen Him go. But there is still no message or intimation of the time. They "returned to Jerusalem with great joy" (Luke 24:52).

Had Israel repented the parousia would have taken place.

b. The Message of Joel (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-20).

Joel speaks about events which were to take place "in the last days" before, and leading up to, and ending with "the Day of the Lord".

Pentecost, instead of being the beginning of the Church, the Body of Christ, was the beginning of events leading up to the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel. This prophecy is based upon repentance; but Israel as a nation did not repent. Thus the parousia of Christ could not take place, nor the Kingdom set up.

The salient features of Joel's prophecy are: (1) Spiritual Signs with Spirit filled men and women, who prophecy, see visions, and dream dreams; (2) Celestial Signs of wonders in heaven, sun turned to darkness, moon into blood; (3) Terrestrial signs with blood, fire, vapor and smoke.

So if we are looking for the parousia of Christ these are the things we must look for first.

c. The Message of Peter (Acts 2:14-36; 3:12-26)

Peter's concluding words in 2:40: "this untoward generation" refers to the same people whom the Lord spoke of in Matt. 24:34. It was this same "wicked and adulterous generation" that was warned by John the Baptist to flee from the wrath to come, and the same generation that heard the words of the Lord.

The generation which heard Peter's appeal in Acts Ch. 2 began in A.D. 29 and ended some forty years later in A.D. 70.

After Peter's address in chapter two we read how they received the Word, were baptized, and continued in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, with breaking of bread and prayers (Acts 2:41-47). These hearers of Peter are described in Heb. 6:4-5; Acts 2:44. They were all in the temple waiting for "the times of refreshing".

This proclamation of the parousia or coming of the Lord was preceded by the miracle of the healing of the lame man at the Gate Beautiful (Acts 3:1-11). Peter in his message that follows quotes from Moses (Deut. 18:18), and mentions Samuel, because Samuel was the first to denounce Israel for rejecting Jehovah and asking another king (1 Sam. 8:7-22). Peter indicates that the people are again rejecting their king, the Messiah, and His coming rule over them. Both the nation in the land and in dispersion rejected, and so the promised kingdom must be postponed.

The Church, the Body of Christ, never did nor could it fulfill all the physical blessings in the land of Palestine promised the Kingdom Saints.

d. The Message of Paul

In Acts 17:16-34 Paul addresses here the Jews and Gentiles of Athens. In verse 31 he speaks about a day of judgment which God hath appointed. This can only have reference to the Day of the Lord. The verb used in the clause: “He will judge” is not the future tense of the verb, but the present tense of the verb “mello” and the infinitive of the verb “krino”. It should be translated “to be about to judge”. Paul is not here setting forth some future event two thousand years hence, but a present one. He is here confirming the words of John 5:22,27.

Paul puts the climax upon the presentation of the Parousia when in Acts 26:6-7 he speaks about “the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers” and in Acts 28:20 “the hope of Israel”. Paul is here quoting from Jer. 14:8; 17:13. The Lord Jehovah was “the hope of Israel” and to forsake Him is to forfeit for the time the hope of the Parousia of Christ and the “times of restitution”.

Paul’s message to both Jew and Gentile during the Acts period is summed up in 26:20: “But shewed first unto them of Damascus and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and do works meet for repentance”. “Repentance” is therefore the key word in the theme and message for that dispensation that would lead to the Parousia of Christ.

Therefore we must conclude that the messages given during the Acts period were all set in the context of the Day of the Lord, the Tribulation Period, and had repentance as a theme in favor of the Second Advent of Christ – His Parousia.

e. The Message of The Messiah (The Olivet Discourse)

Matt. Chs. 24-25; Mark Ch. 13; Luke 21:5-33.

We have reserved the Lord’s message on the Parousia of His Coming last because it is the classic passage in the N.T. The word “parousia” occurs four times in Matt. Ch. 24, verses 3,27,37,29 and translated “coming”.

Let us first note the events which led up to this Olivet Discourse:

Inside the Temple (Matt. 23:37-39) (1) The Lord’s Lamentation: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem ... ye would not”; (2) The Lord’s sentence: “your house...desolate”; (3) The Lord’s Prediction: “Blessed is He that cometh”.

Outside the Temple (Matt. 24:1-2) (1) The Disciple’s Remark: “to shew Him the buildings of the temple”; (2) The Lord’s Reply: “Not one stone left upon another” (Matt. 24:2; Mk. 13:2; Luke 21:6).

On Mount Olivet (Matt. 24:3; Mk. 13:3; Luke 21:7). The disciples’ questions:

- (1) “When shall these things be?”
- (2) “What shall be the sign of thy coming?”
- (3) “Of the end of the age?”

The Lord then proceeds to answer these questions in Matt. 24:4-51; 25:1-46; but He does so in reverse order, beginning with the third.

(1) The sunset (end) of the age (4-24) The Lord's remarks in this section are bounded by "deception" (Vrs. 4,24). There will come: (a) False Christs (5) (See Jn. 5:43; Rev. 6:1-2); (b) Wars and rumors of wars (6-7) See Rev. 6:3-8; (c) Famines, Pestilence, Earth Quakes (7); (d) Beginning of sorrows (8); (e) Affliction, Killing, Hatred (9) See Jn. 16:2-3; Rev. 6:9-11; (f) Stumbling, Betrayal (10); (g) False Prophets (11); (h) Love grow cold (12); (i) Gospel of Kingdom Preached in all World – then end (14); (j) "Abomination of Desolation" in temple (15) See Mk. 13:14-16; Luke 17:31-33; (k) The Great Tribulation (21) (21) (See Dan. 12:1; Joel 2:2; Rev. 7:14).

(2) The sign of Thy presence (25-31) – The Negative: (a) Not in desert (26); (b) Not in secret chambers (26). The Positive: (a) As lightning (27); (b) Preceded by death (28); (c) Cosmic disturbance (29); Sun, moon, stars: (d) Sign in Heaven (30); (e) Preceded by mourning (30); (f) In clouds of Heaven with power and glory (30); (g) Angels as herald blowing trumpet, gather elect (31).

(3) The time when these things be (24:32-51; 25:1-46) – (a) Parable of the Fig Tree (32) – leaves and summer; (b) Fulfilled in this generation (Historical adumbration) (33-35). This discourse has two horizons, one forty years distant (A.D.70) from the time of utterance, and the other still in the future; (c) Only Father knows (36); (d) Like days of Noah (37-42), eating, drinking, marrying, one taken, other left; (e) Watch in view of coming (42-45) – As a thief, Wise and foolish virgins (25:1-13); (f) Work in view of coming (46-51; 25:1-30), faithful servant (24:46-51), Talents (25:14-30).

LESSON # 10 – THE PARABOLIC PRINCIPLE

INTRO:

Most of our Lord's teaching while here on earth was in the form of parables. A study of the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John become a study of parables, and also miracles and signs.

These Gospels set forth our Lord's earthly ministry, and are to be contrasted with Paul's heavenly ministry. It is only in the light of Dispensational Truth that one can really understand both the parables of our Lord and the revelations of Paul. If one only sees moral and practical teaching in the parables much of their meaning is missed and, if one sees only dispensational and prophetic teaching the view is limited.

"It is of utmost importance that we understand the distinction between the Jews and the Gentiles and the Church of God. This is indeed the key to what has been termed 'Dispensational teaching'. The Bible becomes a new book to us as we thus learn to understand something of God's purpose for the future", says Ada R. Habershon in her book, The Study of the Parables. We would add it is important to see the difference between the Church of God, which Paul persecuted (1 Cor. 15:9; Gal. 1:13; Acts 8:3) and The Church, the Body of Christ, which came by revelation to Paul (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). Miss Habershon shows that there is practical teaching on such subjects as, Prayer, Service, The Word of God, Joy, The Use of Riches, Over-Anxiety and Consistency. Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer on the subject, Parables in his Systematic Theology, Vol. 5, pgs. 166-167 has this to say: "A standard work on the parables for nearly a century has been Notes on the Parables of Our Lord, by Richard C. Trench; nevertheless, though Trench was a scholar of the highest order in the field of original languages, he possessed slight understanding of dispensational distinctions apart from which but little progress can be made in the right interpretation of the parables. In concluding his discussions of the distinguishing marks of a parable, Archbishop Trench summarizes thus: 'To sum up all then, the parable differs from the fable, moving as it does in a spiritual world and never transgressing the actual order of things natural – from the mythus, there being in the latter an unconscious blending of the deeper meaning with the outward symbol, the two remaining separate and separable in the parable, - from the Proverb, inasmuch as it is longer carried out, and not merely accidentally and occasionally, but necessarily figurative, - from the Allegory, comparing as it does one thing with another, at the same time preserving them apart as an inner and an outer, not transferring, as does the allegory, the properties and relations of one to the other' (9th ed. Pp. 15-16)."

Our Lord's parables are integrated into His ministry, not isolated from them.

DEFINITIONS:

1. The word "Parable" – This English word is a transliteration from the Greek word "parabole". This is composed of two words, "para" beside and "ballein" or "ballo" to throw. From the first of these we get our word "parallel".

A parable then is something thrown along side of, a placing beside, a comparison, especially a comparing of spiritual things with natural things to illustrate some special truth.

Prof. Dungan says: "...a story by which something real in life is used as a means of presenting a moral thought".

An old simple definition is: "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning".

Dean Alford: "A serious narration, within the limits of probability, of a course of action pointing to some moral or spiritual truth."

Angus and Green: "When an allegory is written in the style of history and is confined to occurrences that may have taken place, it is called a PARABLE."

The word “parable” in Hebrew is mashal, a placing of one thing beside another, juxtaposition, as of ships in battle.

The word occurs in all four of the Gospels, in which there are over fifty recorded parables. Luke heads the list with some twenty-six parables; Matthew is second with some nineteen, while John has only two and Mark five.

There are no parables in connection with the Body of Christ, the Church. In the early ministry of Paul there were “signs” (1 Cor. 14:22). There are no “signs” or “miracles” in The Prison Epistles.

Parables are connected with prophetic and dispensational truth (Matt. 13:36-43), and also with a secret (Matt. 13:35). Note that this was “kept secret from the foundation of the world”. As such they are connected with “The Kingdom of the Heavens”.

Someone has counted some fifty different things used as a basis for the parables, such as “seed”, “sower”, “house”, “leaven”, “pearl”, “field” and “wise and foolish virgins” etc. etc.

Christ spoke in parables to both conceal and reveal the truth; to veil it from the understanding of the unbelieving, but to enlighten His disciples (Matt. 13:13-15). However, the meaning only became clear when Christ interpreted them.

There is nothing in a parable which is historically inaccurate. The idea that a parable is a form of Fairytale is altogether fallacious. There is no good reason, for instance, for refusing to call the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus a parable. It is not expressly so called, but it has all the ear-marks of a parable, and is spoken in the context of parabolic language. In Matt. 18:12-14 the story of the ninety and nine sheep is not called a parable, but certainly is one. But it is so called in Luke 15:3-7. In Jewish writings a parable is introduced by such expressions as: “I will tell thee a parable”; “To what is a thing like?” “There was”; “To”. (See Matt. 15:15; 24:32; Luke 4:23,36; 16:1,9; 18:1-2).

2. The Kingdom of God

The word for “kingdom” is basileia; the word for “church” is ekklesia. The expression “Kingdom of God” can be used interchangeably with “The Kingdom of the heavens”. But in its widest use is given to the reign of Jehovah over the universe. We read in Psalm 103:19: “His kingdom ruleth over all”. “The kingdom of God includes, “The Kingdom of His dear Son” (Col. 1:13) in which we find the Church, the Body of Christ.

“The kingdom of God” is found mostly in Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Paul’s Epistles and Revelation. The Thessalonian saints were in it (2 Thess. 1:5).

3. The Kingdom of the Heavens

This expression occurs some fifty times in Matthew and only in Matthew’s Gospel. It is always in the plural. It refers to the earthly aspect of the Kingdom, especially the 1,000 year reign of Christ upon earth. It will be the rule of the heavens upon earth (Zech. 6:13). It is always associated with Israel. It is spoken of as “drawing near” by John the Baptist, Jesus and The Twelve (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Mark 1:15; Luke 10:9,11). Entrance into this kingdom was by doing the will of God (Matt. 7:21). Peter was commissioned to rule in this kingdom (Matt. 16:19). Peter used “the keys of the kingdom of heaven” in Acts 5:1-10. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will have a part in it (Matt. 8:11). It is used interchangeably with “The Kingdom of God” (Matt. 3:2 with Mark 1:15).

In The Gospel of Matthew Christ is the promised Messiah sent from God to Israel according to O.T. prophecy to announce the coming of the promised kingdom and bring it in. But first they must accept the Suffering Servant (Isa. Ch. 53). But they rejected their Messiah-King (Matt. 9:3,34; 12:14,24; Luke 19:14).

4. The Kingdom of His Dear Son (Col. 1:13)

This refers to the purpose of God in this dispensation. It is also called “the kingdom of Christ and of God” (Eph. 5:5). This is part of the larger sphere – The Kingdom of God.

I. THE PURPOSE OF THE PARABLES

“All the parables, indeed, implied some background of opposition or else unreceptiveness. In the record of the first series of them, the fact that Jesus spoke to the people in parables, and only in parables is strongly marked. It appears, therefore, to have been the first time that this mode of popular teaching was adopted by Him. Accordingly, the disciples not only expressed their astonishment, but inquired the reason of this novel method. The answer of the Lord makes a distinction between those to whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom and those to whom all things were done in parables. But, evidently, this method of teaching could not have been adopted for the people, in contradistinction to the disciples and as a judicial measure, since even in the first series of parables three were addressed to disciples, after the people had been dismissed. On the other hand, in answer to the disciples, the Lord specially marks this as the difference between the teaching vouchsafed to them and the parables spoken to the people, that the designed effect of the latter was judicial: to complete that hardening which, in its commencement, had been caused by their voluntary rejection of what they had heard (Matt. 12:14). But as not only the people, but the disciples also, were taught by parables, the hardening effect must not be ascribed to the Parabolic Mode of teaching, now for the first time adopted by Christ. ... It seems impossible to believe that Jesus had adopted a special mode of teaching for the purpose of concealing the truth which might have saved those who heard him. His words, indeed, indicate that such was the effect of the parables” – Edersheim in his Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Vol. 1.

“In the Scripture it is disclosed that Christ not only anticipated the blindness of Israel, which blindness extended throughout the present age (Rom. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:13-16) but, He purposely veiled His meaning by the use of parables lest Israel should understand. On the other hand, within the perfect plan of God, Israel is held accountable for the hearing and doing of all that He addressed to them, either directly or through parables. Since the pre-cross ministry of Christ is so evidently addressed to Israel and concerning her earthly kingdom, it is expected that the parables will, to a large degree, represent truth related to that kingdom. The difficulty is no small one for many expositors when confronted with the teaching relative to Israel’s divinely imposed blindness – the judicial withholding of vital truth from their understanding. Such difficulties, though complex as related to the divine way of dealing with His chosen people, are much clarified when the divine purpose in the present age is discerned. The veiling of kingdom truth does not in any way lessen its importance, nor does it supply an excuse for students to be confused – as too often they are – regarding these subjects” – Lewis Sperry Chafer in his Systematic Theology vol. 5, Page 167.

The general purposes of the Parables are twofold: (1) To demonstrate truth by something which is known and accepted; and, (2) To conceal truth from those who have hardened their hearts and are not entitled to know it (Matt. 13:10-13). The different effect was not due to the parabolic method, but to the different standpoint of the hearers. In the latter case their guilt caused the state of spiritual insensibility. “Their own hardening merged into the judgment of hardening” says Edersheim on Matt. 13:13-15).

Dr. Plummer says: “The chief purpose of parables is to instruct by means of the exquisite analogies which exist between natural and spiritual things, and which are the outcome of the Divine wisdom that fashioned both. In them Christ ‘utters things which have been hidden from

the foundation of the world' (Matt. 13:35) for the whole universe is a parable which hides God from the unworthy, while it reveals Him more and more to the devout.”

There are three simple rules for interpreting parables that should be followed:

1. Always ascertain the scope of a parable and stay within it. The scope is usually ascertained by reference to the context, and is given either by the Lord Himself as in Matt. 22:14; or by the inspired writer of the Gospel narrative as in Luke 18:1. Parables that are found in more than one Gospel usually amplify each other.

2. Never draw teaching from parables inconsistent with Divine truth as revealed in other Scriptures. Example: Do not teach prayer to glorified saints because the rich man prayed to “Father Abraham” (Luke 16:24).

3. Never use a parable as the first and only source of a new teaching. Example: Do not attempt to teach that the number of the saved and lost will be equal because in the parable of the ten virgins there are five of each. Others have found here that a person once saved could be lost again. Again from this same fact, others teach the need of a second work of grace for salvation. Some have found here a partial rapture theory; others the church going through the first half of the tribulation period. Matt. 13:10-17; Isa. 6:9-10; Matt. 13:34-35; Psalm 78:1-72

In Psalm 78 we have: (1) Rebellion (8); (2) Retribution (21); (3) Repentance (34); (4) redeemer (35); (5) Restored (39); (6) Rejection of enemies (66).

All of these elements are also found in the parabolic teaching of Christ in the Gospels. This is the purpose of parables.

II. THE PERIODS OF THE PARABLES

They are more or less connected with the whole history of Israel.

1. During Israel’s Patriarchal Period – From the call of Abraham to the forming of the nation (Gen. 12:1 – Exod. 12:2). (Parable of the rich man, Lazarus and Abraham’s bosom).

2. During Israel’s Old Covenant Period – This extended from Sinai and the Law to the Cross of Christ. It was ratified (Exod. 19:5-8). It was terminated (Matt. 27:51). Hence all the Gospels were included in the Old Covenant period and thus the parables likewise.

3. During Israel’s New Covenant Period (Past) – From Pentecost to their final rejection and dispersion – Acts Ch. 2 – Ch. 28:16-28. So they continued as long as Israel remained a nation, until A.D. 70. “The Jews require a sign” (1 Cor. 1:22). It was included in their commission (Mark 16:15-20). It was practiced by the twelve apostles and others.

4. During Israel’s “Day of the Lord” Period (Rev. 11:6). Many parables speak of the Tribulation Period, such as The Tares and the Wheat and The Dragnet (Matt. Ch. 13). The “signs” of Moses and the Prophets will be repeated in that future day (Exod. 7:3; Isa. 8:18; Jer. 32:20-23; Ezek. 4:3).

5. Not connected with the “Dispensation of the Secret” Period – Parables, Miracles and Signs were found as long as Israel was in standing with God. They were cut off when Israel was cut off. No parables in The Prison Epistles.

III. THE PERSON SPEAKING THE PARABLES

It was the Lord Jesus Christ Who spoke the parables; also performed the miracles and pointed out the signs.

1. His relation to Israel – He was a “minister of the circumcision: (Rom. 4:8). This is clearly defined in Matt. 15:24 where it says: “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel”. He also came “to confirm the promises made unto the fathers” (Rom. 15:8).

2. His relation to Gentiles – Gentiles were looked upon as outcasts, called “dogs” (Matt. 15:26). In contrast to the Jews called “children”. The Jews were to be filled first, then the Gentiles. But the Gentiles were also to be blessed with Israel (Rom. 15:9-12). There are some necessary contrasts: a. The blessing of Gentiles with Israel (Acts 15:14-18); b. The blessing of

Gentiles apart from Israel (Acts 13:46-48); c. The uniting of Jew and Gentile into One Body (Eph. 2:14-18).

3. Gentile ministry in the Gospels: a. The Syrophenician woman (Matt. 15:21-28. b. The Centurion (Matt. 8:5). C. Certain Greeks (may be Hellenistic Jews, or Jews of the dispersion (John 12:20-22).

IV. THE PRESENTATION OF SOME PARBLES

It is not our purpose to make a study of the fifty or more parables in the Bible, but just to take some important samples. This we will do from the thirteenth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew. This chapter is most important, both in this Gospel and in the N.T. In chapters 5-9 the Lord has presented messages and miracles relative to His Messiahship. In chapters 11-12 they are rejected. So that when we come to chapter 13 the Kingdom of Heaven is set forth in mystery form or in parables.

“Then said He unto them, therefore every Scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old” (Matt. 13:52). We have here in Matthew Ch. 13 seven distinct parables.

(1) The Sower, the Seed and the Soils – The wayside, the stony places, the thorny places and the good ground. Varying results – one good out of four.

(2) The Tares and the Wheat – Sower of good seed is the Son of Man; sower of tares is the Devil.

(3) The Mustard Seed – A tiny mustard seed grows to a big tree; birds lodge in it; has abnormal growth.

(4) The Leaven – Put by a woman in three measures of meal until all is leavened. Enemy at work through inward pollution.

(5) The Hidden Treasure – Hid in a field and purchased by man who finds treasure.

(6) The Pearl of Great Price – Sold all and purchased it.

(7) The Dragnet – Gathering of fish from sea, separating good and bad. End of age.

This chapter is most important both in Matthew and in the N.T. Dr. James M. Gray says: “From a dispensational viewpoint, there is no chapter in the New Testament more needful to be understood than this”.

Dr. Arthur T. Pierson in his book, Knowing The Scriptures, gives the following three features:

(1) “The recorded miracles and parables of our Lord closely correspond in number; we can trace from forty to fifty of each and the miracles all have a hidden parabolic meaning, as the parables have all a deeper meaning than their literal significance.”

(2) “The miracles teach the significance of the forces of creation; the Parables, of the forms of Creation.” (Quoted from Dr. Hugh McMillan).

(3) “When a parable is predictive and prophetic, it is always in allegorical dress; when preceptive and didactic, actual and historical” (from Dr. W.G. Morehead).

In further introducing these parables we want to see:

1. The Places – These parables or mysteries of the kingdom are divided into two groups:

a. Those spoken at the seaside (Vr. 1) – This first verse is full of significance. It is a prophetic suggestion of His final break with Israel. No word of God is void of power or empty of meaning. It was on that day – the memorable Sabbath day (See 12:1) when the Lord took His true place among the people as the One greater than David, than Solomon, and than Jonah – the Lord of the Sabbath. He went out of His own house, representing Israel, and went “by the seaside” representing the nations. The sea in Scripture is a type of the restless nations (Dan. 7:2,3,17; Rev. 17:1,15). It reveals that Israel having rejected their Messiah, the Kingdom of Heaven would take on a larger aspect and involve the nations.

b. Those given in the house (Vr. 36) – Our Lord now returns to the house and gives His last three parables. These have specific reference to Israel at the end time.

2. The Period

The proclamation of the Kingdom of Heaven started with John the Baptist (Matt. 3:1-2); it was continued by Christ and the twelve (Matt. 4:17; 10:7); then by Peter and the eleven (Acts 3:19-21). It continued down to the end of the Book of Acts or about 40 A.D. It will be taken up again in the 70th week of Daniel (9:27).

This Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven was interrupted by the complete rejection of Israel (Acts 28:23-27) and the coming of The Dispensation of the Grace of God and the Secret (Eph. 3:1-9). The Gospel of God's great grace and the sacred secret expect nothing from man. They thrive in any soil. They expect and need no sustenance from beneath. These parables, therefore, have no application to the Dispensation of the Church, the Body of Christ.

3. The Parables

"He spake many things unto them in parables" (3). "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" (10). "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" (11).

"Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand" (13).

"All these things spake Jesus unto them in parables; and without a parable spake He not to them" (34).

Three things are here spoken of the rejecters: They are blind; they are deaf; and they are ignorant. Moral and spiritual blindness, deafness and ignorance had possessed them. Jesus then proceeds to give the pronouncement of judgment upon the rejecters (14-15); and the blessing upon His disciples (16-17). See Isa. 6:9-10; Acts 28:25-27. Thus Israel finally committed a triple rejection of the truth from the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. So parables are veiled truth in pictorial form, not to be understood by rejecters, but revealed to believers.

The fact that Jesus spoke in parables was a matter of prediction (See Vr. 35). David as a prophet said: "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter dark sayings of old" (Ps. 78:2). Jesus says here that He utters things "which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world" (35). With reference to the Church, Paul says: "chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). "From" has to do with God's purposes in Israel; "before" with His purpose in the Church, His Body. The term "Kingdom of Heaven" refers to the earthly rule of Christ. So in these parables we get a panoramic view of the Kingdom of Heaven in its mystery form.

A. THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER, SEED, SOILS

(Matt. 13:1-9,18-23; Mk. 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15)

This parable is true to the life of the Orient. The unfenced fields were allotted to farmers and the paths ran right through the grain fields; so it was quite possible to sow on hard places. There were also outcroppings of rocks and often shallow soil; and in many places thorns so thick that the farmer despaired of eradicating them.

The number three is prominent in these parables. In the parable of the sower triple failure was caused by the ground; in the three following, by Satanic agency, such as tares, fowls, and the woman. Between the first and seventh there are two sets of three. There were three kinds of faulty ground; three satanic agencies; three degrees of fruit-bearing; three measures of meal; and three groups of redeemed – the treasure, the pearl, and the good fish.

1. THE INSTRUCTION (3-9)

a. A Sower (Vr. 3 – speiron – a male) – This sower went forth to sow. It is the picture of a farmer sowing seed in the springtime. Such a scene would be very natural and evident around the Sea of Galilee.

b. The Seed (4-8) – The seed in this parable is one and the same no matter where it is planted.

c. The Soils (4-8) – There were four kinds of soil into which the seed fell: the hard wayside path; the stony places with a mere top soil; the thorny places with much weeds; and the good soil.

d. The Success (4-8) – There followed four different results: Seed snatched away by fowls; seed became rootless and fruitless; seed choked out by thorns; and seed bearing fruit some hundredfold, some sixty fold, and some thirtyfold.

2. THE INTERPRETATION (18-23)

Jesus Himself gives the interpretation of this parable, as also the second. These two interpretations would thus form patterns for the other five. It will become necessary to refer to the explanation of the second parable to get details for the first. This first one places more emphases upon the four kinds of soil than any other feature.

a. The Sower (Vr. 37) – “He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man.” Jesus Christ is the prime mover in sowing the good seed, whether He does it personally or by His Apostles and ministers.

b. The Seeds (Vrs. 19,38) – The seed is spoken of as being twofold: “the word of the kingdom”. This is the Gospel of the Kingdom” as presented by John the Baptist, by Christ, and by His Apostles; “The children of the kingdom” not only the “word of the kingdom” but believers also constituted the good seed. So Christ sows good seed and good children or subjects of the kingdom.

c. The Soils (19-23) – There are four types of soil into which the seed now falls. The number four is always representative of the world and so in verse 38 we read: “The field is the world”.

(1) The Wayside Soil (19) – The beaten path that lay through every oriental field. This represents Satanic prevention - likened to the rebellious heart devoid of understanding. Here “the wicked one” is the same as “The enemy – the Devil” (Vr. 39). The Devil “catcheth away” this seed and it fails of its mission. This first sowing may be the offer of the kingdom by John the Baptist. There was no permanent success in John’s ministry. The people heard the word of the kingdom, but did not understand; no response to the message. They were called a “generation of vipers” (Matt. 3:7). The Devil was prominent in its non-effect.

(2) The Stony-Ground Soil (20-21) – Palestine has much stony ground of soft limestone with just a little dirt on top. It is a hilly land and the soil is often washed away entirely. So many times there is no depth of earth. This represents shallow possession. It is the shallow, impulsive heart, eager to receive impressions, but without persistency and soon overcome by temptation. “Tribulation and persecution” soon react upon this shallow life and the rootless plant dies. Multitudes received the word with joy (Mk. 12:37). Herod himself was glad (Luke 23:8). Likened to the emotional hearer who exults in the message and embraces it with enthusiasm. This second sowing may be the offer of the kingdom by Jesus Himself, the Twelve Apostles, and the Seventy Disciples. The seed often fell on stony places. Jesus said: “For this people’s heart is waxed gross and their ears are dull of hearing and their eyes they have closed” (15). See also Matt. 21:1-19; 27:19-25; Luke 4:14-29; 23:8-11; Jn. 6:66.

(3) The Thorny-Ground Soil (22) – This represents sinful pre-occupation. Thorns as elsewhere were prevalent in Palestine. They grow more rapidly than good seed and also more prolifically. This sowing may be that of Peter and the Eleven during the Acts period from Pentecost and on. But riches and wickedness choke this word and it becomes unfruitful. These are double-minded hearers. If there is plenty of soil for weeds, there is also for the good seed. See Acts 2:38; Luke 8:14 with Heb. 6:1; 6:4-6; 10:34; 13:5; Acts Ch. 5; 8:13.

(4) The Good Ground Soil (23) – This represents Sincere Preparation. These are those who hear and understand the word. Then fruit is borne. It is the fruit for which the plant exists. This will no doubt be the sowing of the future, perhaps by the 144,000 during the

tribulation, and into the Millennial Kingdom. This will be the harvest. It will fall in good soil, and bring forth fruit. See Matt. 24:14; 28:19-20; Rom. 11:26; Isa. 60:21; Ezek. 11:19; Hos. 14:7.

Between the third and fourth sowings we have an unpropheied period of the Secret, the Church which is the Body of the Lord. In the first three sowings there was no permanent harvest. But here there is fruitbearing unto perfection. God will take away the stony heart of Israel and give them a heart of flesh (Ezek. 11:19).

d. The Success

The Greek prepositions play an important role here: “By the path” – para, by or beside; “On the rock” – epi or upon; “In the midst of thorns” – en or among; “Into the ground” – eis or into.

In the first three soils there is no permanent harvest. The fourth presents a threefold harvest – 100, 60 and 30 fold. Only one-third of one-fourth of all the seed sown will come to full harvest. This first parable tells the story of Ps. 126:6, representing as it does the First and Second Advents of our Lord. When Christ comes again He will not be the Man of Sorrows, but Lord of the Harvest.

B. PARABLE OF THE TARES AND WHEAT (Matt. 13:24-30; 36-43)

A parable urges us to consider deeply the ways of God with His people, and to look for the hidden causes and workings which are veiled from the eyes of the uninstructed.

The first parable in the Bible is one that concerns the people of Israel in relation to their separate calling as a distinct nation and peculiar people. It is Balaam’s parable in Numbers 23:7. See also 23:18 and 24:3,15. The parables are particularly dispensational and prophetic in character. They are not intended to portray merely a moral lesson or a text for a Gospel message. The parable of The Prodigal Son has been used to picture the universal Fatherhood of God without reference to the sacrifice of Christ.

In the first parable of The Sower and the Seeds we have special reference to the soils which the parable presented. In this parable we have special reference to the seeds sown. This parable is spoken to the multitudes outside the house (1-2). However, the interpretation is not given to the multitude, but unto the disciples (36-37). This parable also has to do with “The Kingdom of the Heavens” (24). This parable is not found in any other Gospel; it is exclusive with Matthew. While the number four is outstanding in the first parable, the number two is outstanding here. Both numbers are kingdom numbers.

The key to this parable is found in the words: “An enemy hath done this” (28).

1. THE INSTRUCTION (24-30)

a. The Two Sowers (24-25) – A man sowed good seed in his field (24). An enemy sowed evil seed in this same field (25). The “man” or the farmer is here contrasted to his “enemy”. The enemy enters the man’s field, not his own. It was an enemy that entered man’s first garden (Gen. 3:1).

b. The Two Sowings (24-25) – The “good seed” (kalon sperma). The “tares” (zizanium). This is the general name for weeds in grain, like English cockle or darnel. Darnel is a plant which bears a striking resemblance to wheat and is often mistaken for wheat or barley. It is still found in Palestine among the small grain.

c. The Twofold Success (26-30) – “Let both grow together.” They were not to root up the tares out of the wheat, lest they also pluck up the wheat. Both were to ripen for the harvest; then the tares would be separated by the reaper from the wheat. The tares were to be burned; the wheat gathered into the barn.

2. THE INTERPRETATION (36-43)

“Jesus ... went into the house.” It could be into the house of Peter. The disciples found this parable more difficult than The Mustard Seed and The Leaven; so asked Jesus to interpret the same.

a. The Sowers (37,39) “The Son of Man” (37) is also the owner of the field. The “enemy ... is the Devil” (28,39); also called “the wicked one” (38). “An enemy ... the wicked one, ... the Devil.” Our Lord recognized a personal Devil, an Evil One who since the Fall in Eden has sought to frustrate the work of God and Christ in the world. “The field is the world” (38). Sometimes he comes as “a roaring lion” and again as “a minister of light” (1 Pet. 5:8; 2 Cor. 11:14).

b. The Soil (38) – “The field is the world.” Thus the soil into which the seeds are sown is world-wide. During Jesus’ ministry on earth it was localized to Palestine, but now it has taken on a world-wide aspect.

c. The Seeds (38) – “The children of the kingdom.” In the first parable the seed was “the word of the kingdom” (19). Now it has taken the aspect of the kingdom subjects. These then constitute the good seed that are sown.

“The children of the wicked one.” So there are also offspring of the Devil. We see here the actual existence of the Devil. It declares him to be a moral father, and as such to have children. The offspring of Satan are often so morally perfect as to be indistinguishable from true believers – the good seed. Yet they are the seed of the serpent (Gen. 3:15).

Down through the ages Satan has constantly sought to overthrow the purpose of God in Christ:

Gen. 3:14-15 – introduces us to the beginning of the conflict. The purpose of the ages centers in Christ (Eph. 3:11).

Gen. Ch. 4 – Here Cain kills his brother Abel. Cain, we are told: “was of that wicked one” (1 Jn. 3:12).

Gen. Ch. 6 – Here we have an irruption of the angelic world, when “the sons of God” co-habit with “the daughters of men”. The result is an offspring of giants, called Nephilim.

Gen. 12:5-6 – Abraham comes to the Land of Canaan where there is an evil seed – the Canaanites, Nephilim, the Giants, the sons of Anak, and the Rephaim.

Exod. 1:22 – The slaughter of the male children by the wicked Pharaoh, who was an instrument “of wrath, fitted to destruction” (Rom. 9:22).

Matt. 3:7-10 – John the Baptist and his contemporaries – the “generation of vipers”.

Matt. 3:12; 12:33-34; 23:33; John 8:44 – Here our Lord lays bare the character and end of many of His contemporaries. “...burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire”; “generation of vipers”; “ye serpents, ye generation of vipers”; “Ye are of your father the Devil”.

The history of the Kingdom proclamation from the Gospels through the Acts bear this out: There were the seven sons of Sceva (Acts 19:14); The wolves at Ephesus (Acts 20:29); The rich in James (5:1); The false prophets of Second Peter (2:1); The “certain men” of Jude, “crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men” (4); The false prophets (Rev. 2:2); The synagogue of Satan (Rev. 2:9); The Nicolaitans (Rev. 2:15); and Jezebel, that wicked woman (Rev. 2:20).

Such are the unmistakable teachings of Scripture down through the ages. “Who hath ears to hear, let him hear” (Matt. 13:9). “But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears for they hear” (Vr. 16).

d. The Separation (40-43) – “... in the end of this world” (age) there shall come the great separation of the tares and wheat. Both are to grow together until then. This will be at the end of Daniel’s 70th week, or the end of The Great Tribulation period. Thus we see that Satan’s purpose to frustrate and spoil the kingdom purpose will fail.

The Rebellious (40-42) – The angels will gather the tares and cast them into the fire. Matt. 24:30 gives us the commencement of this great harvest. These wicked ones will go to the place of torment, where there is “wailing and gnashing of teeth”.

The Righteous (43) – These will shine as the sun in the kingdom. See Dan. 12:3; Mal. 4:2-3. So this parable gives us a revelation of the growth of evil in this world, and answers many problems otherwise unsolved. The primeval promise (Gen. 3:15) introduces the conflict of the ages, and here it has an end.

C. PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED (Matt. 13:31-42; Mk. 4:30-32;
Luke 13:18-19)

1. THE INTRODUCTION

This is the third in the order of parables spoken by Christ at the “sea side”. It is found in the first four which show the apparent failure of the kingdom in its outward aspect. The parables tell of the outward failure of the Kingdom of Heaven and the inner corruption during the time when the King is rejected and absent.

The popular current explanation of these parables is that they were meant to announce the glorious success of the Gospel. The Mustard Seed is regarded as portraying the rapid extension of Christianity and the expansion of the Church of Christ. Beginning insignificantly and obscurely, its proportions have increased immensely, until it will ultimately cover the earth. Most commentaries are utterly hopeless in the giving of a true interpretation of these parables.

These seven or eight parables form part of one connected and complete discourse whose teaching must be consistent and harmonious throughout. This third one cannot conflict with the first two. In Mark 4:13 in speaking about the first parable our Lord said: “Know ye not this parable? And how then will ye know all parables?”. In the first parable, instead of drawing a picture of a field in which the good seed took root and flourished in every part of it, our Lord pointed out that most of its soil was unfavorable, and that only a fractional proportion bore an increase. Instead of promising that the good ground section of the field would yield greater and greater returns, He announced that there would be a decreasing harvest – “some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty”. This certainly forbids a world-wide acceptance of the Gospel during the absence of the King

2. THE INSTRUCTION

In this parable our Lord likens the Kingdom of Heaven to a Mustard Seed, the smallest of all seed grain used in Jewish husbandry. It became the largest of all herbs and took tree-like proportions (Luke 13:19). Ordinarily, wild mustard does not assume such proportions; but, under the handling of man in the garden it is seen to grow to an enormous size. It spreads forth its branches, says Jesus, until the birds of the heaven find lodgment in the shade of it.

a. The Seed – “a grain of mustard seed.” The word translated “mustard” is sinaopi. It occurs five times in the N.T. – Matt. 13:31; Mk. 4:31; Luke 13:19; Matt. 17:20; Luke 17:6. In the latter two the reference is to “faith like a grain of mustard seed”. It appears that this was a proverbial saying among the Jews.

b. The Sower – “a man sowed in his field.” Jesus has already said that the “field is the world” and “He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man” (38,37). It could not therefore have been a weed, but a good seed that could be used either as food or condiment for seasoning food.

c. The Success – “becometh a tree, ... the birds lodge in the branches.” It is an abnormal thing for an herb to become a tree, so that birds lodge and build in it. An herb is

different from a tree. Its stems never develop woody tissue. This developed into something foreign to its nature. “Fowls” were a part of the first parable. The “fowls of the heavens” are mentioned in Matt. 6:26; 8:20; 13:32; Mk. 4:4,32; Luke 8:5; 9:58; 13:19.

3. THE INTERPRETATION

Our Lord in this parable is giving the abnormal growth of the Kingdom of Heaven during the time He is away.

a. The Ordinary Seed – “a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field.” Note: “the least among seeds”, “the greatest among herbs” and “becometh a tree”. We have already said that “the field is the world” (38). The Mustard Seed is then to be taken as a symbol of the Kingdom in its very small beginning, with a small number of adherents and most common folk (Acts 1:15; 2:41-47).

The Kingdom purpose of God commenced with one man, Abram and his descendents. The people that God cast out of Canaan were “seven nations, greater and mightier than thou” (Deut. 7:1). See also 7:7 and 10:22. Christ began His ministry with twelve apostles and seventy disciples (Matt. 10:1ff; Luke 10:1ff). The H.S. began His ministry with 120 disciples on The Day of Pentecost (Acts 1:15).

b. The Abnormal Success – “... it is the greatest among herbs and becometh a tree.” The tree according to the symbolism of Scripture is a picture of world power (See Dan. 4:10-12; Ezek. 31:3-9). Thus the Kingdom of Heaven will be taken over by world powers – The Times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24).

The Mustard Seed is very small and here grows into an herb. According to Walter Quincy Scott, a proverbial Talmudic expression referred to as a type of anything exceedingly small. It does not normally become a tree, so Jesus meant here that the Kingdom form was unusual and abnormal.

We may think of Christendom under Constantine during the Middle Ages; magnified by Popes, or swelled by pagans and heretic groups. This parable cannot typify true, prosperous, inner growth. There is no true Christian nation or ethnic group, no literal national church on the face of the earth.

c. The Subtil Service – “the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.” In the first parable, we learn that “the fowls” typify the “wicked one” (13:19). So when these “birds of the air come and lodge in the branches” we may assume it implies that Satan and his cohorts have now taken habitation in the Kingdom or Christendom (See Matt. 13:4; Eph. 2:2,3). These birds do not belong to the tree, but are squatters. When Satan and his demons can no longer snatch away the seed, they take shelter in its branches and pollute it and use it for their own ends.

Just as fowls bring defilement where they lodge, so these unsaved demon possessed professors of religion defile the Kingdom with worldly ambitions, impure lives and false principles. The Bible generally speaks of birds in an evil sense – Gen. 15:11 where they come down on Abraham’s sacrifice; Deut. 28:26 where carcasses are meat for the fowls of the air; Rev. 18:2ff where Babylon has become the habitation of demons and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. So the kingdom is and will be befouled by demons and wicked spirits, who descend from the heavens (Eph. 6:10-12; 2 Thess. 2:7-19; Lev. 11:13-20).

Thus the warning of Christ in this parable has to do with the danger of size and the sheltering of evil. Largeness does not necessarily mean spiritual growth and success. It may mean the opposite.

Here is indeed the intensification of mystery – not only its presence as evil, but its ability to deceive and even to give spurious size and prosperity to the Kingdom of Heaven.

At the time of the end there will be an exceedingly rapid development of the Kingdom among the Jews, which will head up in false Babylon, a cage for every hateful bird.

D. THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN (Matt. 13:33-35; Luke 13:20-21)
(See also Matt. 16:1-12; Mk. 8:13-21; Luke 12:1; 1 Cor. 5:6-8; Gal. 5:9)

1. THE INTRODUCTION

This parable is the last of the first four, spoken by the Lord outside the house. It reaches a climax and tells us what the end of the external history of the Kingdom of the Heavens will be during the time when the King is absent – “the whole was leavened”.

The most common interpretation of this parable is that The Leaven represents the Gospel; The Meal represents the world of humanity; The Woman represents the church; and The Hiding represents the process of world evangelization in which the gospel works until the whole is evangelized and Christianized. Dr. John Gill says: “Leaven is everywhere else used in a bad sense, ... here it seems to be taken in a good sense and the Gospel to be compared to it. The woman is the church or the ministers of the Gospel”. P. Lange says: “The woman is an apt figure of the Church, Leaven, a substance kindred, yet quite opposed to meal, having the power of transforming and preserving it, and converting it into bread, thus representing the divine in its relation to, and influence upon, our natural life. One of the main points of the parable is the hiding or the mixing of the leaven in the three measures of meal. This refers to the great visible church, in which the living gospel seems, as it were, hidden and lost.”

This interpretation assumes that the Gospel is to work secretly, progressively, diffusively and universally, so that in the process of time this secret evangelization will bring the entire world under the domination of Christianity.

This common interpretation is both historically unsound and Scripturally unwarranted; and that for three reasons: First, it contradicts the interpretation of the other parables (See 13:18-23,24-30,36-43,31-32,47-50); Secondly, it is not in accord with apparent historical and experiential facts. No Continent, Country, City or Community presents any process of complete evangelization; Thirdly, it is not in accord with other Scriptures (See 2 Thess. 2:7; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-6,13; 1 Jn. 5:19).

2. THE INSTRUCTION

This parable contains three distinct items: Leaven, a Woman, and Meal.

a. The Leaven – The Greek word translated “leaven” is zume and occurs some 13 times in the N.T. The number thirteen in Scripture is always a number of rebellion and of Satan. Nearly all the titles of Satan are a multiple of 13.

Leaven is produced by a microscopic vegetable fermentation resulting from placing fungi or bacteria in sweet spirits, then exposing to the air. This process causes fermentation to rise to the surface, forming a scum. This scum is called yeast. This yeast placed in dough causes fermentation; the fermented dough set aside for future use is called leaven. This leaven or sour dough has the power to reproduce itself over and over. When placed in other dough it continues to work until the entire body of dough in which it is placed has become permeated by the fermenting process. Leaven produces fermentation, then finally rotteness, putridity, and decay. Nothing can stop the process of fermentation except a “purging out” (1 Cor. 5:7) or fire (1 Cor. 3:15).

b. The Meal – The Greek word translated “meal” is aloe and means “to grind”. It stands for wheat flour, fine meal. It occurs two times in the N.T. Here and in Luke 13:21.

Meal is the product of ground grain, produced by taking the whole grain, and grinding it as a whole without elimination of any part. Meal thus ground is a pure, perfect, vitalizing, health-giving, life-sustaining product of nature. (See Gen. 18:6; Num. 5:15; 1 Kings 4:22; 2 Kings 7:12,14,16; 4:41; 1 Chron. 12:40; Isa. 47:2; Hos. 8:7).

c. The Woman – The word translated “woman” is gune. It is the common word for the female sex in the N.T. This was just any woman. It was the work of the women to grind the meal, prepare the leaven, and mix it in the meal.

3. THE INTERPRETATION

a. Concerning the Leaven – The word “leaven” occurs some 90 times in all the Scriptures. Leaven is not a logical symbol of that which is good. There is nothing that will stop the process of fermentation save fire.

Usage in the O.T. – It was excluded at the Passover (Ex. 12:14-20, 34-39; 13:3-7). It was excluded in the offerings made by fire unto the Lord (Lev. 2:11-12; 6:17; 10:12). There is an exception here in the Two Wave Loaves (Lev. 23:15-17). These Wave-Loaves typify the Pentecostal believers who possessed a new nature, but also had their old nature, and thus were imperfect. The offering of the Wave-Sheaf of the First Fruits typified the resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15:20). The offering of the Two Wave-Loaves baked with leaven were offered seven sabbaths after the offering of the Wave-Sheaf, on the fifteenth day.

Usage in the N.T. – In the N.T. leaven is invariably a symbol of false teaching, corrupt doctrine, and evil propaganda on the part of men who seek to corrupt the truth.

The leaven of the Pharisees (Luke 12:1) – Hypocrisy.

The leaven of the Sadducees (Matt. 16:6-12) – Rationalism.

The leaven of the Herodians (Mark 8:15; Matt. 22:16-22) – Hatred.

The leaven of the carnal Corinthians (1 Cor. 5:6) – Boasting (1 Cor. 5:8) – Malice and wickedness.

The leaven of the Galatian legalists (Gal. 5:9) – Legalism

In every occurrence on the N.T. leaven symbolizes evil.

b. Concerning the Meal

The word “meal” occurs twelve times in the Bible. This is a perfect governmental number and is related to Israel as a whole. Meal which is a product of pure ground grain is a symbol of that which is good.

“...three measures of meal.” The “three measures” seem to be the amount used in Israel for making bread (Gen. 18:6). There were three men that came to Abraham, but this may not be the reason for using three measures of meal. Some say it signifies the Jews, the Greeks, and the Samaritans; others that it stands for Asia, Europe and Africa; or the three sons of Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth; or the body, soul, and spirit. In the Parable of the Sower and the Seed there is the triple failure in the soils. In the three following parables there are three evil agencies, Tares, Fowls and the Woman. There were three degrees of fruit-bearing, and three groups of the redeemed – the Treasure, the Pearl and the Good Fish. It has also been said that the three great truths to be corrupted are: The truth concerning the Godhead, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

c. Concerning the Woman

A woman in Scriptural symbolism can mean both that which is good and evil. In the good sense it is very good, such as Hannah, the Great Woman of Sarepta, and Mary, the mother of Jesus. A woman is also a photo of apostasy and an apostate people (See Zech. 5:7-11; 1 Tim. 2:11-14; Rev. 2:20; 17:1-3). So here the woman is the agent by which the truth so vitally connected with the Kingdom of Heaven is to be corrupted. The hiding represents the secret, stealthy process by means of which corrupt doctrine is to be infused into truth. Babylon is represented by the mother and child. The harlot of the end time is connected with Babylon.

As is true with the Kingdom Gospel; it has been completely corrupted, so the present period of grace suffers from corrupt teaching by false teachers. There are various forms of legalism which corrupt this Dispensation of the Grace of God and of the Secret. They are Jehovah’s Witnesses, Christian Science, Mormonism, Seventh Day Adventism, Catholicism, etc. They may differ as to propaganda, but all unite in mixing the yeast of false teaching with some truth. “He who hath ears to hear, let him hear!”

E. THE PARABLE OF THE HID TREASURE (Matt. 13:44)
(See Exod. 19:5; Deut. 4:20; Ps. 135:4; Zech. 12:3; 2 Pet. 2:1)

1. THE INTRODUCTION

After the Parable of the Leaven, the Lord dismissed the multitude and went into the house. There He explained the Parable of the Tares (36-43) and then proceeded to unfold the inner aspects of the three remaining parables. These next three are only found in the Gospel of Matthew.

In a country which was subject to revolutions, invasions and robbers, it was customary to hide money and valuables in some secret cistern-like vault in the field. Such are seldom found by accident. It would be dangerous to dig in another man's field. Hence the buying of the field and thus getting the treasure.

Many foolish and unbiblical interpretations are given to this parable. One of the more popular ones is that the "treasure" is the Gospel which is hid in the Scriptures, represented by "the world". The man seeking the treasure is the sinner. But such interpretation runs counter to all sound Biblical exegesis as determined by the context and the other parables. Our Lord is still talking about "The Kingdom of the Heavens" so the theme is the same in this parable as the others.

2. THE INSTRUCTION

a. The Treasure – This represents Israel, the elect nation. (See Exod. 19:5-6; Deut. 14:2; 26:18; Ps. 135:4; Mal. 3:17). Five times here Israel is called a "peculiar treasure", "people" and "jewels". No other nation has ever had such a calling and such titles.

b. The Field – This we are told is the world – "the field is the world" (38). It is in this world that the treasure, Israel, is hidden.

c. The Man – The Man Who buys the field is none other than Christ. The sinner has absolutely nothing with which to purchase any such treasure, nor could Israel redeem herself. (See Ex. 6:6; Ps. 74:2; Isa. 43:1; Jer. 31:11; Zech. 10:8).

3. THE INTERPRETATION

Three distinct things are now presented for our consideration in this parable:

a. Recognition of the Hid Treasure – "treasure hid in the field." This was the condition of the nation Israel during most of her earthly experience, both before Christ came and since her final rejection in A.D. 70. Note the "hidden ones" in Ps. 83:3-4.

Seen in Abraham (Isa. 51:1-2) – Abraham was hidden away in the world of Ur when God found him (Gen. 11:31).

Seen in Jacob (Gen. 28:5) – Jacob had to flee from his home and find himself in Padan-aram with Laban, an unprincipled godless man. Here he is hidden; nothing to indicate he was God's chosen.

Seen in Joseph (Gen. 37:28,36) – Joseph is first sold to the Midianites, who take him to Egypt and sell him to Potiphar. He is then hid away in Egypt.

Seen in Israel in Egypt – Here they are hid away among the Egyptians, as a company of slaves working in the brick-kilns (Exod. Ch.1; Acts 7:19; see also Deut. 26:1,5). Here is God's peculiar treasure hidden away in Egypt, buried amid the rubbish of this wicked Gentile nation.

Seen in Israel in the Wilderness (Psa. 106,107; Deut. 32:10) – Israel is hid away for forty years in the Wilderness of Sinai.

It is this hid treasure that The Man, Christ Jesus found when He came to earth. This refers to the days of His earthly ministry. We are told in John 1:11: "He came unto His own". This means His own people according to the flesh, not some spiritual coming (See Matt. 15:24). His ministry was confined unto them. The treasure was now no longer hidden for their

King was among them. The elect nation was in their land, not under Moses in Egypt. The Lord's earthly ministry to His hidden ones was to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24). "He came to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

b. Rejection of the Hid Treasure – "When a man hath found, he hideth." "He came to His own, but His own received Him not" (Jn. 1:11).

In the previous two chapters (Matt. Chs. 11,12) we see how they rejected Him and He then in turn must reject them (See 11:20-24; 12:31-34). Israel is thus set aside again, hidden from view as a nation. Then they proceed to crucify their king. Without a King they can never be manifested and known as God's nation; they are again His hidden ones.

c. Redemption of The Hid Treasure - "and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field." "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).

Israel could never qualify under Law to be this treasure, she must be redeemed. Israel will never be "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Pet. 2:9) by virtue of her own deeds. This peculiar treasure must be redeemed (Rev. 1:5-6).

So this treasure which the Lord found hidden He hides again, and buys both the field and the treasure. Up until Matt. 16:21 the Lord had not spoken of His death. But now He hides the treasure and declares the great price He must pay for its redemption (1 Pet. 1:18-19). It was the death of the cross that secured both the field and the treasure.

Luke 19:11 gives further light on the hiding of the treasure. The second hiding of the Kingdom is symbolical of the abeyance of the Kingdom. The day will come when He shall take the treasure and reign (Rev. 11:15). So in the "hiding" or "casting away of Israel" He reconciles the world, but will take His treasure again (Rom. 11:15).

This parable declares that in spite of all opposition God's purpose for Israel and the Kingdom will be fulfilled. This would comfort the hearts of the Apostles. They would see how irresistible is the purpose of Him, Who fulfills all his promises.

F. THE PARABLE OF THE PEARL (Matt. 13:45-46)

1. THE INTRODUCTION

This parable, like the previous one and the following one, is spoken in the house to the disciples.

Note here again the phrase: "The Kingdom of Heaven." This parable is therefore related to the others and must be interpreted in the light of the revelations already given. There are two popular interpretations of this parable. One holds that the merchant man is the sinner seeking the best pearl, which is Christ. The sinner must give up all in order to merit Christ and His salvation. But Christ is not hid and the sinner has nothing to give or sell in order to win Christ. Salvation is a free gift and the sinner is merely asked to "believe", "receive", "accept" the gift that God has provided (See Acts 16:31; Jn. 1:12; 2 Cor. 6:2; Eph. 2:5-8). The other view holds that, while the other parables speak of the Kingdom, this one speaks of the Church. The pearl then represents the Church, and the merchantman represents Christ Who sold all and bought the Church. But there is nothing in this passage nor the context of this chapter that would warrant such an interpretation. If Christ suddenly changed from the Kingdom aspect to the Church He would have so indicated. Note again that He is still speaking about "The Kingdom of Heaven".

2. THE INSTRUCTION

The "Merchant" - The original word is emporos and gives us the English word emporium. It occurs five times in the N.T. (Matt. 13:45; Rev. 18:3,11,15,23). It means one who goes on board a ship, hence a merchant or a wholesale dealer.

The “Pearl” – This word is in the original margarites. It is thought by some that the word translated “rubies” in the O.T. should be pearls (Job 28:18; Prov. 3:15; 31:10). The word “pearl” is mentioned nine times in the N.T. (Matt. 7:6; 13:45-46; 1 Tim. 2:9; Rev. 17:4; 18:12,16; 21:21 (2)).

The harlot in Revelation 17:4 is “decked with gold and precious stones and pearls”. After her destruction, the New Jerusalem or Holy City is seen with its foundation of precious stones and gates of pearl (Rev. 21:21). So merchants and pearls are connected in the end of the age with the two cities, Babylon and New Jerusalem; the two systems of which one is a parody or caricature of the other.

The merchant seeking pearls is an old Oriental custom. There are still travelling jewelers, connoisseurs who deal in precious stones and pearls. If they meet with some rich and costly pearl they will sell all their valuable property and buy this gem. A pearl of first quality is the most precious gem in nature. No matter how brilliant and pure the diamond may be, it cannot compare in loveliness with a bright and delicate luster of the pearl. Nothing is so pure, so rare so exquisite as the pearl.

The pearl is the product of suffering on the part of a little sea animal, the oyster. The pearl is a combination of both the mineral and animal world. A tiny grain of sand or foreign substance enters the oyster and is embedded in its muscle. The oyster then proceeds to cover this foreign matter with a product from its own body, called nacre or mother-of-pearl.

3. THE INTERPRETATION

In the Parable of the Treasure Hid in a Field we saw Israel as a nation; in this Parable of the Pearl we shall see a remnant or the overcomers out of that nation. Paul distinguishes between these two in Romans Chs. 9-11. The nation, because of their rejection, were blinded and cut off from the olive tree. But they will ultimately be restored (Rom. 11:26). Then there is the remnant who are received because of “the election of grace” (Rom. 11:5).

THE ELECT NATION

1. Distinct from nations
2. Likened to a treasure
3. Earthly calling & City
4. Seed like sand for multitude
5. The Wife

THE ELECT REMNANT

1. Distinct from The Nation
2. Likened to a pearl
3. Heavenly calling and city
4. Seed like stars for multitude
5. The Bride

Israel had been unfaithful to God in O.T. days, so He had to divorce her. But He will take her back again (See Isa. 62:4-5; Hos. 2:19-20).

The Merchant – To be consistent with the other parables of The Kingdom of The Heavens, the merchant is the same as “The Sower”, the man who sowed good seed; “the Son of Man” who sowed good seed in The Parable of the Tares; and the “man in The Parable of the Treasure.

He sought this “one pearl of great price”. The pearl as we have seen is found in the sea, which is a type of the Gentile nations (Rev. 17:15). It is always the Lord Who seeks. God sought out Adam; He sought out Abraham; He seeks every sinner by His Spirit.

He bought this “one pearl” with His precious blood (1 Pet. 1:18-19). He desired it, and He delighted in it (Ps. 45:11; Prov. 8:31).

The “pearl of great price”. This represents the faithful remnant in Israel, from the time of Abraham down to the end of the age. These will form one company at the end time; also called The Bride of the Lamb (Rev. 21:9). These are “holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling” “who died in faith, not having received the promises” (Heb. 3:1; 11:13).

Isa. 1:9; 7:3 (Shear-jashub, the name translated for us in 10:21 as “the remnant shall return); 11:11,16; Ezek. 9:4-6; 14:22; Joel 2:32, (See remnant at Pentecost); Mic. 2:12; Rom. 9:27; 11:5).

There are overcomers spoken in the Book of Revelations, the 144,000 sealed from the tribes of Israel; and the various companies of Rev. 12:17; 14:1-5; 15:1-3; 20:4.

Pearls are compared with holiness in Matt. 7:6 (“Holy brethren” in Heb. 3:1). Like the forming of the pearl they are subject to tribulation (Dan. 11:35). The Epistles of Peter and James speak of tribulation.

This parable speaks of that inner group, the faithful remnant, the children of Abraham after the Spirit. Believing Gentiles will also be added to this company. The Church, the Body of Christ is not the subject of parable and prophecy.

G. THE PARABLE OF THE DRAGNET (Matt. 13:47-52)

1. THE INTRODUCTION

In the preceding parable – that of the pearl – we saw the remnant of Israel likened to that which is the most precious treasure of the sea. In this parable we have two kinds of fish that come out of the sea.

This parable is in many ways like the Second Parable, the Tares and the Wheat. Both were spoken to the disciples; both dealt with the good and the bad; both put emphases upon the end time; both spoke of the angel’s as God’s messengers who did the reaping and sorting; both placed special emphasis upon the fate of the wicked – “cast into a furnace of fire”.

The speaker here is still the Lord, speaking to His disciples (13:36). The subject is still “the Kingdom of the Heavens” (13:47). So this parable must be seen and interpreted in the light of those already given and interpreted by the Lord.

2. THE INSTRUCTION (47-48)

a. The Net – The N.T. speaks of three kinds of nets: (1) Diktuon – a casting net (Matt. 4:20; Luke 5:4; Jn. 21:6); (2) Amphiblestron – a large circular fishing net (Matt. 4:18; Mk. 1:16); (3) Sagene – The Drag Net (Matt. 13:47 – its only occurrence).

b. The Sea – This is used in Scripture as a type of the nations, especially in their uproarious state – “The waters ... are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues” (Rev. 17:15).

c. The Fish – “...gathered of every kind.” There were both good and bad fish in every catch, from the Sea of Galilee and The Mediterranean. There was a good fish with scales (Lev. 11:10) that was called The Bream. Then there were bad fish called, “Stinking Sheat Fish” also “Sting-rays” and “The Electrical Torpedo Fish”. There were also large shoals of sardines.

d. The Shore or Land – As the “sea” represents the nations of the Gentiles, so the land represents the “Land of Israel”.

e. The Sorting – Kept the good fish, but cast away the bad. Oftentimes the bad fish were just left to decay and rot on the shore, poisoning the air with putrid heaps.

3. THE INTERPRETATION (49-50)

The time is at “the end of the age”. The agents are “the angels”. The judgment of the wicked will be “the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth” (Vr. 42; Matt. 3:12; Rev. 9:2).

But who are the “wicked” and the “evil”? In the Parable of the Tares they represent the hypocrites, the counterfeits sown by the Devil among the wheat. If the sea represents the Gentile nations and the land represents the Land of Israel, then the net draws both good and bad Israelites from among the nations to Palestine.

The Israelites have been scattered among the nations (Isa. 43:1-7; 54:7; 56:8; Jer. 29:14; 31:10; 32:37; Ezek. 20:34; 22:19-21; 39:27-28; 28:25; Hab. 1:15).

The fish is considered a representation of Israel. Pisces, “The Fishes” is the 12th sign of the Zodiac, which is an imaginary belt in the heavens, usually 18 degrees wide and encompasses the path of the planets. It is divided into twelve constellations or signs. The

number twelve is certainly written into the history of Israel. There were the twelve tribes, the twelve apostles, the twenty-four elders, and the 144,000 of all the tribes.

Palestine will contain at the end time both good and bad among its citizens, who have come from all nations. The Lord will literally fish them out as the prophets predicted (See Jer. 16:16; Amos 4:2; Hab. 1:14-15). So at the end, God will separate the good from the bad – the good to be saved, and the bad to be destroyed.

4. THE INTERROGATION (51-52)

“Jesus saith unto them, have ye understood all these things?” The disciples reply to the Lord’s query is “Yea Lord”. If this answer is true and we believe it is, then none of these parables refer to the age we live in and God’s dispensational dealings with the Church. This dispensation was at that time a secret hid in God (Eph. 3:8). The Lord is here depicting the course of The Kingdom of the Heavens during the time of His absence, the path it will follow to its conclusion.

Those who are instructed or disciplined in the kingdom message have a twofold responsibility: to bring “forth out of his treasury things new and old”. Some things they already knew from their O.T. Scriptures and the former teaching of Jesus Christ. Our Lord now tells what character the Kingdom message will take in His absence.

Daniel speaks of “understanding” at the end time of the antichristian apostasy (See Dan. 11:33,35; 12:3,10). Those who have this spiritual understanding are called “householder” (oikodespotes). This word occurs some 12 times in the N.T. (See Matt. 10:25; 13:27; 13:52; 20:1; 20:11; 21:33; 24:43; Mark 14:14; Luke 12:39; 13:25; 14:21; 22:11). It is translated by such words as “master of the house”, “householder”, “Goodman of the house” and “Goodman”. Here again we see the number twelve employed, and all of the words are found in the Gospels. This is truly therefore a Kingdom message.

LESSON #11 - THE COVENANT PRINCIPLE

INTRODUCTION

The various covenants of Scripture are important as they disclose the whole purpose of God to the earth. It is not only necessary to know them, but also to make a distinction among them. One cannot understand his duty without knowledge as to what law or covenant he is under and responsible to.

With the exception of the first covenant God has made no covenant with the Church, the Body of Christ. Abel offered an animal sacrifice on a rough built altar of stone. Am I to build an altar, slaughter a lamb, and offer a sacrifice? Noah was told to build an ark to save him from an impending flood. Is it my duty to do the same? Abraham was told to take his son Isaac and offer him as a sacrifice on Mt. Moriah. Am I to do the same?

A. Definition: A covenant is a solemn compact, agreement, or contract between men or between God and men.

In Scripture usage the word means a compact or fetter, that which binds together. We are here dealing with the word “covenant” as it has to do with God and men.

The covenants fall into two classes: (1) Conditional with its formula: “If ye will” (Exod. 19:5). Hence the Mosaic Covenant was a conditional one; (2) Unconditional with its formula: “I will” (Gen. 9:11). Hence the Noahic Covenant was unconditional.

In the first, the conditional, if God says: “If ye will” and man says: “I will” and then doesn’t keep the part of the contract there is failure. In the second, the unconditional, when God says: “I will” He fulfills the covenant regardless what man says or does. In this latter, God simply declares what He will do without any reference to what man may do.

All these covenants are related to the earth; there is a time element and four of them have signs.

B. DIVISIONS

I. THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION (Eph. 3:11; 1 Pet. 1:18-25; 2 Cor. 5:21)

Confusion can only follow a neglect to distinguish among things that differ. The Bible remains a sealed Book because of the failure to understand and practice a simple rule of “rightly dividing the Scriptures”.

This first covenant was made between the Father and the Son in eternity. Its purpose was to harmonize and satisfy Divine holiness, justice, and love with the act of redemption, reconciliation and restoration. The human race had come under the curse of sin and death and were justly deserving of its penalty.

1. Provisions of the Covenant – Through the Love of God:

a. To accept His only begotten Son as the substitute for sinners (Matt. 3:17; 17:5; 2 Cor. 5:21).

b. To lay upon that Son the iniquity of us all (2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13).

c. To deal with Him as though He were the real culprit (Matt. 27:46; Ps. 22; Isa. 53).

d. To require that He should make His soul an offering for sin (Isa. 53:10).

Nothing less than these demands and conditions would fully satisfy the demands of God’s holiness and vindicate the truth of God, Who declared that “The soul that sinneth it shall die”.

Provisions of the Covenant – Through the Love of Christ:

a. To voluntarily empty Himself of the glory and power of deity which He possessed with an equality with the Father (Phil. 2:5-8).

- b. To submit willingly to the humiliation and demotion of being born of a woman (Gal. 4:4).
- c. To take on Himself man's nature and likeness, so that He would be bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh (Heb. 2:14-16).
- d. To obey perfectly the Law of God and so to qualify as the Substitute of a ruined race and the Savior of a sin-cursed humanity (Matt. 3:15; 5:17).
- e. To die on the cross (Matt. 27:35-36; Luke 23:33).

2. Principles of the Covenant

- a. Christ the Federal Head of a new race (Rom. 5:12-21)
- b. Believers justified by His merits and imputed to them all the benefits of these merits (Rom. 5:1-11).
- c. These blessings are received by grace through faith without works (Eph. 2:8-10).

This is a just covenant. There is not in it a single element of grace which remits the penalty and pardons the guilty. Christ had to make a full restitution. He fully paid the price for us in order that God's holiness and justice might be satisfied. He was raised from the dead because of our justification (Rom. 4:25).

Although God the Father had an infinite love for His only begotten Son, it was impossible for Him to deal with Christ graciously. His holiness and justice had to be satisfied. So there is not a single element of grace to be found in the conditions imposed upon Christ in this Covenant of Redemption and accepted by Christ.

This covenant lies as a basis for all the other covenants that God was to make with humanity. In the others God does display some measure of grace as it is found in the fullness of grace through Jesus Christ.

II. THE EDENIC COVENANT

This covenant has to do with the relationship of God and man in Eden. It has to do with the regulation of life in the First Dispensation.

See Hosea 6:7 and note margin where "Adam" is a better translation than "men".

1. Its Constitution (Gen. 1:28-30; 2:15-17)

God created Adam and Eve and put them in a garden eastward in Eden. In this garden God made the covenant of the foregoing verses with man. His life in the garden was to be regulated according to this covenant.

2. Its Contents

There are six specific things which make up the covenant:

a. Reproduction (Vr. 1:28) – Man was to replenish the earth with a race of people. Apparently there was a pre-Adamic race. But they may not have been a race of men like Adam and Eve. Scripture says that Adam was the first man (1 Cor. 15:45). As to the kind of beings on earth before Adam the Bible is silent. That there was a pre-Adamic race is certain or else the words, "replenish the earth" could have no meaning. One cannot "replenish" that which has never existed. While the Bible is silent as to the nature of a pre-Adamic race, yet this suggestion can be made. In the Gospels we have the record of demons, who when cast out of the possessed man at Gadara requested to enter swine (Matt. 8:28-34; Mk. 5:1-21; Luke 8:26-40). It seems that these demons wanted a body. These demons may be the remnants of pre-Adamic beings who lost their bodies in the great disaster that befell the earth according to Gen. 1:2.

b. Subjugation (1:28) – Man was commanded to "subdue" the earth to meet his needs. This may mean to control the forces of light, heat, and electricity, and also gravitation to enable man to supply his needs. It seems to imply that man was to be in complete control of all forces and powers.

c. Domination (1:28) – Adam was to be in complete control over the creature world. This included the fish, fowl, and all land animals (Ps. 8:6-8).

d. Provision (1:29-30) – Not only man, but the whole animal creation was subjected to a vegetarian diet. Before the Flood man ate no flesh (Gen. 9:3). Man as well as animals were herbivorous. Today man is omnivorous, and many animals are carnivorous or flesh eating. In the Millennium the animals will again be herbivorous. (Isa. 11:6-8).

e. Cultivation (2:15) – The first occupation of man was to be a gardener. It seems creation needed the hand of man lest it decay and become useless. This was not a laborious task, but a pleasure, because as yet the ground did not produce thorns and thistles. God put the potential in His creation and expected man to cultivate and produce all the possibilities God had created.

f. Preservation (2:15) – The word “keep” means “to keep safe, preserve, guard”. It seems that man was to protect and preserve the Garden from some enemy. God no doubt gives to Adam a warning that an enemy is lurking nearby. And so there was, for Satan soon comes to the Garden to tempt the first pair and bring ruin to them and the creation.

3. Its Conditions

This is a conditional covenant. It was based upon the formula, “If ye will”. A responsibility rested upon man. The conditions were twofold:

a. A Restriction (2:17) – Man was to abstain from eating of one tree of the Garden. He was created as a free moral being and as such was put on probation. But man disobeyed the will and word of God and fell into sin.

b. Retribution (2:17) – Sin is followed by death. Man dies a moral death in sin immediately and ultimately he dies physically. Moral death leads to physical death. Had not God come upon the scene with a way of salvation man would have lived a hopeless life and died a hopeless death.

4. Its Conclusion (Gen. 3:22-24) – When sin entered this Covenant ended. The conclusion is seen in The Expulsion from the Garden. This may well have been one of the briefest covenants in point of time.

III. THE ADAMIC COVENANT

This covenant records a long struggle between the serpent and the seed of the woman, with its final victory in behalf of humanity. In the meantime the human race will be purified by toil, and saved by sorrow from those iniquities which would drown them in their abominations. They had failed to keep the first covenant, but this one they will keep, for they cannot do otherwise. This covenant contains the first promise of a coming Savior. It is set in the context of toils and duties wrung from the inhabitants of the earth, but also the blessed promise of God that some day a Deliverer would come Who would destroy the works of the Devil (1 Jn. 3:8).

1. Its Constitution (Gen. 3:14-19)

This covenant was made with Adam the transgressor and before his expulsion from the garden. It has to do with ordering of life upon the earth after the Fall. It continues down to this day.

This is an unconditional covenant, “I will” (3:15-16). It has a curse and a promise.

2. Its Contents

These are given in fourfold judgments and one promise:

a. Condemnation of the Serpent (animal) (14) – The serpent as an animal had lent itself to Satan to become a channel of communication, an instrument through whom Satan spoke. It was cursed to crawl in the dust and make it its meat.

b. Condemnation of the Serpent (Satan) (15) – The real serpent was Satan (Rev. 20:2). The Seed of the Woman (Christ) shall ultimately subdue the serpent as Satan and cause his final destruction in the Lake of Fire. The completion of this act has not as yet taken place. On the

cross Christ conquered sin and death and Satan. The sentence of final judgment has been pronounced. It now awaits its final execution.

c. Condemnation on the Woman (16)

The condemnation that came upon Eve and womanhood changed their order in three particulars:

(1) Multiplied Conception – “I will greatly multiply thy conception.” This probably meant that several children should be born at one time. The earth in the early days was replenished rapidly. There were no children born before the Fall. In order to fulfill this command there must be intermarriage. So Cain got his wife from his father. It says of Adam that “he begat sons and daughters” (Gen. 5:4).

(2) Maternal Affliction – “I will greatly multiply thy sorrow; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children.” This sorrow may go further than the travail in child-birth. It may be the sorrow of a mother for her child all through life.

(3) Marital Subordination – “And thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee.” Woman, being the first in the Fall is to endure sorrow in connection with motherhood and sub-ordination in wife-hood. It does not necessarily imply inequality or inferiority but simply headship.

d. Condemnation on the man (3:17-19)

This is seen in the curse upon the ground. Creation shall bring forth thorns and thistles and make cultivation difficult. Man shall eat his bread in the sweat of his brow. Hard labor will ensue in the cultivation of the ground.

e. Coming of Christ (15)

Here we have the promise, the proto-evangelium, the coming of the seed of the Woman, the Redeemer. He will endure suffering and death because the serpent shall bruise His heel. But there is the ultimate triumph of the Seed of the Woman. This verse sets forth the battle of the ages between the good and evil seeds.

3. Its Conclusion

This covenant runs its course to the great conflagration – the renovation of the heavens and the earth by fire (2 Pet. 3:12-13). During the millennial reign of Christ, the curse will be removed to a great extent, yet not completely. This covenant is still in effect today.

IV. THE NOAHIC COVENANT (Gen. 6:18; 8:20-9:17)

Noah had been selected by God to build an ark and escape the judgment of The Flood because he was “perfect in his generations” (Gen. 6:9). This meant that he was uncontaminated in his pedigree by the evil corruption in the world. His wife, his sons and their wives also must have been “perfect” in their generations. “The sons of God” co-habited with “the daughters of men” until the whole human race, outside of Noah and his family, were corrupted and doomed.

1. Constitution of the Covenant

a. Its Prediction (6:18) – Here we are told that it is with Noah that God is to establish His covenant. This took place before the coming of the Flood and its curse.

b. Its Presentation (8:20-9:17) – This is after the Flood of waters that saved Noah and destroyed the wicked generation. This was an unconditional covenant. It was based upon God’s “I will”. This covenant had a sign – THE RAINBOW.

Noah and his family step out from the ark upon the renovated earth. Adam could say: “God can create”. Noah could say: “God can destroy”. There were only eight survivors of the perished race. It is to them God now gives His covenant, a new charter of blessing and a new grant of dominion in the earth. The Noahic Covenant is still our present lease of the earth.

2. Contents of the Covenant

a. No Condemnation for man’s sake (8:21) - We note here that the very same thing which brought the curse is the reason why God will not again curse it. Sin brought the curse.

God recognized that man is a sinner and that his imagination of the heart is evil from his birth. He is a fallen son of a fallen race.

b. No Destruction of all flesh (9:9-11)

This would soothe the fears of the rescued. Otherwise, every time they saw a cloud in the sky they would fear that another Flood would destroy them. God promised that there would not again be a universal Flood. God spoke this some four thousand years ago and His word has been true to this day. God's covenant was their protection from another Flood and back of the laws of God there is nature's God Himself.

c. A Preservation of the Seasons (8:22) – According to the terms of this covenant, God legislates for the winds and the waves, the sunbeams and the storm clouds; so as to secure to man the indispensable order of the seasons. For some four thousand years this has now been fulfilled. It isn't science that brings farming and the production of crops; it is God's covenant with Noah and his posterity.

d. A Reproduction of Mankind (9:1,7) – This was practically the same command given to Adam in the Edenic Covenant. The earth now again has to be populated.

e. A Dominion over the Animal Creation – (9:2) – Noah is here given dominion over the animal creation with the added fact of "fear". This has followed since the inauguration of this covenant. This was not given in Adam's dominion over the animals.

f. An Addition in Diet (9:3-4) – In the Edenic Covenant God gave man a vegetarian diet. Now he is given flesh or meat together with vegetables. However, the flesh must not be eaten with the blood. The blood must be drained. This is the only restriction. God is here setting forth the sanctity of the blood. This is a general principle all through Scripture. It is the blood which provides atonement for the soul.

g. The Institution of Capital Punishment (9:5-6) – This law has to do with the taking of the life of a murderer. This law has never been abrogated or revoked. It is just as much in force today as the seasons of the year. This is an important principle of human government.

Cain slew his brother. Lamech killed a man. But these were not judged and meted out any punishment directly. But here after the Flood the punishment of the murderer is ordained. This is binding until the end of the age. God gave this law because man was created in the image of God. Adam was made in the likeness of God. Therefore to slay a man intentionally as a murderer is rebellion against God. Wicked, murderous man would do the same to God if he could. Murder is rebellion against God.

In Numbers 35:11-13 we read about the Cities of Refuge. Here a man slayer could flee and be safe if he killed ignorantly or unintentionally. The deliberate, pre-meditated murderer found no refuge here.

The animals were also included here. Before the flood they ate vegetation like man. Now they prey on one another. This will end in the millennium.

3. Conclusion of the Covenant

This is an unconditional covenant and will continue until the earth is renovated by fire.

THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT: The Rainbow (Gen. 9:12-16)

This is the first covenant with a sign. When we see this bow in the skies it reminds of God's covenant with Noah. This was a covenant of grace and assurance. We must remember the sure word of God.

"I will look upon it." Not only will man see it but God will look upon it. It is formed by rays of light shining through the rain. It is the joint product of storm and sunshine; so is this covenant. It is due to the clouds of human sin and the sunshine of God's grace. The rainbow brings earth and heaven together. When God looks at the rainbow He thinks of me; and when I see it, I should think of Him.

"When I bring a cloud over the earth." The clouds are of His bringing and also is the rainbow.

V. THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

This covenant is one of the most remarkable and far-reaching that we find in our study of the covenants. It includes some of the most blessed promises and purposes for Israel and the earth set forth in the Bible.

The building of the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-9) brings a turning point in human history. Up to this time there were no nations. The human race was united under one language and in one locality. There was neither Jew nor Gentile. At the Tower of Babel the race consummates in idolatry. God then comes down, confounds their language, which results in dispersion over the earth. It is after this that Abraham is called by God to leave his own land and go to Canaan where God would make of him a new nation. He is the recipient of this covenant.

1. Constitution of the Covenant (Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-14)

This is the first time we find such words as “believe”, “counted” and “righteousness” appearing in Scripture. God’s remedy is to call out one man from the seed of Shem, namely Abram, who lived in Ur of the Chaldees. The world at this time was corrupt in idolatry. Terah, Abram’s father was an idolater and so was Abram (Isa. 51:1-2; Josh. 24:2-3). It was while Abram lived in Ur that God appeared to him and told him to leave his land, his home, and his father’s house. He obeyed, but Terah and part of the family went with him to Haran in Mesopotamia. It was from here that he finally went to the land of Canaan.

This covenant is unconditional – It is first made with Abram, then with Isaac, and later with Jacob.

2. Contents of the Covenant

(a) Its Formation (Gen. 12:1-3)

(b) Its Confirmation (Gen. 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-14)

There are seven (7) great things predicted concerning Abram and his seed which go to make up this covenant:

a. “I will make of thee a great nation.”

Abram was chosen from an idolatrous nation that God might make him a father of a great nation. But not only one nation, many nations were to come from him. Abraham’s seed was to be threefold:

The Dust Seed (Gen. 13:16) – This is supposed to include all the seed of Abraham from Ishmael, Isaac, and the six sons of Keturah. Or the dust seed might only be the seeds of Ishmael, Esau, and the six sons of Keturah.

The Sand Seed (Gen. 22:17) – This no doubt includes all the seed of Abraham through Isaac; all of Israel through the twelve sons of Jacob.

The Star Seed (Gen. 15:5; 22:17) – This includes all the spiritual seed of Abraham, all the faithful remnant and overcomers down through the ages.

This promise was made with an old man, 99 years old, and his aged wife Sarah. They were childless when the covenant was given and beyond the time of natural reproduction.

His name was changed from Abram which means “Exalted Father” to Abraham which means “Father of a Multitude”. Abraham is the father, not the founder of the nations which came from his seed. As a rule nations do not come from individuals.

God spoke the prophecy some 4000 years ago and the Jew is still with us. 1 Kings 4:2-34 shows the greatness of this nation when they were at their height, under Solomon, in favor with God and man. The time will come again when this nation will be just as great, it not greater. This miracle nation was formed out of the 12 sons of Jacob, the grandson of Abraham. So they descended from Abraham some 4000 years ago. They are distinct in character, in religion, in customs. The Jews represent the oldest of nations. They exist in full vigor after their

contemporaries the Hittites, Amorites, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Babylonians, Medians and Romans have long since passed away.

Jonah is a type of the Jewish nation. When Jonah was in the sea, the sea wouldn't drown him; and when in the whale, the whale wouldn't digest him. The great fish in process of time cast Jonah up on the land. So will the Gentile nations ultimately cast out the Jew upon his own land. The nations are sick because Jonah is in the sea. The Jew cannot be explained apart from God. He has overshadowed them even in their dispersion.

ISHMAEL (Gen. 17:20; 16:10-12) – These passages speak of the descendants of Ishmael who also were to be a great nation. They were to be of a peculiar character. Ishmael was to be the father of twelve princes. In contrast with the Seed of Jacob who were to bless all nations; these people were to be a foe to all nations. This nation was of that larger “dust seed” of Abraham. Before Ishmael was born God predicted that the posterity of this man would not be numbered for multitude, that he would be a wild man, his hand against every man and every man's hand against him. The Hebrew for “wild” means a “wild ass of a man”. The Arabians, from Ishmael, are almost as much a living miracle as the Jews themselves. They boast of being the children of Abraham. Mohammed, their prophet, traced his descent from the marriage of Ishmael with Modad, a daughter of the king of Hejaz. The predictions concerning Ishmael have been fulfilled in a remarkable way. He begat twelve princes (Gen. 25:12-16; 1 Chron. 1:29-31). The history of the Arabians is remarkable. They have retained freedom from the first day until now. Many nations have tried to subdue them, but have failed. The word to Hagar their mother has been fulfilled; they have been lawless, wild, plundering – “a wild ass of a nation”. Egypt tried in vain to conquer them. She tried by sending troops against them, but they became such a menace that Egypt instead built a wall to keep them out. Cyrus the Persian never subdued them. Herodotus said: “The Arabs were never subdued by the Persians to the condition of subjects, but were considered by them as friends.” All other countries paid tribute to Persia; the Arabians went free. Alexander the Great overturned the Persian Empire and conquered Asia, but the Arabs alone refused to make submission or send ambassadors to acknowledge the victor. They took no notice of him. This so angered Alexander that he was meditating a terrible expedition against them, the preparations for which, showed what he thought of that nation. Death put a stop to his plans and saved the Arabians from onslaught. The Romans – that great military nation, failed to subdue them to subjection. Pompeii failed to bring them to it. One of the generals of Augustus penetrated into the country, firmly resolved to subdue it, but a strange sickness assailed his army and after two years he was glad to escape with only a remnant of the army he took into the land. Trajan, a Roman Emperor (98-117 A.D.) tried it and the historian Dion gives a strange account of the reason why he raised his siege of one of their cities. “His soldiers were repelled by lightnings, thunderings and hail and other prodigies. At the same time great swarms of flies infested his camp and he was at last forced to retire with disgrace into his own domains.”

Ishmael became a great nation after the rise of Mohammed of Arabia in 622 A.D. They emerged from their desert home and under the name of Saracens, conquered with amazing rapidity a vast extent of Asiatic and European territory. After the flood of invasion was past, they again subsided to the limits of Arabia and continued their independence. They trade with Egypt as Ishmael did. Their hands are still against other men, as other men are still against them. The only way to account for the Arabian is God's prediction concerning Ishmael and his seed (Gen. 17:20; 21:13-21).

Abraham also had six sons with Keturah whom he took to wife after Sarah's death. These sons developed into great nations but are not so marked as Isaac and Ishmael.

b. “I will bless thee”

Temporal blessings (Gen. 13:2; 14-18) – “Abraham was heavy with riches.” This is the meaning of the verse. God gave to him the Land of Canaan and an abundance of herds, flocks, sheep, camels, etc. Someone has calculated that if Abram were living today he would be so wealthy that the late John D. Rockefeller would be no more than a door keeper in his tent. The

Dead Sea alone has been estimated to have a value of \$1,200,000,000.00. It could well be the richest spot on the earth. When Abraham went down to fight against the kings that took Sodom and Lot, he won a victory over them with his trained household servants. God richly blessed him in victory. When Abraham's servant came to Laban's house seeking a bride for Isaac, he told how rich his master was in flocks, herds, silver, gold, men-servants, maid-servants, camels, and asses (Gen. 24:22,35).

Spiritual blessings (Gen. 15:6) – One of the greatest things ever written of Abraham is this verse. Abraham is also called God's "Friend" (2 Chron. 20:7; Isa. 41:8; Jas. 2:23). Abraham believed God, walked with God by faith and will receive a great reward.

c. "I will make thy name great"

This is a remarkable thing concerning Abraham. Abraham's name, next to Christ is the outstanding name of Scripture. It occurs more than 300 times. But outside of Scripture, Abraham is more popular than Christ. Jew, Christian, and Mohammedan revere his name.

What did Abraham actually do? He wandered about Canaan like a pilgrim, pitched his tent, and built an altar. He was not a law-giver like Moses; not a poet like David; not a statesman like Daniel; not a prophet like Isaiah. We have no record of any writings from his pen. But he had a great name.

d. "Thou shalt be a blessing"

"Salvation is of the Jews" said Jesus (John 4:22). In a coming day God will bless the whole world through the Jews. The day of Israel's national repentance will be the day of her world-wide evangelization. God will then bless her and make her a blessing.

e. "I will bless them that bless thee"

"And curse him that curseth thee"

These blessings and cursings have been wonderfully fulfilled in the past history of the Jewish nation. The nations that have been kind to the Jew have been well treated by God. The two nations of Great Britain and United States have been blessed both financially and spiritually because of their treatment of the Jews. Other nations such as Egypt, Turkey, and Spain have not because of their attitude toward the Jews. "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye" (Zech. 2:8).

EGYPT – This country was Israel's oppressor for some 200 years. Then the great plagues fell on Egypt: waters turned to blood; borders smitten with frogs; dust of the land becoming lice; swarms of flies; the malignant murrain; the painful boils; the destructive hail; the ravenous locusts; the terrible darkness; and the death of the first-born. See Joel 3:19; Ezek. 29:14-16. These predictions against Egypt were accomplished under Nebuchadnezzar and Cambyses, the Babylonians and the Persians. Later the Saracens conquered the country and with their hatred of idolatry, and their war-cry: "There is no God, but Allah, and Mohammed is His prophet" destroyed all temples and images, mutilating what they could not destroy.

AMALEK – This was Israel's first foe (Deut. 25:17-19). They have been utterly blotted out, and only their name is found in the Book as a witness to the prediction of God (See 1 Chron. 4:43).

MOAB and AMMON (Zeph. 2:9-10) – These people were also destroyed because of their treatment of God's people (Ezek. 25:3-11). See also Ps. 137:7-8; Obad. 3-4; 10-15; Jer. 49:7-22; Ezek. 25:12-14; Amos 1:11-12; Mal. 1:4 concerning EDOM closely allied with Moab and Ammon.

TYRE AND SIDON (Amos 1:9-10; Joel 3:4-8; Ezek. 26:3-5) These city nations were also destroyed because of their attitude toward Israel.

PHILISTIA – (Ezek. 25:15-17; 2 Chron. 26:6; 2 Kgs. 18:8)

DAMASCUS – (Amos 1:3-5)

ALL NATIONS (Joel 3:2-3) – He will gather them in the Valley of Armageddon and destroy in the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

Pharaoh determined to drive Israel into the Red Sea, but was himself drowned in it. Haman erected a gallows for the Jew Mordecai and was himself hanged on it. The Three Hebrew Children were thrown into the fiery furnace and then the men that threw them in were cast in and consumed. Daniel was put into the den of lions, and then those that put him there were cast in and eaten. Frederick the Great said: "To oppress the Jews never brought prosperity to any nation." Note Matt. 25:31-46 where Christ will be the Judge of the nations.

f. "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

Later on the Lord adds: "In thee and thy seed shall all families of the earth be blessed." We can divide the world into two parts, relative to humanity. All those who have directly or indirectly come in contact with Abraham and his seed; and in the other class those who have not. All monotheism is traceable to Abraham and his seed. About half of the population of the world have come in contact with Abraham.

ABRAHAMIC NATIONS (Monotheists) – English, Scottish, Irish, Norwegian, Swedes, Danes, Dutch, Belgians, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italians, Greeks, Germans, Poles, Russians, Finns, Austrians, Hungarians, Armenians, Turks, Jews, Arabians, Persians, Egyptians, Moors, Converts from heathenism, various races in the Americas, Africa, and Australia.

NON-ABRAHAMIC NATIONS – (Polytheists) – Chinese, Japanese, Mongols, Tartars, Telegus, Bengalis, Singhalese, Burmese, Siamese, Malays, Dyaks of Borneo, Hottentots, Bushman, Bantus, American Indian, Patagonians, Cannibals.

After 4000 years since Abraham lived his influence is felt in the world to the extent that nearly half of the human race know of him and revere him. In Gal. 3:8, Paul repeats the promise to Abraham: "In thee shall all nations be blessed." In 3:16 he makes it plain to whom it was "Now unto Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to they seed, which is Christ." So all the spiritual blessings for the families of the earth who revere Abraham have come through Christ. Some day when Christ will have destroyed all godless nations, the whole earth will come under the blessings of Christ, Abraham's seed.

Connected with this promise and blessing is the promise of the land (Gen. 13:14-18). It was after Lot had made his selfish choice of the well-watered plain that God gave this land to Abraham and his seed. This promise was later renewed to Isaac, then to Jacob, and in due time they came in and possessed the land. Israel still owns all the land given to Abraham, but as yet they do not possess it.

Thomas Chalmers gives Israel title to the land in the following interesting way:

(1) Homestead Law – In a homestead a person or persons live on a piece of land for a certain number of years and then it belongs to them. The Canaanites only had squatter rights to the land; it belongs to Israel. They homesteaded it and it is their possession.

(2) Gift or Grant – God gave it to Israel as a gift and not to any other people. He is the Lord of the earth and has a right to give as He sees fit.

(3) Covenant – Israel is forever a blood-marked people. Through the Abrahamic Covenant they own their land.

(4) Conquest – Josh. 11:15-20; Deut. 20:10-18.

(5) Right of Tenure – This is the Law of Omar. If you hold a piece of land long enough it belongs to you. Israel held it for 845 years.

(6) Purchase – An explanation is necessary, for a land that is a gift cannot be purchased. Yet that is what happened. Canaan had become polluted because of their sin (Jer. 2:7). Christ had to redeem the people and the land. The title is sealed with his precious blood. Christ holds the title. Joseph Rabinowitz says: "The keys of Palestine are in the hands of our brother Jesus."

This Covenant is unconditional.

3. Conclusion of the Covenant

This has to do with the Jewish race and will continue until Israel is completely established in their land. Then all the promises will culminate relative to Abraham and to his seed.

THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT – Circumcision (Gen. 17:9-14).

Dr. W. Griffith Thomas presents this sign in a fourfold way:

(1) Designation – It designated them as marked by the rite of circumcision. The Hebrew race is a marked race in this manner.

(2) Separation – They are a separated people unto God from all the people of the earth. They are to be a distinct nation among the nations.

(3) Purification – There is a spiritual significance to the rite of circumcision (Deut. 30:6 with Jer. 9:25). This because they did not live the pure lives which God intended for them to live. Paul says that we are the circumcision who worship God, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. 3:3).

(4) Possession – Circumcision marks them off as God’s peculiar possession or treasure.

VI. THE MOSAIC COVENANT

This Covenant is also called “The Old Covenant” or “The Legal Covenant”. This is a covenant, not made with an individual, but with a nation. It contains the substance of the covenants of flesh, land, and circumcision. Its purpose was to serve as a “school-master” until Christ should come (a disciplinarian) (Ga. 3:24).

1. CONSTITUTION OF THE COVENANT (Ex. Chs. 20-31; Gal. 3:17-25).

Five hundred years have now passed since the time of Abraham; and now we have another covenant associated with the name of Moses. Abraham may be called “The Father of the Nation” but Moses may be called “The Founder of the Nation”.

Israel had come to Egypt in the days of Joseph and had settled in the Land of Goshen. Here they enjoyed the best of the land. But now the tide has turned. There is a Pharaoh on the throne who does not know Joseph. A change in dynasty had evidently occurred and now the Children of Israel are made slaves and put into hard labor.

Moses life is in three stages of 40 years each (Acts 7:23,30). Forty years in Egypt, forty in Midian, and forty in the Wilderness. He was educated in the court of Pharaoh, but refused the riches, the pleasures and the glories of Egypt in order to suffer with his people and ultimately lead them to the Promised Land – the covenanted land. It is in this third and last stage of his life that we find Moses at Mt. Sinai receiving the covenant from God. The Theophany or manifestation of God at Sinai was most awe-inspiring and solemn. God came to the mount; His glory was visible and His words audible. The Covenant of Promise made with Abraham is now supplemented, not supplanted, by the Covenant of Law to which the nation as such was a party (Gal. 3:16-19).

2. CONTENTS OF THE COVENANT

This is a conditional covenant (Exod. 19:5; 20:25)

This Mosaic or Law Covenant is in three parts: (1) The Moral Law (Ex. Chs. 19-20); (2) The Civil Law (Ex. Ch. 21-24); (3) The Ceremonial Law (Ex. Chs. 25-31). Each of these parts is essential to the other and together forming this covenant. The Commandments or Moral Law of right and wrong. The judgments or Civil Law would govern the social life of Israel. The

Ordinances or Ceremonial Law would govern the religious life. These three elements form the Law as that word is used in the N.T. (Matt. 5:17-18).

The commandments and the ordinances formed one religious system. The commandments were a ministry of condemnation and death (2 Cor. 3:7-9). The ordinances gave, in the person of the High Priest, a representative of the people with Jehovah, and in the sacrifices a “cover” (kaphar) for their sins in anticipation of the Cross (Heb. 5:1-3; 9:6-9; Rom. 3:25-26).

There was a threefold giving of the Law:

(1) Orally (Ex. 20:1-17) – This was the pure Law, with no provision of priesthood and sacrifices for failure. This was accompanied by the judgments (Ex. 21:1-23:13). Then the directions for keeping the annual feasts (23:14-19). Then instruction for the conquest of Canaan (23:20-33). These instructions Moses communicated to the people (Ex. 24:3-8).

(2) Written (Ex. 24:9-31:18) – Moses was then called up to receive the Tables of Stone. He was to receive a transcript of the Law given orally. While Moses was gone, the people under Aaron made a golden calf, worshipping it while dancing around it in nakedness. They became idolaters and broke the first commandment. Moses returns, and upon witnessing this gruesome sight, breaks the Tables of the Law on the mountain. Then together with the Levites he orders 3000 of the nude idolaters slain.

(3) Re-written (Ex. Ch. 34) – Moses again ascends the mountain and receives the Law written on new tablets of stone. Now the sacrificial system is instituted. A tabernacle is built for God because He could not dwell openly with a sinful people – prone to idolatry. They could now approach God only by means of the altar of sacrifice, and a holy priesthood. The blood of the sacrifices pointed the way to The Lamb of God Who would come in the fullness of time to take away their sins (Gal. 4:4).

3. CONDITIONS OF THE COVENANT

This Covenant being conditional has blessings for obedience and punishment for disobedience. The responsibility resting upon those to whom this covenant was made (Ex. 19:5-6; Lev. 26:3; Deut. 28:1). The marvel of this covenant rests not only in the blessings promised, but also in the punishment predicted (Ex. 19:6; Lev. 26:3-13; Deut. Ch. 28). The predictions relative to Israel’s punishment are remarkable in that they have been fulfilled to the very letter. They are fully set forth in Lev. Ch. 26 and Deut. Ch. 28.

Note a few examples from these chapters, such as Deut. 28:37. Someone has translated this verse: “Thou shalt be called Sheeny among all the nations whither Jehovah shall lead thee.” The word translated “by-word” is from the Hebrew “Sheninah” or “Shneeah”. It is a hiss and byword. This word has been taken up by the world but it was God who called the apostate Jew this first. See also 1 Kings 9:7; 2 Chron. 7:20; Jer. 24:9.

Deut. 11:10-17 – Palestine unlike Egypt had two seasons of rain: the early rain which softened the earth for plowing and the latter rain which brought maturing and ripening of the grain. But they disobeyed God and the rain ceased. A few years ago water ran in the brook Kedron for the first time in 1600 years. This is predicted of the restoration (Joel 2:21-27).

Deut. 28:33 – This took place time and again during the time of the Judges by the Moabites, Canaanites, Midianites, the Philistines and the Ammonites. Israel was also oppressed by the Egyptians, the Assyrians and the Babylonians.

Deut. 28:49 – This “nation from afar” could mean either the Babylonians or the Romans who finally destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Both Vespasian and Adrian went to Judea from commands in England. Their movements were swift as eagles, which their standards bore – see 28:63.

Though this people have been persecuted and almost exterminated at times, they still remain. It is because God’s covenants with Abraham and with David must stand. God’s promise is sure, see Jer. 31:35-37.

4. CONCLUSION OF THE COVENANT

This covenant as we shall see is merged with The Palestinian Covenant. It continues until the New Covenant is ushered in.

The Sign of this Covenant: THE SABBATH. The seventh day of the week is the sign of this covenant. This sign belongs to the Jew and not the Gentile. God did not give it in Egypt. He gave it to Israel as a sign (Ex. 31:12-14). The Law given to Israel (Ex. 31:12-18) is given this sign between Israel and God (Deut. 5:12-15; Ezek. 20:12-20). It was a sign given to Israel as a remembrance of their marvelous deliverance from Egypt. There is also here a principle of life – one day’s rest in seven. The Sabbath has never been changed but it has been abolished as a religious obligation in this Dispensation (Col. 2:16-17; Gal. 4:9-11). However, there is a practical application here for all time. Man is built on a seven day plan, like a seven-day clock and needs one day for rewinding. The Sabbath is still the seventh day of the week. It has never been replaced by any so called Christian Sunday. It was Constantine (280-337 A.D.) who first passed a decree that Christians worship on the first day of the week. Col. 2:17 tells us that all these things were shadows of coming things. The believer today finds his spiritual rest in Christ. “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28-30).

VII. THE PALESTINIAN COVENANT (Deut. Ch. 29-31:10)

This covenant is practically a continuation of the Mosaic Covenant. It gives the conditions under which Israel entered the Land of Promise. The nation had never yet possessed all the land given to Abraham (Gen. 15:18; Num. 34:1-12).

1. CONSTITUTION OF THE COVENANT (Deut. 30:1-10)

This Covenant was given to Israel after the years of wandering in the Wilderness. Israel was brought to the border of the land at Kadesh-barnea, but because of unbelief they did not enter the land. They then went into a period of wandering for forty years.

Now they were ready to enter in again. The Mosaic Covenant had promised punishment on Israel for disobedience. That punishment included being plucked off the land and scattered among all the nations of the earth. A sovereign God in His foreknowledge knew that they would be disobedient. The Palestinian Covenant is given in view of this foreseen world-wide dispersion of Israel (30:1).

2. CONTENTS OF THE COVENANT

a. Compassion upon the people (Deut. 30:3a) – This will be done by God after the people have repented of their sins and returned unto the Lord.

b. Revelation given by God (Deut. 30:3a) – Jehovah will return to gather His scattered people Israel. This will take place at the Great Unveiling. This Covenant is therefore associated with His Great Advent to earth (Amos 9:9-14).

c. Restoration of the People (Deut. 30:4) – He will gather them from the four ends of the earth.

d. Possession of the Land (Deut. 30:5) – They shall again inherit the land promised to their fathers (Isa. 11:11-12; Jer. 23:3-8; Ezek. 37:21-25).

e. Conversion of the Nation (Deut. 30:6) – A spiritual circumcision of the heart will take place (Rom. 11:26-27; Hos. 2:14-16).

f. Condemnation of Israel’s Enemies (Deut. 30:7) – Those who have afflicted Israel will in turn be punished (Isa. 14:1-2; Joel 3:1-8; Matt. 25:31-46).

g. Provision of Prosperity (Deut. 30:9-10) – Earthly riches will be their blessing when again the Lord brings them into their land (Amos. 9:11-14).

3. CONDITIONS OF THE COVENANT (Deut. 30:1-2)

The one condition of this covenant is national repentance. When Israel is purged and cleansed, they will acknowledge their sin and repent before God.

4. CONCLUSION OF THE COVENANT

This covenant will run until the end of the Millennium or The Great Conflagration. This Covenant is conditional under the Mosaic Covenant, but unconditional under the Abrahamic and New Covenants.

VIII. THE DAVIDIC COVENANT (2 Sam. 7:4-17)

This is another of the great covenants of the Scripture. Five hundred years had now passed since God made His covenant with Moses.

1. CONSTITUTION OF THE COVENANT

Joshua, the great leader that followed Moses, had led the people into the Land of Canaan. After his death defection set in, they inter-married with heathen people, fell into idolatry, and became servants of their enemies. In their misery, God raised up judges who in turn delivered them from their enemies.

Then they desired a king, not willing to await God's time; so God granted their wish and gave them Saul. He was a man after their own eyes, and ruled Israel for 40 years. The second king was David, a man after God's heart. He also ruled Israel for 40 years.

This covenant was given to David through Nathan the prophet at Jerusalem. David had been a great warrior and now he had rest from all his enemies. He wanted to build a house for the Lord. He consulted Nathan the prophet, but was finally told that God would forbid it. Instead God promised to build a house for him, not out of cedar, but a royal political house.

God told David that he would have a son; that God would be his Father. This could only refer ultimately to Jesus Christ. So God gave David a house forever, a throne forever, a kingdom forever, and a son forever. David did not fully understand this promise, but worshipped God for His kindness and grace.

2. CONTENTS OF THE COVENANT (2 Sam. 7:12-16)

a. A Perpetual House (Vrs. 12-13) – This Davidic House is not a material house; it is to be a political and spiritual one. It has reference to his posterity.

b. A Perpetual Kingdom (Vr. 12) – This is the sphere of his royal authority. David's greater son is to have a kingdom and an earthly sphere of rule. This kingdom will never be destroyed when established in his seed. This kingdom is now in abeyance, but will ultimately be set up.

c. A Perpetual Throne (Vr. 13) – This gives him royal authority. He shall rule with a rod of iron in that day when He sits upon His throne (Ps. 2:9).

3. CONDITIONS OF THE COVENANT

This is an Unconditional Covenant. The formula is: "I will be his father", "I will chasten him", "My mercy", "I took and I put" (Vrs. 14-15).

This is very interesting. There is one condition. This Scripture has a twofold meaning and fulfillment: first, David's son Solomon, and then, David's son Christ.

Adam Clarke has suggested this translation for verse 14: "When iniquity is laid upon Him, I will chasten him with the rod of men" (See Isa. Ch. 53). This refers to Christ, David's greater Son; also His redemptive work, for in that kingdom only a redeemed people can enter. That is why we read "forever". It is the House of Israel; it is the hope of the House of David; and the hope of the world.

Disobedience in the Davidic family is visited with chastisement; but never to the abrogation of the Covenant (2 Sam. 7:15; Ps. 89:20-37; Isa. 24:5; 54:3). The chastisement fell, first in the division of the kingdom under Rehoboam and finally in the captivity (2 Kgs. 25:1-7). Christ will be crowned the next King of Israel (Luke 1:31-33; Acts 2:29-32; 15:14-17).

4. CONCLUSION OF THE COVENANT

This Covenant will be perpetual until that day when Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father. This may be many ages in the future.

The Sign of the Covenant: A SON (Isa. 7:14; 9:6-7) – The sign of this Covenant is a Son – The Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 1:30-33; 2:12). “The Lord shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David.” This is the great point. Some interpret this to mean the heart, and spiritualize it, but David never sat in any man’s heart. It will be a throne in Jerusalem. Christ is seated on His Father’s throne today, but then He will sit on His own throne. Today there is a King in Heaven without a throne, and on earth a throne without a King.

The throne might be perpetual and the kingdom perpetual, but how could a man be perpetual? That troubled David as he sat before the Lord. David saw his son Solomon on the throne, but he didn’t live to see the Covenant fulfilled (Heb. 1:5).

God also revealed something else to David and that was the two natures of Christ: “I will set up thy seed after thee” (Vr. 12) and “I will be His Father” (Vr. 14). David’s son would be both human and Divine. He would be both man and God in one person. He is both David’s seed and David’s Lord. So David’s son born of David is David’s Lord. “He is the root and offspring of David” (Rev. 22:16). No wonder David said: “What manner of man is this?” (Vr. 19) This king was to be a royal son of David begotten by God. This explains why He could reign “for ever and ever” (Ps. 45:6).

Christ came into this world with this dual nature – Divine and human. Jesus went to a fig tree to gather figs because He was human; He spoke the word and cursed the fruitless tree because He was Divine (Matt. 21:17-20). He was resting in a boat because He was a man; He stilled the waves and the wind because He was Divine (Matt. 8:23-27). At the tomb of Lazarus He wept because He was human; Lazarus came forth from the dead because He was Divine (John 11:35,43). He was hungry because He was human (Luke 4:2); He fed the multitude because He was Divine (John 6:10-13).

God also revealed that His Son would have two great experiences as recorded in Psalms 16 and 22. He would first suffer death, and then be resurrected. This would all happen before He sits on the throne. His suffering first and then His glory; the cross first and then the crown. This is the mystery that the prophets could not comprehend, and the Jews did not want (1 Pet. 1:11). They wanted their Messiah crowned, but not crucified.

This Son would not only have two natures and two remarkable experiences; He would also have two thrones (Ps. 110; 68:18). He would sit on His Father’s throne first and then on His own on earth.

He was also to have a twofold sway: one Kingly and the other Priestly. He was to be a King-Priest (Ps. 110). This is an interesting fact and it isn’t a fact founded on anything in David’s life for he was never a priest. David ordained the course of the priest, but he was never given to assume priestly function. David was of the Tribe of Judah and God recognized only the Levitical Priesthood. If Christ were on earth today He could not be a priest after the order of Aaron. But He is and will be a Priest after the order of Melchizedek. He will bless both politically and spiritually.

God also revealed that His Son would take the throne by a two-fold act – a descent from glory and a judgment of His people (Ps. 72; 96:9-10; 110:5-6).

God’s King would also rule over the Kingdom in a twofold aspect. It will be over His people or national and it will also embrace all nations or international (Cpr. Ps. 2:8 with Ps. 72). Also Israel will become a nation of priests for Jehovah in His universal rule (1 Pet 2:5).

IX. THE NEW COVENANT (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-13)

This has also been called “The Messianic Covenant” because it has a distinct relation to Christ, not to Abraham or Moses.

This Covenant is made with Israel and Judah. It is called “New” in contrast to the “Old” or the Mosaic Covenant.

The English word “covenant” is derived from the Latin *con* “with” and *venio* “to come”. The Greek word is *diatheke* a disposition or arrangement. The Hebrew word “covenant” is *berith* and means “to cut or divide”. This Hebrew word is often used in connection with another Hebrew word which means “to cut” namely *karath*. So “to make a covenant is “to cut a cutting”. It has the idea of each party having a share in the covenant. A covenant is confirmed by sacrifice – see Gen. Ch. 15; Ps. 50:5; Jer. 34:18). As the Old Covenant was ratified by sacrifice and blood (Heb. 9:18-20) so also the New Covenant (Heb. 9:15).

1. Constitution of the Covenant

This is not an old covenant renewed or made over, but an entirely New Covenant as to character and content. It is contrasted with the one given at Sinai. That was a legal covenant based on obedience; this one is of pure and sovereign grace.

Paul contrasts these two covenants in 2 Cor. Ch. 3 as follows:

THE OLD COVENANT

A ministration of death
A glory that was done away
The ministration of condemnation glory

For if that which was done away was
glorious
The face of Moses (2 Cor. 3:7-13)

THE NEW COVENANT

The ministration of the Spirit
Rather glorious
Much more the ministration of righteousness exceeds in glory
Much more that which remaineth is
glorious
The face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor.3:8;4:6)

The prophet Jeremiah was called to go out as a prophet of judgment against the people and tell them of impending judgment because of their sin. He was severely persecuted for his preaching. He did not promise an immediate restoration but a future one. It is in this connection that he gives the New Covenant of Israel’s inward renewal. Ezekiel also tells of this renewal, and the coming Mediator between God and man (Ezek. 36:24-38; 37:14, 21-28; 11:17-19).

The formation of this covenant is recorded in Matt. 26:26-28 and Heb. 8:6-13. We are told in Heb. Ch. 8 that to make or ratify a covenant it was necessary that sacrificial victims be slain (Exod. 24:3-8). Here Moses slays the lamb in connection with the Old Covenant and seals it with the blood. The Covenant of Promise made with Abraham is sealed with sacrifices and blood (Gen. Ch. 15). The Noahic Covenant was sealed with blood (Gen. 8:20-22). A covenant is a contract made strong over the dead victim for the purpose of ratifying the same (Heb. 13:20).

This covenant was made with the House of Judah and Israel. This covenant will be fulfilled in the future. The First or Old Covenant was established at Sinai; this second or New Covenant at Zion. It is made with Christ (Heb. 9:11-15; 10:1,12,26-27). The sacrifice of Christ was the one all-embracing sacrifice. It abolished all other offerings for sin.

The orthodox Jew today is greatly perplexed. He thinks that he must bring a sacrifice according to the Old Economy. He rejects the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ. The New Covenant is better than the Mosaic efficaciously, not morally. It is an unconditional covenant made with Christ

2. Contents of the Covenant

a. A Regeneration (Jer. 31:33; Heb. 8:10)

It is God Who regenerates and sanctifies His people. In that day there will be an obedience to God's Law written in the heart. The Old Covenant says: "Thou shalt and thou shalt not". It gave commands but did not give the power to obey them. Israel was a powerless people under the Old Covenant. But this New Covenant will give the power in Christ to obey God's will.

b. A Revelation (Jer. 31:34; Heb. 8:11)

God will reveal Himself to every man and give to him Divine knowledge. Man is ignorant and needs a light and knowledge of God. To know the Lord was Paul's highest ambition (Phil. 3:8,10). The way to please God is to know Him better. Christ is the revelation of God, and the Bible is the revelation of Christ.

An ancient prophet says of the fulfillment of the covenant: "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

Heathen ignorance and darkness need this revelation as is seen from Romans Chapter one. Likewise Israel needs this revelation as is depicted in Isa. 1:3. But in the day of regeneration all will know the Lord. This is the basis of God's future kingdom.

c. A Restoration (Jer. 31:34; Heb. 8:12)

There will be no more a remembrance of their sins and iniquities. In the Old Covenant they made remembrance of sin every year. But in this New Covenant God says: "I will forgive and forget" (See Ps. 103:12; Isa. 38:17; Mic. 7:19). We usually remember what God forgets; but He forgets what we remember. He remembers that we are dust and we often forget that.

This covenant like all the covenants is made to be fulfilled on earth. There is no covenant made during the ages that relates to the Church, the Body of Christ. We are related to the pre-age Covenant of Redemption. Our blessings in Christ are far greater than any of Israel's earthly blessings (Eph. 1:3).

3. Conditions of this Covenant

This covenant is entirely unconditional. It is based on the formula "I will" (Jer. 31:31,33; Heb. 8:8,10). Like Paul on the road to Damascus, Israel will some day be completely undone in herself and can only ask, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6).

4. Conclusion of the Covenant

This covenant, like all the covenants, will end with the great consummation at the end of the ages when God shall be all in all (1 Cor. 15:28).

LESSON #12 – THE INITIATION PRINCIPLE

INTRO:

Definition: The Initiation Principle is that principle by which God initiates the believer into His truth through the mysteries revealed in Scripture.

The Greek word *musterion*, a secret or mystery, is in the LXX Version translated from the Hebrew word *raz*, meaning “secret”. *Raz* occurs nine times in the O.T. and all in Daniel (2:18,19,27,28,29,30,47; 4:9). The Greek word *musterion* is used 27 times in the N.T. – three in the Gospels (Matt. 13:11; Mk. 4:11; Luke 8:10); twenty times in Paul’s Epistles (Rom. 11:25; 16:25; 1 Cor. 2:7; 4:1; 13:2; 14:2; 15:51; 2 Thess. 2:7; Eph. 1:9; 3:3; 3:4; 3:9; 5:32; 6:19; Col. 1:26; 1:27; 2:2; 4:3; 1 Tim. 3:9; 3:16); and four times in the Revelation ((1:20; 10:7; 17:5; 17:7).

The Greeks were noted for their “mysteries” as well as other pagan nations. The key to these was not learning or wisdom, but INITIATION. A knowledge of these mysteries could only come to the initiates. Those not initiated could never find out the simplest secret. They could be kept secret from the keenest minds and revealed to the meanest mind. Upon entering any so-called secret society one has to be initiated into its secrets.

All God’s ways are secret in a sense, because none can be known apart from His revelation. The mysteries or secrets of Scripture are those which He has positively hidden until His appointed time.

All the secrets of Scripture follow man’s failure either individually or nationally; the failure of Adam and the failure of Israel nationally.

The word *mystery* is a word that God has taken from paganism and glorified in His Word. Among the pagans the religious mysteries were secrets into which only a few were initiated; whereas Biblical mysteries are given for one and all to know, if they have eyes to see and ears to hear (Matt. 13:15-16). The word *mystery* in Scripture does not mean something that is mysterious and non-understandable. It simply means knowledge withheld until revealed. It could never be discovered by mere reach and reason of human understanding. It is always necessary to keep in mind the TIME when each secret is revealed. Thus it behooves us: (1) To keep in mind that each of God’s secrets was unknown until the time when it was revealed; (2) They must never be forced into previous revelations given at a time when God was hiding them.

Paul in his pre-prison Epistles reveals that, “Behold, I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed” and, “we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together” (1 Cor. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:17). This was a mystery never revealed before that a company of believers will be alive when Christ comes and will ascend with Christ.

Moses says in Deut. 29:29: “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of the law.”

God has not revealed all His truth at once. It has been progressive as His dispensational dealing with man has changed. “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book even to the time of the end” (Dan. 12:4). Abraham could never have known that his seed should be as numberless as “the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore” (Gen. 22:17) without a revelation from God. The mysteries of the Kingdom of the Heavens while the King is away (Matt. Ch. 13) could not have been known without a divine revelation. The Church which is the Body of Christ (Eph. 3:1-9) could not have been known without a special revelation given to Paul. Paul speaks of himself and other ministers as the “stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Cor. 4:1). It we are to be good “stewards of the mysteries” we must know what they are. So a mystery in Scripture is knowledge withheld until God reveals it; while the current use of the word may either mean knowledge withheld completely, or until one gets to the last page of the mystery story.

I. THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS (Matt. Ch. 13 (11))

These mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens had never been revealed before. It had never been revealed that when the King came He would be rejected by His people and that there would be a long interval between His rejection and the restoration of the Kingdom. This was concealed from the prophets. The prophets predicted the sufferings and the glory of Christ but the long interval between was unknown. Peter tells us (1 Pet. 1:10-11) that the prophets searched diligently regarding this matter and were puzzled. It was only after Christ had been rejected by His people that He spoke in parables and gave the revelation of these mysteries of the Kingdom of the Heavens. These mysteries were given only to the disciples who had ears to hear and eyes to see and understand the truth (Matt. 13:11).

1. Parable or Mystery of the Sower, Seed, and Soils (Matt. 13:3-9; 13:18-23)

Here the Lord indicates that all the seed sown would not result in fruit. Only one-fourth of the seed sown would bear fruit and only one-third of this would bear a hundred fold. This mystery gives also the causes why the Kingdom was rejected: (1) the opposition of the Devil; (2) the weakness of the flesh; and (3) the world and its riches.

2. Parable or Mystery of the Tares and Wheat (Matt. 13:24-30; 36-43)

The mystery reveals that the good seed will be aped by Satan who sows tares among the wheat. During the time of growth they both resemble each other. Only at the time of harvest will God reveal the true wheat and the false tares. This mystery traces the fortunes of the Kingdom to the end of the age when Christ will clear the field of all intruding hypocrites, casting them into “a furnace of fire”.

3. Parable or Mystery of the Mustard Seed (Matt. 13:31-32)

A mustard seed grows into an abnormal tree representing the outward aspects of the growth of the Kingdom. This false greatness will afford a covert for malignant spiritual powers. Birds represent evil powers (Matt. 13:19; Dan. 4:21; Rev. 18:2).

4. Parable or Mystery of the Leaven (Matt. 13:33-35)

Leaven is put into three measures of meal until all is leavened. Leaven in Scripture represents that which is evil and corrupts (Matt. 16:6). Corruption is the secret of the greatness of the Kingdom which permeates the whole. Nothing can stop it but fire.

These four parables or mysteries were spoken to the multitude; the following three are given to the disciples.

5. Parable or Mystery of the Hid Treasure (Matt. 13:44)

A treasure is hid in a field. The field is then purchased and with it the treasure. This refers to Israel as a nation who are the treasure (Exod. 19:5). The field we are told is the world in which they are hid (Matt. 13:38).

6. Parable or Mystery of the Pearl (Matt. 13:45-46)

This refers to the faithful remnant among God’s people Israel. These are the “overcomers” of the Book of Revelation; the bridal company among God’s people. These constitute the “star seed” of Abraham.

7. Parable or Mystery of the Dragnet (Matt. 13:47-50)

This refers to the end of the age when Christ will separate the good from the bad. He will direct His angels to cast the bad into “the furnace of fire” to be tormented.

II. THE MYSTERY OF ISRAEL’S BLINDNESS (Rom. 11:25)

This is sometimes called: “The Mystery of the Olive Tree” because the figure of an olive tree is used in the illustration of Israel’s blindness (11:17). It is used for the duration of the blindness here and not the fact. We note that Israel’s blindness is “in part”. In Isa. 6:9-10 we have the prophet’s prediction that Israel would be blinded – a judicial or judgment blindness. This blindness will continue until “the fullness of the Gentiles be come in”. Following this period

of blindness, Israel will be blessed – a national salvation. “The fullness of the Gentiles” will come in during the Tribulation Period and perhaps by the 144,000 and their ministry (See Rev. 7:4-10).

III. THE MYSTERY OF THE TRANSFORMATION AND TRANSLATION OF THE SAINTS (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-56)

Here we have a revelation that there will be a company of saints living at the time of Christ’s Second Advent who will escape the final wrath of God in the Tribulation and be taken to meet Christ in the air. This has no reference to the Church, the Body of Christ which will be at this time with Him in glory (Col. 3:4). The revelation tells that both the dead in Christ and the living will together meet the Lord in the air. “For this corruptible (dead body) must put on incorruption, and this mortal (living body) must put on immortality” (1 Cor. 15:53). Then the living will shout: “O death, where is thy sting?” And the dead will shout back at the grave: “O grave, where is thy victory” (1 Cor. 15:55). So the dead will be resurrected and the living will be transformed, and together will go to meet Christ in the air. After He has done his work of wrath upon His enemies, these saints will come back with Him to earth, and the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom.

IV. MYSTERY OF THE FAITH (1 Tim. 3:9)

The definite article “the” designates “faith”. So that “the mystery of the faith is the subject-matter of the faith. It is that doctrine of truth which was kept secret until revealed and in this context revealed by Paul. This “faith” is particularly related to Christ and the Gospel of the Grace of God (see 3:16). It included Paul’s Gospel to the Uncircumcision (Gal. 2:7). It included Justification by Faith alone.

V. THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS (1 Tim. 3:16)

This verse is connected with the latter part of verse 15, “of the truth”. The “truth” here constitutes the “secret of godliness”. The “truth” is Christ (John 14:6; 1:17). Marvin R. Vincent says: “The contents of this truth or mystery is Christ, revealed in the gospel as Savior from ungodliness, the norm and inspiration of godliness, the Divine life in man, causing him to live unto God as Christ did and does (Rom. 6:10).”

“The mystery of godliness” is the substance of piety. This truth is called a mystery because it was, historically, hidden until revealed in the person and work of Christ; also because it was concealed from human wisdom.

Paul speaks about this mystery as being “great” but not in the sense of being “great” in difficulties, but of importance. Here we have some very profound truth. The Apostle has been giving instruction about the appointment of bishops or overseers, deacons, and their wives, insisting that they be in every way qualified to take such high and responsible offices. All this in view of the fact that “the church of the living God” is “the pillar and ground of the truth”. How natural then is this lyrical outburst which follows the mention of the truth! For the revealed “truth” with which the church is entrusted is CHRIST HIMSELF. He it is “Who was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the nations, believed on in the world, received up into glory”.

We note here that the clauses are all parallel, with each two forming a pair, and heaven and earth contrasted. There is “flesh” and “spirit”; “Angels” and “Gentiles”; “world” and “glory”.

1. “Manifested in the flesh” (John 1:14; Rom. 1:3; 8:3; 9:5; 1 Jn. 4:2)

Here we have the manifestation of the Incarnation. This is a foundation truth. If Christ is not God manifested in the flesh then all else is of little importance. This is the heart of God’s redemptive program, the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. It is the foundation of Godliness or piety. Here is the Lord Jesus Christ, Incarnate Deity, the One in Whom “dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9). These words imply His pre-existence. He could say: “Before Abraham was, I am” (Jn. 8:58).

Christ was in the form of God (Phil. 2:6); He was “the effulgence of His glory and the express image of His person” (Heb. 1:3). From this condition He came into manifestation in the flesh. Under human conditions His essential attributes were veiled. He did not appear to men what He really was. He was not recognized by them as He who “was in the beginning with God” (Jn. 1:1-2); as “the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15); as one with God (Jn. 10:38; 14:9); as He who had all power in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18); Who was before all things and by Whom all things consist (Col. 1:17); Who was “the King of the ages” (1 Tim. 1:17). On the contrary, He was regarded as an imposter, a usurper, and a blasphemer. He was hated, persecuted, and finally put on a cross to die a cruel, ignominious death. He was poor, tempted, and a Man of Sorrows.

2. “Justified in the Spirit”

Here we have the manifestation of the resurrection. This is the key-stone of the Christian faith. It secures and substantiates the claims that Christ made in the flesh, in life and death. Here we have the same contrast between the flesh and the Spirit of Christ as in 1 Pet. 3:18: “being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit”. Our Lord was vindicated by the Spirit at His baptism and His transfiguration (Matt. 3:17; 17:5 see also Matt. 12:18; Eph. 1:6; Col. 1:13).

So far as the bodily manifestation was concerned, there was nothing to indicate that Jesus of Nazareth was the pre-existent Son of God. But He was vindicated by the Spirit as such. He was “declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom. 1:4). Glimpses of His Spirit life came out in His fleshly sphere. It is seen in His spotless and exalted character; His works and words of love, life, and liberty (See Jn. 6:63; Matt. 12:28; 2 Cor. 3:17).

3. “Seen of Angels”

Here we have the manifestation of His Heavenly Appearance. This could be translated “showed Himself to” (See Matt. 17:3; Luke 1:11; Acts 7:2; Heb. 9:28).

He was seen of angels both in His incarnation state, and in His glorification. The angels heralded His birth; they strengthened Him after the temptation; they upheld Him in the garden; they declared His resurrection; and at His ascension predicted His Second Advent (See Luke 1:30-33; Matt. 4:11; Luke 22:43; 24:4-6; Acts 1:10-11). How the angels must have wondered at the way He humbled Himself, and was made a little lower than the angels (Heb. 2:9) for the suffering of death. Even the angelic host was given a new insight into the character and purpose of God by the miracle of the incarnation. But there will also be a great appearance of Christ to the angelic world when He shall be manifested in glory (Col. 3:4; Phil. 2:10; Eph. 3:10).

4. “Preached unto the Gentiles”

Here we have the manifestation of His proclamation. The Book of Acts records the fact that the Gospel was preached not only at Jerusalem, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the land (Acts 1:8) but also by Paul and his associates to Rome and possibly to Spain (Acts 28).

He was proclaimed “among the nations” which might be a better translation. It is by the “foolishness of preaching” (1 Cor. 1:21) that men hear the Gospel and are saved; not by art, symbolism or ritual.

This will have its great future fulfillment when Jehovah’s true witnesses, His own people, will go to the nations (See Isa. 43:8-10).

5. “Believed on in the World”

This is the manifestation of Salvation. Notwithstanding all the opposition and persecution, the Lord has blessed His Word, so that the gospel has been accepted in all places. Men were invited to renounce the manner of life that was regarded as most desirable and best, and to take up a cross. The Gospel prevailed because the Holy Spirit brought conviction and conversion. Countless millions have not been the victims of a delusion. “Great is the mystery of godliness.”

6. “Received up into Glory”

This is the manifestation of the Ascension. “In glory” (en doxe); with attendant events of pomp and majesty. He was taken back to glory from whence He came. He had been a Victim on earth; now He is a Victor in Heaven. When He came from glory, it was said: “A body thou hast prepared for me” (Heb. 10:5). When He came back to glory the Father said: “Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool” (Heb. 1:13). He is the “unspeakable gift” with an unchangeable priesthood, and giving unsearchable riches.

The Ascension is one of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. The Incarnation, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection would not be complete without the crown of the Ascension. Here is the seal of Divine approval upon the work for which He came into the world. Pentecost, with its coming of the Holy Spirit as a Comforter, was conditioned upon the Ascension (Jn. 16:7). His Ascension is also the assurance that He will come again (Acts 1:11).

1 Tim. 3:16 impresses upon us how profound is the Divine truth as seen in Jesus Christ. How gloriously perfect is the Gospel of Christ. Nothing need be added to it and nothing must be taken from it. Truly, “great is the mystery of godliness”.

VI. THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY (2 Thess. 2:7)

The mystery of godliness is the mystery of God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. The mystery of iniquity or lawlessness is man exalting himself to become God. Paul says here that “the mystery of iniquity doth already work”. John says: “And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is in the world” (1 John 4:3). Lawlessness, iniquity and humanism have been in the world since the Fall of man. The development of sin down through the ages is the development of man doing his utmost in rebellion against God. This rebellion culminated at the Fall, at the Flood, at Babel, at the Crucifixion and finally it will culminate in the great tribulation under Antichrist and the False Prophet. “The mystery of lawlessness” is the mass of lawlessness yet hidden, but will reveal itself at the end of this age. The position of the word “iniquity” (anomias) is emphatic, and emphasizes the concealed character of the evil power.

This undercurrent of evil is the menace to all moral, social, and spiritual work in the world. The world does not recognize the workings of Satan and his host of demons. This will all culminate in the superman, Antichrist, whom Christ will destroy with the brightness of His coming (2 Thess. 2:8).

VII. THE MYSTERY OF PAUL’S ‘MY GOSPEL’ (Rom. 16:25-27)

Mr. C. H. Welch reminds us in his Alphabetical Analysis on the subject Mystery that “we seek to demonstrate the principle that where history ceases (so far as Israel is concerned) some element of mystery comes in. It might be the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; it might be the mysteries of God’s purpose in appointing Nebuchadnezzar; it might be the introduction of the present dispensation of the Mystery, but the sequence is the same”. This is important to see.

This passage has caused considerable controversy because of its position in this Epistle. It is a doxology. It is customary for Paul to conclude his Epistles in Benediction – “The Grace of

our Lord Jesus Christ” etc. and not a doxology. This doxology is also variously placed in the different manuscripts: (1) In over 190 it stands after Ch. 14:23; (2) In two or three it is omitted altogether; (3) In one there is a space left after verse 24; and in another a space is left after Ch. 14:23; (4) In some manuscripts it stands in both places; (5) In the manuscripts where the Doxology stands as we have in our A.V. the Benediction in verse 24 is omitted. However, Dr. E.W. Bullinger in his structure of Romans shows that this Doxology must be a part of the Epistle and also stand where it does. We will set out his structure:

A/ 1:1-6. The GOSPEL, always revealed, never hidden.

B/ 1:7-15. Epistolary

C/ a – 1:8 – 8:39. Doctrinal

b – 9:1 – 11:36. Dispensational

C/ a – 12:1 – 15:7. Practical

b – Dispensational

B/ 15:12 – 16:24. Epistolary

A/ 16:25-27. The MYSTERY. Never revealed, always hidden.

In Romans 1:1 Paul speaks about “the Gospel of God” which was not hidden but revealed through the O.T. prophets. In 16:25 he speaks about “my Gospel” which was hidden away in the Scriptures until now revealed by Paul. That Gentile nations would be blessed through the “Gospel of God” from the nation Israel was no secret (See Isa. 42:6; 60:3; 66:19). But that Gentiles would be blessed with the Gospel apart from the nation of Israel was not even hinted in the O.T. Scriptures. This was the revelation and commission given to Paul which he calls “My Gospel”.

Paul speaks of the designation, “My Gospel” three times: the first is Rom. 2:16; the second is here at Rom. 16:25; and, the third is found in 2 Tim 2:8. In its first occurrence (Rom. 2:16) the expression “My Gospel” is set in the context of the Gentile world, who are unevangelized and unenlightened by “The Gospel of God” and the Law of God. This raw heathen world was left to the voice of conscience and the witness of creation. Israel as a nation had never brought them the “Gospel of God” but now, without Israel, they can receive Paul’s “My Gospel”. Both of these Gospels go back to Abraham. “The Gospel of God” given to Israel as a nation is rooted in the covenant of circumcision (Gen. Ch. 17). “My Gospel” given to Paul for the Gentiles is likewise rooted in Abraham when he was a Gentile, and before he received the covenant of circumcision (See Gen. 15:6). It is basically the Gospel of Justification by faith.

This mystery in Romans Ch. 16 is not said to be related to a period “before age times” but literally, “having been hidden from the ages in God” Paul’s Gospel is the Gospel of Reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:17-21).

VIII. THE MYSTERY OF THE HIDDEN GOSPEL (1 Cor. 2:7)

The Apostle Paul continues in chapter two with the trend of thought started in chapter one, namely, to show that the Gospel does not depend for its success upon human wisdom or the philosophy of men. Eloquent appeals, logical arguments, or profound philosophy have no place in the proclamation of the Evangel. Nothing could have appealed better to the Corinthians than some new philosophy or some shrewd line of reasoning. Faith, claims Paul, does not rest on human reason, but on the Word of God and the revelation given therein of the Gospel of Christ. Paul draws a sharp contrast between the false and the true; between human wisdom and reasoning, and proclaiming the Gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit. Chapter one verse thirty is the key to this hidden secret which God ordained before age times – “Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption”.

There is the true wisdom which is only found in Jesus Christ, “who of God is made unto us wisdom”. “In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:3).

What is the hidden Gospel that “God ordained before the ages unto our glory?” It is rooted in the death of Jesus Christ, the miracle and majesty of God’s redemptive program.

1. The Eternal Counsel: Christ crucified FOR us.

This is the foreordained substitutionary death of Christ. “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God” (Acts 2:23a). “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself” ... “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin” (2 Cor. 5:19,21). “The precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb, ... Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world” (1 Pet. 1:18-21).

2. The Historical Commitment: Christ crucified BY us. This is the consummation of condemnation. “Ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain” (Acts 2:23b). “Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree” (Gal. 3:13).

3. The Personal Consummation: Christ crucified WITH us.

This is the doctrine of Identification. “I am crucified with Christ” (Gal. 2:20) “Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into death” (Rom. 6:4). “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Gal. 3:27). “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin” (Rom. 6:11).

The believer can sing a song of triumph at the cross for there he died to sin, to Satan, to fear of death, and all his enemies.

IX. THE MYSTERY OF GOD’S WILL (Eph. 1:9)

Someone has said: “Where history (Israel’s history) ceases, mystery begins”. This is always true. Mystery necessitates revelation. It can never be arrived at by mere study. If God does not reveal it, there remains complete ignorance. In the Prison Epistles of Ephesians and Colossians the word “mystery” occurs ten times – Eph. 1:9; 3:3; 3:4; 3:9; 5:32; 6:19; Col. 1:26; 1:27; 2:2; 4:3. Since the days of Abraham God had limited Himself to a chosen nation, Israel. He would bless the nations only through the channel of this nation. But what if this nation failed to function? Would God then be held up in His gracious purpose; would the enemy advance when this nation failed? It is always in this crisis relative to His chosen people and their disobedience that MYSTERY takes the place of HISTORY, the history of Israel. They become “Lo-Ammi”, “not my people” (Hosea 1:10; 2:23). It is in the interval between the time of Israel’s defection, and their return again, that God turns to the Gentiles. It is “the wisdom of God” that lies behind the meaning and message of the Mystery in Ephesians and Colossians (Eph. 3:10).

The “will of God” occurs nine times in Ephesians and Colossians: Eph. 1:1; 1:5; 1:9; 1:11; 5:17; 6:6; Col. 1:1; 1:9; 4:12.

In Ps. 119:89 we read: “Forever O Lord, Thy Word is settled in Heaven”. As we study this word “mystery” and its message then the “will of God” has far reaching relationships with “Things in Heaven” and the earth and its people take second place. The will of God has to do with setting things in order in Heaven first, and then follows the earth and its inhabitants next in God’s will and purpose.

“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God” (Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1). The great Jewish organization called The Sanhedrin, of which Paul was a member, sent this young zealot of the sect of the Pharisees and its “blameless” relationship with the Law in the sight of men (Phil. 3:6) on a journey to Damascus. His mission was to further the persecution of the Church of God that had been so ruthlessly carried out. Near Damascus a light shone from Heaven, and the voice, that spoke in the Hebrew tongue, arrested Saul of Tarsus. Something greater than the will of men had intervened; it was the WILL OF GOD. Many years later before King Agrippa, Paul explained what this “Will of God” meant (see Acts 26:13-18). His commission was in two parts: “these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee”. How wonderful and accurate is God’s will! Here nothing can fail, no emergencies can divert His will and purpose. For this plan was determined before the ages began. In the will of God this

Jew was marked off in a past eternity to be a minister and a witness; and through whom the glorious mystery or secret of the Church which is the Body of Christ should be revealed.

“According to the good pleasure of His will” (1:5). This has to do with predestinating us “unto the adoption of children”. The “adoption as children” here is not to be taken in the general sense of our social structure. The word “children” is *huiiothesia*, and according to the Companion Bible means “placed as sons”. Members of this Church are not infant children adopted into God’s family, but sons who have reached maturity as heirs to an inheritance (Vr. 11). We who had nothing and were nothing (Eph. 2:1-3; 2:12) are suddenly confronted with: “But God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us” (2:4). This “mercy” and “love” unfolds into Eph. 2:4-7.

“The counsel of His own will” (1:11). S.T. Bloomfield translates this verse as follows: “Having been predestinated by the deliberate counsel of him who accomplishes all his purposes and plans according to his own unfettered will and pleasure. We have here a description of the omnipotence of the Deity.” The word “counsel” here speaks of the measures taken in Heaven for the suppression and complete destruction of the satanic system. In this counsel of His will every enemy in heaven is to be destroyed, and His saints, the Church are to be delivered and destined to inherit the Heavens and all its blessing. This deliverance and destruction are to be done by ONE alone, the Son of God; Who by His death, burial, resurrection, ascension and glorious exaltation to Heaven made it potentially possible. It will be actually achieved when “man’s day” is over and the enemy has done his best to frustrate God’s purpose. Christ is the central figure in the working out of the Father’s will. The days may be dark and evil, but it is only for a limited time. Nothing can stand against the counsel of His will. We are destined to be the first to share the blessings of Christ’s work. Let us then praise Him and take courage as we journey day by day.

“Understanding what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. 5:17). There are those who criticize the teaching of the Secret and declare that it is not a practical doctrine. They say there is an over-emphasis on the “heavenly places” and not enough on the present earth scene. But only those can work in harmony with God’s will who know and use the key of right division (2 Tim. 2:15). One cannot walk circumspectly and walk in harmony with God’s will if ignorant of the truth revealed in Ephesians and Colossians. We must know what the will of the Lord is for us in this dispensation. It is the enemy’s object to keep the believer in comparative darkness and to veil the truth of the mystery. It is this truth that unveils Christ in His fullness and our fullness in Him. This truth eclipses all preceding revelation. The message of resurrection is woven into the teaching of the mystery (Eph. 5:14). This resurrection life is light for we can only understand the will of the Lord from resurrection ground.

“Doing the will of God from the heart” (Eph. 6:5-6). It is possible for bond slaves to render obedience to their masters. If we know Christ, we also know what the Father has planned for us. Yes, even a slave can do the will of God from the heart.

“THE MYSTERY OF HIS WILL” (Eph. 1:9)

There is a marked difference in this aspect of God’s will from “the good pleasure of His will” as seen in 1:5. Instead of “good pleasure” suggesting unbroken peace and perfect harmony with the Father’s will supreme, there are now terms such as “redemption”, “His blood” and “forgiveness of sins”. There must be a good reason for this sudden change. Why does the Father now speak of His will in terms of a mystery?

There is but one answer: “An enemy is at work” (See Matt. 13:28-39). The Father made His choice; His good pleasure found scope in accepting a company of Adam’s sons “in the Beloved”. But Scripture reveals that Lucifer, Son of the Morning, fell from his exalted position in that sphere and thus sin made its appearance in the heavens (Isa. 14:12-20; Ezek 28:12-19). This demanded the work of the Son Who came to redeem, and to gather things in heaven and in earth under His redeeming power, and at the same time destroy the works of the Devil.

This mystery has to do with the heading up of the universe, both heaven and earth, in the “fullness of the times”. And this headship is in Christ. God is working toward a restoration to that former condition when all things were in perfect harmony and unity. Satan and sin broke this unity in His universe when both heaven and earth became affected. But the time will come when there will be a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness will dwell. Then all God’s creation will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

Only God could make known this mystery associated with His will and made known “in all wisdom and prudence”. This mystery is closely associated with “the dispensation of the mystery” (3:9) concerning the Church, the Body of Christ. Satan never knew before that Christ and His Church would replace him in the heavenlies and unite all things in Christ ultimately.

X. THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH THE BODY OF CHRIST

(Eph. 3:1-13; Col. 1:23-29)

Paul sets before us two dispensational relationships in Ephesians, namely: “The dispensation of the Grace of God” (Vr. 2) and “The dispensation of the Secret” (Vr. 9). Behind the meaning and message of the mysteries lies the “wisdom and intelligence” of God (Eph. 1:8).

There is a conflict going on in God’s universe, not so much between God and man, as between God and Satan. The Bible declares that Satan was “full of wisdom and perfect in beauty” (Ezek. 28:12). This being does not always move as a “roaring lion”, he also works as an “angel of light” (1 Pet. 5:8); 2 Cor. 11:14). We can be sure of his final destruction. He was potentially destroyed at the cross and will be actually destroyed in a future day (Ezek. 28:16-19). The principalities and powers in the heavenlies are looking down upon this conflict of the ages and by means of the Church learning “the manifold wisdom of God” (Eph. 3:9-10).

There is much that this enemy knows concerning God’s age purpose, but some things he could not know until revealed. And this revelation comes at a time of crisis. When a major crisis has arisen then God has announced something which up to that time was unknown.

From an Abraham to the setting aside of Israel at Acts Ch. 28, God had more or less limited Himself to this chosen nation. He would bless the nations through Israel, the channel. But what if this nation failed and ceased to function? Would God be held up in His age purpose? We shall see that when Israel failed, mystery took the place of history, that is, history of Israel. When Israel has become “Lo-Ammi” or “not my people” (Hos. 1:10; 2:23) then God has turned to the Gentiles. Israel has had a sad story of failure. They failed under the Judges, the Priests, and the Kings. Finally, the dominion is taken from them and a crisis ensues. What will be the outcome?

The Kingdom that now had been visualized as above all other kingdoms now passes into the hands of Gentile rule (See Dan. 1:1-2; Ezek. 21:26-27). Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon is now given sovereignty. Daniel is in the King’s palace, when this king has a strange dream. He had seen a great image which had a head of fine gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thigh parts of brass, legs of iron and feet of iron and clay. Finally, a stone smote the image and broke it to pieces (Dan. 2:31-35). Daniel interprets the dream, and then said to the monarch: “Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, strength and glory” etc. (Dan. 2:37-39). Only Daniel could reveal the secret, for there was a secret or mystery (Dan. 2:19). So it must be concluded that a real crisis had manifested itself, and there was a secret lying behind the whole trend of events.

The quotations from Daniel and Ezekiel underscore two facts:

(1) God gave the kingdom over to Nebuchadnezzar. Israel had failed under priests, prophets and kings. The outworking of God’s age purpose now enters into a long protracted

period termed “The times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24). The utter failure of the Gentiles will be seen in the giving over of the sovereignty commencing with Nebuchadnezzar, the head of gold, and culminating in the feet of iron and clay, or a combination of men and demons (Matt. 24:37-38; Gen. 6:1,4). Note the emphasis on the “seed of men” in Dan. 2:43. Instead of gold as seen at the commencement of the “Times of the Gentiles” we are told that those who rule in the last days will be likened to “iron mixed with clay”. This Gentile rule is likened to the action and nature of “wild beasts” (Dan. Ch.7).

It is during these “Time of the Gentiles” that the Lord Jesus is cradled in Bethlehem’s manger, conducts His public ministry, offers the kingdom to Israel, is rejected as their King, and crucified on the cross at Calvary. He well knew that he would be rejected and die on the cross. But He also knew that his coming and death would “undo the works of the Devil” (1 John 3:8). Though the kingdom was offered and re-offered “The Times of the Gentiles” must run their course before The Kingdom could be set up, as foretold in Daniel’s prophecy, and the enemy and the false seed destroyed.

Gentile rule down through the ages will have been characterized by Depreciation, Degradation, Demon-possession, Deception, and Destruction.

(2) God will “overturn, overturn, overturn” (Ezek. 21:26-27) – This is the second fact arising from these statements in Daniel and Ezekiel. Behind the failure of Israel a deeper canker is at work. It is the enemy, Satan, who in the wisdom of God will be brought to naught in a grand finale. (See Dan. 2:34,35,44). It is during this “mystery” period that God “overturns” not merely wicked kings, but Satan and his false seed.

“Until He comes whose right it is, and I will give it to Him” (Ezek. 21:27). Every instructed Israelite should have known this truth, but they did not know that another “mystery” was to be revealed, following the rejection of the Suffering Servant, and before the Second Advent of the Sovereign Lord (Matt. Ch. 13). The First Advent of Christ did not see “Him whose right it was to reign as King” established; rather the opposite.

The Acts of the Apostles is the inspired record of the re-offer of the King and kingdom to Israel (Acts 3:19-21). It hinged upon a national repentance. Israel failed, they did not repent; and the outcome of the conference called by Paul (Acts 28:17) brought on another crisis in God’s dealing with this nation.

In this dark hour, for it was a critical time, the all-knowing and all-wise God lifts the veil and makes known another Secret. He makes known to His chosen vessel, the Apostle Paul, the great mystery or secret of a heavenly Body, the Church. This Secret surpasses anything yet revealed that had previously been hidden from the enemy, from Israelites, and from Gentiles. This Secret has to do with the heavenly triumph of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is revealed in the Prison Epistles of Ephesians and Colossians. Behind every secret is the One Who reigns supreme. He is over all, and marches forth in triumph. He is the “only wise God” who wants to lead us into “the knowledge of the Son of God” (Eph. 4:13).

Outline of: THE THREE GREAT CRISES

THE SOURCE

Israel’s failure under Priests and Potentates - -
(The Books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles)

THE SEQUEL

The Lord gave dominion to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 1:1; Jer. 25:8-11; Ezek. 21:26-27)

I.

THE SECRET

God’s strange move, revealed to Daniel, and subsequently to Nebuchadnezzar, whose dream Daniel interprets - -
“The Times of the Gentiles” begin.

The Period of “Overturning.”
(Dan. 2:19-36; Ezek. 21:27).

II.

THE SOURCE

The rejection by Israel of the King and Kingdom.

Israel's Failure: "They repented not."
(Matt. Chs. 11; 21)

THE SEQUEL

Israel blinded - -
(Isa. 6:9-10; Matt. 13:14-15)

THE SOURCE

Israel's failure to repent during the re-offer of King and Kingdom
(Acts 3:19-21; 7:51; 28:25-27)
Development of the prayer of Luke 23:34.
Covers the Acts Period.

THE SEQUEL

Israel finally set aside (Acts 28:26-27)
"Salvation of God sent unto the Gentiles (Acts 28:28).

THE SECRET

Strange condition and things revealed

To those "Who hath ears to hear"
(Matt. 13:9)

Spoken in Parabolic Form.

III.

THE SECRET

A new phase of the Purpose of the

Ages now is revealed (Eph. 3:1-13;

Col. 1:23-29).

Given to Paul by "revelation" - -

Eph. 3:3; Col. 1:25-26.

Jew and Gentile now "one new man";

Joint-heirs, joint-body, and joint-

Partakers of the Gospel. (Eph. 2:15; 3:6)

Let us now note the steps that lead up to this Secret of the Church, the Body of Christ:

(1) "In Whom also hearing" (Eph. 1:13) – There is nothing here of the miraculous connected with the unfolding of this truth; simply "hearing". There are no signs or wonders accompanying this great message. God now moves and works through this simple medium. For nearly two thousand years now this sacred secret has been taught and received into the hearts of the redeemed. Before Paul went to be executed he gave the directions for its furtherance. "And the things thou hast HEARD of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).

(2) "In Whom also believing" (Eph. 1:13) – Christ, as in every other revealed purpose of God, is central in the believer's faith. Members of the One Body are to be completely occupied with Him; not with some doctrine about Him or some ordinance of a past dispensation.

(3) "The Word of Truth" – Here is the foundation upon which "faithful men" are resting. We are to hear and believe, not some tradition invented by man, but truth revealed in the writings of his servant, Paul. When one "rightly divides" the Word it becomes truth to the humblest and weakest believer.

(4) "The Gospel of your Salvation" (Eph. 1:13) – The word "Gospel" is often used in a very loose manner. The books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are referred to as the "gospels". Many rule out entirely the possibility of a "gospel" being found in Paul's Epistles. The Gospel preached by Paul, in his Prison Epistles, contains truth or good news not found in The Gospel of The Kingdom. Colossians, Paul's companion Epistle to Ephesians, tells what this good news is connected with: "Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints. For the hope which is laid up for you in HEAVEN, whereof ye heard before in the word of truth of the gospel; Which is come to you, as it is in all the world; and

bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth” (Col. 1:4-6).

This Gospel which Paul preached after the crisis of Acts chapter 28 was connected with:

(1) An Exalted Position – This hope is connected, not with a millennial kingdom here on earth, but “laid up in Heaven”. The Greek word here translated “laid up” is *apokeionai*, and appears in Heb. 9:27 where it is translated “appointed”. Our inheritance “in Heaven” has been planned and appointed by God.

(2) An Unconditional Principle – It is not a conditional message as is the message of good news of the Kingdom. This could not be embraced without Repentance (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Mk. 1:15; Luke 13:3-5). Our Gospel is unconditional because it is all of Grace. “The Grace of God in Truth”. “By grace are ye saved” (Eph. 2:5). When Grace is in operation, God works for the blessing of men, bestowing on them what they could never work for, nor attain by human merit. All this leads on to: (a) “the hope of His calling”; (2) “The riches of the glory of His inheritance”; (3) “The exceeding greatness of His power” (Eph. 1:18-19).

1. Revealed By A Special Minister (Eph. 3:1-4,7-8; Col. 1:23-25)

“I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ.”

“By revelation He made known unto me the mystery.”

“I was made a minister... who am less than the least.”

“I Paul am made a minister.”

“Whereof I am made a minister ... to fulfill the Word of God.”

“Who then is Paul?” (1 Cor. 3:5). “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels” (2 Cor. 4:7). It is impossible to exalt the message of the mystery, and think and speak lightly of the messenger that God used to reveal this message. What was said of Haggai (1:13) can be said of Paul: “Then spake Haggai the Lord’s messenger in the Lord’s message unto the people.” Paul is not unduly exalting himself in these verses, but merely telling us that God had called, commissioned, and committed to him a special message; a message distinct from the twelve apostles and the Kingdom of Heaven. It was Paul who received this treasure in an earthen vessel, and communicated it unto us.

The word “pattern” (*hupotuposin*) in 1 Tim. 1:16 is the same word in the original that is translated “form” in 2 Tim. 1:13. Not only is Paul himself a pattern; his words are also a pattern. We are to “hold fast the pattern (“form”) of sound words, which thou hast heard of me”. No finer phrasing of this idea can be found than that given in Phil. 4:8-9. Don’t miss the point in verse nine. Paul is designated as a “preacher, prophet, apostle, and teacher” (Acts 13:1-2; 2 Tim. 1:11). He was appointed by the risen Christ to head a new order of apostles (Eph. 4:11; 3:5).

a. His Initial Power (Acts 9:5-6)

It was the Sovereign God Who called him and revealed His sovereign power in him. “He is a chosen vessel” (Acts 9:15); and “Called me by His grace” (Gal. 1:15). Grace precludes any ability of man to do anything regarding his initial salvation and calling. It is all in the sovereign power of God (Phil. 2:12).

There was not only the manifestation of sovereign power in his life, but also separating power. “But when it pleased God who separated me from my mother’s womb (Gal. 1:15). The Greek word for “separated” is *aporidzo*, and the word for Pharisee is *pharisaioi*. This word comes from the Hebrew *parash*, meaning “the separated”. It is interesting to note that Paul as a Pharisee was “a separated one” (Phil. 3:5; Acts 23:6; 26:5). So he who was “separated” (a Pharisee) unto the Law is now “separated unto the Gospel of God” (Rom. 1:1); unto a missionary ministry in the New Covenant (Acts 13:2; 2 Cor. 3:6); and now finally, as a minister of the Mystery (Eph. 3:7; Col. 1:25). Paul was not only zealous for the Law of Moses, but also for the traditions of the Jewish Fathers (Gal. 1:14). Moses Maimonides says that there were some 613 traditions added by the Pharisees to the written Law. All these Laws and Traditions made the legal system a terrible burden to the one who tried to live in them (Acts 15:10). Paul could say “touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless” (Phil. 3:6).

There was also Saving Power manifested in the life of Paul (1 Tim. 1:15). He speaks of himself as the “chief of sinners”. He was a “blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious (1 Tim. 1:13). But he obtained mercy from God because he did it ignorantly in unbelief.

But “the grace of God was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 1:14). This was the man who towered above his contemporaries as an intellectual, moral, and religious giant; yet unsaved. He had been brought up at Tarsus (Acts 21:39; 22:3). But the Lord saved this man and he became just as enthusiastic for the Lord as he had been against Him.

b. His Indwelling Person

“To reveal His Son in me.” “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me” (Gal. 1:16; 2:20). “By the grace of God I am what I am” (1 Cor. 15:10). Paul lived the Christ life. He knew it was only possible by the grace of God. Man’s sin cannot hinder grace, and man’s merit cannot produce it. Paul is a pattern of what religion cannot do, and what grace can do. Only the grace of God can bring the life of Christ within. So the grace life is the Christ life.

The indwelling life of Christ in grace is a sanctifying life (Tit. 2:12). It causes one to live soberly within – personally; righteously without – socially; and, Godly above – spiritually. And all this in the present world.

Paul had been called to the greatest vocation, that of making known “the unsearchable riches of Christ” in “the dispensation of the secret” (Eph. 3:8-9). He is therefore the greatest example of one who follows the admonition of Eph. 4:1, “walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called”. Paul has a lot to say about walking: “walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4); “walk not after the flesh” (Rom. 8:1); “walk honestly” (Rom. 13:13); “walk by faith” (2 Cor. 5:7); “walk in the Spirit” (Gal. 5:16); “walk in good works” (Eph. 2:10); “walk worthy of the vocation” (Eph. 4:1); “walk in love” (Eph. 5:2); “walk as children of light” (Eph. 5:8); “walk circumspectly” (Eph. 5:15); “walk worthy of the Lord” (Col. 1:10); and “walk in wisdom” (Col. 4:5).

This indwelling life is also a sustaining life (2 Cor. 12:9). “My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness”. Paul had been given a “thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me” (2 Cor. 12:7). But he was “more than a conqueror” through Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:37). With this sustaining life there comes serenity, a “peace that passeth all understanding”. The Christ life gave peace and tranquility instead of fear and frustration.

c. His Inevitable Passion

“That I might preach Him among the nations” (Gal. 1:16; Eph. 3:9; Phil. 3:10). This is the man who could say to King Agrippa: “I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision” (Acts 26:19).

“That I may know Him” was Paul’s dominant purpose; for only as he knew Him could he adequately represent Him. His dominant power was “the power of the resurrection”. It was this Christ who said: “I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25).

Let us therefore emulate Paul’s implicit obedience (Acts 9:6; 26:19); his inflexible determination (Acts 20:24); and, his inspired contentment (Phil. 4:11-12). Paul was a master of arts in the experiences of life: hungry without murmuring, full without boasting, suffering without impatience; and abounding without setting his affection on things in this world. Paul was mighty through Christ.

2. Revealed By a Special Message (Eph. 3:6-9; Col. 1:27)

This ministry had a special message to the nations (3.1). Before this a Gentile had to become a proselyte to Judaism in order to receive any blessing from God. Now a Jew in order to be a member of this church had to renounce his Judaism. He can no longer claim any blessing in Abraham, nor in the covenants. He becomes a covenant-less Jew as the Gentiles become a covenant-less Gentile. Both Jew and Gentile are now united in one body in Christ, and made “one new man”.

This secret cannot mean that Gentiles are to be blessed with Israel: for this was never kept a secret. The very first blessing promised to Israel through Abraham, contained the promise of blessing for the Gentiles also (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4). The prophets and poets of Israel constantly refer to Gentile blessing (See Deut. 32:43; Psa. 18:49; 117:1; 67:1-2; 72:17; Isa. 11:10; 49:6; Luke 2:32; Rom. 15:8-9).

a. Its Dispensation (Vrs. 2,9)

The word translated “dispensation” and “fellowship” is *oikonomia* and means “House rule”, “the administration of a household”, “a stewardship or means of dispensing”.

It is a Dispensation of Sovereign Grace (Vr. 2) – God has always dealt with humankind in grace, but now there is a Dispensation of Grace. The Gospel of the Kingdom had grace but also works. In the past God revealed His purpose in many ways, many economies; but today it is by grace alone. This dispensation brings a complete identification with Christ in all His works – “dead with Him, buried with Him, risen with, made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus” (Col. 2:20; Eph. 2:6). It is also a complete incorporation. Our “life is hid with Christ in God” and “Christ is our life” (Col. 4:3-4). The word “hid” is *kekruptai*, and means both secrecy and safety. Christ is thus hidden in us in this world, and we are hid in Him. It is up to us to diffuse the fragrance of His character and conduct (2 Cor. 2:14-15). It is as Wilkinson says: “The hidden violets proclaim their presence in every passing breeze; the lark, hidden in the light, fills all the landscape with music; and the vivid freshness of grass and flower betray the secret windings of the meadow brook.” So we have a new program in a new dispensation.

It is a dispensation of a Supreme Secret (Vr. 9) – The word translated “mystery” is *musterion* and can better be translated “secret”. This “secret” was “hid in God” from all the ages of the past, and is only now revealed by the Apostle Paul. The word “fellowship” could better be translated by “dispensation”. The revelation given us in Ephesians and Colossians could never in any other age have been known; it is that new and distinct.

b. Its Distinctions (Vr. 6)

Here we have a stewardship, an economy of equality. Believers are now made “joint-heirs, joint-members of the body, and joint-partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel”. We are, Jew and Gentile, peers in blessing. These three distinctive elements of the secret are all associated with the preposition “sun” and best translated “joint”.

Joint-heirs (*sungkleronoma*) – All will share alike in Christ. What He has, we will have; where He is, there we are. Under the Kingdom of Heaven, Gentiles will enjoy their blessing from Israel (See Isa. 54:3; 60:3; 61:5-6). This heirship that we have today is greater than being heirs of Abraham (Gal. 3:29).

“He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things” (Rom. 8:32). Way out in space there are newly discovered suns like our own, from which light now reaching us started 110,000 light years ago. Each light-year represents almost six trillion miles (5,064,681,600,000). Multiply this number by 110,000 and you have the distance to these stars or suns. How vast is God’s universe! It staggers our human mind.

Joint-body (*sussoma*) – This is the only occurrence of this word in the N.T. We have been made “one new man” (Eph. 2:15). Both Jew and Gentile on equal basis in this body. As a contrast with the Kingdom of the Heavens note the place of Jew and Gentile – Psa. 72:10-11; Isa. 2:2-3; Zech. 14:9,16.

Joint-partaker (*sungkleronoma*) – All will share alike in the promise in Christ by the gospel. The Gentiles had long been left to themselves “without Christ, ... without God, having no hope” (Eph. 2:12). But now the Gentiles are joint-partakers in the “unsearchable riches of Christ”. The word rendered “unsearchable” is *anexichniastos*, and means untrackable, that which cannot be explored or found by searching. It has reference to footsteps, and hence to tracing or tracking out. It occurs only once again at Rom. 11:33 where it is rendered “past finding out” and “past tracing out” (R.V.). The word “unsearchable” does occur in Rom. 11:33, but it is a different

Greek word (anexereuntos). It means “baffling comprehension”. These “untrackable riches” have to do with THE CHRIST, Mystical or Spiritual – “The Christ” or the glorious Head in heaven and His people the members of the Body on earth. These “riches” were “hid in God” not in the Scriptures.

c. Its Declaration (8-10)

There are two spheres in which this church is to declare its message of “unsearchable riches of Christ”. Both the earth and the heavens are to know its message. “To make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery” and “unto the principalities and powers in the heavenlies might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.” Our ministry is as far and wide as the universe. We are monuments of God’s grace; witnesses to the “untrackable riches of Christ”.

Our evangel is the seven-fold presentation of identification with Christ: (1) “Died with Christ” (apethanete sun Christo) Col. 2:20; (2) “Buried with Christ” (suntaphentes auto) Col. 2:12; (3) “Quickened with Christ” (sunezoopoiesen to Christo) Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13; (4) “Raised with Christ” (sunegeiren) Eph. 2:6; (5) “Seated with Christ” (sunekathisen en tois epouraniois) Eph. 2:6; (6) “Hidden with Christ” (kekruptai sun to Christo) Col. 3:3; (7) “Manifested with Him in glory” (sun auto phanerothesesthe en doxe” Col. 3:4. This is the glorious gospel we have to proclaim. In it we stand “complete in him, which is the Head of all principality and power” (Col. 2:10). God asks us now to believe this record and live in its glorious reality.

What a contrast this Evangel is to “The Gospel of the Kingdom” (See Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15-18; Acts 2:38). Here there is repentance, baptism in water, and sign gifts following.

Before we could ever know or experience the blessed complete identification with Christ there must be the removal of sin and death. These gruesome facts in human life must be dealt with fully and finally. Christ dealt with the penalty or guilt of sin and death when He identified Himself with us in His incarnation, crucifixion, death and burial. He dealt with the power of sin and death when he identified Himself with us in His quickening, or made alive, that we might live in newness of life. He dealt with the place of sin and death when He identified Himself with us in His resurrection from the dead. And, finally, He dealt with the presence of sin and death when He identified Himself with us in His exalted position at the Father’s right hand and caused us to be seated and glorified with Him.

d. Its Destination

Our hope and destination are connected with Christ where He is. Concerning Christ we read: “When He raised Him from the dead and set him at His own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come” (Eph. 1:20-21). “The heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee” said Solomon to the Lord (1 Kgs. 8:27). God is seated on top of the heavens. When Christ ascended he passed through the heavens (Heb. 4:14). He “ascended up far above all heavens” (Eph. 4:10). Paul was caught away to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2). This is in keeping with Amos 9:6 – “It is he that buildeth His stories (ascensions, chambers, spheres) in the heavens.”

The Assembly, the Body of Christ, is to receive “The inheritance of the saints in light” (Col. 1:12). This could mean “The inheritance of the Holiest of all in the light”. This is none other than the unapproachable light of 1 Tim. 6:16. Our place of manifestation will be above and beyond the heavens – seated together in the super-heavenlies with Christ (Eph. 2:6).

As sure as crucifixion led to resurrection and resurrection to ascension, so ascension will lead to manifestation.

“The veil which shrouds your higher life from others, and even partly from yourselves, will then be withdrawn. The world which persecutes, despises, ignores now, will then be blinded with the dazzling glory of His revelation” – Lightfoot.

In Colossians 3:4, Paul says: “appear with Him in glory”. The word “appear” is phaneroo and means “to make apparent, to make openly known”. It is used in Col. 1:26 with reference to the manifestation of the secret. In Phil. 3:14 Paul says: “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus”. The words translated “the high calling” are tes ano kleseos and can better be translated “calling above, or on high”. “Ano” is an adverb, not an adjective – thus “calling on High”. Ano is translated “above” in John 8:23.

The Bible sets forth three spheres of future blessing: The Earth; the Heavenly City; and the Heavenly Places.

The first sphere has to do with the earth (See Zech. 14:4; Acts 1:11-12. This has to do with restored Israel as a nation among the sheep nations of the Gentiles.

The second sphere has to do with the Heavenly City, The New Jerusalem. This will be inherited by Abraham and all the overcomers, who with him have entered into the blessings of the New Covenant (See Heb. 11:10; 12:22; Rev. 21:2; 1 Thess. 4:16; 2 Thess. 2:1-3). These are the Bridal Company who inherit the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2; 22:17).

The third sphere has to do with The Church, the Body of Christ. Their hope is in the heavenlies with all its spiritual blessings (See Eph. 1:3; 1:20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12). This is the place Paul speaks of in Col. 3:4. At the moment of Christ’s manifestation, the Church will be manifested with Him in glory. The word “glory” is a rainbow colored word. It represents both the sphere and the substance of our future hope in Christ. In Ephesians and Colossians it is associated with the fullness (pleroma) of Christ. With reference to our manifestation in glory, we are: (1) To long for it (Tit. 2:13). The word translated “looking for” is prosdecomai, and means “to receive to oneself, expectant, eager, ardently waiting for”. (2) To love it (2 Tim. 4:8). The word “love” is agapao – to acquiesce with satisfaction, cherish with reverence. (3) To live for it (Phil. 3:14).

With Him in glory! O, wonderful word!
Eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard,
Mind hath not fathomed the future in store
Reserved for the children of God evermore.
Suffering over, and failure, and sin;
Like Him without, and like Him within;
Bodies made perfect, and spirits set free
We’ll share in His glory, whose glory we see.
With Him in glory! Beholding His face!
With Him in glory! O marvelous grace!
Holy and happy, and reigning in bliss,
Can there be anything greater than this?

We can also sing most heartily and truly - -

How vast the treasures we possess
In Thee, O Lord, our righteousness;
All things are ours in Christ Thy Son,
With whom Thy love hath made us one.

But there are many treasures in Christ which are searchable. The Scriptures are the treasure-house where they may be searched for and found and known and enjoyed. We may search out the love of God, expressed in the Father; the grace of God, expressed in the Son, Jesus Christ; and, the fellowship of God, expressed in His Holy Spirit. We can trace out the Father’s purpose; the Son’s love; and the Spirit’s power. We can also search out the sufferings of Christ, His resurrection, ascension, and Second Advent (Acts 17:3). But the “untrackable riches” were hid in God, and not revealed until God gave them to Paul. It is the Secret of the Church and The

Christ which constitute this “unsearchable riches of The Christ”. It has to do with Christ Mystical, or Spiritual, the glorious Head in Heaven and the member on earth in a joint-body with Him. This is the Secret.

XI. THE MYSTERY OF THE HEADSHIP OF CHRIST (Eph. 5:21-33)

See also Eph. 1:22-23; 4:15; Col. 1:18.

Paul goes back into O.T. times and takes an illustration from the marriage institution, which institution took place before the fall of man into sin. His purpose is to show that as man became the head of the woman and their union made them “one flesh”, so Christ is the Head of the Church, the Body, and they both constitute a new body.

One must not read into this passage any more than Paul has intended by the H.S. to reveal. Some find here a manifestation of the Church as the Bride of Christ. The bridal idea is not at all Paul’s purpose. He is setting forth the marriage relationship, not in the duality of Bride and Bridegroom, but in the union of “one flesh”. It is this that constitutes the type or illustration of the Church and Christ.

A. THE MARITAL RELATIONSHIP (Gen. 2:21-24)

“And they (Adam and Eve) shall be one flesh.”

The significant thing about this type is that it comes before the Fall. It is therefore a type that comes from the time of perfection. The Church is the complement of this as God’s perfect spiritual union.

1. God’s Pronouncement

“It is not good that man should be alone; I will make a helpmate for him.”

The woman is described as a “help answering to him”. Adam needed one who should be his equal. Delitzsch says: “Who by relative difference and essential equality should be his fitting complement”.

2. God’s Provision (2:21-23)

Adam was given an anesthetic by God and while he slept God became a surgeon and “took one from his side”. The Hebrew word means: “side of a man, a side chamber”. Adam was no doubt a bi-sexual individual as he came forth from God. God now removes a side chamber and forms a woman (womb-man- Anglo-Saxon).

3. God’s Purpose

“They shall be one flesh.” Out of two God made one. Someone has said: “There is here union of purpose, conjunction of bodies, community of interests and even a reciprocity of affection”. So monogamy, not polygamy, is God’s original intention as the highest form of His perfect union.

B. THE MYSTERY REVELATION (Eph. 5:30-32)

“This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.”

Here we now have the Divine commentary on this oldest institution. Herein lies the great and glorious purpose of God’s creation of man.

1. By a Divine Affection – “Christ also loved the church” (25).

God loved Adam and wanted his welfare, therefore He created Eve for him. Every blessing we get from God has come because He loved us. This is the well-spring of his nature that made His love both manifest and practical.

The love of God is a predestined love (Eph. 1:4; Jn. 15:16); a condescending love (Eph. 2:1-3; Jn. 3:16); an unmerited love (Rom. 6:23); a great love (Eph. 2:4); and an everlasting love (Jn. 13:1; Rev. 1:5).

2. By a Divine Substitution – “and gave Himself for it” (Vt. 25).

This fact speaks of redemption through His death. It meant deliverance by the payment of a price. He bought us from the marketplace of sin and from the sentence of death

(Rom. 3:19; 6:23). The price of our redemption was His own precious blood (1 Pet. 1:18,19; Eph. 1:7).

3. By a Divine Sanctification – “that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word” (Vr. 26).

The only way that there could ever be a perfect union between Christ and the sinner is that the sinner become like the Head of the Body, the Church. There is a positional sanctification which we have in the Christ the moment we believe. Then there is also an experiential sanctification through a practical walk with Him and heeding His word (Jn. 15:3).

4. By a Divine Glorification – “That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Vr.27).

When our blessed Lord shall be manifested in glory then we also shall be manifested with Him (Col. 3:4).

Adam’s side was opened to create Eve; so Christ’s side was open to create the Church. A deep sleep fell on Adam; a deep sleep of death fell on Christ. The woman was a part of Adam; so the Church is a part of Christ. Adam and Eve became one flesh; Christ and the church became one body.

XII. THE MYSTERY OF THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST (Col. 2:1-10)

“To the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father and of Christ” (Vr. 2). This has been translated in the Revised Version as follows: “To the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, even Christ.”

This secret has to do with the “fullness of the Godhead” in Christ and that in Him “are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”. This was not something that was bestowed upon Him, but that dwells in Him. There did not come a time when He assumed deity, it ever abode in Him. He became human. In Him perfect humanity and deity were combined. When Christ assumed a human body, God became something that He had never been before, namely man – the God-Man.

The saints at Colossae were in danger of a false cult called Gnosticism. It was a cult that struck full force against the Headship of Christ. They taught that God was far off and that man was separated from God by a great gulf. God was too holy to come in contact with sinful man and so He created intermediaries, or angelic beings. These angels became less and less holy until there was one who could link hands with man; that was Jesus Christ. But Paul argued that in Christ “dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (2:9).

It has been suggested that this verse can be translated as follows: “to the acknowledgement of the mystery of the God, even of the Father and of the Christ”. This suggests a dual unity of the Father and the Son, just as there is a tri-unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Divine unity and equality of the Father and the Son is something beyond human conception except as expressed by revelation from God. Jesus expressed this same dual-unity when He said: “I and my Father are one” (Jn. 10:30).

In keeping with this secret, the Godhead of Christ, Paul asked prayer of the saints “that God would open unto us a door of utterance to speak the mystery of Christ” (Col. 4:3).

XIII. THE MYSTERY OF THE SEVEN STARS (Rev. 1:20)

John had just revealed that he saw “seven golden candlesticks” and that one had “in his right hand seven stars” (Rev. 1:12,16). Now he tells us that “the seven candlesticks ... are the seven churches” and the “seven stars are the angels of the seven churches”.

Dr. E. W. Bullinger says (“Apocalypse” pg. 67) “The chief officer was the “Ruler of the synagogue” and after him came “The Angel of the Assembly” who was the mouthpiece of the

congregation. Hence his title; because, as the messenger of the assembly, he spoke to God for them.

The seven epistles addressed to The Seven Churches (Rev. Chs. 2&3) are addressed to the angels personally; yet the content seems addressed to the human members of the assemblies.

Can it be possible that in that last dread “Day of the Lord” when Satanic influence will be so great, that the only organized and established churches on earth will be these seven assemblies? It seems that these churches are the only ones who have lampstands in heaven with heavenly authority and power to defend them from the overwhelming attacks of Satan.

Angels are used by God to minister to Israel (Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2; 1 Cor. 4:9; Heb. 1:13-14). Satan has his angels who look after the nations (Dan. 10:13). These “stars” or angels are the heavenly custodians of the churches and the channel of the message to these churches.

In Rev. 12:3 the “Great Red Dragon” has seven heads and seven crowns. There will be in this day the regimentation of the Devil’s forces into seven regiments, each with a celestial officer agreeing with Dan. 7:7-8. Thus God will counter Satan’s attack upon the assemblies with seven heavenly beings. This is the great secret.

XIV. THE MYSTERY OF BABYLON (Rev. Chs. 17 & 18)

“And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” ... “And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.” “And the Woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth” (17:5,7,18).

Babylon as represented in these two chapters is both a political, commercial city; and also a wicked religious system. The first is represented by a beast and the second by a woman.

Babylon is almost as old as the human race. It had its beginning in Gen. 10:8-10; 11:1-9. It was the great city in the days of Daniel (Dan. 4:28-30; 5:1-31). We believe that this ancient city will be rebuilt on the banks of the Euphrates River in present day Iraq. It was never as completely destroyed as portrayed by the prophets; therefore it must be restored (See Isa. 13:19-20; Jer. 50:3,8,13,39,40; 51:6,26,43,45; 25:17-26, 30-33). The root of all evil in Babylon goes back to the days of Cain (Gen. 4:16-24). Here in Cain’s posterity and in Rev. Chs. 17-18 can be seen such things as great merchandising, musical achievements, mechanical developments, and gleeful murder.

In 17:1-7 John gives The Identification of the city and system; in 17:8-18 he gives the Interpretation of the symbols; and in 18:1-24 he portrays The Indignation of God upon the city and system.

It was no mystery that Babylon, the city, would be rebuilt for that is prophesied in Isaiah and Jeremiah as we have seen. Neither was the “beast” a mystery for that was foretold by Daniel (Ch. 7). Also the idea of harlotry in Israel was no secret (See Isa. 1:21; Nah. 3:4). But never before had it been revealed that the whole world would support apostate Israel in utmost splendor in a rebuilt Babylon on the border of the land promised to Abraham (Gen. 15:18). The blessings which God promised to an obedient and faithful Israel would come upon the nations, including the headship of the nations (See. Deut. 28:1-13). This would all come about while apostate Israel was repudiating all God’s laws, the means of righteousness, and practicing the ancient Satanic doctrines, rites, ceremonies and magical practices. This is what is called: “The mother of harlots and abominations of the earth”. Harlotry has been connected with idolatry, the worst sin in the sight of God (See Isa. 1:21 with 2:20; Jer. 5:7; Ezek. 16:29-31, 35-36; Micah 1:7). The Devil has always sought worship. He said: “I will be like the most High” (Isa. 14:14). He offered all the kingdoms of the world to Christ if He would fall down and worship him (Matt. 4:9). From the first Babel under Nimrod to the last under Antichrist in revived Babylon, idolatry has spawned all

the sins mentioned here in Rev. Chs. 17-18. All cults and false religions will one day head up under this wicked ecclesiastical system in political and commercial Babylon. "They worshipped the dragon" (Rev. 13:4) will be culmination of idolatry. Babylon introduces a systemized idolatry of the human race. Babylon is always used in connection with the work of the Devil. This woman is the "mother of idolatry". In the great final climax of Babylon she is seen as "the habitation of demons, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird" (Rev. 18:2).

XV. THE MYSTERY OF GOD (Rev. 10:7; see also 15:1; 16:17)

The result of the sounding of the sixth trumpet revealed mankind with a heart like that of Belshazzar (See Rev. 9:13-21; Dan. 5:17-31). The close parallel between Revelation and Daniel makes one feel that judgment of a severe nature and without remedy is imminent. The kingdoms of this world are to pass under the blessed sway of Christ the Lord (11:15). Before the seventh angel sounds and the proclamation of Heaven's King is made, two most solemn episodes intervene: "The mighty angel" with "The Little Book" and the "Two Witnesses".

The "mighty angel" who is characterized as: (1) Clothed with a cloud of glory; (2) Rainbow upon his head; (3) Face like the sun, and (4) Feet as pillars of fire, is thought by some to be Christ. But the word "other" indicates that it could not. This word comes from the Greek word "allos", which means "another of the same kind". This "mighty angel" has "a little book open" which occurs four times in this chapter (Vrs. 2,8,9,10). The occurrence of the number four here indicates the world wide scope of the mystery to be revealed. The planting of the angel's feet on the sea and the land also indicates the world-wide scope of his performance

The phrase "should be time no longer" is better translated "delay no longer". It could not mean that time would cease, for this is The Lord's Day of The Great Tribulation. However, there is a time element that enters into this mystery. God is now going to reveal what He did not reveal in Acts 1:6 with reference to the question of the time of the restoration of the kingdom. Israel was rejecting the Messiah and His message, so the kingdom went into abeyance or mystery form. But now it is revealed.

This revelation is the secret revealed by God to the prophets of old concerning "The Day of the Lord" (Amos 3:7; Isa. 13:6-11; Zeph. 3:8; Zech. 14:1-9. This will be the day when God will "finish" His wrath upon all the wicked (Rev. 10:7; 15:1; 16:17) and save His people Israel. In the day when the seventh angel shall sound (11:15) they will be completed, for his sounding will call forth the pouring of the seven vials of God's wrath, His vengeance upon the earth, and answer the cry of the martyr's blood.

The "mystery of God" will be finished when He arises and shows Himself. This revelation has to do with Israel and the world as revealed by the O.T. prophets. The answer is in Ps. 94:1, "O Lord God, to Whom belongeth vengeance, show thyself. Lift up Thyself, Thou judge of the earth". In "The Day of the Lord" "when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth (Isa. 2:21), this secret of God will be finished.

LESSON #13 – THE PRINCIPLE OF DIVINE WILL IN REVELATION

INTRODUCTION :

Definition – It is that Principle of Interpretation by which God gives all necessary explanation in the finite realm; but confines Himself to a mere declaration of fact in the infinite.

By this principle God wants to teach finite beings to walk by faith in the unexplained infinite. When God speaks of infinite things He doesn't give any explanation, because finite beings could no more understand the explanation of an infinite fact than they could understand the infinite fact itself. There are many infinite facts that are merely stated in Scripture.

I. THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

“In the beginning God” (Gen. 1:1). “The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God” (Ps. 14:1). When the Word of God opens it merely states a fact of God's existence. It is silent about God's beginning and his nature.

Usually a treatise of the Doctrine of God begins by giving proof of God's existence, His nature, and attributes. But here the Word is silent. How God ever came into being in the first place is a matter of absolute silence. As far as our mind can comprehend, everything must have a beginning. We can't conceive of anything not having a beginning.

The Word of God is silent on such matters as man would have written about; and reveals such matters as man would leave out. Man would certainly have written about what Paul saw in “the third heaven” (2 Cor. 12:1-4). But God has kept this in silence, at least until such time as He sees fit to reveal it. On the other hand man would certainly have omitted from Abraham's life his lies about his wife (Gen. 12:10-13; 20:1-2). He also would have omitted the sins of drunkenness and impropriety in the life of Noah (Gen. 9:20-23). Man would also have omitted the sin of Moses when he smote the rock twice instead of speaking to it (Num 20:7-11). And he would have omitted the sins of adultery and murder in the life of David (2 Sam. 11:2-17).

So the existence of God is an infinite fact that God has not revealed to us, and we are to accept it by faith and not speculate about it.

II. THE MYSTERY OF THE TRINITY

“In the beginning God (Elohim).” Elohim is a uni-plural noun (Gen. 1:1). “Go to, let US go down” (Gen. 11:7).

“The name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19). See also Luke 3:22; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:2.

The Bible declares the fact of a Trinity – One God, revealed in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Bible does not explain this mystery, but it certainly assumes it.

Man himself is a trinity – “spirit and soul and body” (1 Thess. 5:23). This is unexplainable. Water which is a liquid oxide of hydrogen (H₂O) can be seen in three forms – liquid, solid, and vapor.

Here is a Biblical fact for faith to accept.

III. THE MYSTERY OF THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST

“I will set up thy seed after thee” (David) 2 Sam. 7:12. “I will be His Father, and he shall be my son” 2 Sam. 7:14.

Here we have the two natures of Christ set forth – David’s seed, the human seed of Mary, and God’s Son, the Divine, by the Holy Spirit.

“Thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son”, “He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest” (Luke 1:31-32. Mary’s son and God’s son.

“Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: ... and took on Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men” (Phil. 2:6-7). Here is a mystery, God and man in the same person, Jesus Christ.

Christ came into this world with this dual nature – Divine and human. Jesus went to a fig tree to gather figs because He was human; He cursed the fruitless tree because he was Divine (Matt. 21:17-20). He was resting in a boat because He was a man; He arose and stilled the waves and the wind because He was Divine (Matt. 8:23-27). At the tomb of Lazarus He wept because he was human; He called Lazarus forth from the dead because He was Divine (Jn. 11:35,43). He was hungry because He was human (Luke 4:2); He fed the multitudes because He was Divine (Jn. 6:10-13).

The two natures, human and divine in Christ, are a mystery and a fact for faith. They cannot be explained.

IV. THE FACTS OF DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY AND THE HUMAN FREE AGENCY

Here theologians and denominations have found a battleground for much discussion and separation. Some have emphasized the one at the expense of the other, and vice versa.

The sovereignty of God in salvation is seen in such verses as John 6:44,65 – “No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him”. “No man can come unto me except it were given him of my Father.” The free agency of man is seen in John 5:40; Rom. 10:11,13 – “And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life”. “Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

The Bible sets forth both the sovereignty of God and free agency of man; and never tries to reconcile them. They can be likened to two separate walls that meet at the top with the roof. God can reconcile them, but not man.

Application:

Never speak of things about which there is nothing written. This becomes merely speculation. Speculation is not revelation, nor is it interpretation.

Never draw any lurid, gruesome pictures of the Lake of Fire and its occupants (Rev. 19:20; 20:10,14,15; 21:8). This fearful place was created “for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41). The “tares”, the seed of the Devil will be burned in this fire (Matt. 13:40). All “them which do iniquity” will be cast into this fire where there is “wailing and gnashing of teeth” (Matt. 13:41-42). Many have let their imaginations run rampant on this subject and bring the Word of God into disrepute. Remember that the Hebrew word sheol, and the Greek word hades, translated also hell, are not the same place as The Lake of Fire.

There is only one statement that Jesus made between His birth and His public ministry – “How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business” (Luke 2:49). In the Apocryphal books we have one entitled, The Gospel of the Infancy. Here there is recorded various miracles which Jesus was supposed to have performed as a child. He turned children into kids, killed his teacher, brought water in his cloak, dyed all cloth different colors in one dye vat, palm trees bowed for Him, in Egypt idols fall down before Him, etc. etc.

It isn’t what we read in the Bible, but what we read into the Bible that makes all the trouble.

LESSON #14 - THE APPLICATION PRINCIPLE

INTRODUCTION:

Definition: It is that principle of Biblical Interpretation that makes an application only after a correct setting of the text has been made.

The O.T. Scriptures were written for us, but not necessarily to us or about us (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:6). After giving a passage its true setting and proper interpretation, then we may use it for the purpose of example and application.

The Bible is first and foremost a spiritual revelation; so without spirituality it is impossible to understand its contents and rightly interpret its various parts (1 Cor. 2:13-16). The need for interpretation indicates a misunderstanding or a liability to misunderstanding. Many object to hermeneutics being applied to Scripture on the ground that it is a spiritual Book. Interpretation is needed not because of the Book, but because of man's fallibility. Sin has marred even our mental capacities to understand God's revelation.

I. REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERPRETING SCRIPTURE

1. Common Sense

Someone has said that if a person lacks knowledge he can get that, and if he lacks religion he can get that also; but if he lacks common sense he has no where to go.

Every person may not be equally endowed, but all people have some degree of common sense and as it is employed it will increase.

Common sense is simply the ability to discover harmony in things that agree and to distinguish things that differ (Phil. 1:10). To a man devoid of common sense there would be no difference between Christianity and Mohammedanism; there would be no difference between Law and Grace, and no difference between truth and error.

We must begin with the knowledge and understanding that God has given and not come to the Bible with a speculative mind.

2. Faith in the Inspiration of the Bible

We must believe that the Scriptures are God's Word. We must believe that they are infallible as given by God and that we are fallible. Therefore there can be no contradictions in God's Word; the contradictions being with us and our inability to understand. If one doesn't believe that the Bible is God's Word, then he will put more dependence on human reason than Divine revelation.

3. Perpetual Mental Industry

God has told us to "study" and there is absolutely no substitute for this (2 Tim. 2:15). "Study" says W. Graham Scroggie "is brain sweat". Search the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11).

4. Obedience to the Word

Knowledge and understanding will come to us in the measure that we are obedient to God's Word (Rom. 16:19,25-26). If we rebel and refuse to obey what God has said, we will remain in ignorance.

5. Purity of Life

The Bible is a spiritual book. It is God's Holy Word. We must strive for experiential holiness in order to understand the Word. The Word cleanses, and as we obey it, it will purify our lives (Jn. 15:3; 17:17; Eph. 5:25-26).

6. Knowledge of Contemporary History

A knowledge of the nations mentioned in the Bible will enhance an understanding of the times. Such nations are Assyria, Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, Syria, Egypt, etc. All of these will throw light upon the Bible, as God's people came in contact with these nations. The Bible is an eastern Book, and its oriental setting will help in understanding much of its content.

7. Customs of Bible Lands

Many of the manners, customs, and modes of speech are what they were in Abraham's time. Life in the East is most uniform. The copper ewer or basin with which the girded slave (John 13:4) washes the feet is the same size and pattern in every home. The material, style, and color of a woman's dress are the same as that worn by all women of her station from time immemorial.

Fields are divided by boundary lines of stones loosely piled up on a wide base. Other land marks are also used. Barley harvest proceeds wheat harvest by about two weeks. The early rains come in October-November; the latter rains in March-April (Deut. 11:14; James 5:7). The summer is dry with scorching winds from the desert. Crops are carried to a thrashing floor, which is a bare exposed surface of rock. Threshing is done by the feet or oxen, or by heavier sledges having sharp pieces of iron or basalt. Winnowing is done by tossing the mass of grain and chaff before the wind. Sifting is necessary to remove stones, dirt and weeds.

Houses have flat roofs. The streets are always filled with diverse scenes, such as blind men, beggars, lepers, water-sellers, etc. In the home guests recline at meals. People usually sit to do their work. Often the animals live with the people in the same large room. The wild flowers and grass of the fields are used for fuel.

8. Expect to Understand the Bible

Many regard the Bible as a sealed Book, not to be fully understood. And if it is understood, then only by an initiated class of priests (Eph. 3:3-4; Col. 3:16; 1 Thess. 5:27; 2 Tim. 3:14-16). Ignorance of the Word is sin against both self and God. The Scriptures were written that we might know (John 8:31-32; 20:31).

II. HINDRANCES FOR PROPER INTERPRETATION

1. Human Applause and Appeasement

Many have been decoyed from the truth because of human applause and to seek human favor. The Truth will never be popular with some people. It will bring opposition and often persecution. Vanity on the one hand and flattery on the other can be hindrances to interpretation and application of the Truth. The honor of man, either personal or for others, will always be a hindrance to the Truth.

2. Incoherent Bible Study

This has been called "The hop-skip and jump method". Here one studies the Bible without regularity or system. One is apt to study some favorite book, chapter, or verses. The Bible should be studied by books. Begin at the beginning as one would do in reading any other book.

3. Sectarian Creeds can be a hindrance

Men set up their creeds or tenets of belief in what they think the Bible teaches. Many interpret and apply the Word in the light and for the delight of denominational teaching.

III. METHODS THAT PREVENT PROPER INTERPRETATION

There are some methods of great value in Bible Study, but there are also some that will lead the Bible student astray.

1. The Mystical Method

This originated in heathenism, and came by the way of priesthood. It declares that only men specially endowed and inspired by the Spirit can interpret Scripture. It removes the Bible from the common man. Scriptures have been taken completely out of context and interpreted to mean something else than originally meant.

2. The Allegorical Method

This method takes the words of the Bible to mean something else than they mean. It puts a secondary meaning to the Word. So that everything one reads means something else than intended by the Spirit. Clement of Alexandria (150-220?) a Greek theologian and Church Father has a definition of this method as follows: "Did you ever read a book of dreams, or a dream book? You dream of a dog and it means one thing and you dream of a snake and it means something else." So the Bible needs interpretation just as a dream needs interpretation. According to Clement when one reads of swine in the Bible, it doesn't mean swine but something voluptuous or unclean. An eagle stands for robbery, a raven stands for greed, and a hog stands for injustice. So the Bible can mean anything that men make it mean.

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) a Swedish philosopher and religious writer adopted this theory. To him every statement in the Bible has a meaning such as no sane person would gather from the Bible. This is supposed to be a spiritual interpretation given by some inner light. Some people always equate Jerusalem and Zion with Heaven and make these earthly places mean something never intended by the Scriptures.

3. The Rationalistic Method

This is the method of unbelief. Nature is here the standard and reason is the guide. If the Bible can be made to harmonize with human reason it is all right, otherwise it is mystical. Only that which harmonizes with reason is valid. Here there is no room for faith. Reason is the standard and guide.

4. The Apologetic Method

This false method maintains the absolute perfection of every statement in the Bible. This is the other extreme of the Rationalistic Method. By the Apologetic Method everything in the Bible is regarded as coming directly from God.

The Devil said to Eve: "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4). This is a record of what the Devil said; but it is not from God. Much in the Bible is an inspired record of what the enemies of God said. David committed the sins of adultery and murder, but that does not make him our standard. Abraham and Isaac lied about their wives which lies were sins.

This method takes for granted that if a man was once inspired he is always inspired. It is not the man that is inspired but the record is inspired.

5. The Literal Method

This method takes everything in the Bible literally. But much in the Bible is written in figurative language. When Jesus said: "Take my yoke upon you" He was not speaking of a literal physical yoke (Matt. 11:29). This is a metaphor, in which one thing represents another. The "Yoke of the Law" was a common phrase among the rabbis to express the burdensome nature of its ordinances and traditions (See Acts 15:10). Isaiah says: "All flesh is as grass" (40:6; 1 Pet. 1:24). This is a figure of speech called simile, where one thing resembles another. In Psalm 22:6, the Psalmist says of our Lord: "I am a worm and no man". This is a figure called Meiosis, or a belittling. This figure denotes a much greater depth of humility and affliction than words can express.

IV. THE APPLICATION PRINCIPLE DEMONSTRATED

Second Samuel chapter nine is the story of Mephibosheth and David, in which a lost soul of the House of Saul is taken from his condition of guilt through grace to glory in David's household.

1. The Historical Setting

Before making any application of a text one must be honest with the historical setting of the story. This story takes us back to Saul, Jonathan and David. From the day that David killed the giant Goliath and the Hebrew maidens sang: "Saul hath slain his thousands and David his ten thousands" (1 Sam. 18:7-8) Saul was very angry. Saul then became the bitterest enemy of David. He sought to take his life twice, hunting and hounding him as a wild beast in the wilderness (1 Sam. Chs.24,25). But David never retaliated, but instead spared Saul and showed him kindness.

David and Jonathan formed a love covenant which never was broken: "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David and Jonathan loved him as his own soul" (1 Sam. 18:1). This covenant issued out in another covenant: "But also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house forever; no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth" (1 Sam. 20:15).

Then when David had made an end of war and established his throne in Jerusalem he enquires if there is not one left of the House of Saul that he may fulfill his covenant with Jonathan. He discovers a servant of Saul named Ziba, who tells him of Mephibosheth, living in Lo-debar, in the house of one Machir, son of Ammiel. David then sends for this lame man and brings him to his palace at Jerusalem where he found favor with David. His land is restored and he eats continually at the king's table all his life.

So much for the historical setting; now we are ready for the spiritual application.

2. The Spiritual Sequel

David is here a type of Christ and Mephibosheth of the condemned sinner. God's wonderful purpose and program in Christ takes us from a condition of condemnation, through His compassion, unto a glorious coronation.

So Mephibosheth comes to David:

a. By Way of Condemnation – He was "lame on his feet" (2 Sam.4:4). He was lame because of the fall of another (2 Sam. 4:4). This reminds of Rom 5:12,6). He was lame on both his feet (2 Sam. 9:13), totally incapacitated to walk. Every sinner is totally incapacitated to walk in the path of God's righteousness.

He was a homeless man. Machir means "sold" and Lo-debar means "no pasture". "No peace" and "no pasture" spells homelessness. He was in the house of bondage (Rom 7:14). Redemption is God's way of purchasing us out of bondage (Isa. 61:1).

He was also a hopeless man. He says of himself: "such a dead dog as I am" (Vr. 8). God had utterly rejected Saul and all his house. There is nothing good said about a dog in Scripture, and a dead dog is certainly worthless. (See Deut. 23:18; Rev. 22:15; Tit. 1:15; 1:16; Phil. 3:2; Ps. 22:20,16; Isa. 56:11; Matt. 7:6; 15:27). Rom. 3:10,23 shows our condition as a natural man outside of Christ.

b. By Way of Compassion – David now redeems his promise and reveals his grace and mercy. It came first through his word (Vrs.1,4). "And God said" and there came forth a regenerated creation. "God called unto Adam" and there was hope for fallen man (Gen. Ch. 1; 3:9). It is by the Word of God that faith cometh and that we are regenerated (Rom. 10:17; 1 Pet. 1:23).

The way of David was to send his chariots over mountains and deserts and bring this lame man to his palace (Vr. 5). God has acted when He sent His only begotten Son to earth (Jn. 3:16).

The will of David was to show him kindness (Vr. 7). Mephibosheth had nothing to expect, but on the will of another he came into this blessing (Eph. 2:7; Rom. 11:36). All is for the glory of Christ.

c. By Way of Coronation – His portion was first everlasting peace. He dwelt in Jerusalem, the City of Peace (Vr. 13). Christ is our peace (Eph. 2:14,17). He had everlasting plenty. He sat continually at the king's table (Vr. 13). Our riches are in The Heavens (Eph. 1:3; 2:7). As Mephibosheth came from absolute poverty to plenty, so do we. But Mephibosheth remained "lame on both feet (Vr. 13); so we will have the old nature until the resurrection. But let's keep the lame feet under the table of God's blessing. The riches of grace saved us; the exceeding riches set us in the Heavens with Christ.

LESSON # 15 – THE PROGRESSIVE MENTION PRINCIPLE

INTRODUCTION:

Definition: It is that principle by which God makes His revelation of any given truth increasingly clear as the Word proceeds to its consummation.

In his book: "The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament" Bernard says: "The reality of this progress is very visible; and more especially so when we regard the New Testament as the last stage of that progressive teaching which is carried on through the Scriptures as a whole. Glance from the first words to the last, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth'; 'Even so come, Lord Jesus'. How much lies between these two! The one, the first rudiment of revelation addressed to the earliest and simplest consciousness of man, that namely, which comes to him through his senses, the consciousness of the material world which lies in its grandeur round him; the other the last cry from within, the voice of the heart of man, such as the intervening teaching has made it; the expression of the definite faith which has been found and of the certain hope which has been left by the whole revelation of God. The course of teaching which carries us from the one to the other is progressive throughout, but with different rates of progress in the two stages which divide it. In the Old Testament the progress is protracted, interrupted, often languid, sometimes so dubious as to seem like retrogression. Accession takes place in sundry parts, in divers manners, at times under disguises of earthly forms, seeming to suggest mistakes, which have to be themselves corrected. Yet through it all the doctrine grows, and the revelation draws nearer to the great disclosure. Then there is entire suspension. We turn the vacant page which represents the silence of 400 years, and we are in the New Testament. Now again there is progress, but rapid and unbroken. Our steps before were centuries; now they are but years. From the manger of Bethlehem on earth to the city of God coming down from heaven the great scheme of things unrolls before us without a break. It is in harmony with processes of nature and with human feelings, that preparations should be slowly matured; but that final results should rapidly unfold. When life becomes intense it can no longer endure delays, or develop itself by languid progression. The root was long before it showed the token of its presence, the stem and leaves grew slowly; but yesterday the bud emerged from its sheath, and today it is expanded in the flower. A swift course of events, the period of one human life, a few contemporary writers have given us all the gospel that we need to know under our present dispensation, all that we shall ever know until Jesus comes again."

The way in which the Bible is written should cause us to see that this method is the best method in Bible study. The Bible is a Book of Books, and came to man book by book. So we must begin with Genesis and go on to Revelation. Many are ignorant of much of the N.T. because they have never studied the O.T. The Bible books are a progressive revelation of God's redemptive process for man down thru the ages and in His various dispensational dealings.

We will now look at some examples of The Progressive Mention Principle:

I. CONCERNING CHRIST “THE SEED OF THE WOMAN”

1. Genesis 3:15 – Here we have the revelation that Christ is to be the Seed of the woman. This Seed is to be bruised in the heel by the seed of the Serpent; and in turn this Seed will bruise the Serpent’s head. So Christ is to be born of a woman. This revelation carries us on for some 2,000 years.

2. Genesis 12:3; 22:18 – A revelation is now given to Abraham that his seed is the promised one that shall bless all nations. So now the Seed narrows down from the human race to one man and his posterity.

3. Genesis 17:19; 21:12 – Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. God now reveals that His covenant of a seed will come through Isaac.

4. Genesis 28:3-4,14 – Isaac also has two sons, Esau and Jacob. But the promise goes to Jacob and his seed.

5. Genesis 49:10; Num. 24:17 – Jacob had twelve sons, and now the promise is that the blessing shall come upon Judah and out of him shall the seed come.

6. 2 Samuel 7:12-16 – The revelation of the seed narrows down and now we learn that it will come from the house of David. See also Isa. 7:13-14; Matt. 1:6; Luke 3:31.

7. Daniel 9:25-26 – Here we have a revelation concerning when Christ would be born.

8. Micah 5:2 – Here we are told that the Seed would be born at Bethlehem of Judah.

9. Zechariah 9:9 – Here we are told that the Seed would ride into Jerusalem, riding upon a colt.

10. Zechariah 11:11-13 – Here we have the prediction that one would be sold for thirty pieces of silver. See also Matt. 26:14-16; 27:3.

11. Malachi 3:1-2 – Here we are told that the Messiah will be preceded by a forerunner.

12. Psalms 22 – Here we see the manner of His death and that there would not be a bone of Him broken.

13. Psalms 16 – God here revealed to David both the resurrection and ascension of Christ.

II. CONCERNING CHRIST AS THE LAMB OF GOD

The record of the lamb is woven into the very texture of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation.

1. Genesis 4:4 – Abel, we are told, brought of “the firstlings of his flock”. This was presumably a lamb. All we are told is that he brought it, but most likely he also made it a sacrifice. This Jehovah accepted.

2. Genesis 22:13 – Here is the story of Abraham and Isaac journeying to Mt. Moriah, where Abraham was told to sacrifice his son. But in the last moment, God provided a sacrifice, a substitution for Isaac.

3. Exodus Ch. 12 – Here we have the death of the lamb, and the application of blood. A type of crucifixion.

4. Isaiah 53:7 – Now for the first time in Scripture the lamb is a man – a Man slain for the salvation of God’s people. He was a Man of sorrows. He is led as a lamb to the slaughter.

5. John 1:29-33 – John the Baptist now identifies the Lamb of God coming toward him by the bank of the Jordan River, when he says: “Behold the Lamb of God.”

6. Acts 8:26-39 – Philip is sent from Samaria to the road that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza to meet an Ethiopian eunuch, who is reading Isaiah chapter fifty-three. Now for the first time the lamb prophesied by Isaiah is identified as Jesus, the Savior of Calvary.

7. 1 Pet. 1:18-21 – Here Peter gives us the great doctrines concerning the Lamb of God. He reveals (a) The Foreordination of the Lamb; (b) The Manifestation of the Lamb; (c) The Resurrection of the Lamb; (d) The Glorification of the Lamb.

8. Revelation 5:11-12 – Here the Lamb is identified with the Lion of the Tribe of Judah; and His coronation is revealed by the hosts of Heaven.

9. Rev. 5:5-7; 6:1 – It is the Lamb alone Who is worthy to open the seven-sealed book.

10. Rev. 22:3 – This is the last reference to the Lamb in a book that truly can be called The Book of the Lamb. From Rev. 5:6 to 22:3 there are twenty-eight references to the Lamb. In this last passage the Lamb is glorified on the “throne of God”.

In Genesis Ch. 4 we have the Lamb for an individual.

In Exodus Ch. 12 we have the Lamb for a household.

In Leviticus Ch. 16 we have a Lamb for a nation.

In John Ch.1 we have a Lamb for the world.

All the O.T. sacrifices were both typical and educational regarding the Lamb of God, the Redeemer of the world. The sacrifice must be a Man, and that Man must be sinless, perfect, and holy. God could never be content with the mere blood of beasts. The sacrifice must be His infinite Son.

III. CONCERNING THE TRINITY OF THE GODHEAD

1. Genesis 1:1 – The word “God” is in the Hebrew Elohim. It is a uni-plural noun. In the Hebrew language we have singular, dual, and plural. Here it is in the plural, meaning more than two. Gen. 1:1 gives us the first hint of a trinity of Persons in the One Godhead.

2. Genesis 1:26; 11:7; Isaiah 6:8 – In these passages we have the plural pronoun “us”. This is a further intimation of the Trinity.

3. Matthew 3:16-17 – The O.T. gave us hints and intimations of the Trinity; but now in the N.T. we get the full revelation. Here we have the Son, Jesus, in baptism, the voice of the Father and the Spirit descending in the form of a dove.

4. Matthew 28:19 – Here the Apostles are told to go out and disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

5. 2 Corinthians 13:14 – Paul’s triune benediction in the Lord Jesus Christ, God and the Holy Spirit. The three Persons of the Godhead.

IV. CONCERNING PREDICTIONS OF SATAN

1. He is called “the serpent” (Gen. 3:1; 3:2; 3:14).

2. He is the “subtil” one (Gen. 3:1; 2 Cor. 11:3).

3. He is the liar (Gen. 3:4; John 8:44).

4. He is the tempter (Gen. 3:1-4; Matt. 4:1-11).

5. He is the accuser (Job 1:9-11; 2:4-5).

6. He is the hinderer (Zech. 3:1-2; 1 Thess. 2:18).

7. He is the sifter (Luke 22:31).

8. He is the instigator of lies (Acts 5:1-11).

9. He is the worker of satanic “power and signs and lying wonders” (2 Thess. 2:9).

10. He is called “the dragon” (Rev. 13:4; 20:2).

11. He is called “the great dragon” (Rev. 12:9).

12. He is called the “old serpent, the devil, and Satan” (Rev. 12:9; 20:2).

13. He is the leader of rebellion (Rev. 7-9).

LESSON #16 - THE FULL MENTION PRINCIPLE

INTRODUCTION:

Definition: It is that principle in which God declares His full revelation upon a subject vital to salvation and sanctification.

There are many scattered fragments of truth scattered throughout the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit will take many of them and give them an exhaustive treatment. If there is a repetition of a subject it is always for a reason; God does not repeat without a reason.

We have two summaries to TEMPTATION (1 Cor. Ch. 10; and James Ch. 1). In 1 Cor. Ch. 10 we have the thought of Escaping Temptation; and in James Ch. 1 we have Enduring Temptation.

I. EXAMPLES OF SUMMARIES IN SCRIPTURE

1. The Law of Moses (Exodus Ch. 20).
2. Vicarious Sacrifice (Isaiah Ch. 53).
3. Principles of the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. Chs. 5-7).
4. Righteousness by faith (Rom. 3:10-21).
5. Restoration of Israel (Romans Ch. 11).
6. The Resurrection (1 Cor. Ch. 15).
7. Godly repentance (2 Cor. Ch. 7).
8. Christian Giving (2 Cor. Chs. 8-9).
9. The Church – Body of Christ (Eph. Chs. 1-3).
10. Nature of the God-Man (Hebrews Chs. 1-2).
11. Trials and Triumphs of Faith (Hebrews Ch. 11).
12. Godly discipline (Hebrews 12:1-11).
13. The Evils and End of Babylon (Revelation Chs. 17-18).

II. EXPOSITION OF SUMMARIES IN SCRIPTURE (1 Cor. Ch. 13)

This chapter summarizes God's revelation concerning the subject of love. D.L. Moody is reported as saying that this chapter should be read in church every Sunday.

There is a tradition that during his last days, the Apostle John gathered his disciples to give them a last message. He said, in tenderness: "Little children love one another". But they said: "Father, you have said that from the beginning. Haven't you something else for us?" He answered again with increased tenderness: "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. ... A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you". "Ah, but you are going away. Give us some new commandment tonight." And he said: "Little children love one another."

All other commandments are summed up and united in love.

The gifts mentioned in 1 Cor. Chs. 12 and 14 are a manifestation of the power of God; but the gift of love in chapter 13 is a manifestation of the nature of God. Someone has said: "Love is acting like God".

1. Comparisons with Love (Vrs. 1-3)

a. With the gift of speech (Vr. 1) – Without love the speech of man and angels is "as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal". The language of men and angels is no substitute for love. It was said of Jesus Christ that: "never man spake like this man" (John 7:46). But then no one ever loved like Christ.

b. With the gift of prophecy (Vr. 2) – This is a supreme gift; tongues is the lowest. Here one shares the truth of God's revelation.

c. With the gift of the mysteries (Vr.2) – The world is full of enigmas and mysteries. But the knowledge of them is not as great as having a life of love.

d. With the gift of all knowledge (Vr.2) – We may have the wisdom of a Solomon, or be able to speak fully on any scientific subject. But this is not as great as love.

e. With the gift of all faith (Vr. 2) – Even such faith that would remove mountains is nothing unless captivated and motivated by love. Note the expressions – “All mysteries, All knowledge, All faith”.

f. With the greatest philanthropy (Vr. 3) – The selling and distributing of one’s goods is nothing without love.

g. With the supreme sacrifice (Vr. 3) – The giving of one’s own life is the greatest personal sacrifice. But even this without love is worthless.

The Holy Spirit through Paul reveals that love must be supreme in all our utterances (Vr. 1); in all our understandings (Vr. 2); and in our undying devotion (Vr. 3). So all earthly or even Godly wisdom and wealth are nothing without love.

2. Characteristics of Love (4-7)

In these verses there are some fifteen characteristics of love that are mentioned. Love is both a regulator and restrainer of life.

a. “Love suffereth long” (Vr. 4) – Remarkable isn’t it that suffering is the first quality of love mentioned. God is love and no one ever suffered as He did. As long as there is sin and Satan there will be suffering. Love never wears out. It was Tyndale (English reformer and martyr 1492-1536) who said: “Take away my goods, take away my good name, yet so long as Christ dwells in my heart, so long shall I love you not a whit the less.” The love of Christ endured the mockery, the spittle, the scourging, the crown, and the nails and then said: “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). Love is never impulsive, but patient.

b. “And is kind” (Vr. 4) – Love is never inconsiderate, but benevolent. Longsuffering is a passive quality; kindness an active. It renders gracious, well-disposed service to others. Longsuffering and kindness often go together – Gal. 5:22; Rom. 2:4; 2 Cor. 6:6; Col. 3:12.

c. “Love envieth not” – Love is not jealous. Envy is like rust on iron; it wears one out. Love says: “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). There is no other possible way of obtaining victory over envy. Envy is an abominable and universal sin. It was envy that delivered Christ into the hands of his enemies. It is the source of every evil work. It kills contentment.

d. “Love vaunteth not itself” (Vr. 4) – “Love makes no parade” says Moffat. “Love is not forward and self-assertive” says Weymouth. Love does not show off. The original word means “a boaster, a braggart”. The idea of this word is superiority over others; and is connected with contempt or disregard for others. Ostentation desires to gain the applause of others.

e. “Is not puffed up” (Vr. 4) – “Gives itself no airs” says Moffat. Love is not susceptible to flattery. Our Lord could say: “I am meek and lowly in heart” (Matt. 11:29). The original word means “to inflate with pride and vanity and self-esteem”. A Dr. Frost once prayed: “Lord make me humble, but if you do, don’t let me know it because I will be proud of it.” “Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth” (2 Cor. 10:18). “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble” (James 4:6). See what the Lord says about proud nations – Isa. 25:11; Jer. 50:31; Ezek. 30:6; Dan. 4:30).

f. “Doth not behave itself unseemly” (Vr. 5) – Love is never rude, coarse, vulgar, or offensive. It is courteous by instinct and not by training. It will make us “walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called” (Eph. 4:1). A regenerated disposition will be kind courteous, never rash. His conduct will correspond to every rule of respectability and decorum.

g. “Seeketh not her own” (Vr. 5) – It seeks the good of others. Our Lord sought not His own, but always the will of the Father (Luke 22:42; John 5:43). The prophet said: “Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not” (Jer. 45:5).

“Measure thy life by loss instead of gain;
Not by wine drunk, but by the wine poured forth;
For life’s strength standeth in its sacrifice,
And whoso gives the most hath most to give.”

h. “Is not easily provoked” (Vr. 5) – “Never irritated” says Moffat. Love is not touchy. Love never goes around with a chip on the shoulder challenging someone to knock it off. Love governs the temper. Love, can on occasion, be filled with holy wrath; but there is a difference between righteous anger and irritability. The blood thirsty Saul of Tarsus was changed by God’s transforming grace in his very nature and wrote this hymn of love.

i. “Thinketh no evil” (Vr. 5) – It could also be translated, “Taketh no account of evil”. Love does not keep books. An old proverb says: “Revenge is sweet”. But there is no sweetness in hatred. Many a person is in the insane asylum simply because he nourished a resentment. Lord Balfour said: “I am unable to harbor resentment for long, because I always forget the reason why I was originally angry.”

j. “Rejoiceth not in iniquity” (Vr. 6) – “Love does not rejoice in the vices, but in the virtues of others” – Barnes. Love takes no pleasure in those who commit sin. We are prone to feel good at the shortcomings of our enemies. A believer cannot smile at the fact of sin. This is the very opposite to those sinners in Romans 1:32 who not only themselves revel in doing evil, “but have pleasure in them that do them”.

k. “But rejoiceth in the truth” (Vr. 6) – As the Devil is the embodiment of the lie, so the Lord is the embodiment of the Truth – “I am...the truth” (John 14:6). So here we have the negative and the positive, the great contrast, “rejoiceth not” and “rejoiceth”. In Second Corinthians 6:10 Paul speaks of the dual emotion of “as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing”. There is a mixture of sadness and gladness in every believer’s heart. There can be the greatest of misery and the greatest of mirth.

l. “Beareth all things” (Vr. 7) – This word “beareth” means “covereth” or “to roof over”. So love covers or conceals the weaknesses, faults, and shortcomings of those in Christ. Shem and Japheth covered the sins of their father Noah. The O.T. record of Lot reveals that he was a man with an eye for the material, the worldly; but in the N.T. he is called a “just Lot” (2 Pet. 2:7). David committed the sins of adultery and murder, but there is no mention of them in the N.T. Love and grace prevail to “cover” the sins of these O.T. saints.

m. “Believeth all things” (Vr. 7) – Love is not full of distrust and doubt. We need to be careful about judging the motives of others. We can believe in the good instead of evil because of the possibility of grace. This does not mean that love is blind and credulous, ready to believe on uncertain evidence. Faith is to go beyond our understanding for there are many things in life that cannot be understood here.

n. “Hopeth all things” (Vr. 7) – Love hopes when all else ceases to hope. Love never lets go. It will survive endless disappointments and still go on hoping. The student studies in hope; the farmer sows in hope; the mother labors in hope. Hope is ever beckoning to higher heights. Hope looks, not to the process of things, but to the prospect at the end of life. Hope can make the sick strong; the slave free; the beggar rich, and the coward courageous. To live without hope is to be of all men most miserable.

o. “Endureth all things” (Vr. 7) – “Always patient” says Moffat. It “bears up under, sustains, and does not murmur” says Barnes. This word is an advance on the word “beareth”. It means “patient acquiescence” holding the ground when it seems that even faith and hope are gone. Love like this holds its ground in the day of defeat. At midnight it keeps its face to the dawn.

Here are then the moods of love – “beareth, believeth, hopeth, endureth: set in the context of “all”. So there is no limit to what love bears, believes, hopes, and endures. When hurt, love bears, when depressed love believes, when disappointed love hopes, when persecuted love

endures. Someone has noted that this is one chapter in Paul's writings in which he does not mention the name of Christ. But one can substitute the name of Christ for the word love in every instance and find a reflection of perfect love.

3. Contrasts of Love (8-13)

"Love never faileth." He will now show that in contrast to all these wonderful gifts only love is enduring. Love is a miracle worker because it is creative. Love accelerates time. Jacob served fourteen years for Rachel, but they seemed as but a few days because of his love for her. Love lightens every load. It makes all things easy, even the most objectionable. Love is silent in its operations. It is like the sunbeams and the falling snow.

a. "Prophecies, they shall fail" (Vr. 8) – They shall not fail of prediction, but the gift of prophecy shall cease. Before the canon of the N.T. was complete it was necessary to have prophecy. Both Balaam and Caiaphas were prophets without love (Num. Chs. 22-25; John 11:49-52). But the gift of prophetic communication would some day cease.

b. "Tongues, they shall cease" (Vr. 8) – Not that the power of speech shall cease, but the gift of supernatural tongues would cease. They were merely a transient form of communication. This gift of ecstasy and spiritual information was given for the unbelieving Jews (1 Cor. 14:21-22).

c. "Knowledge, it shall vanish away" (Vr. 8) – This does not mean that all shall live in ignorance, but that the special gift of knowledge shall vanish. This no doubt has special reference to the interpretation of tongues, an understanding and discernment of them.

All these gifts served a temporary purpose, and until the Word was complete such signs were necessary (Phil. 3:13; Col. 1:28; 2:12).

d. Childhood state shall pass away (Vrs. 9-12) – Paul now pictures the immature stage of early Christian experience.

(1) By Way of Illustration (VR. 11) – Childhood and manhood. The Apostle now reverts to an everyday natural and personal illustration to show that the law of spiritual growth is progressive; the same as the law of natural growth. It is a process of development and transformation. There is a great difference between childhood and manhood in feeling, speaking, and understanding. Childhood is not a goal, but a stage in life unto perfection. You have here the "IN PART" and "PERFECT". The perfect man has taken up into his maturity all the essential elements of his childhood; nevertheless he has put away all his former childish mode of speaking, feeling, and thinking.

(2) By Way of Interpretation (Vrs. 9,10,12) – Paul now sets down why certain gifts must pass away. It is because the partial and imperfect cannot be permanent. Therefore we can never boast of our present status in feeling, understanding, and knowledge. The "In part" stage sees things as a child, and "through a glass darkly". The great secret wisdom of perfection did not come until Paul writes his Prison Epistles (Eph. 4:13; Phil. 3:15; Col. 1:28; 4:12). In Col. 1:25 Paul says that it was given to him "to fulfill the Word of God". So these sign gifts belong to a time of transition when the full-orb of truth was not yet made known.

Put the phrase "these shall cease" over against the other phrase "and now abideth".

4. Consummation of Love (13)

"And now abideth." All these gifts shall cease and have already passed away. But Faith, Hope, and Love remain. But the greatest of these three is love. Love is everlasting.

Some day faith will be turned to sight and hope will be realized in reality. All salvation is wrapped up in faith; all reward is wrapped up in hope; all Heaven is wrapped up in love. Faith seeks an acceptance of Christ; Hope is an aspiration after Christ; and love is an experience of Christ. Faith speaks to me about my dependence upon revelation; hope speaks to me upon my delight in expectation; but love speaks to me about my desire for realization. Faith is not a goal, but a road to salvation; hope is not a goal, but a road to satisfaction; but love is a goal, for "God is love". Faith and hope lead to glory, but love enters in.

III. EXPOSITION OF SUMMARIES IN SCRIPTURE (James Ch. 3)

God gives us His full mind concerning the tongue in James chapter three.

Our Lord said: "Every idle word that man shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36). Paul said: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth" (Eph. 4:29). Our words either corrupt or edify. Paul also warns against "foolish talking" and "jesting" (Eph. 5:4). Suggestive things are never humorous or funny to the Lord. Moses told his people: "Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people" (Lev. 19:16). James had told us in 1:19: "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." Someone has said: "We have two ears to hear, and one mouth to speak; so we should only speak of half what we hear".

Someone asked about the success of the Duke of Wellington as a general and the answer was: "He could hold his tongue in seven different languages".

Over the fireplace of Calvin Coolidge's Northampton home were these words:

"A wise old owl lived in an oak;
The more he saw, the less he spoke;
The less he spoke, the more he heard.
Why can't we be like that wise old bird?"

There is a stewardship that we have with our tongues. A man of wisdom once said: "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. 25:11). A Japanese proverb plumbs the deadly nature of an evil tongue when it observes: "The tongue is but three inches long, yet it can kill a man six feet high".

1. Verses 1 and 2 – Here he speaks about "masters" or teachers; "be not many masters". There were many who were setting themselves up as teachers in the synagogue and James says that they would "receive the greater condemnation". The task of the teacher is a most responsible one. Some teachers are "blind leaders of the blind" (Matt. 15:14). There are many roving dispenser of isms; but few real teachers of the Word of God. Teachers who take it upon themselves to teach others how to walk and to please God are liable to offend or stumble, and particularly to offend in word. James says: "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man". In 1 Cor. Ch. 3 Paul deals primarily with the teacher. Christ was a perfect Teacher (Luke 11:53-54).

2. Verse 3 – The first illustration is the bit – This is a small instrument by which the whole body of the horse is controlled. One little bit in a horse's mouth controls the whole body of that horse. James doesn't mean that a person should be dumb and lifeless, without ambition and power, but simply that his tongue should be kept in control. The horse has to follow his mouth in which the bit is placed. There is an old expression: "Her mouth ran away with her".

3. Verse 4 – The second illustration is the helm – This illustration has to do with a ship. The helm or rudder is a very small thing, yet it enables the steersman to guide the ship wheresoever he will. Many years ago now a steersman drove the great ship Titanic into an iceberg and in a few moments it sank. So one must watch and control the tongue in order to avoid shipwreck. The tongue can sway the multitude for good. It can exalt a man to the highest emotions of love, kindness, sympathy and benevolence. It is also able to lead men into sin, suffering, and death. The tongue can sooth the dying and also damn the living. There is a story of Amasas, king of Egypt, who sent a sacrifice to Bias, the sage. He requested that the sage send back to him the best part, and the worst part. He sent back the tongue.

4. Verses 5-6 – The third illustration is fire – Fire is a most destructive force. Forest fires have raged uncontrolled in their fury by the fierce winds. In most cases fires start from just a small spark, a cigarette stub thrown among leaves, the spark of a passing locomotive, a lightning bolt, a burning match cast aside, and a smoldering campfire. The great Chicago fire is supposed to have started by a lantern kicked over by a cow. It is said that mice and matches

cause over 1200 fires in New York City yearly. “The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity”. It is able to destroy lives and cities. It is a world of unrighteousness in the sense that it includes all elements of evil. The sins committed by the hands and the eyes are definite. The hand can strike a cruel and murderous blow; the eye can be the instrument of lust; but the tongue is a whole world of iniquity. There is no divine law that it cannot break. It may be guilty of irreverence to God, insolent to parents, and arrogant to all men. The tongue can spot and stain the whole body by the soot of slander. Jesus said: “Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which goeth out of the mouth, this defileth a man” (Matt. 15:11). “The tongue setteth on fire the course of nature” (or the “wheel of nature”). This means that life from its beginning to its close has in it the tongue as an ever present inflammatory element of evil. James says: “it is set on fire of hell” (or gehenna). Instead of being all lit up by the fires of Gehenna, how much better to be touched by “a live coal from off the altar” of God (Isa. 6:6-7).

5. Verses 7-10 – The fourth illustration is taming the animals – Every kind of beast, of birds, of serpents, animals on land and sea may be tamed. “But the tongue can no man tame”. There is that in the nature of man which can master and subdue the wildest and fiercest of the animal creation; but he cannot control his own tongue. It is restless, always active. The tongue will turn on one when off guard like the lion when the keeper or trainer turns his eye away. In Romans 3:13 we read: “The poison of asps is under his lips”. Death-dealing poison – the tongue is a worse poison than the poison bag of the rattlesnake or the copperhead. The tongue cannot be tamed; it will act up at a moment’s notice and bring its destructive venom.

6. Verse 11 – The fifth illustration is the fountain – A fountain does not send forth both sweet and bitter water at the same time. But out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. We have heard of double-tongued people (1 Tim. 3:8); double-minded (James 1:8; 4:8); and double-hearted (Ps. 12:2). Some can sing the praises of God one day; and lapse into loose, vulgar, unclean speech the next day. No fountain can yield both salt water and fresh (Vr. 12).

7. Verse 12 – The sixth illustration is fruit trees – A fig tree cannot bear olive berries; nor a vine bear figs. No man can control the tongue; but the Spirit of God can sanctify it. With man there is the language of helplessness. But with God there is cleansing of the tongue, and speaking forth His praises and truth. So we need to watch our tongues with ceaseless care. Evil slander can never be stopped. The lie has feet, is fleet of foot, and eludes truth in the race.

Since our words justify or condemn us, we need to pray: “Set the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer” (Ps. 19:14).

There is a dispensational relationship here to Israel in the fig, the olive, and the vine. See Jotham’s allegory in Judges 9:7-13). These trees are symbols of Israel in her three areas of blessing. The fig speaks of national righteousness; the olive of Israel’s covenant blessings; and the vine of her spiritual blessings.

8. Verses 13-18 – Wisdom commanded and contrasted – James now returns from his illustrations of verses 3-12 and comes back to his subject of verses 1-2. His readers desired to become “masters” or teachers. The first qualification of a teacher is wisdom, a wisdom that comes from above (Vr. 17). True wisdom is practical and gentle; false wisdom shows itself in strife and party spirit. When a contentious man boasts of his wisdom he is a liar. “Bitter envying and strife” and lying are against true wisdom, and are “earthly, sensual (or carnal), devilish”. These can only bring “confusion and every evil work”.

James sums up true wisdom by showing that it is: (1) chaste, pure, in relation to its possessor; (2) peaceable, gentle, easily entreated or persuaded, in relation to others; and (3) full of pity and good works in the fruit of righteousness in its practical out-working.

LESSON # 17 - THE GAP PRINCIPLE

INTRODUCTION:

Definition: It is that principle of Divine Revelation wherein God omits certain periods of time, leaping over centuries without comment. Later revelation makes clear the gap period.

The context principle is recognized by most Bible students; but this one is unrecognized by many.

I. Genesis 1:1-2 – with Isaiah 45:18; Jeremiah 4:23-27

In Genesis 1:1-2 we come from a perfect order of Creation to a condition of utter confusion. The universe that God created (Vr.1) became “tohu va vohu”. It became “without form and void”. The Jerusalem Targum translates this verse: “And the earth was vacancy and desolation, solitary of the sons of men and void of every animal, and darkness was upon the face of the abyss; and the Spirit of Mercies from before the Lord breathed upon the face of the waters”.

That the universe which God created did not pass through the condition of verse two in the process of His making can be seen by comparing Isa. 45:18 and Jer. 4:23. “He created it not in vain (tohu); he formed it to be inhabited” (Isa. 45:18). “I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form, and void (tohu va vohu).”

We have here a gap period that could have been millions of years in length. All the time that science needs for the formation of coal and oil deposits can be fitted into this gap period.

Some catastrophe must have occurred between Gen. 1:1 and 2 which is just as mysterious as the creation of the first heavens and the earth. It could have come about by the satanic fall.

II. Isaiah 61:1-2 – with Luke 4:16-20

In Luke’s record our Lord went into the synagogue at Nazareth on a Sabbath Day and read the text for the day from Isa. 61:1-2. But in the reading He stopped after “To preach the acceptable year of the Lord”, closed the book and sat down. Why did He stop after a comma? Because “the day of vengeance of our God” had not come at that time. At His Second Advent He will proclaim “the Day of Vengeance”. So here is a gap of some 1900 plus years between these two clauses of Isa. 61:2. So here we have Acceptable Year (Gap Period) Vengeance.

III. 1 Peter 1:10-11 – with Isaiah Ch. 53 and Zechariah Ch. 14

The problem of the prophets was to reconcile the sufferings of Christ with the glory of His Kingdom. They could not see His humiliation before His exaltation. They did not understand the Gap Principle. They saw the two mountain peaks without seeing the valley in between. Jewish interpreters of their Scriptures make the sufferings of Christ prophetic of their own sufferings down through the centuries. But here we have a Gap Period of some 1900 years plus.

This was the problem of John the Baptist as recorded in Matt. 11:1-19. He did not fully understand the Gap Principle.

IV. Daniel 8:8-10

This chapter presents to us Daniel’s vision of The Ram and The He-Goat. The Ram had two horns and represented Media and Persia (Vr. 20). The He-Goat with a great horn between his eyes represents Greece and its first king Alexander the Great (Vr. 21). When Alexander suddenly died at the height of his career, having conquered the then known world, his kingdom was divided among his four generals represented by the four horns that came from the great horn (Vr. 8). And

finally out of them came forth a “little horn” that can only represent the Antichrist, or the ruler of the end time (Vrs. 9,23-25).

There is therefore a long gap period between the four horns and the little horn. The four are history; the “Little Horn” is prophetic and waits a future fulfillment.

V. Daniel 9:20-27

Here we have Daniel’s vision of the seventy (70) weeks, or seventy-sevens or heptads. Each week stands for seven years according to the day-year principle (See Num. 14:34).

Daniel had been praying, confessing sins and supplicating the Lord. As he was praying Gabriel appears and gives him this revelation: “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy” (Vr. 24).

It is to be remembered that these are not calendar years, but prophetic years. God does not count time when Israel is out of fellowship with God or “Lo-Ammi” not my people.

Jerusalem was rebuilt and restored after the seventy years Babylonian Captivity; Messiah, the Prince was cut off and did not receive the kingdom; and Israel became finally “no more His people” (See margin for “but not for himself” Vr. 26).

Sixty-nine weeks have been fulfilled; so there remains the one week in which Antichrist will appear. He will confirm a covenant with Israel, then break it and cause untold desolations (Vr. 27).

So there is a gap period between verses 26 and 27. Antichrist has not yet come; God’s people Israel became “Lo-Ammi” in A.D. 70.

VI. Isaiah 9:6-7

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given.”

The child born has reference to the incarnation of Christ which took place nearly 2,000 years ago.

The “Son given” has reference to His Second Advent in great glory. It is then that the government will be on His shoulder, and He will be the great King.

There is therefore a gap period in this verse between His first Advent and his Second.

VII. Hosea 1:4,11

The word “Jezreel” means both “I will scatter” and “I will sow”. The former is understood in verse 4, the latter in verse 11.

There is now a great gap period between the former scattering and the latter gathering of God’s people.

LESSON #18 - THE CONTEXTUAL PRINCIPLE

INTRODUCTION:

Definition: The Contextual Principle is that principle of Biblical Interpretation in which the Bible gives light upon a given truth in either the near or remote contexts of the same.

The context of any given passage is therefore extremely important in the interpretation of that passage. A good definition of the context is given by Dr. Milton S. Terry. He says: “The word context, as the etymology intimates (Latin, con, together, and textus, woven) denotes something that is woven together, and applied to a written document, it means the connection of thought supposed to run through every passage which constitutes by itself a whole.”

Together with the Dispensational Principle of a “rightly divided” Word, the Contextual Principle is of utmost importance. This fact is recognized by many writers on the subject of interpretation. Dr. Arthur T. Pierson says: “As in any organism, no member or part, however minute, can be fully understood aside from its relation to the whole; so, in Scripture, every paragraph and sentence are part of its totality, and must be studied in relation to all the rest. The text will be illuminated by the context, or Scripture immediately preceding and following. Every occurrence and utterance should be studied in its surroundings.” Elliot and Harsha conclude that “The study of the context is the most legitimate, efficacious, and trustworthy resource at the command of the interpreter. Nothing can be more convenient, more logical, than to explain an author by himself, and to have recourse to the entire train of thought.”

It is impossible to evaluate the mind of a writer and his writing without taking his whole train of thought. McClelland says: “The mind generally thinks in train, and connects its ideas together by well-known laws of association. This connection of thought, and the logical relation of one part of the series to another, is an invaluable key to the mind of a writer.”

Are we justified in putting so much emphasis upon the importance of this principle? Schodde thinks we are; - “The justification for the rule itself is found in the fact that it is practically impossible to express a thought that does not stand in some connection, stated or implied, with some other thoughts or facts that influence its contents or form or both.” “We may expect in any normal literary product a continuity of thought” says Dana.

To either neglect or reject the study of the context in any given passage is fraught with grave consequences. Often a passage is made to mean just the opposite because the context has been neglected. Dr. Bullinger says: “Beware of any teacher to whom the context is not manifestly essential. Beware of any teaching that is not based upon it.” Contextual interpretation never caters to the personal ability and ingenuity of the interpreter. It lacks therefore the glamour of presenting something entirely new, for the context has always been in Scripture as much as the particular text in question. So if no attempt is made to interpret a text in its context, such an interpreter can become a false prophet.

Dr. Bullinger says again: “If we would find the words and word of God to be a delight to us, instead of a perplexing jumble, we must have special regard to the context”. To ascertain, therefore, the point of view or the purpose of an author is extremely important. This cannot be done on the basis of analyzing one particular word or sentence; the scope of the passage must be considered. Many a doubtful passage has been made clear in the light of the context.

EXEGESIS versus EISEGESIS. Exegesis) from ex – out, and egeisthai – to lead; hence “to lead out”) is the practical application of the science of Contextual Hermeneutics. Thus an exegete is one who goes to the Scriptures and takes from them the truth that God has written down. A true exegete will always consider the context of a given passage, the point of view which the author is setting forth in the passage. Eisegesis (from eis –into, and egeisthai – to lead; hence “to lead in”) is often the result of a neglect of being an exegete. An eisegete reads into the passage because of failure to take the context into consideration.

I. EXAMPLES ARISING FROM A DISREGARD OF THE CONTEXT

Many partial Bible verses are taken out of context and made a motto of life. But most of them give an erroneous impression.

1. Romans 8:28 – “All things work together for good.” But note the rest of the verse.
2. John 6:37 – “Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.” See the first part of the verse.
3. Psalm 2:8 – This is often taken as a missionary text. But the context indicates that it is the Son of God who asks the Father for these possessions; not some missionary asking God.
4. Joshua 24:15 – “Choose you this day whom ye will serve.” This has often been made an evangelistic text, urging people to make a choice between God and idols. But the context shows it is a choice between the gods on the other side of the Euphrates and the gods of the Amorites.
5. Phil. 2:12 – “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” This Scripture has been used to declare that man can work out his own salvation. But the context reveals otherwise. This is spoken of believers, who are already saved.
6. Micah 6:15 – “Thou shalt not drink wine.” This has been used as a motto in favor of prohibition. But the context reveals that they would not drink wine because there was no yield of grapes.

II. EXAMPLES RESULTING FROM A DUE REGARD TO THE CONTEXT

What has been said above is negative and destructive rather than positive and constructive. We have shown some of the mistakes arising from a disregard of the context.

1. The Nearer Context

a. Gen. 35:2 – God is now calling Jacob and his family to Bethel to build an altar unto God and worship him (Vr. 1). In view of this command Jacob calls upon his household to put away all strange gods among them. It might seem from this that Jacob was an idolater. It is true that Rachel had taken “teraphim” with her when she went with Jacob from her father’s house (31:19). In the context (Gen. 34:26-29) we have the record of the sons of Jacob capturing the city of Shechem and had taken cattle, sheep, oxen, asses, and all the wealth. There must have been idols of silver and gold among the wealth. Apparently here is where the idols came from; so Jacob was not an idolater.

b. Ezek. 37:1 – In this verse we read about a valley which was full of dry bones. This has often been spiritualized to mean a dead church, or dried up church members. But the near context gives the true meaning. In Vr. 11 we are told that “these bones are the whole house of Israel”. So the nearer context gives the interpretation.

c. Daniel Ch. 8 – In this chapter Daniel has a vision of a ram with two horns, and a he-goat with one notable horn that was broken and resulted in four horns out of which there came finally a little horn. Many so-called prophets have used this in very ridiculous ways. One such prophet, during the American-Mexican War made the ram to represent Mexico and the He-goat the United States. But the nearer context makes it all clear. Verses 20-21 tell us that the ram represents Media and Persia, and the he-goat represents Grecia.

2. The Remoter Context

Every passage has not only an immediate context, the nearer one; but also a context in the book in which it is written, and even to the Bible as a whole.

a. Gen. 18:23-33 – In this passage Abraham prays for the city of Sodom only, while God had told him that He would destroy both Sodom and Gomorrah (20), and he did destroy both (19:24). The reason why he prayed for Sodom was because in it there was his nephew Lot and family. Gen. 14:12 tells us this. Apparently there was nothing to save in Gomorrah.

b. Gen. 24:67,15,24 – Here we are told that Isaac marries a granddaughter of his father’s brother Nahor. There must have been a great difference in their ages. Gen. 18:11-12 explains that both Sarah and Abraham were old when Isaac was born. So both Isaac and Rebecca could have been about the same age.

c. Gen. 37:25,27,28,36; 39:1 – Here we are told that Joseph’s brothers sold him to a caravan of both Ishmeelites and Midianites; that they brought him to Egypt and sold him there.

Gen. 16:11-12 tells us that Ishmael was Abraham’s son by Hagar. Gen. 25:2 tells us that Midian was Abraham’s son by Keturah.

Judges 8:22,24 tell us that Gideon fought against the Midianites and that they are called Ishmaelites. The fact is that all Ishmaelites were Midianites; but not all Midianites were Ishmaelites. The Ishmaelites lived in the land of Midian. It is like all Canadians are Britains; but not all Britains are Canadians. Ishmael and Midian were half-brothers, and shared the same country.

d. Judges 5:8 – Here we are told that there was not a shield or spear among forty thousand in Israel. In Judges 3:16 we read that Ehud made him a dagger which had two edges. In Judges 3:31 we are told that Shamgar slew six hundred Philistines with an ox goad. In Judges 14:5-6 we are told that Samson slew a lion with his bare hands.

The explanation to all this is found in 1 Sam. 13:19-22. The Philistines had captured all the smiths in Israel, so that they could not manufacture weapons. So in the days of Israel’s favor with God they drew the sword; but in the days of their disobedience and oppression they had ignoble weapons or none at all.

e. 2 Chron. 22:10-12 – The problem here is how this young lad Joash could be hid in the temple for six years without anyone finding him. Athaliah the wicked usurper queen slew all the royal seed of the house of Judah, except this young son who was saved in the temple.

The answer is found in 24:7. The House of the Lord had been broken up and deserted. The holy vessels had been removed and brought to the temple of Baal.

f. 2 Kings 18:13-16 – This passage deals with King Hezekiah and his relation to the king of Assyria. He had to give the Assyrians silver, gold, and precious treasures from the house of the Lord. He even took off gold from the doors and pillars of the Temple.

But in Isa. 39:2 we are told that Hezekiah showed the emissaries of Babylon all his precious things, gold, silver, spices and ointment. How could he do this if all had been taken by the King of Assyria?

2 Chron. 32:22-23 is the answer to the problem. Here we are told that when God saved Judah out of the hand of Sennacherib, king of Assyria, the people brought gifts to Hezekiah. It was these that he showed to the king of Babylon. Hence no contradiction.

g. Gal. 3:20 – The problem here is that of a mediator when there is only one party. The nearer context is talking about two covenants – the Abrahamic and the Mosaic. The Law was given by a mediator, but the Abrahamic Covenant was ratified by God alone while Abraham was asleep. So there is no mediator of one, but only of two. The Mosaic Covenant or The Law had a mediator (See Deut. 33:1-4; Psalm 69:17; Acts 7:53; Heb. 2:2).

h. Jer. 32:4; 34:3; Ezek. 12:13 – The problem here is that King Zedekiah shall be taken captive by the king of Babylon to the land of Babylon where he shall see the king and speak with him, and yet it says he shall not see it.

The problem is solved when we turn to 2 Kings 25:6-7. Here we learn that all these things are true. Zedekiah was brought to the king of Babylon at Riblah, and he saw him face to face, and talked with him. Here he was tried and found guilty, was condemned, and sentenced to blindness. His eyes were put out, he went to Babylon, but never saw it.

i. Eph. 4:6 – This Scripture is used to teach the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. But Ephesians was written to “saints and faithful in Christ Jesus” (Vr.1). Salvation is an individual matter as John 1:12-13 and Gal. 3:26 teach.

III. EXAMPLES OF ERROR IN CHAPTER AND VERSE DIVISIONS

God did not write the Bible with our present chapter and verse divisions; neither did he punctuate it as we now have it. All of this work is man-made, and hence not inspired.

1. Matt. 16:28 – 17:1 – Verse 16:28 indicates that some would not see death until they would see Christ coming in His Kingdom. But they did die and Christ has not come. But read on and see that 17:1 indicates they did see a preview of the Kingdom. 2 Pet. 1:16-18 corroborates this fact.

2. Mark 2:23-28 – 3:1-5 – In Chapter two we have a discussion between Jesus and the Pharisees concerning the Sabbath day. Jesus declares that he “the Son of Man is Lord also of the sabbath”. In chapter three we have a miracle which proves that he is the Lord of the Sabbath, when He heals the man with a withered hand.

3. 1 Cor. 10:33 – 11:1 – In 11:1 we have the application of what Paul had uttered in 10:33. He speaks of his own self-renunciation and bids the Corinthians to follow him. There should be no chapter division here.

4. 1 Cor. 12:31 – 13:1 – We should read right on from 12:31 thru chapter thirteen. 12:31 should end with a colon because the “more excellent way” is in the next chapter.

5. 2 Cor. 6:18 – 7:1 – Chapter 7:1 speaks of promises, and one might be led to believe that they are found in this chapter; but they are what Paul has been giving in chapter six. There should be no chapter division here.

6. Gen. 1:1 – 2:4 – This first section of Genesis gives us the first of the eleven generations of the book. There should be no chapter division at 1:31.

7. Hosea 1:11 – 2:1 – The names in chapter 2:1 apply to the uniting of the “children of Israel and Judah”. They are to be “Ammi” – “my people” and “Ruhamah” – “having obtained mercy”.

The Context Principle has an immeasurable value in what is called “A comparison and contrast of Scripture.” In 1 Cor. 2:12-13 Paul says that we have received the Spirit of God that we might know the things of God – “comparing spiritual things with spiritual”. This has also been translated: “Unfolding spiritual things spiritually”; “Unfolding Biblical things in Biblical words”; “By spiritual words are spiritual things explained”; “Explaining spiritual things in spiritual words”; “Comparing, unfolding, explaining”. Never under any circumstance make human reason take the place of Divine revelation.

Paul demonstrates the Context Principle in Romans 3:10-19, where he clinches his argument on the universality of sin:

In 3:10-12 he quotes from Psalm 14:1-3.

In 3:13 he quotes from Psalms 5:9 and 140:3.

In 3:14 he quotes from Psalm 10:7.

In 3:15 he quotes from Isa. 59:7-8.

In 3:18 he quotes from Psalm 36:1.

In “comparing spiritual things with spiritual” note Eph. 5:18-19 with Col. 3:16.

LESSON #19 - THE THREEFOLD PRINCIPLE

INTRODUCTION:

Definition: It is that principle of Bible Study by which God sets forth the truths of salvation in a threefold way.

Dr. E.W. Bullinger in his Numbers In Scripture says of the number three: “In this number we have quite a new set of phenomena. We come first to the geometrical figure. Two straight lines cannot possibly enclose any space, or form a plane figure; neither can two plane surfaces form a solid. Three lines are necessary to form a plane figure; and three dimensions of length, breadth, and height are necessary to form a solid. Hence three is the symbol of the cube – the simplest form of solid figure. ... Three stands for that which is solid, real, substantial, complete, and entire. All things that are especially complete are stamped with this number three. God’s attributes are three; omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence. There are three great divisions completing time – past, present, and future. Thought, word, and deed complete the sum of human capability. Three kingdoms embrace our ideas of matter – mineral, vegetable, and animal. Three denotes divine perfection.”

This principle exhibits the Grace of God in a blessed way and shows the fullness, completeness, and richness of our salvation. This three-fold principle meets the threefold need of man, for he has three needs:

- (1) Salvation from the wrath or penalty of sin and death.
- (2) Salvation from the bondage or power of sin.
- (3) Salvation from the presence or physical distress of sin, namely disease, demons, and death.

Every woe that has come to the human race has come from these facts. Sin has completely affected man’s soul and body.

God in Christ has met man’s need in all three of these realms. Justification from the wrath or penalty of sin; Sanctification from the power of sin; and, Glorification from the presence of sin (See Titus 2:11-13; Psalm 34:22 with Psalm 103:4 and Hosea 13:14).

I. EXAMPLES OF THIS PRINCIPLE

1. Christ is set forth as Prophet, Priest, and Potentate – He was a Prophet like unto Moses (Acts 3:22); a Priest like unto Melchisedec (Heb. 7:17); and a Potentate like unto David (Acts 2:30).

2. 1 Thess. 1:3 – “work of faith”, “labor of love”, and “patience of hope”.

3. 1 Thess. 1:9-10 – “turned to God from idols”, “serve the living and true God”, “wait for His Son from heaven”.

4. Heb. 9:24-28 – “appeared to put away sin”, “appear in the presence of God”, “appear the second time”.

5. 1 Cor. 13:13 – “faith, hope, love.”

6. John 16:8-11 – The Holy Spirit will convince of “Sin”, “Righteousness”, and “Judgment”.

7. Revelation 1:5 – Here we have the three offices of Christ set forth: Prophet – “the faithful witness”; Potentate – “the Prince of the kings of the earth”; Priest – “washed us from our sins in His own blood”. See also Acts 3:22; 2:30; Heb. 7:17.

8. Genesis 26:25 – In this verse we have the threefold and only activity of Isaac. He “Builded an altar”, he Pitched his tent”, and he “digged a well”.

9. Luke 12:36-37; 19:13 – Here we have three attitudes towards the Lord’s Coming according to the Gospels. Waiting – “wait for their Lord”; Watching – “when He cometh shall find watching”; Working – “Occupy till I come”.

10. 1 John 2:12-14 – Here John writes to three ages and experiences of men: The Children – “I write unto little children”; The Young Men – “I write unto you young men”; The Fathers – “I write unto you fathers”.

11. 1 Tim. 1:2 – Here Paul’s salutation to Timothy includes “Grace, Mercy, and Peace. These three include God’s attitude, His activity, and His accomplishment for sinners.

12. Matt. 4:1-10 – In Christ’s threefold temptation by Satan He answered His adversary three times with – “It is written” (Vrs. 4,7,10).

13. 1 John 5:5-8 – Here we have three witnesses in Heaven and three on earth that reveal “that Jesus is the Son of God”. The three in Heaven are “the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit”. The three on earth are “the Spirit, and the water, and the blood”.

14. Mark 5:41-42; Luke 7:11-15; John 11:40-44 – There is the record of three persons whom Jesus raised from the dead – Jairus’ little daughter; the widow of Nain’s son; and Lazarus.

15. John 10:14; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:4 – Christ is presented as The Shepherd in a threefold way: The Good Shepherd in death; The Great Shepherd in resurrection; and The Chief Shepherd in glory.

16. Jude 11 – Here we have the threefold revelation of the completeness of apostasy – “the way of Cain”, “the error of Balaam”, and “the gainsaying of Korah”.

17. Daniel 5:25-28 – Here we have threefold completeness of Divine judgment upon Belshazzar and his kingdom – “Mene”, “God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it; “Teke”, “Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting; “Peres”, “Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians”.

18. 1 John 2:16 – Here we have threefold nature of temptation revealed – “The lust of the flesh”, “The lust of the eyes”, and “The pride of life”. This is the fulfillment of what took place in the Garden of Eden when Eve partook of the forbidden fruit – “Good for food”, “Pleasant to the eyes”, and “To be desired to make one wise”.

LESSON # 20 - THE ELECTION PRINCIPLE

INTRODUCTION:

Definition: It is that principle of Divine revelation whereby God in presenting His purposes in redemption sets aside the first in order to establish the second.

God has His own divine sovereign purpose, and that purpose is according to election. God is faithful and his purposes are not changeable. Neither the Devil nor men can upset His purposes. This election principle runs all through the Scripture.

This principle is set forth in Hebrews 10:9 – “He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second.” The second which God chooses is elected on the basis of grace and the cross.

A general outline is as follows:

A-1. Creation – ruined.

B-1. Man – ruined.

C-1. Israel – ruined.

D-1. Church ruined. (Pentecostal)

D-2. Church – restored. (Body of Christ)

C-2. Israel – restored.

B-2. Man – restored.

A-2. Creation – restored.

Adam is set aside, Christ is chosen.

Ishmael is set aside, Isaac is chosen.

Esau is set aside, Jacob is chosen.

Reuben is set aside, Joseph and Judah are chosen.

The firstborn is always connected with the flesh and Satan; the second with the Spirit and Christ. Man by natural birth is not saved; but man that is born from above is saved (John 3:1-7). Adam had two grounds of access to God. Before his fall his access depended upon his obedience and his own righteousness; but after the fall his access was by a slain animal and its shed blood.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

I. Old and New Creations

Unto Adam God pronounced the judgment upon creation which was marred and ruined in the fall (Gen. 3:17-18). Out of this ruin came the weeds that plague all true growth, also insect life and bacteria that cause disease. All this brings suffering, sorrow and death.

God will not restore the old creation, but will bring in new heavens and a new earth (Isa. 66:22; 2 Pet. 3:7,10,12,13; Rev. 21:1).

II. The Two Adams

The first Adam and the last Adam. The first was made a living soul, the last was made a quickening spirit (1 Cor. 15:45-49).

Jesus Christ is never called the second Adam; He is called “the Second Man”. Adam was the original head of the human race; but that headship has now been transferred to Jesus Christ, “The Last Adam”.

III. Esau and Jacob (Gen. Ch. 27-28:9)

In the N.T. interpretation of this rejection of Esau and acceptance of Jacob, Paul writes: “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” (Rom. 9:10-13). “The elder shall serve the younger” is God’s sovereign election.

IV. Blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. Ch. 48)

Joseph brings his two sons before his aged dying father for his blessing upon them. Manasseh was the first-born and Ephraim was the second born. Joseph places Manasseh on Jacob's right hand and Ephraim where the left hand would fall. But the dying Jacob crossed his hands so that Ephraim received the first blessing. Joseph then said to his father: "Not so my father; for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head" (Vr. 18). But Jacob said: "I know it, my son, I know it; ... and he set Ephraim before Manasseh" (Vrs. 19,20).

V. The Old and New Covenants

The first or Old Covenant that God made was stated in these words: "It shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God as He hath commanded us" (Deut. 6:25). But Israel broke this covenant. So God made a New Covenant with them. This is stated in Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-13). "...which my covenant they brake (Jer. 31:32) referring to the Old. We have a divine comment upon this covenant in Heb. 8:7,13: "For if the first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. In that He saith, A New Covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."

VI. The Ordinances and the Offering of Christ

With the Old Covenant went also all the ordinances that pertained thereto. They were marred by man, and will never be mended. Their marred condition is set forth in Isa. 1:11-15. The divine commentary on all this is found in Heb. 10:6-10. Further light is seen in Col. 2:14-17,20; Gal. 4:8-11. Christ has fulfilled all the types and shadows of the old.

VII. Israel and the Potter's House

Jeremiah is taken to the potter's house to see him work on the wheels (Jer. 18:1-6). He sees a vessel that breaks in the potters' hands; but that the potter out of the same lump of clay makes a new vessel. Isa. 5:1-7 and Ezek. 36:16-20 are revelations of Israel's first making and marring. But God's purpose is to make a new vessel out of His people Israel. See Ezek. 36:25-28; Matt. 21:43; Rom. 11:26; Isa. 26:2; 66:8.

LESSON # 21 - THE CHRISTO-CENTRIC PRINCIPLE

INTRODUCTION:

Definition – It is that principle of Divine Revelation in which God reveals that all things in Creation and Redemption are centered in Christ.

This is possible because deity is centered in Christ as the manifestation of the Godhead. Christ was in the “form of God” (Phil. 2:6). “God is a Spirit” (John 4:24). He manifests Himself in the Second Person of the Trinity, namely, Jesus Christ. This form had all “the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9).

God took form in O.T. times and manifested Himself. This is called creature form. The O.T. Theophany of the Angel of the Lord is none other than Jesus Christ. As such He appeared to Adam, to Abraham, to Gideon, and to Samson. Heb. 1:3 describes the eternal Godhead of Jesus Christ as: “the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person”. Jesus Christ is to God what the rays of the sun or light are to the sun. We see the sun only by means of the rays. The rays are the same quality as the sun. When the sun comes, the rays come. We know God, the invisible One, through Jesus Christ. He is “the express image of his person”, the impression of His image, or essence. Just as the wax impressed by the seal answers perfectly to the die employed, so Christ answers perfectly to the essence of the Godhead. Jesus Christ manifests God in His thought, word, and deed. He has a mind big enough to understand the wisdom of God, and a heart big enough to contain the love of God.

I. Angelic Thought and Ministry centered in Christ

1. Christ the object of angelic worship – Isaiah 6:1-4 gives us the revelation of Seraphim worshipping and ministering to Christ; “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts”. Isaiah saw the glory of Christ (John 12:41). In the Book of Revelation Christ is the center of angelic worship and ministry (4:8; 5:9; 5:13; 11:15; 12:10).

2. Christ’s birth announced by an angel – Luke 2:8-14 gives the message of Christ’s birth, coming by an angel to shepherds in the Judean hills.

3. Christ’s temptation attended by angels (Matt. 4:11) – Angels ministered to Christ after His temptations by Satan.

4. Christ’s agony in Gethsemane attended by an angel (Luke 22:43) – An angel came “strengthening Him” after His agony in the garden.

5. Christ’s resurrection attended by angels (Luke 24:4-6) – Two angels stood by the empty tomb of Christ to minister on His behalf.

6. Christ’s ascension attended by angels (Acts 1:10-11) – Again two angels appear to minister on behalf of Christ to His disciples.

7. Christ’s Second Coming Attended by Angels – When He comes again, He will come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him (Matt. 25:31; Mk. 8:38; Luke 9:26; 2 Thess. 1:7; Rev. 19:10).

8. Christ is the Object of all Angelic Worship and Ministry (Heb. 1:6) – In Heb. 7:26 we read that He was “made higher than the heavens”. He went back into glory to be made higher than all the angelic hosts (Eph. 1:20-21).

II. All Satanic and Demonic Hatred and Subtlety Centered in Christ

Christ while on earth was unrecognized by man; but the demons recognized and addressed Him as the “Son of the Most High God” (Mk. 5:7).

Revelations chapter 12 gives us a picture of Satan’s whole plan and purpose. The woman is Israel, the man Child is Christ, and the Dragon is Satan.

Since Genesis 3:15 when God pronounced enmity between the seed of the Serpent and the seed of the Woman there has been The Conflict of the Ages between Satan and Christ. This conflict is first seen in Cain when he slew his brother Abel (Gen. 4:8); in the dehumanized progeny of Gen. Ch. 6; in the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-9); in Abraham's lies about his wife (Gen. 12:11-12; 20:1-2; Israel in Egypt's bondage (Ex. 1:7-14); in Pharaoh's hardened heart (Ex. Chs. 7-11); the royal line nearly annihilated in the days of Athaliah (2 Kings 11:1-3); attempted destruction of all Jews in Persia (Book of Esther); slaying of all children two years and under in Bethlehem (Matt. 2:16); Satan's entrance into Judas to betray Christ and ultimately to kill him (Jn. 13:26-27); finally the Antichrist will come to deceive the earth inhabitants before Christ returns (2 Thess. 2:3-12).

III. All Human Hopes and all Human Occupations Centered in Christ

Christ is the only Savior (Jn. 1:29; Acts 4:12; Heb. 1:3). Everyone before the Cross looked forward to Him, and everyone after the Cross looks back to that event for salvation. There is no hope apart from Him – "Jesus Christ, which is our hope" (1 Tim. 1:1). The blood of bulls and goats of O.T. times could never remove sin (Heb. 10:4). It is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanseth from all sin (1 Jn. 1:7).

All human occupation should be centered in Christ (1 Cor. 6:20; 10:31; Col. 3:17). A man's whole life both in the secular as well as the spiritual should be centered in Christ.

There was a pork packer in Peoria, Ill. Who said: "My business is being a Christian and I pack pork to pay expenses."

IV. The Whole Material Universe, its Creation and Preservation, Centered in Christ

John 1:3; 1:10; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:3; 3:4).

Christ is not only the Creator of all things; He is also the Conserver and the goal of all things. "Without Him was not anything made that was made" (Jn. 1:3). Man was created last, so that he could not possibly have created anything.

In Romans 11:36 we read: "For of Him" as origin; "and through Him" as organ; "and to Him" as object "are all things".

This earth is an infinitesimal part of God's great universe. One can put 1,400,000 worlds into the sun, which is 93,000,000 miles away from our earth. Light travels at the rate of 186,000 miles a second. The nearest star is calculated in light years.

Christ is both the Creator of all things as well as the heir of all things (Heb. 1:2).

There is consistency in God's universe. Gravity keeps man down on this earth and holds things together. The sun, stars, and moon run their regular courses in the heavens. Christ holds them all together. By the word of His power He holds all things and preserves all things (Heb. 1:3). His word spoke the universe into existence, and His word holds the universe in harmony.

V. The Entire Written Word is Centered in Christ

Christ is called "The Word" (Jn. 1:1) and "The Word of Life" (1 Jn. 1:1). The Scriptures have but one main theme – Christ (Luke 24:27,44; Heb. 10:7).

In the O.T. Christ is Predicted as the coming One; In the Gospels He is Presented as the One who came; In the Acts He is Proclaimed as the resurrected glorified One; in the Epistles He is Possessed as the Savior and Sanctifier; in the Revelation He is Predominant as the coming "Lord of Lords and King of Kings".

The Bible is the only book that gives absolute truth concerning man – his past, present, and future; but man is not the main theme of the Bible.

The Bible is the only book that gives us the truth about Satan – his past, present, and future; but Satan is not the main theme.

The Bible is the only book that gives a true picture of Israel – her past, present, and future; but Israel is not the main theme.

The Bible is the only book that gives a true picture of the Church in its composition, commission, and consummation; but this is not the main theme.

The main theme of the Bible is CHRIST. Luther asked: "What Book and what Person". The answer was: "The Bible and Christ". There are two words that are inseparable – The Written Word and The Incarnate Word.

GENESIS - In Gen. 1:1 we have the creation of the heavens and the earth, and Christ is the Creator (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16). In the first Adam we see the Last Adam; in the first man we see the Second Man (1 Cor. 15:45,47). Gen. 3:15 speaks of "the seed of the woman". Christ is the "Seed of the woman" through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and finally Mary (Matt. 1:1-16). Christ is the Prophet of Eden, who declares His own incarnation as "the Seed of the Woman". He is the Priest of Eden who saves His people through sacrifices and skin clothing. He is the Potentate of Eden who drives the sinner forth, declaring that sin and death shall not inhabit His domain. In Abraham, the stranger coming from a far country and living a life of faith and having nothing but a grave in Canaan, we see Christ, Who came from a far Country, lived a life of faith, and finally had nothing but a cross and a borrowed grave. In Isaac we see Christ the true Seed of Abraham (Rom. 9:7; Gal. 3:16). In the miraculous conception (Gen. 18:14; Luke 1:35); in the pre-natal naming (Gen. 17:19; Matt. 1:21; Luke 1:31); in the projected death of the one we see the foreshadowing of Christ some 2,000 years before, and on the same mountain of Moriah (Gen.22:2; 1 Chron. 21:28; 22:1; 2 Chron. 3:1). In the wood laid upon Isaac, we see Christ bearing His cross (Gen. 22:6; Jn. 19:17). "Judah is a lion's whelp" (Gen. 49:9) and Christ is "The Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev. 5:5). In Jacob's ladder we see Him who is the "true and living way" – the One who forever bridged the gulf between Heaven and earth (Gen. 28:12; John 14:6). In "the Angel of Jehovah" with whom Jacob wrestled on the banks of the Jabbok we have the Son of God (Gen. 32:24-30). Jacob called the name of the place "Peniel: for I have seen God face to face". In Joseph of whom the question was asked: "Shalt thou reign over us?" we see Him of whom his brethren afterwards said: "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Gen. 37:8; Luke 19:14). We see the sufferings of Joseph followed by his exaltation, as a type of Christ in His humiliation and ultimate triumph (1 Pet. 1:11).

EXODUS - In Genesis we saw Christ in the sufferings and glory of Joseph; here we see Him in the sufferings and glory of Moses (Ex. 2:14; Acts 7:35). Joseph's sufferings began when his brethren said: "Shalt thou indeed reign over us?" Moses sufferings began when two of his brethren said: "Who made thee a prince and judge over us? (Ex. 2:14). So it was with the Lord (Luke 19:14). God said to Moses: "I am come down to deliver, ... and I will redeem" (3:8; 6:6). So Christ is the One who came down to deliver and to redeem (Eph. 1:7). God said to Moses: "I am that I am" (3:14). Christ is the great "I am". "I am the Bread of Life" (Jn. 6:35); He is the living water (Jn. 7:37-38); He is the smitten rock of Exodus (17:6; Isa. 53:4); "I am the Good Shepherd" (Jn. 10:11); "I am the resurrection and the life" (Jn. 11:25); "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn. 14:6); "I am the true vine" (Jn. 15:1); He is the true Pascal Lamb (1 Cor. 5:7-8); He is the true Priest in the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man (Ex. 30:10; Heb. Ch. 9).

LEVITICUS - Here Christ is seen in the various offerings: the Burnt Offering, the Meat Offering, the Peace Offering, the Sin Offering, and the Trespass Offering (Phil. 2:8; 2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:24; Ps. 51:4). He is the High Priest on the great Day of Atonement (Heb. 9:11-12); He is the bird slain and the bird set free, in His death and resurrection.

NUMBERS - Here Christ is the brazen serpent (21:9; Jn. 3:14-15); the Rock (20:11; 1 Cor. 10:4); the Manna (11:7-9; Jn. 6:57-58); the future Star that arose out of Jacob (24:17; Luke 1:78; 2 Pet. 1:19).

DEUTERONOMY - He is the Prophet like unto Moses (18:15; Acts 7:37-38). He is the Rock and Refuge of his people (32:4; 33:27; 1 Cor. 10:4).

JOSHUA - Here He is the Captain of the Lord's host (5:13-15; Heb. 2:10; 12:2). He is the salvation in Rahab's scarlet thread (2:12-20; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).

JUDGES - Here Christ is seen as the "Angel of the Lord" the covenant angel whose name is called: "Wonderful Counseller, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Judg. 6:12; 13:18; Isa. 9:6).

RUTH - Here Christ is seen in the kinsman redeemer; the true Boaz (Ruth 2:1; 3:2,13; 4:4).

SAMUELS - Here Christ is seen in the sufferings and rejection of David, who became a savior and captain for his followers (1 Sam 22:1-2; Rev. 22:16).

KINGS - Here we see the glory that should follow; and the greater than Solomon (Matt. 12:42) and the greater than the temple (Matt. 12:6).

CHRONICLES - Here he is the king's son rescued from among the dead, hidden in the House of God to be manifested in due time, as Jehovah had said (2 Chron. 22:10 - 23:3).

EZRA - Here He is "a nail in his holy place (9:8), which according to Isa. 22:20-25 is used of Eliakim, who typifies Christ.

NEHEMIAH - Here He is the Bread from Heaven, and Water out of the rock (9:15-20; Jn. 6:57-58; 1 Cor. 10:4).

ESTHER - Here he is the Seed preserved. His name is there though concealed. He is the Great Deliverer, higher than the Law of the Medes and the Persians.

JOB - Here He is the "Daysman" or Mediator (9:33); and as the Redeemer coming again to the earth (19:25-27).

PSALMS - In Psalm 1 He is the Blessed Man. In Psalm 2 He is the Son of God. In Psalm 8 He is the "Son of Man". In Psalm 16 He is the Risen Man. In Psalm 22 He is the Good Shepherd, humiliated, suffering and dying. In Psalm 23 He is the Great Shepherd. In Psalm 24 He is the Chief Shepherd, the King of Glory. In Psalm 45 He is the Prophet with grace-filled lips. In Psalm 51 He is the Savior. In Psalm 72 He is the Priest after the order of Melchizedek. In Psalm 150 He is the One who leads everything that hath breath in praising God.

PROVERBS - Here He is the Wisdom of God (Ch. 8; 1 Cor. 1:24); the Path and Light of his people (4:18); the Surety for His people while strangers (11:15; Rom. 5:8-10); the Strong Tower into which the righteous run and are safe (18:10); the Friend and the Brother (17:17).

ECCLESIASTES - Here he is the One among ten thousand in the midst of all vanity and vexation of spirit (7:28).

SONG OF SONGS - Here he is the Shepherd, Lover, Bridegroom, Rose of Sharon and Lily of the Valley. "He is my Beloved" (2:16).

ISAIAH – Here we have his suffering and glory (Ch. 53); His people’s Light (60:1-2; Matt. 4:16); The Mighty God (9:6); Matt. 28:18); Salvation’s well (12:3).

JEREMIAH – Here he is the Righteous Branch and “Jehovah our righteousness” (23:5-6).

LAMENTATIONS – Here He is the Man of Sorrows (1:12-13); and great in faithfulness (3:23).

EZEKIEL – Here he is the True Shepherd (34:23); The Prince (37:25) and The Plant of Renown (34:29).

DANIEL – Here He is the Stone become the Head (2:34; Matt. 21:42,44; 1 Pet. 2:4,6); The Son of man and Messiah the Prince (8:13,16; 9:24).

HOSEA – Here he is the true David (3:5); and the Son out of Egypt (11:1).

JOEL – Here he is the Lord of bounty (2:18-19); and he is God dwelling in Zion (3:17).

AMOS – He is the Great Shepherd of Israel (3:12); and The Raiser of David’s Tabernacle (9:11; Acts 15:16-17).

OBADIAH – He is the Deliverer on Mt. Zion (17).

JONAH – He is Jonah’s salvation (2:9); and the sign of Christ’s resurrection (Matt. 12:39-41).

MICAH – Here He is the Breaker, King, and Lord (2:13); the “Ruler in Israel” coming forth from Bethlehem (5:2).

NAHUM – Here He is a “strong hold in the day of trouble” (1:7).

HABAKKUK- He is the source of faith (2:4); and the God of salvation under all circumstances (3:17-18).

ZEPHANIAH – He is the Lord of judgment (3:5); the God of cleansing (3:15); and the Mighty God in the midst of Zion (3:17).

HAGGAI – He is the “desire of all nations” (2:7); and The Lord of Hosts, the Judge (2:11-17).

ZECHARIAH – Here he is “my Servant the Branch” (3:8); “my Shepherd”, “my Fellow”, “the Man” (13:7; and “King over all the earth” (14:9); and “the man whose name is the branch” (6:12).

MALACHI – Here he is the “Messenger of the Covenant” (3:1); He is “a refiner’s fire” and “fuller’s soap” for the sons of Levi (3:2-3); the “Sun of righteousness” (4:2).

If this is true of the O.T. how much more of the N.T.

MATTHEW – Here he is the “righteous Branch and a King” (Jer. 23:5) The Sovereign.

MARK – Here He is “my Servant the Branch” (Zech. 3:8). The Servant.

LUKE – Here he is “the Man whose name is the Branch” (Zech. 6:12). The Seed.

JOHN – Here he is “the Branch of the Lord” (Isa. 4:2). The Son.

In Christ we have the living embodiment of the Bible. Genesis chapter five is considered a very dull, uninteresting chapter. Yet it reveals the wonders of the Word. It has been called “The Epitaph Chapter”. Names in Hebrew have a distinct meaning:

Adam – Man of the earth.

Seth – Set or appointed.

Enos – Mortal.

Cainan – Mourner or weeper.

Mahalaleel – Blessed of God.

Jared – The thought of one descending.

Enoch – Dedicated or consecrated.

Methuselah – When he is dead it shall be sent.

Lamech – To the miserable.

Noah – Comfort or rest.

In this chapter we have the constant refrain: “He lived, begat, died”. But there is more here. One can see the Gospel on the meaning of these names. As long as Methuselah lived the Flood was not sent. The oldest man in this world held back the flood; for in the very year he died it came. Man is appointed mortal for “It is appointed unto men once to die” (Heb. 9:27). There is mourning and sorrow because of sin. The blessed Lord came down from Heaven dedicated and consecrated. Through His death shall come to the miserable, rest. “His rest shall be glorious” (Isa. 11:10). Only Christ can give true rest (Matt. 11:28-29).

The Living Word and the Written Word cannot be separated. The written word is given to manifest the Living or Incarnate Word. The Holy Spirit is the interpreter of them both for He uses the written word to interpret the Incarnate Word (John 16:13-14). Any preaching which does not magnify Christ is not preaching the Word. So we have the Word in three manifestations: The Incarnate Word; The written word; and the preached word.

“The Scriptures and the Word
Bear one tremendous name,
The Living and the Written Word
In all things are the same.” - Joseph Hart

SIMILAR PREDICATES OF THE LIVING AND WRITTEN WORD

“His name is called the Word of God” (Rev. 19:13).

They “pressed upon Him to hear the Word of God” (Luke 5:1).

The Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6).

The Gospel of peace (Rom. 10:15).

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way (John 14:6).

“Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes” (Ps. 119:33).

“Full of grace and truth” (Jn. 1:14).

“All thy commandments are truth” (Ps. 119:151).

“A bone of Him shall not be broken” (Jn. 19:36).
“The Scriptures cannot be broken” (Jn. 10:35).
“I am the Living Bread ... If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever” (Jn. 6:51).
“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God” (Luke 4:4).

“With Thee is a fountain of life” (Ps. 36:9).
“Thy law ... is a fountain of life” (Prov. 13:14).

“I am the light of the world” (Jn. 8:12).
“Thy word is a light unto my path” (Ps. 119:105).

“Thou art my lamp, O Lord” (2 Sam. 22:29).
“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet” (Ps. 119:105).

“I ... will be unto her a wall of fire” (Zech. 2:5).
“Is not my word like as a fire” (Jer. 23:29)?

“To you who believe He is precious” (1 Pet. 2:7).
“Exceeding great and precious promises” (2 Pet. 1:4).

“His mouth is most sweet” (Song of Songs 5:16).
“How sweet are thy words unto my taste” (Ps. 119:103).

“His name shall be called wonderful” (Isa. 9:6).
“Thy testimonies are wonderful” (Ps. 119:129).

“Christ, the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:24).
“The Gospel is the power of God” (Rom. 1:16).

“Him that is from the beginning” (1 Jn. 2:13).
“Thy word is true from the beginning” (Ps. 119:160).

“From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God” (Ps. 90:2).
“Thy testimonies are everlasting” (Ps. 119:144).

“The Lord shall endure forever” (Ps. 9:7).
“The word of the Lord endureth forever” (1 Pet. 1:25).

“Christ abideth forever” (Jn. 12:34).
“The word of God abideth forever” (1 Pet. 1:23).

Christ, “a stumbling Stone” (Rom. 9:33).
“They stumble at thy word” (1 Pet. 2:8).

“Abide in me and I in you” (Jn. 15:4).
“If my words abide in you” (Jn. 15:7).

“Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith” (Eph. 3:17).
“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly” (Col. 3:16).

“Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword” (Rev. 1:16).

“For the word of God is ... sharper than any two-edged sword” (Heb. 4:12).

“Sanctified in Christ Jesus” (1 Cor. 1:2).

“Sanctified through the truth” (Jn. 17:19).

“The Son therefore shall make you free” (Jn. 8:36).

“The truth shall make you free” (Jn. 8:32).

SIMILAR EFFECTS ATTRIBUTED TO CHRIST AND THE SCRIPTURES

“Born of God” (1 Jn. 5:18).

“Born ... by the word” (1 Pet. 1:23).

“Begotten by Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:3).

“Begotten through the gospel” (1 Cor. 4:15).

“The Son quickeneth whom He will” (Jn. 5:21).

“Thy word hath quickened me” (Ps. 119:50).

Christ “healed them” (Matt. 4:24).

“He sent His word and healed them” (Ps. 107:20).

Thus we see that the Living Word and the Written Word cannot be separated.

LESSON #22 - THE PARADOXICAL PRINCIPLE

INTRODUCTION:

Definitions:

The Paradoxical Principle is that principle of Biblical interpretation by which the paradoxes of Scripture become reasonable to faith.

A paradox is seemingly contradictory, or opposed to natural common sense, but true to fact as seen in faith. A paradox consists of a pair of truths each of which depends upon the other for existence, and each of which is not true without the other. By the dialectical method (development through the stages of theses, antithesis and syntheses) both truths are held in tension in which faith becomes the syntheses.

Whenever the Divine breaks into the human there is created a miracle and a paradox ensues. Hence men by sheer reason can never understand Christianity, because no paradox can be solved by reason.

“A paradox is a statement or expression seemingly, though not necessarily, absurd, self-contradictory, or self-inconsistent.” – Arthur T. Pierson

In a Divine Book it seems absolutely plausible that there should be apparent contradictions to the natural reasonings of man. The paradoxes come about because of the lack of capacity in a finite being to wholly grasp Divine ideas.

Both the paradox and the parable are given to reveal truth as well as to conceal (See Matt. 13:10-17).

In Holy Scripture contradiction and contrariety of teaching and testimony must be only apparent to faith, but becomes real to human reason.

Paradoxes abound and serve one or all of three purposes:

- (1) First, to present a problem, afterwards to be solved.
- (2) Second, to arouse attention and challenge discrimination.
- (3) Third, to impress the majesty and mystery of the Divine Author as One whose thoughts are higher than man's, and defy perfect comprehension (See Isa. 55:8-9; Job Chs. 38-39; Rom. 11:33-36).

The paradoxes, or seeming contradictions, are not stumbling stones to faith, but rather stepping-stones to a higher knowledge of God and His truth.

ILLUSTRATIONS

I. THE PARADOX OF GOD AS BOTH SELF-REVEALING AND SELF-CONCEALING

Job 11:6 – “And that he would show thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is.” “The secrets of wisdom are double of understanding.”

“The secrets of wisdom are double to that which actually is” – Rotherham.

“And show thee wisdom's hidden depths; Truth's twofold form.”

“And show thee some of wisdom's secret depths, that they are far beyond all that is seen” – Bullinger.

God's wisdom is twofold in knowledge. All things converge in God. Rays of light, emanating from one orb, may at the vast distances suggested by astronomy be so parallel, as that no human instruments can measure their convergence. Yet they do meet in their source. They have a common focus, only our measurements are inadequate.

Exodus 33:12-23 – “I will make all my goodness pass before thee.” “And will cover thee with my hand while I pass by.” Here God is both revealing Himself and concealing himself.

Isaiah 53:2-3 – See John 1:14; Matt. 16:16-17

II. THE PARADOX OF DEATH

Heb. 2:14 – “That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil.”

“Mors mortis morti mortem nisi morte tulisset aeternae vitae Janua clausa foret.”
“Had not death, by death, borne to death, the Death of Death, the gate of Life Eternal would be closed.”

Here is a seeming inconsistency, a paradox, but a blessed reality in the death of Christ.

III. THE PARADOX OF THE JEW

Jer. 31:10-11; 35-40

The key to all our world problems is the Jew who is scattered among the nations; but will some day find his home in Palestine.

1. The Jew is scattered among all nations; but mixed with none.
2. Made a hissing and a byword (Lam. 2:15-16; Deut. 28:37; Ps. 44:14); yet they are a controlling power.
3. Plundered for centuries, yet holding the wealth of the world.
4. Despised for many centuries, yet not destroyed.
5. They yearned for their own land for many centuries, yet kept from possessing it.

This last is a historical marvel. Palestine is an insignificant little country. It had no geographical, historical, commercial, and political value to other nations. No nation really valued it, but the Jew; and yet they were kept from possessing it.

IV. THE PARADOX OF GOD’S IMMUTABILITY AND HIS MUTABILITY

1 Sam. 15:10-11; Jonah 3:10; Mal. 3:6; Jas. 1:17

God is essentially or absolutely unchangeable; but He is relatively changeable.

God’s attributes and utterances are always consistent; but His attitude changes toward man when man’s attitude absolutely alters toward Him. However, God’s original intention and prediction will always be fulfilled. His change is only temporary.

V. THE PARADOX OF GOD’S HOLINESS AND LOVE

God’s Holiness – (Exod. 15:11; Lev. 11:44-45; Ps. 22:3; Isaiah 6:3)

God’s Love – (1 Jn. 4:8,16; 2 Cor. 13:11)

The Scriptures teach that “God is a Spirit” (Jn. 4:24). There is a qualitative difference between God and man. For the purposes of dominion and communion with His creatures, God reveals Himself in the dual attributes of holiness and love. God is holy-loving, and He is loving-holy. All the other attributes of God are related to these two. In His holiness, God wields dominion over man; and in His love, we experience His communion. Emphasize the holiness of God at the expense of His love and we have a God of tyranny. Emphasize His love at the expense of his holiness and we have a sentimental God.

Both of these aspects of God’s being are revealed in Creation and Redemption.

Creation (Gen. 2:16-17) – “And the Lord God commanded the man saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat.” Here is a revelation of God’s love. “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” Here His dominion is expressed in His holiness.

Redemption (Matt. 27:46; Luke 23:46) – Jesus Christ recognized both God’s holiness and love in those crucial hours when He hung on the cross as our Savior. “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” Here a holy God in His absolute dominion let his wrath and judgment for sin fall upon His Son, as he bore the iniquity of the world. “Father, into Thy hands I commend my Spirit.” Here He recognizes God’s love and communion.

A holy God of absolute dominion, and a loving God of absolute communion is the paradox of his nature and the essence of His being. Man by sheer reason cannot understand this. But faith is able to accept the paradox (1 Cor. 2:14).

VI. THE PARADOX OF THE INCARNATION

John 1:14; 2 Cor. 5:19; Phil. 2:5-8

This is the paradox of the God-Man. God in human form is indeed a paradox to mortal man.

Some of the greatest heresies of Christianity of the early centuries were Christological centering about the person of Christ. Men tried to reason out the miracle of the dual being of Christ. Councils were held, anathemas were pronounced, and the church was split asunder because men employed reason instead of faith.

The statement is often made that “God became man”. That is not quite true. It is better to say that God became the God-Man. He became man and still remained God. The Absolute became relative, and still maintained absolute deity. God becomes man without ceasing to be God. This is the paradox of the incarnation.

VII. THE PARADOX OF GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY AND MAN’S RESPONSIBILITY

God’s Sovereignty – (Rom. 9:9-24; Mal. 1:1-5)

Man’s Responsibility – (Gen. 2:17; 3:1-6; John 3:16; Rom. 10:9-11).

Scriptures teach that God is absolutely sovereign; and, also that man is responsible. This creates a paradox, a seeming inconsistency. Man was responsible in God’s sovereign creation, and he is likewise absolutely responsible in God’s redemption.

If one teaches God’s sovereignty at the expense of man’s responsibility as do some Hyper-Calvinists it leads to Determinism or Fatalism. Emphasize man’s responsibility at the expense of God’s sovereignty as do the Arminians and one comes to the errors of Humanism, Pelagianism, and Free-willism.

VIII. THE PARADOX OF GOD’S TRANSCENDENCE AND GOD’S IMMANENCE

Isa. 6:1-3; Matt. 10:29

God is high and holy far above man; but He is also lowly enough to be interested in his creation.

To emphasize God’s transcendence at the expense of His immanence one falls into the error of Deism. Deism says that God is on a throne somewhere in the universe. He started the universe going but since then had had no personal interest in His creation.

To emphasize God’s immanence at the expense of His transcendence one falls into the error of Pantheism, or God is everything. He is the rose, the sunset, the water that quenches one’s thirst, and the apple that satisfies one’s appetite.

The transcendent God is the immanent God, and the immanent God is the transcendent God. This creates a paradox for man, and becomes unreasonable to him. But faith can believe in both.

LESSON # 23 - HUMAN WILLINGNESS IN ILLUMINATION

INTRODUCTION:

Definition: This is the principle by which a knowledge of God's truth is guaranteed to those who will to know the truth.

John 7:17 – “If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine.”

“He shall know.” That is the guarantee. God will make known to him the truth. Sin has veiled our mental capacities to understand and know the truth. The unbeliever cannot know God's truth because he is darkened by sin. (1 Cor. 2:14).

I. WE NEED SPIRITUAL ILLUMINATION

(John 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:9-10)

The Holy Spirit lifts the veil from our eyes and enlightens the mind, and makes us behold the things that are spiritually discerned. The Spirit gives revelation to the one who “willeth to do His will”.

When the Lord opened eyes of blind men they could see (Matt. 12:22; Mk. 10:46-52; Luke 7:21; John 9:1-7). But before the Lord opened eyes of the blind they could not see. We may read a passage many times and see nothing in it; then suddenly one day the Spirit gives light and we see.

Matt. 16:16-17 – This concerns the question that Christ asked His disciples. Peter had been with the Lord for some three years – walked with Him, worked with Him, talked with Him; and yet it took these three years for Peter to recognize that Christ was “the Son of the living God”.

Matt. 11:25-27 – The little child who comes to God depending upon the Spirit will have revealed to him things that the wise and prudent will never know.

Isaiah 29:10-18 – The learned and unlearned, not taught by the Spirit of God, find the Book a sealed Book because God hath poured upon them “the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes”. Sin kept them from understanding God's visions and prophecies. Hence any one that wills to know the Truth must be Spirit led.

II. WE NEED INTELLECTUAL HONESTY

This means to honestly recognize that the Bible is the Word of God. Therefore every human opinion must be submitted to His Truth. Anyone who honestly recognizes that the Bible is the Word of God will submit to it.

Truth is not what one has been taught. A person may have been taught Truth, but the criteria of Truth is not that something has been taught. If Truth is what someone has taught then Buddhism, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses and Modernism have truth. Truth would then be what someone has taught.

It is absolutely necessary, when we come to God's Word, to dismiss from our minds all predisposition to regard what we have been taught to be the Word of God. Many have been taught error; and when they come to the Word of God, they disregard the Truth and hold fast to their preconceived ideas.

So it isn't what we have been taught, but “Thy Word is Truth”. We need to take the place of Mary who sat at the feet of Jesus and was taught by Him (Luke 10:38-42). Peter refused to believe Christ concerning His suffering and crucifixion at Jerusalem; and Christ said unto him “Get thee behind me Satan” (Matt. 16:23). So if anyone is to know the Truth there must be intellectual honesty.

Sir Stephen Blackman said that there are four words which should govern us when we study the Word: ADMIT - SUBMIT - COMMIT - TRANSMIT.

(1) ADMIT – This means to let the light in: to let the Word in. It is a willingness to give up every preconceived idea unsupported by the Word of God. Error will always act and re-act on the soul of man and his life. Error in doctrine will lead to error in practice. The tendency of every error in a man's life will make him like the father of error, the Devil. If it were not for some counteracting truth that a person holds he would soon become completely like Satan. A good thing to do at all times is to think oneself empty before reading oneself full. Never lean on human authority. Human writings may be useful as reference, but worthless as authority. Never let some human author close the gate of your heart against the Truth of God's Word.

(2) SUBMIT – This means obey the Word of God. Every student of the Word must obey the Word. Many refuse to be controlled by the Word of God. Many make a show of dedication to the Word, but are not willing to be controlled by the Word. Many do not really know God, Christ, and the Spirit because they do not know the Word.

“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” (Matt. 13:12).

Admit the Word of God as Truth no matter what your ideas or opinions may be and submit yourselves to the teaching of the Word.

(3) COMMIT – This means to memorize or hide the Word in the heart. “Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Ps. 119:11). “But I will meditate in thy precepts” (Ps. 119:78). “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col. 3:16).

(4) TRANSMIT – This means tell it forth to others. “And to make all see what is the dispensation of the secret, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ” (Eph. 3:9).

LESSON # 24 - THE AGREEMENT PRINCIPLE

INTRODUCTION:

Definition: The Agreement Principle is that principle in which God in the original manuscripts guarantees that no passage in Scripture will contradict any other passage.

This principle is based upon the truthfulness and accuracy of the Holy Spirit in giving the Truth. This principle is also called “The Harmony or Unity Principle”.

The Scriptures are an organic unity. There are sixty six books in all as we have them in our bibles; but all are in perfect harmony. This unity is manifested in its Structure, its History, its Purpose, its Doctrine, and most of all in its great theme – The Christ.

Many claim that the Scriptures are full of contradictions, discrepancies, errors, and inconsistencies. But the Bible is not full of error. See the following Scriptures – Num. 23:19; Deut. 32:4; 1 Sam. 15:29; Ps. 119:89-90; John 17:17; Rom. 3:4; Tit. 1:2.

All contradictions found in God’s Word are only apparent contradictions. Jesus said: “Go not into the way of the Gentiles” (Matt. 10:5). Then later He said: “Go ye therefore and teach all nations” (Matt. 28:19). There is no contradiction here; just a change in dispensation. “Rightly dividing” the Word will eliminate most contradictions. All contradictions are in men not in God and His Word.

The Agreement Principle is illustrated by the fact that the Bible is in perfect agreement upon subjects which sinful man never will be in agreement.

It is necessary at all times to be accurate in the study of the Word. There must be accuracy in noting names, persons, places, etc.

There are two Sauls in Scripture – King Saul, and Saul of Tarsus.

There are two Jehoram’s – one the king of Judah (1 Kg. 22:50) and another Jehoram King of Israel (2 Kgs. 1:17).

There are three men by the name of James – James, the son of Zebedee (Matt. 4:21); James, the son of Alphaeus (Matt. 10:3); and James, the Lord’s brother (Matt. 13:55).

There are at least four Johns – John the Baptist (Matt. 3:1); John the Apostle (Matt. 10:2); John Mark (Acts 12:12); and John of Acts 4:6).

There are some nine or ten Simons – Simon Peter, Simon Zelotes, Simon the son of Joseph and Mary, Simon the father of Judas Iscariot, Simon the Pharisee, Simon the leper, Simon the Cyrenian, Simon the tanner, and Simon Magus.

There are some six Herods – Herod the Great, Herod Antipas, Herod Archelaus, Herod Philip, Herod Agrippa I, and Herod Agrippa II.

There are some seven Marys mentioned in the N.T. – Mary, the mother of Jesus (Matt. 1:16,18); Mary Magdalene (Matt. 27:56); Mary the mother of James and Joses (Matt. 27:56); Mary the wife of Cleophas (John 19:25); Mary the sister of Lazarus and Martha (Luke 10:39); Mary the mother of John Mark (Acts 12:12); and Mary a helper of Paul (Rom. 16:6).

There are royal titles given such as Abimelech, the royal title of the Amalakites and Philistines; Caesar for the kings of Rome; Pharaoh for the rulers of Egypt.

One person may have more than one name – Silvanus and Silas (2 Cor. 1:19); Levi and Matthew (Mark 2:14); Timotheus and Timothy (Acts 16:1); Cephus, Simon, Peter (Jn. 1:42; Matt. 10:2); Jehoiachin, Jeconiah, Coniah (Jer. 22:24; Jer. 24:1); Zaphnath-paaneah and Joseph (Gen. 41:45); Daniel and Belteshazzar, Hananiah and Shadrach, Mishael and Meshach, Azariah and Abed-nego (Dan. 1:7).

There are also places with the same name: Antioch in Syria and Antioch in Pisidia; there are three Bethsaidas; five Ramahs; Luz and Bethel; Sea of Galilee, Tiberius, Gennesaret, and Chinnereth; Dead Sea, Salt Sea, and East Sea.

Dean Stanley in Smith's Dictionary has tabulated some twelve discrepancies between Stephen's address in Acts Ch. 7 and the history of the Jews as given in the O.T. He says that some of these come by variations or additions. We say that if the Holy Spirit wished to add details in the N.T. record that does not make the record an error.

We shall now look at some of his so-called discrepancies. He compares Acts 7:2 with Gen. 12:1. The first speaks of Mesopotamia and the second Haran. He should have compared Acts 7:2 with Gen. 11:31. Or else compare Acts 7:4 with Gen. 12:1. (See also Gen. 15:7 and Neh. 9:7).

He compares Acts 7:14 with Gen. 46:26-27. In Genesis it says that 66 souls came with Jacob to Egypt. Jacob himself would make 67, Joseph makes 68, and Joseph's two sons make 70. And it is apparent that the wives make up the 75 of Acts 7:14, for it says "all his kindred".

Another discrepancy which Stanley finds seems very foolish. In Acts 7:20 Stephen says of Moses that he was "exceeding fair"; while in Exod. 2:2 it says he was "a goodly child". However, the same word that Stephen uses is used in the Greek Version of the O.T.

In Acts 7:22 it says that Moses "was mighty in words and deeds" and in Exod. 4:10 it says that he was "slow of speech, and of a slow tongue". We say that education and much learning do not always result in eloquence of speech.

Stanley is also concerned about the fact that Stephen mentions three periods in Moses' life of 40 years each (Acts 7:23,30,42) while in Exodus there is no mention of these. Here Stephen simply adds these details. (See also Exod. 16:35; Num. 14:33; Deut. 2:7; 8:2; 31:2; 34:7).

Again he compares Acts 7:32 where Stephen says that Moses "durst not behold" the burning bush. In Exod. 3:3 it says "and see this great sight". But he should have compared Acts 7:32 with Exod. 3:6.

In Acts 7:53 Stephen says that Moses received the law "by the disposition of angels; but in Exod. 19:6ff there is nothing said about angels. However, Paulo confirms the statement by Stephen in Gal. 3:19 and Heb. 2:2.

Luke says that Christ ascended from Bethany while Luke in Acts says He ascended from the Mount of Olives. Both are right because Bethany is located on the side of the Mount of Olives.

In Acts 9:4 it says that Paul "heard a voice" and in Acts 22:9 it says "they heard not the voice". In Acts 9:4; 22:9; 26:14 the Greek form is ten phonemes – an articulate sound; while in Acts 9:7 it is ten phonemes – an inarticulate sound.

In Numbers 4:3,21-23,29-30 concerning the sons of Levi it says they were thirty years of age when they began their ministry; and in Num. 8:24-25 it says that they were twenty-five years of age. The first has to do with numbering; while the latter indicates they were on probation for five years.

In 2 Kings 15:30 it speaks about the twentieth year of the reign of Jotham, and in 15:33 it says he reigned sixteen years. The problem is solved when we understand that his father Uzziah was smitten with leprosy and he reigned for four years during his father's lifetime. After his father died he reigned sixteen years.

In Num. 33:38 we read that Aaron died on Mt. Hor, and in Deut. 10:6 it says he died at Mosera. These are two names for the same place.

Someone found a discrepancy between the historical record in Genesis relative to Abraham's sons, and the statement in Heb. 11:17 that Isaac was "his only begotten son. The historical record says that Abraham had one son with Sarah, one with Hagar, and six with Keturah. Hebrews speaks of the covenant and the promise which only was made with Isaac the true line in the ancestry of Christ. For this reason he is called "the only begotten".

Someone else has noted a discrepancy in 1 Kgs. 15:14 and 2 Chron. 14:1-3. In the first Asa did not remove the "high places", and in the second it says he took away the high places.

The first speaks of high places for the worship of the one true God; the second speaks of “strange gods” in connection with “high places”. See also 2 Kgs., 12:2-3; 15:3-4 with 1 Chron. 16:39-40.

There is supposed to be a discrepancy in Matt. 27:7 with Acts 1:18. In Acts it says that Judas purchased a field to bury strangers in, and in Matthew it says the chief priests did it. It was Judas’ money that purchased the field; the priests did the transaction. So there is really no problem here.

In 2 Kings 10:30 it indicates that the children of Jehu shall sit on the throne through the fourth generation; while in Hosea 1:4 it says they will cease. The answer is found in 2 Kings 10:31.

Someone has seen a discrepancy between Gen. 6:19 and 7:2 with reference to the animals that Noah took into the ark. There were 120 years between these two accounts. The sevens were for sacrifice while the two were for propagation. The H.S. often adds details in a latter account.

LESSON # 25 - THE NUMERICAL PRINCIPLE

INTRODUCTION:

Definition – It is that principle by which God places a certain definite meaning on numbers employed by the Holy Spirit in the Scripture, and continues that significance throughout the inspired Book.

Back of all creation there is evidence that God has a mathematical mind. God is a God of numbers. The Word of God is perfect in holiness, righteousness, object and end, and also in its design in numbers.

There are two books, the Book of God's World and the Book of God's Word. Both of these are the work of God. Man could never create the world, and man could never have written the Bible. In all of God's works and words we find the right way, the right time, the right order, and the right number.

As there is a remarkable numerical structure in nature, so there is the same remarkable numerical structure in the Word. This proves that the Creator of the Universe is the Author of the Bible. When we find numbers used, not by chance, but by design; not haphazard, but with significance, then we see not merely so many works and words, but the living God working and speaking. In Psalm 147:4 we read: "He telleth the number of the stars". In Isaiah 40:26 we read: "Behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number". God knows how many stars there are. No man has ever been able to tell the number of the stars. In Job 28:25 we read: "He weigheth the waters by measure". In Luke 12:7 we read: "But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered". In Job 14:16 we read: "For now thou numberest my steps".

I. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF NUMBERS

When we see the same design in each of the works and words of God, the same mysterious principle being carried out in each, then the conviction is overwhelming that we have the same Designer, the same Author. We see the same hand, the same seal stamped on all His works, the same signature or autograph on each page of the Word. It is an autograph which cannot be torn off or obliterated, but is indelible like the water mark on paper. In a study of nature the numbers four and seven predominate.

There is a certain numerical significance in relation to time. When God created the earth, or better re-created it, He declared that the sun, moon, and stars were set in the heavens for time (Gen. 1:14-16). So actually our time comes from the heavens. The first natural division of time was stamped with the number seven. "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day" (Gen. 2:2). This principle of work on six days, and rest on the seventh is woven into our physical make-up. We need this one day of rest every week for the well-being of our bodies.

When God gave the ritual to Israel, He gave them the seventh day. The seventh day was holy; the seventh month was a hallowed month by its number of sacred festivals. The seventh year was the sabbatic year of rest for the land. Seven times seven marked the year of Jubilee. God deals with Israel in periods of 490 years or seventy times seven (Dan. 9:24).

In the heavens the important number is twelve. This is seen in the twelve signs of the Zodiac, an imaginary belt in the heavens consisting of twelve constellations, and encompasses the path of the planets. The woman in Revelation chapter twelve had on her head a crown of twelve stars. Twelve is the number of governmental perfection and is associated with the rule of the heavens. God said that the sun was to rule the day and the moon to rule the night (Gen. 1:16). These rule by their passage through the twelve signs of the Zodiac, which completes the circle of the heavens of 360 degrees (thirty times twelve).

There are seven parts in the life of a fruit-bearing plant – root, stem, leaves, flower-stalk, flower, fruit, and seed. The most useful plants to man are the cereal grains; and they are seven in number – wheat, oats, barley, maize, rice, rye, and millet. When we look forth into the heavens and see the rainbow, God’s covenant with man of no universal flood, we discern seven colors. When we listen to the human voice, we catch the same number seven; for when we hear the eighth note there is the beginning of a new one. The human voice is composed of seven ranges – bass, baritone, tenor, alto, contralto, soprano, and mezzo-soprano. All the terms used to denote the volume of sound are seven ff f mf m mp p pp.

The Psalmist says: “I am fearfully and wonderfully made (Ps. 139:14). This can be seen, among other things, in the number seven. Man is composed of nerve, brain, muscle, blood, hair, bone, and flesh; seven in all. To enable man to function there are seven parts to his body – four limbs, head, neck, and trunk. There are seven holes in man’s head – ears, eyes, nostrils, and mouth. A man may have seven relations of the first degree – father, mother, brother, sister, wife, son and daughter. The pulse beats on a seven day principle, on six days it beats faster in the morning and slower in the evening; but on the seventh day it beats slower in the morning. Man cannot violate God’s law of rest on a seventh day. God is a God of symmetry. If He creates five fingers on one hand, He puts five on the other; and if He creates five toes on one foot He puts five on the other. Man also has five senses – seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling.

Another wonder of creation is the number seven in the period of gestation or incubation. The chicken is 21 days, the duck 28 days, the ostrich and swan 42 days, the mouse is 21 days, the rabbit and squirrel is 28 days, the cat 56 days, the lion 98 days, the sheep 147 days, the pig 119 days, the cow 280 days, the elephant 630 days, and the human species is 280 days.

The bee is a remarkable little animal with the number three or its multiple stamped upon it. When the egg of the queen is hatched it is fed for nine days. It reaches maturity in 15 days. The drone matures in 24 days, eight times three. The bee is composed of three sections, head and two stomachs. The two eyes are made up of some 3000 small eyes, having six sides. Underneath the body are six wax scales with which the comb is made. It has six legs, and each leg is composed of three sections. The antenna is composed of nine sections. The sting has nine barbs on each side. The bee’s whiskers are composed of nine sections. The bee is marked from head to feet with threes and multiple of threes. That could not have just happened. It is by Divine design.

When we come to the Word of God we find the same numerical perfection. Take the first verse of the Bible: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”. In these seven words there are 28 Hebrew consonants, or four times seven. The subject has fourteen letters; and the objects have likewise fourteen letters. The first object – “the heavens” has seven letters; and the second object – “the earth” has likewise seven letters. The three principle words in this verse – God, Heavens, and earth have together 14 letters. The numerical value of these words is 777. The only other verse in the Pentateuch which has seven words and twenty-eight letters is Exodus 20:1, which ushers in the Ten Commandments. All this reveals that the Word of God is Divine, God inspired. “Man could not if he would; and he would not if he could.” Note the sevens in Deut. 4:34; Rev. 5:12 and 7:12. There are seven “walks” in Ephesians; seven “comings” in the Thessalonians; seven “precious thing” in Peter. “Mine hour” is found seven times in John. There are seven Beatitudes or “Blesseds” in Revelation. The word “covenant” is found seven times in Gen. Ch. 9. The word “preacher” is found seven times in Ecclesiastes. The word “manna” occurs fourteen times in the O.T. Satan is mentioned 14 times in Job. “Daughter of Jerusalem” is found seven times in the singular, and seven times in the plural. There were seven things done by the Good Samaritan. Seven gifts in Romans 12:6-8. Seven things Paul desired as a believer in Phil. 3:8-11. There is the seven-fold armor in Eph. Ch. 6.

II. THE SUBSTANCE OF NUMBERS

1. The Number ONE

In all languages it stands for “unity”. As a cardinal number it stands for one; as an ordinal it means first in a series. It is indivisible, made up of no other number. It is the source of all other numbers, and independent of all others.

We think of God in connection with one. “The Lord our God is one Lord” (Deut. 6:4). God is independent of all other beings; and He is the source of all things that are. One excludes all conflict for it excludes all difference. It stands alone and harmonizes with itself. It excludes all idolatry. In essence there is but one God, Who is manifested for the purpose of deliberation, manifestation, and operation into three persons.

Number one marks the beginning – “In the beginning God”. Everything issues out in good which begins with God. The Kingdom message was – “Seek ye first the kingdom of God” (Matt. 6:33). Sinful man wants to be number one, and herein lies all the trouble in the world. Satan wanted to be number one, and he has led the human race along the same downward path. Sin and rebellion against the One God have been the result. God is both the first and last (Isa. 43:10-11; 44:6; 48:12-13; Rev. 1:17; 2:8; 22:13).

All will be peace when this fact is accepted; and without it all is confusion. There cannot be two firsts. One can have the first two, but not two firsts. With God there is no tie. He is the first and only One in creation, Revelation, and Redemption. He purposed, planned, and accomplished it all.

The first commandment stands first in time, in order, and in importance (Exod. 20:1). In the Millennium there will be one King over all the earth (Zech. 14:9). In the Church there is One Head (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18). At the consummation of the ages there will be One God who is “all in all” (1 Cor. 15:28). There will be perfect peace both on earth and in heaven when there is no one to dispute Jehovah’s will. “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10). There will always be unrest and conflict when there is more than one will.

Our Lord, while on earth, in the midst of all hatred, wrath, persecution and rejection had a perfect peace. It was because He could say: “nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42). Perfect rest and peace can only be found in the Father’s will.

The Great Wall of China which runs between China proper and Mongolia is 2,000 miles long, 20 to 50 ft. high and 15 to 25 ft. thick. It is called “The Mightiest Work of Man”. It contains material enough to build a barrier 8 feet high around the earth. It was built over a period of fifteen years. The man who was responsible for the wall was Chin, from whom comes the word China. He called himself: “the one and only”. He destroyed all literature in order that history might begin with him. But who knows of Chin today. Even in China there have come many dictators since the time of Chin.

There are many words that occur in Scripture just once, and are instructive -

Hebrews 4:12 – “For the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword ... and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart”. The word “discerner” (Greek, kritikos) occurs but once. This is the origin of our word critic. The Word of God is skilled in judging. It can distinguish between the thoughts and intents of the heart and judges them. Man often becomes a critic of the Word of God. What perversion, confusion, and folly this brings! In a future day the Word will judge man (John 12:48).

2 Cor. 2:17 – “For we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God”. It is the word “corrupt” (Gk. Kapeeleuo) which occurs but once. The word has come to mean adulteration. The Greek Version of Isa. 1:22 reads: “Thy wine merchants (hoi kapeeloi) mix wine with water. Paul did not water-down the Word of God. The H.S. has reserved this word wholly for the Word of God.

Gal. 3:1 – “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth”. The word means to fascinate (baskaino). The heathen were fascinated with the eye (Deut. 28:54,56). Here it is used in a wider sense. The Galatians had been charmed and fascinated by these Judaising speakers and teachers. Thus they are declared to be foolish. They stand in great danger of being deceived, and turned away from the truth.

The first occurrence of words in Scripture is also important. They will fix the meaning of that word throughout Scripture. Here are some examples:

The word “Hallelujah” occurs first in Ps. 104:35 and the same word in Greek, “Alleluia” occurs at Rev. 19:1-3. In both places it stands for judgment. This is what praise is given for.

The word “prophet” occurs first in Gen. 20:7 showing that a prophet is first of all a spokesman for God, not merely a foreteller.

The word “Holy” (kodesh) occurs first at Exod. 3:5, the Book of Redemption. Redemption is the ground of holiness.

The word “bride” occurs first at Isa. 49:18. This shows it applies to Israel and not to the Church which is His Body. Israel is the bride (see Isa. 50:1; 54:1,4,6; 61:10; 62:4-5).

The “Day of the Lord” occurs first at Isa. 2:12. It is the Day when God shall judge the earth; when He humbles man; and he alone is exalted.

So Number One has for its fundamental idea the exclusion of difference.

1. It excludes another – “One Lord” (Deut. 6:4; Zech. 14:9). It speaks of sufficiency which needs no other, of absolute power or omnipotence. It speaks of independency which admits no other. We have thus sufficiency and independency, both which are perpetual or eternal.

2. It excludes external difference – Speaks of full identification, of perfect peace and concord.

3. It excludes internal difference – “The dream is one” (Gen. 41:25). This speaks of harmony in parts or attributes. Thus there is consistency, congruity, agreement. Speaks of individuality – one body, limb, branch.

Thus we find in One independency, unity, supremacy.

2. THE NUMBER TWO

The meaning of number two is the opposite of number one. Number one stands for unity; number two for difference. Number one says there is only one, while number two says there is another one. Two stands for difference and distinction. This thought of difference may be for good or evil. In Genesis 1:2 we have first darkness and then light. There is a difference because God divided the light from the darkness (Gen. 1:4-5).

In Genesis 3:15 there is the “seed” of the woman in opposition to the “seed” of the serpent. In Lev. 10:10 there is a “difference between holy and unholy”. In Lev. 20:24 there is Israel separated from other people”. In Ezek. 2:6-7 there is a difference between the words of man and the words of God. The Bible speaks of good and evil; law and grace; Christ and Anti-christ; clean and unclean, etc. In the N.T. where there are dual Epistles, the second has some special reference to the enemy. 2 Cor. 2:11; 11:3; 12:7. Here there is the revelation of an enemy, the working of Satan. In 2 Thess. 2:9 we have “the working of Satan”. In 2 Timothy there is reference to “perilous times”. 2 Peter describes the apostates. In 2 John there is the Anti-christ.

There are two foundations in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 7:24-29) the rock and the sand. In the sacrifices there are two goats and two birds (Lev. 16:5,8; 14:4ff). There are two covenants – the Old and the New (Heb. 8:7-8). There are two sons in the parable (Luke 15:11ff). There is the contrast between Cain and Abel; Abraham and Lot, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau. There are the two potter’s vessels in Jeremiah 18:1-4. The first man is of the “earth, earthy”, the Second Man is “the Lord from heaven” (1 Cor. 15:47). The old creation was under the curse, marred and ruined; but the new heavens and earth will be established in righteousness

(Isa. 65:17; 66:22; Rev. 21:1. “He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second (Heb. 10:9).

Testimony also enters into the meaning of number two. The testimonies may be different, but the second will support the first. Jesus said: “The testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me” (John 8:17-18). “At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses” shall a matter be established (Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; Matt. 18:16; Heb. 10:28). The whole Law hung on “two commandments” (Matt. 22:40). The Second Person of the Trinity is called “the Faithful Witness” (Rev. 1:5).

Two stands for dependence, humiliation, service. Here the idea of seconding assists the thought. These various meanings unite in Christ, the Second Person of the Godhead, and the Second Man. In uniting His two natures, the divine and the human, the Savior humbled Himself unto death to serve us. This is the good sense of the number two.

In the bad sense we have the ideas of difference, division, contrast, contradiction, opposition and conflict. The unclean beasts entered the ark by twos: the mother of a female child was to be unclean two weeks after its birth, or double the time for the male child.

The woman herself illustrates this number, full of contrasts as she is. She is dependent on man, but yet his helpmate. It was through the woman that sin and death came; and yet through her victorious “Seed” came salvation.

Death is division, separation, the last dread enemy; yet the death of Christ on the cross, in which the conflict between good and evil rose to its height, is once again salvation for mankind. Nowhere is there so great a contrast, such an apparent contradiction, as in the cross.

There are many character pairs in Scripture who represent God and the truth: Moses and Aaron, Caleb and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, Peter and John, Paul and Barnabas, Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration of Christ on the mount, two angels at Christ’s resurrection, and two men in white apparel who testified at His ascension that he would return in like manner as ye have seen Him go.

Facts of future punishment occur twice in Scripture: “The fire that never shall be quenched (Mark 9:43-45); “Cast into the fire (Matt. 7:19; John 15:6); “The furnace of fire” (Matt. 13:42,50); “Everlasting fire” (Matt. 18:8; 25:41); and “Hell fire” (Matt. 5:22; 18:9).

3. THE NUMBER THREE

The number three stands for Divine perfection. It is one of the perfect numbers. The others are seven, ten, and twelve. It is the number of the Godhead, the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It also stands for that which is permanent.

It is the number of resurrection. Its first occurrence is at Gen. 1:13. It was on the third day that the earth rose out of the water, a symbol of resurrection life. It was on the third day that Christ arose from the dead (Matt. 16:21). So it is the number of Divine manifestation and perfection.

It is the number of completeness. There are three dimensions of space – length, breadth, and height. There are three great divisions completing time – past, present, future. There are three persons in grammar that include all the relationships of mankind – first, second, and third persons. Thought, word, and deed complete the sum of human capability. The universe offers a threefold view – earth, sky, and sea. There are three degrees of comparison which complete our knowledge of qualities – positive, comparative, and superlative. There are three kingdoms in the realm of matter – animal, vegetable and mineral.

Archdeacon Lee says: “Among the heathen, if at all civilized, every type and image of deity, all that stands in immediate relation to it, all in which the Divine completes itself, has the stamp of three. The idea almost forces itself on the mind when man contemplates creation. It is but natural indeed that the essential character of the Triune God, as He has revealed Himself,

should be impressed upon His works. And so, in the record of Revelation, three is the numerical signature of the Divine Being and of all that stands in any real relation to God”.

Dr. T.A.G. Balfour in his “The Typical Character of Nature” says: “The whole world, from its foundation, seems to have been designed to proclaim a Tri-personal God, but only in the threefold constitution of man was the whole realized in one nature. Body, soul, and spirit are the three constituents of man, as he comes perfect from the hands of his Creator, and each was, in my opinion, designed to symbolize or represent a distinct person in the Godhead. The doctrine of the Trinity is not one which is peculiar to Scripture, but which is interwoven in the very constitution of man, and to which all nature bears its willing testimony”.

The seraphim at the throne of God ascribe holiness unto Him who sitteth upon the throne, repeating the word “Holy, Holy, Holy” (Isa. 6:3). Why just three? This is significant. They were apparently declaring the tri-unity of God. The Aaronic blessing upon the Children of Israel was threefold (Num. 6:23-26). Three things are predicted of God in the Scripture: “God is love” (1 Jn. 4:8); “God is Light” (1 Jn. 1:5); and “God is a Spirit” (Jn. 4:24).

Christ used the words “It is written” three times (Matt. 4:4,7,10). He raised three persons from the dead (Mark 5:41-42; Luke 7:14-15; John 11:43-44). The inscription over the cross of Christ was written in three languages, “Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew” (Luke 23:38). Christ is the “good Shepherd” in death (John 10:14); He is the “great Shepherd” in resurrection (Heb. 13:20); and He is the “chief Shepherd” in glory (1 Pet. 5:4).

There is also completeness of opposition against man in the world, the flesh, and the Devil (1 John 2:16; Gal. 5:17; John 8:44). The completeness of temptation is seen in “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 Jn. 2:16).

Completeness is also seen in uniting of three people, such as Shem, Ham, and Japheth; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Gershom, Kohath, and Merari; Saul, David and Solomon; Noah, Daniel, and Job; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; Peter, James and John.

Three times the voice of God spoke to Peter when the sheet was let down with all manner of unclean animals (Acts 10:11-16). The Jordan river was divided three times (Josh. Ch. 4; 2 Kgs. 2:8,14). The spies brought three things out of Canaan – “Grapes, figs, and pomegranates” (Num. 13:23).

In the Book of Revelation chapter one there is a series of threes in verses 1 thru 19. (See Number in Scripture by Dr. E.W. Bullinger, pg. 119). The Epistle of Jude is filled with combinations of three – “sanctified, preserved, called” (Vr. 1). “Mercy, peace, and love” (Vr. 2). “the people out of the land of Egypt, angels, Sodom and Gomorrha” (Vrs. 5-7). “The way of Cain, error of Balaam, gainsaying of Korah” (Vr.11). Threefold exhortation to a building up in the faith (Vrs. 20-21).

The number three is seen in the death of Christ. “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (Matt. 12:40). Christ was crucified on the third day, and was on the cross six hours – two times three. There were three hours of darkness and three hours of light. In the three hours of light He suffered from man; but in the three hours of darkness He suffered for man. In the three hours of light He bore the injustice of man, but in the three hours of darkness He met the justice of God.

In Mark chapter five we have three prayers by the Legion of Demons, by the Gadarenes, and by the demoniac who was healed. You have in these prayers the answers of “yes” and “no”. How important it is for us to pray as Christ did in the Garden of Gethsemane: “Thy will be done”. The phrase “Before the foundation of the world” occurs three times – John 17:24; Eph. 1:4; and 1 Pet. 1:20. This refers to God’s grace in His electing purpose. On the other hand the phrase “From the foundation of the world” occurs seven times.

There are many words and expressions that occur only three times in both the Hebrew of the O.T. and the Greek of the N.T. The word glorious (ah-dar) occurs three times (Exod. 15:6,11; Isa. 42:21). The word recompense (2 Sam. 19:36; Isa. 59:18; Jer. 51:56). The word

ancient is found in Dan. 7:9,13,22). In the N.T. there are such words as Father (abba), Mk. 14:36; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6. The word hid or secret (apokruptos) is found in Mk. 4:22; Luke 7:17 and Col. 2:3. The expression “made without hands” is found in Mk. 14:58; 2 Cor. 5:1; and Col. 2:11. Sweet savor (eudia) is found at 2 Cor. 2:15; Eph. 5:2; and Phil. 4:18. The word form (morphae) is found three times at Mk. 16:12; Phil. 2:6,7. The word guide or direct (kateuthuno) is found in Luke 1:70; 1 Thess. 3:11; 2 Thess. 3:5.

4. THE NUMBER FOUR

The number four is the number of creation with special reference to the earth. On the fourth day the material creation was finished (Gen. 1:14-19). There are four regions to the earth – North, south, East and West. There are four seasons to the year – Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter (Gen. 8:22).

Four is the number of the great elements – matter, air, fire and water. The Bible speaks of the “four winds of the heaven” (Dan. 7:2; 8:8; 11:4); and “the four corners of the earth” (Isa. 11:12; Ezek. 7:2; 46:21,22). There are four great world empires (Dan. Chs. 2 and 7). We sometimes speak of over the earth, on the earth, in the earth and under the earth. We speak of God’s animate creation as beasts, birds, fish, and man. The Lord spoke of His coming as taking place either “at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning” (Mark 13:35).

Mankind is divided into a fourfold division in Genesis Ch. 10. They are spoken of as “lands or countries, tongues, families, and nations”. In the Book of Revelation there are seven descriptions of a fourfold number (Rev. 5:9; 7:9; 10:11; 13:7 (R.V.); 14:6; and 17:15).

The fourth commandment has reference to the earth (Ex. 20:8). The fourth clause of the Lord’s Prayer mentions the earth (Matt. 6:10).

It takes four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John to present the earthly life of our Lord; and these are based on the fourfold revelation of the O.T. “Branch” (Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8; 6:12; and Isa. 4:2).

In 1 Cor. 15:42-44 we have four kinds of flesh – Corruption and Incorruption; Dishonor and Glory; Weakness and Power; Natural and Spiritual.

When Ezekiel saw the whirlwind come out of the north with a great cloud and fire (Ezek. 1:4) there was in the midst of it “the likeness of four living creatures with faces of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle (Ezek. 1:5-10). These emblems are related to the Lord Jesus as The Man, The King, The Servant and The Lord. These are the Cherubims which are four in number and are connected with the earth and the glory of Israel and her King, the Lord Jesus. They are first seen in Gen. 3:22-24. See also Ezekiel Ch. 10; and Rev. Ch. 4. They are described as four living creatures full of eyes (Rev. 4:6). They are God’s pledge to the earth that some day the curse will be removed. They are connected with God’s redemptive purpose for Israel and the earth as seen in their position on the Mercy-Seat (Ex. Chs. 25 and 37). They announce the judgment of God that will come upon the earth in the Tribulation Period (Rev. Ch. 6). Thus their number four marks them as connected with earth and creation, and their place in redemption shows the curse can only be removed by the Redeemer.

There are four specific names given to our Arch-enemy, namely: The Dragon, The Old Serpent, The Devil, and Satan (Rev. 20:2). There are four “little and wise” animals in Prov. 30:24-28 – The ant, the coney, the locust and the spider. There were four women in the genealogy of our Lord as recorded in Matt. Ch. 1 – Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and the Wife of Urias. There are four Hebrew children mentioned in Daniel – Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and Daniel. There are four kings in Daniel – Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius and Cyrus.

5. THE NUMBER FIVE

The number five is made up of four plus one (4+1). Four is the number of the earth, and one is the number of Deity or The Godhead. The earth in its weakness needs the government and grace of God. It is as Dr. E.W. Bullinger says: “But four plus one (4+1=5) is significant of Divine strength added to and made perfect in that weakness; of omnipotence combined with the impotence of earth; of Divine favor uninfluenced and invincible”.

So five is the number of God’s grace. Grace is God’s favor to the undeserving. Favor is of many kinds: to the miserable it is mercy; to the poor it is pity; to the suffering it is compassion; to the obstinate it is patience; but to the unworthy in is GRACE. Favor has its source and character in the nature of God, the nature of “God is Love” (1 John 4:8). Romans 3:24 says: “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”. The word “freely” is dorean in the original, and is translated “without a cause” in John 15:25. As there was no real cause why they should hate Jesus; so there is no cause why God should ever justify us by His grace. Therefore we are “justified without a cause by His grace”.

There were five different sacrifices in Abraham’s offering – heifer, goat, ram, dove, and pigeon (Gen. 15:9). When God changed the name Abram to Abraham He added the fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, namely Hey (Gen. 17:5). God then revealed Himself to Abraham as El-Shaddai, “the Almighty God” or the All-bountiful One (Gen. 17:1). Shad comes from the Hebrew root meaning “breast”. God is the “breasted” to Abraham and his people, the all-sufficient God.

The fifth kingdom in Daniel is the Stone Kingdom of Jesus Christ that will crush the other four world kingdoms (Dan. 2:45).

When the young David went out to meet the giant Goliath he “chose him five smooth stones” (1 Sam. 17:40). They represented his own weakness with Divine strength.

Five and its multiple are also seen in the promise of God to Israel in Lev. 26:8 – “Five of you shall chase an hundred and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight.”

Paul says: “I had rather speak five words with the understanding than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue” (1 Cor. 14:19). Words without end can accomplish nothing; but words of grace spoken in the power of God’s Spirit can accomplish much.

When Christ made His supreme sacrifice for us there were five parts of His body wounded for us – His back, His head, His hands and feet, and His side (Isa. 53:5; Matt. 27:29; Mk. 15:15; Luke 24:40; Jn. 19:1,34; 20:25).

In the Cleansing of the Leper (Lev. 14:14) the blood is taken and put upon three parts of his body – the tip of his right ear, the thumb of the right hand, and the big toe of the right foot. Through the ear he is to receive the Word of God; with his hands he is to do the work of God; and with his feet to walk in God’s ways. Each part is stamped with the number five. The ear represents his five senses or avenues of perception; the hand has five fingers, the expression of active power; the foot has five toes, and expression of personal conduct. The hands and feet have together ten digits, or 2x5.

6. THE NUMBER SIX

Six is distinctly the number of man. It is one short of the perfect number seven. It is stamped with man’s human attainment. It is the highest that man can attain; so it is the perfection of imperfection.

Dr. E.W. Bullinger in his Numbers In Scripture says: “Six is either 4 plus 2, i.e. man’s world (4) with man’s enmity to God (2) brought in, or it is 5 plus 1 the grace of God made of none effect by man’s addition to it, or perversion, or corruption of it, or it is 7 minus 1, i.e. man’s coming short of spiritual perfection.”

Man was created on the sixth day (Gen. 1:24-31), as was also the serpent. Man was appointed to labor on six days, but on the seventh he was to rest (Exod. 20:9-10). As six is thus related to man and the serpent it is related to sin and weakness.

There are three individuals in the O.T. marked with the number six: Goliath was six cubits in height, wore six pieces of armor; his spear's head weighed 600 shekels of iron (1 Sam. 17:4-7); Nebuchadnezzar created an image that was 60 cubits high, six cubits in breadth, and worshipped with the use of six musical instruments (Dan. 3:1-6); The Man of Great Stature in 2 Sam. 21:20 who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. He was the son of a giant. Then there is The Antichrist of Rev. 13:18 marked with the number 666.

There are six names in the Bible used for man, four in the O.T. and two in the N.T. The Hebrew names are Adam, Ish, Geber, and Enosh. The first is man as a human being; Ish and Geber indicate man as strong, vigorous, and man of valor; Enosh is weak man, mortal man. The Greek names are Anthropos and Aner.

The fact that six is pregnant with malignant significance is seen in the fact that six times our Lord was accused of having a demon – Matt. 12:24; Mk. 3:22; Luke 11:15; John 7:20; 8:48,52. These six wicked accusations were made by man.

The number six is seen also in physical destruction in the form of earthquakes. They are six in number – Exod. 19:18; 1 Kings 19:11; Amos 1:1; (Zech. 14:5); Matt. 27:54; 28:2; Acts 16:26.

Athaliah was a usurper queen to the throne of David in Judah. Her reign is recorded as being six years (2 Kings 11:1-3; 2 Chron. 22:10-12). She slew all the royal seed except one young son, Joash, who was rescued and hid in the House of God for these six years.

When the people of Israel murmured in the Wilderness and longed back to Egypt there were six foods for which they lusted – fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic (Num. 11:5). As a contrast the foods of Canaan were seven in number (Deut. 8:8).

The Serpent has six names in the Bible: (1) Nachash shining one (Gen. 3:1); Akshuv lie in wait, adder (Ps. 140:3); (3) Ephah poisonous serpent, adder, viper (Job 20:16); Tsiph-onee hissing serpent, viper (Isa. 11:8); (5) Tanneen great serpent or dragon (Exod. 7:9,10,12); (6) Saraph to burn, a venomous, deadly serpent (Num. 21:8; Isa. 14:29; 30:6).

7. THE NUMBER SEVEN

Seven is the number of spiritual perfection and completeness. It is found in both the works and words of God.

The first natural division of time, the seventh day, is stamped with this number. It was on this day God rested from His work of creation (Gen. 2:1-3).

When God gave the ritual of redemption for His people Israel we find it stamped with the number seven. The seventh day was a holy day; the seventh month was set aside by its many sacred festivals; the seventh year was the Sabbatic Year of rest for the land; and the year of Jubilee was marked by 7x7 (Lev. Ch. 23; 25:4,8).

In the realm of nature we also see the number seven. There are seven stages in the life span of a fruit bearing plant – seed, root, stem, leaves, flower stalk, flower, and fruit. There are seven cereal good grains used around the world – wheat, oats, barley, corn, rice, rye and millet. There are seven distinct parts to the human anatomy – two legs, two arms, head, neck, and trunk. The human head contains seven holes – two ears, two eyes, two nostrils, and one mouth. There are seven ribs connected to the breast bone on either side.

In seven years the whole structure of the human body changes. There are seven Greek words used to describe the seven stages of human existence – Infancy (paidion, child); Childhood (pais, boy); Youth (meirakion, lad, stripling); Adolescence (neaniskos), young man); Manhood (aner, man); Decline (presbutes, old man); Senility (geron, aged man).

The believer's armor given in Eph. 6:14-18 has six distinct pieces – The Girdle of Truth, Breastplate of righteousness, Sandals of the Gospel, Shield of Faith, Helmet of Salvation, and Sword of the Spirit. There is also the seventh, Prayer, without which all these would be of no avail.

God's covenant with Abraham as given in Gen. 12:2-3 has seven items – “I will make of thee a great nation, I will bless thee, And make thy name great, Thou shalt be a Blessing, I will bless them that bless thee, And curse him that curseth thee, In thee shall all Families of the earth be blessed.”

The Book of Revelation is full of the number seven. There are the seven churches of Asia Minor (1:11; Chs. 2 & 3); “the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars” (3:1); the seven seals (Ch. 5 & 6); seven ascriptions of praise to the Lamb (5:12); Seven ascriptions of praise to God (7:12) Seven trumpets (Chs. 8 & 9); “Seven angels having the seven last plagues” (15:1); Seven vials of God's wrath (Ch. 16); Seven beatitudes of blessing (1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:2; 20:6; 22:7; 22:14); The word Jesus is found seven times.

The first verse of the Bible sets forth the number seven in no uncertain terms. There are seven Hebrew words in the original. These seven words have 28 letters or 4x7. The first three words have 14 letters, and the last four words have 14 letters. There are 14 syllables in these seven words. Only Divine authorship could have done this!

There were seven men who lived to be over 900 years – Adam (930), Seth (912), Enos (905), Cainan (910), Jared (962), Methuselah (969), and Noah (950).

8. THE NUMBER EIGHT

The word eight comes from a Hebrew root which means “to make fat”, “to super-abound”. Eight is one above seven, so it is over and above this number of perfection.

This is the number of resurrection and a new beginning. The eighth day begins a new week; and the eighth note begins a new octave. So eight is the number of resurrection and regeneration.

During the days of The Flood there were “eight souls ... saved through water” (1 Pet. 3:20); and Noah is called “the eighth person” (2 Pet. 2:5) because he represents a new beginning.

Circumcision was performed on the flesh on the eighth day (Gen. 17:12) and is typical of the “putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh” (Col. 2:11).

Seven days were occupied in the consecration of the priesthood; and on the eighth day they entered upon their work (Lev. 8:35; 9:1).

God commanded the first-born to be given unto Him on the eighth day (Exod. 22:29-30).

The Transfiguration of the Lord took place on an eighth day (Luke 9:28). This begins the new era with the “power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1:16-18). The eighth Psalm announces His Kingdom (Heb. 2:5-9).

When God sent Samuel to Jesse to anoint a new king, after Saul had failed, he bypassed seven of his sons, and anointed David the eighth son (1 Sam. 16:1-13).

There are eight recorded miracles or signs in the Gospel of John – (1) Marriage in Cana (2:1-11); (2) Healing of Nobleman's son (4:46-50); (3) Healing of Impotent Man (5:1-9); (4) Feeding of the Five Thousand (6:1-14); (5) Jesus Walking on the Sea (6:15-21); (6) Healing of a man born blind (9:1-41); (7) Raising of Lazarus (11:1-44); (8) Miracle of the fishes (21:1-14).

The miracles of Elijah were eight in number (1 Kgs. 17:1; 1 Kgs. 17:14-16; 1 Kgs. 17:17-23; 1 Kgs. 18:37-38; 1 Kgs. 18:41-45; 2 Kgs. 1:10; 2 Kgs.5:14; 2 Kgs. 2:8). The miracles of Elisha were double or sixteen.

There are eight quotations in Revelation Ch. 1 from the O.T. Scriptures:

- A-1. Verse 5 (Isaiah 55:4).
- B-1. Verse 7 (Dan. 7:13).
- C-1. Verse 7 (Zech. 12:10).
- D-1. Verse 8 (Isa. 44:6).
- D-2. Verse 8 (Isa. 44:6).
- C-2. Verse 12 (Zech. 4:2).
- B-2. Verses 13,15 (Dan. 7:9,13,22; 10:5-6).
- A-2. Verse 16 (Isa. 49:2).

9. THE NUMBER TEN

This is the number of cardinal and ordinal perfection. It is the number in which order has reached completeness. It is also the number of human responsibility. There are five fingers on each hand, making ten in all. This speaks of responsibility in Divine work. Then there are five toes on each foot, ten in all. This speaks of responsibility in a Divine walk. So in ten we have the whole cycle of completeness.

The completeness of God's claim on man is set forth in the Ten Commandments (Exod. Ch. 20). These present human responsibility man-ward and God-ward. No man ever met the responsibility completely; hence the need of redeeming grace. Only Christ fully met the demand made on man.

Completeness of God's judgment upon Egypt is seen in the Ten Plagues (Exod. 9:14).

The completeness of the Devil's rule in the world is seen in the ten kingdoms in Daniel. These are symbolized by the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's great image (Dan. 2:41); and in the ten horns of the fourth beast (Dan. 7:7,20,24; Rev. 12:3; 13:1; 17:3,7,12).

In the covenant of the land made with Abraham, God listed ten nations that occupied that land – Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaims, Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites (Gen. 15:18-21).

Israel rebelled and tempted God ten times in the Wilderness, completing her series of perversities (Num. 14:22).

Israel is represented by The Ten Virgins of the parable (Matt. 25:1-13). Five were foolish and five were wise because they had oil in their lamps when the Bridegroom came. The five wise could say: "This is our God, we have waited for him" (Isa. 25:9).

The salvation and security of believers is set forth in a ten-fold assurance – "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature" (Rom. 8:38-39).

Israel was commanded to give a tithe or tenth part of the increase of their fields as recognizing God's claim upon the whole of their substance (Lev. 27:30-34; Num. 18:24-26; Deut. 14:22; Neh. 10:37-38).

When the males in Israel were numbered they were required to pay a redemption fee. Every male twenty years of age paid ten gerahs which was the amount of half a shekel (Ex. 30:12-16).

In Psalm 119 there are ten words which give the Divine description of the Word itself – "Way, Testimony, Precepts, Commandments, Sayings, Law, Judgment, Righteousness, Statutes, and Word."

Ten times our Lord uses the expression: "I am" in John's Gospel – 6:35; 6:41; 8:12; 8:18; 10:7,9; 10:14; 14:6; 15:1,5.

The Talmud says that there were ten generations from Adam to Noah; and ten from Noah to Abraham.

10. THE NUMBER TWELVE

The number twelve and its multiples, twenty-four and one hundred and forty four, are perfection numbers of a governmental nature. They have to do with Rulership.

Our planetary sun and moon which rule the day and night of the earth do so by passing through the twelve signs of the Zodiac, an imaginary belt in the heavens; composed of Aries the Ram, Taurus the Bull, Gemini the Twins, Cancer the Crab, Leo the Lion, Virgo the Virgin, Libra the Balance, Scorpio the Scorpion, Sagittarius the Archer, Capricorn the Goat, Aquarius the Water Bearer, and Pisces the Fishes. The Zodiac completes the great circle of the heavens of 360 degrees (12 times 30).

There were thirteen judges in Israel, but one the sixth was a usurper, namely Abimelech (Judg. Ch. 9). The twelve appointed were Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Barak, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Japhthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, and Samson.

Jacob had twelve sons, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin (Gen. Chs. 29,30,35). These became the twelve tribes of Israel. Later the two sons of Joseph were added, omitting Levi and Joseph. But in all the listings of the twelve tribes no more than twelve are found.

Jesus called unto Himself twelve apostles, namely, Simon Peter, Andrew, James the son of Zebedee, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the son of Alpheus, Lebbaeus Thaddaeus, Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot (Matt. 10:1-5). After Judas failed and hanged himself, Matthias was chosen to take his place (Matt. 27:5; Acts 1:26).

The Lord was twelve years old when he entered the temple and held a discussion with the elders (Luke 2:41-47).

When the Lord was in the Garden of Gethsemane he told His adversaries that He could call "more than twelve legions of angels" to protect Him. This marks the perfection of angelic power.

In the Book of The Revelation of Jesus Christ there are twenty-four thrones, and twenty-four elders (Rev. 4:4; 4:10; 5:8; 5:14; 11:16; 19:4). There are also 144,000 sealed Israelites (12,000 from each tribe) Rev. 7:4-8.

In the New Jerusalem there will be twelve gates with twelve angels at the gates. There are twelve foundations with the names of the twelve apostles. The city is four-square and measures twelve thousand furlongs on each side. The wall was 144 cubits. There are twelve gates with twelve pearls (Rev. Ch. 21).

In the coming Kingdom of Christ on earth the twelve apostles will sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28).

King Solomon had twelve thousand horsemen, and twelve oxen holding up the molten sea, there were twelve lions on either side of the six steps leading up to his throne (2 Chron. 1:14; 9:25; 4:4; 9:19).

11. THE NUMBER THIRTEEN

The number thirteen has come down to us as an unlucky number, or a number of ill-omen. There is much superstition connected with it. Some people will not sit down at a table where they are the thirteenth person or there are already thirteen places. Others will not occupy a hotel or motel room with the number thirteen on it.

Every occurrence of this number in Scripture has the stamp of rebellion, apostasy, corruption, and revolution on it.

Let us now apply the first-mention principle to this number. We find its first occurrence in Gen. 14:4 which says: "Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled." This has the stamp of rebellion upon it. The second mention of

this number is Gen. 17:25 which tells us that Ishmael was thirteen years old when circumcised and brought into the covenant. But he grew up in rebellion and rejection.

Rebellion and ruination go back to Gen. 1:2. In Gen. 1:1 we have twenty-eight letters in the Hebrew or 4×7 . In verse two we have fifty-two letters or 4×13 . This is evidence that God did not create the earth “without form or void”.

Israel as a nation is a type of rebellion and ruination. While every listing of the tribes is twelve in number, there were actually thirteen tribes. Joseph’s two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh were considered among the tribes. When the apostles and Jesus sat down for the last Passover Supper they were thirteen in number; but one was a traitor. Judas rebelled and sold Jesus to His enemies.

There were thirteen judges in Israel including Abimelech, but he was a usurper. Or if one excludes Abimelech and includes Samuel there are still thirteen judges. It was certainly a time of rebellion and retribution from God.

In Mark 7:21-22 we have a listing of thirteen things which make an apostate heart or a heart of rebellion. In the dietary laws given to Israel by God there are twenty-six unclean things mentioned or 2×13 (Deut. 14:7-19).

In the Book of Revelation Satan is called a Dragon, thirteen times.

Solomon spent seven years building the house of the Lord (1 Kgs. 6:38), but it took him thirteen years to build his own house (1 Kgs. 7:1). This is when his apostasy began.

In the Book of Esther there is an interesting occurrence of the number thirteen. The “Jews’ enemy” Haman cast lots or the horoscope for twelve months to determine the best time to carry out his design against the Jews. It was on the thirteenth day of the first or thirteenth month that the decision was made (Esther 3:12-15).

Paul received thirty-nine stripes (3×13) of the Jews (2 Cor. 11:24).

The names of our Adversary are multiples of thirteen by Gematria (Hebrew and Greek letters stand for numbers). Satan, in Hebrew is 364 (13×28). Satan, in Greek is 2197 ($13 \times 13 \times 13$). “That old serpent, even Satan” is 2756 (13×212). Beelzebub is 598 (13×46). Belial is 78 (13×6). Dragon is 975 (13×75). Murderer is 1820 (13×140). Tempter is 1053 (13×81). Fowler (Ps. 91:3) is 416 (13×32).

12. THE NUMBER SEVENTEEN

The number seventeen is outstanding as a number because it is made up of two perfect numbers – seven and ten. It is not a multiple of any other number, hence it is a prime number. It is the seventh in the list of prime numbers, which are 1,3,5,7,11,13, and 17.

This number speaks of ordinal perfection in ten, and spiritual perfection in seven; or the perfection of spiritual order.

Psalm 83:6-11 – is an example of the number seventeen in its combination of ten and seven. In verses 6-8 we have a tenfold confederation of Israel’s enemies – Edom, Ishmaelites, Moab, Hagarenes, Gebal, Ammon, Amalek, Philistines, Tyre, and Assur. In verses 9-12 we have seven enemies already destroyed by God – Midianites, Sisera, Jabin, Oreb, Zeeb, Zebah, Zalmunna. These are recorded in the Book of Judges.

Romans 8:35-39 – Here we have a series of seven and then of ten; seven in the questions, and ten in the answers. Verses 35-37 give us the sevenfold questions – “shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” Verses 38-39 give us the tenfold answers – “neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature.” We have here the spiritual and eternal perfection of the believer’s standing in Christ.

Hebrews 12:18-24 – Here we have a contrast between the Old and New Covenants. In verses 18-21 we have the marks of the Old Covenant which are seven in number; and in verses 22-24 we have the ten-fold marks of the New Covenant. The blessings of the Old Covenant were

perfect and spiritual; but the New Covenant more so. They were ten in number or double the number of grace (2x5).

Angelic Appearances – There are, in the Gospels and Acts, some seventeen Angelic appearances. See Matt. 1:20; 2:13,19; 4:11; Luke 22:43; Matt. 28:2; Mark 16:5; Luke 1:11; 1:26; 2:9,13; John 5:4; Acts 1:10; 5:19; 10:3; 12:7; 27:23.

13. THE NUMBER FORTY

The number forty occurs some 146 times in Scripture. It is therefore an important number. It stands for probation, trial, and testing. It is mainly connected with chastisement for God's covenant people, Israel.

Moses life was a series of forty years – forty years in Egypt; forty years in Midian; and forty years with Israel in The Wilderness (Acts 7:23,30,36). Forty days he was in the mount to receive the Law (Exod. 24:18); and forty days he was in the mount after the sin of the Golden Calf (Deut. 9:18,25).

The twelve spies spent forty days spying out the Land of Canaan (Num. 13:25; 14:34).

Forty years is seen in the lives of the judges, Othniel, Barak, and Gideon with reference to rest in the Land of Canaan (Judg. 3:11; 5:31; 8:28).

Elijah was forty days in Mt. Horeb (1 Kgs. 19:8); Jonah and Nineveh (Jonah 3:4); Forty days Ezekiel lay on his right side to symbolize the 40 years of Judah's transgression (Ezek. 4:6).

Israel was ruled by several kings for forty years each – Saul (Acts 13:21, David (2 Sam. 5:4), Solomon (1 Kgs. 11:42), Jehoash (2 Kgs. 12:1), and Joash (2 Chron. 24:1).

Forty days Jesus was tempted of the Devil in the Wilderness (Matt. 4:2). For forty days after his resurrection and before His ascension Jesus was seen of His disciples (Acts 1:3).

Forty centuries after the creation of Adam, Galatians 4:4 was fulfilled – “But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law.”

By:

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