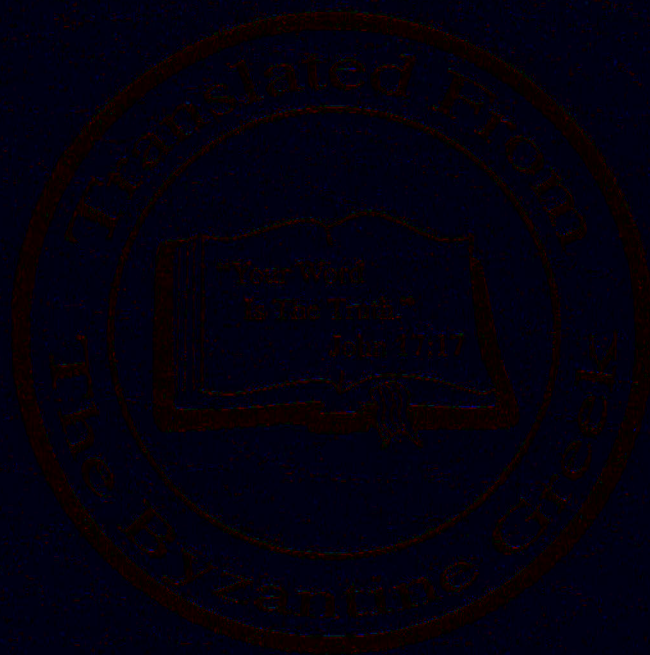


THE NEW TESTAMENT In Its ORIGINAL ORDER

*A Faithful Version
With Commentary*



From the Stephens Text of 1550

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An Editor's Forward

The Bible is a grand mansion with many and varied rooms. On one of its floors resides the New Testament. Its books are the rooms into which pilgrims, the Christian faithful, have come and gone for what is now approaching two millennia. Those rooms are exceedingly familiar to many via the standard translations such as the King James Version and the Revised English Bible and others. But mankind's cultures and mankind's languages are ever in flux so, given great expanses of time, rooms that were both comfortable and ashimmer with light take on a darkened and dulled look. Ultimately, such rooms need the deft touch of a restorer's hand to return to their original splendor.

To enhance the clarity of Scripture obscured by time and by conflicting readings of key passages is a daunting challenge. Fred R. Coulter has provided a New Testament translation that retains the grace and grandeur of the King James Version while seeking to clarify some of the problematic key passages. He has been mindful of the earlier giants who translated the New Testament, such as William Tyndale, as well as of later studies of scriptural texts and of Judaic culture. He has focused on being accurate and faithful to the original Greek texts. Their convoluted syntax, at times elliptical phrasings, at times problematic grammar present a thorny challenge to the translator. That is a challenge I believe Mr. Coulter has met—a challenge that is multiplied manifold by dealing with ancient languages such as Greek and Latin.

My charge here has been to be a footnote to that grand endeavor, namely to edit the scriptural text produced as well as the enlightening commentary and appendices on those Scriptures. My focus was to be a nearsighted one, if you will: to peer closely at the renovated and the new rooms, the various books of the New Testament and the commentary, to look for spatters and streaks, i.e. surface irregularities.

These “irregularities” may be seen as being divisible into matters of *expression* and matters of *convention* for both the translation as well as the substantial commentary that follows. With regard to *expression*, the key concern as editor was the question of clarity in diction and in phrasing: Is a given word problematic in terms of being archaic or ambiguous? Does a phrasing's length, complexity, or inverted syntax impede comprehension? Is the style—for example, within individual books of the New Testament—sustained and consistent? As for *conventions* of the language, my questionings were straightforwardly grammatical or punctuational. Are the grammar, punctuation, and usage standard? If not, are the deviations permissible? Do the deviations, if allowed, make for a distracting variability?

As the final editor for this volume, *The New Testament In Its Original Order—A Faithful Version With Commentary*, I have rigorously applied the ques-

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tions above to its pages. My fervent hope is that what follows in this volume is a more translucent window through which to view the beauties, marvels, and profundities of the New Testament original, now freshly rendered and then illuminatingly expounded upon by Fred R. Coulter.

Dr. Will Tomory
Professor of English
Southwestern Michigan College

About the Author

Fred R. Coulter attended the University of San Francisco and graduated from San Mateo State College before graduating from Ambassador University (Ambassador College), Pasadena, California, with a BA in Theology in 1964. He was ordained a minister of Jesus Christ in 1965 and pastored churches of God in the Pacific Northwest, the Mountain States, and the greater Los Angeles area and Monterey, including the central coast area in California. Mr. Coulter completed advanced biblical and ministerial studies in 1972-75 under the Ambassador University master's program. While completing these studies, his professor of *Koiné* Greek encouraged him to consider translating the books of the New Testament.

After completing his formal instruction in *Koiné* Greek, Mr. Coulter continued to expand his knowledge by undertaking a verse-by-verse study of the books of the New Testament, using the Byzantine Text. In the course of his study, he was moved to translate the Gospel accounts into clearer, more understandable English for contemporary readers. The early fruit of his labor, *A Harmony of the Gospels in Modern English*, is now in its third edition.

In translating the four Gospels, Mr. Coulter endeavored to accurately and clearly convey the meaning of the Greek text as defined by the rules of Greek grammar and syntax, guided by an absolute conviction that every word in the Gospel accounts is authentic and essential to a full understanding of the whole of Scripture. It is Mr. Coulter's belief that every book in the New Testament is God-breathed and holy, and, the words of God were given for all mankind to read and understand. This belief has been the underlying principle and motivation behind his translation of each book of the New Testament.

Mr. Coulter's translation of the New Testament was undertaken as part of his commitment to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. When Jesus walked the earth, He instructed His disciples to preach the gospel to all nations (Matt. 28:19). To fulfill this commission, it was necessary to translate the Scriptures so that all people could read the words of God in their own language. With the Scriptures in hand, the apostles and their disciples traveled throughout the ancient world. Greek historians record that the apostle Thaddaeus carried the gospel message to Mesopotamia and Assyria; the apostles Matthew, Thomas and Bartholomew traveled to the lands of the Medes, Persians, and Bactrians and to India; the apostles Philip, Matthias and Andrew journeyed north into the kingdoms of Antiochus, Cappadocia and Polemon, and to the Bosphorus and Asiatic Scythia; the apostles John, James (son of Alphaeus), Simon the Zealot and Peter traveled to Britain and Ireland; and the apostle James (son of Zebedee, brother of John) remained in Jerusalem to continue the work in the land of Judea. Thus the written message of the gospel of Jesus Christ was transported to the entire civilized world. People in all nations could read the Scriptures and learn the way of life that Jesus had lived and taught.

In the centuries that followed, however, access to the Scriptures was denied to the common people, and the reading and interpretation of Scripture was restricted to the priesthood of the Universal Church of God—the Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church assumed sole authority over Scripture, claiming that only the priests had been empowered to understand and interpret the Scriptures. Thus the words of God were “locked up” and were no longer the possession of the people.

With the coming of the Reformation, the Scriptures were restored to the people. At the core of the Reformation was the belief that all people should read the Scriptures and seek to learn the will of God. This belief led to the translation of Scripture into English by William Tyndale and into German by Martin Luther. Since those early translations, the

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Holy Scriptures have been translated into every major language in the world, and a countless number of dialects, so that nearly all nations have access to the words of God.

In these modern times, however, the restoration of Scripture to the people has been threatened by a number of translations that omit or add words or even whole verses. In addition, some translations have added entire books that were not part of the original authentic canon. "Higher criticism" has purported to expose weaknesses and discrepancies in the authentic texts, undermining the faith of many. An array of scholars in the academic world has replaced the Catholic priesthood as translators and interpreters of Scripture.

Jesus Christ Himself said that the Holy Spirit would guide us into all truth. Expertise in the Greek language alone does not impart understanding of the truth of God; nor does ordination and induction into the clergy. As the Scriptures were inspired by the Holy Spirit, they can only be understood through the enlightenment and leading of the Holy Spirit.

In undertaking to translate the New Testament, Mr. Coulter has acknowledged the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the writing of each book and sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit in translating each passage and verse. Throughout his endeavor, he carefully studied the use of the Greek verbs, participles and prepositions in order to accurately translate the meaning of the Greek text. In addition, he consulted with experts in *Koiné* Greek when a term or phrase in the Greek text was ambiguous or open to question. This combination of diligent study and faith in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit has led to a translation that accurately and faithfully sets forth the true meaning of the Greek text of the New Testament.

*Carl D. Franklin
December 2003*

Other Works by the Author

The Christian Passover is a book of over 500 pages that details the scriptural and historical truths of the Passover in both the Old and New Testaments, leading the reader step-by-step through every aspect of one of the most vital and fundamental teachings revealed in the Bible. It fully explains the meaning of the Christian Passover—a remembrance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ the Passover Lamb of God—in a most compelling and inspiring manner. The full meaning of the body and blood of Jesus Christ is revealed, showing the magnitude of God's love for every person, and His awesome plan and purpose for mankind.

A Harmony of the Gospels In Modern English brings to life the message and purpose of the true Jesus, portraying His life and ministry in their true historical setting. This easy-to-understand, step-by-step account of the life of Jesus Christ is an indispensable study aid for every serious Bible student.

The Seven General Epistles is designed for an in-depth verse-by-verse study of the epistles of James; I and II Peter; I, II and III John and Jude. As part of the living Word of God, these epistles are as meaningful today for personal Christian growth as when they were written.

Lord, What Should I Do? is a book for Christians who are confused and bewildered by the escalating spiritual and doctrinal chaos in Christian churches today, which is undermining the true faith of the Bible. Any religious organization that teaches truths from the Word of God is a target for the forces of evil behind this chaos. This book clarifies the problem and offers the solution.

On-Line studies for the serious Bible student, more written information and in-depth Bible studies in audio format can be obtained at **www.cbcbg.org**.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, all the honor and glory go to God the Father and Jesus Christ for making this endeavor possible, for we have nothing that we did not receive (I Cor. 4:7). In the same manner, Jesus told His apostles that they were entering into other men's labors: "For in this the saying is true, that one sows and another reaps. I sent you to reap that in which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor" (John 4:37-38). The apostles' ministry was built on the foundation of all those who had labored and served God before them.

Entering into the labor of others goes back to the beginning. After the creation of Adam and Eve, God raised up righteous men who walked with Him—Abel, Seth, Enoch and Noah. After the Flood, God dealt directly with Abraham, and it is written of Abraham that he kept and taught the "way of the Lord" (Gen. 18:19). Moreover, God said of Abraham that he "... obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws" (Gen. 26:5). Because of Abraham's faithfulness, the promises of God were passed on to Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. Later, God raised up Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egyptian slavery and to give them His laws and commandments at Mount Sinai.

God instructed Moses to write all of His judgments, statutes, commandments and laws, and Moses recorded them all on scrolls which together were called the Book of the Law. After God spoke the Ten Commandments to Israel, He wrote them with His own finger on tablets of stone. Nearly a year later, when the tabernacle was completed, Moses put the tablets of stone with the Ten Commandments inside the Ark of the Covenant and placed the sacred scrolls of the Law in special sheaves on the side of the Ark—which was placed into the holy of holies.

The Aaronic priesthood and the Levites were custodians of these sacred laws for Israel. They made exact copies from the sacred scrolls so that the laws of God could be taught to the children of Israel. Just before Moses died, he finished writing the fifth and final book of the Law—Deuteronomy. At that time, God ordained Joshua to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land (1448 BC). After Joshua and the elders died, God raised up judges to rule the people of Israel, while the priests and Levites continued to bear the responsibility of teaching the people the laws and commandments of God.

However, the children of Israel did not continue to walk in the way of the Lord. They sinned by not keeping His laws and commandments and by transgressing His covenant. They forsook the Lord and went after the gods of the land—Baal and Ashtaroth (Judg. 2:6-13). Therefore, God corrected them by delivering them into the hands of their enemies (vs. 14-15). When they repented, He raised up righteous judges to deliver them (vs. 16). As each judge died, the children of Israel would again go whoring after other gods. Each time they repented, God would raise up another judge to deliver them (vs. 17-23). This cycle continued for over 400 years during the period of the judges.

The last judge of Israel was Samuel. He was unique because he was judge and prophet. When Samuel became old, he made his three sons judges. But they did not walk in their father's ways—they took bribes and perverted judgment (I Sam. 8:1-3). As a result, the elders of Israel came to Samuel and demanded that they be given a king to judge them like all the nations (vs. 4-5). Not only did the children of Israel reject God's established system of judges, but they rejected God's reign over them.

In spite of the fact that the children of Israel had rejected God's rule, because of

Acknowledgements

His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, God instructed Samuel to fulfill the people's request for a king. At that time, God made a new covenant with the children of Israel and their kings (I Sam. 8:10-22; 10:17-24). After this covenant was ratified with the selection of Israel's first king, Saul, Samuel made it official by writing down the covenant and placing it in the holy of holies before the Lord (I Sam. 10:25). Samuel also wrote the books of Judges, and parts of I and II Samuel.

Afterwards, God rejected Saul as king because he did not follow God's commandments and rebelled against Him (I Sam. 15). Then the Lord selected David, the shepherd boy of the house of Jesse to succeed Saul as king (I Sam. 16). David was a man after God's heart and became the greatest of all the kings of Israel and Judah. As a king and prophet, David wrote hundreds of psalms and a number of proverbs in praise and worship of God. These were added to the sacred scrolls along with the Law and the histories of Joshua, Judges, I and II Samuel, and I and II Kings.

David's son Solomon succeeded him and was granted permission by God to build a temple in Jerusalem, according to the plans that his father David had received from God. Solomon began his reign with great humility, desiring to serve God and the children of Israel and to judge them according to the Lord's covenant. Solomon built the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem and wrote many of the chapters in the book of Proverbs, as well as the Song of Solomon and the book of Ecclesiastes. God blessed Solomon and Israel with wealth and riches unparalleled in the history of the world. During his reign Israel was a world-ruling power and an enormous trading empire with all the nations of the world (I Kings 10:23-24; II Chron. 9:20-24).

Solomon's reign began in glory with the bountiful blessings of God. However, it ended in disaster because he sinned greatly against God and before all Israel. He married seven hundred wives and had three hundred concubines, many of them from foreign nations. They turned his heart away from the Lord and led him to worship other gods. So great was his apostasy that he built temples and incense altars for all the pagan gods of his wives in Jerusalem. He built them on the mount just west of the Temple Mount of God (I Kings 11:4-10). Later it was called the "mount of corruption" (II Kings 23:13).

As a result of Solomon's sins, God divided Israel into two kingdoms—the northern kingdom of the ten tribes of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah—the Jews, Levites and the tribe of Benjamin. During the reigns of the kings of Judah and Israel, God raised up prophets to warn the people when they and their kings sinned. Their writings were added to the Scriptures: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel and the twelve Minor Prophets.

The northern ten tribes of Israel continued until 721-718 BC, when they were carried into captivity by the Assyrians because of their sins and transgressions against God (II Kings 17:1-18). Later, because of the rebellion and transgressions of the southern kingdom of Judah, God sent Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon against them. Nebuchadnezzar and his armies destroyed Jerusalem and the temple that Solomon had built for the worship of God and carried the Jews into captivity to Babylon. After seventy years some of the Jews, together with some of the priests and Levites, returned to Jerusalem.

Under Ezra and Nehemiah, the remnant of the Jews along with the priests and Levites rebuilt the temple. During this time, God used the priest Ezra to write the books of Ezra, and I and II Chronicles, and to edit and canonize the Old Testament. He had one hundred twenty priests and Levites, called the Sopherim, who helped him complete this final canonization. Thus, the Old Testament took its final form with the three divisions of the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms (Writings). The Levitical Sopherim and scribes made official copies of the Old Testament which were sent to all Jewish synagogues throughout the Persian Empire to be used by the Jews in the Diaspora for teaching and worship.

Acknowledgements

The Old Testament, with these divisions, was preserved by the scribes down to the time of Jesus Christ and the apostles (Luke 24:44-47). After the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the second temple in 70 AD, faithful Levitical scribes, later called Masoretes, continued to hand copy and preserve the Old Testament until the time of the printing press.

As Jesus said, the apostles entered into the labor of the patriarchs, Moses and the prophets. Jesus Christ ordained His chosen apostles to preach the Gospel to the world, to raise up churches and to write and canonize the New Testament. Faithful scribes hand copied the original New Testament texts from the time of the apostles until the time of the Reformation. Beginning in the early 1500's AD, Erasmus brought together the Greek manuscripts, known as the Byzantine Text. His fifth and final edition of the Greek New Testament was published in 1535 AD. From this edition Robert Estienne published the Stephens Greek New Testament in 1550 AD. This became the standard for most Reformation translations and was later called the Textus Receptus. The Stephens 1550 text was used by this author for his translation of the New Testament.

In 1525, William Tyndale was the first man to translate and publish the New Testament from the Byzantine Greek into English, using Erasmus' 1516 and 1519 editions. Later, he translated the Old Testament from the Hebrew. Because he dared to translate and publish the Bible in English, William Tyndale was martyred by strangulation and burned at the stake in October 1536 AD at the behest of Roman Catholic Inquisitors. His complete Bible, finished by John Rogers after his death, is known as the Thomas Matthew Bible (1537 AD). In that same year, King Henry VIII authorized the Thomas Matthew Bible to be published and used in the churches in England.

Later, during the reign of Catholic Queen Mary, English exiles in Geneva produced an English Bible in 1557, known as the Geneva Bible. This Bible, which was 95-98% Tyndale's work, continued to be printed in many editions through 1699 and was widely used in England, Scotland and the American Colonies. In 1611, the first edition of the King James Version was published. Later, it became the standard English version and was used by English-speaking people throughout the world.

Today, Jesus' saying is still applicable: "I sent you to reap that in which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor" (John 4:38). Any contemporary translator enters into the labor of thousands of faithful men, who through the ages have labored in the Word of God—many giving their lives in martyrdom.

Acknowledgment goes to all those faithful, honest scholars and ministers of the Word, who down through the centuries have labored and published lexicons, dictionaries, commentaries, and the histories of the preservation of the Bible—without which this work would not be possible. Truly, we have entered into the labor of thousands of others.

I give my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to my lovely, dear wife, Dolores, for her patience and personal encouragement that helped to make this publication a reality. As translator of this Faithful Version of the New Testament, I give special tribute to the late Dr. Charles V. Dorothy, Ph.D., of Ambassador University, Fuller Theological Seminary, and Claremont Graduate School. It was under his private tutelage for two years that I studied New Testament Greek, 1974-75. Dr. Dorothy continued as my mentor and personal friend for many years. Through the years, I have constantly studied to increase my knowledge and understanding of New Testament Greek. Until his death in June 1996, Dr. Dorothy encouraged me to translate. In 1992, I began to translate the New Testament, beginning with the seven General Epistles. This complete translation, which was over ten years in the making, is the sole responsibility of Fred R. Coulter.

Special recognition and acknowledgement go to the late Dr. Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D., biblical scholar and historian, who died in January 2002. After serving as profes-

Acknowledgements

sor of theology and history at Ambassador University, he founded the Association for Scriptural Knowledge in Portland, Oregon. Before his death, he was recognized as one of the world's foremost scholars in the history and preservation of the Bible. Dr. Martin's book, *Restoring the Original Bible*, is one of the premiere books in the field of the preservation and canonization of the Bible. Dr. Martin was a personal friend of mine. Only two weeks before his untimely death, Dr. Martin gave me permission to quote extensively in this work from his book, *Restoring the Original Bible*. In addition, he made me promise to arrange the books of the New Testament in their original order.

The New Testament In Its Original Order—A Faithful Version With Commentary is the result of over forty-three years of studying God's Word, and teaching God's people, including over thirty years of studying New Testament Greek—the last ten of which were devoted to translating. This book is the fruit of that labor. However, a work such as this has required the help of many. Everyone who has worked on this project gives special thanks and acknowledgement to the brethren of God because their love, prayers and financial support has made this project a reality.

Personal acknowledgment and gratitude go to Carl and Jean Franklin for their expert editing of this English translation so that it might accurately reflect the original Greek. Acknowledgment and deep appreciation go to William M. Tomory, Ph.D., for his professional expertise in evaluating both the expression and mechanics of this English translation, and for his scrupulous editing of the translation and commentaries to conform to the current standards for style and punctuation.

Gary Staszak is to be highly commended for his painstaking, exhaustive research and factual, compelling writing of the commentaries on the history and preservation of the Old and New Testaments—Chapters Nine through Fifteen and several appendices. He also acknowledges the assistance of Albert and Renate Miller, Louis Williams and Jenai Rasmussen in his efforts.

Special thanks go to Becky Ritke, Marcia Ritke-Momose and Phyllis Daniel for their diligent editing of the commentaries and appendices. John and Hiedi Vogeles are to be commended for their diligence and tireless labor in the final formatting and proof-reading of the entire text for publication of this book. Others who assisted in providing material for the appendices are Robert Martin, Mike Joseph and Ron Carey. Thanks also go to Kip Johnson for proof-reading the commentaries and appendices.

We all give thanks to God the Father and Jesus Christ for the blessing of being able to labor in this endeavor in the Word of God. We have labored to the end that the reader may find this translation faithful to the original Greek as preserved in the Stephens Text of 1550 and that it captures and reflects the meaning and divine authorship of the apostles' original writings. We pray that this translation and the accompanying commentaries and appendices may guide the reader to a better understanding of the original teachings of the apostles of Jesus Christ, who preached the Gospel to the world and originally wrote the New Testament—the enduring fruit of their labor.

*Fred R. Coulter
December 2003*

Author's Preface

Why This New Translation?

This new translation, The New Testament In Its Original Order—A Faithful Version With Commentary, has been produced because today, in these end times, we are confronted with the removal of God from the public conscience and the destruction of the Holy Bible—the Word of God—especially the New Testament! The foundation of Christianity is being subverted and corrupted with new translations that change the Word of God so dramatically, it is tantamount to destroying it.

In modern Western civilization today, most references to God and the Holy Bible have been removed from the public arena. Aside from profanity or cynical ridicule, God is rarely mentioned in the printed or electronic media, popular entertainment or music. Furthermore, within the past fifty years, a secular humanist worldview has gradually been eroding the knowledge of the true God. As a result, a form of Christianity without God has been developing. Who has ever heard of such a thing as an atheistic Christianity? Christianity without Christ? That is the supreme oxymoron—or to coin a new word to show the insanity of such a concept, a “moryoxon”!

Today's modern, pluralistic, secular, scientific world has no room for the true God—God the Father and Jesus Christ—or His Word, the Holy Bible. Lloyd Geering, a fellow of the Jesus Seminar, headquartered in Santa Rosa California, is an outspoken advocate of a secular, humanist religion—“Christianity” without God. In his book, *Christianity Without God*, Geering writes: “So appeal to human rights led, in turn, to the abolition of slavery, the rejection of racism, the emancipation of women, and the acceptance of homosexuals. All these emancipations evolved out of the Christian matrix and today are even sometimes referred to as Christian values. Yet each of these innovations has pitted the developing secular world against the entrenched dogmas of conventional Christianity....The emancipations already won, along with those still in the process of being achieved, have been made possible only because at the same time **we have also been steadily emancipating ourselves from obedience to a supposed supernatural heavenly Father, whose revealed will was not to be questioned.**”

“We have now reached the stage within the evolving stream of Christian tradition when to achieve the most mature state of personhood **we must become emancipated from the last element of our cultural tradition which has the capacity to enslave us—namely, theism**” (Geering, *Christianity Without God*, p. 136, bold emphasis added).

In Psalm 2, David prophesied that before the return of Jesus Christ, the people and governments of the world would reject God's rule in their lives. They would not relent until they had “emancipated” themselves from God: “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, **Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us**” (Psa. 2:1-3, *KJV*).

Geering continues, “Secular futurists today, however, know that the world's future is, as never before in human history, dependent upon us humans. Because the modern global, secular humanist world stands in unbroken line of descent from the Christendom of the past, we can justifiably speak of this post-Christian dispensation as a further, but different, form of Christianity; it is now ‘**Christianity without God**’ ” (Geering, p. 142).

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The secularization of Christianity did not come suddenly. Rather, it has been a slow, but steady erosion of faith and trust in God and His Word, resulting in a destruction of the true knowledge of the Creator God. Geering elaborates: "During the twentieth century that 'God' was slowly vanishing from the area of public consciousness and was no longer being appealed to by public bodies in times of pestilence, war, and drought, as once was the case. Even in churches it is rare to hear prayers beseeching God, say, to break the current drought; asking him to provide a fine day for the Sunday School picnic could be done only in jest. **All public bodies, national and international, are now fully aware that humans themselves must solve the problems of our time and that there is no 'God' out there who can be appealed to when all else fails. The once public 'face of God' has been forced to retreat to the subjective consciousness of devout individuals and traditional church gatherings.** God has been privatized; what has remained public are the values inherited from the Christian past, values which continue to lead to fresh emancipations and new human ideals; **and it is these values which constitute 'Christianity without God'**" (Ibid., p. 143, bold emphasis added).

In concert with the removal of God from the public conscience, there has been the move toward "political correctness." The politically correct, public-speak language being espoused by government, liberal educrats, and the printed and visual media promotes tolerance toward all political, religious and ethnic groups, is gender neutral and champions homosexuality. In most printed media, especially in books used at all levels of public education, politically correct "word police" scour publications to eliminate politically incorrect "offensive" or "potentially offensive" words and phrases. As a result, the emphasis of language has shifted to project the paradigm of a politically correct, atheistic humanism, which exalts man while debasing God the Father, Jesus Christ and His Word. Noting this, Geering writes: "The transition from Christendom to 'Christianity without God' is reflecting itself in common language. In three little books of a quite novel kind Don Cupitt has made a study of the religiously interesting idioms now coming into colloquial English. He observed, for example, that as the word 'God' has been disappearing from public use, a whole host of little phrases focusing on 'life' (many of them new) have been coming into common usage, such as 'How's life been treating you lately?', 'Get a life!', 'That is the story of my life!' He suggests that the secularization of religion has had the effect of sacralizing life [worshipping human life itself instead of God].

"Cupitt also observed that the same change has been happening with our rituals. Funerals, for example, are ceasing to be events marking the departure of the deceased to their 'reward in heaven' and, instead are becoming 'celebrations of a life', a life which is now ended and complete" (Ibid., p. 143).

Rejection of Jesus Christ as the Savior of Mankind

Central to the concept of Christianity without God is the rejection of God the Father and Jesus Christ. Robert W. Funk, founder of the Jesus Seminar, in his article, "The Coming Radical Reformation" writes: "The God of the metaphysical age is dead. There is not a personal god out there external to human beings and the material world. We must reckon with a deep crisis in god talk and replace it with talk about whether the universe has meaning and whether human life has purpose" (The Coming Radical Reformation, *Thesis I*).

Funk's declaration is very similar to Aldous Huxley's 1937 proclamation of his philosophy of meaninglessness, when he wrote his reasons and motives for the denial of a special creation of everything, and his rejection of God's rule in his life: "I had motives

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for not wanting the world to have a meaning. Consequently, I assumed that it had none and was able without any difficulty to find satisfying reasons for this assumption ... For myself, as no doubt for most of my contemporaries, **the philosophy of meaninglessness was essentially an instrument of liberation** ... from a certain system of morality. We objected to the morality because it interfered with our sexual freedom; we objected to the political and economic system because it was unjust....There was one admirably simple method of ... justifying ourselves in our politically erotic revolt: **We could deny that the world had any meaning whatsoever.** Similar tactics had been adopted during the 18th century and for the same reasons....The chief reason for being 'philosophical' was that one might be free from prejudices—above all, prejudices of a sexual nature. It was the manifestly poisonous nature of the fruits that forced me to reconsider the philosophical tree on which they had grown" (Aldous Huxley, *Ends and Means*, pp. 312, 315, 316, 318).

The very God that the unbelieving reject has revealed His will and purpose for mankind, as well as for the universe, in His Word, the Holy Bible. Without God's inspired Word men cannot discern the purpose of life or the universe. Their rejection of God blinds their minds so that they cannot understand—all their talk about the purpose of human life and the universe is useless and meaningless! Thousands of years ago, King David wrote of such men: **"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.** They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is none that doeth good.* The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and seek God.* They are *all* gone aside, they are all together become filthy: *there is none that doeth good, no, not one.* Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the LORD" (Psa. 14:1-4, *KJV*).

A Christianity without God must reject the commandments of God the Father and Jesus Christ, thus giving way to moral relativism. Funk proclaims: "The Bible does not contain fixed, objective standards of behavior that should govern human behavior for all time. This includes the ten commandments as well as the admonitions of Jesus" (Funk, *The Coming Radical Reformation*, Thesis 20).

When men cast aside the laws and commandments of God, they bring calamity upon themselves and those who follow them. The prophet Isaiah warned those who would do so: **"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him! Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel"** (Isa. 5:20-24, *KJV*).

In rejecting Jesus Christ as the Son of God, religious atheists retain the name of Jesus only to remake a Jesus in their own image, according to their theories—a false Jesus—a man merely of human origin, not divine. Therefore, they reject all references in the New Testament that Jesus was the Creator God, Who came to the earth to save mankind. Again Funk writes: "We should give Jesus a demotion. It is no longer credible to think of Jesus as divine. Jesus' divinity goes together with the old theistic way of thinking about God....The plot early Christians invented for a divine redeemer figure is as archaic as the mythology in which it is framed. A Jesus who drops down out of heaven, performs some magical act that frees human beings from the power of sin, rises from the dead, and returns to heaven is simply no longer credible. The notion that he will return at the end of time and sit in cosmic judgment is equally incredible. We must find a new

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plot for a more credible Jesus" (Ibid., *Theses 6 and 7*).

Funk and the fellows at the Jesus Seminar are busy making the "new plot" by dissecting the New Testament, throwing out as fiction all but 16-18% of the Gospels. They are rearticulating and redacting the Gospels to create a new false "Jesus," a concoction of their imaginations: "In rearticulating the vision of Jesus, we should take care to express ourselves in the same register as he employed in his parables and aphorisms—paradox, hyperbole, exaggeration, and metaphor. Further, our reconstructions of his vision should be provisional, always subject to modification and correction" (Ibid., *Thesis 21*).

Further, in their perversion they are deciding for themselves which parts of the New Testament they will use while systematically discarding the rest. The few teachings they do accept from the Gospels are some of Jesus' teachings that they have classified as wisdom teachings. Geering explains his views as follows: "**In 'Christianity without God' there is no place for the traditional figure of Christ as the divine Saviour.** Yet there is certainly a place for Jesus the teacher, the man of wisdom, the one who revitalised the path to freedom. Of relevance to us is not the Jesus who was elevated into a mythical heaven but Jesus the fully human person who shared the tensions, enigmas, and uncertainties that we experience. It is Jesus who told stories which shocked people out of their traditional ways of thinking and behaving, who can free us from the mind-sets in which we have become imprisoned. **The Jesus most relevant to us is he who provided no ready-made answers but by his tantalising stories prompted people to work out their own most appropriate answers to the problems of life.** That is why the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son will be remembered long after the historical confessions and creeds have been forgotten.

"Christianity can exist without God. Indeed, 'Christianity without God' has actually been in our midst for quite some time. It has been coming quietly, unheralded and unnoticed....It was 'Christianity without God' which made possible the series of emancipations mentioned above. Indeed, they may even be regarded as manifestations of the coming of the very Kingdom, of which Jesus spoke. Just as the early church saw evidence of the coming of the Kingdom in such events as 'the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear', so we may say that, though there is yet a long way to go, we can rejoice to see positive changes taking place:

there is increasing personal freedom to think and to speak,
the slaves are being freed,
patriarchy is crumbling,
homosexuals are free to 'come out',
weapons of mass destruction are being widely condemned,
racist attitudes are being overcome,
equality of the sexes is being achieved,
the disadvantaged are no longer being ignored,
human worth and values are being increasingly honoured"

(*Christianity Without God*, pp. 145-146).

The apostle Peter warned about false teachers, such as these, who would arise and deceive the majority of people: "But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed **there will be false teachers among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies, personally denying the Lord who bought them,** and bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of them, **the way of the truth will be blasphemed**" (II Pet. 2:1-2).

In their brazen, blasphemous assaults against the truth of God, the fellows of the Jesus Seminar are attempting to mythologize the New Testament, so it becomes a collection of stories that can be changed at whim. According to Funk, "The New Testament is a highly uneven and biased record of orthodox attempts to invent Christianity. **The canon of scripture adopted by traditional Christianity should be contracted and ex-**

panded simultaneously to reflect respect for the old tradition and openness to the new. Only the works of strong poets—those who startle us, amaze us with a glimpse of what lies beyond the rim of present sight—should be considered for inclusion. **The canon should be a collection of scriptures without a fixed text and without either inside or outside limits,** like the myth of King Arthur and the knights of the roundtable or the myth of the American West” (The Coming Radical Reformation, *Thesis 19*).

In order to accomplish this task they have rejected 82-86% of the Gospels and have sought to expand the New Testament by adding many other apocryphal and Gnostic writings from the Nag Hammadi library of Upper Egypt and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Robert W. Funk, Roy W. Hoover and the Jesus Seminar have already published a book titled, *The Five Gospels*. As Funk said, they reduced and expanded Gospels at the same time. To reduce the four Gospels, they have rejected 99% of the Gospel of John and substantially reduced the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, retaining a mere 16-18% of these books. Then they added a “fifth” gospel, the Gnostic Gospel of Thomas (that was written by someone other than the apostle Thomas, in the 200’s AD or later). Among the other works they are seeking to incorporate into their new version of the New Testament—none of which were written by those whose names appear in the titles—include the following: *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene*, *The Gospel of Mary*, *The Gospel of Barnabas*, *The Apocryphal Gospel of Peter*, *The Gospel of Phillip*, *An Unknown Gospel*, *The Secret Book of James* and *The Didache*, as well as any other text they consider to be “Christian.” Homogenizing the New Testament with these spurious Gnostic and apocryphal writings would so corrupt it, it would be utterly unrecognizable as the Word of God.

In a Christianity without God, man becomes his own god. Hence, it is reasoned that man is his own savior and can solve all the world’s problems. Is it any wonder that Jesus said, “When the Son of man comes, shall He find the *true* faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8).

The apostle Paul prophesied about the fruits of a godless religion that would arise in the latter days: “Know this also, that in *the* last days perilous times shall come; for men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, braggarts, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, despisers of those who are good, betrayers, reckless, egotistical, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; having an outward appearance of godliness [Christianity without God], but denying the power of *true* godliness. But *as for you*, turn away from *all* these....*They are* always learning but *are* never able to come to *the* knowledge of *the* truth [of God]” (II Tim. 3:1-7).

Today, we are witnessing a godless society that is suffering from the consequences of rejecting Jesus Christ and God the Father. The prophet Hosea laid bare the suffering that a society incurs when a majority of the people have rejected God: “Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel [and the whole world as well]: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, **because *there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.*** Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away....**My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.**

“As they were increased, so they sinned against me: *therefore* will I change their glory into shame. They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart on their iniquity. And there shall be, like people, like priest: and **I will punish them for their ways, and reward them their doings.** For they shall eat, and not have enough: they shall commit whoredom, and shall not increase: because they have left off to take heed to the

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LORD. Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart. My people ask counsel at their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them: **for the spirit of whoredoms hath caused them to err, and they have gone a whoring from under their God**" (Hosea 4:1-12, KJV).

Just as Hosea wrote of God's penalty for rejecting Him, the apostle Paul wrote that because men did not want to retain the knowledge of God, He abandoned them to their own devices: "Indeed, *the* wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest among them, for God has manifested *it* to them; **for the invisible things of Him are perceived from *the* creation of *the* world, being understood by the things that were made—both His eternal power and Godhead—so that they are without excuse; because when they knew God, they glorified *Him* not as God, neither were thankful; but they became vain in their own reasonings, and their foolish hearts were darkened.**

"While professing themselves to be *the* wise ones, they became fools and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into *the* likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed creatures, and creeping things. **For this cause, God also abandoned them to uncleanness through the lusts of their hearts, to disgrace their own bodies between themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie;** and they worshiped and served the created thing more than the one Who is Creator, Who is blessed into the ages. Amen.

"For this cause, God abandoned them to disgraceful passions; for even their women changed the natural use *of sex* into that which is contrary to nature; and in the same manner also the men, having left the natural use *of sex* with the woman, were inflamed in their lustful passions toward one another—men with men committing shameful *acts*, and receiving back within themselves a fitting penalty for their error.

"And in exact proportion as they did not consent to have God in *their* knowledge, God abandoned them to a reprobate mind, to practice *those* things that are immoral; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, malice; full of envy, murder, strife, guile, evil dispositions; whisperers, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things *and practices*; disobedient to parents, void of understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable *and* unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who commit such things are worthy of death, not only practice these things themselves, but also approve of those who commit *them*" (Rom. 1:18-32).

These are the penalties that godless societies reap. Indeed, man's wisdom is foolishness to God. As the apostle to the Gentiles, Paul was confronted with the foolish wisdom of this world—Greek philosophy and religion—that leads to spiritual death: "For to those who are perishing [the wise and mighty of the world], the preaching of the cross is foolishness; but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will nullify the understanding of those who understand.' **Where is *the* wise? Where is *the* scribe? Where is *the* disputer of this age? Did not God make foolish the wisdom of this world?** For since in the wisdom of God the world through *its own* wisdom did not know God, it pleased God to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching" (I Cor. 1:18-21).

Those who reject God the Father and Jesus Christ are not content with removing the knowledge of God from the public conscience and creating an evil society. They are also assaulting the Word of God with a vengeance. Their final coup de grace is the elimination of God the Father and Jesus Christ from the New Testament itself! By changing and corrupting the Scriptures with new versions that use common street language and politically correct, neuter gender language, the sacredness of the Holy Scriptures is debased. Thus, the Scriptures become secularized and profaned!

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How Did It Happen?

How did such designs against the Word of God ever develop in Western civilization, the bastion of Christianity that has published and distributed the majority of the billions of Bibles in the world today? Why do we see a world so deluded, deceived, degenerate and immoral that it is readily embracing “Christianity without God” and accepting debased, corrupted, blasphemous, politically-correct Bibles with hardly a whimper of resistance? Rather, than rehearsing a broad overview of history, we will examine a listing of the various English Bible versions and translations, which tell the story of a slow but steady, insidious corruption of the Word of God.

After the publication of the King James Version in 1611 virtually nothing was done to change the English Bible. However, beginning in 1871, Westcott and Hort, with a committee of revisers, began to change the printed Greek text of the Byzantine family, commonly known as the Textus Receptus, or the Received Text. They produced a revised New Testament Greek text to conform to the inferior Sinaiticus and Vaticanus Greek texts from which the English Revised New Testament in 1881 came, followed by the complete Bible in 1885, known as the English Revised Version.

After the ERV, many English versions were produced:

Fenton, NT 1895

The Emphasized Bible, Rotherham 1897

- The Bible in Modern English, Fenton 1901

American Standard Version in 1901

Moffatt, NT 1913, 1917; OT 1926, 1935

Douay Bible 1941 (Catholic)

New World Translation 1950 (Jehovah's Witnesses)

Revised Standard Version 1952

New Testament in Modern English, J. B. Phillips 1957

The Amplified New Testament 1958

Berkley New Testament 1959

The Amplified Old Testament 1962

New American Standard Bible 1963

The Jerusalem Bible 1966 (Catholic)

New English Bible 1970

New American Bible 1970

The Living Bible (Paraphrased) 1971

Today's English Version (Good News for Modern Man) 1976

New International Version 1978

New King James Bible 1983

New Jerusalem Bible 1985

Revised English Bible 1989

New Revised Standard Version 1990

Contemporary English Version 1995

New Testament and Psalms (Inclusive Version) 1995

New Living Translation 1996

New American Standard Bible 1997

English Standard Version 2001

The Bible in Contemporary Language—The Message 2002

Today's New International (Inclusive) Version, proposed in 2002

The Bible in Contemporary Language

In some recent versions of the Bible, the emphasis on an accurate translation of the Hebrew or Greek texts has been abandoned in favor of a vernacular paraphrase. One

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of the newest versions, *THE MESSAGE: The Bible in Contemporary Language*, 2002, by Eugene H. Peterson, is a freewheeling paraphrased, personal interpretation of the Scriptures. To call it a translation is an insult to God the Father, Jesus Christ and the inspired Word of God. While some parts of this version may convey a fairly accurate meaning of various sections of the Hebrew or Greek texts, in general, this version destroys the true meaning of the Word of God with a common vernacular, street-language English that is far removed from any semblance of the true meaning of the original language. Below are four excerpts of Scripture from *The Message* compared with the *King James Version* in the Old Testament and *A Faithful Version* in the New Testament.

Psalms 22: David's prophesying of the sayings of Jesus Christ while He was on the cross in Psalm 22 is a prime example of Peterson's blasphemous rendition of the Scriptures: "God, God ... my God! Why did you dump me miles from nowhere? Doubled up with pain, I call to God all the day long. No answer. Nothing. I keep at it all night, tossing and turning. And you! Are you indifferent, above it all, leaning back on the cushions of Israel's praise? ... I'm a bucket kicked over and spilled, every joint in my body has been pulled apart. My heart is a blob of melted wax in my gut. I'm as dry as a bone, my tongue is black and swollen. They have laid me out for burial in the dirt" (verses 1-3, 14-15).

Peterson's interpretation is a radical departure from the inspired Hebrew text of the Old Testament. Rather than portraying the prophesied thoughts and sayings of Jesus on the cross, it sounds more like a person recovering from a drunken binge or a drug overdose.

In the KJV these verses read: "God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?* O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent. But thou *art* holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel ... I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death" (verses 1-3, 14-15).

John 1:1-5: The first five verses of the Gospel of John are central to the revelation of the divinity and pre-existence of Jesus Christ as God. Peterson's version entirely distorts the true inspired meaning of these verses, resembling Gnostic passages from an ancient Egyptian religious manuscript more than the inspired Word of God. Some phrases are not even intelligible and bear little resemblance to the original Greek: "The Word was first, the Word present to God. God present to the Word. The Word was God, in readiness for God from day one. Everything was created through him; nothing—not one thing!—came into being without him. What came into existence was Life, and the Life as Light to live by. The life-Light blazed out of the darkness; and the darkness couldn't put it out" (John 1:1-5, *The Message*).

An accurate translation reads: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, but the darkness does not comprehend it" (John 1:1-5). As is the inspired Greek, this faithful translation is straightforward, conveying the truth about Jesus Christ in an easy-to-read manner.

Romans 5:12-14: When Paul wrote to the Romans, he used very precise language in order to fully explain the teachings and doctrines of Jesus Christ. In Chapter Five, he wrote that Adam's sin brought death to all mankind. However, Peterson's paraphrased rendition greatly distorts this truth: "You know the story of how Adam landed us in the dilemma we're in—first sin, then death, and no one exempt from either sin or death. That sin disturbed relations with God in everything and everyone, but the extent

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of the disturbance was not clear until God spelled it out in detail to Moses. So death, this huge abyss separating us from God, dominated the landscape from Adam until Moses. Even those who didn't sin precisely as Adam did by disobeying a specific command of God still had to experience this termination of life, this separation from God" (Rom. 5:12-14, *The Message*). Such an impious, inaccurate rendition does away with the correct doctrinal teachings of Paul's writings—the inspired teachings of Jesus Christ. Moreover, in these verses, Peterson does not even mention the word "law," which is in the original Greek and is central to the doctrine of sin.

Here is a precise translation of these verses: "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and by means of sin *came* death; and in this way, death passed into all mankind; *and it is* for this reason that all have sinned. For before *the* law, sin was in *the* world. However, sin is not imputed when law does not exist; nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until Moses, even upon those who had not sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam" (Rom. 5:12-14).

Ephesians 6:10-18: Finally, Peterson's paraphrase of Ephesians 6:10-18 again demonstrates his flippant, irreverent, sacrilegious style that degrades the true inspiration of God's Word: "And that about wraps it up. God is strong, and he wants you strong. So take everything the Master has set out for you, well-made weapons of the best materials. And put them to use so you will be able to stand up to everything the Devil throws your way. This is no afternoon athletic contest that you'll walk away from and forget about in a couple of hours. This is for keeps, a life-or-death fight to the finish against the Devil and all his angels.

"Be prepared. You're up against far more than you can handle on your own. Take all the help you can get, every weapon God has issued, so that when it's all over but the shouting you'll still be on your feet. Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and salvation are more than words. Learn how to apply them. You'll need them throughout your life. God's Word is an *indispensable* weapon. In the same way prayer is essential in this on-going warfare. Pray hard and long. Pray for your brothers and sisters. Keep your eyes open. Keep each other's spirits up so that no one falls behind or drops out" (*The Message*). Peterson's interpretative rendition denudes the Scripture of its dignity and sacredness.

Compare Peterson's version to a faithful translation from the original Greek: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in *the* Lord, and in the might of His strength. Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities *and* against powers, against the world rulers of the darkness of this age, against the wicked spiritual *forces* in high *places*. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having worked out all things, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with truth, and wearing the breastplate of righteousness, and having your feet shod with *the* preparation of the gospel of peace. Besides all *these*, take up the shield of the faith, with which you will have the power to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one; and put on the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; praying at all times with all prayer and supplication in *the* Spirit, and in this very thing being watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints" (Eph. 6:10-18).

God's inspired Word is meant to uplift and inspire, as well as to teach the true revelation of God the Father and Jesus Christ. It is meant to show the way of salvation and eternal life, which only God can provide through Jesus Christ. The Word of God should never be recast in vulgar street-language reminiscent of "Mad Magazine," or MTV, or "Saturday Night Live" as Peterson has done in the majority of his personal, paraphrased interpretations of Scripture. However, it is not surprising that millions of people have purchased *The Message* because the majority of people are ignorant concerning Bible translation.

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A Radical Translation of the New Testament

In the world of Bible translations, it seems as if some translators are in a race to see who can produce the worst, most corrupt, debased English translation possible. In an apparent attempt to outdo Peterson in desecrating, secularizing, demonizing and profaning the New Testament, John Henson has published *Good As New: A Radical Retelling of the Scriptures* funded by "The ONE Community for Christian Exploration." This organization is described on the back flyleaf of the dust jacket: "ONE is a network of radical Christians and over twenty organisations in the UK, working to renew the Church from within. Contributions have come from all across the spectrum, from fundamentalists to liberals, and from all denominations."

Henson's presentation so cynically mocks the Word of God, and even God Himself, that to dignify his work as a translation of the New Testament is blasphemous indeed. Yet, Rowen Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, head of the Anglican Church of England, praised it as a "presentation ... of extraordinary power ..." (Ibid., p. 7).

So arrogant and presumptuous is Henson's work that he radically deviates from the canon of the Greek New Testament by excluding the epistles of Titus, II Peter, II and III John and Jude, as well as the book of Revelation. To add further confusion, he includes the Gospel of Thomas in his New Testament version as did Robert W. Funk and the fellows of the Jesus Seminar in their publication, *The Five Gospels*.

In Henson's chapter, "Firing the Canon," he justifies his reasons for making void the true "God-breathed" canon of the New Testament. Henson writes: "It's time we ditched our obsession with the hefty tome we have inherited, and recognized what a turn-off it is for those seeking enlightenment. Those who believe the Bible from 'cover to cover' (especially the covers) make sure their novices are carefully guided so that they miss most of it. We need to revoke the redundancy notice given by the Church to the Holy Spirit the moment the last full stop was put to the Book of Revelation. **We need the courage to say that some things in the Bible are no longer scripture for us,** whereas the letters of Bonhoeffer and the sermons of Martin Luther King are, and the hymn/poems of Brian Wren and John Bell may one day be. We must say, if we find it to be true, that The Gospel of Thomas is closer to the Jesus we understand and appreciate than Revelation.

"As a community we offer new and fresh versions of some of the earliest Christian writings. They include five 'Gospels' (counting Thomas), Acts, the letters of Paul—to Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae, Thessalonika and Philemon; the letters of James, Peter, John the Elder and 'To the Hebrews.' These writings preserve truths and insights from the first Christians that continue to have value for us today. My own view is that the remaining books of the traditional canon do not have much to add and that Revelation in particular is contrary to the mind of Jesus" (Ibid., p. 18). How can Henson even pretend to know the mind of Jesus Christ? Such an audacious assertion that the book of Revelation is contrary to the mind of Jesus is utterly blasphemous.

Henson continues with this comment: "(There has not been a vote on this, but feedback suggests that the ONE community for the most part goes along with this. But it must always be stressed that the ONE community is a collection of individuals—very much so, and that none of our publications, including this one, is likely to reflect the standpoint of all our members.)

"Our intention is not to create a new canon to replace the old [but that is exactly what they are doing], but to do away with the concept of a closed canon of scripture. The canon perpetuates some of what should not be there, and inhibits an enthusiastic appreciation of the treasure-store of Christian writing since biblical times to the present day (post-biblical scripture). **The canon is an idol. We have fired the canon!!**" (*Good As*

New, pp. 18-19, bracketed comment and bold emphasis added.)

Changing the Names of God and Persons: In order to make the Scriptures gender neutral, Henson has changed the names of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and Satan the Devil, as well as the names of persons and places. Henson gives this rationale for doing so: "We seek to include the experience of the feminine in our understanding of God. That aspect of God theologically understood as the 'First Person' receives no sexual bias at all. 'Father' is translated as 'the Loving God.' The 'Second Person,' Jesus, is male, and although maleness is part of his humanity, it is secondary to it. So titles of Jesus lose their exclusive masculine sense. The cryptic term 'Son of Man' becomes 'the Complete Person.' 'Son of God' is translated 'God's likeness.' 'The Third Person' is regarded as feminine" (Ibid., p. 12). Contrary to what Henson asserts, in the Greek New Testament, "Spirit" is neither a masculine nor a feminine gender noun, but it is neuter gender [See Appendix H, page 762, for a full exegetical explanation of the Holy Spirit]. However, Henson carries out his misguided assumption that the Holy Spirit is feminine by using the word "she" for its pronoun.

In his *Introduction*, Henson further explains: "However, when a word like 'spirit,' carrying with it the idea of personality and creativity is classified alongside other words, which are also words for persons, such as women and mother, it is reasonable to suppose that the choice of classification is significant in terms of sexual understanding" (Ibid., pp. 12-13). Indeed Henson's last statement is true. However, "Spirit" in the original Greek is always and only neuter. His statements reveal that he has little or no knowledge of the Greek or has deliberately ignored the inspired Greek text in order to promulgate his baseless assertion that the Holy Spirit is feminine.

Henson continues his explanation for changing key words in his presentation: "Other radical departures reflect the need to demythologize in order to translate adequately into our own culture. 'Kingdom of God' thus becomes 'God's New World,' 'Eternal Life'—'Life to the full,' 'Salvation'—'Healing' or 'Completeness,' 'Heaven'—'The world beyond time and space' and so on.

"ONE was largely responsible for introducing the concept of inclusive language to these islands [the British Isles] in its pamphlet *Bad Language in Church* (1981) amidst some scorn. Our position is now accepted by all but the most change-resistant" (Ibid., p. 13).

John 16:13-16, The Holy Spirit: As shown in the following, when the words are changed, the meaning is likewise changed.

"But when the Spirit comes, she'll make you aware of many different types of truth. She won't push her own ideas. She'll open your minds and teach you how to listen. She'll make you aware of possibilities in the future. The Spirit will ensure my reputation by explaining my teaching to you. She'll continue to pass on to you the truths my Parent and I share. Soon you'll miss me; then it won't be long before you see me again" (*Good as New*, p. 114). This translation does not reflect the Greek at all. It is hopelessly misconstrued.

From this *Faithful Version* these verses read: "However, when that one has come, *even* the Spirit of the truth, it will lead you into all truth because it shall not speak from itself, but whatever it shall hear, it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come. That one shall glorify Me because it shall disclose to you *the things that* it receives from Me. Everything that the Father has is Mine; for this reason, I said that it shall receive from Me and shall disclose *these things* to you. A little *while*, and you shall not see Me; and again a little *while*, and you shall see Me, because I am going to the Father"

John 1:1-4: Henson's rendition is not even a translation; rather it is only a crude interpretation that completely ignores many of the Greek words as in the following from John 1:1-4:

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"In the beginning God spoke. This is just like God—part of the way God is. Everything there is comes from God speaking; otherwise there would be nothing at all. God speaking brought into being the life and intelligence we all share."

A correct translation reads: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."

Romans 1:26-27: Henson's outlandish interpretation of scriptures ignores the actual meaning of the Greek and openly twists the scriptures to endorse homosexuality and unmarried sexual relationships. His translation utterly destroys the meaning of the Word of God. Modern-day promiscuous sexual behavior is endorsed in his ignominious rendition.

"God let them go on to pursue their selfish desires. Women use their charms to further their own ends. Men, instead of being friends, ruthlessly exploit one another. Their stressful lifestyle makes them ill." Henson justifies his blatantly perverse interpretation of these verses in a footnote that reads: "These verses have been shamefully used as a basis for the discomfiting of those with a same-sex orientation. Undoubtedly Paul had uppermost in his mind [now he knows Paul's mind as well] the callous exploitation associated with the sex-trade, centered in his day in the pagan temples. He was not addressing the issue of loving same-sex relationships. Our translation strives to refocus on Paul's concern with the ill treatment of one human being by another, of which sexual abuse is one example, the persecution of minorities another" (*Good as New*, p. 303).

A correct and faithful translation reads: "For this cause, God abandoned them to disgraceful passions; for even their women changed the natural use *of sex* into that which is contrary to nature; and in the same manner also the men, having left the natural use *of sex* with the woman, were inflamed in their lustful passions toward one another—men with men shamelessly committing lewd *acts*, and receiving back within themselves a fitting penalty for their error."

I Corinthians 7:1-2, 27-28: Henson's twisted interpretation turns God's truth into a lie and makes a mockery of godly marriage:

"I now turn to the questions you raised in your letters to me. Some of you think the best way to cope with sex is for men and women to keep away from one another. I think that is more likely to lead to sexual offenses. My advice is for everyone to have a regular partner.... If you have a partner, keep the relationship going. If you are on your own, try not to get involved. But if you do find a partner, there's nothing wrong with that, not even if previously you didn't think yourself the type. Those in relationships have extra problems, and I feel for you."

The true meaning of these verses reads: "Now concerning the things that you wrote to me, *saying*, '*It is good for a man not to touch a woman,*' *I say this*: Rather, to avoid sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband Have you been bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Have you been loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. However, if you have married, you have not sinned; and if a virgin has married, she has not sinned. Yet those *who marry* shall have distress in the flesh, but *I wish* to spare you" (verses 27-28).

I Corinthians 6:9-10: Henson's gross mistranslation reads: "It's time you realized that people who choose not to control their conduct aren't ready for God's New World! I'm talking about people who mess around in frivolous relationships, people who worship things instead of God, those who set out to steal another's partner, those who make money out of sex or abuse the young, thieves, loan-sharks, those who eat and drink too -much, those who make fun of others."

A true rendition of the Greek reads: "Don't you know that the unrighteous shall not inherit *the* kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters,

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nor adulterers, nor abusers of themselves as women, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit *the* kingdom of God.

Nicknames: Henson has taken the liberty to rename nearly every person, and many places and terms in his translation. A few examples follow:

People: Aaron—Ron; Apollos—Ray; Clement—Clem; the Devil—Evil the power of evil; James and John—Thunder and Lightning; John the Baptist—John the Dipper; Nicodemus—Nick; Peter—Rocky; Thomas—Twin.

Places: Arimathea—Ram; Bethsaida—Fishtown; Bethany—Dategrove; Laodicea—Banktown; Paradise—God's Garden.

Terms: Angels—God's agents, messengers, companions; Apostles—Special helpers, close friends of Jesus, Jesus' team; Christ/Messiah—God's Chosen, the Chosen One; Disciples—Friends, followers, team, gang; King—Ruler, Leader, head of state, "the greatest"; Kingdom of God—God's New World; Kingdom of heaven—Bright New World; Lord (of Jesus)—Leader; The Law—The Rule Book, rules and regulations; The Scripture—the old books; Sin—wrongdoing, faults; Son of God—God's true likeness; Son of Man—The Complete Person; I—for Jesus; We—for Jesus and his community or humanity (See *Good as New*, pp. 22-25).

Upon close examination, it is evident that nearly every verse in Henson's *Good as New—A Radical Retelling of the Scriptures* is a radical perverse interpretation of the New Testament. It is a literal destruction of the sacredness, the holiness, the beauty and grace of the God-breathed Word of God.

Another Perverse Corruption of the Word of God—the Inclusive Version

Ungodly men have made deep inroads into the Holy Bible in their attempt to demote the true Creator God and Jesus Christ His Son and rank them equally with the demon gods of the religions of this world. Unbeknown to the general public, since 1983, the translating committees for the New International Version of the Bible have been planning and working on a new version of the Scriptures that is gender neutral and politically correct. In 2002, they published an inclusive version of the New Testament and announced that the complete Bible will be finished in 2005 and will be titled, Today's New International Version. However, in 1995, as a trial run, Oxford University Press published *The New Testament and Psalms (An Inclusive Version)*. This perverse version pales into insignificance Peterson's irreverent, flippant, sacrilegious style. This new gender neutral, politically-correct version is so radical that it is tantamount to having a "Bible without God"—the supreme oxymoron fulfilled—a moryoxon indeed! It is no less than the destruction of the Word of God through subversion. It seems that all the powerful and subtle forces of evil have come together to produce this ungodly corrupted version.

The Inclusive Version: The following excerpts are quoted from the *General Introduction of An Inclusive Version*. These are given to show the rationale behind the thinking of the translation committee. It is truly mind-boggling! The editors write, "This new, inclusive version of the Bible not only reflects the newest scholarly work of the most reliable manuscripts available, it also reflects and *attempts to anticipate* developments in the English language with regard to specificity about a number of issues such as gender, race, and physical disability....This introduction [to the Inclusive Version] is intended to inform the reader about the interpretive character of the text. Attention should be paid to the kinds of adaptations in the language that have been made in order to express the intent of the text in **the most inclusive way possible**" (*An Inclusive Version*, p. viii).

The reference to "the most reliable texts available" is not a correct statement, be-

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cause an inferior Greek text has been used, which is very similar to the corrupted Greek text produced by Westcott and Hort. The statement “the interpretive character of the text” means that it is not an accurate translation from the Greek; rather, it is an interpretation suited to their politically-correct, gender neutral agenda.

In order to produce an inclusive version, wholesale changes have been made. While their rationale seems altruistic—not to offend anyone—the result is the utter debasing of the Word of God: “This [inclusive] version has undertaken the effort to replace or rephrase all gender-specific language not referring to particular historical individuals, all pejorative references to race, color, or religion, and all identification of persons by their physical disability alone, by means of paraphrase, alternative renderings, and other acceptable means of conforming the language of the work to an inclusive idea....The editors were committed to accelerating changes in English usage toward inclusiveness in a holistic sense. The result is another step in the continuing process of rendering Scripture in language that reflects our best understanding of the nature of God, of the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ, and of the wholeness of human beings” (Ibid., pp. viii-ix).

As cited above, these editors have rewritten and reinterpreted the Scriptures to fit a modern, post-Christian paradigm. Rather than teaching that people should be subject to the Word of God, they teach that the Word of God should be subject to the people. Thus the “church” becomes a “community” that shapes the Scriptures according to its own carnal, sinful desires: “This inclusive community looks to its Scriptures [the new inclusive version] for guidance and authority in how to form community; the way community is formed ultimately influences how the Scriptures themselves are read. Thus, the language of Scripture reflects the community, and the community is shaped by language. When we make our churches accessible to persons with disabilities, when we struggle against the pervasive racism and violence in our societies, when all persons, women, men [including homosexuals], children, the elderly, are treated equally and non-violently, we are forming the Body of Christ” (Ibid., p. ix, bracketed comments added).

It is through the calling of God the Father and the power of the Holy Spirit that Jesus forms His Church—the Body of Christ—not through an inclusive, corrupted version of the Scriptures and the vain efforts of godless humanists. The apostle Paul wrote: “You [individual believers] are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* Cornerstone; in Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together, is increasing into a holy temple in *the* Lord” (Eph. 2:20-21). Jesus Himself said He would build His Church, and the gates of hell would not prevail against it (Matt. 16:18).

Believers do not frame the Scriptures; rather the Scriptures frame the believers. They are to live by every word of God. Furthermore, the Word of God, which is the truth of God, must be clear and easy to understand and faithfully translated to reflect the inspiration of God the Father and Jesus Christ. The Word of God, which is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is a clarion call to repentance, faith, love and obedience. Yet, *An Inclusive Version* does just the opposite.

God the Father Becomes—Father-Mother: The authors of *An Inclusive Version* have replaced all references to God the Father with “Father-Mother.” In order to justify changing the nature of God the Father, they have redefined the word “Father” to mean a “metaphor.”

“Another metaphor to which we have become accustomed is God as Father....But if we try to cast any biblical metaphor in stone and say that, for example, God is literally a father, we lose the power of communication which makes us *think*, How is God like a father? How is God much more than a father?

“We have based much of this inclusive version on this insight into the nature of metaphor. When **we have crafted new metaphors, such as Father-Mother**, we have done so to make the reader think about what is being read and to experience the power of

metaphor to make us ask, How is this the same? and, How is this different?" (Ibid., p. x, bold emphasis added).

"The metaphor 'Father,' used for God, occurs in every book of the New Testament except its shortest work, 3 John. It is used for God over one hundred times in the Gospel of John alone. It is, of course, a male metaphor, and leads those who read it repeatedly to think of God as a male being. It is also a highly personal metaphor, connoting family intimacy, authority, care, and protection. By repetition, however, all metaphors tend to lose their metaphorical meaning, and begin to be understood as propositions, as literal statements. This has happened in the church [which church?] with the New Testament metaphor, 'Father.' By speaking to God, and by referring to God again and again, as 'Father,' one may begin to think of God, literally, as a 'Father,' hence also as a male being; and those for whom the word 'father' has negative, rather than positive connotations, have great difficulty with that metaphor for God—do not want either to use it, or to hear it used.

"Occasionally in the Bible, however, God is thought of on the analogy of a mother, and as the church [which church?] does not believe that God is literally a father, and understands 'Father' to be a metaphor, the metaphor 'Father' is rendered in this version by a new metaphor, 'Father-Mother.' This new metaphor is not even understandable as a literal statement and can be understood only in a metaphorical way. One cannot be literally a 'Father-Mother,' so the metaphor allows the mind to oscillate between the picture of God as 'Father' and the picture of God as 'Mother,' the mind attributing both fatherly and motherly attributes to God" (Ibid., pp. xi-xii, bracketed comments added).

Such reasoning is utter nonsense! The word "Father" is not a metaphor and literally means "Father." To replace "Father" with "Father-Mother" only causes confusion! What is God? Is He a father, or a mother? How can He be a Father-Mother or Mother-Father at the same time? How would one know to whom to pray? Notice what this does to the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father-Mother in heaven, hallowed be your name" (Matt. 6:9, *An Inclusive Version*).

Paul wrote, "God is not the author of confusion" (I Cor. 14:33). However, even the editors admit that this inclusive version causes confusion: "This can confuse the reader of an English translation of Scripture who may think that when God is referred to as 'he,' it is also said that God is a male being. Because the church [which church?] does not assume that God is a male being, or, indeed, that God has a sex, in this version God is never referred to by a masculine pronoun, or by any pronoun at all. This has been accomplished by either saying 'God,' or by using another expression for 'God,' rather than by using a pronoun, or by changing the syntax of a sentence so as to avoid using a pronoun—for example, replacing 'he said' by a participle, 'saying' " (Ibid., p. xi, bracketed comments added). Apparently, this is done to conform to the demands of the radical feminists.

The New Testament teaches that Jesus Christ came to reveal God the Father to those whom He chooses: "At that time Jesus answered and said, 'I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and have revealed them to babes. Yes, Father, for it was well pleasing in Your sight to do this. All things were delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son personally chooses to reveal Him'" (Matt. 11:25-27). Jesus Christ never once called God His mother, or "Father-Mother."

In addition to "Father," other words have been substituted for the title "Lord." As the editors explain: "... 'Lord' is retained in every instance in which the antecedent is ambiguous, being either God or Christ; it is also retained in phrases such as 'the Lord Jesus' or 'the Lord Jesus Christ.' Where the antecedent of 'Lord' is clearly God, 'God' is often substituted for 'Lord'; where the antecedent is the historical Jesus, 'Jesus' is of-

ten substituted; and where the antecedent is clearly the risen Christ, 'Christ' is often substituted. The result is that references to 'Lord' ... are considerably diminished. On occasion, also, when Jesus is being addressed, it is difficult to know whether the meaning is 'Lord' or simply 'Sir' " (*Inclusive Version*, p. xiii). In Paul's Epistles, "Christ" is exchanged for "Lord," thus further diminishing the lordship of Jesus Christ (*Ibid.*, p. xix), leaving open the idea that just any false Christ could be accepted.

Not content with reducing Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the translators of the *Inclusive Version* continue desecrating Jesus Christ as Son of God, Son of Man, Son of the Blessed One and Son of the Most High. They claim: "The maleness of the historical person Jesus is not relevant ... the formal equivalent 'Child' is used for 'Son,' and gender-specific pronouns referring to the 'Child' are avoided. Thus readers are enabled to identify themselves with Jesus' *humanity*....If the fact that Jesus was a man, and not a woman, has no christological significance in the New Testament, then neither does the fact that Jesus was a *son* and not a *daughter*" (*Ibid.*, p. xiii). This statement is a preposterous lie! The New Testament makes it quite clear that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, a male and circumcised the eighth day (Luke 2:21). Moreover, that Jesus was a male is crucial to His being the Savior of mankind—men and women. Such reasoning by the translators of the *Inclusive Version* is absurd.

They further try to destroy the revelation of Jesus Christ by substituting "the Human One" for "the Son of Man"; "Kingdom" is exchanged for "dominion"; "King" is renamed "ruler." When referring either to the Devil, Satan or an angel, they replace the masculine pronoun "he" with "the Devil," "Satan" or "angel," thus avoiding any reference to "he" in order to please the radical feminists (*Ibid.*, p. xiv).

In their eagerness to be ever so politically correct and to avoid offending various racial groups, they exchange the word "darkness" with "night." Finally, they avoid characterizing people by their disabilities and handicaps.

An Inclusive Version's rendition of the New Testament is diametrically opposed to the God-breathed original Greek. While claiming to improve the Word of God, in reality the authors display their utter contempt for God and His Word, thus conforming the New Testament to the tenets of Christianity without God. Their doctrine of inclusion is actually a doctrine of exclusion because it excludes true godliness and righteousness and the freedom to publicly worship God the Father and Jesus Christ.

A Practicing Homosexual Consecrated a Bishop: In recent years, the godless anti-family, pro-abortion agendas of the radical feminists and homosexual organizations—political and religious—have been embraced by many so-called "Christian" denominations. At the same time, many Roman Catholic priests have been exposed as pedophiles and homosexuals. Predator priests stalking innocent children have seduced, defiled and destroyed the lives of untold thousands of boys and girls around the world—all in the name of God. The dirty secret is that these abominable practices have been going on for centuries but only now are partially being exposed. It is impossible to make a corrupt tree produce good fruit!

The homosexual movement has not only come out of the closet, but it has declared war on Christianity—targeting it for destruction through new laws and court decisions.

On August 5, 2003, the Episcopal Church in America fully baptized itself into Christianity without God by elevating a practicing homosexual to be a full bishop. Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold said bishops at the General Convention in Minneapolis voted 62-45 to confirm the Rev. V. Gene Robinson. Robinson was consecrated to the Diocese of New Hampshire on November 2, 2003.

In an article for the *Wall Street Journal*, Katherine Kersten wrote in *Gospel of Inclusion?—Its Episcopal Church Disciples Have Little Room for Scripture* about the consequences of the Episcopal Church's sanction of homosexual priests and bishops and

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its endorsement of same sex marriages: "Yet this church has just tossed aside 2,000 years of bedrock Christian teaching about marriage, the family and sexuality ... Episcopalians' inability to defend core doctrine suggests that mainline American churches are losing their theological moorings, and increasingly falling prey to the prevailing winds of secular culture ... "The Episcopal Church has always regarded marriage as the sacrament that sanctifies the 'one flesh' union of man and woman. But the new gospel expands the notion of sacrament to include anything that 'mediates' the grace or blessing of God and causes us to give thanks ...

"The new gospel subordinates thinking to 'feelings' ... The gospel of inclusion preaches a reconstructed, therapeutic Jesus, who accepts us exactly as we are. Traditional Christianity, however, holds that Jesus calls us to repentance of sins, and to transformation through a new life lived in accordance with God's will.

"The gospel of inclusion has little place for repentance or transformation. Thus, it has little place for the central feature of Christianity: Christ's Cross, which brings redemption through suffering. This new gospel may be appealing, for it permits its adherents to 'divinize' their own, largely secular agenda. But in a Christian church, it cannot easily coexist with the Gospel of Christ" (*Wall Street Journal*, August 8, 2003).

One thing is clear: God warns us that there will either be repentance or destruction. In order to stave off destruction by the hand of the Lord of hosts, this evil generation must repent and change its ways! God will accept nothing less as Isaiah prophesied: **"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it"** (verses 16-20, *KJV*). These words of God, though directed to ancient Israel, apply to any nation at any time down through history (*Jer.* 18:7-10). Unfortunately, only the remnant—the few who are truly seeking God and His way—will heed and repent. God will be merciful to the remnant, but the sword of the Lord will devour unrepentant sinners.

The Battle over the Ten Commandments: During the writing of this Preface, an intense legal battle over the public display of a monument of the Ten Commandments in the Alabama Supreme Court was being waged. On August 27, 2003, Chief Justice Roy Moore lost the battle to retain the monument on public display, and the Ten Commandment monument was moved to a private room in the Alabama courthouse. After its removal, Judge Moore issued this statement saying, "It is a sad day for our country when the moral foundation of our law and the acknowledgment of God has to be hidden from public view to appease a federal judge" (*San Jose Mercury News*, August 28, 2003, p. 3A).

On November 13, 2003, in Montgomery, Alabama, a Court of Judiciary conducted the United States' first official religious inquisition. Judge Moore was questioned about his refusal to heed a federal judge's ungodly, illegal and unconstitutional order to remove the Ten Commandments monument from the rotunda of the state courthouse and his public acknowledgment of God. It was reported that during the course of the inquiry, a panel of nine judges gave him three opportunities to deny his public acknowledgement of God so that he could retain his position, which he refused to do. Excerpts from an article Judge Moore wrote for the *Wall Street Journal* dated August 26, 2003 and entitled "In God I Trust" follow:

"The battle over the Ten Commandments monument I brought into Alabama's Supreme Court is not about a monument and not about politics ... Federal Judge Myron Thompson, who ordered the monument's removal, and I are in perfect agreement on the

fact that the issue in this case is: 'Can the state acknowledge God?' Those were the precise words used by Judge Thompson in his closing remarks in open court ...

"We must acknowledge God in the public sector because the state constitution explicitly requires us to do so. The Alabama Constitution specifically invokes 'the favor and guidance of Almighty God' as the basis for our laws and justice system. As the chief justice of the state's supreme court I am entrusted with the sacred duty to uphold the state's constitution. I have taken an oath before God and man to do such, and I will not waver from that commitment.

"By telling the state of Alabama that it may not acknowledge God, Judge Thompson effectively dismantled the justice system of the state ...

"No judge has the authority to impose his will on the people of a state, and no judge has the constitutional authority to forbid public officials from acknowledging the same God specifically mentioned in the charter documents of our nation, the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution.

"My decision to disregard the unlawful order of the federal judge was not civil disobedience, but the lawful response of the highest judicial officer of the state to his oath of office ...

"For half a century the fanciful tailors of revisionist jurisprudence have been working to strip the public sector naked of every vestige of God and morality. They have done so based on fake readings and inconsistent applications of the First Amendment. They have said it is all right for the U.S. Supreme Court to publicly place the Ten Commandments on its walls, for Congress to open in prayer and for state capitols to have chaplains—as long as the words and ideas communicated by such do not really mean what they purport to communicate. They have trotted out before the public using words never mentioned in the U.S. Constitution, like 'separation of church and state,' to advocate, not the legitimate jurisdictional separation between the church and state, but the illegitimate separation of God and state.

"The First Amendment says that 'Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof ... (Moore, WSJ, *In God I Trust*, emphasis added).

Because of his stand for God, the Word of God and the Constitution of the United States, Judge Roy Moore was removed as Chief Justice of Alabama's Supreme Court by the nine member Court of Judiciary.

Over twenty years ago, Edward F. Hills, author of *The King James Version Defended*, wrote a prophetic warning about the coming laxity of professing Christians. In his 1979 edition, Hills sounded the alarm that unless America returned to its heritage of faith in God the Father and Jesus Christ and the Word of God, diligently using the Bible as the standard for her behavior, America's fall and destruction would surely come.

Hills wrote: "For almost two decades this policy of unilateral disarmament and surrender has been relentlessly pursued by the forces of the Liberal-left, until now the end of the road is clearly in sight. Humanly speaking, the United States has only a few more years to exist as an independent nation. Soon riots and insurrections will take place. Then the Russians [and other nations] will move in with overwhelming force in the name of the United Nations, and the United States Government will surrender as planned. Then world government, the goal of the Liberal-left, will have been achieved. Christians, however, will be bitterly persecuted even unto death.

"Most American citizens are completely carnal, absorbed in their fleshly pursuits and oblivious to their country's impending doom. And, tragically, this carnal carelessness is shared by many [at this time most] professing Christians. They take a balcony view of these threatening dangers and will not lift a finger to avert them, insisting that the rapture will take place before these disasters overtake America. But this is a misuse of biblical prophecy. Christ's word to us is, *Occupy till I come* (Luke 19:13). We must

not use the doctrine of the second coming of our Lord as an excuse for failure to do our present duty now. As spiritually minded Christians we must work for the re-arming of our country and do everything we can to roll back the tide of atheism and communism which is now engulfing the world. But in order to accomplish this we must first arm ourselves with the *sword of the Spirit* (Eph. 6:17), namely, the true Word of God, which is found in the printed Masoretic text, the Textus Receptus, and the King James Version and **other faithful translations**" (Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, 2000, p. 242, bracketed comments and bold added).

Hills' protégé, Theodore P. Letis, wrote of the demise of the Bible because political and sexist agendas are now controlling the philosophy of Bible translation committees and publishing companies: "The Bible in English has fallen on hard times. Not only do some feminists see it as a format from which to transform Ancient Near Eastern, patriarchal religions [through the use of inclusive versions] into modern, 20th century paradigms of egalitarianism [i.e. Communism, under the guise of liberalism, and world government], but the American Bible publishing industry has reduced it to a commodity, hoping to maximize gains by imposing a marketing-manufactured consensus on conservative evangelicals, calling it the beginning of a 'new tradition [Christianity without God]' " (Ibid., back cover, bracketed comments added).

The Reasons for This New Translation

The onslaught of vicious attacks from every side against Christianity, God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Word of God have been so overwhelming that the true Word of God and true Christianity are in a desperate battle of epic proportions. Satan, the devil, and the political, secular, sexist and religious establishments of this world have united in their efforts to destroy true Christianity and the truth of the Word of God. This war is a spiritual Armageddon! It is time for everyone who loves God the Father and Jesus Christ to realistically confront these assaults and have the courage to make a stand for God, for His Word and for the Truth, because "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Psa. 11:3). Furthermore, God the Father and Jesus Christ hold each one accountable, not only to live by every word of God but also to stand for the Word of God and defend it.

Christendom has grown rich and increased with goods and has need of nothing. Its faith is so weak and insipid that it is on the verge of destruction. It is ready to implode upon itself because it has grossly compromised with and accepted the world's standards—instead of living by God's laws and commandments. The truth of God's Word has been replaced with an ungodly, emotional, feel-good religion—an insipid counterfeit. As a result, the main bulk of Christendom is blind and ignorant. It has fallen asleep, while the forces of evil have marshaled their armies to try to destroy the Word of God by corrupting it and replacing it with a lie!

However, in spite of the efforts of ungodly men to destroy and corrupt the Word of God with a flood of translations that range from inadequate to blasphemous, Jesus Christ promised, "**The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away**" (Matt. 24:35). God has faithfully overseen the preservation of His Word written by the apostles in the *Koiné* Greek language and preserved in manuscripts known as the Byzantine Text.

This new translation, *The New Testament In Its Original Order—A Faithful Version With Commentary*, is firstly a call to repentance and a return to the true faith of Jesus Christ as taught by the original apostles and written in the original God-breathed New Testament. In his short epistle to the brethren of Jesus Christ, the apostle Jude wrote a most impassioned plea for the true believers to return to the faith once delivered to the saints. When he wrote his urgent message, the apostolic age was coming to a

Author's Preface

close, the great apostasy was gaining momentum, and false apostles and ministers were leading brethren astray. Likewise, in our day, the age of man's rule under the sway of Satan, the devil, is coming to a close, and the return of Jesus Christ is near. Once again false teachers and pseudo-scholars are busily seeking to subvert and undermine the Word of God and destroy the faith of true Christians. Jude wrote: "Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, **I was compelled to write to you, exhorting you to fervently fight for the faith, which once for all time has been delivered to the saints.** For certain men have stealthily crept in, those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment. ***They are ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God, turning it into licentiousness, and are denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ***" (Jude 3-4).

Secondly, we have striven to make the Word of God available to students of the New Testament and the true brethren of Jesus Christ in a modern English that has been faithfully translated from the *Textus Receptus*—the Stephens Text of 1550. The Stephens Text agrees with 98-99% of the Byzantine Greek Text.

Thirdly, we have endeavored to provide accurate commentaries that explain the history of the preservation of the Word of God and to answer such questions as: What is the New Testament? Who wrote it? When was it written, and by whom was it canonized? Other commentaries and footnotes explain many hard-to-understand scriptures.

Fourthly, we have provided an accurate chronological setting of the days of Jesus and the apostles that is centered around the true Sabbath and holy days of God. This helps to answer questions about when Jesus was most likely born; how Jesus fulfilled the Law and the Prophets; what it means to be born again and born of God; what the true meaning of justification by faith and the works of the law is, and much more.

Finally, we have sought to provide the ministers of Jesus Christ with an accurate translation and commentaries, so they can have confidence that the Word of God is true in order to feed the Flock of God that is among them with the true teachings of Jesus Christ and His apostles. May they rightly divide the Word of God.

May God the Father and Jesus Christ bless you with a humble heart, a contrite spirit, and a hunger and thirst after righteousness and eternal salvation. My prayer for you is what the apostle Paul was inspired to write to the brethren in Ephesus: "For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; *and* that being rooted and grounded in love, you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge; so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us, to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations, *even* into the ages of eternity. Amen" (Eph. 3:14-21).

*Fred R. Coulter
December 2003*

A Faithful Translation

The word “faithful” is found in numerous passages of Scripture, many of which contain the words of Jesus Christ. One of the most well-known passages is the parable of the talents, spoken to the disciples near the end of Jesus’ ministry: “Well *done*, good and faithful servant! *Because* you were faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord” (Matt. 25:21). Jesus was exhorting his followers to use their talents in His service after He returned to the Father. Mr. Coulter has heeded his Lord’s exhortation and has diligently studied and labored to render a faithful translation of the New Testament.

What greater responsibility could there be than to translate the Word of God in a trustworthy, accurate and meaningful manner—neither adding to nor taking away from the words of God! (Rev. 22:18-19.) Faithfulness in translating requires fidelity and accuracy in communicating the meaning of the words and phrases of the language that is being translated. Such accuracy depends upon knowledge of the lexical and grammatical patterns of both the language one is translating from and the language one is translating to.

In his translation of the Greek text into English, Mr. Coulter has taken great care to communicate the intended meaning of the words chosen by the original writers. Mr. Coulter’s translation of Hebrews 4:9 is a good example of his faithfulness in accurately conveying the meaning of the words in the Greek text. The subject of this chapter is the observance of the weekly Sabbath day by the New Testament church. In Verse 9, the Greek text uses the word “sabbatismos,” which specifically refers to the observance of Sabbath days. This meaning is clearly conveyed in Mr. Coulter’s translation of the verse: “There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God.”

Matthew 28:1 also demonstrates the faithfulness and accuracy of Mr. Coulter’s translation of the phrasing in the Greek text. This verse relates the arrival of Mary Magdalene and the other Mary at the sepulcher in which Christ had been laid. In describing the time of this event, the Greek text uses the phrase “the first of the weeks,” an expression which specifically refers to the day that the annual wave sheaf was offered to God. This meaning is reflected in Mr. Coulter’s translation of the verse: “Now late on the Sabbath, as *the first day of the weeks* was drawing near, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to observe the sepulcher.” This translation of the Greek text accurately conveys that the women came to observe the sepulcher toward the end of the weekly Sabbath, which would occur at sunset. The “first day of the weeks,” which would begin the seven-week count to the Feast of Pentecost, had not yet arrived.

Faithfulness in translating also requires an accurate representation of the Greek text by the punctuation that is used for the rendering. A good example of the importance of proper punctuation is found in Mark 16:9. In the King James Version this verse is translated, “Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene....” The placement of the comma in the KJV translation conflicts with other passages in the Greek text, which reveal that Jesus rose as the Sabbath day was ending at sunset, not at sunrise Sunday morning. Knowing that Scripture does not contradict itself, Mr. Coulter has properly placed the comma to reflect the actual meaning of the Greek text: “Now after *Jesus* had risen, early *the first day of the weeks* He appeared first to Mary Magdalene....” This rendering of Mark 16:9 acknowledges the divine inspiration of all the Scriptures and does not translate the passage in a manner that conflicts with other passages.

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Included in the requirements for a faithful translation is an understanding of Greek idioms that were commonly used at the time of Christ. Such idioms cannot be translated literally but must be translated according to their cultural and historical usage, as documented in other Greek writings of that period. A good example is found in Luke 24:21. This verse is part of the narrative describing the appearance of the risen Christ to two disciples who were on their way to the village of Emmaus. In speaking of the death of Jesus, one of the disciples used a Greek expression that is translated “the third day.” This Greek expression is an idiom that was commonly used at that time to describe a complete unit of three days. It was never used to describe a three-day period that was in progress, but only a three-day period that had already been completed. The King James Version overlooks the true meaning of this idiom and translates the expression in Luke 24:21 as “... today is the third day since these things were done.” (This wording in the KJV translation misrepresents the meaning of the Greek text.) Mr. Coulter accurately conveys the meaning of Luke 24:21 by translating the expression according to the idiomatic usage of that period: “... as of today, the third day has already passed since these things took place.”

In addition to fulfilling the requirements of the language that is being translated, a faithful translation must use phrasing that befits the language that is used for the translation. The phrasing in the translation must not only represent the words in the Greek text but also appropriately express the thoughts of the writer. The use of inappropriate phrasing in a translation detracts from the writer’s purpose and allows room for misunderstanding. Take, for example, the translation of I John 3:18 in the New International Standard Version: “Little children, we must stop loving in word and in tongue, but instead love in work and in truth.” This translation implies that we should cease to express love with our mouths. This was not John’s intention when he wrote the words in the Greek text. John’s intent was to point out that to profess one’s love with one’s mouth is not sufficient. John was communicating the fact that Christianity is a way of life lived in the truth taught by Christ and His apostles. The Christian walk is not a life of lip service, but is manifested by one’s conduct and actions. Mr. Coulter’s translation of I John 3:18 conveys this meaning: “My little children, we should not love in word, nor with our tongues; rather, *we should love* in deed and in truth.”

Some passages in the Greek text require clarification in order to accurately convey the thoughts of the writer. Paul’s statements in I Corinthians 15:29, the famous resurrection chapter, illustrate this point very graphically. The King James Version translates this verse literally: “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?” The KJV translation makes it appear that Christians should be baptized in behalf of dead relatives so that these unconverted family members may be resurrected to immortality. This is not Paul’s intention at all. In his epistle to the Hebrews Paul shows that baptism must be accompanied by repentance from sin and accompanied by faith in Jesus Christ (Heb. 6:1-2). No individual can repent and believe in behalf of another. It is therefore impossible for a Christian to obtain eternal life for a relative by being baptized for that person. The true meaning of Paul’s words in I Corinthians 15:29 is made clear by examining his statements in the preceding verses. The entire chapter is discussing the resurrection of the dead, which is the basis of the Christian faith (I Cor. 15:1-4, 12-14). The resurrection to immortality is the hope of every Christian who is baptized (I Cor. 15:19-20, Rom. 6:4-5). Paul is arguing a point of logic: if there is no resurrection of the dead, why be baptized for the hope of being resurrected? Mr. Coulter’s translation enables the reader to grasp the meaning of Paul’s words: “Otherwise, what shall they do who have been baptized for the *resurrection* of the dead, if *the* dead are not raised at all? Why then are they baptized for the *resurrection* of the dead?”

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The words in italics have been inserted to clarify the meaning of the Greek text. Without such clarification, the true meaning of the verse cannot be transmitted to the reader.

Every verse and passage in this faithful translation of the New Testament has been phrased with one goal in mind: to reveal the true meaning of the Greek text. Many passages in the Greek text allow a literal translation and need no clarification because they are understandable to the reader. Where a literal translation would not convey the meaning of the text, a passage has been clarified by the addition of one or more words, printed in italics to distinguish them from the literal wording of the Greek text. This method enables the wording of the original text to be preserved while communicating to the reader the meaning and intent of the writer.

In every respect, this translation has been an endeavor to uphold the true teachings of Jesus Christ and His apostles as recorded in the Greek text of the New Testament. While no translation can attain a state of flawlessness, this translation far surpasses the standards of many other recent translations into English and has indeed fulfilled the requirements for a faithful translation—*The New Testament In Its Original Order—A Faithful Version With Commentary*.

Carl D. Franklin
December 2003

About This New Translation

The basis for this new translation of *The New Testament In Its Original Order—A Faithful Version With Commentary*, is the inspired Word of God, originally written and canonized by His chosen apostles in the *Koiné* (common) Greek language (31-95 AD). Later the manuscripts of these New Testament books became known as the Byzantine Text. The Greek text used for this translation is the Stephens 1550 Greek New Testament. It is in 98-99% agreement with the Byzantine Text, the dominant text form used during the period of manual copying. (See Chapters 9-15 on the preservation and transmission of the New Testament Greek text.)

God the Father and Jesus Christ have faithfully watched over the Word of God so that it would never be lost or destroyed. Jesus Christ promised that He would uphold His words: “The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away” (Mark 13:31, Matt. 24:35, Luke 21:33).

In spite of all the attacks against the New Testament down through the centuries, Jesus Christ has kept His promise. These attacks first began during the days of the apostles. False teachers and prophets were attempting to counterfeit the epistles of the apostle Paul (II Thes. 2:1-2) and were preaching a different gospel by perverting the true Gospel of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:6-10). Therefore, God moved Paul, Peter and John to canonize the New Testament in order to preserve the Word of God for future generations. (See Chapters Five, Six and Seven on the apostles’ canonization of the New Testament.)

Fifty years after the death of the apostle John in 98-100 AD, beginning in the middle of the second century, revisers of the Greek New Testament texts—mainly in Alexandria, Egypt and possibly Rome—began to modify some portions of the New Testament. They produced texts that were, in many respects, different from the Byzantine Text. However, the Byzantine manuscripts in Asia Minor, the Aegean region and elsewhere were only slightly influenced by the readings of these altered Greek texts.

The total number of existing New Testament manuscripts and lectionaries is over 5,400. The dominance of the Byzantine Text is reflected in 90% of these manuscripts. Therefore, when the altered texts are set aside, it is apparent that the Byzantine Text most closely reflects the original New Testament written and canonized by the apostles of Jesus Christ.

In spite of the attempts of men to modify the Word of God—by adding to and deleting from or corrupting it—the promise of God stands sure! Down through the centuries, Jesus Christ has guided faithful men to copy and preserve authentic copies of the original New Testament books written by His apostles. (See Chapter Four “When Was the New Testament Written?”) From the days of the apostles until the mid-fifteenth century, faithful scribes accurately copied the Greek New Testament, known as the Byzantine Text. After the fall of the Byzantine Empire to the Turks in 1453 AD, Greek scholars and theologians brought the Byzantine Greek New Testament with them to Europe. During the next seventy-five years, New Testament Greek was taught in various universities throughout Europe, setting the stage for the Protestant Reformation.

In 1456, with the invention of the movable type printing press, Johann Gutenberg printed the first Latin Bible, making scribal hand copying obsolete. Then, in 1516, one man, Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1536), with the help of Froben, a printer in Basel, Switzerland, published Erasmus’ Greek-Latin New Testament. His Greek-Latin New Testament ignited the fires of the Protestant Reformation and led Martin Luther to nail his ninety-five theses to the Wittenberg Cathedral door on Halloween Eve, October 31, 1517.

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Later, William Tyndale used Erasmus' 1516 edition for his New Testament translation into English, which was published in 1526, and Erasmus' 1519 edition for his 1534 revised New Testament. Subsequently, Erasmus refined his Greek-Latin New Testament, combining the best Byzantine texts, and printed his fifth and final edition one year before his death, in 1535. It was from this version that Robert Estienne (1503-1559), also known as Stephens, published the famous Stephens Greek New Testament of 1550 in Paris, reprinted in Geneva, Switzerland in 1553. (The Stephens version is practically identical to Erasmus' Fifth Edition.) Later, Erasmus' 1535 text, the Stephens Text, along with Beza's 1598 and Elzevir's nearly identical 1633 text, was called the "Textus Receptus." The Stephens Greek Text of 1550 was used to translate the New Testament of the Geneva English Bible of 1557. The 1599 Geneva New Testament Bible was translated from Beza's text. (Metzger, *The New Testament, Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 3rd ed., pp. 103-104.)

The translators of the 1611 King James Version of the Bible used the Textus Receptus as the basis for their New Testament. However, beginning with *The Revised English New Testament* in 1881, translators incorporated the faulty and deficient readings of Alexandrian manuscripts. The twentieth century saw a proliferation of new English translations of the Bible, and nearly all the New Testaments were translated from the inferior Alexandrian Greek text type. Only a few translations were made from the Textus Receptus. The two main ones are *The New King James Version* and *The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by J. P. Green Sr.

A faithful translation requires that the translator render the New Testament accurately from the Textus Receptus, and have an understanding of what Jesus Christ Himself taught about the Word of God.

Jesus' Teachings About the Word of God

Jesus' teachings about the Word of God are the fundamental basis for translating the New Testament from the original Greek. Jesus Christ, who was God manifested in the flesh, said in His prayer to God the Father the night before His crucifixion, "Your Word is the truth" (John 17:17). Jesus' statement applies to the entire New Testament as written and canonized by His specially chosen apostles. The Word of God is the Truth of God, and no lie comes from the truth (I John 2:21). This is the cornerstone of a faithful translation.

God sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of the Lord. He fully testified that Jesus spoke the words of God: "He Who comes from above is above all. The one who is of the earth is earthy, and speaks of the earth. He Who comes from heaven is above all; and **what He has seen and heard, this is what He testifies**; but no one receives His testimony. The one who has received His testimony has set his seal that God is true; **for He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God**; and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him*" (John 3:31-34). And again Jesus told His disciples, "The words that I speak to you, *they* are spirit and *they* are life" (John 6:63).

All the words that Jesus Christ spoke were the commands of God the Father. He did not speak His own words but the words of the Father. Jesus said, "**For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak**" (John 12:49). Again Jesus said, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and **the word** [the entire message—the Gospel of Jesus Christ] **that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me**" (John 14:23-24).

Because Jesus' chosen apostles needed direct, divine spiritual guidance in order

to write and canonize the New Testament, Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would bring to their remembrance what He had taught them and, therefore, what they should write: “But *when the Comforter comes, even the Holy Spirit*, which the Father will send in My name, that one shall teach you all things, and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you” (John 14:26). Again, Jesus told the apostles, “I have yet many things to tell you, but you are not able to bear them now. However, when that one has come, *even the Spirit of the truth, it will lead you into all truth* because it shall not speak from itself, but whatever it shall hear it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come” (John 16:12-13).

When Jesus called Saul, who later became an apostle and was renamed Paul, He said that He would personally reveal to him the things he should teach the Gentiles: “... For I have appeared to you for this purpose: **to appoint you as a minister and a witness both of what you have seen and what I shall reveal to you.** I am personally selecting you from among the people and the Gentiles, to whom I now send you” (Acts 26:16-17). Paul was taught directly by Jesus Christ in dreams and visions for three years in Arabia (II Cor. 12:1-5; Gal. 1:17-18).

Apostles Were Instruments of God-breathed Writings

The God-breathed writings of His chosen apostles are the commandments of the Lord, as the apostle Paul taught the Corinthians. When the believers at Corinth became self-exalted in their own false spirituality due to the teachings of false apostles, the apostle Paul warned them most emphatically that the things he was writing to them were no less than the commandments of God: “WHAT? Did the Word of God originate with you? Or did it come only to you *and no one else*? If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that **the things I write to you are commandments of the Lord.** But if anyone *chooses to be ignorant*, let him be ignorant” (I Cor. 14:36-38).

The apostles who wrote and canonized the New Testament were direct divine instruments of God the Father and Jesus Christ. They received special guidance through the power of the Holy Spirit in order to write the very words of God. The apostle Peter left no doubt about this fact, when he wrote: “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture originated as anyone’s own *private* interpretation; because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the **holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit**” (II Pet. 1:20-21).

The apostle Paul confirmed this when he wrote that the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, were literally God-breathed: “And that from a child you have known the holy writings [the Old Testament], which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus. **All Scripture** [Old and New Testament] **is God-breathed** and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work” (II Tim. 3:15-17).

Therefore, the entire message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as originally written and recorded by His apostles in the *Koiné* Greek language is the God-breathed word of God the Father and Jesus Christ. Furthermore, the New Testament is the apostles’ continuous witness to the world until man’s rule under the sway of Satan the devil ends, when Jesus Christ returns.

Today, we have a faithful copy of the Byzantine Text contained in the Stephens Greek New Testament of 1550. Since its publication in 1550, the Stephens Text has widely been used as the standard Greek text for translation and scholarly research. For over 450 years, it has withstood the attacks of critics and detractors, proving itself to con-

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tain the true words of God the Father and Jesus Christ as written by His holy apostles. Therefore, when the Stephens Text of 1550 is faithfully translated, it conveys the original divine authorship of God's Holy Word—the truth of God the Father and Jesus Christ to show the way of redemption and eternal salvation.

Translation Philosophy

This translation is not the work of a committee. In recent years, as evidenced by their translations, translation committees have demonstrated that they are more committed to carnal-minded, special interest groups, who desire to make the Word of God convey a particular political, sexist or ecumenical religious agenda, than to accurately translating the Word of God in truth. Moreover, they have used inferior Alexandrian type Greek texts for their translations of the New Testament. They have further corrupted the Word of God by using common street language and superimposing a gender-neutral language on the Word of God in their efforts to please radical feminists and homosexuals. In summary, they have allowed societal mores to determine how they should present their translations; they have allowed the community to frame the Word of God.

The obligation of any New Testament translator is to present to the reader a faithful translation of the God-breathed words, as God moved the original apostles to write and canonize them.

The philosophy underlying this translation, *The New Testament In Its Original Order—A Faithful Version With Commentary*, by Fred R. Coulter, is a return to translating the Word of God faithfully from Greek into English. The goal of this version is: 1) To seek the truth and best represent its meaning from the original Greek into English, 2) To convey the Word of God as accurately as possible with the same divine character that is conveyed in the Greek text, 3) To recapture the original doctrines of Jesus Christ that the apostles taught the authentic primitive Church of God as recorded in the New Testament and, 4) To cherish and uphold every “jot and tittle” of the writings of the apostles of Jesus Christ so that true believers may know how to live by every Word of God in a personal, intimate relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Notes on the Greek Text

The Original Order of the New Testament Books: In nearly every version or translation of the New Testament, the seven *General Epistles* are found after the book of Hebrews and before the book of Revelation. But that was not the original placement of the seven *General Epistles*.

Few people who read the New Testament realize that in its original canonization by the apostles of Jesus Christ—Paul, Peter and John—the *General Epistles*—*James, I and II Peter, I, II, III John and Jude*—were placed immediately after the book of Acts and before the Epistle to the Romans. That is the proper order of the books in the New Testament, as inspired by God the Father and Jesus Christ. To this day, the Byzantine text of the New Testament retains the correct order of the books.

The original arrangement of the books of the New Testament is well known by scholars and textual critics. As one scholarly work states, “Whether copies contain the whole or a part of the sacred volume, the general order of the books is the following: Gospels, Acts, Catholic Epistles [the title that scholars have given to the *General Epistles*—not epistles written by the fathers of the Catholic Church], Pauline Epistles, Apocalypse [the book of Revelation]” (*A Plain Introduction to the New Testament, Textual Criticism*, Scrivener, 4th ed., vol. 1, p. 72).

Scholars attribute the original placement of the *General Epistles* to the high re-

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pute in which their authors were held by the early New Testament church. Concerning the placement of the *General Epistles*, we read, “In our English New Testament, the General Epistles are placed near the end of the volume, just before the Book of Revelation. The Greek manuscripts put them, as a rule, immediately after the Gospels and Acts, and before the writings of Paul. This was no doubt in recognition of the fact that they bore the names of the Apostles who were directly associated with Jesus, and whose authority, therefore, might be considered superior to that of Paul. In keeping with this principle, the first place of all was accorded to the Epistle of James. Its author was assumed to be no[ne] other than James, the Lord’s own brother” (*The Literature of the New Testament*, pp. 209-210).

While acknowledging the role that the apostles’ high standing played in the placement of the *General Epistles*, we must be careful not to view their original placement as a matter of human opinion. It is not human judgment but divine inspiration that guided the original placement of these epistles among the books of the New Testament.

There was a divine purpose in the original placement of the books of the New Testament. The *General Epistles*, which were originally located after the book of Acts and before the Epistle to the Romans, clearly teach that obedience to the laws and commandments of God is required of all Christians and is essential for salvation. The *General Epistles* lay a firm scriptural foundation for understanding Paul’s words concerning law and grace, not only in the Epistle to the Romans but in his other epistles as well. If the original order of the apostolic epistles had been retained by the translators of the New Testament, perhaps the scriptural teachings concerning grace and law-keeping would not have been so universally misconstrued as they have been.

This translation has retained the original placement of the books of the New Testament that is reflected in the Byzantine Text. The complete order is as follows: The four Gospels, Acts, The Seven General Epistles, Paul’s Epistles to the Churches, Paul’s Epistle to the Hebrews, Paul’s Pastoral Epistles and Revelation.

Notes on the Stephens Text

The original Stephens Text used an ornate style of letters with abbreviations for various words. It does not use the final moveable *v* for the third person singular and plural, the third singular *ε*, the dative plural in *σιν*, etc. Also, there are occasions when the *ς* is not used. (See page *xli* for a replica of the first page of the Gospel of John.) In most modern printings of the Stephens Greek Text, ornate type has been replaced with a more readable font, variables have been added and abbreviated words have been fully spelled out. However, aside from updating these features, modern printings are exactly the same as the original Stephens 1550 version. In 1897, George Ricker Berry used the Stephens Text for his Greek-English Interlinear New Testament. His translation has widely been used and is still being published by Zondervan Publishing.

Notes on Points of Grammar

Present Tense Verbs: Present tense personal verbs can correctly be translated two ways. The first is the immediate personal present tense, for example: *γράφω* *grapho*, “I write” or “I am writing” (I John 2:8, 12, 13). “I am writing” is more personal and direct. In this translation, when the context calls for it, the present tense verbs have been translated in the present progressive tense with an “-ing” ending. The second is the simple present tense or present tense verbs with a perpetual application. For example: “He [God the Father] **takes away** every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit; but He **cleanses** each one that bears fruit, in order that it may bear more fruit” (John 15:2).

Participles: Greek is sometimes referred to as a participial language because of the extensive use of participles and participial phrases. The participle can be used as a noun, adjective, adverb or verb and in any mood. Moreover, participles are also declinable and have gender, number and case, and are found in all tenses—past, present and future. Because of this, the use of the participle is most difficult to grasp. Therefore, only the two most frequently used types of participles will be examined, these being the present tense and aorist tense participles. Several examples follow:

Present Tense Participles:

John 14:21: “**The one who has** My commandments and **is keeping them**, that is **the one who loves Me**; and **the one who loves Me** shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.”

Philippians 2:13: “For it is God **Who works** in you both to will and to do according to *His* good pleasure.

James 4:11: “Brethren, do not talk against one another. The **one who talks** against a brother, and **judges** his brother, **is speaking against** *the* law, and is judging the law. But if you judge *the* law, you are not a doer of *the* law; rather, *you are* a judge.

I John 2:4: “**The one who says**, ‘I know Him,’ and **does not keep** His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

Aorist Tense Participles:

Matthew 2:4: “And **after gathering together** all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ should be born.”

Luke 6:49: “But **the one who has heard** *My words* and **has not practiced them** is like a man who built a house on *top of* the ground, without a foundation; and *when* the torrent beat against it, it fell at once, and the ruin of that house was great.”

Romans 1:21: “Because **when they knew God**, they glorified *Him* not as God, neither were thankful; but they became vain in their own reasonings, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”

I Corinthians 15:17-18: “But if Christ has not been raised, your faith *is* vain; you are still in your sins, and **those who have fallen asleep** in Christ have then perished.”

Aorist Tense Verbs: In Greek, the aorist tense verb indicates a completed action in the indefinite past. However, in English it is most difficult to strictly maintain that application. Therefore, the aorist tense, depending on the context, has been translated sometimes in the present tense, sometimes in the future tense and sometimes in the perfect tense. For example, the aorist tense verb *εγραψα egrapsa* “**I wrote** ...” in I Cor. 5:9 refers to a past epistle that Paul had written to the Corinthians. However, in verse 11, in order to make sense in English, the same verb *εγραψα egrapsa* was translated, “But now **I have written** ...”

Again, the aorist tense verb *επιστευσάμεν episteusamon* “we believed” was translated “**we ... have believed**” (Gal 2:16), which conveys the most accurate meaning in English.

Perfect Tense Verbs: The perfect tense verb describes an event that has taken place in the past but has results existing in the present time. For example: *εωπακα eoraka*, “**I have seen** ...” and *μεμαρτυρηκα memartureka*, “**I have borne witness** ...” (John 1:34) are perfect tense verbs in the Greek and have been translated as perfect tense verbs in English. In the KJV, these perfect tense Greek verbs have been translated “I saw ...” and “I bare record ...” which incorrectly reflect an aorist past tense.

In Romans 5:5, the perfect tense verb *εκκεχυται ekkechutai*, “The love of God **has been poured out** into our hearts through the Holy Spirit ...” again shows a past

completed action that has results continuing in the present and into the future.

Middle Voice Verbs: Some middle voice verbs are unique in that the subject that is performing the action either experiences the result of the action or participates in the action. For example, middle voice verbs that reflect the action in reference to the subject should be translated “I myself,” “he himself,” “you yourself,” “you yourselves,” “we ourselves,” etc., and when expressing personal involvement, “I personally.” Unfortunately, most translators have not translated middle voice verbs accurately to reflect the true meaning expressed in the Greek. In this translation, where the added expression “self” is awkward in English, the subject’s personal involvement is expressed by using the word “personally.”

John 15:16: “**You yourselves** did not choose Me, but **I have personally chosen** you ...” This verse shows both types of the middle voice verb.

Eph. 1:4: “According as **He has personally chosen** us for Himself ...” In this case it would be awkward to translate the middle voice as “He Himself has chosen us for Himself”; therefore, God’s personal involvement in choosing us is expressed by the word “personally.”

Col. 1:13: “Who **has personally rescued** us from the power of darkness and has transferred *us* unto the kingdom of the Son of His love.”

Col. 1:18: “And He is the Head of the body, the church; Who is *the* beginning, *the* firstborn from among the dead, so that in all things **He Himself** might hold the pre-eminence.”

Acts 26:17: “**I am personally selecting you ...**” Acts 22:14: “The **God** of our fathers **has personally chosen** you ...” The middle voice verb in these examples show that Jesus Christ Himself personally selected and called the apostle Paul.

I John 1:6: “If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, **we are lying to ourselves ...**” This middle voice verb clearly shows that the subject “we” is initiating the action as well as receiving the consequences of the action (self-deception). A single middle voice verb *ψευδομεθα* *psuedometha* is used to convey the meaning that must be translated into the English phrase “we are lying to ourselves.”

Middle voice verbs are different from verbs used with a reflexive pronoun. Verbs used with a reflexive pronoun to express the involvement of self are also used in the New Testament. In I John 1:8, John expressed nearly the same thought as he did in verse 6 by using a verb with a reflexive pronoun, “If we say that we do not have sin, **we are deceiving** [verb] **ourselves** [reflexive pronoun], and the truth is not in us.”

Gal. 4:9-10: “But on the other hand, after having known God—rather, after having been known by God—how *is it that* you are turning again to the weak and impotent elements, to which you again desire to be in bondage? **You are of your own selves** observing days, and months, and times and years.” By using a middle voice verb in this passage, the apostle Paul is showing that what the Galatians were doing was contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ—they were returning to their former pagan beliefs. They themselves of their own accord were observing pagan religious days, months, times and years. In effect, by such practices, they were rejecting God’s commands to observe the Sabbath and holy days.

Heb. 9:11-12: “But Christ Himself has become High Priest of the coming good things, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made by *human* hands (that is, not of this *present physical* creation). Not by *the* blood of goats and calves, but by the means of His own blood, He entered once for all into the holiest, **having by Himself** secured everlasting redemption *for us*.”

Other Types of Middle Voice Verbs: Not all middle voice verbs can be translated to express an action to or for the self, or to express active personal participation. These other types are intransitive verbs, called deponent verbs, which have no active form but

About This New Translation

only middle voice or passive form with an active meaning. Some examples follow:

Active Voice

αἶρω—I take

ἀποδίδωμι—I give away

κρίνω—I judge

φυλάσσω—I guard

Middle Voice

αἶρομαι—I choose, prefer

ἀποδίδομαι—I sell

κρίνομαι—I bring a lawsuit

φυλάσσομαι—I am on my guard

Indeed, the grammar of New Testament Greek is very complex. Furthermore, it is impossible to literally translate the Greek into English because of the differences in the syntax and word order between the two languages. These few examples have been presented to give the reader a flavor of the Greek that underlies this English translation. It is hoped that this brief summary on these few points of Greek grammar will assist readers who are interested in the mechanics of translating the text into English. For the average Bible student, George Ricker Berry's work, *The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament*, would be a most helpful tool. As an encouragement to anyone desiring to acquire some knowledge of Old Testament Hebrew or New Testament Greek, the following is Berry's admonition to ministers and teachers (clergymen):

“1. Without *some* knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, you cannot understand the critical commentaries on the Scriptures, and a commentary that is *not* critical is of doubtful value.

2. Without *some* knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, you cannot satisfy yourself or those who look to you for help as to the changes which you will find in the Revised Old and New Testaments [or any other translation].

3. Without *some* knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, you cannot appreciate the critical discussions, now so frequent, relating to the books of the Old and New Testaments.

4. Without *some* knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, you cannot be certain, in a single instance, that in your sermon based on a Scripture text, you are presenting the correct teaching of that text.

5. Without *some* knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, you cannot be an independent student, or a reliable interpreter of the word of God.

6. As much knowledge of Hebrew can be secured, with the same method, under the same circumstances, by the same pupil, in *one* year, with the aid of the Interlinear Old Testament, as can be gained of Latin in three years. Greek, though somewhat more difficult, may be readily acquired within a brief period with the aid of the Interlinear New Testament (which contains a lexicon) and an elementary Greek grammar.

7. The Hebrew language has, in all, about 7,000 words, and of these 1,000 occur in the Old Testament over 25 times each.

8. The Hebrew grammar has but *one* form for the Relative pronoun in all cases, numbers and genders; but *three* forms for the Demonstrative pronoun. The possible verbal forms are about 300 as compared with the 1,200 found in Greek. It has practically no declension.

9. Within ten years the average man wastes more time in fruitless reading and indifferent talk than would be used in acquiring a good working knowledge of Hebrew and Greek that in turn would impart to his teaching that quality of independence and of reliability which so greatly enhances one's power as a teacher.

10. There is not *one* minister in *ten* who might not if he but *would*, find time and opportunity for such study of Hebrew and Greek as would enable him to make a thoroughly practical use of it in his work as a Bible-preacher and Bible-teacher.”

George Ricker Berry
1897

May George Ricker Berry's words be an incentive to you, the reader, to go beyond the basics so that you may grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

ΤΗΣ ΚΑΙΝΗΣ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗΣ ἈΠΑΝΤΑ.

ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ

Κατὰ Ματθαῖον.

Κατὰ Μάρκον.

Κατὰ Λουκᾶν.

Κατὰ Ἰωάννην.

ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΩΝ.

Nouum IES V Christi D.N.
Testamentum.

EX BIBLIOTHECA REGIA.



*Ex Libris
Georgii à Schöbel
P. Rosenfeld.*

An. M. DC. LXX

Symb.

Terrenis præstant Cælestia Rebus.

J. Jones

Βασιλεὺς τ' ἀγαθὸν χρηστὴρ τ' αἰχμητὴρ.

LVTETIAE,

Ex officina Roberti Stephani typographi Regii, Regiis typis.

M. D. L.



Τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην ἅγιον
εὐαγγέλιον.

ΕΝ ΔΕ ΧΗ ΛΩ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ, ΚΑΙ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ ΛΩ
 ΠΡΟΣ Τ' ΘΕΟΝ, ΕΘΕΟΣ ΛΩ Ο ΛΟΓΟΣ. ΕΠΙ
 ΛΩ ΕΝ ΔΕ ΧΗ ΠΡΟΣ Τ' ΘΕΟΝ. Πάντα δι'
 αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐ
 δὲ ἓν, ὃ γέγονεν. ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ
 ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, ἐτὶ
 φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει, ἐτὶ σκοτία αὐ
 τὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν. Ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ
 Θεοῦ, ὄνομα αὐτῷ Ἰωάννης· ἐπὶ ἦλθεν εἰς μδρτυρίαν, ἵνα μδρ
 τυρήσῃ παρὰ τοῦ φωτός, ἵνα πάντες πιστεύσωσι δι' αὐτοῦ. ἐκ ΛΩ ἐ
 κεινὸν τὸ φῶς, ἀλλ' ἵνα μδρτυρήσῃ παρὰ τοῦ φωτός. Ἦν τὸ
 φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν, ὃ φωτίζει πάντα τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸ
 κόσμον. ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ΛΩ, καὶ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ ὁ κό
 σμος αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔγνω. Εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθε, καὶ οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέ
 λαβον. ὅσοι ὅμως ἔλαβον αὐτόν, ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἴσους αὐτῷ τέκνα
 Θεοῦ γενέσθαι, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, οἱ οὐκ ἐξ αἱμά
 των, οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος σαρκὸς, οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος ἀνδρός,
 ἀλλ' ἐκ Θεοῦ ἐγενήθησαν. καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο, καὶ ἐσκή
 νωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, (καὶ) ἐπασάμυθα τῷ δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς
 μονογενοῦς πατρὸς, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας. Ἰω
 ἄννης μδρτυρεῖ παρὰ αὐτοῦ, καὶ κέκραγε, λέγων, (ὁ)υτοῦ ΛΩ ὃν εἶπον,
 ὃ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος, ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν. ὅτι παρὰ τοῦ
 μου ΛΩ. ἐκ τούτου πληθύνεται αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν,
 καὶ χάριν ἀπὸ χάριτος. ὅτι ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωσέως ἐδόθη, ἡ χά
 ρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐγένετο. Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρα
 κε πώποτε· ὁ μονογενὴς υἱὸς, ὃς ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς, ἐκεῖ
 νον ἐξηγήσατο. Καὶ αὕτη ὅστις ἡ μδρτυρία τοῦ Ἰωάννου, ὅτε

Κολοσ.α.Γ

Αμερ. θ. γ. Α
 μεθ. α. Α
 Αμε. γ. Α

Кер.О.А.
С.В.Е.И

B 15 Cr. 10. A

Ματθ. ι. Γ
 λ κ. β. Δ
 Λευκ. ι. Α
 β. πρ^η. α. Δ

Κολοσ. α. Γ.
α β. η

Κεφ. ς. Ε
α. ιη. ς. Γ
α. ιη. ς. Δ

Ματθ. γ. Α
 Λουκ. ιβ. Α
 Νικ. γ. Δ

Love of God

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life.” John 3:16

“In this way the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this *act* is the love—not that we loved God; rather, that He loved us and sent His Son *to be the propitiation* for our sins.” I John 4:9-10

“And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us. God is love, and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him. By this *spiritual indwelling*, the love of God is perfected within us ... There is no fear in the love of God; rather, perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment. And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love of God. We love Him because He loved us first.” I John 4:16-19

“By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome ... And this is the love of God: that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, exactly as you heard from *the beginning*, that you might walk in it.” I John 5:2-3; II John 6

“If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.” John 14:15

“The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him ... If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s, Who sent Me.” John 14:21, 23-24

“As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and live in His love ... the Father Himself loves you.” John 15:9-10; 16:27

“ ‘You shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is *the* first and greatest commandment; and *the* second *one* is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” Matt. 22:37-40

“A new commandment I give to you: that you love one another in the same way that I have loved you, that *is how* you are to love one another.” John 13:34

CHAPTER ONE

ABOUT THE NEW TESTAMENT

Billions of people have the New Testament, but most do not understand what it really is. Although many have read it, very few realize why, when and by whom it was written. Chapters One through Seven answer these vital questions.

What Is the New Testament?

The New Testament is not a collection of cleverly concocted myths to establish a religious movement or to create vast ecclesiastical empires to rule men and women. It is the divinely inspired account of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, whose life and teachings fulfilled hundreds of prophecies in the Old Testament. It is a message from God the Father and Jesus Christ to all mankind—not only to the rich and educated, but also, even more importantly, to the common man and woman. Its God-breathed words and teachings set forth the Father's entire plan for our salvation, called the "gospel of grace" and "the gospel of the kingdom of God." The New Testament proclaims God the Father's love for us, shown in His forgiveness of our sins, and reveals the way to eternal life through Jesus Christ, as summarized in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life." **It is the most magnificent book in the world—greater than the Old Testament because the New Testament interprets the Old. Combined, the New and Old Testaments constitute the entire Word of God revealed to the world.**

The New Testament is God the Father's personal revelation of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Jesus was no ordinary man, wisdom-teacher or religious sage! He was God manifested in the flesh (I Tim. 3:16). However, before He was made flesh, He was the Creator, the LORD God of the Old Testament. The apostle John was inspired to reveal the truth of Jesus Christ's divine identity when He wrote: "**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one thing that was created came into being without Him. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.**"

"The true light was that which enlightens everyone who comes into the world. **He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, but the world did not know Him.** He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him; but as many as received Him, to them He gave authority to become *the* children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name; who were not begotten by bloodlines, nor by *the* will of the flesh, nor by *the* will of man; but *by the will* of God. **And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us** (and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth" (John 1:1-4, 9-14). The Word—the one Who became Jesus Christ—was the LORD God of the Old Testament.

Why Was the New Testament Written?

The reason for the New Testament's writing is found in the refusal of God's children throughout the ages to heed His guidance and admonishment. In Moses' time, the children of Israel excused their refusal on the grounds that His voice was terrifying. They begged Moses to communicate with God on their behalf, and they promised to do whatever God told them through Moses—yet they continued to rebel. It is ironic that in our day many continue to excuse their rebellion on the grounds that God's will is difficult to discern: If only He would speak to us with a voice that we could hear—so goes the argument—then we could know and do His will!

Since the creation of Adam and Eve, God has spoken audibly or face to face with relatively few men. After the flood of Noah's time, God dealt directly with Abraham and spoke with him. Nearly four thousand years ago, God established His covenant with Abraham for the benefit of all nations. The entire plan of God's salvation for the world generates from His covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3, 15:4-18). This covenant contained God's promise of physical descendants through Abraham's son, Isaac, and of spiritual progeny as well: first, Jesus Christ, and then all those who are Christ's in the first resurrection at His Second Coming. The promise of physical seed was fulfilled in part by the birth of Isaac; the promise of physical blessings and national greatness was passed on through Isaac to his son Jacob. Jacob's name was later changed to Israel, and from his twelve sons came the twelve tribes of Israel.

Before the death of Jacob there was a great famine in the land of Canaan. Jacob, all his sons (except Joseph) and their wives and children left Canaan and went to Egypt to live. Jacob's son Joseph had already been in Egypt for seventeen years, having been sold into slavery in his youth by his brothers because of jealousy, and eventually elevated by pharaoh to be second in command of all Egypt due to his God-given wisdom and ability to interpret dreams. After Joseph died, another pharaoh came to power and enslaved all the children of Israel. As God had prophesied to Abraham, the children of Israel were greatly oppressed by the Egyptians. They cried out to God for deliverance, and God led Moses and his brother Aaron to bring them out of slavery. God delivered the children of Israel from bondage with His mighty hand and an outpouring of fearsome plagues. As the Israelites left Egypt, pursued by the pharaoh's soldiers and charioteers, God parted the Red Sea, allowing the Israelites to cross on dry ground. The waters then returned, inundating and drowning the Egyptians. Afterward, He brought the children of Israel safely through the wilderness to Mount Sinai (Exodus 1-19).

At Mount Sinai, according to the promises that God had made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, He established a covenant with the children of Israel. The LORD God, the One who later became Jesus Christ, commanded Moses to sanctify the people and have them wash their clothes in preparation for meeting Him at the foot of the mountain on the third day, which was the day of Pentecost. This was an awe-inspiring and fearful event for the children of Israel. They heard the voice of God, Who had descended from heaven to the top of Mount Sinai to speak to them. There He gave them the Ten Commandments and established a covenant with them, now called the Old Covenant. The account is recorded in Exodus 19: "And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that *was* in the camp trembled. **And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God;** and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded

long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

“And the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses *up* to the top of the mount; and Moses went up. And the LORD said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish. And let the priests also, which come near to the LORD, sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them. And Moses said unto the LORD, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it. And the LORD said unto him, Away, get thee down, and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the LORD, lest He break forth upon them. So Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them” (Ex. 19:16-25, *KJV*).

Then, God spoke directly to the children of Israel. They heard His awesome, powerful voice as He gave them the Ten Commandments: “And God spake all these words, saying ...”

The First Commandment: “*I am* the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.”

The Second Commandment: “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments.”

The Third Commandment: “Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.”

The Fourth Commandment: “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day *is* the sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates: for *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them *is*, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

The Fifth Commandment: “Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.”

The Sixth Commandment: “Thou shalt not kill.”

The Seventh Commandment: “Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

The Eighth Commandment: “Thou shalt not steal.”

The Ninth Commandment: “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.”

The Tenth Commandment: “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour’s” (Ex. 20:1-17, *KJV*).

The sights and sounds coming from the mountain were so awesome and terrifying, the children of Israel refused to listen to the voice of God any longer. They wanted Moses to talk with God alone and then tell them what God had said: “And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw *it*, they removed, and stood afar off. **And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.** And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that His fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God *was*” (verses 18-21, *KJV*).

Chapter One

Although the children of Israel promised to heed Moses, they did not. Only a year and a half after they left Egypt, Moses announced that God was ready to lead them into the Promised Land, but they refused to go. As a result, God sentenced them to wander in the wilderness for forty years. Furthermore, God pronounced His judgment that all Israelites older than twenty years, except Joshua and Caleb, would die in the wilderness. In spite of this punishment, time and again, the Israelites rebelled against God and Moses. (A summary of these events is found in the book of Numbers.)

When the forty years of their wandering in the wilderness had passed, God brought the next generation of the children of Israel to the border of the Promised Land in preparation to enter it. At that time, Moses again instructed them in the way of the LORD. He gave them the laws and commandments of God a second time, as found in the book of Deuteronomy. (The name of this book means the second giving of the Law.)

Moses' Prophecy About Jesus Christ

God remembered the words of the children of Israel when they refused to listen to Him after He had given them the Ten Commandments. He also remembered that they said they would listen to a man. However, during their wanderings in the wilderness, they did not listen to the man Moses as they had said. God was patient, and He offered to give them another chance to keep their promise. God announced through Moses that He would send another man, a prophet like Moses, and the people would have to listen to Him. When this Prophet came, if they would not heed Him, they would no longer have an excuse: **"The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto Me; unto him ye shall hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb [Mount Sinai] in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.**

"And the LORD said unto me, They have well *spoken that* which they have spoken. I [God the Father] will raise them up a Prophet [the coming Christ] from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever will not hearken unto My words, which he shall speak in My name, I will require *it* of him. But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die" (Deut. 18:15-20, KJV).

God Became a Man

In order to fulfill Moses' prophecy, the Word—the One who pre-existed as God—came in the flesh as a man to speak with men. Jesus Christ was that man—the Son of God, born of the virgin Mary. But how could God become a man? Before one can understand that, one needs to know some basic facts about God as revealed in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, God—the Hebrew word is *Elohim*, a collective plural noun—is a holy family of intelligent beings composed of spirit. The God Family is eternal and all-powerful. The God Family is perfect in love, righteousness, character and purpose. The God Family is Lawgiver, Creator and Sustainer of all substance and life, upholding the universe by the power of Jesus' word (Heb. 1:3). The Scriptures reveal that the God Family created mankind "after Our image and after Our likeness" (Gen. 1:26-27). Therefore, God is the reality of the "image and likeness" from which man was created. The God Family presently consists of God the Father and God the Son. These two members of the God Family have the same form, or "image and like-

ness,” which They have given to human beings, though They are composed of spirit.

God the Father is the supreme, glorious, divine spirit being Who is the Sovereign Ruler of the universe. He accomplishes His will through the power of His Holy Spirit. God the Father, Who has all power and all authority, is love and has perfect, holy, righteous character, full of grace and mercy. He is greater than His Son Jesus Christ but shares all that He has with His Son.

God the Father sent Jesus Christ to reveal the Father’s love and grace and His magnificent plan for mankind. He came not only to reveal God the Father’s plan and purpose but also to reveal God the Father Himself, to all who believe Him and His Gospel. Jesus said: “I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and have revealed them to babes. Yes, Father, for it was well pleasing in Your sight *to do this*. **All things were delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son personally chooses to reveal Him**” (Matt. 11:25-27).

Jesus Christ was the only one Who could reveal God the Father because Jesus was God manifested in the flesh. Prior to His human birth, the One of the God Family Who became the Son eternally existed with the Other of the God Family Who became the Father. All things were created by God the Father through God the Son. The Son is revealed in the Old Testament as the LORD God and Lawgiver and in the New Testament as the Word of God. In order to become the Savior of all mankind, He willingly divested Himself of His position in the God Family, giving up His majesty, glory and power to become a fleshly human being. He was begotten of God the Father and born of the virgin Mary. The angel Gabriel instructed Mary and later Joseph to name Him Jesus (Luke 1:31; Matt. 1:21). (His full New Covenant title is Jesus Christ of Nazareth.) As a human being, having human flesh, Jesus was subject to the same temptations we face, yet He never sinned. As the perfect “Lamb of God,” He gave Himself as God the Father’s unique sacrifice in atonement for the sins of all mankind. Three days and three nights after His death by crucifixion, He was resurrected and reinvested with eternal life through the power of God the Father and ascended into heaven, becoming the Firstborn from the dead. Once again having been invested with the full divine nature and power of the God Family, He sits at the right hand of God the Father as High Priest, Advocate and Intercessor with the Father; and He is the Head of the Church.

Jesus Christ Was the Prophet Foretold by Moses

After the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the apostles understood that the Prophet about Whom Moses had prophesied was in fact Jesus Christ. The apostle Peter made this clear when He preached to the people: “For Moses truly said to the fathers, ‘**A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up to you from among your brethren, like me; Him shall you hear in all things that He shall say to you. And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people.**’ Now indeed, all the prophets from Samuel and those who followed, as many as prophesied, also proclaimed these days. You are *the* children of the prophets and of the covenant that God Himself appointed to our fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.’ Unto you first has God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you in turning each *of you* from your wickedness” (Acts 3:22-26).

John the Baptist was the first witness to declare that Jesus Christ had come from heaven and that He spoke the words of God. “He Who comes from above is above all ... and **what He has seen and heard, this is what He testifies**; but no one receives His testimony. The one who has received His testimony has set his seal that God is true; **for He**

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Whom God has sent speaks the words of God; and God gives not the Spirit by measure unto Him. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand” (John 3:31-35).

Jesus Christ confirmed that He did not speak on His own behalf but spoke all that the Father had commanded Him, just as had been prophesied in Deuteronomy 18. Moreover, He did not seek His own will but the will of the Father who had sent Him. Jesus said: “Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself, but only what He sees the Father do. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner....**I have no power to do anything of Myself; but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father, Who sent Me**” (John 5:19-30).

By manifesting Himself as a man, God fulfilled the prophecy He gave to Moses and spoke to mankind. God has also spoken His essential words of life to us, which have been recorded by His chosen apostles to be preserved for all humanity. **The New Testament is the record of the words that God Himself would speak if He were to talk with us as humans talk. Every human being is held accountable to Him because He has spoken to us through this record.**

The act of God to become a man and to speak personally to His creation was profound. The apostle Paul clearly stated that this was the greatest thing God could do. He did not speak to us as God. He did not speak to us through angels. He did not speak to us through His prophets. He spoke to us by His Son. He offered forgiveness of sin and eternal life through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to all who would believe and repent: “God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds; Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and *the* exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high; having been made so much greater than *any of* the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them. For to which of the angels did He ever say, ‘You are My Son; this day I have begotten You’? And again, ‘I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me’? And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, ‘Let all *the* angels of God worship Him.’ ” (Heb. 1:1-6).

Jesus Christ Is the Way, the Truth and the Life

The teachings of all the religions of the world count as nothing when compared to the awesome truth of what God the Father did through Jesus Christ for the sake of all mankind. Jesus made it clear—He will not give His honor to another. Contrary to the teachings of the religions of the world, there are not many ways to God. There is only one way to God the Father and salvation, and that way is through Jesus Christ. No one comes to the Father except through Him. Jesus declared, **“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me”** (John 14:6).

God will not compromise with anyone. Jesus Christ is the only way! Furthermore, Jesus will not unite Himself with any ecumenical movement to bring all religions together. He is as far above all other so-called gods, goddesses, philosophies and religions as the heavens are high above the earth. There is none equal to or greater than Jesus Christ, except God the Father. This is why all who come to Jesus Christ must believe and be called by God the Father, as Jesus declared to His own disciples: “No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day....And He said, ‘For this reason, **I have said to you, no one can come to Me**

unless it has been given to him from My Father' ” (John 6:44, 65).

The New Testament Is a Witness

God did not leave the world without a witness. The New Testament is His witness to all nations, to all religions—every human being on earth.

Witness to the World

Jesus said, the gospel of the kingdom of God would be preached in all the world as a witness, **“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world for a witness to all the nations; and then shall the end come”** (Matt. 24:14). Not only would the gospel be preached and proclaimed, but also it **would be published** as Jesus prophesied: “But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for it is necessary for *these things* to come to pass, but the end *is* not yet. For nation shall rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be earthquakes in different places, and there shall be famines and disasters. These things *are* the beginning of sorrows. But keep yourselves on guard, for they shall deliver you up to councils and synagogues. You shall be beaten, and you shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake, **for a witness against them. And the gospel must first be published among all nations**” (Mark 13:7-10).

God could give no greater witness to mankind than to come in the flesh to speak to His creation and show His love for them by dying for their sins. His witness to the world continued after His death and resurrection. The apostles preached and witnessed through the power of the Holy Spirit and were inspired to write and preserve the words of Jesus’ witness for all generations until His return. This is how His special witness was revealed and continues to be revealed to the world today. Jesus’ words fulfill the prophecy in Deuteronomy 18:15-20, and because Jesus Christ came and gave this witness to the world, the world is accountable to God: “But I am telling you the truth. It is profitable for you that I go away because if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you. However, if I go, I will send it to you. And when that one has come, **it will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment:** Concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; concerning righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you no longer will see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged” (John 16:7-11).

Witness Against the World’s Religions and Their Leaders

After Jesus’ resurrection, thousands of Jews heeded the apostles’ witness. They believed in Jesus Christ as Messiah, repented and were baptized as recorded in the book of Acts. However, the majority of Jews rejected Jesus Christ, refusing to believe that He was the Messiah. Just as the unbelieving Jews rejected Jesus Christ, every other religion of the world has also rejected Him—Catholicism/Orthodox, Protestantism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism and all animist religions. Although some of these religions may profess Jesus, they have all rejected the teachings of Jesus Christ and the New Testament by substituting their own traditions and practices for the Word of God. Recall how Jesus castigated the religious leaders of Judaism because of their traditions: “And He answered *and* said to them, ‘Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you hypocrites, as it is written, “This people honors Me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me.” But in vain do they worship Me, teaching *for* doctrine the commandments of men.

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For leaving the commandment of God, you hold fast the tradition of men, *such as* the washing of pots and cups; and you practice many other things like *this*.' Then He said to them, **'Full well do you reject the commandment of God, so that you may observe your own tradition'** " (Mark 7:6-9).

Thus, the words of Jesus Christ as preserved in the New Testament are not only a witness against Judaism but against all other religions of the world, because they have rejected the teachings of Jesus Christ in order to observe their own traditions and worship their own gods and idols.

John, in his gospel, records Jesus Christ's witness to the leaders of Judaism: "Therefore, Jesus said to them, **'If God were your Father, you would love Me, because I proceeded forth and came from God. For I have not come of Myself, but He sent Me.** Why don't you understand My speech? Because you cannot *bear* to hear My words. You are of *your* father the devil [who is the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4)], and the lusts of your father you desire to practice. He was a murderer from *the* beginning, and has not stood in the truth because there is no truth in him. **Whenever he speaks a lie, he is speaking from his own self; for he is a liar, and the father of it.** And because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. Which *one* of you can convict Me of sin? But if I speak *the* truth, why don't you believe Me? **The one who is of God hears the words of God. For this reason you do not hear, because you are not of God'** " (John 8:42-47). Just as Judaism and its teachings are not of God, so also other religions of the world are not of God.

On the night of His last Passover, Jesus told His apostles the reason for His witness against the religious leaders of Judaism, and hence, all religions and their leaders: "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have had sin; but now they have nothing to cover their sin. The one who hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no other man has done, they would not have had sin; but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father" (John 15:22-24). The apostle Paul summed up the fruits of the religions of the world and their leaders, "They personally profess to know God, but in *their* works they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and reprobate unto every good work" (Titus 1:16).

Witness to All People

The New Testament, including the words of Jesus Christ, is a witness not only to all nations and to all religions but to every human being. The apostle John recorded Jesus words: "And even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, in the same way it is ordained that the Son of man be lifted up, so **that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life.**

"For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. The one who believes in Him is not judged, but **the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.** And this is the judgment: that the light [Jesus Christ] has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who practices evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, so that his works may not be exposed; but the one who practices the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*" (John 3:14-21).

***Anyone Who Rejects the New Testament
Shall Be Judged by the Words of Christ***

The words of Jesus Christ as recorded in the Gospel of John reveal that He fulfilled the prophecy of Moses in Deuteronomy: “I [God the Father] will raise them up a Prophet [Jesus Christ] from among their brethren, like unto thee, and **will put My words in his mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words, which He shall speak in My name, I will require it of him**” (Deut. 18:18-20, *KJV*).

Consequently, Jesus Christ’s words are a witness against all who reject Him, and His words will judge them. “But if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. **The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him; the word which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I speak, I speak exactly as the Father has told Me**” (John 12:47-50). Furthermore, if anyone rejects Jesus Christ, he is also rejecting God the Father—the Sovereign Ruler of the universe.

The New Testament was divinely inspired to be written and preserved so that every man and woman could know the words of God, the love of God and the salvation of God. It contains the words of eternal life and shows the way to God the Father through Jesus Christ. On the one hand, all who repent and believe the words of Jesus Christ and the New Testament will receive the mercy of God the Father and the forgiveness of sin through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ—the Father’s only begotten Son. On the other hand, all who refuse to hear and believe the words of Jesus Christ and His Gospel as contained in the New Testament will be judged by those very same words. The apostle Paul was inspired to write of this judgment: “Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the graciousness of God leads you to repentance? **But you, according to your own hardness and unrepentant heart, are storing up wrath for yourself against the day of wrath and revelation of God’s righteous judgment, Who will render to each one according to his own works; on the one hand, to those who with patient endurance in good works are seeking glory and honor and immortality—eternal life. On the other hand, to those who are contentious and who disobey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish—upon every soul of man who commits evil acts, both of the Jew first, and of the Greek; but glory and honor and peace to everyone who works good, both to the Jew first, and to the Greek, because there is no respect of persons with God**” (Rom. 2:4-11). What Paul has written confirms the prophecy in Deuteronomy 18.

A Call to Repentance

Not only is the New Testament a witness to the world, the nations, the religious leaders and every person, but it is a call to repentance! John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way for Jesus Christ. He preached repentance of sins, instructing the people to believe in Jesus Christ, Who would come after him. After John the Baptist was put in prison, Jesus Christ began His ministry by preaching repentance: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God ... Now after the imprisonment of John, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time

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has been fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is near at hand; **repent, and believe in the gospel**' ” (Mark 1:1, 14-15).

Jesus made it clear that He came to call sinners to repentance, “I did not come to call *the* righteous [those who think they are righteous], but sinners to repentance” (Mark 2:17); and, He left no doubt that all must repent of their sins: “Now at the same time, *there* were present some who were telling Him about the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answered *and* said to them, ‘Do you suppose that these Galileans were sinners above all Galileans, because they suffered such things? No, I tell you; **but if you do not repent, you shall all likewise perish**. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, do you suppose that these were debtors above all men who dwelt in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; **but if you do not repent, you shall all likewise perish**’ ” (Luke 13:1-5).

What Is Sin?

The New Testament defines sin as the transgression of the law (I John 3:4). Anyone who transgresses the laws and commandments of God is living in a state of sin or lawlessness. A literal translation of this verse from the Greek reads: “**Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness.**”

There is no one in the entire history of the world who has not sinned, except Jesus Christ. That is why He alone can be our Redeemer and Savior. Every person needs to be saved from his or her sins, because “the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).

In his epistle to the Romans, the apostle Paul was moved to emphatically declare that all have sinned—all have transgressed the laws and commandments of God, and all are sentenced to death. The only escape and salvation is through Jesus Christ: “What then? Are we [Jews] of ourselves better [than the Gentiles]? Not at all! **For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—ALL—with being under sin.** Exactly as it is written: ‘**For there is not a righteous one—not even one!**’ There is not one who understands; there is not one who seeks after God. They have all gone out of the way; together they have *all* become depraved. There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness. No, there is not so much as one! Their throats *are* like an open grave; with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps *is* under their lips; whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; their feet *are* swift to shed blood; destruction and misery *are* in their ways; and *the* way of peace they have not known. **There is no fear of God before their eyes.**’ Now then, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, **so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God....For all have sinned, and have come short of the glory of God**” (Rom. 3:9-19, 23).

On the day of Pentecost, just fifty-four days after the crucifixion, the apostles began preaching Jesus Christ’s gospel of repentance. On that day, God poured out His Holy Spirit in power, and the apostles spoke in a multitude of languages as a fantastic witness to the Jews from all nations who had gathered at the temple in Jerusalem to observe the feast day (Acts 2:1-18). When they wondered what this miracle meant, the apostle Peter was inspired to powerfully preach Christ and repentance of sin. His moving witness to the Jews who had gathered at the temple ended with these words: “ ‘Therefore, let all *the* house of Israel know with full assurance that God has made this *same* Jesus, Whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.’ Now after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart [convicted of their sins]; and they said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘**Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for *the* remission of**

sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'... And with many other words he earnestly testified and exhorted, saying, 'Be saved from this perverse generation.' **Then those who joyfully received his message were baptized;** and about three thousand souls were added that day" (Acts 2:36-41).

Baptism is a requirement for salvation, as these scriptures show. One must be baptized by full immersion in water, which is symbolic of the burial of the old sinful self in a watery grave. Baptism must come after true and deep repentance toward God the Father and Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul's Call to Repentance

When the apostle Paul came to Athens, the center of the Greek pagan religions, he preached a powerful message of repentance. As it is recorded in Acts, he exhorted the Athenians to repent of their idolatries and vain religious practices: "Then Paul stood in *the center of Mars' hill and* said, 'Men, Athenians, I perceive *that* in all things you are very reverent to deities; for *as* I was passing through and observing the objects of your veneration, I also found an altar on which was inscribed, "To an unknown God." So then, He Whom you worship in ignorance *is* the one *that* I proclaim to you.

"He *is* the God Who made the world and all things that *are* in it. Being *the* Lord of heaven and earth, He does not dwell in temples made by hands; nor is He served by the hands of men, as *though* He needs anything, *for* He gives to all life and breath and all things. **And He made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth, having determined beforehand *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their dwelling, in order that they might seek the Lord, if perhaps they might feel after Him and might find Him; though truly, He is not far from each one of us, for in Him we live and move and have our being;** as some of the poets among you also have said, 'For we are His offspring.'

"Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we should not think that the God-head *is* like that which *is made* of gold, or silver, or stone—a graven thing of art *devised by the* imagination of man; for *although* God has indeed overlooked the times of this ignorance, **He now commands all men everywhere to repent,** because He has set a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by a man Whom He has appointed, having given proof to all *by* raising Him from *the* dead" (Acts 17:22-31). Paul's message of repentance was the same as Jesus Christ's: "If you do not repent, you shall likewise perish."

The Meaning of Repentance

Because of the witness that Jesus Christ has given to the world—all nations, all religions and all people—He commands all men and women to repent and turn to God with all their hearts! Today, God's judgment is at the door. None shall escape unless he or she repents.

What is repentance? There are two kinds of repentance. One is worldly repentance, which is a shallow repentance that leads to death. The other is godly repentance that leads to forgiveness and salvation. The apostle Paul said, "For sorrow unto repentance before God works out salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world works out death" (II Cor. 7:10).

Godly repentance means a complete abhorrence of one's sins, a complete turning from sin—from the transgression of the laws and commandments of God. Repentance is a complete amendment of life, a turning away from one's own sinful way to the way of love and obedience, keeping the laws and commandments of God and living by every word of God as taught by Jesus Christ.

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In the book of Psalms, we find King David's prayer of repentance, uttered when Nathan the prophet came to him after David's affair with Bathsheba and the killing of her husband Uriah. This prayer shows David's complete abhorrence of sin and self as he cried out to God with tears of anguish and sorrow, begging for His mercy and forgiveness. David's repentance was to God, not to any man. He did not confess his sins to a priest. He did not confess his sins to Nathan the prophet. Just as David did, we are to confess our sins directly to God the Father and Jesus Christ, not to a man. King David's prayer has been preserved for us so that we can understand the attitude of true repentance: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. **Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.**

"Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest. Behold, **I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.** Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; *that* the bones *which* thou hast broken may rejoice. **Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.** Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit....**Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation"** (Psa. 51:1-14, *KJV*).

Repentance is the first step in the sinner's reconciliation with God the Father and Jesus Christ. God the Father through His Spirit must open a person's mind to understand that he or she is a sinner against Him. As David said, "I have sinned against You and You alone." Then one must believe the gospel of Jesus Christ, that it is because of one's own sins that He had to die. True belief brings repentance and necessitates confessing one's sins to God the Father and asking for forgiveness, remission and pardon of those sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. True, deep, godly repentance will produce a profound change in a person's mind and attitude, which will result in a continuous desire to live by every word of God. The truly repentant person will turn from evil thoughts and ungodly practices and will seek to conform his or her life to the will of God as revealed in the Holy Bible and as led by the Holy Spirit. Repentance and confession of sins is an ongoing process in a Christian's spiritual growth toward perfection in Jesus Christ.

Upon true, heartfelt repentance, God is ready and willing to forgive sin, as shown in David's prayer of repentance: "Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily. Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. **For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.** Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications. **In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me"** (Psa. 86:3-7, *KJV*).

God does not require animal sacrifices for the propitiation of sin. He does not require the sinner to perform rote prayers with the aid of a strand of beads. He does not require hundreds of reiterations of "Hail Mary" or "Our Father." God does not require a person to crawl for miles on his or her knees or to perform self-flagellation or ritual bloodletting. God requires only that the sinner have a broken and contrite heart and genuinely repent as it is written: "For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give *it*: thou delightest not in burnt offering. **The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise"** (Psa. 51:16-18, *KJV*).

The apostle John wrote, "If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). If we

repent and confess our sins to God the Father and Jesus Christ, God will certainly forgive us. Once our sins are forgiven, we are to quit living in sin. We are to stop living like the world and are to live according to the ways of God. As Jesus said, “Sin no more, so that something worse does not happen to you”; and “Go, and sin no more” (John 5:14; 8:11).

The prophet Isaiah made it clear that not only are we to repent of sin but also we are to cease from sinning: “Wash you, make you clean [through repentance and baptism]; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; **cease to do evil; learn to do well**; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: **though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword**: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*” (Isa. 1:16-20, KJV).

The Meaning of Water Baptism

After genuine, godly repentance and acceptance of Jesus Christ as one’s personal Savior, the believer must be baptized by complete immersion in water for the remission of his or her sins. Water baptism symbolizes the death and burial of each repentant believer—a spiritual conjoining into the death of Jesus Christ. Through this baptismal death the believer becomes a partaker of the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ, Whose blood is applied as full payment for his or her sins. The believer’s rising up out of the water is symbolic of his or her conjoining with Jesus Christ in the resurrection at His return. When the believer rises out of the watery grave of baptism, he or she rises to newness of life. In order to become a new person, each baptized believer must receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit from God the Father through the laying on of hands. The believer is then led by the Holy Spirit to walk in loving obedience to God the Father and Jesus Christ.

After true, godly repentance and baptism for the forgiveness of sin, the new believer is justified and put in right standing with God the Father through the blood and sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul explained this operation of God’s grace: “*But* are being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus; Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood, in order to demonstrate His righteousness, in respect to the remission of sins that are past....Even *the* righteousness of God *that is* through *the* faith of Jesus Christ, toward all and upon all those who believe; for there is no difference” (Rom. 3:24-25, 22).

Salvation by Grace

Once the believer has been justified by grace, he or she continually stands in a state of grace before God. The apostle Paul makes this clear: “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Whom **we also have access by faith into this grace in which we stand**, and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God. And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations, realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance, and endurance *brings forth* character, and character *brings forth* hope. **And the hope of God never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us**” (Rom. 5:1-5).

Salvation by grace does not confer a license to sin with impunity. Neither Jesus Christ nor the apostles ever taught such a doctrine. Furthermore, there is no such teaching in the entire New Testament. Jesus said, if we love Him, we will keep His commandments: “If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My command-

ments....The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him....If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me" (John 14:15, 21, 23-24).

Paul confirms that salvation by grace is demonstrated in works—not the humanly devised traditions and works of religion but the good works of loving God and keeping His commandments. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this especially is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, so that no one may boast. **For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them**" (Eph. 2:8-10).

When one has received the begetting of the Holy Spirit from God the Father, he or she is to walk in the way of the Lord and to love God the Father and Jesus Christ with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength (Mark 12:29-34). He or she is to keep the commandments of God from the heart in the spirit of the law. Finally, the believer is to grow in grace and knowledge and to be faithful unto death. Then, at the return of Jesus Christ, the believer will be resurrected to eternal life—as a glorified son or daughter of God.

The New Testament Confirms God's Promise of Spiritual Seed to Abraham

When we fully understand the Word of God, it is clear that God, in His covenant with Abraham, promised the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ. God promised, saying, "**He that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir**" (Gen. 15:4, *KJV*). God's promise to give Abraham his own physical seed was fulfilled through the birth of Isaac, who was the forefather of the twelve tribes of Israel. From the tribe of Judah came Jesus Christ, the promised Seed. As the apostle Paul stated, He is the true Heir of the promises that God gave to Abraham: "**Now to Abraham and to his Seed were the promises spoken**. He does not say, 'and to *your* seeds,' as of many; but as of one, 'and to your Seed,' which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16).

Next, God promised Abraham many offspring: "And He brought him forth abroad, and said: **Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them**; and He said unto him: **So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and He counted it to him for righteousness**" (Gen. 15:5-6, *KJV*). This promise does not refer to Abraham's physical descendants but to his spiritual seed, who would receive the gift of eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ. Because the spiritual seed would inherit everlasting glory, God took Abraham out to show him the stars in heaven, rather than the ground beneath his feet. As the stars of heaven are high above the earth, so the promise of eternal life is exceedingly greater than the promise of physical blessings. The blessings that were offered to the physical seed through the Old Covenant were temporary, but the blessings that are offered to the spiritual seed through the New Covenant are eternal.

The apostle Paul understood that the Old Covenant could not bring the spiritual blessings God had promised in His covenant with Abraham. These blessings could only be imparted by Jesus Christ, Who is Abraham's true spiritual Seed and the Heir of the promises: "Now this I say, **that *the* covenant ratified beforehand by God to Christ cannot be annulled by the law** [the requirements of the Old Covenant], which was *given* four hundred and thirty years later [to Israel], so as to make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance *is* by law, *it is* no longer by promise. But God granted *it* to

Abraham by promise. Why then the law? It was placed alongside *the promises* [because a ratified covenant cannot be added to] for the purpose of *defining* transgressions, **until the Seed should come to whom the promise was made**" (Gal. 3:17-19).

Paul made it clear that the Old Covenant with Abraham's physical seed was temporary. When Jesus Christ established the New Covenant, the promise of eternal life through faith superseded and replaced the promise of blessings through the requirements of the Old Covenant. Under the New Covenant, individuals of every nation and race can inherit the promise of eternal life by becoming the children of Abraham through faith: "*It is exactly as it is written: 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness.'*" Because of this, *you should* understand that those who *are* of faith are **the true sons of Abraham**. Now *in* the Scriptures, God, seeing in advance that He would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying*, 'In you shall all the nations be blessed.' *It is* for this reason that those who are of faith are being blessed with the believing Abraham" (Gal. 3:6-9).

The Promise of Eternal Life Through Jesus Christ

The prophet Daniel confirmed the promise of spiritual children who would inherit eternal life and shine like the stars of heaven: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth [are dead in the graves] shall awake [in the resurrection of the righteous], some to everlasting life, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt [in the resurrection of the wicked]. **And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn the many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever**" (Dan. 12:2-3, *KJV*).

Jesus Christ also spoke of the time of the resurrection with similar words: "Therefore, as the tares are gathered and consumed in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this age. The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all the offenders and those who are practicing lawlessness; and they shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. **Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father**" (Matt. 13:40-43).

Jesus Christ was both the Seed of Abraham and the Son of God. In the same way, all those who believe in Him, have the begetting of the Holy Spirit from God the Father, and live by His words are the spiritual seed of Abraham and the children of God. Paul wrote of this truth in his letter to the Galatians: "**Because you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus**. For as many *of you* as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. **And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise**" (Gal. 3:26-29).

Like Jesus, the Firstborn from the dead, those who are the sons of God, the seed of Abraham, will be resurrected from death to immortality. They will inherit eternal life and live as glorified spirit beings in the kingdom of God: "For **as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God**. Now you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but **you have received the Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father.'**" The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God. **Now if we are children, we are also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him**. For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with **the glory that shall be revealed in us**" (Rom. 8:14-18).

God the Father's promise of being resurrected from the dead to eternal life

Chapter One

through Jesus Christ is sure. “And as we have borne the image of the *one* made of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *one*. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. **Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.** For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility, and this mortal must put on immortality. Now when this corruptible shall have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory’ ” (I Cor. 15:49-54).

The apostle John wrote that the transformation of the children of God to eternal glory will take place at Jesus Christ’s Second Coming: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called **the children of God!** For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that **when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is**” (I John 3:1-2). The apostle Paul also wrote: “But for us, the commonwealth of *God* exists in *the* heavens, from where also we are waiting for *the* Savior, *the* Lord Jesus Christ; **Who will transform our vile bodies, that they may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the inner working of His own power, whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself**” (Phil. 3:20-21).

If our vile bodies are to be transformed and conformed to His glorious body, what does Jesus Christ’s glorified body look like? In a special vision, the apostles Peter, James and John all saw Jesus Christ in His glorified form. Matthew gave this account: “Jesus took with *Him* Peter and James and his brother John, and brought them up into a high mountain by themselves. **And He was transfigured before them; and His face shined as the sun, and His garments became white as the light**” (Matt. 17:1-2). Later, when John wrote the book of Revelation, he again saw Jesus in His glorified form: “And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands; and in *the* midst of the seven lampstands *one* like *the* Son of man, clothed in *a garment* reaching to the feet, and girded about the chest with a golden breastplate. And **His head and hair were like white wool, white as snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; and His feet were like fine brass, as if they glowed in a furnace; and His voice was like the sound of many waters.** And in His right hand He had seven stars, and a sharp two-edged sword went out of His mouth, and **His countenance was as the sun shining in its full power**” (Rev. 1:12-16).

When the children of God are glorified, the words of Jesus Christ will be fulfilled: “**Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father**” (Matt. 13:43). Exactly as God promised Abraham, his seed will be an innumerable multitude who will shine like the stars: “And He brought him forth abroad, and said: **Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them;** and He said unto him: **So shall thy seed be**” (Gen. 15:5, KJV).

Now you know what the New Testament is and why it was written. You have a choice before you. Will you repent and believe in the Son of God so that you may receive eternal life? Or will you reject Jesus Christ and His words and receive the judgment of God and eternal death? What will you do? God holds you accountable for your decision—you must choose. If you choose the path that leads to life, then the New Testament and all Scripture becomes your instruction book for eternal life. If you continue on that path until death, then when Jesus Christ returns—at the resurrection—you will be raised with a glorious spiritual body and live forever—into the ages of eternity.

CHAPTER TWO

THE NEW TESTAMENT WAS ORIGINALLY WRITTEN IN GREEK

It is vital to understand that the New Testament was written in Koiné Greek, which was the common spoken and written language for hundreds of years in Palestine and the Roman Empire before the days of Jesus and His apostles. Greek was the universal language of commerce and trade. This is the language that Jesus, the apostles and early New Testament Church used.

Some erroneously teach that the New Testament was originally written in the Hebrew language and was later translated into Greek. Because they have not studied the history of Palestine, they fail to realize that Hebrew had ceased to be spoken by the Jews many centuries before the New Testament era.

Under the Babylonian and Medo-Persian empires, 640-333 BC, Aramaic exerted the greatest influence. The writings of Daniel, who lived and worked during the time of the Chaldean and Persian Empires, show the extensive influence of Syriac and Chaldean, which were dialects of Aramaic. The Persians ruled Palestine from the time of Daniel and Ezra until its invasion by Alexander the Great in 333 BC. From that time, the influence of Aramaic was overshadowed by the influence of Greek. Samuel G. Green, a renowned Biblical scholar, described this significant change as follows:

“... as a direct result of the conquests of Alexander the Great and his successors, the Greek tongue had been carried into almost all the countries of the civilized world, and had become the medium of commercial intercourse, the language of the courts, and, in fact, **the universal literary tongue** of the provinces afterwards absorbed in the Roman Empire. **The natives of Alexandria and of Jerusalem, of Ephesus, and even of Rome, alike adopted it;** everywhere with characteristic modifications, but substantially the same. Hence it had become a necessity to **translate the Old Testament Scriptures into Greek**....This translation, or the Septuagint, naturally became **the basis of all subsequent Jewish Greek literature, and in particular of the New Testament**” (Green, *Handbook to the Grammar of the Greek Testament*, pp. 155-156, emphasis added).

The Influence of Greek in Jewish Literature

As Green stated, the Greek translation of the Old Testament was followed by other Jewish Greek literature. Rabbi B. Z. Wacholder is one of the leading scholars in Jewish Greek literature of the period from Alexander to Christ. Martin Hengel, a Biblical scholar of modern Germany, wrote of Wacholder's opinions of this era:

“Around the middle of the second century BCE [nearly two hundred years before the New Testament was written] the **Jewish Palestinian priest Eupolemus**, son of John, whom Judas [Maccabaeus] had probably sent to Rome with a delegation in 161 BCE, **composed in Greek a Jewish history** with the title ‘About the Kings of Judah’... B.Z. Wacholder, who analyses this work, goes very thoroughly in the last chapter of his book into **further Jewish-Palestinian literature in Greek** and traces it down to Justus of Tiberias and Josephus. In his view, its origin **lies in the priestly aristocracy**, the leading

representatives of which had always also **had a certain degree of Greek education from the second or even third century BCE**" (Hengel, *The "Hellenization" of Judaea in the First Century after Christ*, p. 23, emphasis added).

Greek was the language of Jerusalem in New Testament times—the language not only of the priestly aristocracy but also of business and commerce. Its influence was most noticeable in the city of Jerusalem. Hengel wrote, "The most important centre of the Greek language in Jewish Palestine was of course the capital, Jerusalem. We again have a good deal of epigraphical evidence [evidence from historical inscriptions] to support this" (*Ibid.*, p. 9).

The importance of Greek in Jewish life is evidenced by the fact that the temple had a fully staffed Greek secretariat. Such offices were vital to the diplomatic, commercial and banking interests of the nation. Hengel believed that "an institution like **the temple must have had a well-staffed Greek secretariat for more than two centuries**" (*Ibid.*, p. 17, emphasis added).

It was not difficult to find Greek-speaking Jews to serve as members of the temple secretariat. Many Levitical and priestly families had contact with Greek-speaking areas outside Palestine, and some families lived in these areas. The most aristocratic of the priestly families—the old Zadokite family of the Oniads—lived in Egypt. The high priests that Herod appointed came from this and other Greek-speaking families. Herod's selection of these high priests illustrates the active communication and freedom of movement that was taking place between Palestine and other lands:

"There was a constant and lively interchange with all the centres of the Diaspora [the lands where the Jews were dispersed]. Thus Herod first brought the priest Ananel (Josephus, *Antiquities* 15.22, 34, 39ff., 51) from Babylonia and later the priest Simon, son of Boethus, from Alexandria to Jerusalem, both presumably from the old Zadokite family of the Oniads, in order to appoint them high priests. Boethus could have been a descendant of Onias IV of Leontopolis who fled to Egypt in 164 BCE: that would explain the later status of his family in Jerusalem. The successful Simon, son of Boethus, who married a daughter, Mariam, to Herod, succeeded in founding the richest high priestly family after the clan of Annas and at the same time a particular group among the Sadducees, the Boethusians, who were evidently close to the Herodian rulers" (Hengel, *The "Hellenization" of Judaea in the First Century after Christ*, p. 14).

The high priests who returned to Jerusalem from Alexandria were Greek-speaking. The city of Alexandria, named for Alexander the Great, was renowned as a center of Greek culture and learning. It was the Jews of Alexandria who in earlier times had translated the Hebrew text into Greek for the Septuagint. When the families of the high priests returned to Jerusalem, they continued to speak Greek. As Hengel wrote, these influential upper-class families were not the only Greek-speaking Jews in Jerusalem:

"Be this as it may, we can assume that Greek was spoken among the families of these aristocrats who had returned. It will also be the case that **Greek was no less established among the leading families of Jerusalem than in the scriptoria and the bazaars of the city or at the tables of the money changers in the temple forecourt**" (*Ibid.*, p. 14, emphasis added).

In New Testament times, Greek was spoken not only by the elite of Jerusalem but also by those who copied manuscripts in the scriptoria, by the middle-class businessmen who ran the bazaars, and by the bankers who served as money changers in the temple. The monetary exchange that was centered at the temple and all business transactions in Jerusalem required the speaking of Greek. This was the language of business and commerce in every province of the Roman Empire, including Palestine.

Greek Was Spoken in Galilee in New Testament Times

While Jerusalem was the commercial, cultural and banking center of Palestine, the region of Galilee did not fall far behind. Galilee was perfectly positioned at the crossroads of trade entering and exiting Palestine. The entire region was bustling with commerce, and the language of that trade and commerce was Greek.

Hengel relates that by the time of Christ, the cities of Sepphoris and Tiberias in Galilee had Greek schools of renown. As carpenters, Joseph and Jesus might have worked in Sepphoris, which was only four or five miles from Jesus' home. The Greek-speaking city of Tiberias, center of a thriving fishing industry, was near their home. These two cities of Galilee were both prominent in the Palestine of Jesus' day. As centers of commerce and trade, they depended on merchants and tradesmen who could speak fluent Greek. Their schools ranked among the best.

As Hengel related, the training received in these schools of Galilee was on a par with the great institutions of higher learning in Antioch and Alexandria: "Wacholder believes that the rhetorical training which Justus received in the Tiberias of Herod Antipas and Agrippa II was on a par with the 'cosmopolitan Greek of Antioch or Alexandria,' whereas Jerusalem could not offer Josephus educational possibilities of the same high quality" (Ibid., p. 24).

The historian Josephus, who belonged to one of the leading priestly families of Jerusalem, spoke Greek; but his Greek was far from the quality of the Greek spoken and written by Justus, who had studied Greek at Tiberias. As the following quote relates, the linguistic and rhetorical education of Justus of Tiberias was far superior to that of Josephus of Jerusalem:

"Therefore Josephus stresses at the end of his *Antiquities* that his Jewish education was more perfect than his Greek, and that he still found difficulties in speaking impeccable Greek (*Antt.* 20.262-4)...Presumably he also refers to this deficiency because his rival and opponent Justus of Tiberias had had a better linguistic and rhetorical education....The patriarch Photius of Constantinople (c. 820-886) still praised the stylistic precision and evocative character of Justus' history of the Jewish kings, which extended from Moses to the death of Agrippa II, the last Jewish king" (Ibid., p. 24).

Like Josephus, all members of the priestly families were trained in both Hebrew and Greek. Hebrew continued to be spoken by the priests in the temple and the Scribes in the synagogues for religious events and discussions only. When at home with their families or conducting business in the market, they spoke Greek. The common people, who had long before lost their knowledge of Hebrew, spoke Aramaic in general, but those who dealt in commerce and trade also spoke Greek. According to Hengel, "Judaea, Samaria and Galilee were bilingual (or better, trilingual) areas. While Aramaic was the vernacular of ordinary people, and Hebrew the ... language of religious worship and of scribal discussion, Greek had largely become established as the linguistic medium for trade, commerce and administration" (Ibid., p. 8).

Historical inscriptions attest to the fact that Galilee in the early Christian era was a bilingual society. Hengel states: "In economic terms Galilee was to a large extent dependent on the completely Hellenized Phoenician cities, especially Acco/Ptolemais and Tyre. The great cemetery in Beth-shearim between Nazareth and Haifa, which comes from between the second and fourth centuries CE, contains predominantly Greek inscriptions. Some of those buried there come from the Phoenician metropolises. After the death of R. Jehuda han-Nasi (after 200) the tombs of Beth-shearim took on a more than regional significance, like the Holy City before 70 CE. The marked increase in Greek inscriptions compared to those in Hebrew and Aramaic (218 to 28) is bound up with the

further development of the process of Hellenization in the second to the fourth centuries CE ..." (Ibid., pp. 15-16).

Hengel points out the significance of these inscriptions, which supports the earlier findings of Schlatter and contradicts the opinion of the History of Religions school: "In the meantime we also have two bilingual inscriptions from Judaea and Galilee, quite apart from the large number of testimonies to use of the Greek language. Almost ninety years ago Schlatter had a completely correct view of the linguistic situation, a clearer one than the representatives of the History of Religions school."

"The constant discovery of new inscriptions confirms this picture of a fundamentally multilingual society. Schlatter already drew attention to this situation in his famous study on 'The Language and Homeland of the Fourth Evangelist' (which is in no way taken seriously enough): 'Here too the inscriptions are the decisive authority for assessing the linguistic question (of a bilingual situation, M.H.)' " (Ibid., p. 9).

Evidence That Greek Was Spoken by Jesus and the Apostles

In addition to the above evidence, the scholar Samuel G. Green wrote concerning the language spoken by Jesus and the apostles: "It was in the Greek of the Septuagint thus modified that, in all probability, our Lord and His apostles generally spoke. The dialect of Galilee (Matt. xxvi. 73) was not a corrupt Hebrew, but a provincial Greek" (Green, *Handbook to the Grammar of the Greek Testament*, p. 156).

The Gospel accounts verify that Jesus and His disciples, who were Galileans, spoke the Greek dialect of Galilee and not a corrupted Hebrew; hence Jesus' words to the scribes and Pharisees at the temple: "Therefore, Jesus said to them, 'If God were your Father, you would love Me, because I proceeded forth and came from God. For I have not come of Myself, but He sent Me. **Why don't you understand My speech?** Because you cannot *bear* to hear My words' " (John 8:42-43, emphasis added).

In recording Jesus' words, John shows that the scribes and Pharisees had difficulty understanding His Galilean dialect. John's choice of the Greek word translated "speech" is *λαλια lalia*, which means "dialect." The Pharisees had a problem with the Greek dialect of Jesus and His apostles throughout their ministries. As further evidence of this, Matthew comments that it was Peter's Galilean Greek that gave him away during Jesus' trial:

"Now Peter was sitting outside in the court; and a maid came to him, saying, 'You also were with Jesus the Galilean.' But he denied *it* before everyone, saying, 'I don't know what you are talking about.' And after he went out into the porch, another *maid* saw him and said to those there, 'This man was also with Jesus the Nazarean.' Then again he denied *it* with an oath, *saying*, 'I do not know the man.' After a little *while*, those who were standing by came to Peter and said, 'Truly, you also are one of them, for even **your speech shows that you are**' " (Matt. 26:69-73, emphasis added).

As the Greek in Peter's epistles testifies, he was speaking and writing a better Greek than those at Jerusalem. The Greek they spoke would be the Greek that would carry the gospel message to the world and would be recorded for all time in the New Testament.

The very names of Jesus' apostles are Greek: "Among the twelve disciples of Jesus, two, Andrew and Philip, bear purely Greek names, and in the case of two others the original Greek name has been Aramaized. Thaddaeus (*tadda'j*) is probably a short form of Theodotus (or something similar), and Bartholomew (*Bartholomaios* = *bar-talmaj*) derives from (bar) Ptolemaios. The blind beggar Bartimaeus (Bar-Timaïos) in Jericho, who becomes a follower of Jesus, can also be mentioned in this connection" (Hengel,

The 'Hellenization' of Judaea in the First Century after Christ, p. 16).

Even the areas that Jesus' disciples came from bear witness to their speaking Greek: "The information that Simon Peter, Andrew and Philip came from Bethsaida (John 1.44) could perhaps have historical value, since Herod's son Philip refounded this place soon after his accession as the *polis Julias* (before 2 BCE) in honour of Augustus' daughter Julia, and it was therefore more markedly 'Hellenized' than the surrounding villages....At all events, Simon Peter must have been bilingual, since otherwise he could not have engaged so successfully in missionary work outside Judaea....It is remarkable that Luke does not know of Peter having any problems with language—say in connection with Cornelius" (Ibid., p. 16).

The Followers of Jesus

As we find in historical records and in Scripture, those who responded to the preaching of the gospel were primarily Greek-speaking people. It is logical, therefore, to conclude that Jesus also spoke to them in Greek.

Scripture attests to the fact that many early converts were Greek speaking: "There are many references to what were in all probability bilingual members of the [early Christian] community from the upper and middle classes: mention should be made of Johanna, the wife of Chuza, the *ἐπιτροπος* of Herod Antipas, i.e., his steward; the tax farmers, like the *αρχιτελωνης* Zacchaeus in Jericho; then men like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. The mysterious Manaen (Menachem) in Antioch, whose mother is perhaps mentioned by Papias, the boyhood friend (*συντροφος*) of Herod Antipas, Mary and her son John Mark, the relations of Barnabas, Silas-Silvanus, Barsabbas Justus, who similarly emerges again in Papias, the prophet Agabus and others may similarly belong to this milieu. Their circle is enlarged by Diaspora Jews resident in Jerusalem like Barnabas from Cyprus and Simon of Cyrene with his sons Alexander and Rufus. Simon's sons and his mother were perhaps known later in the Christian community in Rome, and Jason of Cyprus, Paul's host (Acts 21:16), whose mother tongue was already Greek, even if they still understood Aramaic or had relearned it" (Ibid., pp. 17-18).

Early Christians in Jerusalem Spoke Greek

Luke records that some of the earliest members of the church at Jerusalem were Greek-speaking Jews. Hengel's statement concerning the rapid growth of Christianity in this community follows:

"What was decisive for the subsequent course of primitive Christianity, however, was the amazingly rapid and intensive effect of the new message on the Greek-speaking Hellenists in Jerusalem....Here we have that social stratum in Jerusalem the significance of which ... has so far been neglected. The circle of Christians who came from it cannot have been all that small, otherwise their missionary activity in Jerusalem would not have provoked so much of a stir and caused such offense" (Hengel, *The 'Hellenization' of Judaea in the First Century after Christ*, pp. 43-44).

In the book of Acts, Luke gives us insight into this early community of Greek-speaking Jews from which the first evangelists were chosen and from which the gospel spread to all Judea. Luke wrote: "Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a complaint by the Greeks [*KJV* 'Grecians' refers to Greek-speaking Jews] against the Hebrews [Jews whose native tongue was Aramaic], because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. And after calling the multitude of disciples to *them*, the twelve said, 'It is not proper *for* us to leave the Word of God in or-

der to wait on tables. Therefore, brethren, search out from among yourselves seven men of good repute, full of *the* Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word.’ And this declaration was pleasing to all the multitude; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and *the* Holy Spirit; and Philip; and Prochorus; and Nicanor; and Timon; and Parmenas; and Nicolas, *who was* a proselyte of Antioch. And they set them before the apostles; and after praying, they laid *their* hands on them. And the Word of God spread, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem was multiplied exceedingly, and a great multitude of the priests were obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:1-7).

All seven of those chosen in Luke’s account bear Greek names. These Hellenized Jews spoke Greek as their native language as attested to by Hengel, who gives us linguistic evidence: “In contrast to the use of ‘Hellenizing’ and ‘Hellenism’ stamped by culture and intellectual history which is customary among theologians, and which ultimately goes back to Droysen, in antiquity the verb *ελληνίζειν* and the rare noun *Ελληνισμός* referred almost exclusively to language. Only rarely did these words have a comprehensive meaning relating to culture and civilization—with one significant exception to which we shall have to return—and there is evidence of this only in the post-Christian period. In Christian literature from the third-fourth century CE the term *Ελλην* and the other terms associated with it then generally came to mean ‘pagan.’ Before that, both terms primarily and in the first instance denoted an impeccable command of the Greek language. This also gives us a fairly clear criterion for distinction in this investigation: ‘Hellenistic’ Jews and Jewish Christians are (in the real, original meaning of the word) those whose mother tongue was Greek, in contrast to the Jews in Palestine and in the Babylonian Diaspora who originally spoke Aramaic. It is in this way, in terms of mother tongue, that Luke understands the distinction between *Ελληνισταί* and *Εβραίοι* in Acts 6.1 (cf. 9.29). The mother- (or main) language of the *Ελληνισταί* is Greek and that of the *Εβραίοι* Aramaic. However, we meet these two groups in Jerusalem itself, in the Jewish metropolis of the Holy Land—and that goes against the usual dividing line. It is too easily forgotten that in the time of Jesus, Greek had already been established as a language for more than three hundred years and already had a long and varied history behind it. As early as the third century [BC] in different parts of Palestine, we have a whole series of testimonies to Greek as a language, and they are slowly but steadily continuing to increase in number. The Greek language had already long been accepted not only in the former Philistine or Phoenician areas on the coast and (in the third century BCE) in the ‘Graeco-Macedonian’ cities in the interior, but also (though not so intensively) in areas settled by Jews and Samaritans” (Hengel, *The ‘Hellenization’ of Judaea in the First Century after Christ*, pp. 7-8).

Hengel believes that because Greek was spoken almost exclusively among this group of Hellenist Jews in Jerusalem, Jesus and His apostles must have evangelized them in Greek:

“During the lifetime of Jesus, the message of Jesus also reached Diaspora Jews in Jerusalem who almost only spoke Greek or spoke it exclusively; it was from among them that that group of Hellenists was recruited which separated because of its worship in Greek and as a special group in the community became significant in Jerusalem with such amazing rapidity. John 12.20f. could be a later reflection of this transition. Perhaps John 4.38 is a reference to their mission in Samaria (Acts 8.4ff.). At all events it is probable that the rendering of parts of the Jesus tradition into Greek and the development of a distinctive theological terminology with terms like: *αποστολος*, *εὐαγγελιον*, *εκκλησια*, *χαρις*, *χαρισμα*, *ο υιος του ανθρωπου*, etc., must have begun very early, possibly as an immediate consequence of the activity of Jesus, which also at-

tracted Diaspora Jews, in Jerusalem, and not, say, decades later outside Palestine in Antioch or elsewhere. In other words, **the roots of the ‘Jewish-Christian/Hellenistic’ or more precisely Greek-speaking Jewish Christian community in which the message of Jesus was formulated in Greek for the first time clearly extend back to the very earliest community in Jerusalem**, and accordingly the first linguistic development of its kerygma [preaching of the gospel] and its Christology [the study of Christ] must have already taken place there” (Ibid., p. 18, emphasis added).

The seven who were chosen to represent the Hellenist Jews in the Jerusalem church became evangelists who preached to Hellenist Jews in other parts of Judea. Hengel describes the Greek-speaking cities in which these men evangelized: “However, the significance of language was not just limited to Jerusalem. Thus a substantial Jewish population lived in the Hellenized cities of the coastal plain from Gaza to Dor or Ptolemais-Acco: in Caesarea they made up almost half the population, and in Jamnia certainly and Ashdod probably they outnumbered the Hellenized Gentile population. Philip, who came from the group around Stephen, may have preached primarily in Greek in the coastal plain and particularly in Caesarea. That Greek was the principal language in these cities is again confirmed by Jewish epitaphs and synagogue inscriptions” (Ibid., p. 14).

It is evident that Paul, whom God selected to preach to the Gentiles, also spoke Greek. Luke recorded that shortly after Saul’s conversion, he became involved in a dispute with the Greek-speaking Jews of Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-31). In his epistle to the Philippians, Paul described himself as a “Hebrew of Hebrews” (Phil. 3:5). Paul had been trained at the feet of Gamaliel, the leading rabbi of that period in Jewish history, and Paul was fully capable of speaking Hebrew to the Pharisaic Jews of Jerusalem (Acts 21:40). However, Paul did not customarily speak Hebrew. He was equally knowledgeable in the Greek language, as the same passage in the book of Acts shows (Acts 21:37-39). Paul could not have preached throughout Asia without this ability to speak Greek. Thus the records of the New Testament demonstrate that the preaching of the gospel was carried out almost exclusively in Greek.

The Gospel Was Recorded in Greek

The books of the New Testament were written between 26 and 96 AD, a period of almost seventy years. As internal evidence reveals, Jesus’ disciples recorded His message and began to circulate these writings throughout Palestine and the Empire at a very early date. These documents were later collected into the Gospel accounts—Matthew’s account may have appeared as early as 35 AD; Mark wrote his account shortly after, in 42 AD, and Luke wrote his account around 59 AD. The Gospel of John also was written about 42 AD.

In 50 AD Paul wrote the first of his epistles that would appear in Scripture. The rest of Paul’s epistles were written between 51 and 67 AD. The epistle of James was written around 40-41 AD. The epistles of Peter were written between 63 and 66 AD. Jude was written sometime around 67 AD. The letters of I, II and III John were written about 63-64 AD. The book of Hebrews was written from Rome about 61 AD. Thus the basic canon of the New Testament was completed by the time the Jewish Wars began—that is, about 66 AD. The book of Revelation, the final book of the New Testament, was written by the aged apostle John about 95-96 AD.

The early New Testament text was copied and preserved by the brethren in Asia Minor. It was this text that was generally adopted by Christians in the 4th century as the text of the New Testament. From that time forward, it has been known as the Byzantine

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text. The Byzantine text, of which the King James Version is a translation, is the most authoritative Greek text of the New Testament. Its role as the leading Greek text dates back to the beginning of the Byzantine period, for which the text is named: "The Byzantine text is found in the vast majority of the Greek New Testament manuscripts. It is called *Byzantine* because it was the Greek New Testament text in general use throughout the greater part of the Byzantine Period (312-1453). For many centuries before the Protestant Reformation this Byzantine text was the text of the entire Greek Church, and for more than three centuries after the Reformation it was the text of the entire Protestant Church. Even today it is the text which most Protestants know best, since the King James Version and other early Protestant translations were made from it" (Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, p. 40).

As Hills explains, the authenticity of the Byzantine text is supported by a history dating back to the apostolic era: "This general trend in the Greek Church toward the Byzantine (true) text first evidenced itself in Antioch and Asia Minor....It is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that this text had been preserved in these regions from apostolic times. Before the middle of the fourth century its circulation in this area was probably confined to the humbler believers, the more scholarly Christians (the leaders) being inclined toward the text of Alexandria, that great center of Christian scholarship, or toward the Western text, which was in vogue at Rome. But after the triumph of orthodoxy in Antioch and Asia Minor during the latter half of the fourth century, this popular text came more and more into its own. Orthodox scholars, such as Diodorus and Chrysostom, came more and more to appreciate its orthodox character and to adopt it. Soon its victory was complete, and it became the New Testament text of the whole Greek Church, of the Protestant Reformation, and of our familiar King James Version" (Ibid., p. 56).

Descriptions of the Original Manuscripts of the New Testament

Some claim that the New Testament was originally written in Hebrew and then translated into Greek. However, the records of early church history do not support this assertion. Tatian, Papias, Tertullian and Irenaeus, to name but a few writers of the early church, describe the original writings and quote from them. Yet not a single quote is taken from a Hebrew text—all are taken from Greek texts. Although Papias asserts that Matthew compiled his early reports in Hebrew, no evidence is given.

Early translations of the New Testament are all based on Greek texts. *The Harmony of Tatian*, translated in 170 AD, is based on a Greek original, as is *The Muratorian Canon*. The Old Latin version translated in 180 AD is based on a Greek original. Early Gothic, Egyptian, Ethiopian, Armenian and Palestinian versions are all based on Greek originals. Even the Aramaic versions of the New Testament are translations from the Greek (see *The Books and the Parchments*, by F. F. Bruce, p. 189). No evidence of a Hebrew original has been found in all the centuries that have followed the writing of the New Testament.

Internal Evidence in the New Testament

If the New Testament was originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic, there would have been no need for the apostles to interpret the meaning of Hebrew and Aramaic words for their readers. However, the Gospel accounts contain many such interpretations. Consider the following passage in the Gospel of John:

"On the next day, John [the Baptist] was again standing *there*, and two of his dis-

ciples *with him*. And as he gazed upon Jesus walking, he said, ‘Behold the Lamb of God!’ And the two disciples heard him say *this*, and they followed Jesus. Now when Jesus turned and saw them following, He said to them, ‘What are you seeking?’ And they said to Him, ‘**Rabbi**, [Greek Παββι *Rabbi*, meaning “my teacher”]’ (which is to say, being interpreted, Teacher [Greek Διδασκαλε *didaskale*]), ‘where do You dwell?’ He said to them, ‘Come and see.’ They went and saw where He was dwelling, and remained with Him that day. Now it was about *the* tenth hour. Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard *this* from John and followed Him. First, he found his own brother Simon and said to him, ‘We have found the **Messiah**, [Greek Μεσσιαν *Messiah* meaning “the Anointed”] (which is, being interpreted, ‘**the Christ**’) [Greek ο χριστος *Christos*]. And he led him to Jesus. And when He saw him, Jesus said, ‘You are Simon the son of Jona. You shall be called **Cephas**’ [Greek Κηφας *Cephas*], (which is, *being* interpreted, ‘a **stone**’ [Greek Πετρος *Petros*])” (John 1:35-42).

The words “Rabbi” and “Messiah” are Hebrew. The word “Cephas” is Aramaic. If John had written his Gospel in Hebrew or Aramaic, these words would not have required translation for Greek-speaking readers.

“Rabbi” is a transliteration of the Greek Παββι, which is a transliteration of the Hebrew רַבִּי and literally means “Lord” or “Master.” The Greek Διδασκαλε *didaskale* is a paraphrase of the Greek Παββι. John interprets this term for the sake of his Greek readers who were not familiar with the Hebrew Rabbi, and therefore would not have understood the Greek transliteration Παββι.

“Messiah” is a transliteration of the Greek Μεσσιαν *Messian* which is a Hellenized transliteration of the Hebrew מְשִׁיחַ *Meshiach*. The Hellenized Jews, to whom John was writing, were not acquainted with this Hebrew term. Thus John translated it into the Greek word *Christos*, which means “the Anointed One.” If John had written in Hebrew to a Hebrew-speaking people, it would make no sense to translate into Greek.

“Cephas” is an Aramaic word meaning “little stone” or “pebble.” John felt it necessary to translate this word for the Hellenized Jews, who were no more familiar with Aramaic than with Hebrew.

Other examples of the translation of Hebrew terms can be found in John’s Gospel: “Now *as Jesus was* passing by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; rather, *this blindness came* so that the works of God might be manifested in him. I must work the works of Him Who sent Me while it is still day. When *the* night comes, no one is able to work. As long as I am in the world, I am *the* light of the world.’ After saying these things, He spat on *the* ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to the eyes of the blind man. And He said to him, ‘Go *and* wash in the pool of **Siloam**’ (which is, by interpretation, “Sent”). Then he went and washed, and came *from there* seeing” (John 9:1-7).

The name “Siloam” is a transliteration of the Greek Σιλωαμ, which is a transliteration of the Hebrew הַשִּׁלּוֹחַ. Again, it is evident that the apostle John was writing to a Greek-speaking audience that did not understand the meaning of this Hebrew term.

Evidence in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke

Evidence found in Matthew 11 shows that Matthew not only wrote in Greek but wrote at the time of Jesus’ ministry from 26 to 30 AD. The events that are recorded in Mathew 11 are also recounted in Luke. These accounts add to the evidence that the Gospels of Matthew and Luke were written early in the first century, and they were written

in Greek: “And as they were leaving, Jesus said to the multitudes concerning John, ‘What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by *the* wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Behold, those who wear soft *clothing* are in kings’ houses. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and *one* more excellent than a prophet. For this is *he* of whom it is written, “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who shall prepare Your way before You.” Truly I say to you, there has not arisen among *those* born of women *anyone* greater than John the Baptist. But the one who *is* least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. For from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven is taken with a *great* struggle, and *the* zealous *ones* lay hold on it. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to receive *it*, he is Elijah who was to come. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear. But to what shall I compare this generation? It is exactly like little children sitting in *the* markets and calling to their companions, and saying, “We have piped to you, and you did not dance; we have mourned to you, and you did not wail.” For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon.’ The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Behold, a man who is a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’ But wisdom is justified by her children” (Matt. 11:7-19).

Hengel points out the profound importance of this passage in dating the Gospel of Matthew: “With exemplary method Gerd Theissen has been able to interpret Matthew 11.7f/Luke 7.25f. as specific polemic against Antipas and as support for the circle of John the Baptist by using coins minted at the foundation of Tiberias and the reed depicted on them. From his interpretation of this logion in terms of contemporary history it becomes clear how in all probability we can identify an authentic saying of Jesus here. As Antipas was banished to Gaul as early as 38 CE, this saying with its unique parallelism between a ‘reed moved by the wind’ and ‘a man in soft raiment’, ‘gorgeously apparelled and living in luxury in kings’ courts’, certainly cannot be a late ‘community construction’. **It would only be comprehensible to the immediate contemporaries of Jesus and John the Baptist**, but nevertheless has been handed down relatively unchanged. The derogatory designation of Antipas as an ever-adaptable ‘reed’ also matches the title ‘fox’ given to him in Luke 13.32” (Hengel, *The ‘Hellenization’ of Judaea in the First Century after Christ*, pp. 42-43).

Matthew’s and Luke’s use of terms known to the Greek-speaking community of Jesus’ day contradicts the claim that their Gospels were not written until later generations and verifies that they wrote in Greek to an audience that understood Greek. From the beginning of Mathew’s Gospel, it is evident that he was not writing to a Hebrew-speaking people. The following passage from Matthew illustrates this: “And the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: Now His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph; *but* before they came together, she was found to be with child of *the* Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous *man*, and not willing to expose her publicly, was planning to divorce her secretly. But as he pondered these things, behold, an angel of *the* Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary to *be* your wife, because that which has been begotten in her is of *the* Holy Spirit. And she shall give birth to a son, and you shall call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins.’ Now all this came to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, ‘Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall give birth to a son, and they shall call His name “Emmanuel”’; which is, being interpreted, ‘God with us’ ” (Matt. 1:18-23).

The name “Emmanuel” is a transliteration of the Greek Εμμανουηλ, which is a transliteration of the Hebrew אֱמָנוּאֵל. The fact that Matthew had to interpret the meaning of this Hebrew name illustrates that he was writing in Greek to a Greek-

speaking audience. Further evidence that Matthew wrote in Greek to a people who spoke Greek, and not in Hebrew, is furnished by two grammatical structures unique to the Greek: the articular infinitive and the genitive absolute. Neither of these grammatical structures has a comparable structure in Hebrew.

The Articular Infinitive in the Gospel of Matthew

Matthew's use of the articular infinitive offers absolute evidence that his Gospel was written in Greek. In English, the word "to" is always used with the infinitive form of the verb, as in "to be," "to come," and "to speak." The Greek infinitive is similar to the English infinitive unless it is preceded by the definite article "the." When the definite article "the" is used, the infinitive is known as an **articular infinitive**. In New Testament Greek, when the articular infinitive is combined with a preposition, it limits the infinitive to a specific time period. Dana and Mantey stated the following: "Nothing distinguishes the noun force of the infinitive more than its use with the [definite] article....**This item is one of the proofs of the general good quality of New Testament Greek**" (*A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, p. 211).

Matthew's precise and well written Greek is illustrated by his use of the articular infinitive with the Greek preposition *en*: "Now in that same day, Jesus departed from the house and sat down by the sea. And so great a multitude gathered around Him that He went into a ship and sat down, and all the multitude stood on the shore. And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, 'Behold, the sower went out to sow. And **as he was sowing**, some of the seed fell by the way; and the birds came and devoured them. And some fell upon the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up **because the soil was not deep enough**; but after the sun rose, they were scorched; and because they did not have roots, they dried up. And some of the seed fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. And some fell upon the good ground, and yielded fruit—some a hundredfold, and some sixtyfold, and some thirtyfold. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.' And His disciples came to Him and asked, 'Why do You speak to them in parables?' And He answered and said to them, 'Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has *understanding*, to him more shall be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have *understanding*, even what he has shall be taken away from him. For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand' " (Matt. 13:1-13).

The phrase "**as he was sowing**" contains an articular infinitive. This expression in the Greek is *καὶ ἐν τῷ σπείρειν*. When the articular infinitive is used with the preposition *ἐν en*, the definite article is dative, which means that the time at which something occurs is being expressed. Thus George Ricker Berry in his Greek Interlinear translates it "And as he sowed."

Another illustration of the precision and high level of Matthew's Greek is found in the very next verse, Matthew 13:5. Matthew now uses the articular infinitive with the preposition *δια*, however. Verse 5 reads, "and immediately they sprang up **because the soil was not deep enough**; but after the sun rose, they were scorched; and because they did not have roots, they dried up."

The expression "**because the soil was not deep enough**" also contains an articular infinitive. The Greek is *διὰ τὸ μὴ εἶναι βάθος γῆς* which begins with *διὰ dia*. When an infinitive is used with the preposition *διὰ dia*, the definite article is accusative with cause; i.e., "for" or "because of." Thus Berry translates this phrase "**because of not having depth of earth**."

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More examples of Matthew's use of the articular infinitive could be given. These examples, however, are sufficient to demonstrate his mastery of literary Greek. His usage of the articular infinitive illustrates the fact that Matthew not only grew up speaking Greek but that he also had formal training in Greek rhetoric.

Matthew's Use of the Genitive Absolute

The Greek genitive case primarily signifies motion from a person, place or thing. The genitive absolute is a genitive noun that occurs in a subordinate sentence without immediate dependence on any other words; i.e., it occurs absolutely. As Green stated, "The noun, in these cases, is to be translated first, without a preposition, then the participle. In idiomatic English, a conjunction must often be supplied, either temporal (*when*), causal (*since*), or concessive (*although*). It will be observed that the genitive in this construction must refer to some other than the subject of the principal sentence. Equivalent idioms are in English the nominative absolute, in Latin the ablative absolute....The genitive absolute, says Dr. Donaldson, is originally causal, in conformity with the primary notion of the case. Hence arise, by way of analogy, its other uses as denoting accessories of time, manner, or circumstance. The tense of the participle greatly determines the force of the phrase" (*Handbook to the Grammar of the Greek Testament*, pp. 221-222). Green amplified the importance of the participle in genitive absolute constructions. He wrote, "When a participle has a subject of its own in a separate clause, the construction is the genitive absolute" (*Ibid.*, p. 330).

Three examples of the genitive absolute used by Matthew as translated by Green follow:

Matt. 1:18	μνηστευθεισης ... Μαρίας, <i>Mary having been betrothed</i>
Matt. 1:20	ταυτα δε αυτου ενθυμηθεντος, <i>and he having reflected on these things,</i> i.e., when he reflected
Matt. 2:1	του Ιησου γεννηθεντος, <i>Jesus having been born,</i> i.e., when Jesus was born

The first example of a genitive absolute is found in Matthew 1:18. The Greek phrase is μνηστευθεισης γαρ της μητρος αυτου Μαρίας. Green translated this genitive absolute beginning with the noun "Mary" (without a preposition), followed immediately by the participial phrase "having been" and then the verb "betrothed": "*Mary having been betrothed.*"

The genitive absolute in Matthew 1:20 is the Greek phrase ταυτα δε αυτου ενθυμηθεντος, which Berry translated literally, "And these things when he had pondered." Green translated this genitive absolute beginning with the temporal conjunction "when," followed immediately by the personal pronoun "he," and then the verb "reflected": "*when he reflected.*"

The third use of the genitive absolute is found in Matthew 2:1: "Now when **Jesus was born** in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem." The Greek genitive absolute translated "Jesus was born" is του Ιησου γεννηθεντος.

Greek and the Seven Evangelists

Within the text of Acts 6:1-7, it is quite evident that Greek was the mother tongue of the original seven evangelists who spread the gospel far and wide. As Hengel pointed out, their names support this conclusion. The cities in which these men evangelized were Greek-speaking communities. Hengel wrote, "Mention should of course be made here of the 'Seven' as the spokesmen of the Hellenist community (Acts 6.5), who all have Greek names, and naturally—above all others as far as his effect on the Christian church and world history is concerned—of Sha'ul/Paul, who studied the Torah in Jerusalem and persecuted the community of Christian 'Hellenists' " (Hengel, *The 'Hellenization' of Judaea in the First Century after Christ*, p. 18).

Furthermore, shortly after Saul's conversion, he became involved in a dispute with the Grecians of Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-31). The word Grecians in this passage does not refer to Gentile Greeks but to Greek-speaking Jews. Here is Scriptural evidence that Paul used the Greek language, not Hebrew.

There is no question that Paul spoke Greek, and all of his epistles were written in Greek. Hebrew was not the language of Palestine during the days of Jesus' ministry; neither was it the language of the apostles. Therefore, it can be concluded that Jesus and all of the apostles spoke Greek, and the entire New Testament was originally written in Koine Greek. God inspired men to preserve the New Testament in Koine Greek. This text, as noted earlier in this chapter, is commonly known today as the Byzantine Text. This knowledge of *what* language the New Testament was written will lead us into *who* wrote it in the following chapter.

Later Aramaic and Hebrew Translations of Gospel of Matthew From the Original Greek: According to Johannes Weiss, the late professor of theology at the University of Heidelberg, "Among the Jewish Christians of Beroea in Coele-Syria ... who as a separate community under the earliest name of the Christians (Nazarenes) existed as late as the second half of the third century [late 200s AD], there arose after 150 [AD] a targumistic translation of the Gospel of Matthew in the Aramaic (Syriac) language and in Hebrew characters, the Gospel of the Nazarenes....[It] remained for a century and a half completely concealed from the view of [most] ecclesiastical writers, until in one exemplar it came into the hands of Eusebius of Caesarea and by him was immediately received and used as the original Hebrew Matthew of tradition, long believed lost" (Weiss, *The History of Primitive Christianity*, pp. 669-670, quoting Schmidtke, "Neue Fragmente und Untersuchungen zu den judenchristlichen Evangelien," *Texte und Untersuchungen*). This revised gospel was mistakenly considered by many to be the original due to Eusebius' influence. In addition, the Jewish Christians of Transjordan (Ebionites) used an excised Hebrew version of Matthew's Gospel (with readings from Luke's Gospel inserted), which "lacked not only a genealogy but an infancy narrative" among other segments (Ibid., pp. 736-737).

CHAPTER THREE

WHO WROTE THE NEW TESTAMENT?

The answer to this question is fundamental to the authenticity and authority of the New Testament as the inspired Word of God. Some scholars and theologians believe that the New Testament is merely a collection of religious myths written decades after the deaths of those who were traditionally held to have written them. However, when one examines the New Testament, one discovers substantial evidence that those who wrote it were the original disciples of Jesus Christ and eyewitnesses of His ministry, and that what they wrote is the true, inspired Word of God.

Part One: The Compilation and Writing of the Gospels and the Book of Acts

No one today who seeks to know the authorship of the Gospels can ignore the popular theories of scholars who believe that the accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were written by third- or fourth-generation storytellers and are pure folklore and myth. Robert W. Funk and the scholars in the “Jesus Seminar” in Santa Rosa, California, are perhaps the most extreme of this group in their rejection of the Gospels—and the rest of the New Testament—as the divine Word of God. They theorize that nearly all the stories about Jesus Christ contained in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are purely folklore. Their theory of the compilation of the Gospels follows:

“In the absence of hard information, scholars theorize that the New Testament gospels were composed during the last quarter of the first century by third-generation authors on the basis of folk memories preserved in stories that had circulated by word of mouth for decades. The oral stories the four evangelists recorded had been shaped, reshaped, augmented, and edited by numerous storytellers for a half century or more before achieving their final written forms” (Robert W. Funk and the Jesus Seminar, *The Acts of Jesus*, p. 2).

“The followers of Jesus no doubt began to repeat his witticisms and parables during his lifetime. They soon began to recount stories about him, perhaps about his encounters with critics or about his amazing way with the sick and demon-possessed. As time went by, the words were gathered into compounds and clusters suggested by common themes or by catchwords to make them easier to remember and quote. His parables were retold and adapted to new audiences with each performance. The stories were likewise repeated by individual storytellers, who retold them in their own words, sometimes adding or omitting details as imagination or memory dictated” (Ibid., p. 2).

“Since much of the lore about Jesus was created and transmitted by word of mouth for a few decades before it was written down, it is folklore....In the manufacture and maintenance of folklore, memory does not function like a videotape. It is not possible to rewind and replay one’s memories. On the contrary, memories are constantly edited, deleted, augmented, and combined with other memories as persons call them to mind. And when one adds the element of fear, or paranoia, or conviction, or nostalgia,

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those memories can become more vivid and powerful than everyday life” (Ibid., pp. 5-6).

“Scholars of the gospels are faced with a similar problem: Much of the lore recorded in the gospels and elsewhere in the Bible is folklore, which means that it is wrapped in memories that have been edited, deleted, augmented, and combined many times over many years” (Ibid., p. 6).

“There are at least five conditions that might have prompted them to employ their imaginations. They might have created stories to fulfill a prophecy or to match scriptural language. They might have invented stories to assist in marketing the messiah to the larger world. They might have made up tales to give expression to their own convictions about who Jesus was and what he did and said. They might have imagined scenes to justify practices adopted by themselves or their communities. And they might have put into a fictive story form claims that they were making on their own behalf or on the behalf of their leaders” (Ibid., pp. 6-7).

“At the time the first written gospel was being produced, this shaping process was not, and could not be, corrected by additional evidence supplied, for example, by written documents (there were very few during the first couple of decades) or by recourse to the memories of eyewitnesses (they were no longer on the scene). That is the reason later gospel writers are dependent on earlier documents for their information” (Ibid., p. 4).

As a result of their assumptions, Funk and his colleagues have concluded that the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are pure folklore—not the inspired word of God. In their words, **“The gospels are now assumed to be narratives in which the memory of Jesus is embellished by the mythic elements that express the church’s faith in him, and by plausible fictions that enhance the telling of the gospel story for first-century listeners** who knew about divine men and miracle workers first-hand” (Robert W. Funk, Roy Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels*, pp. 4-5, emphasis added). They believe that the Gospels were not written by Matthew, Mark, Luke or John, but by others, long after the original apostles and other eyewitnesses had died.

Contrary to these scholars’ theories and opinions, compilation of the Gospels began early—within one year after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ—not decades later.

Isaiah Prophesied That the Disciples of Jesus Christ Would Write the New Testament

Isaiah’s prophecy foretells and also directs the specially chosen disciples of Jesus Christ to write what would become the New Testament: **“Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples”** (Isa. 8:16, *KJV*). This prophecy clearly reveals that God did not leave the writing of the most important book in the world to those who were not disciples of Jesus Christ or eyewitnesses of His ministry. When Isaiah was given this prophecy, God commanded him not to walk in the way of the people—a significant command not only for Isaiah’s time but also for that of Jesus Christ and His apostles. Just as God commanded Isaiah not to join the confederacy of the people, neither was Jesus to align Himself with the religious leaders of His time. Likewise, the disciples of Jesus Christ were not to join any ecumenical confederacy of religions of this world—neither then nor now! Isaiah was inspired to write: “For the LORD spake thus to me with a strong hand, and **instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people**, saying, ‘Say ye not, A confederacy,’ to all *them* to whom this people shall say, ‘A confederacy’; **neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid**” (Isa. 8:11-12, *KJV*).

As Isaiah continues, we find commands for the disciples of Jesus Christ, who

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were instructed to sanctify God and fear Him rather than men: “Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and *let him be* your fear, and *let him be* your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary.” Next, Isaiah prophesies that for those who refuse to listen to, or reject, Jesus Christ, He would be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence: “But [He, Jesus Christ would be] **for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken**” (Isa. 8:13-15, *KJV*).

The apostle Paul quoted this prophecy to explain why Israel rejected Jesus Christ. Just as Isaiah had prophesied, Israel stumbled at Christ, who was that Rock (1 Cor. 10:4). He became to them a rock of offense and a stone of stumbling. In Paul’s words: “But Israel, although they followed after a law of righteousness, did not attain to a law of righteousness. Why? Because *they did not seek it* by faith, but by works of law; for they stumbled at the Stone of stumbling, exactly as it is written: ‘Behold, I place in Sion a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offence, but everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed’ ” (Rom. 9:31-33).

Dr. Ernest L. Martin, noted Biblical scholar, commented on the meaning of the prophecy of Isaiah 8:16: “Christ did not mean that he would personally add to the Law and the Prophets by composing books of his own. A reading of the Old Testament revealed to the apostles that it was *they* who were to be responsible for writing and selecting the documents which would comprise the New Testament” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, p. 297).

Martin comments on the meaning of two key words in Isaiah 8:16: “What do the words ‘bind’ and ‘seal’ signify? The Hebrew for the word ‘bind’ means ‘to close.’ The word ‘seal’ means practically the same—‘to cap off, to enclose.’ This is exactly what the apostles did with the message which the ‘Stone’ and ‘Rock’ gave them. They were to complete it. Bind it up. Close it shut. The authority to perform such an important job may have been reflected in Christ’s teaching that the apostles had the power ‘to bind on earth’ (Matthew 16:19). The word ‘to bind’ had the significance of authorization of giving judgment, just as the word ‘to unbind’ means ‘not to receive or not accept’. Recall again the intention of Matthew 5:17: ‘I am not come *to unbind* the Law or the Prophets.’ Christ did not wish to undo the Old Testament, but his disciples were commissioned ‘to add to’ and ‘to complete’ the Bible. In a word, the apostles felt that they had authority, even from the Old Testament, to bind, seal, authorize and canonize the Law and Testimony of Christ. This meant to put the teachings of Christ in a book, just like the Old Testament was given to the early Jews” (Ibid., pp. 298-299).

Isaiah concludes his prophecy by showing that Jesus Christ and His apostles and His disciples would form the New Testament Church: “Behold, I [Jesus Christ] and the children [the disciples and apostles] whom the LORD hath given me *are* for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion” (Isa. 8:18, *KJV*). Therefore, the apostles and disciples of Jesus Christ, who were eyewitnesses of His life and ministry, were the ones who wrote the New Testament. They were to “bind up the testimony” and “seal the law”—they were to complete the testimony and teach the true spiritual meaning of the law. This task would not have been left to others, living 100 to 150 years later, who never knew or met Jesus in the flesh.

The Importance of Faithful Eyewitnesses

From the commands of God in the Bible we know that God lays stress on the duty of witnesses to be truthful. In fact, the Ninth Commandment reads: “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour” (Ex. 20:16, *KJV*). Nevertheless, because hu-

man testimony is sometimes fallible, when there was a criminal case that came before the judges of Israel, God commanded that only by the mouth of two or three witnesses should a man be put to death—never on the testimony of one person: “At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; *but* at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death [by stoning], and afterward the hands of all the people. So thou shalt put the evil away from among you” (Deut. 17:6-7, *KJV*). Again, “One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established” (Deut. 19:15, *KJV*).

Because God is righteous and true, He will not tolerate false witnesses. God commanded that those who acted as false witnesses would suffer the same judgment that they desired to inflict upon the accused. God’s commands are very specific: “If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him *that which is* wrong; then both the men, between whom the controversy *is*, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days; and the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, ***if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you.*** And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you” (Deut. 19:16-20, *KJV*).

It is self-evident that truth is established by true and faithful witnesses. Jesus Christ specifically chose those who would bear true witness of His teachings and ministry. Therefore, we can have full assurance that those who wrote the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament wrote the truth and nothing less: “**A faithful witness will not lie:** but a false witness will utter lies” (Prov. 14:5, *KJV*). And again, “**A true witness delivereth souls:** but a deceitful *witness* speaketh lies” (Prov. 14:25, *KJV*).

The whole purpose of Jesus Christ’s life and ministry was to testify of the truth of God, to reveal God the Father and bring the way of salvation to mankind. Since Jesus Christ is “the way, the truth and the life,” He was and is a true witness of God the Father as aforementioned, “**A true witness delivereth souls.**” Recall what Jesus told the Jews and religious leaders of Judaism: “If I bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true [God the Father did not use only one witness]. **There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the testimony that he witnesses concerning Me is true. You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth.** Now I do not receive witness from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light. **But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works that the Father gave Me to complete, the very works that I am doing, themselves bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me**” (John 5:31-36). There is no question that the witness of John the Baptist was true. More importantly, Jesus’ witness and testimony are true, because as God manifested in the flesh He would always speak the truth.

The Greek word for a witness is *μαρτυρος marturos*, which “... signifies one that gives testimony to the truth at the expense of his life” (*Gruden’s Complete Concordance*, 1986, p. 754). Jesus was the ultimate Witness. He died not only for the sins of the world but for the truth of God as well. In the beginning of the book of Revelation, the apostle John wrote of Jesus as “the faithful Witness” (see Rev. 1:4-5).

Jesus Christ, the faithful and true Witness, commanded His disciples in turn to preach the gospel to all nations as His witnesses. “And [Jesus] said to them, ‘According as it is written, it was necessary for the Christ to suffer, and to rise from *the* dead the third day. And in His name, repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all

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nations, beginning at Jerusalem. **For you are witnesses of these things'** " (Luke 24:46-48).

The Gospels: Eyewitness Testimonies

As we begin to understand how the Gospels were compiled and written, we must bear in mind that the process of their writing was much different from the writing of the epistles (letters from the apostles James, Peter, John, Jude and Paul, addressed to the body of believers). They are not a detailed history of events covering many years, as are the Gospels and the book of Acts. The Epistles were generally composed by one person or dictated to a scribe over a short period of time, with perhaps several edits and rewrites before the final version was sent out. The Gospels and Acts are different because they contain material from many sources and persons that was collected over a number of years and then put into final form.

As we examine the four Gospels and the book of Acts for evidence of how the Gospels were written and compiled, we learn that the Gospel accounts of the life of Jesus Christ were written by direct eyewitnesses—Jesus' disciples—during His ministry, with the exception of Luke, who used the eyewitness accounts of many disciples. The twelve disciples who were called and ordained by Jesus as apostles were the primary eyewitnesses, and we can accept their writings and testimonies as the truth. In addition, there were many other eyewitnesses who authenticated the disciples' testimonies. The scriptural evidence confirms that the accounts of Jesus' life and ministry were compiled and written long before the eyewitness writers died. Contrary to the theories of some scholars, some of the accounts that later became part of the Gospels arguably were written very early—at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, in 26 AD.

The Twelve Apostles

The word *apostle* means "one sent bearing authority." The apostles were personally commissioned by Jesus Christ to bear His authority and were sent in His name to preach the gospel in all the world. Jesus Christ called the twelve apostles when He began His ministry in Galilee. The first ones to accept the call to follow Him were Simon Peter and his brother Andrew, then James and John, the sons of Zebedee (Matt. 4:18-21). Next Jesus called Matthew, the son of Alphaeus, a Levite and a tax collector (Mark 2:13-14; Matt. 9:9). A short time later He called the other seven.

When the time came for Jesus to appoint and ordain the twelve as apostles, He prayed to God the Father all night and then selected them from among the disciples who followed Him. Those He named and ordained were Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot (Luke 6:12-16; Mark 3:13-19).

The Gospel of Matthew

Who was Matthew? D. Edmond Hiebert, Th.D., who has served on the faculties of Tabor College and Mennonite Brethren Seminary, Fresno, California, states: "The gospels record only a few historical details concerning the apostle Matthew. He was the son of a man named Alphaeus (Mk 2:14). Another disciple, James, was also identified as the son of Alphaeus (Mk 3:18; Lk 6:15), but there is no indication that these two disciples were brothers. Matthew was an employee at the tollhouse in Capernaum. He was either employed directly by Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee, or he worked under a

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person who had the taxes of the district in tenure. Matthew's immediate positive response to the call of Jesus makes it obvious that he had been among the multitudes attending the preaching of Jesus and had been deeply impressed. After Jesus called him, Levi (meaning that Matthew was a Levite) gave 'a great feast in his house' (Lk 5:29) in honor of his new Master to which he had invited many other publicans [tax collectors]. This may hint that he was a man of considerable means and owned a large home" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 1, p. 61).

We know from the gospel accounts that Matthew was with Jesus Christ during His entire ministry. As a Levite, Matthew would have had knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures. When we examine the Gospel of Matthew, it becomes evident that its writer used his knowledge of the Scriptures to show how prophecies were fulfilled in the life of Jesus and by the events of His ministry. As a tax collector, Matthew must have been very well educated and skilled in record keeping. In order to keep tax records for Herod Antipas, he would have had an excellent command of Greek. There is little doubt that Matthew used his varied talents to record the teachings and activities of Jesus from the beginning of His ministry in 26 AD. This is especially evident when we closely examine the Sermon on the Mount, found in Matthew, in chapters 5 through 7. When compared to the account in Luke 6, Matthew's account is a detailed, almost word-for-word rendition of what Jesus taught His disciples. Therefore, there is no reason to doubt that the apostle Matthew wrote the Gospel that bears his name.

The Gospel of John

The historical acceptance of the apostle John as author of the Gospel of John is based on an ancient source. As described by Hiebert: "In A.D. 324 or 325, Eusebius in his noted *Ecclesiastical History* recorded the results of his investigations concerning the four gospels. He wrote about the apostle John, 'His Gospel, which is known to all the churches under heaven, must be acknowledged as genuine.' In the same chapter he asserts, 'But of the writings of John, not only his Gospel, but also the former of his epistles, have been accepted without dispute both now and in ancient times [from the days before John died]. Thiessen declares, 'The external evidence for the early date and apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel is as great as that for any book in the New Testament'" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 1, pp. 192-193).

Hiebert (citing B. F. Westcott) also summarized the internal evidence that John was the author of the fourth Gospel: "1) the author was a Jew; 2) the author was a Jew of Palestine; 3) the author was an eyewitness of what he describes; 4) the author was an apostle; 5) the author was the apostle John. He [Westcott] supports each link in the chain with a full presentation of evidence found in the gospel itself. He established the last point through the expression 'the disciple whom Jesus loved,' as confirmed by the picture in the synoptics [the first three Gospels]" (Ibid., p. 203).

From the Gospels, we know that the apostle John was with Jesus throughout His ministry. Moreover, Jesus had an unusual relationship with John, whom he greatly loved (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20). While He was dying on the cross, Jesus entrusted John with the care of His mother Mary (John 19:26-27). Furthermore, John had a special vantage point in that he (with his brother James and the apostle Peter) witnessed the transfiguration of Jesus. The Gospel of John is entirely different from the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke). It contains deeper spiritual teachings than the other Gospels. When we examine the writings of the apostle John, it is evident that he was moved to write more about the love of God than were any of the other apostles. Moreover, because the chronology of the Gospel of John follows the progression of the annual holy days, it gives us an accurate, year-by-year time frame for Jesus' ministry. There can

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be little question that the apostle John wrote the Gospel that bears his name. In one of his closing remarks, John states why he wrote his account of the ministry of Jesus Christ: "Now then, Jesus did many other miracles in *the* presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book. **But these have been written, so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you may have life through His name**" (John 20:30-31).

The Gospel of Mark

This Gospel is unique in that its writer (Mark) was probably a teenager at the time of Jesus' ministry. In his account, Mark identifies himself as the one who fled naked when Jesus was arrested, the night before His crucifixion (Mark 14:51-52). From this account we know that Mark was indeed an eyewitness to Jesus' ministry, although he was not chosen to be an apostle. Mark lived in Jerusalem with his mother, Mary, who was also a disciple of Jesus (Acts 12:12). Beginning in 44 AD, Mark worked with Paul and Barnabas before returning to Jerusalem. After that, he continued to work for a time with Barnabas (Acts 15:37). Later, after 60 AD, Mark was with Peter in Babylon (I Pet. 5:13).

According to Hiebert, "Certain features are consistent with its [the Gospel's] traditional association with Peter. Peter's connection with the writing of this gospel is not necessary for its interpretation, but certain features in it take on added interest if that connection is recognized. For example, the addition of the two little words 'and Peter' (16:7), found only in Mark, is then freighted with emotional overtones. The connection naturally accounts for the 'eyewitness vividness' of many of Mark's episodes. It seems natural that Mark's use of 'they' in introducing a story concerning Jesus represents Peter's 'we' in reciting events as the experience of one who had been a disciple of Jesus. The inclusion of Aramaic expressions attributed to Jesus (5:41; 7:11, 34; 14:36), not found in the other gospels, may well be due to the fact that Mark recalled 'vividly the tone of the Apostle in relating the Master's solemn words.' It has also been noted that this gospel omits incidents which might honor Peter—his walking on the water (Mt 14:28-31), the promise of the keys (Mt 16:17-19), the payment of the temple tribute (Mt 17:24-27)—but elaborates on events that were to his discredit (Mk 8:33; 9:5-6; 14:29-31, 66-72). Peter's traditional connection with the gospel is supported by the fact that it conforms to the outline of the story as given by Peter in Acts 10:34-43.

"There is, however, no need to assume that when Mark commenced the writing of his gospel he deliberately restricted himself to a reproduction of Peter's preaching. As a youth Mark had heard the preaching of the apostles in Jerusalem. He was also familiar with the preaching of Paul and Barnabas (Ac 13:5-12; 15:39; Col 4:10-11). The Petrine preaching was, indeed, the main source upon which he drew, but he was well informed about Jesus before he became Peter's assistant.

"We accept without hesitation the Marcan authorship of the second gospel. This view does justice to the early and strong external evidence concerning its authorship and is consistent with the internal features of the gospel" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 1, pp. 86-87). Based on this information, we can conclude that the Gospel of Mark contains Peter's and Mark's eyewitness accounts of the ministry of Jesus Christ, written by Mark under Peter's supervision.

Mark, under Peter's supervision, not only wrote Peter's eyewitness accounts in his Gospel, but also he probably helped Paul (during the latter's second prison term in Rome) assemble his epistles for canonization by the apostle John. Mark's usefulness in this regard is noted by Paul in II Timothy 4:11. There can be no doubt that Mark wrote the Gospel that bears his name.

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The Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts

About Luke's Gospel, Hiebert wrote: "The gospel of Luke is the longest and most comprehensive of the four gospels. It is also the longest book in the New Testament. Its beautiful hymn and superb stories from the lips of Jesus, unique to this gospel, have made it a favorite with countless readers. Its attractive literary features justify the comment of a French rationalistic critic (Ernest Renan) that this gospel is 'the most beautiful book ever written.'

"Although the name of the author nowhere appears in it, the third gospel does not present itself as an anonymous work. In his prologue the author refers to himself in saying, 'it seemed good to me also' (1:3), and it is certain that Theophilus, the original recipient of the gospel, knew the writer's identity. In fact, it must have been common knowledge from the very beginning. Since the name of the author cannot with unquestioned certainty be deduced from the contents of his work, the uniform traditional ascription of it to Luke must represent information known from the first century" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 1, p. 114).

The Gospel of Luke differs from the others inasmuch as Luke was not an eyewitness of Christ's ministry as were Matthew, John and Mark/Peter. However, Luke used the accounts of eyewitnesses to compile his gospel. Furthermore, during the period recorded in Acts from Chapter 13 to the end of the book, Luke was an eyewitness to the apostle Paul's ministry. Luke was a Greek physician who apparently had been converted in Antioch, which was the location of the apostle Paul's home church, or headquarters. From Paul's epistles and the book of Acts, it is evident that Luke accompanied Paul during much of the latter's traveling ministry, serving as Paul's scribe, record-keeper and physician. (See Chronology of the New Testament, Appendix Q, pages 846-849. Luke undoubtedly recorded the account of Paul's defense before the Sanhedrin and of his deliverance from his would-be murderers (Acts 23). In order to save Paul from a plot to kill him, two Roman centurions and two hundred soldiers took Paul by night to Caesarea. There he was kept under protective custody for two years (58-60 AD) in Herod's Praetorium, awaiting trial. During Paul's Caesarean imprisonment, Luke was granted ready access to him. Moreover, judging from the account in Acts 24-26, Luke undoubtedly took notes during Paul's defense before Felix, Festus and Agrippa.

Caesarea was not far from Jerusalem where the eyewitness records of Jesus' ministry must have been kept, probably under the care of the apostle James, the brother of Jesus. It is most likely that Luke would have traveled to Jerusalem to consult those records as he wrote his Gospel during Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea. Because Luke was Paul's scribe and record-keeper, we can conclude that Luke wrote his account under Paul's supervision.

Luke himself offered some important information about the writing and compilation of his Gospel. He began his account: "**Since many have taken in hand to compile a written narration of the matters which have been fully believed among us, as they delivered them to us, those who from the beginning had been eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word**, it seemed good to me also, having accurately understood everything from the very first, to write *these things* in an orderly sequence to you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you might know the *absolute* certainty of *the* things in which you have been instructed" (Luke 1:1-4).

Luke began the book of Acts in much the same way, addressing it to Theophilus: "The first account I indeed have written, O Theophilus, concerning all things that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after giving command by *the* Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen; to whom also, by many infallible proofs, He presented Himself alive after He had suffered, being seen by them

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for forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:1-3).

Hiebert summarizes the reasons for ascribing authorship of both books to Luke: “The book of Acts, like the third gospel, is anonymous, and not even its title indicates authorship. Yet in the prologue of both works the author refers to himself by the first person pronoun, and it is obvious that Theophilus, the recipient of both volumes (Lk 1:4; Ac 1:1), knew his identity....The uniform tradition of the early church ascribes this work to Luke, and no alternative suggestions are mentioned” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 1, p. 248).

From the introductions to the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, it is apparent that Luke used the written records of the apostles to write his Gospel and the first twelve chapters of Acts. The rest of the book of Acts is a firsthand, eyewitness account of the apostle Paul’s ministry, written by Luke.

Writing Was a Common Practice in Jesus’ Day

From what Luke wrote, it is evident that the people of Jesus’ time were well educated. They were not uneducated or primitive type men running around in burlap bags as some modern movies portray them. From the scrolls discovered in the Qumran caves, it is clear that highly serviceable writing materials were available. That writing was a regular practice is confirmed by Luke’s account of John the Baptist’s circumcision and naming ceremony: “And it came to pass on the eighth day *that* they came to circumcise the little child; and they were calling him Zacharias, after the name of his father. Then his mother answered *and* said, ‘No! But he shall be named John.’ And they said to her, ‘*There is no one among your kinfolk who is called by this name.*’ Then they made signs to his father *as to* what he desired him to be named. **And after signaling for a writing tablet, he wrote, saying, ‘John is his name.’** And they were all amazed. Then his mouth was immediately opened, and his tongue *was loosed*; and he spoke, praising God” (Luke 1:59-64). This account confirms that writing materials were in daily use, at least among the scribes and priests. In spite of the fact that Zacharias was temporarily mute for over nine months, he would have been well educated because he was a priest of the line of Aaron.

Who Were the Many Eyewitnesses and Ministers of the Word?

Luke makes clear that many had taken it upon themselves to write accounts of what they had heard Jesus say and what they had seen Him do with their own eyes. Does the New Testament give any indication of who these writers were? Can their accounts be trusted? By examining Luke’s writings closely, we can discover the identity of many of these eyewitnesses. Based on who they were, we can decide whether their accounts can be fully trusted to be true and accurate.

According to the calculated Hebrew calendar, Jesus was crucified on Passover day, Nisan 14. On the Julian calendar, this would have been Wednesday, April 5, 30 AD. (Note: Roman dates are reckoned according to the Julian calendar.) He was in the grave for three days and three nights and was resurrected at sunset on the weekly Sabbath, during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Nisan 17 (April 8). On Nisan 18 (April 9) the first day of the week—the wave sheaf offering day—Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, being accepted by God the Father as the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world (see the chart in Appendix G, pages 760-761).

After God the Father had received Jesus and accepted His sacrifice, Jesus came

back to Jerusalem. He first appeared to two disciples on the road to the village of Emmaus. Jesus later revealed Himself to them as He broke bread later in Emmaus, and then He disappeared. The two disciples immediately ran back to Jerusalem to the eleven apostles, and while they were relating what had happened, Jesus appeared in their midst. Luke wrote this account: "Now as they were telling these things, Jesus Himself stood in their midst and said to them, 'Peace *be* to you.' But they were terrified and filled with fear, thinking *that* they beheld a spirit. Then He said to them, 'Why are you troubled? And why do doubts come up in your hearts? See My hands and My feet, that it is I. Touch Me and see *for yourselves*; for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see Me having.' And after saying this, He showed them *His* hands and *His* feet. But while they were still disbelieving and wondering for joy, He said to them, 'Do you have anything here to eat?' Then they gave Him part of a broiled fish and a *piece* of honeycomb. And He took these *and* ate in their presence.

"And He said to them, 'These *are* the words that I spoke to you when I was yet with you, that all *the* things which were written concerning Me in the Law of Moses and *in the* Prophets and *in the* Psalms must be fulfilled.' Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, 'According as it is written, it was necessary for the Christ to suffer, and to rise from *the* dead the third day. And in His name, repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. **For you are witnesses of these things**' " (Luke 24:36-48).

In the book of Acts, Luke recorded the commands that Jesus gave the apostles before He ascended to heaven the second and final time: "And while *they* were assembled with *Him*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to 'await the promise of the Father, which,' *He said*, 'you have heard of Me. For John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with *the* Holy Spirit after not many days.'

"So then, when they were assembled together, they asked Him, saying, 'Lord, will You restore the kingdom to Israel at this time?' And He said to them, 'It is not for you to know *the* times or *the* seasons, which the Father has placed in His own authority; but **you yourselves shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the ends of the earth**' " (Acts 1:4-8).

In the book of Acts, we find that whenever the apostles proclaimed Jesus Christ and His resurrection from the dead, they emphatically declared that they were His witnesses. In his first message, Peter proclaimed that he and the other apostles were eyewitnesses: "Therefore, being a prophet [King David], and knowing that God had sworn to him in an oath *that* from *the* fruit of his loins, as concerning *the* flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit upon his throne; He foresaw *this and* spoke concerning the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in *the* grave, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus has God raised up, whereof **we all are witnesses**" (Acts 2:30-32). Again, in the third chapter of Acts, Peter said: "The God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His Son Jesus, Whom you delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate, after he had judged to release *Him*. But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and requested that a man *who was* a murderer be granted to you; and you killed the Author of life Whom God has raised from *the* dead, whereof **we are witnesses**" (Acts 3:13-15).

In answer to the accusatory question put to the apostles by the Sanhedrin, Peter boldly proclaimed: "We are obligated to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus Whom you killed *by* hanging *Him* on a tree. Him has God exalted by His right hand *to be* a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel. And **we are His witnesses of these things**, as *is* also the Holy Spirit, which God has given to those who obey Him" (Acts 5:29-32).

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Eight years after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God opened the door of salvation to the Gentiles. At that time, a Roman centurion, Cornelius, saw a vision of an angel, who instructed him to send for the apostle Peter. Peter found many people gathered and waiting to hear his message when he arrived at Cornelius' house. Cornelius said to him: " 'Therefore, I sent for you at once; and you did well to come. So then, we are all present before God to hear all things that have been commanded you by God.' Then Peter opened *his* mouth *and* said, 'Of a truth I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons, but in every nation the one who fears Him and works righteousness is acceptable to Him. The word that He sent to the children of Israel, preaching the gospel of peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all), you have knowledge of; which declaration came throughout the whole of Judea, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism that John proclaimed, *concerning* Jesus, Who *was* from Nazareth: how God anointed Him with *the* Holy Spirit and with power, *and* He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, because God was with Him.

"**'And we are witnesses of all *the* things that He did,** both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed Him by hanging *Him* on a tree. *But* God raised Him up on the third day, and showed Him openly; not to all the people, but to **witnesses who had been chosen before by God, to *those of us* who did eat and drink with Him after He had risen from *the* dead.** And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to fully testify that it is He Who has been appointed by God *to be* Judge of *the* living and *the* dead. To Him all the prophets bear witness, *that* everyone who believes in Him receives remission of sins through His name' " (Acts 10:33-43). Again, Peter emphasizes that he and the other apostles were witnesses—chosen by God.

Jesus' commission of the apostles to be His witnesses "unto the ends of the earth" was fulfilled not only during their lifetimes but also after their deaths, through their writings and through those who succeeded them as witnesses. Matthew clarified that the gospel was to continue to be preached to all nations until the end of the age—until Jesus came again: "And Jesus came *and* spoke to them, saying, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. **Therefore, go *and* make disciples in all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.** And lo, I am with you always, *even* until the completion of the age" (Matt. 28:18-20). There is no question that in order to teach future disciples "to observe all things" that Jesus commanded, the disciples would need written documentation—the authoritative Word of God. Furthermore, Jesus Himself prophesied that "the gospel must first be published among all nations" as a witness, and then the end would come (Mark 13:10).

Jesus commanded the apostles to be witnesses and to preach the gospel to all nations. **We can conclude that the apostles were the primary eyewitnesses and ministers of the word that Luke wrote of in Luke 1:1-4, because they had been with Jesus from the beginning. In addition, they were chosen by God and ordained and commissioned by Jesus Christ to preach and to write the Gospel through His name and by His authority.** It was the apostles who wrote the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament, directed by Jesus under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. As the Head of the Church, Jesus did not leave the task of writing the most important book in the world to unknown storytellers living decades after the apostles had died.

Who Were the Rest of the Eyewitnesses?

There were indeed other eyewitnesses who contributed firsthand accounts to the formation and compilation of the Gospels. Who were they? Luke's account in the first chapter of Acts provides clues: "And after saying these things, *as* they were looking at

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Him, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. Now while they were gazing intently up into heaven as He was going up, two men in white apparel suddenly stood by them, who also said, 'You men of Galilee, why do you stand *here* looking up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, Who was taken up from you into heaven, shall come in exactly the same manner as you have seen Him go into heaven.' Then they returned to Jerusalem from *the mountain* called, Mount of Olives, which is near Jerusalem, being *about* the distance of a Sabbath's journey.

"And after entering *Jerusalem*, they went up into the upper chamber, where both **Peter and James were staying; and John and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James, the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot; and Jude, the brother of James** [the eleven apostles]. **All these were steadfastly continuing with one accord in prayer and supplications, together with the women, including Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.** And in those days, Peter stood up in *the midst* of the disciples (**now the number of names together was about a hundred and twenty**)" (Acts 1:9-15).

Including the 11 apostles, about 120 disciples gathered together shortly after Jesus had ascended to heaven the second and final time. Who were the other 109 eyewitnesses of Jesus' ministry? Luke specified that Mary the mother of Jesus and His four brothers (Mark 6:3) were included in that number. Also included were Joseph and Matthias, who were set apart, so lots could be cast before the Lord to select one of them as a replacement for Judas Iscariot. The main requirement Peter set forth for Judas Iscariot's replacement was that he had to have been an eyewitness from the beginning: "Therefore, it is obligatory *that* from those men who have accompanied us during all *the* time in which the Lord Jesus came in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day in which He was taken up from us, one of these shall become a witness with us of His resurrection" (Acts 1:21-22). The lot fell to Matthias, and he became the twelfth apostle (Acts 1:23-25). Undoubtedly, also among the 120 were the 70 disciples that Jesus sent to preach the gospel in various villages and cities to prepare His way (Luke 10:1-20). There is no question that Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and Salome also were included in the 120 (Mark 15:40-41). Based on the Gospels and Acts, we can positively identify 88 of the 120 eyewitnesses described as early disciples of Jesus.

Although it is not possible to know exactly who the remaining 32 were, perhaps some of the others mentioned in the Gospel accounts were there. These might have included the two disciples with whom Jesus walked to the village of Emmaus; Mark, who wrote the Gospel of Mark, and his mother Mary; Lazarus and his sisters Martha and Mary; Nathanael, an early disciple of Jesus (John 1:46-52); Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (John 19:38-39); and various women from Galilee, perhaps numbering a half dozen. And finally, the sisters of Jesus might have been there with their mother Mary and their four brothers. We are not told how many sisters Jesus had, but there possibly were at least four (Mark 6:3). If all of these were present, then we have identified an additional 20 eyewitnesses—a total of 108 out of 120. Perhaps many of the 120 did not write their own accounts about the ministry of Jesus Christ but verified the written narrations of those who did. The other disciples' recollections undoubtedly confirmed and supplemented the apostles' accounts, thus assuring that their testimony was accurate and true.

The teachings of the New Testament agree with the Old Testament commandment that testimony can be accepted as true only if it is corroborated by a second witness (and if possible, a third). Jesus said, "In *the* mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established" (Matt. 18:16). However, because of the magnitude of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ—God manifested in the flesh, Who died for the sins of the

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world—He did not select only two or three witnesses. From this account in the book of Acts, we can see that in order to ensure the veracity of the Gospels, Jesus chose 40 x 3, or about 120 witnesses.

We can conclude, therefore, that in addition to the twelve apostles, all of these were eyewitnesses of Jesus' ministry—His close disciples. Many of them could have written accounts of His ministry that became part of the basis for the Gospels. These were probably the "many" that Luke wrote of in Luke 1:1-2, as he compiled and wrote his Gospel: **"Since many have taken in hand to compile a *written* narration of the matters which have been fully believed among us, as they delivered *them* to us, those who from *the* beginning had been eyewitnesses."**

Mary the Mother of Jesus

The most important eyewitness, after the 12 apostles, was Mary the mother of Jesus. Mary must have contributed the narrations about Zacharias and Elizabeth, the father and mother of John the Baptist; and about the angel Gabriel's announcement to her that she would bear a son and call him Jesus (Luke 1:5-38; Matt. 1:18-25).

Mary also contributed the account of her visit with Elizabeth; Elizabeth's salutation to Mary; Mary's hymn to God; the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem; the shepherds' visit as Jesus lay in the manger; and the words of Simeon and Anna when Mary and Joseph presented Jesus at the temple after Mary's purification (Luke 1:39-2:35). Undoubtedly, she contributed to the accounts of Herod's attempt to kill Jesus and of the escape of Joseph, Mary and Jesus by night to Egypt as well as their return to Nazareth (Matt. 2:1-23).

Only Mary was an eyewitness to all of these events, having experienced them firsthand. Luke wrote: "Mary stored up all these sayings, pondering *them* in her heart" (Luke 2:19), and "His mother kept all these things in her heart" (Luke 2:51). Not only did she ponder and store up all these things in her heart, but she also may have kept a written record—a journal or diary—of these events. These firsthand accounts, which only Mary the mother of Jesus knew of, are part of the record of the Gospels. Remember, Luke relates that he used the written accounts of eyewitnesses to compile and write his Gospel. However, is it possible that Luke may have interviewed Mary (who would have been in her eighties) when he wrote his Gospel? We are not told that he did, but it would not be out of the realm of possibility.

The Scriptures testify that Mary was the mother of Jesus by divine conception, and she contributed her accounts to the Gospel records. However, Mary was not exalted to the status of deity by the apostles or the New Testament Church of God. The Roman Catholic doctrines of the perpetual virginity of Mary, her assumption into heaven, her mediation with Jesus, and her status as queen of heaven and co-redeemer of mankind are all false teachings. Such doctrines are not found in the New Testament. These are abominable deceits, false doctrines based on beliefs that originated in ancient, pagan Babylon. They are teachings of Satan, designed to enslave people to the idolatrous Babylonian Mystery Religion of the Roman Catholic Church (see *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop, ISBN 0-937958-57-3).

It is evident to those who truly study the Bible, that the Roman Catholic Church is not the true church of God, regardless of the claims made by the popes and hierarchs. The New Testament identifies the Roman Catholic Church and the religions of the world: "And one of the seven angels who had the seven vials came and spoke with me, saying to me, 'Come here; I will show you the judgment of the great whore who sits upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.' Then he carried me away in *the* spirit to a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet

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beast that had seven heads and ten horns, full of names of blasphemy. And the woman *was* clothed in purple and scarlet, and *was* adorned with gold and pearls and precious stones; *and* she had a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominations and *the* filthiness of her fornication; and across her forehead a name *was* written: 'MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.' And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Rev. 17:1-6).

Such churches and religions are not of God but are the usurpers of Christ—antichrist systems that have deceived the whole world under the power and influence of Satan, the devil (Rev. 12:9). It is important to fully understand these things when studying the writing and compiling of the New Testament.

Mary Magdalene

Yet another woman contributed to the compilation of the Gospels. In the Gospel of John, we find that Mary Magdalene went to Jesus' tomb early in the morning (John 20:1-18), where Jesus appeared to her first. The account of Jesus' conversation with Mary Magdalene must have originated with her, because she and Jesus were the only ones privy to it.

The Apostles Give Themselves to the Ministry of the Word

After His resurrection and first ascension to heaven, Jesus came back to earth and appeared to the apostles so as to open their minds to understand the Old Testament. "And He said to them, 'These *are* the words that I spoke to you when I was yet with you, that all *the* things which were written concerning Me in the Law of Moses and *in the* Prophets and *in the* Psalms must be fulfilled.' **Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures**, and said to them, 'According as it is written, it was necessary for the Christ to suffer, and to rise from *the* dead the third day. And in His name, repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. **For you are [eye] witnesses of these things**'" (Luke 24:44-48).

When we read what the apostle Peter preached in Acts, Chapters 2 through 5, it is absolutely clear that the apostles understood the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning Jesus Christ. From the beginning they realized the importance of their preaching and other work on behalf of Christ. After Peter and John were arrested for healing a man, they were brought before the high priests and the full Sanhedrin. The power of Peter's answer to these inquisitors reveals that the apostles realized the magnitude of their witness: "Now it came to pass in the morning *that* their rulers and elders and scribes were assembled together in Jerusalem, and Annas, the high priest, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and as many as were of *the* high priest's lineage. And after placing them in the midst, they inquired, 'By what power or in what name did you do this?' Then Peter, filled with *the* Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers of the people and elders of Israel, if we are examined this day as to a good work *done to the* infirm man, by what *power* he has been cured, be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that **in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarean, Whom you crucified, but Whom God has raised from *the* dead, by Him this *man* stands before you whole. This is the Stone that was set at naught by you, the builders, which has become the Head of *the* corner. And there is no salvation in any other, for neither is there another name under heaven which has been given among men, by which we must be saved**'" (Acts 4:5-12).

Later, as the apostles were healing multitudes (Acts 5:12-18), the high priests

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again had the apostles arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin. Peter and the others gave a powerful rebuttal to the high priests and the Sanhedrin, in response to the command that the apostles cease preaching in Jesus' name: "And they brought them in *and set them* before the Sanhedrin. And the high priest asked them, saying, 'Did we not order you by a *direct* command not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, with *the* purpose of bringing this man's blood upon us.' But Peter and the apostles answered *and* said, 'We are obligated to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus Whom you killed by hanging *Him* on a tree. Him has God exalted by His right hand *to be* a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel. And WE ARE HIS WITNESSES of these things, as *is* also the Holy Spirit, which God has given to those who obey Him.' Now when they heard *this*, they were cut *to the heart* and took counsel to put them to death" (Acts 5:27-33). However, a highly esteemed member of the Sanhedrin, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, stood up and persuaded the Sanhedrin not to kill the apostles: "And they were persuaded by him; and they called in the apostles *and*, after beating *them*, commanded *them* not to speak in the name of Jesus; and they released them. Then they departed from *the* presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing *that* they were accounted worthy to suffer shame for His name. And every day, in the temple and in the houses, they did not cease teaching and preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ" (verses 40-42). This event occurred in 30-31 AD, less than one year after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The number of the disciples began to multiply (see Chronology in Appendix Q, page 846).

Luke's account about how the apostles devoted themselves to the ministry of the Word follows: "Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a complaint by the Greeks against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. And after calling the multitude of disciples to *them*, the twelve said, 'It is not proper *for* us to leave the Word of God in order to wait on tables. Therefore, brethren, search out from among yourselves seven men of good repute, full of *the* Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and **the ministry of the Word**' " (Acts 6:1-4). Again, this is only one year after the death and resurrection of Jesus.

What did Luke mean when he wrote that the apostles were giving themselves to the "ministry of the Word"? From the introduction to his Gospel, we can conclude that they were writing down and compiling the teachings of Jesus, which later became the Gospels: "Since many have taken in hand **to compile a written narration** of the matters which have been fully believed among us, **as they delivered them to us, those who from the beginning had been eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word**" (Luke 1:1-2). Here Luke equates "ministers of the Word" with "eyewitnesses." From this it is clear that these eyewitnesses were none other than the apostles, who gave themselves to "ministry of the Word" (Acts 6:4). The latter expression means that, in addition to their preaching, they were writing and compiling the accounts of Jesus' life, ministry and teachings. No doubt, because of the tremendous increase in the number of disciples, the apostles realized they had to make a written compilation of the teachings of Jesus Christ: a uniform standard was needed from which to teach all the many thousands of new disciples.

In giving themselves to the ministry of the Word, the apostles were writing their narratives. The other eyewitnesses among the 120 mentioned in Acts 1:15 probably assisted the apostles in verifying and compiling their writings, which later became the Gospels as we know them. Luke wrote that the apostles "delivered them [the written narrations] to us." From this information we can understand that the teachings of Jesus Christ were written down from the beginning. The apostle Matthew probably recorded parts of what became his Gospel much earlier, near the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

Three Special Eyewitnesses—Peter, James and John

Jesus not only chose and ordained twelve apostles to go and bear His authority, but also from those twelve, He further selected Peter, James and John to see a vision of Him in His glorified form on the Mount of Transfiguration. Matthew wrote of this awe-inspiring event: “And after six days, Jesus took with *Him* Peter and James and his brother John, and brought them up into a high mountain by themselves. **And He was transfigured before them; and His face shined as the sun, and His garments became white as the light.** Then behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah talking with Him. And Peter answered *and* said to Jesus, ‘Lord, it is good for us to be here. If You desire, let us make three tabernacles here: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.’ While he was speaking, a bright cloud suddenly overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, ‘This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight. Listen to Him!’ And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces in extreme terror. But Jesus came *and* touched them, and said, ‘Arise, and do not be terrified.’ And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus alone. **Now as they were descending from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, ‘Tell the vision to no one until the Son of man has risen from the dead’**” (Matt. 17:1-9). After the resurrection, these three would become especially powerful witnesses, greater than the rest of the twelve apostles in preaching and performing miracles.

So great was the significance of Jesus’ transfiguration, that only Peter, James and John were permitted to witness the vision of Jesus appearing as God in His glorified form. The only other man to have seen God in His glorified form was Moses. The LORD God, Who became Jesus Christ, showed His glory to Moses and talked with him face to face (Ex. 33:18-23, 34:1-9). When we understand the status of Moses, then we will understand why Jesus chose Peter, James and John to be special eyewitnesses of His glory, and what this choice meant in regard to writing and canonizing the New Testament.

The Old Testament tells of how Moses received the Law directly from God Himself. God wrote the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone. Moses wrote the book of the Law and the rest of the Law as contained in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, along with the book of Genesis. Then he officially finalized, or canonized, the first five books of the Bible and gave them to the priests and Levites for safekeeping. “And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel” (Deut. 31:9, *KJV*).

Dr. Ernest L. Martin wrote about this canonization by Moses: “The Ark of the Covenant was a wooden chest enclosing the tables of stone, the rod that budded, plus the pot of manna (Heb. 9:4). It constituted the central part of Israel’s physical worship and was located in the Holy of Holies of the Temple. The scrolls of the Law were stored in specially designated sleeve compartments attached to the sides of the Ark (Deut. 31:26)” (Martin, *The Original Bible Restored*, p. 78).

Moses had God’s stamp of authority. No one in all Israel—in the entire history of the house of Israel and the house of Judah—was greater. The Law of Moses was the official and final authority for all Israelites. Moses was considered a prophet *par excellence* because he spoke to God face to face, wrote the Law, canonized the first five books of the Bible and led the children of Israel to the Promised Land. If another man attempted to set himself above Moses, he was punished as a rebel and a usurper. What happened to Korah and his followers, who attempted to remove Moses, usurp his authority and take over the priesthood, provided an example of the fate awaiting anyone who attempted to overthrow him: God caused the earth to open up and swallow Korah, his rebels, and all their families (Num. 16:1-50). Thus Moses was established as a unique prophet of God.

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Jesus Christ gave this same stamp of approval to the leading apostles—Peter, James and John. This could be the main reason why these three were the only eyewitnesses to Jesus' transfiguration and why they saw Moses and Elijah in the vision with Christ. Until that time, Moses had been the greatest and Elijah the second greatest of the prophets of God. Just as Moses had led the children of Israel, the three apostles would lead in preaching the Gospel to all the world—not only by their spoken words but also by their writings. Just as Moses wrote and canonized the first five books of the Old Testament, they would help write and finalize the New Testament. The apostles were to “bind up the testimony and seal the law,” which means they were to write the New Testament, showing that Jesus Christ's teachings made the law complete by revealing the spiritual meaning and intent of the laws and commandments of God.

The Apostles and Disciples Were to Do Greater Works than Jesus Had Done

On the night of His last Passover, Jesus told His apostles: **“Truly, truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me shall also do the works that I do; and greater works than these shall he do because I am going to the Father. And whatever you shall ask in My name, this will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son”** (John 14:12-13). Thus saying, Jesus confirmed the authority He would give to Peter, James and John as well as to the other apostles, which would later be manifested in miracles of unheard-of power.

Such a miracle occurred on the day of Pentecost, when God poured out His Holy Spirit and all the apostles supernaturally spoke in other languages. The apostle Peter preached such a powerful message of repentance that three thousand were baptized and converted that very day (Acts 2). Shortly thereafter, Peter and John healed a man who had been lame for over forty years. He was lying at the temple gate called “Beautiful”, when Peter and John went into the temple. “Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *which was the ninth hour*; and a certain man who was lame from his mother's womb was being carried, whom they placed daily at the temple door which is called Beautiful, to beg alms from those who were going into the temple.

“When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms. But Peter and John, intently observing him, said, ‘Look on us.’ And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, ‘Silver and gold I do not have; but what I do have, this I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarean, rise up and walk.’ Then taking him by the right hand, he raised *him* up; and immediately his feet and ankle bones were strengthened. And leaping up, he stood and walked; and he entered into the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. Now all the people saw him walking and praising God. And they recognized him, that he was the one who had been sitting at the temple gate *called* Beautiful, asking for alms; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened to him. And as the lame *man* who had been healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch *that is* called Solomon's, *for* they were greatly amazed” (Acts 3:1-11).

Because of this miracle the multitudes gathered around. Peter preached repentance, and about five thousand were converted (Acts 4:4). Peter, John and the other apostles also gave a powerful witness to the Sanhedrin (Acts 4 and 5). After they were beaten and released from the Sanhedrin, they returned to the brethren. The following is recorded in Acts: **“And when they had prayed, the place in which they were assembled was shaken; and they were all filled with *the* Holy Spirit, and they spoke the Word of God with boldness. And the multitude of those who believed were of one**

heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things common. And with great power the apostles testified of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all” (Acts 4:31-33).

Jesus Christ had so established the power and authority of Peter and the other apostles that when Ananias and his wife Sapphira lied to Peter, they fell over dead (Acts 5:1-10). The church was greatly affected by these events: “Then great fear came upon the whole church, and upon all who heard these things” (Acts 5:11). There was no question that God was working through Peter, John, and the rest of the apostles by the power of the Holy Spirit.

After the episode with Ananias and Sapphira, the apostles performed even greater miracles: “And many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon’s porch; and none of the others [e.g. leaders of Judaism] dared to join them, but the people magnified them; and believers were added all the more to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,) **“Insomuch that the people were bringing out the sick into the streets and putting them on beds and stretchers, so that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. And a multitude from the cities round about also came together to Jerusalem, bringing sick ones and those beset by unclean spirits; and they were all healed”** (verses 12-16). Thus the apostles fulfilled Jesus’ promise that they would do greater works than He had done.

As previously stated, Peter and John were special eyewitnesses because they, along with James, had seen Christ in His glorified form. Moreover, they were doing greater works than either Moses or Elijah had done, and God did not allow anyone to usurp Moses or Elijah’s authority. If anyone attempted to do so, God dealt with him directly and punished him severely. In the same way, Christ established the authority of the apostles. He did not allow anyone to usurp their authority or lie to them. Through the power of preaching, miracles, and wonders, coupled with the deaths of Ananias and his wife Sapphira, the authority of the apostles was fully established. All the believers knew that their authority came directly from God the Father and Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Peter—a Special Eyewitness

The vision of transfiguration affected the apostle Peter and his ministry for the rest of his life. In his first epistle, when Peter addressed the elders of the churches, he referred back to this vision of the glory of the transfigured Christ: “The elders who *are* among you I exhort, even as a fellow elder, **and an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory that is about to be revealed.** Feed the flock of God *that is* among you” (I Pet. 5:1-2).

In his second epistle, Peter wrote that the New Testament writings of the apostles were not folklore or myth. He made it clear that those who wrote the books of the New Testament were eyewitnesses, and their accounts were true. Peter emphasized that the believers should always remember the truth they were taught and live by it: “Therefore, I will not neglect to make you always mindful of these things, although you *already* know them and have been established in the present truth. For I consider it my duty, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by causing *you* to remember *these things*; knowing that shortly the putting off of my tabernacle *will come*, even as our Lord Jesus Christ has also signified to me. But **I will make every effort that, after my departure, you may always have a *written* remembrance of these things in order to practice them for yourselves. For we did not follow cleverly concocted myths as our authority, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we**

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were eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory; because He received glory and honor from God *the Father* when *the voice* came to Him from the Majestic Glory [from the throne of God], ‘This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I am well pleased.’ And this *is the voice from heaven that we heard when we were with Him on the holy mountain*” (II Pet. 1:12-18).

Peter makes it absolutely clear that they—all of the apostles, but specifically he, James and John—had not followed “cleverly concocted myths,” fables or folklore when they preached about the teachings and doctrines of Jesus Christ or when they wrote to the brethren. It is evident that the transfiguration remained a defining spiritual experience for Peter and carried over into his entire ministry and his writings.

Peter described what the apostles wrote, compiled and canonized as “the confirmed prophetic Word.” This confirmed prophetic Word was not a foretelling of future events but rather the inspired writings of the books of the New Testament, confirmed by Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit: “**We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word** [the New Testament books that the apostles had] to which you do well to pay attention, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and *the morning star* arises in your hearts; **knowing this first, that no prophecy** [inspired writing] **of Scripture** [New Testament, or Old Testament] **originated as anyone’s own private interpretation** [it did not evolve from religious myths]; **because prophecy was not brought at any time** [Old Testament or New Testament] **by human will, but the holy men of God spoke** [and wrote] **as they were moved by the Holy Spirit**” (II Pet. 1:19-21). There is no question that the New Testament is the “confirmed prophetic [inspired] Word,” and, as Paul wrote, the “prophetic [inspired] scriptures” (Rom. 16:26).

When the apostle Paul wrote to the Hebrews, he made it known that what had been received from the apostles and verified by the other eyewitnesses was the confirmed Word of God. He also warned them not to neglect the great salvation of Jesus Christ as contained in the confirmed Word: “For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away. For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, **how shall we escape, if we have neglected so great a salvation; which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him; God also bearing witness with them by both signs and wonders, and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will**” (Heb. 2:1-4).

In the third chapter of II Peter, the apostle Peter recognized the epistles of Paul as part of the confirmed prophetic Word. He wrote, “And bear in mind that the long-suffering of our Lord *is* salvation, exactly as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has also written to you; as *he has* also in **all his epistles**, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are some things *that are* difficult to understand, which the ignorant and unstable are twisting *and distorting*, as *they* also *twist and distort the rest of the Scriptures*, to their own destruction” (verses 15-16). As one of the two remaining eyewitnesses to the vision of Jesus’ transfiguration, Peter was surely inspired to write the truth of God.

The Apostle John—a Special Eyewitness

Jesus Christ referred to John and his brother James as the “sons of thunder” (Mark 3:17). In many passages of the Bible the voice of God is likened to thunder. James and John were called the sons of thunder because they preached the Word of God with great power. The apostle James, the brother of John, was beheaded by Herod in 44 AD (Acts 12:1-2). Apparently, James had been preaching so powerfully that the Jews

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had persuaded Herod to have him killed. They also wanted to kill Peter (verse 3-5), but God spared him. Thus, John and Peter were the last remaining eyewitnesses of the transfiguration.

Not only was John an eyewitness of Jesus' glory, but he was also the disciple whom Jesus especially loved. Seeing Jesus in His glorified form was an awesome spiritual experience for John. Thus, he began his Gospel in a simple and elegant but powerful and revealing way that showed the impact the transfiguration had on him: "In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men....The true light was that which enlightens everyone who comes into the world....**And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us (and we ourselves beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten with the Father), full of grace and truth....And of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace**" (John 1:1-4, 9, 14, 16). All of the apostles knew that the LORD God of the Old Testament had been made manifested in the flesh. But none of the others expressed this profound truth as powerfully and effectively as John.

Like the writings of the other special eyewitnesses, those of the apostle John are true and authentic. In his first epistle, John wrote of what he and the other apostles had experienced firsthand during Jesus Christ's three-and-a-half-year ministry: "**That which was from *the* beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves and our own hands handled, concerning the Word of life;** (And the life was manifested, and **we have seen, and are bearing witness**, and are reporting to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us;) **that which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you** in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—*is* with the Father and with His own Son, Jesus Christ" (I John 1:1-3).

The Special Help of the Holy Spirit

After His last Passover with the apostles, on their way to the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus explained that they would be aided by the power of the Holy Spirit to remember whatever was necessary for their ministry of the gospel: "But *when* the Comforter *comes*, *even* the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in My name, **that one shall teach you all things, and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you**" (John 14:26).

Jesus also told His apostles that there were many things He had yet to tell them—things they would not be able to bear until the Holy Spirit entered them. The Holy Spirit would lead them into all truth for salvation and in the writing of the New Testament. Jesus said: "I have yet many things to tell you, but you are not able to bear them now. However, **when that one has come, *even* the Spirit of the truth, it will lead you into all truth** because it shall not speak from itself, but whatever it shall hear, it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come" (John 16:12-13).

From these scriptures, we understand that the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Truth. God is a God of truth, and it is impossible for Him to lie (Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18). Therefore, what the Holy Spirit inspired the apostles to remember and write, as preserved in the Gospels and the New Testament, is the truth. The Gospel of John confirms what the apostle Peter wrote: "For we did not follow cleverly concocted myths *as our authority*, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, **but we [Peter and John] were eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory**" (II Pet. 1:16).

Additionally, Jesus told the apostles that they would be His witnesses after the

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power of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, came to reside in them: “But when the Comforter has come, which I will send to you from the Father, *even the Spirit of the truth*, which proceeds from the Father, that one shall bear witness of Me. **Then you also shall bear witness, because you have been with Me from *the beginning***” (John 15:26-27).

In all of his writings, the apostle John continually emphasized that what he wrote was the truth, inspired by the Spirit of Truth. In his first epistle John wrote, “Not one lie comes from the truth” (I John 2:21). John also emphasized the truth at the conclusion of his gospel: “This is the disciple [John] who testifies concerning these things and *who* wrote these things; and we [the other apostles with John] know that his testimony is true” (John 21:24).

The apostles knew that they were writing of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, so future generations would have the true knowledge of Him and the power of salvation and eternal life through faith in Him. John recorded Jesus saying that the words He spoke were spiritually understood and led to eternal life for those who obeyed them: “It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you, *they* are spirit and *they* are life” (John 6:63).

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the apostles wrote and compiled the truth contained in the Gospels. As John was concluding his Gospel, he specifically stated that through belief in Jesus Christ and His words one could have eternal life: “Now then, Jesus did many other miracles in *the* presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book. **But these have been written, so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you may have life through His name**” (John 20:30-31).

Part One of this chapter has sought to inform you about how the apostles were chosen by God to be eyewitnesses of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. As special eyewitnesses of the transfiguration, Peter and John were key instruments of God in compiling and writing the Gospels. Contrary to the opinion of many scholars, what they wrote is the true, inspired word of God the Father and Jesus Christ. Part Two will examine the remaining books of the New Testament and their authors.

Part Two: The General Epistles, the Epistles of Paul and the Book of Revelation

The Uniqueness of Epistles as Scripture

After the Gospels and Acts, God the Father and Jesus Christ inspired the rest of the New Testament to be written in the form of personal letters, or *epistles*. These are entirely different from the writings of the Old Testament, which consist of the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms, or writings. None of the books of the Old Testament were written as an epistle. The New Testament reveals that God the Father gave His Son, Jesus Christ—Who was God manifested in the flesh—as the perfect sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin. He is a personal Savior, so that each believer may receive forgiveness of sin and eternal life. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

When Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene after His resurrection, He instructed her to tell the brethren that He had risen from the dead: “**Go to My brethren and tell them that I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God**” (John 20:17). In saying this, Jesus revealed that our relationship to Him is

that of a brother or sister, and to the Father, a son or daughter—a family relationship. Jesus Christ is the firstborn among many brethren (Rom. 8:29), and true believers are those brethren.

Because believers have a personal and family relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, God inspired that His love and instructions for them be conveyed in the form of personal letters or epistles written by the apostles. As Hiebert has pointed out: “The New Testament is striking in that practically one-third of its contents is letters. Twenty-one of the twenty-seven books are epistles....**In this prominent use of the epistolary form the New Testament is distinct from all the other sacred writings of the world.** ‘The Scriptures of other oriental religions—the Vedas, the Zend Avesta, the Tripitaka, the Koran, the writings of Confucius—lack the direct personal address altogether.’ Pagan religions are ignorant of the new life in Christ that gave rise to the New Testament letters. The epistles unfold in terms of human experience the nature and process of God’s redemptive movements [His love and His plans].

“**This characteristic is the unique glory of the New Testament.** While the Old Testament contains numerous references to the use of letters and even preserves a few of them (cf. Jer. 29; Ezra 5:6-17), no books of the Old Testament are cast into the epistolary form. Says Bengel, ‘The epistolary form is a pre-eminence of the Scriptures of the New Testament as compared to those of the Old.’

“The-use of the epistle as a medium of revelation in the New Testament reveals the difference between the ages of law and grace. Under the legal dispensation the demands of God were set forth in legal documents, sealed with the direct authority of God; in the age of grace God further makes known His will to His children through loving letters of instruction and exhortation. The difference is aptly summarized by Heward when he remarks, ‘Statutory codes [are] for subjects, letters of spiritual advice [are] for sons.’ Under the law, prophets delivered *oracles* to the *people*, solemnly setting forth their authoritative pronouncements with a ‘thus saith the Lord.’ With the inauguration of the age of grace, the apostle wrote *letters* to the *brethren* in a spirit of loving intimacy, setting forth the significance and implications of their new position in Christ. The New Testament use of the epistle as a vehicle of revelation emphasized the truth that now God’s method is that of companionship rather than that of dictation. The revelation is made not so much in the way of information as in the way of education.

“The apostles’ use of the letter to convey their teachings was eminently suited to the nature of Christianity. Christianity is basically a personal relationship between the individual and God through faith in Christ Jesus. The epistle readily lent itself to a free discussion of these personal relations in Christianity. It was likewise well adapted to an informal discussion of the fundamental theological doctrines which the readers had already accepted. Paul directed his epistles to converts who had already accepted Christ and His Gospel but whose lives revealed the need for further instruction in the outworkings of those truths in daily conduct” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 2, pp. 13-14, bold emphasis added).

Greater still, under the New Covenant, believers become the children of God the Father through the begetting of the Holy Spirit. Because they have a personal, spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father, they can use terms of personal endearment when addressing the Father: “You have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, ‘Abba [Daddy], Father.’ The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that **we are *the* children of God.** Now if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ” (Rom. 8:15-17).

This family relationship is based on the love believers share for Jesus Christ, God the Father, and one another. The apostle John wrote: “In this *way* the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we

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might live through Him. In this *act* is the love—not that we loved God; rather, that He loved us and sent His Son *to be the* propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also are duty-bound to love one another....if we love one another, God dwells in us, and His own love is perfected in us. By this *standard* we know that we are dwelling in Him, and He *is dwelling* in us: because of His own Spirit, *which* He has given to us. And we have seen *for* ourselves and bear witness that the Father sent the Son *as the* Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him, and he in God. And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us. God is love, and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him” (I John 4:9-16).

Because believers are in a covenant relationship of love—God loves them and they love God—they are to have a spiritual fellowship directly with God the Father and Jesus Christ. This is accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit through prayer, by studying God’s Word, by living by every word of God, and by fellowshiping with the brethren. John wrote: “That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; **for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son, Jesus Christ**” (I John 1:3).

The apostle John emphasized the profound truth that we are the children of God the Father: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called **the children of God!** For this very reason, the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. **Beloved, now we are the children of God,** and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is” (I John 3:1-2).

The New Testament is the only book in the world that reveals the love of God for the world—God the Father’s love for His begotten children and Jesus Christ’s love for His brethren. God the Father and Jesus Christ inspired that Their personal love and instructions be conveyed to the brethren by the means of letters, or epistles, written by the apostles. This is the unique glory of the twenty-one epistles of the New Testament, and why the New Testament is the most magnificent book in the world.

The General Epistles

The general epistles are also known as the “catholic epistles,” which in no way implies that these epistles were written under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church. The church that became the Roman Catholic Church did not even begin until 325 AD—approximately 265 years after these epistles were written. At that time, the Roman emperor Constantine used the military and political power of the Roman Empire to merge pagan, sun-worshipping religions and apostate Christianity into a new ecumenical or “universal” state religion. The term *catholic*, as applied to the general epistles, merely means “general.”

In ninety-five percent of manuscripts of the Byzantine Greek New Testament, the general epistles (James; I and II Peter; I, II and III John; and Jude) are placed directly after the four Gospels and the book of Acts. Hiebert wrote of this: “The general order of the books of the New Testament in the ancient Greek *manuscripts* is as follows: gospels, Acts, general epistles, Pauline epistles (including Hebrews), Revelation....Influenced by the order generally found in ancient manuscripts, they were placed before the Pauline epistles by Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort in their editions of the Greek text. But the popular Greek text of Nestle follows the order found in our English canon, which adopts the order of Jerome in the Vulgate” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, pp. 19-20).

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The seven general epistles were written by apostles of Jesus Christ: James, the brother of Jesus; Peter and John, two of three special eyewitnesses of Jesus' transfiguration; and Jude, another of Jesus' brothers, who apparently was ordained as an apostle to succeed James after the latter was martyred in 62 AD. These four men were sent by Jesus to witness to the circumcision, as were nearly all the other apostles, except Paul and Barnabas. Jesus Christ specifically sent the apostle Paul first to the Gentiles and secondarily to the Jews and Israelites (Acts 9:15).

In order to understand the general epistles, especially the Epistle of James, one needs to understand that Jesus Christ's commission to preach the Gospel to the circumcision not only included the Jews—which consisted of the tribe of Judah, part of the tribe of Levi and part of the tribe of Benjamin, known as the house of Judah—but also to the so-called ten lost tribes of Israel, known also as the house of Israel.

The Difference Between the House of Israel and the House of Judah

At the time Jesus sent the twelve apostles on their first training mission, He commanded them to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel: "These twelve Jesus sent out after commanding them, saying, 'Do not go into *the* way of the Gentiles, and do not enter into a city of the Samaritans; but go instead to **the lost sheep of the house of Israel** [not to the house of Judah only]. And *as you are* going, proclaim, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand'...For truly I say to you, in no way shall you have completed *witnessing* to **the cities of Israel** until the Son of man has come [which is yet future]" (Matt. 10:5-7, 23).

When the twelve apostles went on this first mission, it is obvious that they did not leave the area of Galilee and Judea. However, from Jesus' instructions, it is evident that He meant this commission to be carried out continuously in every generation until He returns. The context of these scriptures reveals that in the end times the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel will have their own cities. Moreover, according to many prophecies in the Old Testament, by the last days before the return of Jesus Christ, these tribes would constitute distinct nations, separate from the Jews (Gen. 48:5-22; 49:1-28; Deut. 33:1-29). The ten northern tribes known as the house of Israel were never part of the Jewish nation, which was known as the house of Judah. To this day, the ten tribes of the house of Israel are not a part of the Jewish nation located in Palestine, called Israel. Furthermore, the ten northern tribes of Israel were never truly lost. (The historical truth about where the descendants of the ten tribes are today is beyond the scope of this commentary. However, it can be roughly stated that the Anglo-Saxon people of the British Commonwealth countries are the descendants of Ephraim, and the Anglo-Saxon people of the United States are the descendants of Manassah. The descendants of the other eight tribes live in the democracies of northwestern Europe. The reader who wishes to investigate this subject further might begin with *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright* by J. H. Allen and *The "Lost" Ten Tribes of Israel...Found!* by Steven M. Collins.)

The Bible records that the ten tribes were taken into captivity by the Assyrians in 721-718 BC into Assyria, Persia and Media: "For he rent Israel from the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and made them sin a great sin. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was **Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day**. And the king of Assyria brought *men* from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed *them* in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof" (II Kings 17:21-24,

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KJV). Josephus also wrote that the kings of Assyria took the northern ten tribes of Israel captive and removed them into Persia and Media, where they later became known as Parthians (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, bk. 9:14:1; bk. 10:9:7). By the first century AD, many descendants of the ten tribes of Israel had migrated westward from Persia and Media into the area known today as Ukraine, where they became known in ancient times as Scythians.

On the Day of Pentecost 30 AD, when God poured out His Holy Spirit on the apostles and disciples, the multitude of devout Jews gathered at the temple probably included a great number of Israelites who were descendants of the northern ten tribes of Israel. In his powerful Pentecost message to those gathered at the temple, Peter made a clear distinction between Jews and Israelites, showing that both Houses were represented.

The account in the book of Acts informs us as follows: “And when the day of *Pentecost*, the fiftieth day, was being fulfilled, they were all with one accord in the same place. And suddenly *there* came from heaven a sound like *the* rushing of a powerful wind, and filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire, and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with *the* Holy Spirit; and they began to speak with other languages, as the Spirit gave them *the words* to proclaim. **Now *there* were many Jews who were sojourning in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven.** And when word of this went out, **the multitude came together and were confounded, because each one heard them speaking in his own language.** And they were all amazed, and marveled, saying to one another, “Behold, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? **Then how is it *that* we hear each one in our own language in which we were born? Parthians [Israelites] and Medes [Israelites] and Elamites [Israelites], and those who inhabit Mesopotamia, and Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, both Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya which *are* near Cyrene, and the Romans who are sojourning *here*, both Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians; **we hear them speaking in our own languages the great things of God**” (Acts 2:1-11).**

As Peter continued to address the multitudes, he demonstrated that he understood the difference between the Jews (the house of Judah) and the Israelites (the house of Israel). He specifically addressed both groups: “Then Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and spoke out to them: ‘**Men, Jews,** and all those of you who inhabit Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and pay attention to my words....**Men, Israelites,** listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarean, a man sent forth to you by God, as demonstrated by works of power and wonders and signs, which God performed by Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know” (verses 14, 22).

When Peter finished his powerful witness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, he called “all the house of Israel” to repentance. The phrase “all the house of Israel” means all twelve tribes; that is, it includes the ten northern tribes of the house of Israel as well as the Jews of the house of Judah: “‘Therefore, let **all *the* house of Israel** know with full assurance that God has made this *same* Jesus, Whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.’ Now after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart; and they said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for *the* remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all those who are afar off, as many as *the* Lord our God may call.**’ And with many other words he earnestly testified and exhorted, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation.’ Then those who joyfully received his message were baptized; and about three thousand souls were added that day” (verses 36-41). It is important to understand this vital biblical and historical distinction between the house of Judah and the house of Israel in order to know to whom the apostle James wrote his epistle.

The Epistle of James

After discussing various scholars' theories as to which of the four different men mentioned in the New Testament as "James" was the writer of the Epistle of James, Hiebert concludes that the author was the brother of Jesus Christ: "We are left with the conclusion that the author of this epistle was James the Lord's brother. All that we know about him from Scripture and tradition agrees with this" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, p. 41).

The New Testament gives some basic facts about James. Mark records that James was one of four half-brothers of Jesus Christ (Mark 6:3). This means that James and his three brothers, Joses, Judas [Jude] and Simon, grew up with Jesus. As brothers, they had a special relationship with Jesus. They were eyewitnesses of Jesus' life while He was growing up. They lived with Jesus, talked with Him, ate with Him and worked with Him on a daily basis.

Yet, in spite of this, when Jesus began His ministry, they did not become His disciples. It appears that before Jesus' resurrection, they did not really believe He was the Messiah. The apostle John recorded this account prior to the Feast of Tabernacles in the last year of Jesus' ministry: "After these things, Jesus was sojourning in Galilee, for He did not desire to travel in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him. Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was near. For this reason, His brothers said to Him, 'Leave this place and go into Judea, so that Your disciples may see the works that You are doing; because no one does anything in secret, but seeks to be *seen* in public. If You do these things, reveal Yourself to the world.' **For neither did His brothers believe in Him.** Therefore, Jesus said to them, 'My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready' " (John 7:1-6).

After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to James, apparently in a personal, one-on-one meeting. This appearance must have been common knowledge, because Paul wrote of it: "He was raised up the third day, according to the Scriptures; and that He appeared to Cephas, *and* then to the twelve. Then He appeared to over five hundred brethren at one time, of whom the greater part are alive until now, but some have fallen sleep. Next **He appeared to James**" (I Cor. 15:4-7). Apparently, after Jesus appeared to James, James believed, as did his other half-brothers, because all of Jesus' brothers, along with His mother Mary, were in the assembly of the original 120 disciples mentioned in Acts 1:14.

The New Testament does not tell us when James became an apostle, but in 36 AD the apostle Paul referred to him as such. After Paul had spent three years in Arabia, where he was taught directly by Jesus Christ, he returned to Damascus and then went up to Jerusalem. Paul recounted God's calling: "But when it pleased God ... to reveal His own Son in me, in order that I should preach Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those *who were* apostles before me; but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. **Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Peter, and I remained with him fifteen days. But I did not see *any* of the other apostles, except James the brother of the Lord**" (Gal. 1:15-19).

Fourteen years later, in 49 AD (inclusive counting), Paul went up to the conference in Jerusalem. In his epistle to the Galatians, he mentions that he met privately with James, Cephas [Peter] and John to discuss the question of circumcision: "But *the gospel that I preach did not come* from those reputed to be something. (Whatever they were does not make any difference to me; God does not accept *the* person of a man.) For those who are of repute conferred no *authority* upon me. But on the contrary, after seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, exactly as Peter *had been en-*

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trusted with the gospel of the circumcision; (for He Who wrought in Peter for *the* apostleship of the circumcision wrought in me also towards the Gentiles); and after recognizing the grace that was given to me, **James and Cephas and John**—those reputed to be pillars—gave to me and Barnabas *the* right hands of fellowship, *affirming* that we *should go* to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision” (Gal. 2:6-9). Again, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul mentions Peter and the brothers of the Lord, which certainly included James (I Cor. 9:5).

James Wrote His Epistle to the Twelve Tribes of Israel

When the apostle James wrote his epistle to the twelve tribes of Israel, he knew where they were living: “James, a servant of God and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which *are* in the dispersion: Greetings!” (James 1:1.) This means that his epistle was sent to the believers—Jews and Israelites—living in the countries named in Acts 2:9-11. They were among the first converts. Furthermore, after 30 AD, Jews and Israelites, converted and unconverted, made pilgrimages to Jerusalem to observe the annual festivals and holy days of God—Passover and Unleavened Bread, Pentecost and Tabernacles. There is very little doubt that many of the nonbelieving Jews and Israelites who made the journey to Jerusalem were converted during the years following Jesus’ death and resurrection.

Hiebert writes: “That the recipients of the epistle were Christians is evident from its contents. James repeatedly addresses them as ‘brethren,’ and he bases his authority upon the fact that he is ‘a servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ’ (1:1). He views his readers as having been born again [Greek “begotten again”] by the Word of God (1:19), as persons holding ‘the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ’ (2:1); he reminds them of ‘the honorable name by which ye are called’ (2:7). The exhortation to them to ‘be patient until the coming of the Lord’ (5:7) presupposes that the readers were Christians” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, pp. 49-50).

That James authored the epistle bearing his name is attested to by the similarities between it and the letter he authored as recorded in Acts 15:13-29. Hiebert notes: “This view [that James, the brother of Jesus, wrote the epistle of James] is supported by the remarkable coincidences of language between the epistle and the speech of James at the Jerusalem Conference as well as the letter sent by the Conference, which was evidently drawn up by James. The form ‘to greet’ at the beginning of the epistle of James and the Conference letter is an unusual form. James began his speech with the address, ‘Brethren, hearken unto me’—a form also found in the epistle (2:5). The expression ‘your souls’ in the Conference letter is a Hebraic expression; it is also found in the epistle (1:21). The peculiar use of the word ‘to visit’ is found in both the speech and the epistle. These and other similarities certainly are remarkable in view of the shortness of the passage in Acts from which they come. They cause us to feel that all the time we are in contact with the same mind” (Ibid., pp. 41-42).

“The epistle is characterized by the Jewish coloring of its contents. Hayes asserts that James ‘is the most Jewish writing in the New Testament.’ The very opening address is Jewish in origin (1:1); he speaks of Abraham as ‘our father’ (2:21); he draws his illustrations from the Old Testament—Abraham (2:21), Rahab (2:25), Job (5:11), Elijah (5:17-18). He is the only New Testament writer who employs the Old Testament designation of ‘the Lord of Sabaoth’ in speaking of God” (Ibid., p. 56).

When all the evidence is combined and analyzed, there is very little doubt that the apostle James, the son of Joseph, the brother of Jesus Christ, was the author of the Epistle of James.

The Epistles of First and Second Peter

First Peter: The apostle Peter wrote the first epistle that bears his name. At the beginning of his epistle, Peter clearly identifies himself: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ” (I Pet. 1:1). There is no credible evidence that the first epistle of Peter was written by anyone else; however, at the end of this epistle, we find that Silvanus and Mark were with Peter in Babylon (I Pet. 5:12-13). Therefore, it is very probable that Peter used Mark or Silvanus as his scribe.

Hiebert relates, “The early Church had no doubts concerning the authenticity of 1 Peter. The evidence for the epistle is early and clear, and it is as strong as for any other book in the New Testament. It was universally received as an acknowledged part of the Christian Scriptures” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, p. 105).

Peter and his brother Andrew were the first two disciples that Jesus called (John 1:39-44; Mark 1:16-18; Matt. 4:18-20; Luke 5:1-9). When Jesus selected the twelve apostles, Peter was named first (Mark 3:16; Luke 6:14). As we have seen, the apostle Peter was one of the special eyewitnesses, along with the apostle John and his brother James, who saw the glory of Jesus’ transfiguration on the holy mount (Matt. 17:1-9). These three were the initial leaders of the twelve apostles, although the book of Acts makes it clear that Peter and John fulfilled the primary leadership roles (Acts ch. 2-5).

Peter was a bold leader, but he had his weaknesses. The most notable one was his denial of the Lord three times the night Jesus was arrested and tried (Matt. 26:69-74; Mark 14:66-71; Luke 22:56-61; John 18:17-27). On Jesus’ last Passover night, prior to His arrest by the authorities, Jesus revealed to Peter that Satan had demanded to have him but He had prayed for him so that his faith would not fail: “Then the Lord said, ‘Simon, Simon, listen *well*. Satan has demanded to have you, to sift *you* as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and when you are converted, strengthen your brethren [indicating a major leadership role for Peter]’ ” (Luke 22:31-32).

After His resurrection, sometime during the forty days before His final ascension to heaven, and apparently because Peter had denied Jesus three times, Jesus wanted Peter’s confession that he would feed the sheep of God. In the Gospel of John, Jesus specifically asked Peter three times whether he loved Him and then commanded him to feed the sheep: “Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me more than these?’ And he said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord. You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Feed My lambs.’ He said to him again a second time, ‘Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me?’ And he said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord. You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Shepherd My sheep.’ He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me?’ Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, ‘Do you love Me?’ And he said to Him, ‘Lord, You know all things. You know that I love You.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed My sheep’ ” (John 21:15-17).

Peter Was Not the First Pope: Although Jesus used Peter as one of the initial leaders of the apostles, he was not the first pope. Some traditions make the claim that Peter was the first pope, and, he ministered in Rome for twenty-five years and was martyred there. However, most biblical scholars consider these traditions invalid because they have no factual basis in the New Testament Scriptures. Hiebert writes: “Tradition uniformly asserts that Peter did go to Rome, that he labored there, and that he was martyred there. The elaborately developed ‘Legend of St. Peter,’ setting forth his relations to Rome and long received in the Roman Catholic church, may be safely set aside as unreliable. Scripture is silent concerning Peter’s residence and martyrdom at Rome, and the question is still debated, but the uniform tradition of the Church, when stripped of its embellishments, is strong enough to make it reasonably certain [that these traditions are not

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true]. That Peter was the bishop of Rome for twenty-five years may confidently be rejected as 'unquestionably a colossal chronological mistake,' and the claim is abandoned by some modern Catholic scholars" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, pp. 112-113).

The claims of the Roman Catholic Church notwithstanding, there is no place in the New Testament where Jesus Christ or the apostles authorized any man to assume the exalted office and title of pope, or "holy father." Furthermore, Jesus commanded the apostles never to call any man "Rabbi" or "Father." He instructed his disciples to be humble and not to seek status as their religious leaders had done: "They do all their works to be seen by men. They make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments; and they love the first place at the suppers, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, '**Rabbi, Rabbi.**' But you are not to be called Rabbi; for one is your Master, the Christ, and all of you are brethren. Also, do not call *anyone* on the earth your Father; for one is your Father, Who is in heaven. Neither be called Master; for one is your Master, the Christ. But the greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever will exalt himself shall be humbled; and whoever will humble himself shall be exalted" (Matt. 23:5-12).

It is evident that the apostles practiced and taught what Jesus commanded. Therefore, neither Peter nor any of the other apostles would have established the office of "pope." Such an exalted religious position is diametrically opposed to the teachings of Jesus Christ, Who set the example of love and service during His three-and-one-half-year ministry. Furthermore, He commanded the apostles never to exalt themselves over the brethren: "But Jesus called them to *Him* and said, 'You know that the rulers of the nations exercise lordship over them, and the great ones exercise authority over them. However, **it shall not be this way among you; but whoever would become great among you, let him be your servant; and whoever would be first among you, let him be your slave; just as the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many**' " (Matt. 20:25-28). Therefore, it is clear that Jesus Christ did not establish Peter as the first pope or create the office of pope.

Peter's first epistle demonstrates that he practiced what Jesus had commanded and taught. Moreover, he commanded other elders to feed the sheep as Jesus had commanded him: "The elders who *are* among you I exhort, even as a fellow elder, and an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is about to be revealed: **Feed the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight not by compulsion, but willingly; not in fondness of dishonest gain, but with an eager attitude; not as exercising lordship over your possessions; but by being examples to the flock of God.** And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you shall receive an unfading, *eternal* crown of glory" (I Pet. 5:1-4).

The contents of I Peter further establish that the apostle Peter wrote this epistle. Hiebert concurs, stating: "Ebright cites thirty-two passages in 1 Peter which find equivalents in the teachings of Jesus and concludes that they definitely prove the writer's acquaintance with Jesus. And Farrar, in proof of the Petrine authorship, points out the natural way in which we may trace in the epistle the influence of the prominent events which occurred during Peter's associations with Jesus....The general contents and tone of the epistle are consistent with the Petrine authorship" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, pp. 107-108).

Second Peter: Because there is a notable difference in the style of writing and language of II Peter as compared to I Peter, many ancient and modern scholars have doubted that Peter wrote it. Hiebert commented on this: "Second Peter was regarded with doubts in many sections of the early Church. Questions concerning its authenticity

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were again raised during the time of the Reformation, and in modern times many otherwise quite conservative critics are either noncommittal or feel that they must join forces with the negative critics in the rejection of Petrine authorship of the epistle. It is fair to say that 2 Peter has been the most controverted book in the New Testament. Yet the objections to it are not so conclusive as to silence those who defend its authenticity" (Ibid., pp. 133-134).

Perhaps the primary reason for the slow acceptance of Peter's second epistle, as well as the rejection of his authorship, was that the false teachers who were leading the apostasy at that time condemned and discredited it. They must have realized that Peter's excoriating denunciation of false teachers exposed them for what they really were: "But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies, personally denying *the* Lord who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of them, the way of the truth will be blasphemed. Also, through insatiable greed they will with enticing messages exploit you for gain; for whom the judgment of old is in *full* force, and their destruction is *ever* watching" (II Pet. 2:1-3).

The apostasy sweeping the churches of God was so vicious and insidious in perverting the true gospel of Jesus Christ that Peter condemned those false teachers in the strongest language possible. Undoubtedly, this is why the style and language of Peter's second epistle is so different from that of his first epistle. (Please read II Peter 2 in its entirety to understand the full force of Peter's fiery condemnation of false teachers.)

When the internal evidence of II Peter is closely examined, there is very little doubt that Peter wrote this epistle. He begins his second epistle as he began his first epistle, by identifying himself: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained *the* same precious faith as ours by *the* righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 1:1). Hiebert notes, "The claim to Petrine authorship is stronger in this epistle than in 1 Peter. The writer calls himself Simon Peter (1:1) and identifies himself as a witness of the transfiguration (1:16-18). He places himself on a level with the apostle Paul (3:15), identifies himself as the writer of a previous epistle (3:1), and recalls the Lord's prediction concerning his death (1:14)" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, p. 139).

While strongly condemning false teachers, Peter exhorts the believers to be diligent and develop godly Christian character through faith and understanding that are perfected through the love of God (1:5-11). Because Peter knew that the end of his life was near, he promised that he would leave them a written remembrance of the teachings of Jesus Christ (1:12-21). He also wanted to stir up their minds to remember the words of "the holy prophets, and of the commandment of the Lord and Savior, *spoken* by us, the apostles" (3:1-2). Finally, he encourages the brethren not to give up hope because "the day of the Lord" and His Second Coming did not appear to be imminent. He reminds them that in spite of the scoffers, the promises of God were sure and "the day of the Lord" would happen at its set time, regardless of when it took place in the future (3:1-14).

When all the evidence is examined, there is very little doubt that Peter wrote the second epistle that bears his name.

First, Second and Third John

First John: This epistle was written in an unusual style. It does not open with a declaration of the writer's name, nor does it give addressees. The writer was so well-known and had such an intimate relationship with the intended recipients of his epistle

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that he had no need to identify himself. It is clear that they knew who he was and recognized his apostolic authority.

John opens his epistle with a special preamble showing that he was an intimate disciple of Jesus Christ who had been with Him from the beginning of His ministry: "That which was from *the* beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves and our own hands handled, concerning the Word of life; (And the life was manifested, and we have seen, and are bearing witness, and are reporting to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us;) that which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son, Jesus Christ. These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full" (I John 1:1-4).

That the author of this epistle was the apostle John is attested to by Polycarp, who was a contemporary of the apostle John during the last twenty years of John's life: "The earliest definite trace of this epistle is in Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna (c. 69-115). In his *Epistle to the Philippians* (c. 115) he writes: 'For whosoever does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, is antichrist, and whosoever does not confess the testimony of the cross, is of the devil' (chap. vii). These words seem clearly to have been inspired by I John 4:2-3. When we remember that the word 'antichrist' occurs in the New Testament only in John's epistles ... and that 'confess,' 'witness,' and 'to be of the devil' are characteristically Johannine expressions, the conclusion seems certain [that the apostle John was its author]" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, p. 183).

Another early witness of the apostle John's writings was Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis (80-155 AD). Eusebius wrote of him: "Papias has left us five volumes entitled *The Sayings of the Lord Explained*....Papias himself in the preface to his work makes it clear that he was never a hearer or eyewitness of the holy apostles, and tells us that he learnt the essentials of the Faith from their former pupils: 'I shall not hesitate to furnish you, along with the interpretations, with all that in days gone by I carefully learnt from the presbyters and have carefully recalled, for I can guarantee its truth. Unlike most people, I felt at home not with those who had a great deal to say, but with those who taught the truth; not with those who appeal to commandments from other sources but with those who appeal to the commandments given by the Lord to faith [to the faithful ones] and coming to us from truth itself. And whenever anyone came who had been a follower of the presbyters, I inquired into the words of the presbyters, what Andrew or Peter had said, or Philip or Thomas or James or John or Matthew, or any other disciple of the Lord, and what Aristion and the presbyter John, disciples of the Lord, were still saying. For I did not imagine that things out of books would help me as much as the utterances of a living and abiding voice' " (Eusebius, *History of the Church*, 3:39:2, pp. 101-102).

There appears no doubt whatsoever that the apostle John wrote the epistle of I John: "In fact all Fathers, Greek and Latin, accept this epistle as being by John....Thus the evidence shows that this epistle, undoubtedly one of the latest of the New Testament books to be written, took an immediate and permanent position as an authoritative writing of inspiration" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, p. 184).

The First Epistle of John Compared With the Gospel of John: When the style and language of John's first epistle is compared with that of the Gospel of John, there can be no question that the apostle John wrote these books. In both, the language is simple and direct, revealing the spiritual love and power of God the Father and Jesus Christ. One of the most interesting features in John's writings is the contrast of opposites to show the difference between the way of God and the way of Satan and the world:

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GOD'S WAY

The Spirit of Truth
The Children of God in Light

True Christianity is founded on:

- 1) Light
- 2) Truth
- 3) Love of God
- 4) Faith and hope in Jesus Christ and God the Father
- 5) Repentance and confession of sins; cleansing and forgiveness through the blood of Jesus Christ
- 6) Receiving the Holy Spirit of God
- 7) Living in loving obedience and commandment-keeping
- 8) Growing in the grace of God and knowledge of Jesus Christ
- 9) Eternal life

THE DEVIL'S WAY

The Spirit of Deception
The Children of the Devil in Darkness

False Christianity is founded on:

- 1) Darkness
- 2) Deception and lies
- 3) Love of the world and hatred of the true God and His children
- 4) False knowledge and a false faith and hope
- 5) Denial of sinful nature and sinful actions
- 6) Influence of the devil and a counterfeit begetting—possible demon possession
- 7) Living in disobedience and commandment-breaking, all sorts of lawlessness and transgression
- 8) Sinking into the depths of Satanism and knowledge of the occult
- 9) Eternal death

Hiebert notes: "This similarity of the two writings [1 John and the Gospel of John] is all the more remarkable when it is remembered that the nature of the fourth gospel is objective narrative, while the epistle is hortatory and polemical. This conclusion concerning the identity of authorship of the two writings greatly strengthens the evidence for the Johannine authorship of 1 John since tradition with unanimity and emphasis ascribes the fourth gospel to the apostle John" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, p. 187).

Second and Third John: The similarity in content, language and style of these two short epistles clearly demonstrates that they were written by the apostle John. These epistles further strengthen the teachings in his first epistle and his gospel. Hiebert writes that "The relationship of these letters to 1 John further makes it clear that all three must have come from the same hand. Second John bears the closest resemblance to the first. More than half of its contents are also contained in 1 John. Both of these epistles have many phrases which recall, or are identical with those of the first epistle" (Ibid., p. 218).

"The internal evidence is overwhelmingly in favor of the traditional view. The historical situation reflected in these brief letters harmonizes with our information concerning the closing years of John's life. The contents of the epistles point to the Johannine authorship. We conclude with Salmon that 'no account of the matter seems satisfactory but the traditional one, that the writer was the Apostle John' " (Ibid., p. 221).

The Epistle of Jude

In the first verse of this short epistle, the author identifies himself as the brother of James. The salutation here is very similar to that in the epistle of the apostle James, which begins: "James, **a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.**" The opening of Jude's epistle is nearly identical: "Jude, **a servant of Jesus Christ** and brother of

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James, to the called *saints*, sanctified by God *the* Father and kept in Jesus Christ.”

Very little is known about Jude. However, we know that Jude or Judas was the third of the four half brothers of Jesus, which means that he was probably much younger than James (Mark 6:3). Also, Luke noted that all of Jesus’ half-brothers were counted among the original 120 disciples (Acts 1:14). Jude was not only a disciple but also a special eyewitness of Jesus’ life. He lived with Jesus, talked with Him, ate with Him, and worked with Him on a daily basis.

The Epistle of Jude is the only important document from which we can glean an understanding of Jude’s character. Hiebert illustrates as follows: “This brief letter offers practically the only material available for an evaluation of the character of Jude. The epistle reveals him to have been possessed of keen mental abilities. It shows that he was a ‘man of clear perceptions, vivid imagination, intense sensibility, and strong will.’ He had the ability to give clear and forceful expression to his thoughts. His metaphors are vivid and incisive. He was a man of resolute purpose and strong desires. He had profound convictions and the courage to contend for those convictions.

“The impression left by the epistle is that Jude was a man of stern and unbending character. Yet he may well have been of a more tender nature than the epistle would suggest. In dealing with the insidious errors which were rearing their heads within the churches, loyalty to Christ demanded an uncompromising opposition which found expression in vehement denunciation. His love for the truth of God and the souls of men compelled him to speak forth in fiery denunciation against the destructive influences of the false teachers. But when addressing the brethren, there are glimpses of an affectionate nature and a tender spirit. Thrice he addresses the readers as ‘beloved’ (vv. 3, 17, 20). He has a heart concern for those who have been ensnared in the evils being combated and counsels a compassionate and saving attitude toward them (vv. 22-23)” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, pp. 167-168).

There is no record, from history or scripture, as to when Jude became a prominent leader in the Church. However, it is probable that he replaced James as the overseer of the church in Jerusalem after James was martyred in 62 AD. After James was killed, many of the Jewish believers began to leave Christianity and turn back to Judaism and to Jewish gnosticism. This development coincided with a rising opposition to the Romans, which led to the Jewish revolt that began in 66 AD. At this time, a “great apostasy” was sweeping the churches, as noted in the three epistles of John, II Peter and many of the epistles of Paul.

Jude probably wrote his epistle from Jerusalem and witnessed these events first-hand. His epistle shows that many believers were following ungodly men who had stealthily crept in and had established themselves in positions of authority. They were perverting the grace of God by granting license to sin. Jude warned that if the brethren followed them, they would be rejecting the teachings of Jesus Christ and abandoning the true faith. They were going “the way of Cain,” following “Balaam’s delusion,” and would perish as those in “the rebellion of Korah.” In short, they were committing the unpardonable sin. If they did not immediately turn back and repent, they would surely lose their salvation.

Apparently, the apostasy was so powerful and the situation was so desperate that Jude urged the believers to fight for the faith. If they did not fight for “the faith once delivered,” they would lose it! One can hear the tone of urgency in his message: “Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, **I was compelled to write to you, exhorting you to fervently fight for the faith, which once for all time has been delivered to the saints.** For certain men have stealthily crept in; those who long ago have been written about, condemning them to this judgment. *They are* ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into

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licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ” (Jude 3-4).

In the most powerful language possible, Jude showed God’s judgment against Israel in the wilderness, against the angels that had sinned, and against those ungodly sinners who were leading the believers away from the true Christ. Next, he exhorted the brethren to build up their holy faith and to reach out and help other brethren who were falling victim to the apostasy: “But you, beloved, *be* building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in *the* Holy Spirit, *so that* you keep yourselves in *the* love of God *while* you are personally awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Now on the one hand, show mercy to those individuals who are doubting; but on the other hand, save others with fear, snatching *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment *that has been* defiled by the flesh. Now to Him Who is able to keep them from falling, and to bring *them* into the presence of His own glory, blameless in exceeding joy, to *the* only wise God our Savior, *be the* glory and greatness, *the* might and authority, even now, and into all the ages of eternity” (Jude 20-25).

The parallels between Jude and II Peter 2 are remarkable. Some scholars think that Jude must have copied from Peter; others have suggested that Peter copied from Jude. However, when the two epistles are closely compared, it is clear that although they cover the same “great apostasy,” they were written from slightly different points of view. In his second epistle, Peter warned the church that the apostasy was coming—it was imminent. In contrast, Jude wrote of it as having already begun and gaining in strength and power. Apparently Peter wrote his second epistle to the church abroad; whereas, Jude, from the tone of his epistle, was addressing Jerusalem and Judea, where the apostasy had already taken hold.

Hiebert discusses the parallels between II Peter and Jude: “Even a casual reading of 2 Peter and Jude makes it obvious that there is a close relation between the two epistles. This relation is confined to 2 Peter 2:1-3:4 and Jude vv. 4-18. The rest of 2 Peter bears no resemblance to Jude. In both there is a discussion of false teachers, of an antinomian type, whose character and influence threaten the Church. The similarities in thought and structure are so remarkable that they cannot be merely accidental. For points of resemblance between the two, compare Jude 7 with 2 Peter 2:6; Jude 8 with 2 Peter 2:10; Jude 9 with 2 Peter 2:11; Jude 10 with 2 Peter 2:12; Jude 16 with 2 Peter 2:18; and Jude 17-18 with 2 Peter 3:2-3.

“But it is equally clear that the two epistles reveal remarkable differences. Obviously one is not merely a copy of the other. Whichever was written later was penned by a writer who maintained his own independence throughout. He adds to, leaves out, and rearranges the material being used in accordance with his own purpose” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, p. 168). Thus, there is no reason to doubt that Jude, the brother of James and Jesus, wrote the Epistle of Jude.

The Epistles of the Apostle Paul

The Apostle Paul

The New Testament contains more information about Paul than about any other apostle. He wrote of himself in many of his fourteen epistles. In addition, the book of Acts contains firsthand, detailed accounts of Paul’s conversion, his ministry and his travels. The *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible* contains this synopsis: “We are dependent on Acts alone for most of our knowledge of Paul’s career. That he was born in Tarsus, and was a citizen of Tarsus by birth; that he was named Saul; that he was educated in Jerusalem ‘at the feet of Gamaliel’ (Acts 22:3); that he was present at the stoning of Stephen

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and was a persecutor of the Jerusalem church; that he made a persecuting trip to Damascus and was converted as he approached this city; that he subsequently engaged in three distinct missionary journeys; that he was arrested in Jerusalem, appealed to Caesar as the right of a Roman citizen, and was sent to Rome for trial—all this we know only from Acts. Paul himself never mentions any one of these items” (vol. 3, pp. 683-684).

Saul was a Roman citizen by birth and was extremely well-educated. As a boy growing up in Tarsus, he must have been educated in the Roman schools and by the local rabbis as well. He also must have been extremely gifted, because he was selected to go to Jerusalem for advanced studies in Judaism. Saul was taught there by Gamaliel, a Pharisee, the most renowned Jewish teacher of his day. There is no indication of Saul’s age when he went to Gamaliel’s school. Since Paul does not mention that he was in Jerusalem or Judea during Jesus Christ’s ministry, it can only be assumed that he returned to Tarsus before Jesus began preaching.

A bit more information about Saul’s education can be gleaned from W. J. Conybeare. He wrote that Tarsus, the city of Saul’s birth, was most famous for its advanced schools in philosophy and general education: “Strabo says that, in all that relates to philosophy and general education, it was even more illustrious than Athens and Alexandria. From his description it is evident that its main character was that of a Greek city, where the Greek language was spoken and Greek literature studiously cultivated” (Conybeare, *Life, Times, and Travels of St. Paul*, p. 22). Conybeare continues: “Where had he been during ... the years in which the foundations of Christianity were laid? We cannot assume that he had remained continuously in Jerusalem. Many years had elapsed since he came, a boy, from his home at Tarsus. He must have attained the age of twenty-five or thirty years when our Lord’s public ministry began. His education was completed; and we may conjecture, with much probability, that he returned to Tarsus....It is hardly conceivable that if he had been in Jerusalem during our Lord’s public ministration there, he should never allude to the fact. In this case, he would surely have been among the persecutors of Jesus and have referred to this as the ground of his remorse, instead of expressing his repentance for his opposition merely to the Saviour’s followers.

“If he returned to the banks of the Cydnus [at Tarsus], he would find that many changes had taken place among his friends in the interval which had brought him from boyhood to manhood. But the only change in himself was that he brought back with him, to gratify the pride of his parents, if they were still living, a mature knowledge of the Law, a stricter life, a more fervent zeal. And here, in the schools of Tarsus, he had abundant opportunity for becoming acquainted with that Greek literature, the taste for which he had caught from Gamaliel, and for studying the writings of Philo and the Hellenistic Jews ... to the point where the ‘young man, whose name was Saul,’ reappears at Jerusalem, in connection with his friends of the Cilician Synagogue, ‘disputing with Stephen’ ” (Conybeare, *Life, Times, and Travels of St. Paul*, pp. 64-65).

Saul, the zealous persecutor who ravaged the churches of God, was the last person that anyone, other than God, would have called to be the apostle to the Gentiles. On his last mission for the high priest in Jerusalem, Saul had letters of authorization to arrest disciples of Jesus Christ in Damascus and bring them bound to Jerusalem for punishment and death. Luke wrote: “Now Saul, still breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, asking him *for* letters *to take* to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who were of that way, he might bring *them* bound, both men and women, to Jerusalem. But it came to pass while he was journeying, as he drew near to Damascus, that suddenly a light from heaven shined round about him. And after falling to the ground, he heard a voice say to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?’ And he said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting. *It is hard for you to kick against the pricks.*’ Then trembling and as-

tonished, he said, 'Lord, what will You have me to do?' And the Lord *said* to him, 'Get up and go into the city, and you shall be told what you must do' " (Acts 9:1-6).

Then, in a vision, the Lord said to Ananias that he was to go to Saul, lay hands on him to receive his sight and baptize him: "And the Lord *said* to him, 'Arise *and* go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in *the* house of Judas for *one* named Saul, from Tarsus; for behold, he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming and putting *his* hands on him, so that he may receive sight.' Then Ananias answered, 'Lord, I have heard from many *people* about this man, how many evil things he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. And *even* in this place he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name.' But the Lord said to him, '**Go, for this man is a chosen vessel to Me, to bear My name before *the* Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel; for I will show him what great things he must suffer for My name.**' Then Ananias went away and came into the house; and after laying *his* hands on him, he said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord has sent me, *even* Jesus, Who appeared to you on the road in which you came, so that you might receive sight and be filled with *the* Holy Spirit.' And it was as *if* scales immediately fell from his eyes, and he instantly received sight; and he arose *and* was baptized" (Acts 9:11-18).

From that time forward, and perhaps to this very day, many Jewish religious leaders have considered Saul the worst defector Judaism ever had. Some leading rabbis have been known to say, "Jesus we understand, but Paul we will never forgive." Jesus specifically chose Saul, who was a zealous Pharisee, steeped in Judaism, to ensure that Judaism and its traditional works of law would never supplant the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ. Frank J. Goodwin wrote of Paul's calling: "A severe training as a strict Pharisee does not seem the most promising preparation for the future Apostle to the Gentiles. But Paul's weakness was his strength. 'We may safely say that if Saul had been less of a Jew Paul the apostle could have been less bold and independent. His work would have been more superficial and his mind less unfettered. God did not choose a heathen to be the apostle to the heathen; for he might have been ensnared by the traditions of Judaism, by its priestly hierarchy and the splendors of its worship, as indeed it happened with the Church of the second century. On the contrary, God chose a Pharisee. But this Pharisee had the most complete experience of emptiness of external ceremonies and the crushing yoke of the law [the traditional laws of Judaism]. There was no fear that he would ever look back, that he would ever be tempted to set up again what the grace of God had justly overthrown, Gal. 2:18. Judaism was wholly vanquished in his soul, for it was wholly displaced" (Goodwin, *A Harmony of the Life of St. Paul*, 1988, p. 16). Thus, Jesus' calling of Saul fulfilled the long revered saying, "God works in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform."

After being baptized by Ananias, Saul remained in Damascus for a short time, testifying that Jesus was the Christ: "Then Saul was with the disciples in Damascus *for* a number of days. And in the synagogues he immediately began to proclaim Christ, that He is the Son of God. And all who heard *him* were amazed and said, 'Is not this the man who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and who came here for this *purpose*, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?' But Saul increased *even* more in power, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this is the Christ" (Acts 9:19-22).

In his epistle to the Galatians, Paul wrote that after his conversion he went into Arabia for three years. During that time Jesus Christ personally taught him in visions. Therefore, the gospel that Paul preached did not come from any of the other apostles. It came directly from Jesus Christ: "But I certify to you, brethren, that the gospel that was preached by me is not according to man; because neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught *it by man*; rather, *it was by the* revelation of Jesus Christ. For you heard of my

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former conduct when I was in Judaism, how I was excessively persecuting the church of God and was destroying it; and I was advancing in Judaism *far* beyond many *of my* contemporaries in my *own* nation, being more abundantly zealous for *the* traditions of my fathers.

“But when it pleased God, Who selected me from my mother’s womb, and called *me* by His grace, to reveal His own Son in me, in order that I might preach Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those *who were* apostles before me; but **I went away into Arabia**, and returned again to Damascus. Then after **three years**, I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Peter, and I remained with him fifteen days. But I did not see *any* of the other apostles, except James the brother of the Lord” (Gal. 1:11-19).

Aside from the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Lord’s call and conversion of Saul, who became Paul the apostle to the Gentiles, is perhaps the greatest act of grace recounted in the New Testament. Because Paul had received this most profound grace, he fully understood the grace of God through Jesus Christ. Therefore, in the same way that God used the apostle John to teach and write more on the love of God than any other apostle, He used the apostle Paul to teach and write more about the magnificent grace of God than any other apostle.

Paul’s Ministry and Apostleship

In the book of Acts, Luke added more details about Paul’s visit to Jerusalem after he returned from Arabia in 36 AD: “And when Saul came to Jerusalem, he attempted to join himself to the disciples; but all were afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. Then Barnabas took him *and* brought *him* to the apostles [James and Peter], and related to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus. And he was with them, coming in and going out in Jerusalem, and speaking boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then he spoke and disputed with the Greeks, but they attempted to kill him. And when the brethren learned of *it*, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus” (Acts 9:26-30).

Paul remained in Tarsus until 40 AD. By that time, through the preaching of the disciples, God had raised up a great number of Gentile believers in Antioch, the first converts to be called Christians. The apostles sent Barnabas to minister to them, but there were so many disciples that Barnabas went to Tarsus and found Paul and brought him to Antioch to help him minister to them (Acts 11:20-26).

Nearly four years later, in the late spring of 44 AD, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Barnabas and Paul were ordained as apostles. Then they went on their first evangelistic tour: “Now there were certain prophets and teachers in the church that was at Antioch, including Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius the Cyrenian, and Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch), and Saul. And as they were ministering and fasting to the Lord, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Separate both Barnabas and Saul to Me for the work to which I have called them.’ And when they had fasted and prayed, they laid hands on them *and* sent *them* out. So then, after being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed away to Cyprus” (Acts 13:1-4). During this first extended tour, Saul was renamed Paul (verse 9).

The Nature of Paul’s Epistles: During the next twenty years of the apostle Paul’s ministry, he and his helpers traveled extensively. God used him to raise up numerous churches throughout Asia Minor, Galatia, Greece, Rome, Italy, Spain and perhaps other countries not mentioned in the book of Acts. Paul wrote epistles to the various churches to instruct them in the gospel of Jesus Christ and to address questions pertaining to

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Christian living. Fourteen of the New Testament epistles were authored by Paul. Nine were written to seven specific churches: Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and I and II Thessalonians. Four are called “pastoral epistles” because they were written to ministers who had worked with Paul: I and II Timothy, Titus and Philemon. The book of Hebrews can be categorized as a general epistle because it was written to the Greek-speaking church at large, rather than to a specific congregation or individual.

Apparently the only epistle that Paul wrote with his own hand was that addressed to the Galatians (Gal. 6:11). He usually dictated his epistles to a scribe. It is known that he used Luke quite extensively, along with Silas, Timothy, and perhaps Mark and others as his scribes. Hiebert writes: “Paul made it a practice to dictate his letters to an amanuensis (scribe), writing the concluding words himself. Tertius, the scribe to whom Paul dictated the Epistle to the Romans, even added a greeting of his own in the letter (Rom. 16:22). Paul’s concluding words to his epistles constituted the evidence of their genuineness (2 Thess. 3:17; 1 Cor. 16:21; Col. 4:18). Apparently he adopted this method of authenticating his letters because of a case of forgery where someone had written a letter to the Thessalonians in Paul’s name teaching that the Day of the Lord was already upon them (2 Thess. 2:1-2, Gr.).

“The epistles bear obvious traces of dictation. Shaw says, ‘We feel we are all the time listening to a *speaker*—one whom we may imagine walking up and down his room, while the pen of the shorthand writer flies swiftly over the parchment to keep pace with the utterance. All the Epistles have this air of being spoken, reported, and passed on without much revisal.’ Yet we must not assume that his letters were dashed off without preparation. They reveal careful planning [and editing]. A close study reveals a careful choice of words in the development of his subject. In epistles like Romans and Ephesians the course of the argument must have been fully worked out before pen was put to paper” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 2, pp. 19-20).

Hiebert has further explained: “The needs and capacities of the readers governed the contents of the epistle directed to them and influenced the application of the Gospel truths contained in it. In a letter Paul could treat important subjects with accuracy and fullness, and yet do so in immediate connection with actual life situations. His epistles are not abstract doctrinal dissertations on some particular aspect of the Christian faith. They were written to meet specific needs and were adapted to the occasion. The epistolary method enabled Paul to stress the truths of Christianity again and again in different contexts and with different applications, all according to the needs of his readers.

“However, the use of the epistolary form, which places Paul on a level of companionship with his readers, does not rob these writings of their authority as Scripture. Everywhere in the lofty, unwavering testimony of the writer there is that sense of authority which gives these writings their force and finality. And the added fact of direct prophetic revelation in his epistles, furthering the progress of Christian doctrine, diffuses over them that certainty and majesty which stamps them as inspired Scripture....It must be admitted that there is in them a lofty spirit and tone that forever distinguishes them from the ordinary letter of that day. In the words of Pratt, ‘The epistles of the N. T. are lifted into a distinct category by their spiritual eminence and power, and have given the word *epistle* a meaning and quality that will forever distinguish it from *letter*. In this distinction appears that Divine element usually defined as *inspiration*: a vital and spiritual endowment which keeps the writings of the apostles permanently “living and powerful,” where those of their successors pass into disuse and obscurity’ ” (Ibid., pp. 14-16).

Based on the internal and historical evidence, there is no question that the apostle Paul wrote the epistles that bear his name. God inspired the apostle Paul to write his epistles in a unique and authoritative manner in order to establish and communicate the

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essential eternal truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the churches of God in his time, and for all ages until Jesus returns.

The Book of Revelation

The book of Revelation, also known as the Apocalypse, is the most intriguing, mysterious and enigmatic book in the Bible. It is fitting that it stand as the last book of the New Testament and of the entire Bible. What God began as recorded in the book of Genesis, He is going to end as recorded in the book of Revelation. The first chapter of Revelation marks the beginning of the end, when Jesus said, “**I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the Ending,**” says the Lord, ‘Who is, and Who was, and Who is to come—the Almighty’ ” (1:8). When all the events in Revelation have been fulfilled, from chapter one through chapter twenty-one, Jesus proclaimed that His work will be done—the end will have arrived. What He started in the beginning, He has finished: “And He said to me, **‘It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.** To the one who thirsts, I will give freely of the fountain of the water of life’ ” (21:6). Genesis and Revelation, encompassing all of Scripture, reveal the plan of God in microcosm. It is fitting that what Genesis began, Revelation finishes.

Concerning Revelation, Hiebert writes that “The book of Revelation is the true capstone of the Bible. It is the only distinctively prophetic book of the New Testament. Other New Testament books contain various prophetic portions, but none of them provides such a sustained prophetic picture of the future as is given in this concluding book of biblical canon. Without it our Bible would be quite incomplete—like a stirring story without an ending or a drama without its climax. It brings the eschatological expectations of the Church to their fitting conclusion [the return of Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of the kingdom of God]. It ‘supplies the finishing touch to the whole panorama of the biblical story.’ It is truly the book of consummation. That which is begun in the book of Genesis is brought to its conclusion in the book of Revelation. It is irreplaceable. For those who have spiritually illuminated eyes, the Apocalypse is one of the most precious and extraordinary writings in the world” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, p. 231).

Many people desire to understand the book of Revelation, but this book is far more difficult to understand than the epistles of Paul. To those who love God and keep His commandments and have a thorough understanding of both the Old and New Testaments, the book of Revelation reveals. To those who do not love God and who transgress His commandments, the book of Revelation conceals.

Hiebert notes this: “Its strange symbolism and grotesque imagery are difficult for the modern reader to envision, leaving the uneasy impression that they are devoid of sober significance. Its sweeping apocalyptic visions of devastating world judgments seem unreal and far removed from the experiences of the common man, striking him as improbable of realization. Although the book presents itself as a ‘revelation,’ not a few have felt that it might more appropriately be designated a ‘concealment.’ For many readers it remains a closed book. It is unquestionably one of the most misunderstood and misused books of the New Testament” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, pp. 231-232).

The Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelation

The prophecies of Daniel and Revelation complement one another. Daniel tells half of the story and Revelation tells the rest of the story. When Daniel desired to under-

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stand the prophecies that God had given to him, an angel of God told him that it was not for him to know their meaning. Rather, the prophecies he wrote would not be understood in his day, but only at the time of the end: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, *even* to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased....And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things*? And he said, **Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.** Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; **but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand**" (Dan. 12:4, 8-10, *KJV*).

But who are the wise? How is it that they will understand and the wicked will not? The wise are those who love God, fear Him and keep His commandments; and because they do, they will understand. "**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *his* commandments: his praise endureth forever**" (Psa. 111:10, *KJV*). In the book of Revelation, the people of God are those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony and faith of Jesus Christ: "Then the dragon was furious with the woman and went to make war with the rest of her seed, **who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ**....Here is *the* patience of the saints; here *are* the ones who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 12:17; 14:12). Therefore, the true people of God are the ones who are wise, and according to the promises of God, they will understand.

In the opening verses of Revelation, Jesus Christ tells John that He had received the revelation from God the Father. Giving it to John, He commanded him to write it in a book and send it to the seven churches in Asia (1:11): "*The* revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him, to show to His servants the things that *are* ordained to come to pass shortly; and He made *it* known, having sent *it* by His angel to His servant John; who gave witness *to* the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, and all the things he saw. Blessed *is* the one who reads, and those who hear the words of this prophecy and who keep the things *that are* written therein; for the time *is* at hand. John to the seven churches that *are* in Asia: Grace and peace *be* to you from Him Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come; and from the seven spirits that are before His throne; and from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him Who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to God and His Father; to Him *be* the glory and the sovereignty into the ages of eternity. Amen" (Rev. 1:1-6).

Jesus furthermore revealed that His sayings in Revelation would be understood only by those who have the Spirit of God. Seven times He said to the churches, "The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches," and once, "The one who has an ear, let him hear." Likewise, in the Gospels, Jesus made this statement eight times: "The one who has ears to hear, let him hear." In saying this, Jesus was clearly talking to the disciples who heard His voice. These sayings were recorded in the New Testament so that future disciples would hear His voice in the written Word. According to the promises of God, they will understand because they willingly hear and obey both Jesus Christ and God the Father.

Jesus made it clear to the apostles, and subsequently to all believers, that they would understand spiritual things that the world would not understand. Although the multitudes did not understand the parables He spoke to them, Jesus revealed the true meaning of the stories to His disciples—and they understood: "And His disciples came to Him and asked, 'Why do You speak to them in parables?' And He answered *and* said to them, 'Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has *understanding*, to him more

shall be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have *understanding*, even what he has shall be taken away from him.

“ ‘For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, “In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, and in no way perceive; for the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and should hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them.” **But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous men have desired to see what you see, and have not seen; and to hear what you hear, and have not heard**’ ” (Matt. 13:10-17).

The entire book of Revelation is much like the parables that Jesus spoke to the multitudes. Revelation was written to reveal to the people of God what the world will be like in the end times. Because it was not written to the people of the world or for the world, the world does not understand it. Only those who have the Spirit of God, love God and keep His commandments will understand. Those who do not have the Spirit of God cannot understand. Hiebert commented: “The book of Revelation makes serious demands upon the would-be interpreter. It was originally given to God’s ‘servants’ and was communicated to them through ‘his servant John’ (1:1). By its very nature, the Apocalypse cannot be expected to yield its true message to one who lives in the open disregard of God and His will (cf. Rev 22:10-15).

“Like other Scriptures, it demands that the interpreter attentively ‘hear what the Spirit saith to the churches’ (2:7). Intellectual acumen and speculative ingenuity are not adequate equipment for the proper unfolding of its message. Spirit-guided receptivity is essential.

“For an adequate unfolding of its message, the interpreter needs a knowledge of the rest of the Bible. As the capstone of the biblical revelation, the Apocalypse is rightly to be understood only in the light of that prior revelation. Ideally, the interpretation of the Revelation should constitute the acme of biblical interpretation. Admittedly the book demands prolonged and diligent study. Smith appropriately remarks, ‘Because of its symbolism, its saturation with Old Testament passages and themes, the various schemes of interpretation that have developed concerning this book through the ages, and the profundity and vastness of the subjects that are here unveiled, I believe that the Apocalypse, above every other book of the Bible, will yield its meaning only to those who give it prolonged and careful study’ ” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, pp. 233-234).

Who Wrote the Book of Revelation? The writer of the book of Revelation identifies himself four times as “John” (1:1, 4, 9; 22:8). This “John” was none other than the apostle Jesus loved, the one who wrote the Gospel of John and three epistles. Most people do not realize that Jesus prophesied that the apostle John would write the book of Revelation. This is recorded in the last chapter of the Gospel of John. After Jesus had commanded Peter three times to feed His sheep, He revealed to Peter how he would die. Then Peter wanted to know what would happen to John: “But when Peter turned, he saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had sat at the supper and *leaned* on His chest, and had said, ‘Lord, who is it that is betraying You?’ Seeing him, Peter said to Jesus, ‘Lord, what *shall happen* to this one?’ Jesus said to him, ‘**If I desire that he remain alive until I come, what is it to you?** You follow Me.’ Then this saying went out among the brethren, that that disciple would not die. However, Jesus did not say to him that he would not die; but, ‘If I desire that he remain alive until I come, what *is it* to you?’ (John 21:20-23).

Although he did not live to see the literal return of Jesus Christ, John remained alive to see the return of Jesus in a vision. Therefore, what Jesus said of John in John

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21:22-23 was, in fact, a prophecy that he would write the book of Revelation. Moreover, as recorded in the first chapter of Revelation, the first vision that John saw was the return of Jesus in the clouds of heaven: "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen" (verse 7).

Because of their lack of understanding, some scholars do not accept the apostle John's authorship of the book of Revelation. However, the early historical evidence and traditions of the early church point to him as the author. Hiebert concurs: "The external testimony for apostolic authorship is solid and early. But the internal evidence admittedly presents serious difficulties to that view. Those scholars who are strongly impressed with the internal difficulties generally conclude that these difficulties overrule the external evidence. But advocates of nonapostolic authorship find it equally or more difficult to identify a John who fits the demands presented by the book. The most certain factor in the confusion of views is the external evidence supporting apostolic authorship. If the apostle John wrote the book, the traditional view has a natural explanation; no other view can satisfactorily explain that tradition. We concur with the conclusion of Hayes. 'We prefer to agree that the tradition of the church is the best authority in the matter, and that this greatest of the New Testament seers and theologians is that apostle of the living heart who lay upon the Master's bosom at the daily meal and came to have the deepest insight into the Master's mind during the life ministry, then was granted the revelation of the Master's ultimate triumph in the visions of the Patmos exile'" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, pp. 251-252).

It can be concluded that the apostle John did, in fact, write the book of Revelation. It was fitting that the disciple whom Jesus especially loved was granted the blessing of writing the last book of the New Testament and Bible.

A Final Summary

Much of the historical and biblical evidence about who wrote the books of the New Testament has been examined. Scripture has informed us that God the Father and Jesus Christ specifically chose certain deeply converted men to write the most important and magnificent book in the world. Contrary to the opinions of scholars, they did not leave the task to nonbelievers and happenstance. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, God the Father and Jesus Christ inspired these chosen men to write the New Testament. Inspired by the Spirit of Truth from the God of Truth, they wrote the truth of God. As the apostle John wrote, "Not a single lie comes from the truth."

In all the commentaries that have been written about the New Testament, this very obvious fact has been overlooked: **God the Father and Jesus used only eight men to write the entire New Testament.** Six of them were chosen apostles of Jesus Christ. Three were eyewitnesses of Jesus' life and ministry—the apostles Matthew, Peter and John. Two were brothers of Jesus Christ—James and Jude. One, Paul, was specially called to be the apostle to the Gentiles, and for three years Jesus Christ personally taught him in visions. The last two men were Mark, who wrote the Gospel of Mark under Peter's supervision, and Luke, who wrote the Gospel of Luke and Acts under Paul's supervision. Furthermore, when one considers the fourteen epistles that the apostle Paul wrote, together with the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, which were written under his direction, one finds that the apostle Paul was responsible for writing more than one-half of the New Testament.

The New Testament was written by, or the writing was supervised by, the chosen apostles of Jesus Christ. Therefore, one can have full faith and confidence that the original Greek text, as preserved in the Byzantine text, contains the words of God.

CHAPTER FOUR

WHEN WAS THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITTEN?

In Chapters One through Three it has been established, from Scripture and from history, who wrote the New Testament and in what language. But when was the New Testament written? The opinions and hypotheses of scholars vary widely. On the one hand, some view the New Testament as a collection of fables and myths verbally passed on by storytellers for generations before any written documents were made. On the other hand, many scholars believe that most of the New Testament was written before the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple in 70 AD.

Robert W. Funk and the Jesus Seminar have presented the following chronological framework for the compilation of the Gospels: “It is essential in assessing the historical reliability of the gospels to bear in mind that sayings ascribed to Jesus and individual stories-told about him circulated orally for two decades or more before the first written records were created. It was another two decades or more before the first narrative gospel was composed. And then it was another decade or two before the derivative gospels were composed. In round numbers, the chronology of the written gospels may be divided into twenty-year periods:

- 30 C.E. death of Jesus
- 50+ C.E. written collections of sayings (Q)
- 70+ C.E. first narrative gospel (Mark)
- 90+ C.E. derivative gospels (Matthew, Luke, John)”
(*The Acts of Jesus*, p. 8).

In their chronology of the compilation of the Gospels, the only year that is correct is the year of Jesus’ crucifixion—30 CE, or 30 AD. All the other dates are far too late. To support their hypotheses, these scholars have posited a chronological framework for the writing of the Gospels that spans sixty years. By using such a scheme, they are able to discount the possibility that any of the Gospels were completed before 70-90 AD. This chronology is not based on the true facts of history or the verifiable dates of historical persons mentioned in the Gospels. It also ignores the internal evidence in other books of the New Testament that clearly testify as to when the Gospels were written. The framework is inaccurate because it is based on contrived theories.

Other Chronologies for the Writing of the New Testament

In his book, *Redating the New Testament*, John A. T. Robinson masterfully demonstrated that the books of the New Testament were written relatively early. Robinson also presented many hypotheses that various other scholars had developed. From Robinson’s book comes this summary of Harnack’s chronology: “Harnack’s survey, which has never been repeated on so comprehensive a scale, gives a good indication of where critical opinion stood at the turn of the century [1900]. It still carried many of the marks of

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the Tübingen period and continued to operate with a span of well over a hundred years. Isolating the canonical books of the New Testament ... we have the following summary:

48-49	I and II Thessalonians
53	I and II Corinthians, Galatians (?)
53-54	Romans
57-59	Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians (if genuine), Philippians
59-64	Pauline fragments of the Pastoral Epistles
65-70	Mark
70-75	Matthew
79-93	Luke-Acts
81-96	(‘under Domitian’) I Peter, Hebrews
80-110	John, I-III John
90-110	I and II Timothy, Titus
93-96	Revelation
100-130	Jude
120-140	James
160-175	II Peter”

(Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, 1976, pp. 4-5).

Robinson also summarized the chronologies of W. G. Kummel and Norman Perrin, who offer dates ranging from 50 to 140-150 AD for the writing of the New Testament. Conversely, most of the dates in the third century, assigned by other scholars, are far too late.

In spite of the late dates assigned by some scholars, it is possible to determine when the books of the New Testament were written. However, in order to establish more accurately when these books were written, it is essential to begin with known scriptural facts and historical dates that are verifiable.

The Gospel of Matthew

Matthew, who was a Levite and a tax collector, was one of the first disciples that Jesus had called to be an apostle. From the internal evidence of his Gospel, it seems probable that he was taking notes of Jesus’ teachings from the beginning of His ministry in 26 AD. Later, the book of Acts describes how the apostles gave themselves to “the ministry of the Word”; that is, they began to write and compile the teachings of Jesus within the first year after His crucifixion in 30 AD (Acts 6:4). Furthermore, because of the thousands of new believers (Acts ch. 2-5), it was necessary for the apostles to write down Jesus’ words of the New Covenant before the Passover of 31 AD (Matt. 26:17-30, John 13-17). Otherwise, the thousands of new believers would not be able to properly observe their first New Covenant Passover. In Robinson’s opinion, “This first stage must have gone back to the earliest days of the Christian mission and the instruction of converts in the 30s and 40s, and was doubtless perpetuated after the demand for more complex formulations arose” (Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, p. 96).

Robinson further suggests that the apostle Paul must have had some version of “the words of the Lord” that he took with him on his first evangelistic mission: “Inasmuch as Paul went out in the first instance as the delegate of this church [Antioch], we may suppose that this was primarily the tradition of the ‘words of the Lord’ which he took with him, and it would explain the otherwise rather unexpected affinity alike in doctrine and in discipline between Paul and Matthew, especially in early writings like the Thessalonian epistles....If this is the case, it would go a long way to explain the external

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tradition that Matthew was the first gospel” (Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, p. 97).

Matthew emphasized the need for the apostles to clearly distinguish between the teachings of Jesus and the teachings of Judaism as espoused by the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Gospel tells of how Jesus warned the apostles to beware of the doctrines of the latter groups: “And Jesus said to them, ‘Watch out, and be on guard against the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.’ Then they reasoned among themselves, saying, ‘*It is because we did not take bread.*’ But when Jesus knew *this*, He said to them, ‘O *you* of little faith, why are you reasoning among yourselves that *it is* because you did not bring bread? Do you still not understand? *Do you* not remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets you took *up*? Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets you took *up*? How is it that you do not understand that I was not speaking of bread *when I told* you to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees?’ **Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees**” (Matt. 16:6-12).

It was necessary for them to distinguish between Christ’s teachings and the doctrines of the Pharisees and Sadducees as soon as possible because all the early believers were converts from Judaism. Robinson made this point: “Matthew’s gospel shows all the signs of being produced for a community (and by a community) that needed to formulate, over against the main body of Pharisaic and Sadducaic Judaism, its own line on such issues as the interpretation of scripture and the place of the law, its attitude toward the temple and its sacrifices, the sabbath, fasting, prayer, food laws and purification rites, its rules for admission to the community and the discipline of offenders, for marriage, divorce and celibacy, its policy toward Samaritans and Gentiles in a predominantly Jewish milieu, and so on. These problems reflect a period when the needs of co-existence [as with churches within synagogues] force a clarification of what is the distinctively Christian line on a number of practical issues which previously could be taken for granted [as previously taught by the religious establishment of Judaism—the Pharisees and Sadducees]” (Ibid., p. 103).

As a Levite familiar with the Scriptures, “Matthew understood the way in which Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament. More references [from the prophet Isaiah] appear in his gospel to this fact than in any of the other three gospels” (William Steuart McBirnie, *The Search for the Twelve Apostles*, p. 176).

The internal evidence gives a fairly good idea of when Matthew began writing his Gospel. However, there is no direct indication as to when he finished it or when it was in general use. Robinson concurs: “Matthew could therefore in a real sense turn out to be both the earliest and [because of later edits] the latest of the synoptists” (Ibid., p. 102). An attempt to determine when the writing of the Gospel of Matthew began and ended logically should begin with an examination of when the Epistle of James was written, because the apostle James’ epistle was the first New Testament epistle completed, and it is saturated with Jesus’ teachings as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew. Thus, the Gospel of Matthew must have been written before James wrote his epistle.

The Epistle of James

The Internal Evidence of James

From the internal evidence of the Epistle of James as well as other historical writings, it can be determined that James wrote his epistle very early. First, James addressed his epistle “To the twelve tribes, which *are* in the dispersion” (1:1). This means that his epistle was sent to the Jewish communities scattered in all the countries around the Medi-

terranean Sea, as well as to Babylon, Persia, Media, Parthia, Scythia and Europe. Furthermore, this is clear evidence that the Jews during the time of the apostles knew where ten tribes of Israel were located—they were not lost, as later Jewish historians have claimed.

Second, the churches that James wrote to were still a part of the synagogue system. He wrote: “Now then, **if a man comes into your synagogue** wearing gold rings *and dressed* in splendid apparel, and *there* comes in also a poor man in lowly apparel, and you give preference to the one who is wearing the splendid apparel, and say to him, ‘Seat yourself here in the best place’; and you say to the poor man, ‘Stand over there,’ or, ‘Sit here under my footstool’; then have you not passed judgment among yourselves, and have made yourselves judges *with* evil opinions?” (James 2:2-4). And in chapter five there is this instruction: “**Is anyone sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church**, and let them pray over him after anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick one, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him” (verses 14-15). What James wrote is significant because he clearly shows that the early Jewish and Israelite churches in the Diaspora were offshoots of the synagogues, with no indication of Gentile converts.

Third, in 38 AD, Peter was the first apostle that God used to preach to the Gentiles—Cornelius and his household in Caesarea. As Peter was speaking, God miraculously gave the Holy Spirit to the uncircumcised Gentiles (Acts 10). Two years later, about 40 AD, there were many Gentiles in Antioch who believed (Acts 11:19-21). When the apostles in Jerusalem heard about it, they sent Barnabas to Antioch to teach them (Acts 11:22-24). But when he saw that there were a great number of Gentile believers, Barnabas knew that he needed help to teach them. So he traveled to Tarsus to find Saul and bring him back to Antioch to help him (Acts 11:25-27). They continued to teach the Gentile believers in Antioch for four years. In 44 AD, because of the famine in Jerusalem and Judea, Barnabas and Saul brought food and famine relief from the Gentile brethren in Antioch to the brethren in Jerusalem (Acts 11:29-30). They stayed in Jerusalem a short time and then returned to Antioch (Acts 12:25).

Fourth, when God later began to call the Gentiles, there was an influx of Gentiles into the churches, as in the case of the church at Antioch, which was mostly Gentile. However, James makes no mention of any Gentiles in his epistle. This shows that he wrote his epistle well before there were many Gentile converts in the churches and well before circumcision became a burning issue.

Fifth, Saul and Barnabas were ordained as apostles in Antioch in late spring 44 AD (Acts 13:1-3). They immediately set out on their first evangelistic tour, which lasted from late spring 44 AD to the fall of 46 AD (Acts 13:4-14:26), and then returned to Antioch, remaining there until 49 AD (Acts 14:28). At that time, certain teachers of the sect of Pharisees, who believed, came from Jerusalem, teaching that it was obligatory to circumcise the Gentiles in order for them to be saved (Acts 15:1-5). After many heated debates with them, the church at Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem to settle the question. The Jerusalem Conference occurred in the fall of 49 AD, probably around the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. The apostle James wrote a letter to the Gentiles in Antioch about the conference’s decisions concerning circumcision and other matters and sent it to them by the hand of Paul and Barnabas. Judas and Silas were also sent to explain the decision to the brethren (Acts 15:6-35). The fact that James wrote the letter of Acts 15 to the Gentiles indicates that he had to have written his epistle well before 49 AD, because he makes no mention of Gentile converts or the issue of circumcision in his epistle.

Hiebert, defending an early date for the Epistle of James, writes: “Among those who reject the authorship of James, the dates assigned to the epistle vary greatly. Even

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among those who accept that authorship there is considerable divergence of opinion. Some would date it shortly before the martyrdom of James, while others place it early, even before the Jerusalem Conference. The contents of the epistle seem to point to an early date.

“One phase of the evidence for an early date is the ‘very slight line which appears to exist between Judaism and Christianity.’ There is likewise an absence of developed Christian phraseology and a lack of elaborated Christian doctrine. The Christian distinctives mentioned in the epistle—the lordship of Christ and the hope of His early return (1:1; 2:1; 5:8)—were characteristic of Christianity from its very inception.

“The fact that there is no mention of circumcision points to a time before this burning question arose in the Church. Before the admission of Gentiles into the Church, the obligation of the ceremonial Law [and circumcision] upon the believers was taken for granted by Jewish Christians, hence needed no discussion. But with the Jerusalem Conference this became a critical problem, and it seems unlikely that James in writing to Jewish Christians would have nothing to say about it if the problem had already arisen.

“The total absence of any reference to Gentiles and their relation to Christianity is strange indeed if Gentile Christians are already a prominent element in the Church. The epistle gives no hint of the existence of Gentile churches. Neither does it contain any directions concerning the social relations between Jewish and Gentile believers, a problem which was acute after the Jerusalem Conference (cf. Gal 2:11, ff.)....

“It is highly improbable that the epistle was written after the outbreak of the controversy concerning faith versus works [as in the epistles of Paul]...The epistle [of James] belongs to a period before the finer distinctions which arose out of that question were developed. Thus Smith says, ‘There was, when the letter was written, no need to distinguish between *works*, *good works*, and *works of the Law*, but these distinctions became vital for subsequent controversialists. The word *justification* had evidently not acquired a technical sense, and the author shows no acquaintance with the doctrine of Paul.’

“We conclude that the evidence points to a date before the Jerusalem conference. The date may thus be suggested as about A.D. 46, at least before A.D. 49. This view makes James the earliest book in the New Testament” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, pp. 52-53).

Robinson also understood that James was written very early: “Perhaps ... we should date the epistle of James early in 48—not later, and possibly a year or so earlier: let us say 47-8....This early dating has had surprisingly persistent support....The problem of a letter written in Greek to an audience inside as well as outside Palestine remains. But it is no more difficult then than ten years later....If ... the gospel of Matthew, whose tradition is closest to that of this epistle, was also beginning to take shape, in Greek, in a similar milieu at the same time, then the epistle of James will no longer be an anomalous exception. It can take its place, alongside other literature in the process of formation in the second decade of the Christian mission, as the first surviving finished document of the church” (Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, pp. 138-139).

The “second decade of the Christian mission” refers to the 40s AD. It is quite possible that James wrote his epistle in 40-41 AD—only ten to eleven years after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ—rather than in the mid-to-late 40s. Moreover, in 40 AD the only Gentile church was in Antioch, and the question of circumcision had not yet become an issue there, so there would have been no need for James to write of it in his epistle. However, that soon changed. During Paul and Barnabas’ first evangelistic tour in 44-46 AD, they established many Gentile churches on the island of Cyprus and in Asia Minor.

When Was the New Testament Written?

At the same time, the number of Gentile believers undoubtedly increased in Antioch. Therefore, it can be further estimated, based on the evidence of the book of Acts as well as the internal evidence of the Epistle of James and James' extensive use of the Gospel of Matthew, that James wrote his epistle much earlier than Robinson's date of 47-48 AD or Hiebert's date of 46 AD. It is more probable that James wrote his epistle in 40-41 AD—much earlier than most scholars have concluded.

The Similarities Between the Epistle of James and the Gospel of Matthew

Key to understanding when Matthew's Gospel was written are the similarities between the Epistle of James and the Gospel of Matthew. These similarities are profound because they suggest that Matthew's Gospel was completed and used extensively to teach new converts long before James wrote his epistle. Hiebert noted fourteen similarities between the Epistle of James and the Sermon on the Mount as found in Matthew 5-7: "The epistle offers a larger number of similarities to the Sermon on the Mount than any other book in the New Testament. If the apostle Paul developed the significance of the death of Jesus, it may be said that James developed the teaching of Jesus. Scott asserts, 'There is scarcely a thought in the Epistle which cannot be traced to Christ's personal teaching' " (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, p. 57).

The fact that James' epistle is saturated with the teachings of Jesus is even more profound, because during Jesus' ministry James was not a disciple of Jesus. He probably knew very little about Jesus' teachings. Neither he nor his brothers believed that Jesus was the Messiah (John 7:2-5). However, after Jesus was resurrected, He revealed Himself to James. It is apparent that after that time, James believed in Jesus and, therefore, was part of the 120 original disciples (Acts 1:15). This means that James had to have learned the teachings of Jesus from the other apostles. More importantly it suggests that James also used and extensively studied the writings of Matthew, which became the Gospel of Matthew. Therefore, the extensive similarities between the Epistle of James and the Gospel of Matthew are all the more profound.

In addition, a more extensive analysis of James and Matthew reveals far more similarities than the fourteen noted by Hiebert. There are a total of sixty-seven direct or indirect references to Jesus' teachings as recorded by Matthew in his Gospel that are incorporated by James into his epistle. This indicates that James (and undoubtedly all the apostles) used and studied Matthew for a prolonged period of time before James wrote his epistle in 40-41 AD.

A Comparison Between the Epistle of James and the Gospel of Matthew, in Three Sections

A detailed comparison of the sixty-seven parallel references between the Epistle of James and the Gospel of Matthew is given below. This comparison reveals that by the time James wrote his epistle, he had thoroughly incorporated the teachings of Jesus into his thinking.

Section One:

<i>James</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>James</i>	<i>Matthew</i>
1:1	10:5	1:18	13:23, 30,37
1:2-3	5:10-12	1:19	5:22
1:4	5:48	1:21	5:5, 17
1:5	7:7-12	1:22	5:22

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1:6-7	21:18-22	1:23	7:26-27
	14:25-31	1:25	5:17-21
1:8	6:24		7:26-27
1:9	5:3		19:17-19
1:10-11	6:27-28	1:26	5:37
1:12	5:10-12		15:10-11, 17-20
1:13-15	15:18-21	2:1-4	7:1-5
1:17	7:11	2:5-6	18:10; 11:15-30

Section Two:

<i>James</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>James</i>	<i>Matthew</i>
2:7	7:12	3:2	18:1-10
	22:37-40	3:5	12:33-37
2:11	5:27	3:12	7:16-21
	5:21	3:15	16:21-23
2:12	9:10-13	3:16	20:20
2:13	5:7	3:17-18	5:9
	6:14-15	4:4	6:19-24
2:14	7:21-23	4:6	23:4-12
2:15-16	25:31-46	4:7	4:1-11
	21:21		
2:18	19:16-23		16:21-23
2:19	8:29-33	4:8	4:17
2:20	21:28-31	4:10	5:3-4
2:24	5:16	4:12	12:1-8
	9:20-22		16:24-27

Section Three:

<i>James</i>	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>James</i>	<i>Matthew</i>
5:1-3	6:19-21	5:14	10:1
5:6	23:29-36		21:22
5:10	5:12	5:15	7:7-12
5:12	5:33-37		17:15-21
		5:16	6:7

The evidence is overwhelming that the apostle James used the Gospel of Matthew as a basis for much of his epistle. Thus, it can be concluded that Matthew was written and completed (perhaps with some further edits later) and was in general use well before 40-41 AD. **But it is also possible that Matthew had completed his Gospel as early as 33-35 AD.** This supposition would fully harmonize with the fact that the apostles gave themselves to "the ministry of the Word" in the first year after the crucifixion. As a Levite, Matthew undoubtedly was in charge of writing and compiling the teachings of Jesus, as described in Acts 6:4. That is why the Gospel of Matthew was the first gospel account to be completed and why it is the first book of the New Testament.

From the chronology in the book of Acts and also from tradition, it is known that the apostles remained in Jerusalem from 30 to 42 AD. Beginning in 42 AD they began to preach the gospel to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, who were scattered throughout the world in the Diaspora. Jesus commanded the apostles to carry the gospel to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. 10:5-23). Tradition is almost unanimous that in

42 AD most of the apostles left Jerusalem to preach the gospel not only to the house of Israel but also to all nations (Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 24:47-48; Acts 1:8). (See Appendix Q, pages 846-849 for details of where the apostles traveled.)

The apostle James must have written his epistle to “the twelve tribes in the Diaspora” in 40-41 AD, about a year before most of the apostles left Jerusalem to preach to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He probably sent his epistle to them shortly after it was written, to prepare the way for the other apostles who would preach the gospel to them.

The Jews and Israelites—believers and nonbelievers alike—who attended the synagogues in the Diaspora always looked to Jerusalem for leadership. In their synagogues they kept copies of the Old Testament in both Hebrew and Greek. Prior to the coming of Jesus Christ, they always looked to the priests and Levites in Jerusalem as authorities in religious matters. Consequently, after Christ had completed His ministry, the believers in the scattered synagogues of the Diaspora would have respected the leadership of the apostle James. He was in charge of the Jerusalem church, and he was the brother of the Lord, of the house of David. Hiebert substantiates this fact: “As Jews, the readers [of his epistle] had been accustomed to look to Jerusalem for religious leadership. This background conditioned them to look for and accept guidance and doctrinal instruction from James, the recognized leader of the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem. As the leader of the Jerusalem church, the care of these Jewish Christian congregations [yet in the synagogues] would in a special way fall to the province of James. He would come into contact with various representatives of these congregations as different members came to Jerusalem for business or to attend the Jewish national feasts. His discovery of conditions among them led him to use the epistolary method to meet their needs, a method also proposed by him at the Jerusalem Conference” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, p. 51).

Those in the Diaspora must have received James’ epistle about a year prior to the other apostles’ departure from Jerusalem. Thus other apostles’ preaching of the gospel would have had James’ added authority. Assuming that the Gospel of Matthew was completed and in use by 35 AD, the apostles leaving Jerusalem in 42 AD would undoubtedly have taken copies of the Gospel of Matthew with them to teach those in the Diaspora. Additionally, since the Old Testament was written, compiled and canonized by Levites, from Moses to Ezra, it was important that Matthew, a Levite, be the first to complete and publish his account of the gospel. This fact made it clear to those in the Diaspora that the teachings of Jesus Christ had God’s personal stamp of approval. Moreover, the Jews and Israelites could also perceive in Matthew’s account the linkage between the priestly tradition and the ministry of the gospel, which shared processes and patterns:

- 1) teaching, preaching and prophesying;
- 2) writing down the teachings and prophecies to create a permanent record for teaching and preaching in the future;
- 3) canonizing for the final, God-breathed and God-approved publication.

Thus, when the apostles went to those in the Diaspora, they had the authority of Jerusalem—the place where God had placed His name; the authority of prophecy from the Old Testament; and the authority of Jesus’ teachings, written by a Levite—the apostle Matthew. For the Jews and Israelites in the Diaspora, the authority of the apostles was additionally confirmed by God through the apostles’ preaching of the gospel and through miracles the apostles performed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Gospel of Mark

The Gospel of Mark, written in the most elementary Greek, is the shortest of the four Gospels. Because of this, when the United Bible Societies translates the New Testament into various languages, it generally begins with the Gospel of Mark. As of December 31, 2001, Harold P. Scanlin of the United Bible Societies reported that “at least one book of the Bible has been translated into 2,287 languages.” Because the Gospel of Mark is usually the first book of the New Testament translated, one can conclude from this remark that it has been translated into more than 2,000 languages. Thus, a prophecy of Jesus found in Mark 13:10 has been fulfilled, “the gospel must first be published among all nations,” before He returns.

When Was the Gospel of Mark Written?

According to Hiebert, “The traditional testimony concerning the dating of Mark is divided. Irenaeus, according to the more natural meaning of his testimony, placed it after the death of Peter and Paul. This dating is supported by the *Anti-Marcionite Prologue*. The testimony of Papias is not explicit on this point, but he is generally held to support the position of Irenaeus, since Irenaeus seems to have drawn his testimony from Papias. But Clement of Alexandria and Origen, on the other hand, placed the composition of the gospel during the lifetime of Peter. The latter view makes possible a much wider range in the proposed dating of the gospel.

“Robertson feels that ‘these contradictory traditions leave us free to settle the date of Mark’s Gospel apart from the stories in Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria.’ Accordingly, the suggested dates for Mark have varied greatly, from A.D. 44 to 130. A. B. Bruce remarks that ‘the endless diversity of opinion means that the whole matter belongs sharply to the region of conjecture.’ Scholars who date the gospel during the lifetime of Peter advocate ‘the fifties or late forties’ ” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 1, p. 92).

The archaeological discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls helps us pinpoint an earlier date for Mark. In his book, *The Search for the Twelve Apostles*, McBirnie wrote concerning the Gospel of Mark: “ ‘Professor Jose O’Callaghan, a Spanish scholar of the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, has identified 19 tiny scraps of papyrus, found in 1947 among the Dead Sea Scrolls as fragments of a copy of St. Mark’s gospel written around 50 A.D.

“ ‘The date is what matters. Biblical scholars have long assumed that Mark’s gospel, based on recollections of the Apostle Peter, was set down in writing shortly before Peter’s death in Rome, which would date it around 68 A.D.

“ ‘Since Jesus was crucified about 33 A.D. [actually, 30 AD], the previous dating of Mark’s gospel—generally regarded to have been the first one written—left a hiatus of 35 years in which the historical details of the life of Jesus either were transmitted by word of mouth or by now-lost records (such as the famous “Q” document which scholars have long postulated but never found).

“ ‘O’Callaghan’s papyrus fragments, established by scientific methods as having been in a Palestinian library in 50 A.D., indicate that Mark’s gospel may well have been in circulation within about a dozen years of the time of Jesus’ death.

“ ‘This is very important because it means Mark’s record had to survive the acid test of any journalistic or historical writing—being published at a time when it could be read, criticized, and if unauthentic, denounced, by thousands of Jews, Christians, Romans and Greeks who were living in Palestine at the time of Jesus’ ministry’ (*Glendale*

News Press, Saturday, April 15, 1972, United Press International, Louis Cas-sels)" (McBirnle, *The Search for the Twelve Apostles*, p. 251).

It is an astonishing fact that fragments of the Gospel of Mark were scientifically dated as having been in a library in 50 AD. Since Peter was an apostle to the circumci-sion—that is, to the Jews—such a finding means that under Peter's supervision, Mark must have written his gospel very early. As the article quoted by McBirnle indicates, Mark's gospel "may well have been in circulation within about a dozen years of the time of Jesus' death." That would mean that it was written about 42 AD.

There is no reason why Mark's account of the gospel could not have been written by 42 AD. According to the chronology in the book of Acts, the apostle Peter returned to Jerusalem in 38 AD, after he had preached the gospel to Cornelius and his household. When he arrived in Jerusalem, he was questioned by those of the Circumcision Party about why he went to uncircumcised Gentiles. Peter answered that God had inspired the whole event (Acts 11:1-18). After that, since there is no record that Peter left Jerusalem or Judea, he apparently remained there until 44 AD. At that time Herod Agrippa I be-headed the apostle James—the brother of John—and had Peter arrested and put in prison. After an angel helped Peter escape from prison, he left Jerusalem (12:3-17). This means that Peter and Mark could have recorded their account of the gospel between 38 and 44 AD. They were both in Jerusalem during those six years. Therefore, 42 AD is the most realistic date for the Gospel of Mark to have been completed.

It is also important that Mark was a Levite because Levites were educated to copy and preserve the Old Testament. Paul confirmed this when he wrote that Mark was a cousin of Barnabas: "Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, concerning whom you received in-structions (if he comes to you, receive him)" (Col. 4:10). In the book of Acts, Luke re-corded that Barnabas was a Levite of substantial means: "And Joses, who was surnamed Barnabas by the apostles (which is, being interpreted, 'son of consolation'), a Levite, born in the country of Cyprus, had land; and he sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet" (Acts 4:36-37). Thus, God used a Levite to write a second gospel, the Gospel of Mark.

However, Mark did not write of his own accord. As Peter's secretary or amanu-ensis, Mark wrote his account under Peter's direct supervision. Of this, Ernest L. Martin wrote: "As for the Gospel of Mark, it has long been known that John Mark was recog-nized as the secretary, or amanuensis, of the apostle Peter. Indeed, the great humility of Peter is conspicuous in all parts of the Gospel of Mark. Where anything is related which might show Peter's weakness, we find it recorded in detail; whereas the other Gospels often show Peter's strengths. In Mark there is scarcely an action by Christ in which Pe-ter is not mentioned as being a close observer or communicant. All of this affords a rea-sonable deduction that the writer of the Gospel of Mark was an eyewitness and close ob-server of the events recorded about Christ's life from the baptism of John to his crucifix-ion in Jerusalem. The ancient testimony of Papias, in the early second century, that Mark was the secretary of the apostle Peter (and not the actual eyewitness himself) has such good credentials, and the internal evidence of the Gospel itself is so compatible to this view that it seems evident that the Gospel of Mark is really the Gospel of Peter" (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, pp. 335-336).

Furthermore, Peter was one of the three special eyewitnesses of Jesus' transfigu-ration. When we combine this with the fact that Mark was a Levite, we see God's dou-ble stamp of approval on the Gospel of Mark. Peter, a leading apostle and special eye-witness, related the life and teachings of Jesus to Mark, a Levite, who wrote them down.

Scientific dating of the fragments of the Gospel of Mark found in the Dead Sea scrolls establishes that the Gospel of Mark was widely circulated by 50 AD. Moreover, it can be concluded that the apostle Peter distributed copies of the Gospel of Mark among

the churches in Jerusalem and throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria, thus fulfilling his mission as an apostle to the circumcision. This typifies the pattern that God has always used throughout the Old and New Testaments: 1) Preach the Word and 2) Follow up the preaching with the written Word so that the believers can have a permanent record.

The book of Acts gives no indication of where Peter went after he left Jerusalem in 44 AD. It merely says that after he had escaped from prison by the hand of an angel, Peter “related to them [the brethren gathered at Mark’s mother’s house] how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, ‘Report these things to James and the brethren.’ Then he departed and went to another place” (Acts 12:17). It is quite possible that as an apostle to the circumcision, Peter went to Babylon (I Peter 5:13), where the greatest number of Jews in the world lived at that time. Undoubtedly, Peter took with him a copy of Mark’s Gospel, which contained his narration of Jesus’ ministry.

Because of all the evidence—from history, the chronology of the book of Acts, and the scientific dating of the fragments of the Gospel of Mark—one can confidently identify 42 AD as the most probable year of the book’s completion.

The Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts

The Gospel of Luke

When was the Gospel of Luke written? As Hiebert writes, the opinions of scholars vary greatly: “The third gospel does not contain specific information to which we can appeal as unmistakable evidence for a precise date. Suggestions for the date of composition range from A.D. 50 to 150. The date assigned to the gospel is related to the date accepted for Acts, since it was written before Acts (Ac 1:1-2)” (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 1, pp. 135-136).

Contrary to the opinions of some scholars, from the chronology of the book of Acts it is quite possible to know when Luke wrote his account of the gospel. Luke traveled with the apostle Paul on his second and third evangelistic tours, or missionary journeys. In the summer of 58 AD, he was with Paul when the latter was arrested in Jerusalem and taken to Caesarea. Paul was held under house arrest for just over two years, until 60 AD. During Paul’s Caesarean protective custody (58-60 AD), Luke had free access to Paul. It was during this time that Luke must have written his gospel account and compiled nearly all of the information for the book of Acts. Jerusalem was not far from Caesarea, and it would have been easy for Luke to go to Jerusalem, where the eyewitness records of Jesus’ ministry must have been kept—probably under the care of the apostle James, the brother of the Lord.

Hiebert has suggested that Luke must have written his Gospel during the time that Paul was in prison in Caesarea, stating: “Apparently Luke remained in Palestine during Paul’s two-year imprisonment in Caesarea (Ac 24:23-27). Luke must have used the time to travel extensively in Palestine in search of further information. He would not only talk with the leaders but would endeavor to gain additional information from any believers who remembered their personal contacts with Jesus some thirty years before. Various individuals would recall listening to the gracious teaching and parables of Jesus and recite the thrill of His healing ministries. Luke’s reference to various women by name indicates that he visited women who were closely connected with the story of Jesus (Lk 8:1-3, 24:10). It is not improbable that Luke personally visited Mary the mother of Jesus, who apparently was living in the care of the apostle John. Certainly his infancy narrative (Lk 1-2) was drawn from a special source. He relates the nativity story from

Mary's standpoint and includes numerous reminiscences, which only a loving mother would be able to supply. Luke indicates in the prologue that he had access to various written accounts of the story of Jesus (Lk 1:1-2)" (Ibid., pp. 134-135).

Hiebert continues: "A strong point in favor of this early date is the fact that during Paul's two-year imprisonment at Caesarea (Ac 24:27) Luke would have had ample opportunity to carry out his investigations and write his gospel. That Luke did use the time to make his investigations seems unquestionable, but it does not prove that he put his Gospel into final form during that time. It is possible that he began writing at Caesarea and finished later, at Rome, or elsewhere" (Ibid., p. 139).

Because Luke was scribe and record-keeper for the apostle Paul, we can conclude that Luke wrote his Gospel account under Paul's supervision, during the latter's imprisonment in Caesarea. It is most likely that Luke completed his Gospel in 59 AD.

The Book of Acts

Luke must have begun writing the book of Acts while still at work on his Gospel, in 58-59 AD. In order to write chapters 1 through 13, Luke must have had access to records that were in Jerusalem, under the apostle James' care. These chapters contain information that was known only to the original 120 disciples as recorded in Acts 1:13-15. However, from chapter 14 to the end of the book (chapter 28), Luke has recorded the ministry of the apostle Paul. Luke accompanied Paul on many journeys and was an eyewitness of the events that he recorded in Acts.

Luke was with Paul on the journey to Rome, as we find in his account in Acts 27:1-44; 28:1-16. On reaching Rome, Paul hastened to carry out the instructions that Jesus had given him to witness to the Jews there, as he had witnessed to those in Jerusalem: "Now *on* the following night [after he had witnessed to the Jews in Jerusalem], the Lord stood beside him *and* said, 'Be of good courage, Paul; for as you have fully testified the things concerning Me at Jerusalem, so you must bear witness in Rome' " (Acts 23:11). Only three days after being placed under house arrest in Rome, there the apostle Paul called for the religious leaders of the Jews. Luke wrote: "And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the commander of the camp; but Paul was allowed to remain by himself with the soldier who kept him. Now it came to pass *that* after three days, Paul called together those who were chief among the Jews" (Acts 28:16-17). Paul preached Christ and the resurrection to them. Some believed and others did not believe (verses 17-29).

Luke concluded the book of Acts very abruptly, without the customary "Amen" that was normally used to signify that the book was indeed finished. Without any explanation he suddenly jumped ahead from the beginning of Paul's two-year imprisonment in Rome to the end of it: "And Paul remained two whole years in his own hired house, welcoming all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, no man forbidding *him*" (verses 30-31). The book of Acts ends with these two verses. The very abruptness of this ending may furnish a clue as to when Acts was completed. We know that Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment in 63 AD. Luke might well have concluded his writing of the book of Acts shortly before Paul's release, because Luke gives no indication that Paul had been released. Based on the historical and internal evidence of the book of Acts, Luke probably began to write the book in 58 AD and finished it in 63 AD.

Hiebert states that: "The earliest possible date for the completion of Acts is two years after Paul's arrival in Rome as a prisoner (Ac 28:30-31). The exact time of that arrival is uncertain, but it was probably the spring of A.D. 61; thus A.D. 63 would be the earliest possible date for Acts. Acts must have been composed later than the third gos-

pel, since the reference in Acts 1:1 to 'the former treatise' is a natural reference to that gospel. Thus the date of Acts is naturally connected with the date accepted for Luke" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 1, p. 259).

After a lengthy discussion of various scholars' conclusions on the dating of Luke and Acts, Robinson concurs that Luke and Acts were written at this time: "There is nothing, as far as I can see, in the theology or history of the Gospel or Acts that *requires* a later date if the prophecies of the fall of Jerusalem do not. From the internal evidence of the two books we should therefore conclude (as did Eusebius) that Acts was completed in 62 or soon after, with the Gospel of Luke some time earlier" (Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, p. 92).

The Gospel of John

The dating of the Gospel of John has presented scholars with many difficulties. John was one of the three special eyewitnesses who saw the vision of the transfiguration of Jesus Christ. Also, in the first chapters of the book of Acts, John was described as one of the leading apostles, along with Peter. Moreover, there is little doubt that John helped to compile and write Jesus' teachings, along with the other apostles and eyewitnesses, after the crucifixion in 30 AD and before the Passover of 31 AD (Acts 6:4).

Hiebert comments on the divergence of opinion concerning the date of the Gospel of John: "No precise date for the writing of the fourth gospel can be established. The old view of the radical scholars that the gospel arose during the middle or end of the second century has been effectively silenced by the papyrus discoveries in Egypt. The latest possible date for the composition of the gospel is A.D. 98, for according to the testimony of Irenaeus, John continued to live at Ephesus until the time of Trajan (A.D. 98-117). Eusebius, in summing up the earlier tradition concerning the gospels' order of appearance, asserts that John knew of the synoptics and that he finally wrote down what he had been proclaiming orally....

"That John could have written the gospel last of all, as late as A.D. 95, cannot be summarily denied by reason of his advanced age. Clement of Alexandria relates that even after John's return from Patmos he carried on an active ministry as overseer of the churches in Ephesus and the surrounding districts. It is clear that John must have continued to be physically strong and mentally vigorous into old age....

"In recent years there has been support for a date before A.D. 70. This is largely due to the recognition that the intellectual milieu behind the fourth gospel can be reconciled with the general atmosphere prevailing in Palestine before A.D. 70. This view receives impetus from the generally accepted Aramaic element behind this gospel as well as the thought climate revealed by the Dead Sea Scrolls. The view of Gardner-Smith that the fourth gospel is independent of the synoptics also supports an early date. The present tense in John 5:2, 'Now there *is* in Jerusalem by the sheep gate,' is pointed out as internal evidence that it was written before A.D. 70, since the writer otherwise would have used 'was'.

"Turner and Mantey hold that the picture of the conflict between Judaism and Christianity, with Christianity on the defensive, is more appropriate to a date before A.D. 70, since with the collapse of the Jewish state and the rise of Christianity the situation was altered. But it may be replied that the conflict as described is due to the author's faithful depiction of the scene as it existed at the time of his story, although he wrote later" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 1, pp. 222-223).

Although Hiebert brings out some very strong facts for an early dating of the Gospel of John, he himself holds to a later date: "While a date before A.D. 70 is appealing, it faces the difficulty of being forced to reject the established tradition of the church

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that the gospel of John was written sometime in the last quarter of the first century. We hold that the most satisfactory date falls between A.D. 80 and 95" (Ibid., p. 223). In contrast, Robinson postulates an earlier date for the beginning of the Gospel of John: "If we envisage the various gospels coming into being more or less concurrently, and in the case of John largely independently, there is no objection to seeing, as Brown does, some limited cross-fertilization—in either direction—between Johannine and other developing traditions, particularly the Markan and Lukan....Yet, while the gospels were being formed concurrently, the span of development seems to have been somewhat more prolonged in John than with the synoptists, making John still the last gospel to be finished—though possibly also the first to be put down in a consecutive form. For the units of its tradition are not so much isolated *pericopae* [desparate accounts from various sources] as ordered wholes shaped by a single mind, originally no doubt, as Eusebius says, for preaching purposes. We might therefore hazard the following very rough and tentative timetable:

- 30-50 formation of the Johannine tradition and proto-gospel in Jerusalem
- 50-55 first edition of our present gospel in Asia Minor
- 60-65 II, III and I John
- 65 + the final form of the gospel, with prologue and epilogue"
- (Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, pp. 306-307).

From the internal evidence, it appears that the main body of the Gospel of John was indeed written earlier than Hiebert suggests. Although the prologue and the epilogue were added later, John also wrote these sections. If Matthew was completed in 35 AD and Mark in 42 AD, there is no reason to hold to the late date of 95 AD for the Gospel of John. Therefore, it can be concluded that John must have finished the main body of his Gospel and taken it with him when he and most of the other apostles left Jerusalem in 42 AD. The prologue and epilogue must have been added during John's final canonization of the New Testament, which probably took place sometime after 95 AD.

The Epistles of the Apostle Paul

The New Testament contains more information about Paul than about any of the other apostles. Moreover, the apostle Paul wrote more books of the New Testament than any other writer. In the book of Acts, we have a very detailed account of his life and ministry. He himself wrote that he labored more than the other apostles (I Cor. 15:10). All but one of Paul's epistles were written within the span of thirteen years. We are greatly aided in dating Paul's epistles by the chronology in the book of Acts.

Robinson's Chronology of the Epistles of Paul

As the basis for his redating of the New Testament, John A. T. Robinson compared Paul's epistles with the chronology found in the book of Acts. He found no reason to doubt that the apostle Paul did, in fact, write the epistles that bear his name, as well as the book of Hebrews. The chronology that Robinson presents seems much more realistic than the chronologies set forth by other scholars, which indicate much later dates. Here is Robinson's chronology of the events in Acts and the life of the apostle Paul:

- 33 Conversion
- 35 First visit to Jerusalem
- Second (famine-relief) visit to Jerusalem

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- 47-48 First missionary journey
- 48 Council of Jerusalem
- 49-51 Second missionary journey
- 52-57 Third missionary journey
- 57 Arrival in Jerusalem
- 57-59 Imprisonment in Caesarea
- 60-62 Imprisonment in Rome (Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, 1976, pp. 52-53).

Based on the chronology of the book of Acts, Robinson designates the approximate dates when Paul wrote his epistles, as shown in the following chart:

I Thessalonians	early 50
II Thessalonians	50-51
I Corinthians	spring 55
I Timothy	autumn 55
II Corinthians	early 56
Galatians	later 56
Romans	early 57
Titus	late spring 57
Philippians	spring 58
Philemon	summer 58
Colossians	summer 58
Ephesians	later summer 58
II Timothy	autumn 58
Hebrews	c. 67 (Ibid., p. 352).

Robinson's approach—using the chronology of the book of Acts as the basis for determining the approximate dates of the epistles of the apostle Paul—is the correct approach. Robinson believed that once the approximate dates for the epistles of Paul were established, the other books of the New Testament could be dated more accurately. Robinson, like Martin (*Restoring the Original Bible*), understood that the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD was a key event for establishing the approximate dates of writing of nearly all the New Testament books. The reason that 70 AD is such an important date is because none of the New Testament writers mentioned the destruction of Jerusalem as a past event—only as an event that had been prophesied and had yet to occur. Robinson rightly concluded that all the books of the New Testament were, therefore, written before 70 AD, with the possible exception of parts of the Gospel of John and the book of Revelation.

When Paul's Epistles Were Written: An Assessment Based on a Revised Chronology of Acts

In developing any chronology of the epistles of the apostle Paul based on the chronology of the book of Acts, it must be remembered that the dates are approximate and, there can be some slight variations—whether slightly earlier or slightly later. Robinson notes that the dates of his chronology could vary slightly: “It must be stressed again that the absolute datings [of the books of the New Testament] could be a year or so out either way” (Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, p. 84).

The revised chronology presented in this commentary is likewise as close an approximation as possible to the year and season in which the apostle Paul wrote his epis-

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ties. There is no question that Paul wrote all the epistles that bear his name. Yet from the first century until now, there has been a great deal of scholarly debate about the authorship of the book of Hebrews. Because the style of writing in Hebrews is very close to Luke's, some have concluded that Luke wrote it. However, when the internal evidence is closely examined, it reveals that this book also originated with the apostle Paul. He undoubtedly used Luke as his scribe. Nevertheless, with the exception of Hebrews, Paul made it clear that the epistles he wrote were from him. From the very first, Paul signed all his epistles, whether he personally wrote them or had others assist him in the writing. For example, at the close of II Thessalonians, Paul wrote, "The salutation of Paul by my *own* hand, which is *the* sign in every epistle—so I write" (II Thes. 3:17). Also see: I Cor. 16:21, Gal. 6:11, Col. 4:18 and Philem. 19. (For a detailed chronology of Acts, see Appendix Q, pages 846-849.)

The Revised Chronology: Below is a postulated chronology of key events in the book of Acts, which diverges somewhat from that of Robinson. (All years are AD):

- 33 Saul's conversion
- 36 Saul's first visit to Jerusalem
- 40-44 Saul in Antioch with Barnabas
- 44 Saul's second visit to Jerusalem with Barnabas, bringing famine relief
- 44 - (Late spring) Saul and Barnabas ordained as apostles
- 44 First evangelistic journey—late spring 44 to fall 46
- 46-49 Paul and Barnabas minister in Antioch
- 49 Jerusalem Conference, Paul and Barnabas separate
- 49-52 Paul's second evangelistic journey
- 53-58 Paul's third evangelistic journey
- 58 Paul and company journey from Macedonia to Jerusalem
- 58 (Around Pentecost) Paul in Jerusalem, witnessing to the Jews; rescued by Roman centurion and soldiers, taken as prisoner to Caesarea under protective custody
- 58-60 Paul prisoner in Caesarea, sent to Rome in fall of 60
- 61-63 Paul prisoner in Rome in his own hired house
- 63 (Spring) Paul released
- 67 Paul back in prison in Rome

Based on this amended chronology of the book of Acts, a revised chronology of when Paul wrote his epistles follows. (Again, all years are AD.):

- 1) I Thessalonians written from Corinth in 50
- 2) II Thessalonians written from Corinth in 51
- 3) Galatians written from Antioch in spring 53
- 4) I Corinthians written from Ephesus in late winter of 56 before Passover of 57
- 5) II Corinthians written from Philippi in late summer 57
- 6) Romans written from Corinth in winter 57
- 7) Gospel of Luke written by Luke in 59
- 8) Hebrews, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon written during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, 61-63
- 9) I Timothy and Titus written after Paul's release from house arrest in Rome in 63; Paul goes to Spain and probably Britain
- 10) II Timothy written while in prison in Rome the second time in 67

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When these dates are compared side by side with Robinson's, it is evident that they diverge. Substantial differences from Robinson's chronology are explained below. (Differences that are slight—those of one and a half years or less—are inconsequential and therefore are not explained.) The comparison chart below shows the differences between the two chronologies.

The Revised Chronology

I Thessalonians, 50
II Thessalonians, 51
Galatians, spring 53
I Corinthians, winter 56
II Corinthians, late summer of 57
Romans, winter 57
Gospel of Luke by Luke and Paul, 59
Hebrews, Ephesians, Philippians,
Colossians and Philemon, 61-63

I Timothy, 63
Titus, 63
II Timothy, 67

Robinson's Chronology

I Thessalonians, early 50
II Thessalonians, 50-51
Galatians, late 56
I Corinthians, spring 55
II Corinthians, early 56
Romans, late spring 57

Hebrews, 67
Ephesians, late summer 58
Philippians, summer 58
Colossians, summer 58
Philemon, summer 58
I Timothy, autumn 55
Titus, spring 58
II Timothy, autumn 58

Explanations of Differences in Dates Between the Two Chronologies

Galatians: After the Feast of Tabernacles, in the autumn of 52 AD, Paul returned to Antioch, where he stayed until early summer 53 AD (Acts 18:23). However, in the spring of 53 AD, perhaps just before the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the apostle Peter visited Antioch. During the Feast, certain Jews from James also came from Jerusalem to visit. They were of the "Circumcision Party" and demanded that Gentile converts to Christianity be circumcised as Judaism had mandated for all Gentile proselytes. In addition, they practiced many other traditional laws of Judaism, such as, "It is unlawful for a man who is a Jew to associate with or come near to anyone of another race" (Acts 10:28; 11:2-3). Therefore, Christian Jews in Jerusalem, apparently with the apostle James' approval, continued to separate themselves from Gentiles when they ate, and they pressured Barnabas and the apostle Peter, who was an apostle to the circumcision, to do the same.

Peter knew better, because fifteen years earlier, in 38 AD, God had first directed him to preach to the Gentiles—Cornelius and his household in Caesarea. In Acts 10:9-17, God gave Peter a special vision, showing him that he should not call any man common or unclean. By the time Peter came to Caesarea, for the first time in his life, he understood through the vision God had given him that it was not unlawful to associate with Gentiles and eat with them. When Peter entered Cornelius' house, he said: "**You know that it is unlawful for a man who is a Jew to associate with or come near to anyone of another race. But God has shown me that no man should be called common or unclean. For this reason, I also came without objection when I was sent for....Of a truth I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons, but in every nation the one who fears Him and works righteousness is acceptable to Him**" (Acts 10:28-29, 34-35).

Then Peter expounded the gospel of Jesus Christ to Cornelius and his entire

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household. In response to his preaching, they believed. While Peter was still speaking, God poured out His Spirit upon them, just as He had done to the apostles and the believers on the day of Pentecost in 30 AD (Acts 2). By pouring out the Holy Spirit upon Cornelius and his household, God again demonstrated to the apostle Peter that He accepted uncircumcised Gentiles who believed. Cornelius and his household were immediately baptized, without first being circumcised as Judaism required of Gentile converts (Acts 10:47-48). Then Peter stayed with them for a number of days, undoubtedly eating and drinking with them. When Peter came back to Jerusalem, he was immediately confronted by members of the circumcision faction, who demanded that he explain why he had gone into a Gentile's house and eaten with them: "And when Peter went up to Jerusalem, those of *the* circumcision disputed with him, saying, 'You went in to men who were uncircumcised, and did eat with them' " (Acts 11:2-3). After Peter fully explained what had transpired, they all agreed, although perhaps very reluctantly, that God had indeed given the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles without the requirement of physical circumcision (Acts 11:4-18).

God first sent Peter to preach the gospel to the Gentiles in 38 AD. Only one year later, in 39 AD, God raised up many Gentile believers in the city of Antioch in Syria (Acts 11:19-21). When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that many Gentiles believed, they sent Barnabas to minister to them. Barnabas found a great number of new Gentile believers and enlisted Saul to assist him. Later Saul was ordained an apostle and renamed Paul. The apostle Paul's ministry to the Gentiles began when Barnabas brought him to Antioch in 40 AD to help teach the Gentiles. In 49 AD, eleven years after Peter first preached to the Gentiles, some Pharisaic teachers who professed belief in Jesus Christ came to Antioch when Paul and Barnabas were there. They insisted that the Gentiles were obligated to be circumcised and observe the traditions of Judaism, without which they could not be saved.

These false teachers caused a great deal of trouble because the church in Antioch consisted primarily of uncircumcised Gentiles: "Now certain men who had come down from Judea were teaching the brethren, *saying*, 'Unless you are circumcised after the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved' [the Greek, οὐ δύναμαι, *ou dunamai*, meaning the impossibility of being saved]. Therefore, after a great deal of strife and arguing with them by Paul and Barnabas, the *brethren* appointed Paul and Barnabas, and certain others from among them, to go up to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem about this question....But there stood up certain of those who believed, who were of the sect of the Pharisees, saying, 'It is obligatory to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses' " (Acts 15:1-2, 5).

Those Pharisees, who believed, were demanding that the Gentile disciples of Christ be circumcised, as were Gentile converts to Judaism, or be condemned as unregenerate. In addition, they were demanding that the disciples keep the Law of Moses according to their Pharisaic traditions. However, Jesus Himself imposed no such requirements. In fact, as recorded in Mark 7, Jesus Christ rebuked the Pharisees, because by practicing their traditions, they were deliberately rejecting the commandments that God delivered to Moses as recorded in the Book of the Law.

At the Conference in Jerusalem, Peter stood up and related how God had first used him to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. Next, Paul and Barnabas recounted the signs and wonders that God had done through them among the Gentiles. Then the apostles and elders, under James' leadership, agreed that the Gentiles were not required to be circumcised or to observe the other traditional laws of Judaism. Their decision was not a rejection of the laws that God delivered to Moses, but a rejection of the Pharisees' traditional religious laws and legalistic interpretations of God's law (Acts 15:7-32).

Later, when Peter came to the Gentile church in Antioch in 53 AD—the apostle

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Paul's home church—he played the hypocrite in reverting to practicing the traditional laws of Judaism that Jesus Christ had denounced and the apostles in 49 AD had rejected. The pressure exerted by the Jews who had come from James was so intense that even the apostle Barnabas, who was a Levite, joined Peter in this hypocrisy.

Peter had no excuse. He had been present when Jesus Christ soundly condemned these traditional practices as contrary to the laws of God (Mark 7:1-13). Therefore, the hypocritical behavior of Peter and Barnabas, and of James' emissaries, violated and perverted the gospel of Jesus Christ. Their actions amounted to a public repudiation of God's calling of the Gentiles, as well as of the apostles' decree in Jerusalem in 49 AD concerning the Gentiles and physical circumcision. If Paul had not contested these practices and instead had allowed them to continue and take root, his entire ministry to the Gentiles, as well as the preaching of the Gospel to the world in the future, might have been jeopardized. This is why, in the presence of the entire congregation in Antioch, Paul publicly rebuked the apostle Peter, Barnabas and the rest of the Jews for attempting to judaize the Gentile believers.

So vehement was Paul against compulsory circumcision and the traditions of Judaism that at the Jerusalem Conference, in 49 AD, he faced off alone against James, Peter and John. He refused to back down: "And I went up [to Jerusalem] according to revelation, and laid before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run in vain; (But indeed, Titus, who *was* with me, being a Greek, was not compelled to be circumcised.) Now *this meeting* was *private* because of false brethren brought in secretly, who came in by stealth to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, in order that they might bring us into bondage; **to whom we did not yield in subjection, not even for one hour**, so that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. But *the gospel that I preach did not come* from those reputed to be something. (Whatever they were does not make any difference to me; God does not accept *the* person of a man.) For those who are of repute conferred no *authority* upon me. But on the contrary, after seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, exactly as Peter *had been entrusted with the gospel* of the circumcision; (For He who wrought in Peter for *the* apostleship of the circumcision, wrought in me also towards the Gentiles;) And after recognizing the grace that was given to me, James and Cephas and John—those reputed to be pillars—gave to me and Barnabas *the* right hands of fellowship, *affirming* that we *should go* to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision" (Gal. 2:2-9).

Furthermore, God inspired Paul to preserve in his epistle to the Galatians the entire episode of Peter's hypocrisy, so circumcision and the traditions of Judaism would never be mixed with the gospel of Jesus Christ: "But when Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to *his* face, because he was to be condemned; for before certain *ones* came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles. **However, when they came, he drew back and separated himself from the Gentiles, being afraid of those of the circumcision party. And the rest of the Jews joined him in this hypocritical act, insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.**

"But when I saw that they did not walk uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in the presence of them all, 'If you, being a Jew, are living like the Gentiles, and not according to Judaism, why do you compel the Gentiles to judaize? We who are Jews by nature—and not sinners of *the* Gentiles—knowing that a man is not justified by works of law, but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, in order that we might be justified by *the* faith of Christ, and not by works of law; because by works of law shall no flesh be justified.

" 'Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ, *and* we ourselves are found to be sinners, *is* Christ then *the* minister of sin? MAY IT NEVER BE! For if I

build again those things that I destroyed, I am making myself a transgressor. For I through law died to law, in order that I may live to God. I have been crucified with Christ, yet I live. *However*, it is no longer I, but Christ lives in me. For *the life* that I am now living in *the flesh*, I live by faith—that *very faith* of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me. **I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness is through works of law, then Christ died in vain’**” (Gal. 2:11-21).

During this same period, other preachers of the circumcision party were apparently active in the churches in Galatia. Because of this, after Paul’s encounter with Peter and the Jews from James in Antioch, and undoubtedly as soon as Paul heard that judaizers were troubling the churches in Galatia, probably in the late spring of 53 AD, he wrote his epistle to the churches of Galatia from Antioch (Gal. 1:1-16; 5:12; 6:12-13). In the opening greeting of his epistle, Paul included all the brethren who were with him: “Paul, *an* apostle, not *sent* from men nor *made* by man, but by Jesus Christ and God *the* Father, Who raised Him from *the* dead; **and all the brethren who are with me**, to the churches of Galatia” (Gal. 1:1-2). There is very little doubt that these were the brethren of the church in Antioch who had witnessed Paul’s rebuke of Peter and the other Jews.

The conditions were so grave that Paul warned the Galatians that those who preached a mixture of Judaism and Christ were perverting the gospel of Jesus Christ. The force of his words reveals how desperate the situation in the churches of Galatia had become: “I am astonished that you are so quickly being turned away from Him Who called you into *the* grace of Christ to different gospel, which *in reality* is not another *gospel*; **but there are some who are troubling you and are desiring to pervert the gospel of Jesus Christ**. But if we [the apostles] or even an angel from heaven, should preach a gospel to you *that* is contrary to what we have preached, LET HIM BE ACCURSED! As we have said before, I also now say again. If anyone is preaching a gospel contrary to what you have received, LET HIM BE ACCURSED! Now then, am I striving to please men, or God? Or am I motivated to please men? For if I am yet pleasing men [by teaching and practicing the traditions of Judaism], I would not be a servant of Christ” (Gal. 1:6-10).

Because of all these factors, the epistle to the Galatians must have been written earlier than most other chronologies show. (Harnack alone has posited the date of 53 AD.) When examining the circumstances that underlay the writing of the epistle, it becomes evident that Robinson’s date of 56 AD is far too late. In 56 AD, Paul was in Ephesus, and there is no mention of Ephesus in Paul’s epistle to the Galatians. Moreover, Paul would have been derelict in his duty to God and the brethren if he had allowed the false gospel—a mixture of circumcision and Judaism—to flourish three more years before confronting the problem. Paul was not typically so slow to act. Therefore, when all these facts are considered, there can be little doubt that he wrote the epistle to the Galatians immediately after his confrontation with Peter and the Jews from James.

Finally, as the book of Acts records, Paul immediately followed up his epistle to the Galatians with a third evangelistic tour beginning in the summer of 53 AD. He went first to the churches in Galatia to strengthen the brethren there and then to Phrygia (Acts 18:23). After that he sojourned in Ephesus for more than three years.

Hebrews: Robinson dates the epistle to the Hebrews at 67 AD, during Paul’s second Roman imprisonment. However, this is far too late, because by 67 AD nearly all Christians had fled Jerusalem and Judea because of the Jewish revolt against Rome, which began in 66 AD. Some Christian and non-Christian Jews escaped to Pella. Most Christian Jews of Judea and Galilee probably fled to Asia Minor and Ephesus, where there were a large number of believers. Thus, it is likely that Paul wrote the epistle to the Hebrews soon after he arrived in Rome in 61 AD.

Before his Caesarean imprisonment (58-60 AD), Paul had given witness to those

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in Jerusalem (Acts 22:1-21) and to the Jewish leaders of the Sanhedrin (Acts 23:1-10). The night after Paul's final appearance before the Sanhedrin, Christ appeared to him while he was under Roman protective custody in Fort Antonia. Paul recounted what the Lord said to him: "Now *on* the following night, the Lord stood beside him *and* said, 'Be of good courage, Paul; for as you have fully testified the things concerning Me at Jerusalem, so you must bear witness in Rome' " (Acts 23:11). Because Paul had appealed to Caesar, Paul and Luke were put on a ship bound for Rome by Festus in the fall of 60 AD. The ship left port just before winter, and the voyage was rough. Paul and Luke were shipwrecked, but God spared their lives, and they arrived in Rome late winter 61 AD (Acts 27:1-44; 28:1-13).

When Paul arrived in Rome, he was again placed under house arrest. While awaiting his hearing, he was freely allowed to meet with many people, to whom he boldly preached the gospel. Only three days after his arrival, he called for the chief Jewish religious leaders. As Jesus had told Paul in a special vision, he was to witness to the Jewish religious leaders in Rome: "And when they appointed a day *for* him *to speak*, many came into his lodging to *hear* him; *and* he expounded to them from morning until evening, fully testifying *of* the kingdom of God and persuading them *of* the things concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and *from* the prophets. And some were truly convinced of the things that were spoken, but some did not believe: and they departed in disagreement with one another after Paul had spoken *these* words; 'Well did the Holy Spirit speak by Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, saying, "Go to this people and say, 'In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, but in no way perceive. For the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing, and they have closed their eyes; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them.' " Be it known to you, that the salvation of God has therefore been sent to the Gentiles; and they will hear.'

"And after he had said these things, the Jews went away with much debate among themselves. And Paul remained two whole years in his own hired house, welcoming all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, no man forbidding *him*" (Acts 28:23-31).

Shortly after Paul witnessed to the Jewish leaders, at the very beginning of his first imprisonment in Rome, in 61-63 AD, he must have written the book of Hebrews. God clearly inspired him to write the book of Hebrews as an additional written witness and warning to underscore his spoken witness. However, instead of writing his missive in the usual epistolary form, Paul chose to style it as a homily or sermon. Undoubtedly, Paul had preached this sermon many times over. Perhaps he had already written out much of the material that went into the composition of Hebrews in something akin to sermon notes. As William L. Lane notes, "Grasser calls Hebrews 'a sermon sent from one place to another' " (Lane, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 47A, p. lxxi). Hebrews contains the most refined Greek passages in the New Testament, according to Lane, "far superior to the Pauline standard both in vocabulary and sentence building" (Ibid., p. xlix). Perhaps this is why some scholars feel that Paul could not have written Hebrews. But Paul might well have refined his text through frequent preaching. Furthermore, the sermon style in Hebrews shows a similarity with the style of Paul's preaching as found in Acts 13:15-41 and also in Romans 10:15-21 and 15:9-12. Adding to this the many similarities with the Gospel of Luke, the book of Acts, and II Corinthians, which Luke wrote for Paul, it seems likely that Paul dictated the text of Hebrews to Luke.

Many scholars have wondered: If Paul wrote Hebrews, why didn't he sign his name to the book of Hebrews, as he had done with all his other epistles? The answer is that Paul could not have signed his name or even given a hint that he wrote it. Why?

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When Paul was in Jerusalem, the Jews who found him in the temple seized him with the intent to kill him. But the Roman soldiers rescued Paul from their hands, and the centurion allowed him to speak to the multitude in Hebrew. They all listened attentively to him until he mentioned the word “Gentiles.” At that point a riot ensued, and they would have killed Paul, but the centurion and his soldiers rescued him and brought him to the safety of Fort Antonia (Acts 21:40; 22:1-21). Later, the centurion and two hundred Roman soldiers escorted Paul by night to Caesarea because forty assassins had conceived another plot to kill him. Therefore the apostle Paul would not have signed his name to the book of Hebrews, because even those Jews in Jerusalem and Judea who had professed Christ would never have heeded anything written by him. Had Paul made his authorship known, the Jews would have destroyed the message—and possibly the messenger.

Another very important reason why Paul must have written the book of Hebrews in early spring 61 AD is that he does not mention the martyrdom of James, which took place in the spring of 62 AD. The warning message contained in Hebrews would most likely have been delivered first to Rome and then to Jerusalem and the churches in Judea before James was brutally killed by the zealots. Some who participated in this ignominious act had been counted by James among the believers in Jesus Christ when Paul had visited James and the elders in Jerusalem, just before Paul’s Caesarean imprisonment in 58 AD. Luke wrote: “Paul went with us to *see* James; and all the elders *were* assembled. And after greeting them, he reported one by one the things that God had worked among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard *this*, they glorified the Lord. Then they said to him, ‘Brother, you see how many thousands of Jews there are who believe, and they are all zealous of the law’ ” (Acts 21:18-21).

James was killed in the spring of 62 AD, during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Josephus provides this account of the death of James: “But this younger Ananus, who ... took the high priesthood, was a bold man in his temper, and very insolent; he was also of the sect of the Sadducees, who are very rigid in judging offenders, above all the rest of the Jews ... when, therefore, Ananus was of this disposition, he thought he had now a proper opportunity [to exercise his authority]. Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the sanhedrim of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others [or, some of his companions]; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned” (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Bk. XX, ch. IX, pt. 1).

Eusebius, a noted historian of the Catholic Church, reports the following concerning the death of James: “When Paul appealed to Caesar and was sent to Rome by Festus, the Jews were disappointed of the hope in which they had devised their plot against him and turned their attention to James the Lord’s brother, who had been elected by the apostles to the episcopal throne at Jerusalem. This is the crime that they committed against him. They brought him into their midst and in the presence of the whole populace demanded a denial of his belief in Christ. But when, contrary to all expectation, he spoke as he liked and showed undreamt-of fearlessness in the face of the enormous throng, declaring that our Saviour and Lord, Jesus, was the Son of God, they could not endure his testimony any longer, since he was universally regarded as the most righteous of men because of the heights of philosophy and religion which he scaled in his life. So they killed him, seizing the opportunity for getting their own way provided by the absence of a government, for at that very time Festus had died in Judaea, leaving the province without governor or procurator. How James died has already been shown by the words quoted from Clement, who tells us that he was thrown down from the parapet and clubbed to death” (Eusebius, *The History of the Church*, bk. 2: 23).

In the last chapter of the book of Hebrews, there are additional clues that indicate

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Paul must have written this book during the first part of his imprisonment in Rome in the spring of 61 AD, while James was living. Paul's concluding remarks imply that James was still alive. He exhorts his readers: "**Remember your leaders**, who have spoken the Word of God to you, considering the outcome of *their conduct, and imitate their faith*"; and "**Follow your leaders, and be submissive**; because they are looking out for your spiritual well-being, as *those who must* be ready to give account *to God*; in order that they may do this with joy, and not *with* groanings, because that *would* be unprofitable for you....Now I admonish you, brethren, to patiently listen to this message of exhortation, for I have written to you in only a few words. *I want you to* know that our brother Timothy has been released; with whom, if he comes soon enough, I will see you. **Greet all your leaders** [another indication that James was alive], and all the saints [they had not fled to Pella or Asia Minor]. **Those from Italy send greetings to you.** *May God's grace be with all of you. Amen*" (Heb. 13:7, 17, 22-25).

If Paul had written Hebrews in 67 AD, as Robinson suggests, James would have been dead five years, and only a vestige of the church would have remained in Jerusalem and in Judea because most of the believers would have fled to Pella and Asia Minor before the Jewish rebellion in 66 AD.

The comment "Those from Italy send greetings to you" indicates that Paul finished writing Hebrews during his first imprisonment in Rome. At that time he had his own hired house, and many brethren would come to visit him and hear him preach every Sabbath. This comment also shows, the brethren were aware that he was writing to the Hebrews. Furthermore, a notation at the end of Hebrews indicates that Timothy delivered Paul's written message to them: "To *the* Hebrews, written from Italy, *delivered* by Timothy."

Based on these facts, it can be concluded that Paul wrote to the Hebrews from Rome in the spring of 61 AD. He sent his missive to the churches in Rome and in Jerusalem as a final written witness and warning before the martyrdom of James in 62 AD and the Jewish revolt against Rome, which began in 66 AD. In spite of Paul's warnings, when the revolt against Rome began, many of the zealots who had previously professed Christ rejected Him and His teachings. If Hebrews had been written in 67 AD, as Robinson thought, then the warnings that God inspired Paul to write would have arrived too late.

It can be ascertained, then, that the book of Hebrews was completed in the spring of 61 AD and immediately sent to the churches in Rome and Jerusalem. Because of the importance of the book of Hebrews, by late 61 AD, early 62 AD, copies were made and distributed to all the churches of God in Judea and Galilee. Later, because of the profound teachings in this book on the priesthood of Jesus Christ, copies of Hebrews were sent to all the churches—Jewish and Gentile.

Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon: In his chronology, Robinson has Paul writing these four epistles, as well as the epistle to Titus, during his Caesarean imprisonment in 58-60 AD. However, the internal evidence shows that these epistles were more likely written during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome in 61-63 AD. Ephesians and Colossians must have been written in early spring of 63. The city of Laodicea, which was nearly destroyed by an earthquake in 60 AD, is not mentioned by Paul in his epistle to the Colossians. Furthermore, the notation at the end of each epistle shows that they were written from Rome rather than Caesarea, and there is no internal evidence in these epistles to indicate that the closing notations might be incorrect: "to *the* Ephesians, written from Rome *delivered* by Tychicus"; "to *the* Philippians, written from Rome, *delivered* by Epaphroditus"; "to *the* Colossians, written from Rome *delivered* by Tychicus and Onesimus"; and "to Philemon, written from Rome, *delivered* by Onesimus, a servant."

In the book of Acts, Luke recorded that during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome

he was not restricted in his preaching or in receiving people. “And Paul remained two whole years in his own hired house, welcoming all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, no man forbidding *him*” (Acts 28:30-31). During Paul’s two-year imprisonment in Rome he had communications with the ministers and churches that God had raised up through his ministry. Apparently, Tychicus—an elder from Colossae—delivered Paul’s epistle to the Ephesians as well as to the Colossians. Onesimus accompanied him and delivered Paul’s epistle to Philemon. Epaphroditus, an elder from Philippi, visited Paul in Rome and delivered Paul’s epistle to the Philippians.

In each of these epistles Paul made specific references to being in prison. In the epistle to the Ephesians, Paul declared: “For this cause I Paul *am the prisoner of Christ Jesus* for you Gentiles” (Eph. 3:1). “Therefore, I, *the prisoner of the Lord*, am exhorting you to walk worthily of the calling to which you are called” (Eph. 4:1). Paul also wrote that being in prison was working for good: “So then, I beseech *you* not to faint at *my tribulations for you, which are working for your glory*” (Eph. 3:13). “And for me, that boldness of speech may be given to me, so that I may open my mouth to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which *I am an ambassador in chains*; that I may speak with boldness, as it behooves me to speak. Now that you may also know the things concerning me *and* what I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful servant in *the Lord*, will make everything known to you” (Eph. 6:19-21).

When Paul wrote to the Philippians, he again mentioned his time in prison: “Brethren, I want you to know that *the things befalling me have turned out rather unto the advancement of the gospel*, so that *my bonds in Christ* have become manifest in the whole palace, and to all others; and most of the brethren, trusting in *the Lord*, have been *emboldened by my bonds to speak the Word more abundantly without fear*” (Phil. 1:12-14). Paul was confident that he would eventually be released and come to see them; but until then Epaphroditus, who had delivered the things they sent to Paul, would make known to them how he was: “Now I have confidence in *the Lord* that I myself also shall come soon; but I felt *it* necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and soldier, but your messenger and minister for my need, since he was longing after all of you, and *was* deeply depressed because you had heard that he was sick” (Phil. 2:24-26). “But I have all things and abound. I am full after receiving from Epaphroditus the things you sent, a sweet smelling savor, a sacrifice acceptable *and* well pleasing to God. But my God will supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:18-19).

Paul’s closing comments in his epistle to the Colossians reveal the relative freedom that he had in receiving people and in writing and preaching the gospel while he was under house arrest in Rome: “Tychicus, a beloved brother, and a faithful servant and fellow servant in *the Lord*, will make known to you everything concerning me; I sent him to you for this very reason ... together with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you. They will make known to you all the things *that have taken place* here. Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, salutes you; and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, concerning whom you received instructions (if he comes to you, receive him). And Jesus *who is* called Justus; who are *all of the* circumcision. They *are* my only fellow workers for the kingdom of God, who have been a consolation to me. Epaphras, a servant of Christ who *is* from among you, salutes you. He is always striving for you in *his* prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God...Luke, the beloved physician, salutes you, and Demas *does also*. Salute the brethren in Laodicea; and Nymphas, and the church in his house...**Remember my bonds**” (Col. 4:7-18).

The short, personal epistle that Paul wrote to Philemon likewise names Paul’s companions during his first imprisonment in Rome: “Paul, *the prisoner of Christ Jesus*,

and Timothy, a brother, to Philemon, our beloved and fellow worker, **Epaphras, my fellow prisoner** in Christ Jesus, salutes you; *as do also* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas *and* Luke, my fellow workers" (Philemon 1, 23-24).

I Timothy: Robinson's proposed date for the writing of I Timothy—autumn 55 AD—is far too early, because Timothy was with Paul in Ephesus for three years, from late 54 to 57 AD. There would have been no need for Paul to write to Timothy in 55 AD. Rather, all the evidence points to a time shortly after Paul's release from his imprisonment in Rome in 63 AD. (See detailed Chronology in Appendix Q, pages 846-849.)

The following is a review of the chronology of Paul's travels beginning with his departure from Ephesus in the fall of 57 AD and ending with his imprisonment in Caesarea in 58-60 AD: When Paul and Timothy left Ephesus, they went to Macedonia and then to Corinth, where Paul wintered and wrote the epistle to the Romans. After coming to Corinth, Timothy was with Paul, or with Luke's party until they came to Assos, a short time after the Days of Unleavened Bread in the spring of 58 AD (Acts 20:1-2). Then they sailed to Miletus where Paul summoned the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:3-17). When the elders had assembled, Paul warned them of the coming apostasy (Acts 20:18-38).

After Paul's meeting with the elders in Miletus, Timothy is mentioned no more. It is most probable that Timothy returned to Ephesus with the other elders after Paul and Luke departed. Paul and Luke and others sailed from Miletus and arrived in Jerusalem in the late spring of 58 AD—perhaps by Pentecost. By early summer in 58 AD, Paul was awaiting trial in Caesarea. He was under house arrest and under the protection of the Roman government from this time until the fall of 60 AD.

In Caesarea, Paul had appealed to Caesar for the final disposition of his imprisonment, and he was sent to Rome in the fall of 60 AD. He and his party arrived in late winter of 61 AD, and Paul was again placed under house arrest until the spring of 63 AD. After his release from his first imprisonment in Rome, 61-63 AD, Paul probably went to Crete and visited Titus. When Paul left Crete, he instructed Titus to set things in order and ordain elders as he had appointed. Next, Paul probably went to Ephesus to visit Timothy. From Ephesus he journeyed to Nicopolis in Macedonia near the city of Actium, not far from the Adriatic Sea. From there, Paul probably wrote I Timothy and his epistle to Titus in late 63 AD.

When I Timothy is examined, it is obvious that Paul wrote to Timothy because Paul was going to be traveling, perhaps to Spain and Britain. In this epistle Paul gives Timothy instructions on how to administer a local congregation in his absence with regard to: 1) dealing with false teachers; 2) selecting elders; 3) discerning the doctrines of demons; 4) having personal godliness and being an exemplary overseer; 5) preaching; 6) handling assistance to widows; and 7) correcting elders who sin.

By 63 AD, Timothy must have had in his possession the Gospels of Matthew, Luke and Mark and most of the Gospel of John. This can be deduced from what Paul wrote: **"If anyone teaches any different doctrine, and does not adhere to sound words, even those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine that is according to godliness,** he is proud and knows nothing! Rather, he has a morbid attraction to questions and disputes over words, from which come envy, arguments, blasphemy, wicked suspicions, vain reasonings of men who have been corrupted in *their* minds and *are* destitute of the truth—*men* who believe that gain is godliness. From such withdraw *yourself!*" (I Tim. 6:3-5) This passage strongly suggests that Timothy had in his possession accurate written documents as the standard. Since Timothy never personally heard Jesus preach or teach, he could not have known precisely what the words of Jesus Christ were without written records of the gospel accounts.

Titus: Robinson proposed that the epistle to Titus was written in spring of 58 AD,

during Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea. However, there is no record of Paul having traveled to the island of Crete before he was imprisoned in Caesarea. Rather, Paul probably went to Crete after his release from his first imprisonment in Rome, in 61-63 AD. He left Titus there to set things in order and ordain elders as he had appointed. Then Paul probably stopped in Ephesus to visit Timothy on his way to Nicopolis of Macedonia, whence Paul probably wrote his epistle to Titus and his first epistle to Timothy in late 63 AD before proceeding to Spain and Britain.

II Timothy: Robinson's chart shows that II Timothy was written in 58 AD, during Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea. From the tone of this epistle, it is obvious that he was in prison. However, at no time during his imprisonment in Caesarea or his first imprisonment in Rome was Paul facing sure death. In contrast, when he was imprisoned the second time in Rome in 67 AD, his situation was very different. At that time, Paul believed that his execution was imminent, and he feared that he might never see Timothy again. Therefore, he pleaded with Timothy to come to Rome with all speed. **"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith.** From this time forward, a crown of righteousness is laid up for me, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day—and not to me only, but also to all who love His appearing. Be diligent to come to me quickly....Only Luke is with me. Get Mark *and* bring him with you, because he is profitable to me for the ministry....When you come, bring the chest that I left in Troas with Carpus, and the books—especially the parchments" (II Tim. 4:6-13).

When Paul wrote II Timothy he sensed that his time was short. In view of this, it is more likely that Paul wrote II Timothy while in prison in Rome the second time, in 67-68 AD, rather than in Caesarea in 58 AD. Nero unexpectedly committed suicide on June 9, 68 AD, at which time Paul would have been released. If he was released, Paul probably journeyed back to Britain, as tradition holds that Paul spent time there. Other traditions indicate that he also traveled to Scandinavia (Theodoret, *De Civ. Graec.*; *Epistle of Clement*, 3:12-14; J.B. Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, vol.1; T. Burges, *The Ancient British Church*, pp. 48, 117-118). By 42 AD, Rome had controlled much of the southern British Isles. Therefore, it is possible that Paul was arrested by Roman authorities in Britain and returned to Rome (67-68 AD) to await execution. However, it is more likely that Paul was released when Nero died and was martyred at a later date, perhaps in Britain, instead of Rome.

Although there are some later Catholic traditions that Paul was martyred in Rome, there is no specific historical record that he actually died at Rome. In fact, there is hardly any reason to believe these Catholic traditions. Furthermore, there are no eyewitness records of Paul's martyrdom at Rome. The only reliable record is contained in *The First Epistle of Clement*, a non-canonical epistle. Clement was a fellow minister with Paul in Philippi (Phil. 4:3) and later succeeded Paul as overseer of the church at Rome. In 95 AD just before his death, Clement wrote this epistle to the church at Corinth, in which he also wrote of Paul's martyrdom: "Owing to envy, Paul also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. After preaching in both the east and west, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limit of the west [Britain], and suffered martyrdom under the prefects" (The Ante-Nicene Fathers, 1908, vol. I, *First Epistle of Clement*, Ch. V).

If Paul was actually martyred in Rome, Clement would most surely have made it clear because he was Paul's successor and was writing to the Corinthians from Rome. However, Clement only records that Paul "suffered martyrdom under the prefects," but he definitely does not state that Paul's death occurred at Rome. It is entirely possible that Paul was martyred in Britain by the Roman authorities, as Clement's record seems to indicate.

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I and II Peter

I Peter: Unlike the dating of other epistles of the New Testament, the dating of I Peter has evoked little controversy. Of the dating of I Peter, Hiebert writes: "The date of I Peter must be some time in the sixties of the first century. That it was written during the latter part of Peter's life is obvious. It cannot have been written after A.D. 68, the year of the death of Nero, since tradition asserts Peter's martyrdom under Nero. The exact date assigned to the epistle will be determined by the interpretation given to the state of affairs portrayed in the epistle. Many scholars, especially impressed with the statement in chapter 4 about the readers being made to 'suffer as a Christian' (4:16), hold that it was written after the outbreak of the Neronian persecution in the fall of A.D. 64. Then the date must be given as the very last months of A.D. 64 or later.

"More probable to us seems the view that it was written shortly before the actual outbreak of the Neronian persecution. There is no evidence in the epistle that the persecutions have actually resulted in martyrdoms. The sufferings were rather such as were being experienced by Christians generally (5:9). They were being hated and maligned because of their stand for Christ (4:16). This hatred was fanned by their refusal to participate in the pagan practices of their neighbors (4:3-4). They were being suspected of being enemies of the state, but there was the hope that by their good conduct this charge could be refuted (3:15-16). If Christianity had already been officially charged with being an enemy of the state, this hope could not have been entertained. But the obvious trend of events made it clear that more ominous things were ahead (4:17-18).

"Instead of being due to systematic governmental action, their present sufferings were rather the result of outbursts of fanatical pagan hatred against the Christians....Peter foresaw the possibility of hate-inspired mob actions and even locally inspired official action against the house of God (4:17-18).

"We conclude that the epistle was written on the eve of the outbreak of the Neronian persecution. The date then assigned to it must be in the summer of A.D. 64" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, pp. 120-121).

Robinson calculated a somewhat later date of origin. He writes: "In the last resort I can only say that I find nothing decisive to outweigh the many other considerations to suggest that, whoever actually penned it, the epistle comes from Peter's lifetime and that he is in the fullest sense 'behind' it. I see therefore no reason from the evidence of the authorship to go back on the previous assessment of a date for the dispatch of the letter somewhere around the end of April 65" (Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, p. 169).

Some of the internal evidence in I Peter, as well as in Paul's prison epistles, helps confirm the time at which Peter wrote this first epistle. Peter was then in Babylon. In his closing remarks he wrote: "The *church* in Babylon, chosen together with *you*, greets you" (5:13). Some scholars hold the view that when Peter wrote "Babylon" he was actually using a pseudonym for the city of Rome. However, there is no reason to believe that Peter was in Rome instead of Babylon when he wrote his first epistle. (Apparently, the only reason why some scholars claim that the reference to "Babylon" meant Rome is because this assumption supports the unfounded tradition that Peter was an apostle in Rome for over twenty years. The New Testament does not support this tradition in any way.) Lastly, the prophetic designation of Rome as "Babylon" was not used until the apostle John wrote the book of Revelation—more than thirty years after Peter wrote his first epistle.

Some information can be gleaned from the epistles of Paul that helps date Peter's first epistle. It is evident that Paul was in prison in Rome when he wrote his epistle to the Colossians in early spring, 63 AD. In his closing remarks he mentioned that Mark

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was with him and apparently was preparing to leave; and if he came through Colossae, they were to receive him: "Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, salutes you; and **Mark**, the cousin of Barnabas, concerning whom you received instructions (if he comes to you, receive him)" (Col. 4:10). It is possible that at the time Paul wrote his epistle to the Colossians, Mark was about to go to Babylon to be with Peter, as Mark had worked with Peter in writing the Gospel of Mark, and later he also worked with Paul and Barnabas. It is also possible that on his way to Babylon, Mark passed through Colosse to minister to the brethren on behalf of Paul. Paul must have written to the Colossians in 63 AD, because by the time Peter wrote his first epistle, Mark was with him, as Peter indicated in his closing remarks: "The *church* in Babylon, chosen together with *you*, greets you, *as does Mark*, my son" (I Pet. 5:13).

In addition, another fellow minister and traveling companion of the apostle Paul, Silvanus, is mentioned by Peter as being with him when Peter wrote his epistle (I Pet. 4:12). We first learn of Silvanus, or Silas, in Acts 15, during the Jerusalem Conference in 49 AD. After the conference, Silvanus, or Silas, accompanied Paul on his second evangelistic tour (Acts 16:40). Paul also mentioned Silvanus, along with Timothy, in the opening of his first epistle to the Thessalonians: "Paul and **Silvanus** and Timothy, to the church of *the* Thessalonians *which is* in God *the* Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thes. 1:1).

Peter does not give any indication as to why Mark and Silvanus were with him rather than with Paul. However, it is most likely that Paul, having been released from prison, was on his way to Spain and Britain. If that was the case, Mark and Silvanus could have gone to Babylon to assist Peter and on their way back to Ephesus, delivered copies of Peter's first epistle to the brethren in northern Asia Minor. There was a major highway that went north from Babylon into eastern and northern Asia Minor, and then west and south, terminating at Ephesus on the western coast of Asia Minor.

From the book of Acts, we know that the provinces of northern Asia Minor were never included in Paul's territory (Acts 16:7). They were more easily accessed by river and road from Babylon than by road from the Mediterranean Sea in southern Asia Minor, which was Paul's territory. So these areas would more naturally fall to Peter than to Paul.

This would explain why Peter wrote to the brethren who lived in the northern provinces of Asia Minor, instead of Paul. Peter opened his epistle as follows: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to *the* elect strangers scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" (I Pet. 1:1). Although Peter was an apostle to the Circumcision, in this epistle he was writing to areas where there were many Gentile converts (1:14, 18; 2:9; 3:5; 4:3).

Based on the geographical evidence and the internal evidence of I Peter, coupled with the internal evidence from Paul's epistles, it can be concluded that Peter wrote his first epistle in 64-65 AD.

II Peter: Scholars hold divergent opinions about the authorship of II Peter and when it was written. Most opinions are wild denials of Peter's authorship, placing its writing in the middle of the second century. However, from the internal evidence, this was clearly the second epistle that Peter wrote (II Pet. 3:1).

Many events were transpiring in the Roman Empire, beginning with the Neronian fire in 64 AD, the Jewish revolt against the Romans in 66 AD, and the mass exodus of Christian and non-Christian Jews from Jerusalem and Judea to Asia Minor in 66-67 AD. In his second epistle, Peter vehemently warned against the rising tide of false teachers, apparently from gnosticizing and Hellenistic Judaism, who were seeking to gain control of the churches. They were perverting the teachings of Jesus Christ, blaspheming the

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way of Truth, and siding with the rebellious Jews, hoping to obtain freedom from Roman domination (II Pet. 2). It is within this time frame that Peter wrote his second epistle. Although Peter does not indicate where he was when he wrote this epistle, it is entirely possible that he wrote it from Babylon prior to his martyrdom.

Hiebert writes: "Those who deny the Petrine authorship generally place the epistle in the middle of the second century. But in accepting the Petrine authorship we cannot date it later than A.D. 68, the year of Nero's death [June 9, 68 AD]. If it was written after 1 Peter, as we believe, it must be placed as near the end of Peter's life as possible. But the year of Peter's martyrdom is uncertain. Some would place his death shortly after the outbreak of the Neronian persecution, in the latter part of A.D. 64. Others feel that it may be as late as A.D. 67 or even 68. It would seem, however, that Peter met his fate before Paul. When Paul wrote 2 Timothy, Peter could no longer have been in Rome. Apparently Peter's execution had already taken place. We may accordingly date 2 Peter in the early part of the year A.D. 65" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, p. 152).

The year 65-66 AD seems the most likely date of origin of II Peter. In II Peter 1, Peter promised to leave a permanent record of the teachings of Jesus Christ. He could not have died before 67 AD, because—as we will see later from the internal evidence of his second epistle—he was canonizing his epistles to be placed alongside Paul's epistles, which were to become part of the New Testament. In his final exhortation in Chapter Three, Peter equates the epistles of Paul with the Scriptures. Peter's epistles and Paul's epistles were to be part of the written remembrance that Peter promised to leave for the brethren (1:15). The written remembrance of the teachings of Jesus Christ and His chosen apostles would become part of the permanent record for the Church, as well as for future generations after the apostles had passed from the scene (II Pet. 3:13-18). Therefore, we can conclude that Peter must have written his second epistle in 65-66 AD, just as the leaders of the Jewish rebellion were beginning to agitate the people in Jerusalem and Judea to support their cause against the Romans.

Was Peter Ever in Rome?: That Peter was ever in Rome is highly doubtful. The scriptural or historical records do not reveal that he was. As an apostle to the circumcision (Gal. 2:8), Peter served the Jews in Palestine and eastward into Babylon (I Pet. 5:13), where the largest population of the Diaspora Jews dwelt. Since Rome was in Paul's territory, there is no reason to believe that Peter would have gone to Rome to serve the Gentiles—especially after Paul's rebuke of Peter and the Circumcision Party in 53 AD (Gal. 2:11-21). It is unthinkable that Peter would even dare to attempt to succeed Paul. In Paul's epistle to the Romans, written in 57 AD, he does not mention anything about Peter. If Peter had been the first bishop of Rome, Paul would undoubtedly have mentioned it, but he didn't. In his epistle to the Romans Paul wrote: "I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, that many times I proposed to come to you (but I was hindered until the present), in order that I might also have some fruit among you, even as I have among the other Gentiles. I am a debtor to both Greeks and barbarians, to both *the* wise and *the* unlearned; so, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who *are* in Rome also" (Rom. 1:13-15).

Paul fully understood that he was not to preach the Gospel in another apostle's territory. Of his own ministry, he said: "We are not boasting in things beyond *our* measure, *such as* other men's labors; but we have hope *that when* your faith is increased, *we will* be abundantly enriched by you according to our rule *of faith*, **in order to preach the gospel to the regions beyond you, and not to boast in things made ready in another man's territory**" (II Cor. 10:15-16). At other times, the Holy Spirit forbade Paul to preach in areas that were not his (Acts 16:6-10; 18:1-11). If Peter had been the bishop of Rome, Paul would not have gone there.

When Was the New Testament Written?

To further substantiate the fact that Peter was never in Rome, Luke's account of Paul's arrival in Rome as a prisoner shows that the Jews of Rome had not even heard the Gospel preached: "Now it came to pass *that* after three days, Paul called together those who were chief among the Jews. And when they had come together, he said to them, 'Men *and* brethren, although I have done nothing against the people or the customs of our fathers, I was delivered into the hands of the Romans *as* a prisoner from Jerusalem. After examining me, they desired to let *me* go because there was not one cause of death in me. But when the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar—not as though I had anything to charge against my nation. **For this cause then, I have called for you, in order that I might see you and speak to you; because it is for the hope of Israel that I have this chain around me.**' Then they said to him, 'We have neither received letters concerning you from Judea, nor have any of the brethren who have arrived reported anything or spoken evil of you. But we would like to hear from you *and to know* what you think, because we are indeed very aware that this sect is everywhere spoken against' " (Acts 28:17-22). Had Peter been the bishop of Rome, he would have preached the Gospel to them decades before Paul's arrival.

The only accounts of Peter being in Rome come from later and very doubtful traditions promulgated by the Roman Catholic Church that claim Peter was the first bishop of Rome and was martyred there. These later traditions were only attempts to add credence to the myth that Peter was the first pope. In Clement's non-canonical epistle to the Corinthians in 95 AD, he makes no mention of Peter being at Rome. Clement, a successor of Paul in Rome, wrote of Peter's martyrdom, but he never mentioned that Peter died at Rome: "But let us not dwell upon ancient examples, let us come to the most recent spiritual heroes. Let us take the noble examples furnished in our own generation. Through envy and jealousy, the greatest and most righteous pillars [(the apostles) of the Church] have been persecuted and put to death. Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. Peter, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labours; and when he had at length suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory due to him" (The Ante-Nicene Fathers, 1908 vol. I, *First Epistle of Clement*, Ch. V). If Peter had actually been the first bishop of Rome for over twenty years—as some traditions claim—it would be very strange, indeed, for Clement not to mention it, as well as not to mention Peter's martyrdom in Rome.

Catholic traditions and claims notwithstanding, the various bones found beneath St. Peter's Basilica have never actually been proven to be those of the apostle Peter. In fact, some bones that were proclaimed to be the authentic bones of the apostle Peter by Popes Pius XII, in 1950, and Paul VI, in 1968, were subsequently determined to have come from various men, animals and even a woman. (See Appendix P, *Peter's Tomb Recently Discovered in Jerusalem*, page 842).

The discovery of Peter's tomb on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem in 1953 strongly indicates that he was martyred in Jerusalem and not in Rome. It is possible that Peter went to Jerusalem in late 66 AD in order to persuade the remaining Christian Jews not to reject Jesus Christ as Savior and join the forces of the rebels in fighting against the Romans but to leave Jerusalem instead. That could explain why Peter was in Jerusalem at that time and why he was martyred there and buried on the Mount of Olives.

Therefore, in light of this evidence, it can be concluded that Peter was never in Rome. Consequently, he was never the bishop of Rome. He was not martyred in Rome or buried in Rome. Peter was an apostle to the circumcision—the Jews. He was never an apostle to the uncircumcision—the Gentiles.

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The Epistles of I, II and III John, and of Jude

The Epistles of I, II and III John

The dates assigned to I, II and III John by various scholars vary from the early 60s to the 80s-90s AD. There may be good reason for the wide divergence of opinion because the main body of the first epistle was apparently written at an earlier date than were its epilogue and prologue.

Robinson believes that John's epistles were written just before II Peter and Jude. He states: "The epistles were, I believe, written to reassure Jewish Christian congregations in Asia Minor, who were the product of the Johannine mission and in danger of being shaken from their faith and morals by false teachers of a gnosticizing tendency. In other words, the situation is remarkably parallel to that which we postulated for Jude and II Peter. Indeed, we have observed earlier that Jude seems to stand to II Peter much as II John stands to I John. II John is a particular rather than a general pastoral letter, and its purpose may have been to give early warning of the new heresy ('If anyone comes to you', II John 10). In I John the false teachers, who are evidently peripatetic prophets (4.1-6), have clearly done their damage and have already persuaded some to leave (2.19).

"The teaching indeed has much in common with that combated in Jude and II Peter. It evidently involves a denial of Jesus as the Christ and Son of God (2.22f; 4.15; 5.1, 5; cf. Jude 4; II Peter 2.1) and particularly of his coming in the *flesh* (4:2; II John 7). This docetic emphasis is new, and it leads both to doctrinal error—repudiation not only of the incarnation but of Jesus' coming 'with the blood' (5.6), i.e., probably, the reality of his sacrificial death (1.7; cf. 2.2; 4.10)—and to moral error. For if matter is unreal one can soon claim to be beyond morality—beyond sin (1.8-10), beyond law (2.3-5; 3.4) and beyond the material needs of the neighbour (1.9-11; 3.17; 4.20). It is this distortion of the teaching which his charges received, from a moral to a metaphysical dualism (with matter as indifferent or evil), that the writer sees as the root heresy, and this is characteristically gnostic. There is the familiar claim by the false teachers to give esoteric initiation and knowledge, which has to be countered by the Christian claim to the true knowledge and understanding (2.20f., 26f.; 5.20)" (Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, pp. 285-286).

Since the teachings of I John are similar to those of II Peter and Jude (although the intense persecution of the saints had not yet begun), it is probable that I John was written before II Peter and Jude. The year 63-64 AD might be the most probable date at which John wrote all three of his epistles. It was a time when the apostasy was gaining momentum, before the Jewish rebellion against Rome in 66 AD. Robinson also identified the early 60s as the probable time of writing: "There would therefore seem to be much in favour of placing the Johannine epistles provisionally in the same period of the early 60s. II John was perhaps written shortly before I John. III John deals not with heresy but with the conflict over authority in the church's ministry, which also marks Jude and II Peter (and the Pastoral Epistles)" (Ibid., p. 287). It therefore can be concluded that John wrote his epistles about 63-64 AD.

Jude

The internal evidence from the Epistle of Jude does not indicate a specific date of writing. However, it is evident that the apostasy from the original faith given by Jesus Christ had intensified to the point where the churches in Judea were in danger of being engulfed and destroyed. The apostates were not leaving the churches as the apostle John

had written (I John 2:19); rather, they appeared to be taking over the churches wholly.

After rejecting a suggested date of about 150 AD for this epistle's origin, Hiebert comments: "The dates range all the way from A.D. 64 to 80. There are, however, some indications which may help us arrive at a more definite date. If it is true, as we believe, that 2 Peter was written first, then the date for Jude cannot be earlier than A.D. 65. On the other hand, it seems highly improbable that the epistle should be dated later than the destruction of Jerusalem. If that catastrophe had already taken place it is difficult to see how Jude could have failed to use it among his examples of the destructions which befell the ungodly. Some two or three years may have passed since the writing of 2 Peter, thus allowing sufficient time for the development of the conditions depicted in Jude. We may accordingly date the epistle around A.D. 67 or 68" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, pp. 174-175).

Jude's epistle might have been written about a year earlier, in 66-67 AD, as the apostasy was intensifying and the Jewish revolt against the Romans beginning. By 67-68 AD, the Jewish rebellion was in full swing, and most of the Christian Jews had already fled to Pella or to Asia Minor near Ephesus. From the external and internal evidence of the book of Jude, it can be concluded that it was written around 66-67 AD.

The Book of Revelation

When was the book of Revelation written? Many scholars—including Robinson—believe that the book of Revelation, also called the *Apocalypse*, was written before the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD. They have attempted to make strange interpretations appear plausible by twisting events that occurred between the first century of the Roman Empire and 70 AD in order to make them fit the book of Revelation. For example, Robinson dated the book of Revelation to the years between late 68 and 70 AD (Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, p. 252).

By attempting to make the book of Revelation fit the historical environment of the first century, most scholars have missed the whole point of the book of Revelation. If all of Revelation was a historical fulfillment of events up to 70 AD, then it is a book of history, rather than a book of prophecy. Many scholars do view Revelation as a record of past events and not a foretelling of future events.

In spite of the interpretations of these scholars, the book of Revelation is not a record of events of the first century up to 70 AD. Rather, it is a book of future prophecies for the end times. The true meaning of the book of Revelation, like that of many prophecies in the book of Daniel, was not intended to be understood until the end times: "But thou, O Daniel, **shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased....** And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things*? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand" (Dan. 12:4, 8-10, KJV).

Daniel and Revelation go hand in hand, because they contain prophecies that would be fulfilled only in the time of the end. Many of the prophecies of Daniel cannot be understood without the prophecies of Revelation. Likewise, many prophecies of Revelation cannot be understood without the prophecies of Daniel. Only a few parts in the beginning of Revelation had to do with the situation that prevailed when John wrote this book. Furthermore, with the exception of the historical and partial prophetic fulfillment of the letters to the seven churches in chapters Two and Three—in addition to parts of chapters Twelve and Seventeen—virtually all of Revelation has yet to be fulfilled.

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The prophecies in the book of Revelation concern the events that will occur in the end times, which include: the actual return of Jesus Christ; the destruction of Babylon the Great; the coming one-world governmental system; the Beast and false prophet and their fate; the Mark of the Beast; the removal of Satan the devil; the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth under Jesus Christ and the resurrected saints; the final judgment; the new heavens and the new earth; the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven to the earth; and finally, God the Father and Jesus Christ dwelling with Their spiritual family grown great. Because the Word of God is true, all the prophecies in the book of Revelation that have yet to be fulfilled will be fulfilled, perhaps in the lifetimes of many of us.

Robinson reports that other scholars believed that all the writings of John were written between 90-100 AD. He notes: "Indeed one of the facts about the remarkable scholarly consensus which we shall be noting on the dating of the Johannine literature is that it cuts across almost every possible division. Those who believe that all five books—the Revelation, the gospel and the three epistles—are by one man, and that man the apostle John, and those who hold to none of these, or to almost every possible permutation of them, find common ground in dating both the Revelation and the gospel and epistles in the years \pm 90-100" (Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, p. 254).

The weight of evidence points to Revelation having been written in the last decade of the first century. Hiebert writes: "It was the testimony of the early Church that the Apocalypse was written during the latter part of the reign of Domitian, who was emperor from A.D. 81 to 96. The earliest known witness is Irenaeus who wrote that John saw his visions 'no very long time since, but almost in our day, towards the end of Domitian's reign'" (Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 3, p. 253).

"The evidence for an early dating does not appear weighty enough to require a rejection of the strong external evidence for a date during the latter part of the reign of Domitian. Internal evidence is consistent with this traditional date.

"The Domitian dating is consistent with the condition of the Asian churches, as reflected in the seven letters to the churches. That condition implies that these churches already had a fairly long history behind them. Marked spiritual deterioration has already taken place: Ephesus has left its first love (2:4), Sardis is virtually dead (3:1), and Laodicea is complacent in its repulsive lukewarmness (3:15-18). The Nicolaitan party, of which Paul's epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians, as well as the letters to Timothy, reveal no certain traces, is now widely distributed and firmly rooted (2:6, 15). The Domitian dating allows sufficient time for this development between the founding of these churches during Paul's days and the writing of Revelation.

"John's intimate knowledge of the spiritual needs of the churches and his implied authority over them presuppose a fairly long sojourn in the area and a protracted period of activity among them. Since John apparently did not go to Asia Minor until the outbreak of the Jewish War in A.D. 67, the Domitian dating again is more probable" (Ibid., pp. 255-256).

"Further support for the late date has been noted from the history of two of the seven churches addressed. The message to the church at Laodicea (3:14-22) implies the prosperity of that city. An earthquake destroyed Laodicea in A.D. 62 [actually 60-61], during the reign of Nero. While the city was soon rebuilt, some time must be allowed for a full recovery. In his letter to the Philippians (chap. 11), Polycarp implies that the believers in Smyrna did not yet know the Lord when Paul wrote Philippians. This implies that the church of Smyrna did not come into existence until after A.D. 63. But Revelation 2:8-11 'presupposes a Church poor in wealth but rich in good works, with a development of apparently many years to its credit.' This again does not fit the time of Nero but is fully consistent with a dating under Domitian.

When Was the New Testament Written?

“Only two periods for the dating of the Revelation seem historically feasible, a Neronian date of about A.D. 68 or 69 and a date during the latter part of Domitian’s reign, A.D. 95 or 96. While the evidence for the latter date is not so conclusive as to exclude consideration for the former, both the external and internal evidence point to the Domitian dating. If the Revelation really was written at the end of Nero’s reign, it is difficult to understand why the early Church developed so strong a tradition relating its composition to the reign of Domitian. We suggest a probable date as A.D. 95 or 96” (Ibid., pp. 256-257).

All the evidence points to 95-96 AD for the dating of the writing of Revelation. When the internal evidence is examined, it shows that John received the revelation by visions from Jesus Christ during his exile on the island of Patmos. The pattern of Revelation shows a series of visions given to John. The first of these visions concerned John’s time, 95-96 AD. Each succeeding vision revealed, step by step, the sequence of key world events in history, from the time of John until Jesus Christ’s return to the earth, with the final visions revealing the completion of God’s plan.

The pattern unfolds as one reads Revelation. In the first chapter, John tells how Jesus instructed him to write down what he saw, apparently as he saw it: “‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the Beginning and the Ending*,’ says the Lord, ‘Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come—the Almighty.’ I, John, who *am* also your brother and joint partaker in the tribulation and in the kingdom and endurance of Jesus Christ, was on the island that *is* called Patmos, because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

“I was in *the Spirit* on the day of the Lord, and I heard a loud voice like a trumpet behind me, saying, ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last’; and, ‘**What you see, write in a book**, and send *it* to the churches that *are* in Asia: to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamos, and to Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea’ ” (Rev. 1:8-11).

After John saw a vision of the glorified Jesus Christ walking in the midst of the seven golden lampstands, Jesus again instructed John to write: “And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as if dead; but He laid His right hand upon me, saying to me, ‘Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last, even the one Who is living; for I was dead, and behold, I am alive into the ages of eternity. Amen. And I have the keys of *the* grave and of death. **Write the things that you saw, and the things that are, and the things that shall take place hereafter**’ ” (verses 17-19).

Because the revelation concerned key events of the future, Jesus instructed John to write down everything that he saw: “The things that you saw [of Jesus walking in the midst of the seven lampstands], and the things that are [the seven churches in Asia], and the things that shall take place hereafter [the rest of the book of Revelation].”

The flow of events prophesied in Revelation is laid out in a step-by-step pattern showing that Jesus Christ gave these visions to John in sequence, and he wrote them in the order in which they were given. There is no indication that any part of Revelation was given at an earlier time or at a different place. Moreover, it is evident that the series of visions were given within a short span of time, and John immediately wrote them down as Jesus Christ had commanded him to do.

It can be concluded with the utmost confidence that the apostle John wrote the book of Revelation while on the island of Patmos, around 95-96 AD. John was released from his exile upon the death of Domitian on September 18, 96 (Langer, *An Encyclopedia of World History*, p. 109). Apparently, he then returned to Ephesus, where he, the other apostles still living and the elders canonized the New Testament in its final form. Today, the verbatim copies of those original autographs of the New Testament still exist. They were written in the *Koiné* Greek language and preserved in the Byzantine Greek text known as the Textus Receptus.

CHAPTER FIVE

BACKGROUND TO CANONIZATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The First Key: The Battle Against False Apostles, False Doctrines and the Great Apostasy

Before the apostles even began preaching the gospel, Jesus warned them time and time again that there would be false prophets and ministers, and even false Christs (Matt. 24:4-5, 11, 24). They were confronted with this from the very beginning. They were to beware not only of the teachings of Judaism and Jewish Gnosticism, but also those of the pagan Gnostic religion of Samaria and Egypt, as well as other heathen religions. Since Ezra's day, Samaria had been a stronghold of false worship. The apostate worship of the Samaritans, which might have been the primary reason for canonizing the Old Testament, continued down to New Testament times and beyond.

The first confrontation of the apostles with a false prophet occurred at Samaria. The Gnostic heresy of Samaria reared its ugly head in a new manner to work against the apostles and the burgeoning New Testament Church. Early in the ministry of the apostles, in 31 AD, they were confronted by the influential Gnostic religious leader of Samaria, Simon Magus, who claimed to be the great power of God: "But *there was* a certain man named Simon, who had from earlier times been practicing sorcery in the city and astounding the nation of Samaria, proclaiming himself to be some great one. To him they had all given heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, 'This man is the great power of God.' Now they were giving heed to him because *he* had for a long time bewitched them with sorceries" (Acts 8:9-11).

Newly ordained a deacon, Phillip came to Samaria to preach the Gospel. After Simon saw the miracles that Phillip had performed, he was baptized. Although Phillip baptized Simon, it is evident that God never honored that baptism and Simon never received the Holy Spirit, because he never repented and did not receive the laying on of hands. When the apostles in Jerusalem heard of this, they sent Peter and John to Samaria to oppose Simon Magus, who wanted to buy the power of the Holy Spirit: "Now when Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of the hands of the apostles, he offered them money, saying, 'Give this authority to me also, so that on whomever I lay hands, he may receive *the* Holy Spirit.' But Peter said to him, 'May your money be destroyed with you because you thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money. You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. Repent, therefore, of this your wickedness, and beseech God, if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you; for I perceive *that* you are in *the* gall of bitterness and *the* bondage of unrighteousness' " (verses 18-23).

The matter did not end there. Simon Magus continued to be known as "the great power of God" and proceeded to proclaim himself an apostle of God and to preach a false gospel, which was a strange mixture of Gnosticism, Judaism and Christian teachings. He started a counterfeit Christian organization, which had many followers. When he went to Rome in 42 AD, during the reign of Claudius, he was deified and proclaimed

a god. On an island in the Tiber River a statue of Simon Magus was erected with an inscription proclaiming “Simon, the Holy God.” (see *The Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, vol. 9, p. 755). From that time forward, the apostles were fighting not only against the various sects of Judaism but also against Simon Magus’ apostate Christenized Gnosticism.

The Apostle Paul and False Prophets

In the beginning of his ministry, the apostle Paul was confronted by a powerful false prophet—another sorcerer—named Bar-jesus: “And when they had gone through the island as far as Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name *was* Bar-jesus: He was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man, who called Barnabas and Saul to *him*, desiring to hear the Word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so was his name interpreted) withstood them, seeking to turn away the proconsul from the faith. **But Saul, who *was* also called Paul, being filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his eyes on him, and said, ‘O full of all guile and all craftiness, you son of the devil and enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to pervert the straight ways of the Lord? And now behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a season.’ And immediately a mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking someone to lead *him* by the hand” (Acts 13:6-11).**

In nearly every epistle of the apostle Paul, there is evidence that he was combating many forms of false teachings and a growing number of Christian counterfeits. On every side, there were false prophets and enemies of the gospel. The teachings of the sects of Judaism that had to be overcome were the religions of the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Essenes, Hellenistic Judaism, Alexandrian Judaism, Gnostic Judaism and the Gnostic Samaritan/Jewish religion headed by Simon Magus. In addition, Paul was confronted by various pagan religions and by the emperor worship of Rome. There was hardly a place where Paul preached at which he was not confronted by false teachers, many of whom used the name of Jesus Christ but preached false doctrines combined with various beliefs from these religions.

I Thessalonians: When Paul wrote his first epistle to the Thessalonians in 50 AD, he defended himself and his teachings: “For our exhortation *was* not out of error, nor from uncleanness, nor with guile; but even as we were approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, we speak in this manner: as *those* who please not men, but God, Who proves our hearts. For neither at any time did we use flattering words *with you*, even as you know, nor a cover for covetousness—God *is* our witness; nor were we seeking glory from men, neither from you nor from others, *though* as Christ’s apostles we had *the* power to be burdensome; but we were gentle among you, as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. Yearning over you in the same way, we were willing to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you were beloved to us” (I Thes. 2:3-8).

II Thessalonians: The second epistle that Paul wrote, also to the Thessalonians in 51 AD, was an urgent letter because false teachers were circulating a counterfeit epistle, claiming that it was from Paul and the day of the Lord was present! This was a first glimpse of the coming apostasy that later would sweep through the churches of God. Paul wrote: “Now we beseech you, brethren, concerning **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ** and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken in mind, nor be troubled—neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as if from us, *saying* that the day of Christ is present. **Do not let anyone deceive you by any means, because *that* day will not come unless the apostasy shall come first, and the man of sin shall be revealed—the son of perdition**, the one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is

called God, or that is an object of worship; so that he comes into the temple of God and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God. Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I told you these things? And now you understand what is holding *him* back in order for him to be revealed in his own set time. **For the mystery of lawlessness is already working; only *there is one Who is restraining at the present time until it arises out of the midst***" (II Thes. 2:1-7).

Galatians: As noted in Chapter Four, pages 88-89, in 53 AD, Paul wrote to the churches of Galatia because there were false prophets and teachers who were perverting the gospel by intertwining the teachings of Judaism and circumcision with a strange blend of Jewish/pagan Gnosticism while preaching in the name of Jesus Christ. The brethren in Galatia were being enticed and drawn away. Paul could not let this perverted, false gospel continue to infiltrate the congregations of God, so he wrote his strongly worded epistle to the Galatians, warning them that they were in danger of straying from the true gospel.

Paul fully understood the problems they were facing. Before his conversion, he had previously been trained in Judaism and was one of its foremost advocates. Paul immediately recognized the false doctrines of Judaism because he had been one of the chief enemies of the Church before Jesus Christ called him. During the years 30-33 AD, Saul (as he was then known) had persecuted the Church and caused brethren to be hauled off to prison and sentenced to death. But now, as an apostle of Jesus Christ, he would never allow the true teachings of Jesus Christ or the Gospel to be subverted by anyone. As a servant and an apostle of God the Father and Jesus Christ, Paul stood his ground against man's teachings. He would never be swayed to compromise the Gospel of Jesus Christ in order to please man. When he wrote to the Galatians, he made it abundantly clear that there was only one true gospel and, he was an apostle of Jesus Christ by a special calling (Gal. 1:6-17). On the issue of circumcision, Paul gave no quarter, not even to the apostles James, Cephas [Peter] and John. He knew that the truth of the gospel stood alone and was never to be mixed with the teachings and doctrines of any religion, whether Jewish or Gentile. This is why he was so adamantly against any minister or apostle who deviated from the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Word of God. This issue was so urgent that Paul had a private meeting with the three aforementioned apostles, during the Jerusalem Conference of 49 AD, to settle the dispute (Gal. 2:1-10).

In 53 AD, when the apostle Peter and those of the Circumcision Party from Jerusalem came down to Antioch, they refused to eat with the Gentiles. Instead they reverted to observing traditional, religious laws of Judaism and separated themselves from the Gentiles when eating their festival meals. Paul publicly rebuked Peter for his hypocrisy in front of the entire church in Antioch. God inspired that Paul's public rebuke of Peter and the others be preserved for all time (Gal. 2:11-21).

The different gospel that churches in Galatia were receiving from those false apostles was a perverse blending of Christianity, mandatory circumcision, Jewish/pagan Gnostic mysticism and worship of fallen angels. They also combined this strange gospel with the observing of Gnostic religious holidays, instead of the holy days of God. Paul strongly rebuked them, even doubting their conversion: "Now on the one hand, **when you did not know God, you were in bondage to those who are not gods by nature** [fallen angel worship of Gnosticism]. But on the other hand, after having known God—rather, after having been known by God—**how is it that you are turning again to the weak and impotent elements, to which you again desire to be in bondage? You are of your own selves observing days, and months, and times and years. I am afraid for you, lest somehow I have labored among you in vain**" (Gal. 4:8-11).

The Galatians reverted back to observing days, and months, and times and years of Jewish/pagan Gnostic mysticism—pagan days of worship! Today, many theologians

teach that Paul's reference to these pagan holiday observances meant that they were reverting back to observing the holy days and festivals that God had commanded in the Old Testament. However, that is not what Paul meant. He was referring to the pagan practices that the Galatians had been observing before their conversion. Observance of these days, months, times and years are strictly forbidden by God: "When the LORD thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land; **take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou inquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise.** Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it" (Deut. 12:29-32, *KJV*). Again, God commanded: "When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that **useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.** For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee. Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God. **For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so to do**" (Deut. 18:9-14, *KJV*). The Galatians were abandoning the observance of the scriptural holy days and feasts and reverting back to their former pagan ways with the addition of circumcision.

There is no question that Paul had to fight for the purity of the faith of Jesus Christ, even against Peter, a fellow apostle, and the Circumcision Party from Jerusalem. Paul made it clear that he was never going to allow the true Gospel to be subverted with the practices of traditional Judaism or the observance of the pagan practices of Jewish Gnostic mysticism.

Corinthians: In 56 AD, Paul wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians. It is devoted almost entirely to various sins, false teachings and false practices within the congregations. However in his second epistle, which he wrote in 57 AD, Paul warned the brethren in Corinth of the influence of false teachers and apostles who were coming into the Church. As a result, Paul had to defend himself to the brethren against those false apostles: "For we are not like the many, who for *their own* profit are corrupting the Word of God; but we speak with sincerity, as from God, *and* before God, *and* in Christ" (II Cor. 2:17).

To make matters worse, the brethren in Corinth were even allowing false apostles to preach to their congregations, failing to discern the evil in their teachings. As a result, Paul wrote to them that these men were not of God. Rather, they were ministers of Satan the devil, and furthermore, they were deceitfully handling the Word of God. In contrast, he was preaching the truth of God: "Therefore, having this ministry, according as we have received mercy, we are not fainthearted. For we have personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain, not walking in *cunning* craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth, we are commending ourselves to every man's conscience before God. But if our gospel is hidden, it is hidden to those who are perishing; in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of those who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is *the* image of God, should shine unto them. For we do not preach our own selves, but Christ Jesus *the* Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" (II Cor. 4:1-5).

More disastrous yet, the Corinthians were not only tolerating these false apostles but were even accepting their teachings: "I would *that* you might bear with me in a little nonsense; but indeed, do bear with me. For I am jealous over you with *the* jealousy of God, because I have espoused you to one husband, so that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds might be corrupted from *the* simplicity that *is* in Christ. **For indeed, if someone comes preaching another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or you receive a different spirit, which you did not receive, or a different gospel, which you did not accept, you put up with it as *something* good. But I consider myself in no way inferior to those highly exalted *so-called* apostles.** For although *I may be* unpolished in speech, yet *I am* not in knowledge; for in all things I demonstrated this to you" (II Cor. 11:1-6).

Although such false apostles appeared to be ministers of righteousness, they were of Satan and not of God. Regardless of their claims, God did not send them and they did not preach the truth of God, even though they used Jesus' name and perhaps claimed that they had seen and heard Jesus during His three-and-one-half year ministry. Paul condemned these fraudulent apostles: "**For such *are* false apostles—deceitful workers who are transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And *it is* no marvel, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore, *it is* no great thing if his servants also transform themselves as ministers of righteousness—whose end shall be according to their works**" (verses 13-15).

Because the Corinthians were so foolish as to allow false apostles to preach to them, to rule over them, to take tithes from them and to lead them away from Christ, Paul had to bring them to their senses. He did this by mocking the Corinthians' naivety because they allowed false apostles to teach them false doctrines. Paul was forced to show that he and he alone had the fruits of a true apostle of God, which none of those "highly exalted *so-called* apostles" had: "Since many boast according to *the* flesh, I also will boast. **For since you are *so* intelligent, you gladly bear with fools. For you bear *it* if anyone brings you into bondage, if anyone devours *you*, if anyone takes *from* you, if anyone exalts himself, if anyone beats you on the face.**

"I speak as though we were under reproach for being weak; but in whatever way anyone else is bold (I speak in foolishness), I also am bold. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they *the* seed of Abraham? So am I. **Are they servants of Christ? (I am speaking as if I were out of my mind.)** So am I, above *measure*—in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in imprisonments more frequent, in deaths often. Five times from *the* Jews I received forty *stripes* less one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I spent in the deep. *I have been* in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from *my own* race, in perils from *the* Gentiles, in perils in *the* city, in perils in *the* desert, in perils on *the* sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides *all* these things from the *world* outside, pressing on me daily *is* the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I do not burn? If it is necessary for me to boast, I will boast *in* the things concerning my weakness. **The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is blessed into the ages of eternity, knows that I do not lie**" (II Cor. 11:18-31).

Without a doubt, Paul made it known that he was a true apostle of Jesus Christ. Yet, because the Corinthian brethren were allowing false apostles into their congregations, Paul was willing to resort to the foolishness of boasting to expose their grave sins: "I have become a fool *in this* boasting. You have forced me *to do so*, when I ought to have been commended by you. **For in no way was I inferior to those highly exalted *so-called* apostles—even if I am nothing. Indeed, the signs of an apostle were dem-**

onstrated by me in all patience, in signs and wonders and miracles among you” (II Cor. 12:11-12).

Romans: Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans in the winter of 57 AD from Corinth. It contains mostly doctrinal instructions concerning salvation by faith and justification through the blood of Jesus Christ. There is only one reference to “**those who are causing divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned ...** the sort who are not serving our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, and are deceiving the hearts of the innocent by smooth talking and flattery” (Rom. 16:17-18). In the epistle to the Romans, there is no other mention of false prophets.

Acts 20: In the early spring of 58 AD, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul left Greece through Macedonia and was on his way to Jerusalem. Since he did not have time to go to Ephesus, Paul summoned the elders of the Church to meet him in Miletus because he knew that he would not see them again. When they arrived, he gave them a final, solemn and stern, witness and warning against false teachers of apostasy. Moreover, he warned that even some of the elders that he was talking to would rise up and become false teachers and devour the flock of God. Luke wrote of Paul’s stern warning to the elders of Ephesus: “And now behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. Wherefore I testify to you on this day that I am pure from the blood of all; for I have not held back from preaching to you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood. **For I know this that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves.** Watch, therefore, remembering that *for* three years I ceased not to admonish each one night and day with tears” (Acts 20:25-31).

Hebrews: The book of Hebrews, written in 61 AD, is filled with warnings against falling away—committing the unpardonable sin—and contains the full revelation of the heavenly priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians: Paul wrote this epistle in early 63 AD from his first Roman imprisonment. In 4:14, Paul made reference to men who were “systematizing the error.”

Colossians: From prison in Rome in 63 AD, Paul had to warn the brethren in Colossae against the false doctrines of philosophy and the worship of angels (Col. 2).

Philippians: Paul also wrote this epistle from prison in Rome in 63 AD. In Chapter 3, Paul strongly warned the brethren against the Circumcision Party, who trusted in the flesh and did not have the Spirit of God. Rather, they served their own bellies and were the enemies of Christ.

I, II Timothy and Titus: All three epistles are filled with instructions on how to preach the truth and how to fight against false doctrines and false ministers.

Philemon: This short epistle is a personal letter to Philemon and contains no reference to false prophets or false doctrines.

All in Asia Deserted Paul for False Apostles: By 67 AD, when he was once again in a Roman prison, Paul realized that the apostasy had fully engulfed many of the churches in Asia. As a result of the flood of false apostles and teachers, he knew that the majority of brethren had deserted him. In his second epistle, Paul wrote Timothy: “For which cause [the cause of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ] I am also suffering these things; nevertheless, I am not ashamed. For I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He has the power to keep what I have committed *to Him* for that day. Hold *as the standard for doctrine* the sound words that you heard from me, in *the* faith and love that *are* in Christ Jesus. Guard the good thing that was committed *to you* by *the* Holy Spirit that is dwelling in us. **You know this, that all those who are in Asia have**

rejected me, of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes” (II Tim. 1:12-15).

Of the fourteen epistles that the apostle Paul wrote, thirteen contain teachings and warnings against false apostles, false prophets and false teachers, as well as false doctrines and practices—to a greater or lesser degree. This was one of the primary reasons why God inspired Paul to choose these epistles for canonization.

The Apostles John, Peter and Jude and False Teachers

I John: By the time the apostle John wrote his first general epistle, in 63 AD, the antichrists were leaving the congregations and the apostasy was gaining strength by drawing away brethren. The Hellenistic Gnostics who had infiltrated the churches were preaching **three major false doctrines**, which were:

1) A denial of the sinful nature of man and that Christ’s blood and sacrifice were not the only means of forgiveness of sin: “If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth. However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from every sin. If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.** If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us.** My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And *yet*, if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous; and He is *the* propitiation for our sins; and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world” (1:6-10; 2:1-2).

False doctrine came from antichrist liars who denied God the Father and Jesus Christ. John wrote: “**Who is the liar if it is not the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is the antichrist**—the one who denies the Father and the Son. Anyone who denies the Son does not have the Father either” (2:22-23).

2) That it was not necessary to keep the commandments of God and to walk as Jesus walked. Those who taught this doctrine were liars and did not know Jesus Christ. John made it clear that keeping the commandments of God was a critical sign that one knew Jesus Christ as personal Savior: “And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments. **The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.** On the other hand, *if* **anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected.** By this *means* we know that we are in Him. Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked” (2:3-6, see also John 14:15; 15:10-17).

John showed that those who practiced sin and lawlessness were children of the devil: “Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness [for sin is the transgression of the law—*KJV*]. And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. **Everyone who dwells in Him does not practice sin; anyone who practices sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him. Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. The one who practices sin is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning.** For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil. Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin because His seed *of begettal* is dwelling within him, and he is not able to practice sin because he has been begotten by God. **By this standard are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. Every-**

one who does not practice righteousness is not of God, and neither is the one who does not love his brother” (3:4-10).

3) That **Jesus Christ had not come in the flesh**. Those false teachers of mystic, Hellenistic Gnosticism were leading the rebellion and apostasy. Again John identified them as “antichrists” and wrote that under the influence of wicked spirits these antichrists epitomized “the spirit of deception”: “Beloved, **do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world**. By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the* flesh is from God. **And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the spirit of antichrist, which you heard was to come, and even now it is already in the world**. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them because greater is He Who *is* in you than the one who *is* in the world. **They are of the world**; because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them. **We are of God**; the one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not of God does not listen to us. **By this means we know the Spirit of the truth and the spirit of the deception**” (4:1-6).

By means of these three major false doctrines, the antichrists were drawing away disciples. Apparently they persuaded many disciples to leave congregations en masse: “Little children, it is *the* last time, and just as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have risen up, by which we know that it is *the* last time. **They went out from among us, but they were not of us; because if they were of us, they would have remained with us; nevertheless, they left that they might be exposed to show that they all were not of us**” (2:18-19).

II John: John’s second epistle, probably written in late 64 AD, is short, because from the time that he wrote his first epistle, the apostasy had apparently gained much more momentum and strength. Because of this, he wrote to the believers telling them that he had more to write, but couldn’t. Rather, he stated that he would come and speak to them in person. To make matters even worse, the antichrists were emboldened and were committing brazen acts of proselytizing the true brethren, attempting to coerce them to join their ranks. And it appears that they were not satisfied with drawing away disciples from the congregations. By the time John wrote his second epistle, they were even going from house to house, seeking to deceive those who had not yet followed them in their error.

John used strong language and commanded the true believers not even to welcome them or let them into their houses: “And this is the love *of God*: that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, exactly as you heard from *the* beginning, that you might walk in it **because many deceivers have entered into the world—those who do not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. This is the spirit of the deceiver and the antichrist**. Watch out for yourselves in order that we may not lose the things we have accomplished, but *that* we may receive a full reward. **Anyone who transgresses and does not continue in the doctrine of Christ does not have God**. But the one who continues in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. **If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house, and do not say to him, ‘Welcome!’** For anyone who says, ‘Welcome!’ to him is partaking in his evil works” (verses 6-11).

III John: A year later, when John wrote his third epistle, in 65 AD, the rebellion within the congregations had turned into open political warfare between the faithful ministers on the one side, and the false ministers, who were seeking their own power and authority, on the other side. In order to gain power and usurp apostolic authority, the false ministers were discrediting the apostle John by spreading lies, malicious gossip and negative innuendoes. Furthermore, in their lust for power, they were excommunicating

fellow ministers and brethren who would not join them. Undoubtedly, they had established their own competing congregations as they consolidated power. The situation confronting the churches had become so intense that John even named one of the chief leaders in the rebellion: “I wrote to the church, but **Diotrephes, the one who loves to be chief among them, does not accept us**. Because of this very thing, if I come, I will call him to account for the actions that he is practicing with evil words—**maliciously berating us**; and he is not satisfied with these things, *for* he himself neither receives the brethren, *nor does he permit* those who wish to receive the brethren, *but he forbids them and casts them out of the church*” (verses 9-10).

II Peter: When Peter wrote his second epistle, in 66 AD, the Jews were preparing to rise up against Roman rule. He prophesied that the Jewish rebellion would unleash a flood of false teachers and leaders who would reject Jesus Christ as the true Messiah. They would blaspheme the truth of God as they brought in their damnable heresies to lead brethren astray: “But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed **there will be false teachers among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies, personally denying the Lord who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many people will follow as authoritative their destructive ways; and because of them, the way of the truth will be blasphemed**. Also, through insatiable greed they will with enticing messages exploit you for gain; for whom the judgment of old is in *full* force, and their destruction is *ever* watching” (II Peter 2:1-3).

Jude: In 67 AD, when Jude wrote his short epistle, the Jewish rebellion against the Romans was gaining momentum. The false teachers and prophets were making massive inroads into the churches of God in Jerusalem and Judea. So acute was the situation that Jude had to exhort the brethren to fight for the faith. If they didn’t, they might even lose their salvation: “Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting *you* to **fer- vently fight for the faith**, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints. For **certain men have stealthily crept in**; those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment. **They are ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God, turning it into licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ....**Woe to them! **For they have walked in the way of Cain; and for gain, they have wholly given themselves up to Balaam’s delusion, and have perished in the rebellion of Korah**. These are subversive stains in your love feasts, feasting in person together *with you*; fearlessly they are feeding themselves. *They are* clouds without water, being driven by the winds; trees of late autumn, without *any* fruit, uprooted, twice dead; raging wild waves of *the* sea, casting up like foam their own *ignominious* shame; wandering stars, for whom has been reserved the blackest darkness forever” (Jude 3-4, 11-13).

Please read II Peter 2 and the Epistle of Jude in their entirety. It is important to understand the inspired, urgent warnings against, and vehement excoriations of those false teachers and false prophets. There is little doubt that the heightened activities of false prophets and teachers in confronting the apostles and the churches of God was a primary factor in the canonization of the New Testament, just as it was when Ezra and the Great Assembly canonized the Old Testament.

The Jewish-Roman War

Apparently, by 67-68 AD, the rebels and Jewish religious leaders were coercing any remaining Christian Jews, who had not heeded Jesus’ warnings to flee, into rejecting Jesus Christ. As a result, true to the warning that the apostle Paul wrote in the book of Hebrews, many were ensnared into joining the rebellion against Rome. Perhaps they had

been persuaded that if they joined in the struggle for liberation from Rome, then “the true Messiah” would be compelled to come and fight for them and would bring complete triumph over the Romans. However, that did not happen. Instead, Palestine was about to enter one of the most horrific times in its history, not even to be compared to the modern Jewish-Palestinian conflict (which has continued since the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 AD).

In summarizing the Jewish-Roman War, Ernest L. Martin wrote: “The Jewish/Roman War of A.D. 66 to 73 was one of the most horrendous that mankind ever devised, and this was especially the case in the city of Jerusalem. The Jewish Christians who stayed in the capital with the other people of the nation to fight the Romans (those who did not heed the warnings to flee the city) consigned themselves to the most horrible circumstances that mankind could ever endure. And though we can allow for some exaggerations in Josephus [see Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, bk. 2, ch. 17, to bk. 6, ch. 1], what he shows (if only half his descriptions occurred) is that siege of Jerusalem was one of the most terrible and frightening events in the annals of man. What Josephus described should serve as a proper commentary on what Peter and Jude stated in their epistles would occur to those Jewish Christians who failed to heed the warnings that God was abandoning the Temple and the city.

“Peter was well aware that many Jewish Christians would be tempted to join the ‘fighters of liberty’ (as Peter called them), but the people who joined them were actually, according to Peter, the ‘slaves of corruption’ (II Peter 2:19). Josephus would have agreed. Peter was actually making his warning to thousands of people at the time he wrote. Indeed, the New Testament states that there were *many* tens of thousands of believing Jews in Judaea in A.D. 56 (Acts 21:20) and many of these did not migrate out of Palestine with the others from A.D. 62 to A.D. 66 ... The majority of those Jewish Christians who stayed in Jerusalem gave up the type of Christianity that the apostles were teaching. They remained behind in Palestine to war with the Romans—and to disaster!

“There were so many Palestinian Jews who were among the Jews (and Christians) of the Dispersion. It was these people to whom Peter and Jude were writing. They were warning the Jewish Christians in Asia Minor, and elsewhere, not to follow in the rebellious ways of most of the nation because they were going to come to a ‘swift destruction’ (II Peter 2:1) and a ‘judgment of desolation’ (v. 3). Peter said their cities would be turned into ashes just like the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah (II Peter 2:6). And this is exactly what happened....But Peter’s message for the most part fell on deaf ears [as did Paul’s warning in the book of Hebrews in 61 AD]. The majority of Jewish Christians (along with the generality of the nation) went to war with the Romans, and lost” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, pp. 278-279).

The Second Key: The Return of Jesus Christ

The Prophesied Last Generation

The second key to the canonization of the New Testament was when Jesus Christ would return. In the Olivet Prophecy in Matthew 24, just two days before His last Passover, Matthew recorded Jesus’ prophecies of the events that would lead up to the end times and the sign of His return. First, Jesus warned that false prophets would arise and deceive many, there would be wars and rumors of wars, kingdom would rise up against kingdom, nations against nations, famines, pestilences and earthquakes (verses 3-7). Then there would be times of sorrows; the disciples would be persecuted, killed and

hated of all nations; and many would be offended and betray one another (verses 8-11). After that, many more false prophets would arise and the love of many would grow cold because iniquity would abound; the gospel would be preached in all the world as a witness, and those who endured to the end would be saved (verses 12-14). But just before the end, there would be a time of great tribulation and troubles unlike anything since the beginning of the world (verses 16-26). Finally, the sign of the Son of man would appear in heaven, as a bursting sun, heralding the return of Jesus Christ and the resurrection of the saints (verses 27-31).

Jesus ended his prophecy with a parable and a warning: “Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branches have already become tender, and it puts forth its leaves, you know that summer *is* near. In like manner also, when you see all these things, know that it is near, even at *the* doors. **Truly I say to you, this generation shall in no wise pass away until all these things have taken place.** The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away. **But concerning that day, and the hour, no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only**” (verses 32-36).

Because the apostles expected Jesus to return in their lifetimes, they assumed that when Jesus said “**This generation shall in no wise pass away** until all these things have taken place,” He meant their generation. From the Scriptures they understood that a generation-could mean a period of forty years (Ex. 16:35; Num. 14:34; Deut. 2:7; 8:2, 4; 29:5; and Heb. 3:7-11, 17). The apostles assumed that the last generation would be from 30 AD to 70 AD. This assumption was reflected in their writings. The apostles’ writings on the return of Jesus Christ before 63 AD show that they expected Him to return within their lifetimes. Although the apostles understood Jesus’ statements to be true, they did not realize until thirty-three years later that “this generation” was not their generation. Therefore, their writings after 63 AD showed that He would not return until far into the future.

Jesus Went to Heaven and Would Return: On the night of His last Passover, Jesus revealed to the apostles that He was going back to heaven but would return. John recorded what Jesus told them: “In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were otherwise, I would have told you. **I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself;** so that where I am, you may be also....You have heard Me say to you that **I am going away, and that I will come to you again.** If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced that I said, ‘**I am going to the Father,**’ because My Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it happens, so that when it comes to pass, you may believe” (John 14:2-3, 28-29; see also John 16:5, 7, 16, 28; 21:22-23).

It was necessary that Jesus ascend to heaven and sit at the right hand of God the Father so that the power of the Holy Spirit could be sent to the apostles to be within them (John 14:26). The Holy Spirit is the power of God that would lead the apostles and reveal to them things to come. Jesus said to them: “But I am telling you the truth. It is profitable for you that **I go away** because **if I do not go away, the Comforter** [which is the Holy Spirit] **will not come to you.** However, if I go, I will send it to you. And when that one has come, it will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; concerning righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you no longer will see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

“I have yet many things to tell you, but you are not able to bear them now. However, when that one has come, *even the Spirit of the truth*, **it will lead you into all truth** because it shall not speak from itself, but whatever it shall hear shall it speak. And **it shall disclose to you the things to come.** That one shall glorify Me because **it shall**

disclose to you the things that it receives from Me" (John 16:7-14).

The day after Jesus was raised from the dead, He appeared to the apostles and opened their minds to understand the Scriptures and commanded them to preach the Word to all nations: "And He said to them, 'These *are* the words that I spoke to you when I was yet with you, that all *the* things which were written concerning Me in the Law of Moses and *in the* Prophets and *in the* Psalms must be fulfilled.' Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, 'According as it is written, it was necessary for the Christ to suffer, and to rise from *the* dead the third day. And in His name, repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. For you are witnesses of these things' " (Luke 24:44-48).

The apostles saw Jesus for forty days after His resurrection. Moreover, on one occasion He was seen by more than five hundred disciples at one time (I Cor. 15:6). On the fortieth day, moments before He ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives for the second and final time, He gave the apostles some last-minute instructions. Luke wrote: "The first account I indeed have written, O Theophilus, concerning all things that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after giving command by *the* Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen; to whom also, by many infallible proofs, He presented Himself alive after He had suffered, being seen by them for forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God. And while *they* were assembled with *Him*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to 'await the promise of the Father, which,' *He said*, 'you have heard of Me. For John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with *the* Holy Spirit after not many days' " (Acts 1:1-5).

At that time the apostles were eager to know whether Jesus would establish the Kingdom of God immediately. They did not realize that in a few minutes Jesus would ascend into heaven and the fulfillment of the prophecies and His return would not occur until centuries later: "So then, when they were assembled together, they asked Him, saying, '**Lord, will You restore the kingdom to Israel at this time?**' And He said to them, 'It is not for you to know *the* times or *the* seasons, which the Father has placed in His own authority; but you yourselves shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and **you shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto *the* ends of the earth.**' And after saying these things, *as* they were looking at *Him*, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight" (verses 6-9).

When the apostles heard Jesus speak these words, they did not realize the full magnitude of what He said. At that time they could not possibly have known that Jesus actually meant all nations in the world, including those nations that would arise well beyond their lifetimes, and, that the work of preaching the gospel through their writings would continue for nearly two thousand more years.

However, when reading these statements today and looking back on history, one can see in Jesus' words the seeds for the future writing and canonizing of what was to become the New Testament. This can be seen in the following two verses: "And in His name, repentance and remission of sins should be **preached to all nations**, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47), and "You shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and **unto *the* ends of the earth**" (Acts 1:8).

After Jesus ascended into heaven on May 18, 30 AD, for the second and final time, the apostles expected Him to return in the near future. This is evident from Peter's second major sermon, which he delivered just a few weeks after Pentecost 30 AD. There is little doubt that he expected Jesus to return very soon: "But what God had before announced by *the* mouth of all His prophets, *that* Christ should suffer, He has accordingly fulfilled. Therefore, repent and be converted in order that your sins may be blotted out,

so that *the* times of refreshing may come from *the* presence of the Lord; and **that He may send Him Who was before proclaimed to you, Jesus Christ, Whom *the* heaven must indeed receive until *the* times of restoration of all things, of which God has spoken by *the* mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began**" (Acts 3:18-21).

Jesus did not tell the apostles that when He went away, He would not return to earth for nearly two thousand years. They would not have been able to comprehend that. In fact, they had only begun to preach the gospel. Therefore, Christ did not immediately reveal to them that He would not return within their lifetimes. Rather, He revealed it to them thirty-three years later, in 63 AD, when they were able to bear it.

Jesus' Return in Paul's Epistles Before 63 AD

I Thessalonians: In 51 AD when Paul wrote his first epistle to the Thessalonians, he made many references that clearly show he believed the Lord was returning soon: "For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every *other* place also your faith toward God has spread abroad, so that there is no need for us to say anything; because they themselves are relating how readily you received us when we *first* visited you, and **how you turned from idols to God, to serve *the* living and true God, and to await His Son from the heavens, Whom He raised from *the* dead—Jesus, Who is delivering us from the coming wrath**" (1:8-10).

"For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Is it* not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For you are our glory and *our* joy" (2:19-20). "Now may the Lord make you to exceed and to abound in love toward one another and toward all, even as we also *abound in love* toward you, **that your hearts may be established blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints**" (3:12-13). "But I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, that you be not grieved, even as others, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in exactly the same way also, those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say to you by *the* Word of *the* Lord, that **we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede those who have fallen asleep because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with *a* shout of command, with *the* voice of an archangel and with *the* trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in *the* clouds for *the* meeting with the Lord in *the* air; and so shall we always be with *the* Lord**" (4:13-17).

"Now then, concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, there is no need that I write to you; for you yourselves understand perfectly that **the day of *the* Lord will come exactly as a thief comes by night**. For when they say, 'Peace and security,' then sudden destruction will come upon them, as travail *comes* upon a woman who is with child; and they shall by no means escape. **But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day of *the* Lord should overtake you as a thief**. For you are all children of *the* light and children of *the* day; we are not of *the* night, nor of *the* darkness. So then, we should not sleep, as others *do*; but we should watch, and we should be sober; for those who are sleeping sleep in *the* night, and those who are drunken get drunk in *the* night. But we who are of *the* day should be sober, having put on *the* breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet *the* hope of salvation; **because God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ**" (5:1-9).

II Thessalonians: In II Thessalonians, also written in 51 AD, there are two more references to the coming of the Lord and the day of the Lord. These clearly show that

Paul believed that Jesus would return soon. He wrote: "Since *it is* righteous with God to recompense tribulation to those who are persecuting you; **and to you, who are persecuted, rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with His mighty angels**, dealing out vengeance with flaming fire upon those who do not know God, and those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who will suffer *the* penalty of eternal destruction from *the* presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His strength, **when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in that day in all those who believe** (because our testimony was believed by you)" (1:6-10).

The second reference is most profound because it describes in detail the coming abomination of desolation by the man of sin, the son of perdition who was spoken of by Daniel the prophet. Paul wrote: "Now we beseech you, brethren, concerning **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him**, that you not be quickly shaken in mind, nor be troubled—neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as if from us, *saying* that the day of Christ is present. **Do not let anyone deceive you by any means because *that day will not come unless the apostasy shall come first, and the man of sin shall be revealed—the son of perdition, the one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is an object of worship; so that he comes into the temple of God and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God.*** Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I told you these things? And now you understand what is holding *him* back in order for him to be revealed in his own set time.

"For the mystery of lawlessness is already working; only *there is* one Who is restraining at the present *time* until it arises out of *the* midst. And then the lawless one will be revealed (whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of His coming); *even* the one whose coming is according to *the inner workings of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders*, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are perishing because they did not receive the love of the truth, so that they might be saved. **And for this cause, God will send upon them a powerful deception that will cause them to believe *the lie*" (2:1-11). There is no doubt, as these scriptures show, that Paul fully expected that Jesus would return soon.**

Galatians: This epistle was written in the spring of 53 AD. In his closing comments, Paul encouraged the brethren not to be weary in doing good, indicating that he expected Jesus to return soon and then they would reap their rewards: "Now we should not lose heart *in* doing well because **we who do not faint will reap in due time**. So then, as we have opportunity, we should be doing good to all, and especially to those who are of the household of faith" (6:9-10).

I Corinthians: Paul wrote I Corinthians in 56 AD, and the following references show an expectation for Jesus' early return: "**Now this I say, brethren: the time is drawing close. For the *time that remains*, let those who have wives be as if they did not have wives; and those who weep, as if they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as if they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as if they did not possess; and those who use this world, as if they did not use *it* as their own; for this world in its present form is passing away**" (7:29-31). "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you *solemnly* proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes" (11:26). "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: **we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in *the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet***; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (15:50-51).

II Corinthians: We get hints of the soon-expected return of Jesus Christ in Paul's

second epistle to the Corinthians, which he wrote in 57 AD: "And having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, 'I believed, therefore I have spoken,' we also believe; therefore we also speak, **knowing that He Who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead shall also raise us through Jesus, and shall present us with you**" (4:13-14). "For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with *human* hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we truly are groaning, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven; **if indeed that being clothed, we may not be found naked**. For we who are in *this* tabernacle truly do groan, being burdened; not that we wish to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon **so that the mortal flesh may be swallowed up by life**" (5:1-4).

Romans: Paul wrote the epistle to the Romans in the winter of 57 AD, from Corinth. There are several scriptures that reveal he expected Jesus to return soon: "Now *consider* this, **knowing the time, that it is already the hour that we should be roused out of sleep; because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is almost over, and the day is drawing near; therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light**. Let us walk decently, as in *the* day; not in reveling and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and emulation. But *let us* put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and not make any allowance for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts" (Rom. 13:11-14). "**But the God of peace will bruise Satan under your feet shortly**. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you" (16:20).

Hebrews: Paul wrote the book of Hebrews from Rome in the spring of 61 AD, before the martyrdom of the apostle James in the spring of 62 AD. There is no doubt that when Paul wrote Hebrews, he fully expected Christ's imminent return. Notice: "**For it is but a short time until He Who is coming will come, and will not delay**" (Heb. 10:37).

James: This epistle was written in 40-41 AD. In James' closing remarks, he indicates that the apostles were expecting Christ to return soon: "Therefore, brethren, be patient **until the coming of the Lord**. Consider the husbandman *who* waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient for it, until it has received *the* former and latter rains. You also be patient. Strengthen your hearts, **because the coming of the Lord has drawn near**. Do not complain against one another, brethren, so that you may not be condemned. **Behold, the Judge stands at the door**" (James 5:7-9).

I Peter: It is evident that when the apostle Peter wrote his first epistle in 63 AD, he, like Paul, also was expecting Jesus' return, perhaps within a short time. Peter wrote: "For this reason, be prepared in your minds, be self-controlled, **and be fully hoping in the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ...Now the end of all things has drawn near**. Therefore, be serious-minded and be watchful in prayers" (I Pet. 1:13; 4:7).

I John: The apostle John wrote his first epistle in 63 AD, perhaps shortly after Peter had written his first epistle. There are two references in I John about the return of Jesus Christ: "Again, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining....And now, little children, dwell in Him, so that **when He is manifested we may have boldness, and not be put to shame before Him at His coming**" (2:8, 28). John mentioned "the last time" twice: "Little children, **it is the last time**; and just as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have risen up, by which we know that **it is the last time**" (2:18).

It is clear from the writings of Paul, Peter and John that until 63 AD they were expecting Jesus Christ to return soon. However, after 63 AD, their teachings dramatically changed. Why did this marked change occur?

Background to the Canonization of the New Testament

63 AD: Unfulfilled Prophecies Lead to a Sudden Shift in Teachings about Jesus Christ's Return

In his book *Restoring the Original Bible*, Ernest L. Martin laid out seven significant indicators that would have made it apparent to the apostles that Christ would not be returning in their generation or any time soon. This fact was a primary reason for their canonizing the books of the New Testament:

- 1) The martyrdom of James in the spring of 62 AD (pp. 185-186, 240, 265-268).
- 2) The prophetic/chronological factors of Daniel not being fulfilled as they had anticipated (pp. 186-192; 230-231).
- 3) "That generation" from 30 AD to 70 AD not being the last generation for the fulfillment of all prophecies (pp. 192-198, 209).
- 4) Supernatural signs of the temple's destruction between 30 AD and 70 AD (pp. 199-208; 258-259)
 - a. The dirge of Joshua ben Ananias, who daily for seven years cried "Woe to Jerusalem" before the city's destruction in 70 AD.
 - b. The western light of the Temple lampstand going out every night for forty years.
 - c. The crimson thread remaining crimson forty years.
 - d. The lot for the Lord on the day of Atonement always coming up in the high priest's left hand (for forty years).
 - e. The doors of the Temple being shut every night, but found open every morning for forty years.
- 5) On Pentecost 66 AD, God giving a supernatural sign that His presence was taken from the temple, and He had abandoned it.
- 6) Mass exodus of Jews, Christian and non-Christian, from Jerusalem and Judea to Asia Minor in 66-67 AD (pp. 244-248).
- 7) The Jewish-Roman War, 67 AD (pp. 269-280).

In addition, the apostles were watching to see whether the prophecies of Zechariah and Daniel would be fulfilled. Martin wrote: "Since these prophetic events had never occurred to the Jews, the apostles believed that Christ would be the one to place his feet on the Mount of Olives at his second advent. It must have been clear to them that *all the events* mentioned in Zechariah (and in other prophecies) had to take place *before* Christ could come back to earth. And the last possible year for the sequence of events to begin and have their fulfillment by the end of the single generation of 40 years starting from Christ's resurrection from the dead was the year A.D. 63. This was the year to begin the last 7 years of Daniel's sabbatical period in his Seventy Weeks prophecy.

"While all of this scenario was generally believed, a great problem arose. The year A.D. 63 came and went without any clue that the Romans would invade the Parthians as well as the Jews, and in consequence the Romans would lose the war and an independent nation of Judah would arise on the political scene. In fact, just the reverse happened. The off and on wars of the Romans and Parthians which lasted through the first nine years of Nero's reign came to an end in the spring of A.D. 63 with Parthian envoys appearing in Rome with a proposal that offered terms of capitulation to the Romans (*Cambridge Ancient History*, X, pp. 770-773)."

Martin continued: "Instead of a world war starting between the East and the West in A.D. 63, followed by a revolt of the various kingdoms within the Roman dominion, to fulfill what Christians thought to be Christ's prophecies (Matthew 24:6, 7), just the opposite occurred. Rome had actually become stronger than ever in the spring of A.D. 63. With the passing of A.D. 63 (the last possible year for the start of Daniel's final sabbatical period of 7 years occurring within the generation of 40 years from Christ's resurrec-

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tion), Paul came to the conclusion that the 'iron legs' of Rome were going to remain in power for a much longer time. Paul surmised that the prophesied ten kings and the 'little horn' were not then going to appear in the first century.

"The apostle Paul was not the only one to accept this truth. The apostle Peter not long after A.D. 63 also became convinced that a great deal of time was still left in world history before the second advent. That's when he wrote his second epistle and said that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years. This was Peter's acknowledgment that Christ had not really delayed his coming. It simply meant that the final 'generation' of 40 years before the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth would happen many years (even centuries) in the future. The apostles came to realize that there was nothing wrong with Christ's prophecies, but that Christ had been teaching that the actual end-time would arrive *upon a particular generation* which would 'see' the events of Matthew 24 and Zechariah 12 to 14. But with the year A.D. 63 over, it became obvious that the generation that succeeded Christ's resurrection was not the prophesied one of the end-time. This was the signal to Paul (and shortly afterwards to Peter and John) that it had become necessary to formulate a standard body of Christian documents which would last the Christian believers until those end-time events would actually occur" (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, pp. 230-232).

The Abomination of Desolation: Because the expected fulfillment of the beginning of Daniel's 70-week prophecy failed to materialize in 63 AD, that meant the rest of his prophecy would not be fulfilled either. Daniel's seventieth-week prophecy reads: "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and **in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate**, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate" (Dan 9:27, *KJV*). "In the midst of the week" in literal fulfillment means that in the middle of seven years, or at the end of the first three and one-half years, the abomination would stand in the holy place.

If this interpretation had been applied to an expected prophetic fulfillment beginning in 63 AD, it would have meant that midway through the year 66 AD—perhaps around Passover in the spring—the abomination of desolation would be set up as Daniel and Jesus had prophesied: "Therefore, **when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place** [in the holy of holies in the temple]....Then let those who are in Judea flee into the mountains....For then shall there be great tribulation, such as has not been from *the beginning of the world* until this time, nor ever shall be *again*" (Matt. 24:15-16, 21).

The apostle Paul described the abomination of desolation as "the man of sin, the son of perdition" who enters into the temple of God to proclaim himself as God: "The apostasy shall come first, and **the man of sin** shall be revealed—**the son of perdition**, the one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is an object of worship; so that **he comes into the temple of God and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God**" (II Thes. 2:3-4). Just as the prophetic events of 63 AD failed to materialize, so also the "abomination of desolation" failed to materialize in 66 ½ AD.

Because the "abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet" did not come to pass when those in Jerusalem and Judea fled, they did not leave everything behind and go to the mountains of Judea. However, another supernatural event took place in 66 AD that was a final warning for the believers to flee Jerusalem and Judea. At that time, the majority of Christian Jews, as well as many non-Christian Jews, fled to Pella in Jordan and to Asia Minor. This supernatural event took place on Pentecost 66 AD. Martin wrote: "This occurred about 50 days later on the Day of Pentecost and it clearly confirmed that the Deity was abandoning the Temple. The sign was not given in a corner

(where no witnesses could see it) but it was shown to the combined body of 24 priests who represented the 24 orders of the Aaronic priesthood who ministered together in the festival periods in the Temple. There could have been no higher authorities in Judaism to receive such a manifestation of the divine intentions to abandon the Temple. It was often thought by Jews and Christians that when momentous changes in religious or political systems were taking place, it required some clear sign from God (Amos 3:7). So, the witness to all 24 chief priests was powerful evidence to people of the first century that the supernatural event was God ordained and did in fact occur” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, p. 259).

Josephus also described this phenomenon: “Moreover, at that feast which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner [court of the] temple, as their custom was, to perform their sacred ministrations, they said that, in the first place, they felt a quaking, and heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, ‘Let us remove hence’ ” (Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, VI, 5:3).

Martin continued: “This was interpreted by many Jews at the time that the Deity himself was then leaving the Temple....(The fact that the supernatural voice said, ‘We’ rather than the singular ‘I’ was no problem to first century Jews. They were well aware that the Deity went by the name *Elohim*, which was a unified plural designation. See Genesis 1:26 and 3:22.)

“This departure of the Deity from the Temple at Pentecost of A.D. 66 was exactly 36 years (to the very day) after the Holy Spirit was first given in power to the apostles and the others at the first Christian Pentecost recorded in Acts 2. And now, on the same Pentecost day, the supernatural witness was given that God himself was abandoning the Temple at Jerusalem” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, pp. 259-260).

The removal of the Deity from the temple on the day of Pentecost in 66 AD was a powerful sign from God, because it was the opposite of what occurred when the tabernacle was dedicated by Moses in the wilderness. At that time, Moses first anointed Aaron and his sons into the priesthood. Then he set up the altar and the tabernacle with all its implements as God had instructed, as recorded in the book of Exodus: “So Moses finished the work. **Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.** And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle” (Ex. 40:33-35, *KJV*). This cloud showed that the presence of God was in the tabernacle.

Over 400 years later, when Solomon dedicated the first temple in Jerusalem, God again demonstrated His presence in the temple with a similar display of glory: “And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy *place*: (for all the priests *that were* present were sanctified, *and* did not *then* wait by course: also the Levites *which were* the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, *being* arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:)

“It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers *were* as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up *their* voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, *saying*, For *he* is good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever: that ***then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD***; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God” (II Chron. 5:11-14, *KJV*).

God demonstrated by a powerful sign to the 24 high priests as He was removing His presence from the temple in the same manner that He had placed His presence there.

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Martin wrote: “This meant that the Temple was no longer reckoned by God to be a holy sanctuary and that the building was no more sacred than any other secular building. Remarkably, even Jewish records show that the Jews retained historical records that the Shekinah glory of God left the Temple at this time and remained over the Mount of Olives for 3 ½ years. During this period a voice was heard to come from the region of the Mount of Olives asking the Jews to repent of their doings (*Midrash Lamentations* 2:11, p. 51 Soncino edition). This has an interesting bearing on the history of Christianity because we now know that Jesus Christ was crucified and resurrected from the dead on the Mount of Olives, the exact region where the Jewish records say the Shekinah glory of God remained for 3 ½ years after its departure from the Temple on Pentecost A.D. 66....The Jewish reference states that the Jews failed to heed this warning from the Shekinah glory (which they called a *Bat Kol*—the voice of God), and that it left the earth and retreated back to heaven just before the final siege of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, p. 260).

There is no doubt that God had removed His presence from the temple and had deserted the sanctuary. Josephus confessed that not only had God forsaken his temple but He had sided with the Romans to destroy the Jews and Jerusalem because of their wickedness. Josephus wrote: “**Wherefore I cannot but suppose that God is fled out of his sanctuary, and stands on the side of those against whom you fight.** Now even a man, if he be but a good man, will fly from an impure house, and will hate those that are in it; and do you persuade yourselves that God will abide with you in your iniquities, who sees all secret things, and hears what is kept most private?” (Josephus, *Wars*, bk. 5, ch. 9:4)

In 66 ½ AD the anticipated abomination of desolation—“the man of sin, the son of perdition”—did not come and stand in the holy place and proclaim himself as God. Therefore, the apostles fully understood that the return of Jesus Christ would not happen until far in the future, as God had revealed to them beginning in 63 AD.

The Third Key: God’s Special Revelation to the Apostles

In addition to the lack of fulfillment of prophecy, God made it known through a special revelation to the apostle Paul that Jesus Christ would not return in that single 40-year generation from 30 AD—the year Jesus was crucified—to 70 AD—the year that would end with the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem. Not only did Paul receive this special revelation, but “the holy apostles and prophets” also received it. Perhaps this special revelation that God gave to Paul was similar to the one he received in Jerusalem, where Christ appeared to him and spoke with him just before he was taken to Caesarea (Acts 23:11).

Two Parts of the Special Revelation Called “The Mystery of Christ”

Jesus had promised the apostles that through the power of the Holy Spirit, He would make known to them things that they were not previously able to bear. He fulfilled part of that promise when He gave a special revelation to Paul, Peter and John. Apparently, Paul received this special revelation prior to his release from Roman imprisonment in 63 AD. From Paul’s epistles we know that there were two parts to this special revelation: 1) God the Father, through Jesus Christ, was creating an eternal spiritual family through the process of salvation, called “the sonship of God.” 2) Jesus Christ was not

going to return any time soon. From the time of this special God-given revelation in 63 AD, Paul's writings changed.

The Sonship of God: Paul first wrote about the "sonship of God" when he wrote to the Galatians in 53 AD: "But when the time for the fulfillment came, God sent forth His own Son, born of a woman, born under law, in order that He might redeem those who are under law, so **that we might receive the gift of sonship from God**. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, 'Abba, Father' " (Gal. 4:4-6). (Note: In the King James Version, the "sonship of God" is translated as the "adoption of sons," or "children," in Rom. 8:15, 23; Gal. 4:5; and Eph. 1:5).

It becomes apparent when one studies these scriptures in the sequence in which they were written, that the knowledge of the "sonship of God" was a progressive revelation. By 56 AD, when Paul wrote I Corinthians, he spoke of "*the* wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom* that God foreordained before the ages unto our glory....But according as it is written, '*The* eye has not seen, nor *the* ear heard, neither have entered into *the* heart of man, *the* things which God has prepared for those who love Him.' **But God has revealed them to us by His Spirit**; for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God" (I Cor. 2:7, 9-10).

When he wrote to the Romans in the winter of 57 AD, Paul had an even deeper understanding of "the sonship of God": "Now you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received **the Spirit of sonship**, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that **we are the children of God**. Now if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him" (Rom. 8:15-17).

As Paul related in his epistle to the Ephesians, he had some knowledge of this mystery prior to the special revelation that he received in the Roman prison in 63 AD, and he had written to them about it before (Eph. 3:3-4). But after he received the fullness of the revelation, he called it "the Mystery of Christ" that revealed the "sonship of God" for those whom God the Father saves. He wrote: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ; according as He has personally chosen us for Himself before *the* foundation of *the* world in order that we might be holy and blameless before Him in love; **having predestinated us for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ**, according to the good pleasure of His own will, which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence; **having made known to us the mystery of His own will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself**; that in *the divine plan for the fulfilling of the times*, He might bring all things together in Christ, both the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth" (Eph. 1:3-5, 8-10).

While still in prison in Rome, Paul explained to the Ephesians: "For this cause I, Paul, *am* the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles, if indeed you have heard of the ministry of the grace of God that was given to me for you; **how He made known to me by revelation the mystery** (even as I wrote briefly before, so that when you read *this*, you will be able to comprehend **my understanding in the mystery of Christ**), which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as **it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit**; that the Gentiles might be joint heirs, and a joint body, and joint partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, of which I became a servant according to the gift of the grace of God, *which was* given to me through the inner working of His power. To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, was this grace given, **that I might preach the gospel among the Gentiles—even the unsearchable riches of Christ; and that I might enlighten all as to what is the**

fellowship of the mystery that has been hidden from the ages in God, Who created all things by Jesus Christ” (Eph. 3:1-9).

Paul was inspired to write that the “sonship of God” meant that those in the first resurrection would be “filled with all the fullness of God” and therefore, they would have an eternal existence, as God is eternal. However, this revealed knowledge could come about only through deep conversion and a profound love of God. Christ had to be dwelling in the individual through the power of the Holy Spirit—this was “the mystery of God.” What Paul wrote next is, perhaps, the most inspiring passage in the New Testament: God “**according to His eternal purpose**, which He has wrought in Christ Jesus our Lord, in Whom we have boldness and *direct* access with confidence through His *very* own faith. So then, I beseech *you* not to faint at my tribulations for you, which are *working* for your glory. For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named**, that He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, **to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; and** that being rooted and grounded in love, you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height, **and to know the love of Christ, which surpasses human knowledge; so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.** Now to Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us, to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations, *even* into the ages of eternity. Amen” (Eph. 3:11-21).

Paul prayed that the brethren would come to the fullness of this understanding that is the hope of the Christian calling. Paul wrote: “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you *the* spirit of wisdom and revelation in *the* knowledge of Him. **And may the eyes of your mind be enlightened in order that you may comprehend what is the hope of His calling, and what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the inner working of His mighty power**” (Eph. 1:17-19).

In 63 AD, when Paul wrote to the Colossians, he also wrote about the revelation of the mystery of God: “**Even the mystery that has been hidden from ages and from generations, but has now been revealed to His saints; to whom God did will to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory; Whom we preach, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, so that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus**” (Col. 1:26-28).

After his release from prison in 63 AD, Paul again mentioned the “mystery of godliness” in his first epistle to Timothy: “**And undeniably, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, was justified in the Spirit, was seen by angels, was proclaimed among the Gentiles, was believed on in the world, was received up in glory**” (I Tim. 3:16). There is no question that this revelation from God the Father and Jesus Christ had a profound effect on the apostle Paul. Without a doubt, it was the most compelling factor in Paul’s mind for finalizing his epistles.

Peter and John’s Understanding of the Mystery and Sonship of God

This revelation was given to the other apostles as well. In the same way that this revelation affected Paul’s writings, it also changed the tenor of Peter’s second epistle.

II Peter 1: When Peter wrote his second epistle, it is apparent that he had also received the same revelation of God. He taught that the sonship of God for the believers

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meant that they would receive the divine nature of God. What a profound new teaching! He proceeded to write a detailed plan for developing the love of God which would lead to the believer's receiving the full divine nature at the resurrection: "According as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue; **through which He has given to us the greatest and most precious promises, that through these you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.**

"And for this very reason also, having applied all diligence besides, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, the love of God. For *if* these things exist and abound in you, they *will* cause *you to be* neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind—so short-sighted *that* he has forgotten that he was purified from his old sins. For this reason, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure; because *if* you are doing these things, you will never fall at any time. For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 1:3-11).

God inspired Peter, just as he had inspired Paul, to understand the fullness of the special revelation and the "sonship of God," which was "Christ in you, the hope of glory." This is why Peter pledged his later years to help create a permanent written record of remembrance—the canonized writings that we know as the New Testament.

I John 3: The apostle John wrote that the true believers were now the children of God because they had the seed of begetting from God the Father. He also understood that those in the first resurrection would be glorified and would have the same existence as Jesus Christ and God the Father: "Behold! **What glorious love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!** For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, **now we are the children of God,** and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but **we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is.** And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure ... **Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin because His seed of begetting is dwelling within him,** and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God" (I John 3:1-3, 9).

Later, when John was given the visions he described in the book of Revelation, God gave him more understanding of the fullness of God the Father and Jesus Christ's plan for all of mankind, which He revealed through the visions of Revelation. By that time, John fully understood that Christ's return would not be for centuries and centuries into the distant future. God's plan and purpose for mankind was exceedingly greater than the apostles had first comprehended.

Paul's Writings after 63 AD

God revealed to Paul that because Christ would not return soon, the Church would be responsible for revealing to the world the purpose of God, just as Christ had revealed it to Paul and later to Peter and John: "**That the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church** to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly *places*, according to *His* eternal purpose, which He has wrought in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 3:10-11).

How was God going to make the "mystery of God" known to the world through

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the church? Apparently, by that time, Paul had begun to understand that God would do this through the canonized writings of the apostles—the God-breathed, official, authorized New Testament Scriptures, which God would preserve throughout all generations until the return of Jesus Christ. Instead of focusing on Christ's imminent coming, in his later epistles Paul began to emphasize the long-term stability of the churches and the individual Christian's growth in character and fruits of the Spirit.

Ephesians: In writing to the Ephesians, Paul said nothing of the imminent return of Jesus Christ, which had been an important theme in the epistles that he wrote before 63 AD. Rather, the contents of Ephesians show that Christ was not going to return soon. Paul instructed the Ephesian Christians on how to live their lives well into the future (1:9-10, 18-23; 2:20-22; 3:16-21; 4:11-16, 21-32; 5:1-33; 6:1-20).

Colossians: Likewise, Paul's teachings in his epistle to the Colossians clearly emphasized how Christians were to live their lives over a protracted period of time because Jesus Christ would not be returning soon. In fact, Paul did not even mention the return of Christ. However, he did write about the mystery of God which God was making known to the saints (Col. 1:26-28).

Paul wrote that the Colossian brethren were complete in Christ Jesus and that they were to reject philosophy and the traditions of men (2:2-23). Instead, as true believers, they were to keep the Sabbath and holy days of God, as well as the laws of clean and unclean meats (2:16-17).

The third chapter was devoted to long-term Christian growth and how each person was to develop godly character (verses 1-8) and reflect that character in relationships (verses 9-17); to instructions in family relations (verses 18-21); and to instructions for servants (verses 22-25). These detailed instructions reflect Paul's shift in emphasis from expecting the imminent return of Jesus Christ to teaching the brethren how to live and to await the resurrection of the dead, when Christ would finally return. Moreover, because he realized that there was ample time, Paul asked the brethren to pray for an open door so that he could preach the gospel and the mystery of Christ after his release (4:3-4). In closing, he gave personal instructions on how to live in the world (4:5-6).

I Timothy: This epistle was written in the late fall of 63 AD, shortly after Paul was released from his first imprisonment in Rome. I Timothy is one of the most important epistles showing that Paul now understood Christ's return would be far in the future. At this time, Paul wrote of the need to establish a permanent method for administering the churches—the work of the elders—and for teaching and pastoring the churches and fellowship groups.

Paul instructed Timothy to remain in Ephesus to oversee the church. Timothy was not to allow the circulation of false doctrines, myths and genealogies. He was to edify the church in faith with sound doctrine (1:1-10). Paul gave Timothy a solemn charge to hold the faith, maintain a clear conscience and wage a good spiritual fight (1:18-19). Since it was evident that Christ would not return soon, Paul instructed Christians to pray for kings and those in authority in order that Christians could live quiet, peaceful, godly lives and so obtain the salvation of Christ Jesus. He also gave special instructions for women (2:1-14).

Paul devoted all of Chapter 3 to detailed requirements for the qualifications of overseers and deacons and their wives. More than anything, Paul's instructions in this chapter reflect the apostles' new teachings on how to live a Christian life; how the ministry was to function far into the future; and how church leaders were to conduct themselves in the assembly of God, which was the pillar and ground of truth (3:1-15).

In Chapter 4, Paul instructed Timothy to be on guard against spirits of deceit and doctrines of demons and those who would apostatize from the faith (4:1-5). He encouraged Timothy to teach the words of faith and good doctrine; to exercise godliness; to de-

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vote himself to reading, encouragement and doctrine; not to neglect the spiritual gifts; and to be diligent and endeavor to grow as an overseer (4:6-16).

Continuing his instructions in Chapter 5, Paul directed Timothy in detail on how to administer the church and serve the brethren on a long-term basis, how to treat older men and women, and younger men and women (5:1-2), and how to determine a widow's qualifications for church assistance (5:3-10, 16).

Paul's instructions to the Corinthians in 56 AD for the younger widows and unmarried women were completely opposite the instructions that he gave Timothy seven years later in 63 AD. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians in 56 AD, he thought that the time was short and Jesus would return soon: **"Now this I say, brethren: the time is drawing close. For the time that remains, let those who have wives be as if they did not have wives"** (I Cor. 7:26-29).

However, by 63 AD, when Paul wrote to Timothy, he advised the exact opposite because he knew that Christ was not returning any time soon. Paul wrote: **"Therefore, I wish the younger women to marry, to bear children, to manage the household"** (I Tim. 5:14).

Paul continued to advise Timothy about the need to compensate elders who labored in the word. He counseled Timothy on how to correct elders who sinned, and he advised him not to be hasty in ordaining elders (5:21-25). He gave instructions on slaves and masters (6:1-2). Finally, Paul concluded his epistle to Timothy by instructing him to adhere to the sound words of Jesus Christ and not to allow others in the church to teach any other doctrine. Timothy was to be content with what he had and not to seek riches, but rather to fight the good fight of faith and guard the doctrine with which he had been entrusted as a sacred duty (6:3-20).

Paul's Sacred Charges to Timothy: Paul gave five specific sacred charges to Timothy in his first epistle and one in his second epistle. These were strong, specific commands, clearly showing the long-term nature of Paul's instructions and how Timothy was to use his authority as an overseer.

1) "When I was going to Macedonia, I exhorted you to remain in Ephesus in order that **you might solemnly charge some not to teach other doctrines**, nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which lead to empty speculations rather than to edification from God, which *is* in faith" (I Tim 1:3-4).

2) **"This charge** [Timothy's responsibilities as an overseer] I am personally committing to you, *my son Timothy*, in accordance with the prophecies that were made long ago concerning you, in order that by them you yourselves might wage a good war, holding to *the* faith and a good conscience" (verse 18).

3) **"I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels**, that you observe these things without prejudice, *and let* nothing be done by partiality" (I Tim. 5:21).

4) **"I charge you in the sight of God**, Who gives life to every *living* thing, and Jesus Christ, Who *in* testifying before Pontius Pilate *gave* the exemplary profession *of faith*, that **you keep this commandment without fault and without rebuke until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; which in His own times the blessed and only Sovereign will make known, the King of kings and Lord of lords**, Who alone has immortality, dwelling in light which no man can approach; Whom no man has seen, nor has *the* ability to see; to Whom *belong* eternal honor and power" (I Tim 6:13-16).

5) **"Charge those who are rich** in this present age not to be high minded, nor to put *their* hope in *the* uncertainty of riches; but to put *their* hope in the living God, Who abundantly gives us all things for *our* enjoyment; to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous in giving, to be ready to share; **treasuring up for themselves a good foundation for the future, so that they may lay hold on eternal life**. O Timothy, guard the

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doctrine which has been entrusted *to you*, avoiding profane, empty babblings, and contradictions of false knowledge *that is* called science; *through* which some, who are personally professing *these false views*, have missed the mark concerning the faith. Grace *be* with you. Amen” (I Tim. 6:17-21).

6) **“I charge you, therefore, in the sight of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ,** Who is ready to judge *the* living and *the* dead at His appearing and His kingdom; preach the Word! Be urgent in season and out of season; convict, rebuke, encourage, with all patience and doctrine. For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine; but according to their own lusts they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of* teachers, having ears itching *to hear what satisfies their cravings*; and they shall turn away their own ears from the truth; and they shall be turned aside unto myths. But *as for* you, be vigilant in all things, endure hardships, do *the* work of an evangelist; fully carry out your ministry” (II Tim. 4:1-5).

All six of Paul’s charges to Timothy reveal that in 63 AD, and later, in 67 AD, Paul fully understood that Christ would not return for a long time—maybe centuries. Thus, it is evident that the church was to become a long-term establishment and await the return of Jesus Christ at an unknown time in the future.

Titus: Paul’s epistle to Titus is very similar to I Timothy. He gave Titus instructions for selecting elders (1:5-8). Titus and the elders were to stop rebellious deceivers from subverting Christian households (1:9-16). As Paul had written to Timothy, he instructed Titus on the duties of older men and women, younger men and women, children and slaves and masters (2:1-10). They still were to be looking for the return of Jesus Christ, but at a future time (2:12-15). In Chapter 3, Paul gave instructions for Christian living and commanded Titus to reject those who taught heresy.

The Fourth Key: A New Understanding—The Last Days and the Return of Christ Were in the Distant Future

Along with the special revelation that God gave to Paul, Peter and John, came a new understanding about the timing of Christ’s return and the day of the Lord. Peter was the first to write that the last days and the return of Jesus Christ lay in the distant future. Because of the lack of fulfillment of prophecy by 65-66 AD, many were accusing God of delaying Christ’s coming. In addition to issuing warnings about false teachers and the coming Jewish Roman war, Peter was inspired to rethink the timing of the last days and the day of the Lord. He now believed that the day of the Lord might be a thousand years in the future, perhaps more. Peter wrote: “Now, beloved, I am writing this second epistle to you; in *both*, I am stirring up your pure minds by causing *you* to remember, *in order* for you to be mindful of the words that were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of the Lord and Savior, *spoken* by us, the apostles; knowing this first, that **in the last days *there will come mockers***, walking according to their own personal lusts, and asking, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fore-fathers died, everything has remained the same as from *the* beginning of creation.’ But this *fact* is hidden from them—they *themselves* choosing *to ignore it*—that by the Word of God *the* heavens existed of old, and *the* earth came forth out of water and amid water, by which the world at that time, having been deluged with water, had itself been destroyed.

“But the present heavens and earth are being held in store by His Word, and are being reserved for fire in *the* day of judgment and destruction of *the* ungodly. Now, beloved, do not let this one fact be hidden from you; that with *the* Lord, one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not delay-

ing the promise of *His coming*, as some in their own minds reckon delay; rather, He is long-suffering toward us, not desiring that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

“However, the day of *the* Lord shall come as a thief in *the* night in which the heaven itself shall disappear with a mighty roar, and *the* elements shall pass away, burning with intense heat, and *the* earth and the works in it shall be burned up. Since all these things are going to be destroyed, what kind of *persons* ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, **looking forward to and striving for the coming of the day of God**, during which *the* heavens, being on fire, shall be destroyed, and *the* elements, burning with intense heat, shall melt? But according to His promise, **we look forward** to a new heaven and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. For this reason, beloved, since you are anticipating these things, be diligent, so that you may be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless” (II Peter 3:1-14).

In 65-66 AD, for Peter to write “a thousand years is as one day and one day as a thousand years” reveals that although he fully understood that the day of the Lord and the return of Jesus Christ would be in the future—perhaps a thousand years or more—he did not have any specific understanding as to how far in the future it would be. From the tenor of what he wrote, it is clear that Peter fully understood that no man could know when Jesus would return. Jesus had forewarned the apostles, “But concerning that day, and the hour; no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only” (Matt. 24:36).

Four key developments that motivated the canonization of the New Testament have been examined in this chapter. The New Testament evidence of how God the Father and Jesus Christ led the apostles Paul, Peter and John to canonize the New Testament as the Word of God will be explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

WHEN AND BY WHOM WAS THE NEW TESTAMENT CANONIZED?

One of the most profound questions regarding the Old and New Testament Scriptures is this: when and by whom were the Scriptures canonized?

The canonization of the Scriptures was the process by which certain books officially became recognized as the God-breathed, authentic books of the Holy Scriptures. These books and these alone—to the exclusion of all others—were to be accepted, and used with full faith and confidence as the God-breathed, authoritative Word of God. Once these books had been canonized by the true servants of God, all other books and writings were officially excluded. While other writings, books and epistles may elaborate on certain points of Scripture or history, they may never be considered Scripture. They do not have the authority of Scripture, nor are they equal to Scripture, because they were never included in the official and final canonization. In fact, God even inspired that some books, which are referenced in the Old and New Testament, be excluded from canonization.

As such then, the officially canonized Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the inspired Word of God. Thus, the Bible bears the authority of God as His revealed Word to the exclusion of all other writings. It is the “Truth of God” from the “God of Truth” to the apex of His creation—mankind. Every person can have full faith and confidence that the Holy Bible is the Word of God. It reveals how one is to live and how one can worship God in Spirit and in truth. When the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, he elaborated on the divine authority and use of the Holy Scriptures: “And that from a child you have known the holy writings [the canonized Old Testament], which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus. All Scripture [including the New Testament books] *is* God-breathed, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work” (II Tim. 3:15-17).

Because the Scriptures are God-breathed, not humanly contrived myths and folklore, Jesus Christ made it clear that everyone is to live by them. When He was tempted by Satan the devil, Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of man, emphatically exclaimed that He Himself lived by every word of God: “And when the tempter came to Him, he said, ‘If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.’ But He answered *and* said, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of *the* mouth of God.” ’ ” (Matt. 4:3-4). Jesus was quoting Deuteronomy 8:3; however, when verses 2-6 of Deuteronomy 8 are also included, Scripture further informs us that regardless of one’s personal circumstance, he or she is always to live by the Word of God as God has commanded: “And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, *and* to prove thee, to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that **man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.** Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell,

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these forty years. Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him” (Deut. 8:2-6, *KJV*).

Today, most professing Christians believe that Jesus came to do away with or abolish the law. This is absolutely not true! Jesus Christ emphatically declared that He did not come for that purpose. Jesus’ own words as recorded by Matthew clearly state: **“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled.** Therefore, whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever shall practice and teach *them*, this one shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:17-19).

These words of Jesus Christ are the New Testament teaching concerning the Law and the Prophets. As long as heaven and earth exist, the Law and the Prophets are binding on mankind. Since the books of the Old Testament are the inspired words of God—literally God-breathed—a short summary of how the Old Testament books were canonized is necessary before one can understand how, when and by whom the New Testament was canonized.

Review of Canonization of the Old Testament

Before his death in January 2002, Dr. Ernest L. Martin was recognized as one of the leading scholars and authorities of the canonical study of the Bible. In his books *The Original Bible Restored*, second edition, 1991 and *Restoring the Original Bible*, third edition, 1994, Martin gives insight into history and biblical revelation concerning how, when and by whom the Old and New Testament Scriptures were canonized. While he differs in some of his biblical interpretations and historical conjectures, his book is highly esteemed in the study of biblical canonization.

Martin outlined five periods of canonization for the Old Testament: 1) the time of Moses, 2) the time of Samuel, David and Solomon, 3) the time of King Hezekiah, 4) the time of King Josiah and 5) the final canonization by Ezra. This chapter will focus on the fifth period and final canonization of the Old Testament.

History shows that the primary reason for the final canonization by Ezra was the need to establish the true, official, authoritative Word of God in order to combat an insidious Judaic counterfeit worship system that was led by the high priest Manassah and established by renegade priests in the fifth century BC. Manassah had married the daughter of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria, who built a Jerusalem-like temple for Manassah and his apostate priests in Samaria. After refusing to put away their foreign wives, as Ezra had commanded, a defiant Manassah and his rebel priests defected to Samaria and established a false worship system complete with all the rituals described in the five books of Moses. These five books were the main portion of Scripture that they accepted because the other writings that Ezra had incorporated into his final canonization of the Old Testament clearly declared that only in Jerusalem and its temple had God placed His name for true worship under the Old Covenant.

Ezra and the Great Assembly of one hundred twenty priests and the Jews of Jerusalem and Judea were confronted with a counterfeit temple worship that professed to uphold the laws of Moses. The counterfeit temple stood on Mount Gerizim, the Mount of Blessing, near Jacob’s Well. Something drastic had to be done to protect the true worship of God from being corrupted by this new Samaritan-Jewish apostasy.

To accomplish this task, Ezra and the Great Assembly began to exercise firm au-

thority over every aspect of worship at the true temple of God in Jerusalem and in all the synagogues of the Jews scattered throughout the Persian empire. The Great Assembly supervised and regulated the temple rites and sacrifices, priestly laws, synagogue rituals and everything associated with the worship of God under the Old Covenant. Each practice had to be approved by Ezra and the Great Assembly and had to be centered at the temple in Jerusalem. Every act of worship had to be thoroughly and completely scriptural—AND ADAMANTLY ANTI-SAMARITAN!

In order to preserve the true worship of God, it was essential to differentiate between the Scriptures of the Jerusalem Jews and the Scriptures of the Samaritan Jews. The first step was to set the Scriptures in order and canonize each book. When this work was completed, accurate copies of the entire text were made and distributed to Jewish synagogues throughout the Persian empire. Once canonized, the Word of God would be preserved for all time. Here is a summary of Ezra's work, which was a monumental step in the development and preservation of the Old Testament for the Jewish people and eventually for the world:

"According to Jewish tradition, five great works are ascribed to him [Ezra]: (1) the foundation of the 'Great Synagogue' [the Great Assembly], (2) the settlement of the canon of Scripture, with the threefold division into Law, Prophets, and Hagiographa [the Psalms and other Writings], (3) **the substitution of the square Chaldee characters for the old Hebrew and Samaritan**, (4) the compilation of Chronicles, possibly of Esther, with the addition of Nehemiah's history to his own, and (5) the establishment of synagogues" (Angus, *The Bible Handbook*, p. 542).

An especially important task Ezra undertook was to change all the Hebrew letters in the Scriptures of the Old Testament from the ancient cursive script to the square, block style Chaldee script. The block style lettering was commonly used in the sixth century BC in Babylon and elsewhere in the Persian Empire. Martin explained that the use of the block style script was not done "... simply to facilitate the reading of the Bible but, more importantly, Ezra was able to establish at one fell swoop an official canon of the scriptures which was now (by the use of the new letter configurations) able to be distinguished from heretical Samaritan manuscripts which were written in the old Hebrew script" (Martin, *The Original Bible Restored*, p. 63).

As part of the canonization of the Scriptures, Ezra also edited the books that became the Old Testament. This editing included the substitution of current terminology for ancient names that were no longer in use. When the older names were retained, explanatory phrases were sometimes added to identify them. These minor changes helped to update the text and make it more understandable to the people of Ezra's day. As Martin notes, there were no major alterations to the text: "... Ezra felt that the Old Testament needed editing to allow the Jewish nation of his time to have the *complete* and *full* revelation of God in the Hebrew language. **Ezra's additions were not vast changes in the text of the Old Testament**" (Ibid., p.102, emphasis added).

Ernst Würthwein, one of the most well-known experts in the text of the Old Testament, verified the legitimacy of the alterations that were made before the text was canonized: "Before the text of the Old Testament was officially established, it was not regarded as unalterable. Accordingly, we should expect to find that those who were concerned with the transmission of the text would occasionally make deliberate, fully intentional alterations in the text. In evaluating these alterations, we must avoid thinking of them as 'corruptions.' **They were made in good faith**, with no intention of introducing a foreign element into the text, but rather **with the aim of restoring the true text** and (from the copyist's view) preventing misunderstandings. They must have originated **in a period when the letter of the text could still be changed in order to express its message more effectively** for its readership and audience.

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“It is quite natural that a text which was not simply the object of scholarly study but intended to be read constantly by the whole of the Jewish community would be adapted to the linguistic needs of the community....Since the wording of the text was subject to variation **before it was officially established, it was also possible to substitute acceptable expressions** for ones which were morally or religiously offensive” (*The Text of The Old Testament*, pp. 108-110, emphasis added).

Concerning the editing that was done by Ezra and those before him Würthwein added: “**The editorial activity** which we glimpse in these deliberate alterations **was in respects official**, and may be traced to an early period. This is a wide field which unfortunately has not yet been examined as systematically as it deserves” (Ibid., p. 110).

Although a few alterations, such as genealogical updatings, were made in the text of the Old Testament after its canonization, there is no question that Ezra was the one who compiled, edited and canonized the books. A number of books had been canonized earlier by righteous kings of Israel and Judah, but it was Ezra who established the final official text of the Old Testament. Martin wrote, “Furthermore, though various suggestions as to which books David, Solomon, Hezekiah, etc. saw fit to canonize have been made ... this was mainly possible because of hints given in Ezra’s book of Chronicles. It was Ezra (the Second Moses) who gave to the Jewish world the official (and final) Old Testament to be read in the Temple and synagogues. This makes the canonization by Ezra the most important of all” (*The Original Bible Restored*, p. 102).

Just as Ezra and the Great Assembly were moved by God to canonize the Old Testament Scriptures in the face of a developing apostasy, so the apostles Paul, Peter and John were moved to canonize the New Testament while confronting a developing false Christianity and a multitude of false teachers. This ultimate task was not left to other men to do hundreds of years after the apostles had died, as some have presumed.

A Generally Accepted Theory of the New Testament Canon

The New Testament canon refers to the group or collection of books that have been accepted as the authentic writings of the apostles and thus officially designated as authoritative for teaching in the churches of God. One generally accepted theory is that the canonization, or final authoritative compilation of the twenty-seven books now called the New Testament, was not completed until late in the fourth century. *Unger’s Bible Dictionary* informs us that scholars have arbitrarily divided the writing of the New Testament into five periods. The first period is from 30 AD to 70 AD. The second period is from 70 AD to 120 AD and is called the “Apostolic Fathers.” The third period, from 120 AD to 170 AD, is termed the “Apologists.” “The age of the apologists carries the history of the formation of canon one step further. The facts of the life of Christ acquired a fresh importance in controversy with Jew and Gentile. The oral tradition, which still remained in the former age, was dying away, and a variety of written documents claimed to occupy its place. Then it was that the canonical gospels were definitely separated from the mass of similar narratives in virtue of their outward claims, which had remained, as it were, in abeyance during the period of tradition” (Canon of Scripture, *Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, pp. 177-178).

The fourth period was from 170 AD to 350 AD, and the fifth period was from 303 AD to 397 AD. Finally, it is claimed that the canon was fully set in 397 AD. “The canon of the New Testament, as commonly received at present, was ratified by the third Council of Carthage (A. D. 397), and from that time was accepted throughout the Latin Church ...” (Ibid., p. 178).

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The extended timetable of this theory of canonization—70 AD to 397 AD—is untrue. God did not commit the canonization of the books of the New Testament to men of dubious character and questionable faith—three hundred years after the apostle John had died. This theory of canonization distorts the real truth of how, when and by whom the books of the New Testament were canonized.

Martin also rejected this theoretical extended chronology of the canonization of the New Testament. In fact, he strongly condemned such theories as merely the guesswork of scholars: “It is normally assumed by scholars (and they are simply *guessing*) that the canon of the New Testament came into existence sometime in the early or middle second century, and was finalized in the fourth century. **This *guessing* is patently not true. Early Christian scholars did not believe such teaching.** Augustine, one of the most ardent supporters of the organized church of the fourth and fifth centuries, believed that the New Testament canon came into existence in the time of the apostles themselves. He stated: ‘Distinguished from the books of later authors is the excellence of the canonical authority of the Old and New Testaments; which, *having been established in the time of the apostles*, hath through the succession of overseers and propagators of the churches been set as it were in a lofty tribunal, demanding the obedience of every faithful and pious understanding’ (*Contra Faustum Man.* 11.5).

“How different from what is generally accepted today! In our present age, it is common to hear that the second, third, or fourth century church canonized the New Testament in some unknown and mysterious fashion. **This is in no way true.** ‘The striking fact that the early councils had nothing whatever to do with forming the Canon of the New Testament has been so emphasized by a number of writers that one is astonished that it is not more widely known’ (Urquhart, *The Bible*, p. 37). **The Christian community of the second, third or fourth centuries had nothing to do with the canonization of the New Testament**” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, pp. 300-301, bold emphasis added).

In the nineteenth century, German scholar Theodor Zahn in his two-volume work, *Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons* (1888-1892) and *Grundriss der Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons* (1904), also concluded that the canonization of the New Testament was set by the end of the first century. Harry Y. Gamble wrote this summary of Zahn’s works: “Zahn’s massive study of the history of the canon, the most thorough ever undertaken, and his summary of conclusions, argued that there was already a canon of Christian scriptures by about the end of the first century (80-110), not in the sense, of course, that all twenty-seven books of the historic canon were already known and shaped into an authoritative collection, but to the extent that there had arisen a body of Christian documents read in public worship and broadly recognized and cited as normative. They consisted of the fourfold Gospel and a corpus of thirteen Pauline letters, as well as some other writings. Zahn believed that this was adequately documented by the fact that the church fathers, especially the early second-century Apostolic Fathers, were fully aware of these texts, which they clearly took to be fundamental resources of the church at large” (McDonald and Sanders, *The Canon Debate: on the Origins and Formation of the Bible*, pp. 267-268).

Conversely, acceptance of the theory of an extended period of canonization opened the door for the Roman Catholic Church to claim that other writings should be included as canonized scripture. These included the Apocryphal books of the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Old Testament and other spurious writing of the “early church fathers,” as well as later traditions of the Roman clergy. All of these were accepted as having equal or greater status and authority for teaching doctrine and establishing religious practices. Roman Catholic Cardinal James Gibbons justified the inclusion of these writings and religious traditions, placing them on an equal status with the Scriptures as

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authoritative for teaching, when he stated: “The most perfect Christians lived and died and went to heaven before the most important parts of the Scriptures were written. And what would have become of them if the Bible alone had been their guide?” (Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers*, p. 69). Gibbons wrongly concluded that the Bible alone does not contain all the truth necessary for salvation. As a result, the writings of the early Church Fathers, as well as the traditions promulgated by the “Church,” are accepted by the Roman Catholic Church with equal or greater authority than the Bible.

When all the uncanonical, spurious Apocryphal books, the writings of the early Church Fathers and the traditions of men are rejected as being authoritative for doctrine and worship, it becomes evident that nearly all the doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic Church—and of those churches that follow the same—have no scriptural foundation. In fact, when closely examined, they are absolutely contrary to the teachings of both the Old and New Testaments (See *The Two Babylons—Or The Papal Worship, Proved to be The Worship of Nimrod and His Wife* by Alexander Hislop, Loizeaux Brothers, Neptune, New Jersey; and also see *The Golden Bough* by Sir James George Frazer, The Macmillan Company, New York, New York.) Therefore, those desiring to justify these unscriptural, humanly contrived practices and beliefs must continue to accept the myth of a late chronology for the final New Testament canonization by the Council of Carthage in 397 AD.

Martin further substantiated that the Roman Catholic Church never had a part in the canonization of the New Testament: “Some historians would have people believe that the church of the early second century (or even the third or fourth century) probably formulated the final New Testament. There has always been a problem with this appraisal because there is not a sliver of evidence that such a thing took place. The truth is, when the early church fathers began to talk about the canon of the New Testament near the end of the second century, it is assumed that it was already in their midst. The first recorded discussion among the Catholic scholars about the books of the New Testament only concerned whether certain books in the canon were of lesser rank, not which books were needed to form the official canon (Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.*, III.25). ‘What is particularly important to notice is that the New Testament canon was not demarcated by the arbitrary [decision] of any church Council. When at last a Council—the Synod of Carthage in A.D. 397—listed the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, it did not confer upon them any authority which they did not already possess, but simply recorded their previously established canonicity. As Dr. Foakes-Jackson puts it: “The [Catholic] Church assuredly did not make the New Testament” ’ (Bruce, *The Bible and the Parchments*, p. 111)” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, p. 295).

From the evidence, it is clear that the most commonly accepted theory of the canonization of the New Testament is false. However, what is the true scriptural and historical record? By whom and when was the New Testament canonized?

The New Testament Itself Reveals by Whom and When It Was Canonized

God did not want people to be in doubt as to who canonized the twenty-seven books of the New Testament; consequently, this information has been preserved in the New Testament itself. Martin states that, “The important thing that must be realized is the fact that what we call the New Testament today records information about the formation of the Holy Scriptures for the Christian community of believers. And, indeed, the New Testament itself speaks about its own canonization. True, hardly anyone today pays attention to what the apostles said about their own canonization of the New Testament, but I feel it is time to put the matter into proper perspective. It was the apostles

themselves who put together the New Testament books, not some unknown church group or groups of the second and/or third or fourth centuries” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, p. 281). The task of writing and canonizing the prophetic New Testament Scriptures was so profound that Jesus Christ used only His selected apostles to write it and only Paul, Peter and John—His special eyewitnesses—to canonize those writings.

The New Testament is the Word of God

Jesus Christ was the Son of God. He spoke and taught the words of God; moreover, Jesus Christ is called “the Word of God” (John 1:1-3). Jesus said, “The words that I speak to you, *they* are spirit and *they* are life” (John 6:63). God the Father inspired Jesus Christ to speak what He spoke and to do what He did. Concerning this Jesus was clear: “The words that I speak to you, I do not speak from My own self; but the Father Himself, Who dwells in Me, does the works. Believe Me, that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; but if not, believe Me because of the works themselves....If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments....The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him....**If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s, Who sent Me**” (John 14:10-11, 15, 21, 23-34).

When the apostles began to preach the gospel as recorded in the book of Acts, they knew that their preaching was the Word of God. They knew that they were commissioned and sent by Jesus Christ, the Son of God—God manifested in the flesh—to be witnesses to the world of His resurrection from the dead and to proclaim that the gift of salvation is available through His name. They were filled with the Holy Spirit of God, which empowered them to preach the Word of God (Acts 2) and to perform astounding miracles (Acts 3-5). Mark ended his Gospel with this summary, showing that as the apostles preached the Word of God everywhere, God backed it up with power: “And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them* and confirming the Word by the signs that followed” (Mark 16:20).

The apostles not only preached the Word, as Jesus had commanded them, but they also began to write at a very early date. In 30-31 AD, perhaps less than one year after Jesus’ death and resurrection, the apostles began writing and compiling the teachings of Jesus Christ in order to teach the gospel to the multitude of new believers (Acts 6:4; see also Acts 2:37-41, 47; 4:4, 32; 5:12-16, 28; 6:1). The apostles continued to write, and by 35 AD Matthew had finished his Gospel. James wrote his Epistle to the Jews and Israelites in the Diaspora in 40-41 AD. Peter and Mark finished the Gospel of Mark by at least 42 AD. The main body of the Gospel of John was finished by 42 AD. James’ letter to the Gentile believers was written in 49 AD (Acts 15).

Thirteen of Paul’s fourteen epistles were written between 50 AD and 63 AD, with II Timothy being added in 67 AD. Luke finished his Gospel in 59-60 AD, and the book of Acts in late spring 63. The three epistles of John were written in 63-64 AD. Peter wrote his First Epistle late in 63 AD to early 64 AD, and his Second Epistle in 66-67 AD. Jude was written about 66-67 AD. Revelation, the last book of the New Testament, and of the Bible, was written by the apostle John in 95-96 AD.

With the exception of Revelation, all the books of the New Testament were written well before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. In addition to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, these books and epistles written by the apostles were widely circulated in the churches and were used for reading, for teaching and for doctrinal under-

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standing (Col. 4:16; I Thes. 4:1-3; 5:27; II Thes. 3:14; I Tim. 4:9-16; 6:1-6; II Tim. 2:15; 3:15-16; 4:1-4; Heb. 13:20-22; James 2:8-10; II Pet. 1:15; 3:15-16).

When the apostles wrote their gospels and epistles, they knew that God the Father and Jesus Christ had inspired their writings as the true Word of God for teaching the believers of the New Covenant. However, they may not have realized when they first began to write their gospels and epistles that they were actually being inspired to write them for a future New Testament. It was not until 63 AD that God finally revealed to Paul, Peter and John that they needed to canonize their writings in order to preserve the New Testament Scriptures for coming generations until the return of Jesus Christ.

Subsequently, the canonizing of these books into the official, authorized New Testament, along with the writing of the book of Revelation, was adding the finishing touches to the writings that were already being used by the churches. It was the apostles Paul, Peter and John who canonized the writings of the apostles that became the books of the New Testament. They understood that they were to fulfill the Word of God, to bring it to completion. The New Testament canonization completed what God had begun with the book of Genesis in the Old Testament.

Three Special Eyewitnesses Canonized the New Testament Books

As stated previously, Jesus Christ had chosen the apostles Peter, James and John to be special eyewitnesses of the vision of His transfiguration. This occurred during Jesus' ministry in the fall of 29 AD, about six months before His crucifixion (Matt. 17:1-9; Mark 9:1-10; Luke 9:27-36). However, in 44 AD, James was beheaded by Herod (Acts 12:1-2), leaving Peter and John as the two remaining special eyewitnesses of the transfiguration. A third special eyewitness to replace the apostle James, brother of John, was the apostle Paul.

The Change of Names: God sometimes changes the names of those whom He calls for a special purpose. Abram was renamed "Abraham" because God made him "a father of many nations" (Gen. 17:5). Sarai, his wife, was renamed "Sarah" because God made her "a mother of nations and kings of people shall be of her" (Gen. 17:15-16). God changed Jacob's name to "Israel" because "as a prince you have power with God and with men, and have prevailed" (Gen. 32:28).

The New Testament shows that, of the original twelve apostles, Jesus renamed only three; the other nine were not renamed. The three were the leading apostles: Peter, James and John. When Jesus first saw Simon Peter, He renamed him "Cephas," which means "stone" (John 1:42). Martin notes: "Peter [as a stone] was to be associated with Christ (the Rock *Himself*) in the creation of the Christian *ekklesia* [church]. This was accomplished in its initiation phases with Peter on the Day of Pentecost some 50 days after the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2). Peter was also given the 'keys of the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 16:19). These 'keys' were to allow him the power to open 'the doors of the kingdom' to those who would hear the Gospel. It even entailed an authority to bind or loose people regarding their entrance into that kingdom. (This power was later extended to all the apostles, John 20:23.) And it appears certain that one of the main methods by which Peter would be able to exercise the power of the 'keys' was to be [partially] in charge of the canonization of the New Testament. The information in the canon would 'open the doors' to all people who would read and heed the written messages therein" (Ibid., p. 311).

Jesus renamed James and John "the sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17). Martin explains the special reason why He renamed them: "The other two apostles who received

specific titles were the sons of Zebedee—James and John. They were reckoned by Christ as being *the Sons of Thunder*. This title has proved a little mysterious to many interpreters of the Bible because it gives one the impression that the two brothers were headstrong, impetuous, intolerant and authoritarian. And, this is true. But when it comes to analyzing the letters of John, he appears to sanction a conciliation among peoples (especially those who claim the common Christian faith) and that love and harmony ought to exist in Christian relationships (I John 2:9-11). John was also the one that Christ had a natural fondness for more than the other apostles (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20). And when one looks at the biblical account about the actions of these two brothers, they do appear to be stern and uncompromising in their attitudes toward evil. They were the ones who asked Christ if fire should come down on the heads of the Samaritans (Luke 9:54), and (with their mother [Jesus' aunt]) their ambitions were so high that they asked Christ for positions of supreme leadership alongside him (Matthew 20:20-24). They were certainly *not* mild-tempered. They were to be men of 'Thunder.' In Hebrew 'thunder' (*kol*) meant the *Voice of God* (Exodus 9:23; Psalm 29:3; Jeremiah 10:13; etc.). The title could signify that they were to speak like God Himself—as personal spokesmen for God" (Ibid., pp. 311-312).

James, the brother of John, was the first apostle to be martyred. Undoubtedly, as one of the sons of thunder, James had preached repentance and salvation through Jesus Christ to the Jews in such a powerful way—thundering the truth of God—that they could not stand to hear it. Therefore, they persuaded Herod to kill him (Acts 12:1-2).

The fourth apostle to be renamed was Paul. When Paul is first mentioned in Scripture, he is called "Saul." Before Jesus Christ called Saul, he was a destroyer of the brethren, one of the most feared enemies of the Church. Saul, with the full authority of the high priest of Jerusalem, ravaged the Church, causing imprisonment and death to the disciples of Jesus Christ (Acts 8:1-3; 9:1-2). However, in 33 AD, Jesus personally called and converted Saul (Acts 9:3-30). Later in 44 AD, after Saul was ordained an apostle, his name was changed to "Paul" (Acts 13:3, 9). He was no longer Saul, the destroyer; rather, he was Paul, meaning "little one." And true to his new name, Paul reckoned himself as "the least of the apostles" (I Cor. 15:9) and also counted himself "less than the least of all the saints" (Eph. 3:8).

The apostle Paul had a unique calling (Acts 9:3-18; 26:12-20). When in a vision the Lord sent Ananias to baptize Paul, Jesus said of Paul's calling: "**For this man is a chosen vessel to Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel**" (Acts 9:15). Shortly after Paul was baptized in 33 AD, he went into the Arabian desert where he saw the resurrected Jesus Christ (I Cor. 15:8), and received personal instruction from Him for three years (Gal 1:18-19). As the apostle Paul recounts, he was not taught by men but by the Lord: "But I certify to you, brethren, that the gospel that was preached by me is not according to man; because **neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it by man; rather, it was by the revelation of Jesus Christ**" (Gal. 1:11-12).

During his three years' training in Arabia, Jesus gave Paul multiple visions and revelations. Paul wrote that in some of these visions and revelations he seemed to have been caught up into the third heaven: "Indeed, it is not expedient for me to boast. But I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ *who*, fourteen years ago, was caught up to the third heaven. (Whether *this man was in the body*, I do not know; or out of the body, I do not know—God knows.) Now I know such a man (whether *taken up in the body*, or out of the body, I do not know—God knows), *and* that he was caught up to Paradise, and heard unutterable sayings, which a man is not permitted to speak. I will boast of such a one as this, but of myself, I personally will not boast, except concerning my weaknesses" (II Cor. 12:1-5).

Apparently, Jesus instructed Paul in considerably greater detail than He had in-

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structed the original twelve apostles. This was necessary because Paul's special mission was to be an apostle to the Gentiles, who did not have any acquaintance with the covenants and laws of God. Thus, Jesus personally trained Paul and gave him the special understanding that was necessary in order to preach the gospel to the nations of the world through His preaching and writings. Without a doubt, the visions and revelations given to Paul were even greater than the vision of the transfiguration that Peter, James and John had seen on the holy mount, because he was caught up to the third heaven and saw the throne of God. **Paul was a specially chosen vessel to be the third eyewitness to replace James the brother of John** and thus uniquely qualified to write and canonize his fourteen epistles, as well as the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts—well over one-half of the New Testament!

Martin noted the stages of the apostles' canonization: "The canonization (as we will come to see) was accomplished in two [actually three] stages, and it was fully brought to fruition in the last decade of the first century. Christ had made it clear that the disciples would receive 'all *the* truth' back in the first century. Some of this truth was to be a knowledge 'of things to come'—prophecies of the future. These truths of the Gospel were written down and canonized first by [Paul and then] Peter and John about A.D. 66/67, and then finally by John himself about A.D. 96" (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, p. 301).

Paul Canonized His Own Epistles and Forwarded Them to Peter

How Did the Apostle Paul View His Apostleship? Paul knew without a doubt that he was a called apostle of Jesus Christ and directly and personally represented God the Father and Jesus Christ. Paul made that fact known because in every epistle that he wrote, he greeted the brethren with the salutation: "Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 1:3; see also Rom. 1:7; II Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; I Thes. 1:1; II Thes. 1:2; I Tim. 1:2; II Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philem. 1:3).

In writing his epistles, Paul made it known that his apostolic service to the brethren was by the grace of God through the power of the Holy Spirit and not of himself. He wrote to the Ephesians, "If indeed you have heard of the ministry of the grace of God that was given to me for you; how He made known to me by revelation the mystery (even as I wrote briefly before, so that when you read *this*, you will be able to comprehend my understanding in the mystery of Christ), which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as **it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit**; that the Gentiles might be joint heirs, and a joint body, and joint partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, **of which I became a servant according to the gift of the grace of God, which was given to me through the inner working of His power; to me, who am less than the least of all the saints, was this grace given, that I might preach the gospel among the Gentiles—even the unsearchable riches of Christ**" (Eph. 3:2-8).

Paul understood that his preaching and writings were a holy service. He had been given the authority to act on behalf of God the Father and Jesus Christ, as he wrote in his Epistle to the Romans: "So then, I have more boldly written to you, brethren, in part *as a way of* reminding you, because of the grace that was given to me by God, in order that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles, **to perform the holy service of teaching the gospel of God; so that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit**. Therefore, I have *cause for* boasting in Christ Jesus *as to* the things pertaining to God. **For I will not presume to speak about any-**

thing that Christ has not worked out by me for *the* obedience of *the* Gentiles, through word and work, through *the* power of signs and wonders, in *the* power of *the* Spirit of God” (Rom. 15:15-19).

Paul always emphasized that it was God the Father and Jesus Christ Who had called him and put him into the ministry. Paul had not done so by his own initiative or because of his personal abilities and education. He preached the sound doctrine of Jesus Christ, “... according to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, with which I was entrusted. And I thank Jesus Christ our Lord, Who has empowered me, that He counted me faithful, putting *me* into the ministry, who was previously a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent person; but I obtained mercy because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. But the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with *the* faith and love that *is* in Christ Jesus” (I Tim. 1:11-14).

Paul faithfully preached the gospel as a steward of God, and he was entrusted with a special mission from God. He made this clear in his First Epistle to the Corinthians: “So then, let every man regard us [Paul and Apollos] as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Beyond that, it is required of stewards that one be found faithful...For though I preach the gospel, there is no *reason* for me to boast; because an obligation has been laid upon me. And woe to me, if I do not preach the gospel! For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if *I do this* against my will, I have been entrusted with a ministry” (I Cor. 4:1-2; 9:16-17).

Furthermore, in addition to being a minister and a steward of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Paul knew that he was God the Father and Jesus Christ’s personal representative, or ambassador, to the Gentiles. Paul spoke and wrote God’s own inspired words, speaking of this trust when he penned, “And all things *are* from God, Who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation; which *is*, that God was in Christ, reconciling *the* world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them; and He has entrusted to us *this* message of reconciliation. **Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ; and God, as it were, is exhorting you through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, ‘Be reconciled to God.’** For He made Him Who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, so that we might become *the* righteousness of God in Him” (II Cor. 5:18-21).

Paul wrote by the authority and command of Jesus Christ and affirmed this in every letter: “Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, a called apostle, set apart to preach the gospel of God” (Rom 1:1). “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, called by *the* will of God” (I Cor. 1:1). “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God” (II Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1; II Tim. 1:1). “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ according to *the* commandment of God our Savior, and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ, *Who is* our hope” (I Tim. 1:1).

How Did Paul View His Epistles? Paul fully understood that his epistles were the commandments of God—the very words of God. They were not his own personal opinions or the religious ideas of a man. They were the God-breathed words of God the Father and Jesus Christ to the Gentiles for the knowledge of salvation. Paul made it clear to the Corinthians that the Word of God was not given indiscriminately: “WHAT? Did the Word of God originate with you? Or did it come only to you *and no one else*? If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual, **let him acknowledge that the things I write to you are commandments of the Lord**” (I Cor. 14:36-37). Again, Paul affirmed that what he taught was the Word of God when he wrote to the Thessalonians in his first epistle: “And [we are] *earnestly* testifying, that you may walk worthily of God, Who is calling you to His own kingdom and glory. Because of this, we give thanks to God without ceasing: that **when you received *the* Word of God which you heard from us, you did not accept it as the word of men, but even as it is in truth—the Word of God, which is also working in you who believe**” (I Thes. 2:12-13).

There is no question that Paul knew, without any equivocation, what he preached

and wrote were the commandments of God, the very Word of God to reveal the way of salvation and eternal life to the world. Therefore, after Paul had received the special revelation from God the Father and Jesus Christ in 63 AD that Jesus' return was not imminent, he realized that he had to finalize, or canonize, certain of his epistles for future generations. It is likely that Paul began this process some time before he was released from his first Roman imprisonment in the fall of 63 AD. Paul and his assistants—Luke, Timothy, Mark and Silvanus—must have begun this task in a deliberate and thoughtful manner, trusting in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to guide them in the selection of which epistles to preserve, and in the final editing needed to complete his epistles.

However, in his book, *Restoring the Original Bible*, (pp. 306-307), Martin surmises that the process of canonization of the epistles of Paul was an urgent matter done in the last days just before Paul was executed and Peter was crucified. He theorizes that Peter had visited Paul when he was in prison for the second time in Rome in 67 AD. At that time, Paul and Peter hastily selected some of Paul's epistles that were to be canonized. Martin based his speculation on the supposition that Peter's reference to "Babylon" in his first epistle was a pseudonym for the city of Rome. However, there is no historical evidence that Peter and Paul were ever together in Rome at any time; therefore, this supposition is based on unsubstantiated tradition that supports the false notion that Peter was the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church. It is possible that Martin presents this theory, because he believes, as some scholars do, that Peter's reference to Babylon meant Rome.

It is apparent from the epistles that Paul wrote after 63 AD, that he knew it would be necessary to finalize and formalize some of his epistles. He also understood that they would be placed into a book, or codex, in order to teach the future generations of disciples whom God the Father and Jesus Christ would call. Rather than a last minute, hasty selection of Paul's epistles during a visit from Peter, as Martin suggests, it is more probable that Paul understood, he had to canonize his own epistles right after he received the special revelation from Jesus while he was in prison in 63 AD. It was then that Paul also understood that Jesus' return would occur in the distant future.

Consequently, it is more likely that the apostle Paul first canonized eleven of his fourteen epistles prior to his release from prison in 63 AD while he had Luke, Timothy, Mark and Silvanus with him to assist in this undertaking (Phil. 2:19; 4:21-22; Col 4:10, 14). It is understood that Mark was guided by Peter in writing the Gospel of Mark while Peter was in Jerusalem from 38 to 44 AD. In 44 AD, Peter departed from Jerusalem and went to Babylon (Acts 12:17). Subsequently, Mark also left Jerusalem with Paul and Barnabas to travel with them on their first evangelistic tour (Acts 12:25). Mark returned to Jerusalem in the midst of the tour (Acts 13:13). Later, after the Jerusalem Conference in 49 AD, Mark again went with Barnabas while Paul selected Silas, also called Silvanus, to travel him (Acts 15:36-41).

Apparently, during the time that Paul was imprisoned in Rome the first time in 61-63 AD, Mark had returned to assist him. In addition, it appears that after God had given the special revelation to Paul in 63 AD, Mark had also become a special liaison between Peter and Paul. It was after this special revelation that Paul must have canonized eleven of his fourteen epistles as well as the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. Subsequently, just before his release from prison, Paul would have sent his canonized epistles to the apostle Peter in Babylon. At the time Paul wrote his epistle to the Colossians (Col. 4:10), Mark was with him. Paul must have dispatched Mark to deliver these epistles to Peter. When Peter wrote his own First Epistle in 63-64 AD after having received Paul's canonized writings, he mentioned that Mark and Silvanus, who had previously been with Paul in Rome, were with him in Babylon.

Upon being released from his first Roman imprisonment in 63 AD, Paul visited

Titus in Crete and Timothy in Ephesus. Next, he went to Nicopolis in Macedonia to spend the winter (Titus 3:12), where he penned the epistles of I Timothy and Titus. Perhaps Titus visited Paul in Nicopolis (Titus 3:12), delivered Paul's First Epistle to Timothy and then left Timothy a copy of the epistle that Paul had written to him. (These two pastoral epistles of I Timothy and Titus were written in late 63 AD, but were canonized by Paul during his final canonization in 67 AD.) After wintering in Nicopolis, Paul probably left to preach the gospel in Spain and the British Isles; some traditions suggest that he also went to Scandinavia.

Such a scenario must have been the case, because, only two years later when Peter wrote his Second Epistle in 66 AD, he clearly declared that Paul's epistles, which he had in his possession, were considered to be a part of Scripture: **"And bear in mind that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation, exactly as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has also written to you; as he has also in all his epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are some things that are difficult to understand, which the ignorant and unstable are twisting and distorting, as they also twist and distort the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction"** (II Peter 3:15-16).

Peter's words "the rest of the Scriptures," must have meant the other New Testament writings such as the gospels, his First Epistle and the First Epistle of John as well as the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Since Peter was probably in Jerusalem in 64-65 AD, the apostle John must have been there with him. Undoubtedly, John also had copies of Paul's epistles because Peter included John when he wrote "we were eyewitnesses," and he and Peter were the only two living eyewitnesses of the vision of Jesus' transfiguration.

The New Testament Writings Are Called the Prophetic Scriptures

The first phase of canonization of Paul's epistles was done by the apostle Paul himself, beginning in 63 AD, and these first eleven epistles were then forwarded to Peter and John. They fully accepted the epistles that Paul had canonized as Scriptures sanctioned by God. These Scriptures were called by Peter and John "the confirmed prophetic Word," and Paul wrote that his epistles were "the prophetic Scriptures," meaning that these writings were composed under the direct "inspiration" of God.

Peter's Authority and Role in Canonizing the Books of the New Testament: When Peter wrote his Second Epistle, he made it clear that he and the apostle John were forming an official text of New Testament teachings so that the believers would have a written remembrance of the apostles' teachings. Peter referred to this written remembrance as "the confirmed prophetic Word," saying, "Therefore, I will not neglect to make you always mindful of these things, although you *already* know them and have been established in the present truth. For I consider it my duty, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by causing you to remember *these things*; knowing that shortly the putting off of my tabernacle *will come*, even as our Lord Jesus Christ has signified to me. **But, I will make every effort that after my departure, you may always have a written remembrance of these things, in order to practice them for yourselves.**

"For we did not follow cleverly concocted myths as our authority, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but **we** [Peter and John, the two living eyewitnesses of the vision of Jesus Christ's transfiguration] **were eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory.** Because He received glory and honor from God the Father when the voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory, 'This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I am well pleased.' And this *is the* voice from heaven that we heard

when we were with Him on the holy mountain. **We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word** to which you do well to pay attention, as to a light shining in a dark place [the present evil world], until the day dawns [the return of Jesus Christ] and *the* morning star arises in your hearts [the resurrection from the dead to eternal life]; **knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture** [the Old Testament, as well as the New Testament that they were canonizing] **originated as anyone's own private interpretation; because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit**" (II Pet 1:12-21).

After receiving the canonized writings of the apostle Paul, Peter wrote that he and John had authority to finalize the canonization of the writings that would become the New Testament. Peter boldly stated that their authority was not based on cleverly concocted myths, but rather, as special eyewitnesses of the vision of the transfiguration of Jesus, they were given the confirmed prophetic Word. Moreover, Peter made it absolutely clear that what the apostles had preached and written in the books and epistles they were canonizing was the "inspired" Word of God. He emphatically declared "**that any prophecy of Scripture did not originate as one's own private interpretation.**" These writings were not the concocted, mystic imaginations of carnal men; rather, these Scriptures were the "inspired" words of God—literally God-breathed.

It should be understood that when Peter wrote, "any prophecy of Scripture," he did not mean a foretelling of future events. Instead, his use of the word "prophecy" meant the telling forth of God's Word as "inspired" by God through the power of the Holy Spirit. This was the "confirmed prophetic Word" based on the authority that Jesus Christ had conferred upon the apostles.

Martin gives us insight with his explanations: "All Jews of the first century understood the word 'prophecy' in a much broader sense. There were three different ways of looking at the word. It certainly signified the classical meaning of being able to tell the future, and the person able to do this was customarily called 'a prophet.' But the apostle Paul also used the word as meaning one who *spoke forth* the word of God no matter if the message was about the future, the present, or the past (I Corinthians 14:5, 24, 25). This latter usage simply signified one who teaches the Gospel. Yet there was a third meaning, and this is what Peter had in mind when he said that he and John had 'the word of prophecy more confirmed.' This usage meant that the people who could be called 'prophets' were those under the prophetic spirit and able to write inspired scripture. Josephus, the Jewish historian, was well acquainted with this type of usage for the word 'prophet' or 'prophecy.' He said that no succession of prophets had come on the scene within Judaism from the time of the Persian king Artaxerxes (the fifth century B.C.)—at the close of the Old Testament canon—until and including the period of the first century (*Contra Apion*, I.8). In a word, Josephus thought that the 'spirit of prophecy' had ceased with Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Great Assembly who canonized the Old Testament.

"The apostle Peter, however, said the 'word of prophecy' had returned, and that he and John [as well as Paul] were in that category of authority. They were on the same level of authority as all the earlier writers of the Old Testament scriptures. All the writers of the Holy Scriptures were called *prophets*, even if they did not possess the prophetic office as did Elijah, Isaiah, Malachi, etc. For example, David and Solomon and Asaph the psalmist were called *prophets* though their writings were not in the Prophets' Division of the Old Testament (Matthew 27:35; Acts 2:30; 7:48; Matthew 13:35). Indeed, the use of *prophecy* by holy men of God reached back into the very beginning of history. Abel, the son of Adam, was called a *prophet* (Luke 11:50). And in Acts 3:21 and Hebrews 1:1 we are told that the practice of *prophecy* extended back to all past time, to the very beginning of the world.

"The Jewish people in Christ's time simply believed that *all holy men of God*

were *prophets* and that all their writings were *prophecies*. This, of course did not mean that they all foretold future events (cf. John 4:19; Acts 11:27; 13:1; 15:23; I Corinthians 12:28, 29, 37; Ephesians 2:20; 4:11; Titus 1:12). And, most significantly to our present study, *any holy man of God* who wrote any part of the Holy Scriptures was called a *prophet*....This indication of authority was recognized throughout the New Testament. When Christ said: Abraham saith unto him, they have Moses and the Prophets (Luke 6:29), he was not referring to the Prophets (i.e. the Second) Division of the Old Testament. He meant *all* the writers of Scripture who followed Moses. Luke noted this: 'Having begun from Moses and *all the prophets*, he [Christ] expounded unto them *in all the Scriptures* the things concerning himself' (Luke 24:27). When Paul reasoned with the Jews out of the Law and the Prophets (Acts 28:23), he was teaching from the *whole* Old Testament. Indeed, as Josephus said, these *prophets* of the Old Testament ceased their activities when the Old Testament canon was completed. The Jewish people in the first century were well aware that 'prophecy ceased,' in their estimation, when the canon of the Old Testament was finally established (cf. Ecclesiasticus 36:15; I Maccabees 4:44-46; 9:27). But Peter said *the prophetic word* was restored with him and John [and, without a doubt, Paul's writings, as were the other apostles' writings included as part of "the prophetic word"]. This clearly shows that he and John were informing their readers that they were going to present the Christian community with a new batch of inspired scriptures to accompany the books of the Old Testament....One of the main reasons that the apostle Peter wrote Second Peter was to tell Christians of this fact. Their writings (and the other documents which they sanctioned) were not going to be like the fables of others because Peter and John had 'the word of prophecy more confirmed'....**The books they were selecting were God-ordained and were as inspired as the Old Testament ... They were nothing less than the direct teachings of God**" (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, pp. 301-304, bold emphasis added).

There is no question that Peter and John fully understood that what the apostles had written, and were compiling and canonizing for future generations was the literal inspired Word of God. "The confirmed prophetic Word" that they were canonizing became the New Testament Scriptures—the Word of God for eternal life through Jesus Christ the Savior of the world.

The Apostle Paul Also Wrote the Prophetic Scriptures: As previously stated, Paul had seen the resurrected Jesus Christ (I Cor. 15:8). Moreover, he had received his teachings directly and personally from Jesus (Gal. 1:11-12) as well as through an abundance of dreams and revelations (II Cor. 12:1-5).

Martin further informs us: "Peter and John were not the only ones who had 'the word of prophecy more confirmed.' The apostle Paul also had the authority to write 'prophetic scriptures.' At the end of the Book of Romans is an interesting section of scripture, which relates to the matter of canonization. Paul said that his writings concerning the message of Christ were to be acknowledged as 'the Prophetic Scriptures.' This meant that Paul thought he was writing *sacred* Scriptures" (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, p. 305).

It is clear that Paul fully understood, he was writing the New Testament Scriptures. Paul declared in his letter to the Romans: "Now to Him who has the power to establish you, according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, **according to the revelation of the mystery** that in past ages had been kept secret; but **now is made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures, according to the commandment of the eternal God**, has been made known to all the nations unto *the* obedience of faith" (Rom 16:25-26).

Concerning the above scripture Martin explains that the knowledge of the mystery [of God] was not to be found in the earlier prophets of the Old Testament, as sug-

gested by the King James Version. Instead, Paul expressly stated that the teaching given to him, which had remained hidden from the world [in previous ages], was now being disclosed through the apostles. "This fullness of the teaching of Christ was what Paul called 'my gospel' " (Ibid., p. 305).

When analyzing Paul's statements, it becomes apparent that Paul completed the canonization of his epistles when he wrote this section of Romans. Moreover, he stressed that this was by the command of God. He said that what he wrote was literally **"... the prophetic Scriptures, according to the commandment of the eternal God."** There was apparently no doubt in Paul's mind that he had a part in completing the Word of God through his writings as Martin related: "Paul stated that his apostolic commission was to present those new *prophetic scriptures* concerning 'the Mystery' to [the believers and to] the people of the world. Paul even realized that he was the one responsible for teaching the full, final and mature teachings of 'the Mystery' " (Ibid., p. 306).

Paul's letter to the Romans, along with Peter's statements, gives us irrefutable evidence that God had commanded the apostles Paul, Peter and John to canonize the books of the New Testament. Peter confirmed this with his statement: **"I will make every effort that after my departure, you may always have a written remembrance of these things in order to practice them for yourselves"** (II Pet. 1:15).

The three apostles were to complete this most profound task before they died. Therefore, there is no question that God did not leave the writing and canonizing of the New Testament to other men to do hundreds of years after the apostles' deaths. **Only the apostles of Jesus Christ, whom God had specifically chosen for this task, wrote and canonized the New Testament.**

Commenting further, Martin writes, "Peter was indicating that the prophetic scriptures which he and John were leaving with Christians were not their own private ideas and words. They were nothing less than **the direct teachings of God.** This dogmatism of Peter is reflected also in his evaluation of the apostle Paul's epistles, which he mentioned as being on an equal par with 'the other Scriptures' of the Old Testament (II Peter 3:15,16). Certainly, if Paul's letters were in A.D. 66 being reckoned as Scripture, the letters of James, Jude, Peter and John were as well (especially if they were selected by Peter and John to be in the New Testament canon [also including the Gospel of Matthew]). The apostles were assured by A.D. 66 [more likely beginning in 63 AD] that 'the prophetic spirit' had returned to earth in the persons of Peter and John (along with Paul). This was a signal that more Holy Scriptures were being given to Christians in an official manner to present the final messages of God to the world" (Ibid., p. 304, bold emphasis added).

In order to understand how the writings of Paul, Peter and John completed the Word of God, it is necessary to know what Jesus Christ taught about the Law and the Prophets. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said that He had come not only to declare salvation to the world but to fulfill the Law and the Prophets: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17).

Jesus Fulfilled the Law and the Prophets in Two Ways

How did Jesus Christ fulfill the Law and the Prophets? In order to recognize how He fulfilled the law, we must understand the meaning of the word "fulfill." The English word "fulfill" is translated from the Greek verb πληρωω *pleeroo*, which means: "to make full, to fill full, to fulfill ... in Mt. 5:17, depending on how one prefers to interpret the context, πληρωω *pleeroo* is understood either as *fulfill* = do, carry out, or *bring to*

full expression = show forth in its true spiritual meaning, or as fill up = complete” (Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*).

First, Jesus fulfilled the Law and the Prophets through His personal teachings during His ministry. This is recorded in the Gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These accounts show that the Lawgiver, Jesus Christ, filled the Law of God to its fullest measure by revealing its complete spiritual intent and meaning. He “filled the law to the full” by teaching obedience in the spirit of the law. To fulfill the Law of God by amplifying its meaning and application is the exact opposite of abolishing the law. If Jesus had come to abolish the laws of God, He would not have magnified and expanded their meaning, making them even more binding. Furthermore, **if the laws of God were not binding today, there could be no sin**, because “sin is the transgression of the law” (I John 3:4, *KJV*). And if there were no sinners, there would be no need of a Savior. However, the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments testify that Jesus Christ came to save mankind from sin. Instead of abolishing or “doing away with the law,” Jesus came to take upon Himself the penalty for our sins and transgressions of the laws of God and to show us the way to eternal life through spiritual obedience from the heart. That is how He magnified the laws and commandments of God and made them honorable (Isa. 42:21).

Second, Jesus fulfilled the Law and the Prophets by inspiring His apostles to write the New Testament. To complete this process, Jesus Christ inspired the apostles Paul, Peter and John to canonize these writings as the prophetic Scriptures. Therefore, these canonized New Testament writings, when added to the canonized Scriptures of the Old Testament, literally “fulfilled,” “brought to the fullest measure,” or “completed” the Word of God.

Just as the apostles knew that what they preached, taught and wrote was the Word of God, Paul fully understood that his writings would be part of completing the Word of God. Paul wrote to the Colossians before he was released from his first imprisonment in Rome in 63 AD: “Now, I am rejoicing in my sufferings for you, and I am filling up [Greek *αντανάπληρω* *antanapleero*, “to fill up, to fill the measure”] in my flesh that which is behind of the tribulations of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church; of which I became a servant, **according to the administration of God that was given to me for you, in order to complete** [πληρῶσαι, *pleerosai* “to bring to the full, to complete”] **the Word of God; even the mystery** that has been hidden from ages and from generations, but has now been revealed to His saints; to whom **God did will to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles;** which is Christ in you, the hope of glory; Whom we preach, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, so that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus” (Col. 1:24-27).

Martin comments on these verses: “This is an important statement relative to the canonization of the New Testament. It tells us in no uncertain terms that Paul knew he had been given a special commission to help fulfill (that is, to ‘fill to the top’) the Word of God. This is why Paul had little reluctance in telling people about the high calling that he had. Paul considered that the teachings he recorded represented the very commandments of God. ‘If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write unto you **are the commandments of God [Lord]**’ (I Corinthians 14:37). These are strong and authoritative words. No man could make such assertions unless he was convinced in his own mind [by the power of the Holy Spirit] that he had the prophetic office to write inspired scripture” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, pp. 306-307).

Peter also fully understood the magnitude of what he and the apostle John taught and wrote, declaring: “For **we did not follow cleverly concocted myths as our authority**, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ [whether in the spo-

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ken or written word], **but we were eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory**" (II Pet. 1:16).

Paul again confirmed his prophetic inspiration when he wrote: "For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man which *is* in him? In the same way also, **the things of God no one understands except *by* the Spirit of God.** Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that *is* of God, so that we might know the things graciously given to us by God; which things we also speak, **not in words taught by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Holy Spirit in order to communicate spiritual things by spiritual means.** But *the* natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand [the impossibility of understanding] *them* because they are spiritually discerned. However, the one who is spiritual discerns all things, but he himself is discerned by no one. For who has known *the* mind of *the* Lord? Who shall instruct Him? But **we** [the apostles] **have the mind of Christ**" (I Cor. 2:11-16).

Martin notes that: "When one comprehends that Paul himself was aware of his role in completing the full message of God to this world, then the statements of Peter in his Second Epistle can begin to make sense. **Peter readily acknowledged that the apostle Paul was given an equal commission along with himself and John, to write 'prophetic scriptures.'** This is exactly what Paul called his own writings in Romans 16:25, 26, and the apostle Peter boldly ranked those writings of the apostle Paul alongside the writings of the prophets in the Old Testament (II Peter 3:15, 16)" (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, p. 307, bold emphasis added).

The Apostle Paul's Last Epistle and Final Canonization of His Epistles

As previously noted, after Paul had received the special revelation from Jesus Christ in 63 AD, during his first Roman imprisonment, he canonized eleven of his fourteen epistles and had Mark and Silvanus deliver them to the apostle Peter in Babylon (I Pet. 5:12-13). (There is every reason to believe that Mark and Silvanus left copies in Ephesus as well, because Ephesus became a center for copying and distributing the New Testament as it was canonized.) Upon his release, Paul went to Nicopolis, where he spent the winter of 63 AD writing I Timothy and Titus. In the spring of 64 AD, Paul likely departed from Nicopolis and journeyed to Spain, the British Isles and perhaps even to Scandinavia to preach the gospel. However, by late fall of 67 AD, Paul was again arrested and put in prison at Rome. From there Paul wrote his Second Epistle to Timothy.

Because Paul knew that the apostasy was gaining strength, he had great concern for Timothy and the brethren Timothy served (II Tim. 1:15; 2:17-18; 3:5-10, 13; 4:4, 14-15). In the face of this spiritual warfare, Paul instructed them to hold fast to sound doctrine and the truths he had taught them. Throughout his Second Epistle to Timothy, with a sense of urgency and the tone of finality, Paul strongly admonished him concerning doctrine and the Word of God (II Tim. 1:6-7, 13-15; 2:14-19; 3:14-17). Paul's final admonition to Timothy was an exhortation to preach the Word because soon people would be swept away by the apostasy and believe lies and myths: "I charge you, therefore, in the sight of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is ready to judge *the* living and *the* dead at His appearing and His kingdom: **preach the Word!** Be urgent in season and out of season; convict, rebuke, encourage, with all patience and doctrine.

"For there shall come a time when **they will not tolerate sound doctrine**; but according to their own lusts they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of* teachers, having ears itching *to hear what satisfies their cravings*; and **they shall turn away their own ears from the truth; and they shall be turned aside unto myths.** But *as for* you, be vigilant in all things, endure hardships, do *the* work of an evangelist; fully

carry out your ministry” (II Tim. 4:1-5).

Paul’s Final Canonization: While Paul was in prison in Rome the second time in 67 AD (II Tim. 2:9), he knew that his death was imminent: “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith. From this time forward, a crown of righteousness is laid up for me, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day—and not to me only, but also to all who love His appearing” (II Tim. 4:6-8).

Knowing he would soon be departing, Paul urgently began to complete the canonization of his epistles. At this time, Luke was with Paul and could assist him in this all-important task. However, in order for Paul to complete this work, he needed Timothy. He summoned Timothy, asking him to come to him quickly and to bring Mark with him so that Mark could help Paul edit his epistles and complete his canonization before his death: “Be diligent to **come to me quickly....Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is profitable to me for the ministry of the Word**” (II Tim 4:9-11).

It is important that Paul specifically requested Timothy to bring Mark with him, because Mark had assisted both Paul and Peter previously. In this epistle, Paul wrote that Mark “is profitable to me **for the ministry of the Word.**” The same phrase, “the ministry of the Word” was used in Acts 6:4 when the apostles were first beginning to write and compile the teachings of Jesus Christ in 31 AD. Therefore, Paul’s comment must have been in reference to the time in 63 AD when Luke, Mark and Silvanus had helped Paul canonize some of his epistles, which Mark had subsequently delivered to Peter. Concerning Mark, Peter and Paul, Martin writes: “John Mark was a type of liaison between Peter and Paul—one time he was with Peter and the other with Paul. And just before his death, Paul makes his urgent request for Timothy to bring John Mark with him to Rome. He also wanted Timothy to bring along some important items ...” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, p. 384, bold emphasis added).

What were these important items? Apparently, they were the things Paul needed to complete the finishing touches to the epistles he was canonizing. Paul’s instructions were specific: “When you come, bring the chest that I left in Troas with Carpus, and **the books—especially the parchments**” (II Tim 4:13). (Note: In the KJV the Greek word, φαίλονην, *plelonen*, was incorrectly translated “cloak.” It should be rendered as “chest” because Paul was not talking about a “cloak” as a garment; rather, he was asking for a chest, or book case, that had been wrapped with a covering.) Paul was requesting the things that he had previously left with Carpus in Troas. Martin comments: “It appears that Paul wanted his important book case (his receptacle for carrying books) to be brought at once to Rome—and the request was one of pressing necessity” (Ibid., p. 387, bold emphasis added).

Undoubtedly, this chest held the books that Paul had written, and it also contained sheets of parchment—vellum or animal skins that had been made into blank pages for writing. Paul needed these items to finish his canonization. Of these three items, Martin wrote: “But it was of utmost priority that he obtain ‘*the book case [chest], the papyrus scrolls, and especially the animal skin volumes [parchments, or parchment codices—books].*’ Note the definite articles in front of each of the three items. Since Paul gave no further description about them, it appears that Timothy and John Mark knew exactly the specific things Paul meant, and they realized that it was important that they be brought immediately to Rome. There is no doubt in my mind that some particular scrolls and parchment documents were being kept safely by Paul in a specially constructed carrying case or book cover. It also makes sense that they were *his own writings* which he had brought together and left in Asia Minor with Carpus. Paul now needed them dispatched to Rome immediately. This must be the reason why Paul requested John Mark to accompany Timothy....John Mark was Peter’s assistant, Peter’s right hand man. He was also his secretary—the one who wrote literary documents for Peter. The service that

When and By Whom Was the New Testament Canonized?

Paul wanted John Mark to perform may have concerned the retention (or a collection) of some of Paul's writings. This is as good a reason as any why Paul wanted John Mark in Rome" (Ibid., pp. 388-389).

Paul Adds Some Finishing Touches to His Epistles: Once Timothy and Mark had come with these items, Paul could add the finishing touches to all his epistles, though he had first canonized eleven of his epistles in 63 AD. In Paul's final canonization of his epistles, there was probably not much that needed to be edited. Moreover, most edits would be extremely hard to detect by future scholars; however, in the book of Romans, there appear to be several places where it is possible to detect edits by Paul. Various manuscripts suggest three major edits: 1) One version contains the whole epistle as it reads in its final canonized form in most English Bibles today, 2) A second contains only chapters 1-14, along with the ending of 16:25-27 at the end, and 3) The third contains chapters 1-15 with the ending of 16:25-27 at the end (Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 4, p. 227).

The final edit appears as an addition of a few verses at the end of Chapter 16, which Paul might have made in 67 AD just before his death. The original ending probably concluded with verse 24. Paul wrote: "Gaius, my host, and *that* of the whole church, salutes you. Erastus, the steward of the city, and Quartus, a brother, salute you. **The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you. Amen**" (verses 23-24). This closing appears to be a natural ending. Perhaps, Paul finished the first writing of the Epistle to the Romans in 57 AD at this point.

If that was the case, then possibly in 67 AD Paul added this final ending to his Epistle to the Romans: "Now to Him who has the power to establish you, according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to *the* revelation of *the* mystery that in past ages has been kept secret; but now *is* made manifest, and by *the* prophetic scriptures, according to *the* commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations unto *the* obedience of faith; **To the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory into the ages of eternity. Amen**" (verses 25-27). Especially indicative of a later edit is the mention of "*the* revelation of *the* mystery." Perhaps, this second ending reveals Paul's final edit to Romans.

This last addition to the Epistle to the Romans indicates that before his death Paul made some final edits to his epistles. Even if it did not occur exactly in this manner, we know without a doubt that God inspired Paul to canonize his Epistle to the Romans in the form that we now have. All of the internal evidence found in Paul's epistles indicates that he canonized them and sent them by the hands of Mark and Silvanus to the apostle Peter. Peter, in turn, must have sent copies to John. There is no question that exact copies were made and distributed to all the churches to be used by the elders and brethren for doctrine, inspiration, and instruction in righteousness, as Paul had written to Timothy: "And that from a child you have known the holy writings, [the Old Testament] which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus. All Scripture [New Testament] *is* God-breathed and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; so that the man of God [as well as every individual believer] may be complete, fully equipped for every good work" (II Tim. 3:15-17).

When the relevant information contained in the writings of the New Testament is brought to light, there is little doubt that the apostles Paul and Peter canonized their epistles before the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in 70 AD. In the following chapter, we will see that the New Testament was not completed until God gave the apostle John the task of finishing his Gospel and epistles, writing the book of Revelation and canonizing the entire New Testament before he died.

CHAPTER SEVEN

JOHN'S FINAL CANONIZATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Historical Background—70 AD to 100 AD

In Palestine, by the spring of 70 AD, the stage was set for the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. The noted Jewish historian, Josephus, wrote that during the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread, April 13-20, 70 AD, a record number of Jewish pilgrims, who were pious followers of Judaism, came from all parts of the Roman Empire to keep the Passover and the Feast. The Romans allowed the Jews free passage into the city. He recorded that there were "two million seven hundred thousand and two hundred persons who were pure and holy" (besides those who were not ritually pure) in and around the city of Jerusalem (Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, bk. 6:9:3). Since they did not believe that Jesus Christ was the prophesied Messiah, perhaps they were anticipating that if enough Jews observed the Passover at the temple in Jerusalem, its prophesied destruction could be turned back and the Messiah would come, defeat the Roman army, and they would be saved. However, that was not to be. After the multitudes were in the city, the Roman army under Titus surrounded Jerusalem, and its doom was sealed.

Soon, Jerusalem would be utterly destroyed. Within the city and its temple, the internal fighting between various Jewish factions killed many thousands. In addition, because of the tremendous number of people trapped in the city, the food supply was soon exhausted. Coupled with the assaults by the Roman army, tens of thousands died of famine—with many resorting to cannibalism. In the streets, rotting bodies were heaped high and stacked in the upper rooms of the houses. So appalling was the scene that when the Romans entered the city, they could hardly believe that what they witnessed was true. Josephus described the horrifying carnage they encountered: "So the Romans being now become the masters of the walls, they both placed their ensigns upon the towers, and made joyful acclamations for the victory they had gained, as having found the end of this war much lighter than its beginning; for when they had gotten upon the last wall, without any bloodshed, they could hardly believe what they found to be true; but seeing nobody to oppose them, they stood in doubt what such an unusual solitude could mean.

"But when they went in numbers into the lanes of the city with their swords drawn, they slew those whom they overtook without mercy, and set fire to the houses whither the Jews were fled, and burnt every soul in them, and laid waste a great many of the rest; and when they were come to the houses to plunder them, they found in them entire families of dead men, and the upper rooms full of dead corpses, that is, of such as died by the famine; they then stood in a horror at this sight, and went out without touching any thing. But although they had this commiseration for such as were destroyed in that manner, yet had they not the same for those that were still alive, but they ran every one through whom they met with, and obstructed the very lanes with their dead bodies, and made the whole city run down with blood, to such a degree indeed that the fire of many of the houses was quenched with these men's blood. And truly so it happened, that though the slayers left off at the evening, yet did the fire greatly prevail in the night; and all was burning" (Ibid., bk. 6:8:5).

Hundreds of thousands perished by pestilence, sword and crucifixion. Josephus

summarized this awesome carnage: "Now this vast multitude is indeed collected out of remote places, but the entire nation was now shut up by fate as in prison, and the Roman army encompassed the city when it was crowded with inhabitants. Accordingly, the multitude of those that therein perished exceeded all the destructions that either man or God ever brought upon the world" (Ibid., bk. 6:9:4).

Josephus related the final number of casualties and the number of those who were made slaves: "Now the number of those that were carried captive during this whole war was collected to be ninety-seven thousand; as was the number of those that perished during the whole siege eleven hundred thousand (1,100,000), the greater part of whom were indeed of the same nation [with the citizens of Jerusalem], but not belonging to the city itself; for they were come up from all the country to the feast of unleavened bread, and were on a sudden shut up by an army" (Ibid., bk. 6:9:3).

After the Romans had gained full control of Jerusalem, Josephus further reported what the Romans did to those who had survived the siege. All who were still alive were herded into the women's court of the temple and Titus put Fronto in charge of their fate: "So this Fronto slew all those that had been seditious and robbers, who were impeached by one another; but of the young men he chose out the tallest and most beautiful, and reserved them for the triumph [the victory march in Rome]; and as for the rest of the multitude that were above seventeen years old, he put them into bonds, and sent them to the Egyptian mines. Titus also sent a great number into the provinces, as a present to them, that they might be destroyed upon their theatres, by the sword and by the wild beasts; but those that were under seventeen years of age were sold for slaves. Now during the days wherein Fronto was distinguishing these men, there perished, for want of food, eleven thousand; some of whom did not taste any food, through the hatred their guards bore to them; and others would not take in any when it was given them. The multitude also was so very great, that they were in want even of corn for their sustenance" (Ibid., bk. 6:9:2).

When the end finally came, the city was razed to the ground: "And now [at the end] the Romans set fire to the extreme parts of the city, and burnt them down, and entirely demolished its walls" (Ibid., bk. 6:9:4). "Now as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be the objects of their fury, (for they would not have spared any, had there remained any other work to be done,) Caesar gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple" (Ibid., bk. 7:1:1).

There is no question that such an awesome destruction of the city and the temple, which bore the name of God, was the execution of His judgment against a rebellious and sinful people. Even Titus realized that God had delivered the city into his hands and had given him the victory over the Jews. Josephus wrote: "Now when Titus was come into this [upper] city, he admired not only some other places of strength in it, but particularly those strong towers which the tyrants in their mad conduct had relinquished; for when he saw their solid altitude, and the largeness of their several stones, and the exactness of their joints, as also how great was their breadth, and how extensive their length, he expressed himself after the manner following: 'We have certainly had God for our assistant in this war, and it was no[ne] other than God who ejected the Jews out of these fortifications; for what could the hands of men or any machines do towards overthrowing these towers?' " (Ibid., bk. 6:9:1).

Thus, Jerusalem and the second temple were destroyed on Ab 9-10, August 4-5, 70 AD, exactly 655 years to the day after the Babylonians destroyed the first temple in 586 BC. True to the prophecies of Jesus Christ, not one stone was left upon another that was not thrown down (Matt. 24:2, Mark 13:2, Luke 21:6). However, Fort Antonia, named after the Roman general Marcus Antonius, was not destroyed by the Romans, for it was Roman property. After Jerusalem and its temple were destroyed, Fort Antonia again became the garrison for the Roman soldiers of occupation. To this day, its mam-

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moth foundational stones remain and are visible, while the stones of the temple and its foundation have disappeared. In fact, the stones of the Western Wailing Wall are not the stones of the temple but are the foundational stones of Fort Antonia. Thus, the Mosque of Omar—known as the Dome of the Rock—is not situated where the temple of God stood. Rather, the Mosque of Omar was built on the foundational stones of Fort Antonia. (See Appendix O, *Temple Mount at Jerusalem*, page 838.)

Although, Josephus wrote a detailed history of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, unfortunately, there is no scriptural record of the Church during this era, 70-100 AD. Paul and Peter were dead by 68 AD, and there were no more apostolic writings until John finalized his Gospel and epistles and wrote the book of Revelation in 95-96 AD. Therefore, in order to understand the conditions of the eastern Roman Empire and the Christians during this time frame, it is necessary to review the Roman emperors' reigns.

The Emperors of Rome

Titus Flavius Vespasianus, 69-79 AD: In 66 AD Vespasian was appointed by Nero to conduct the war in Judea. After Nero's suicide, the armies in the east proclaimed Vespasian as emperor in July 69 AD, and Vespasian left the war in Judea to his son Titus. When Vespasian arrived in Rome in 70 AD, he was made emperor. In that same year he suppressed an uprising in Gaul and made the German frontier secure. In Palestine, "The Jewish War was brought to a close by Titus's capture of Jerusalem, and in the following year, after the joint triumph [march] of Vespasian and Titus [in Rome], memorable as the first occasion on which a father and his son were thus associated together ... the Roman world had rest for the remaining nine years of Vespasian's reign. The peace of Vespasian passed into a proverb" (*The Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th Edition, vol. 27, p. 1052).

In 76 AD, Vespasian's son, Titus, was made co-regent, assuming the duties of emperor. During times of peace in the eastern Empire during Vespasian's reign, persecution against the Christians was intermittent. The Romans were unable or unwilling to distinguish the difference between the Christians and the Jews, because true Christians also kept the seventh-day weekly Sabbath and annual holy days of God. (*Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, vol. 10, p. 765).

Flavius Sabinus Vespasianus Titus, 76-81 AD: Titus was the eldest son of Vespasian and reigned as co-regent with his father 76-79 AD. He reigned as sole emperor for only two years, 79-81 AD. "Italy and the Roman world were peaceful during his reign. The only fighting was in Britain ... Titus died on the 13th of September 81" (*The Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th Edition, vol. 26, p. 1032). However, during his reign as co-regent and emperor, Judea was nearly depopulated. All those who attempted to take up arms against Rome in Palestine and in cis- or trans-Jordanic Judea were destroyed or put into slavery. Those taken into slavery were banished to the mines of Spain or forced to construct roads and canals throughout the Empire. There was no exception made for women and children; they met the same fate as all rebels (Graetz, Heinrich, *History of the Jews*, vol. 2, pp. 321-322).

Titus Flavius Domitianus, 81-96 AD: Domitian was the second son of Vespasian, the twelfth of the Caesars and the third of the Flavian dynasty. He succeeded his brother, Titus, on September 13, 81 AD. "Domitian was the first emperor who arrogated divine honours in his lifetime and caused himself to be styled *Our Lord and God* in public documents. Doubtless in the poems of writers like Martial, this deification was nothing but fulsome flattery, but in the case of the provincials it was a sincere tribute to the impersonation of the Roman Empire, as the administrator of good government and the peacemaker of the world. Even when Rome and Italy smarted beneath his proscrip-

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tions and extortions, the provinces were undisturbed" (*The Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th Edition, vol. 8, p. 405).

During Domitian's reign there was sporadic persecution against the Christians and continued harsh treatment of the Jews. "During the last three years of his life his behaviour was that of a madman....A conspiracy among his own freedmen—set on foot, it is said, by his wife Domitia Longina, who knew her own life to be threatened—cut short his career. He was stabbed in his bedroom by a freedman of Clemens named Stephanus on the 18th of September 96" (*Ibid.*, p. 405).

Domitian ruled as a "madman" during the last three years of his reign, 94-96 AD. Eusebius wrote of his extreme cruelties: "Many were the victims of Domitian's appalling cruelty. At Rome great numbers of men distinguished by birth and attainments were for no reason at all banished from the country and their property confiscated. Finally, he showed himself the successor of Nero in enmity and hostility to God. He was, in fact, the second to organize persecution against us, though his father Vespasian had had no mischievous designs against us" (Eusebius, *The History of the Church*, bk. 3:17).

During this three-year period, the persecution against the Christians intensified, and the apostle John was exiled to the island of Patmos, perhaps in 95 AD. Eusebius stated there was "ample evidence that at that time the apostle and evangelist John was still alive, and because of his testimony to the word of God was sentenced to confinement on the island of Patmos" (*Ibid.*, bk. 3:18).

Eusebius also recorded how Domitian's persecutions against the Christians were brought to an end: "The same emperor ordered the execution of all who were of David's line, and there is an old and firm tradition that a group of heretics accused the descendants of Jude—the brother, humanly speaking, of the Saviour—on the ground that they were of David's line and related to Christ Himself. This is stated by Hegesippus in so many words: 'And there still survived of the Lord's family the grandsons of Jude, who was said to be His brother, humanly speaking. These were informed against as being of David's line, and brought by the *evocatus* before Domitian Caesar, who was as afraid of the advent of Christ as Herod had been. Domitian asked them whether they were descended from David, and they admitted it. Then he asked them what property they owned and what funds they had at their disposal. They replied that they had only 9,000 denarii between them, half belonging to each; this, they said, was not available in cash, but was the estimated value of only thirty-nine *plethra* of land, from which they raised the money to pay their taxes and the wherewithal to support themselves by their own toil.'

"Then, the writer continues, they showed him their hands, putting forward as proof of their toil the hardness of their bodies and the calluses impressed on their hands by incessant labour. When asked about Christ and His Kingdom—what it was like, and where and when it would appear—they explained that it was not of this world or anywhere on earth but angelic and in heaven, and would be established at the end of the world, when He would come in glory to judge the quick and the dead and give every man payment according to his conduct. On hearing this, Domitian found no fault with them, but despising them as beneath his notice let them go free and issued orders terminating the persecution of the Church. On their release they became leaders of the churches, both because they had borne testimony and because they were of the Lord's family; and thanks to the establishment of peace they lived on into Trajan's time" (Eusebius, *The History of the Church*, bk. 3:19-20).

Marcus Cocceius Nerva, 96-98 AD: Nerva succeeded Domitian through the influence of Petronius and Secundus, commanders of the Praetorian guards, and of Parthenius, the chamberlain of the Palace. He reigned from September 18, 96 AD to January 25, 98 AD. As emperor, he established an equitable administration and was

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much more aware of the need for peace and compassion for the peoples he ruled. He recalled all exiles who were banished under Domitian's rule and gave relief from oppressive taxation. He promoted tolerance toward the Christian community and acquitted all those who had been condemned to death by Domitian because they had converted to Christianity. He died after reigning only sixteen months (*Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, vol. 6, pp. 957-958; *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th Edition, vol. 19, pp. 393-394).

Along with the release of all the others who were exiled, the apostle John was released from his exile on the island of Patmos. Eusebius wrote: "In Asia, moreover, there still remained alive the one whom Jesus loved, apostle and evangelist alike, John, who had directed the churches there since his return from exile on the island, following Domitian's death" (Eusebius, *The History of the Church*, bk. 3:23). While John was on the island of Patmos, he received and wrote the revelation from Jesus Christ that became the book of Revelation. Undoubtedly, John brought this book with him when he returned to the city of Ephesus in Asia.

Because of the threat to Nerva's life by those who resented the murder of Domitian, Nerva sought to leave the Empire in stronger hands. Accordingly, "In October 97, in the temple Jupiter on the Capitol, Trajan was formally adopted as his son [by Nerva] and declared his colleague in the government of the empire (Pliny, *Paneg.* 8). For three months Nerva ruled jointly with Trajan (Aur. Vict. *Ep.* 24); but on the 25th (according to others, the 27th) of January 98 he died somewhat suddenly" (*The Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th Edition, vol. 19, p. 394).

Eusebius confirmed that the apostle John lived into the reign of Trajan. Of this he wrote: "That he [the apostle John] survived so long is proved by the evidence of two witnesses who could hardly be doubted, ambassadors as they were of the orthodoxy of the Church—Irenaeus and Celestine of Alexandria. In book II of his *Against Heresies*, Irenaeus writes: 'All the clergy who in Asia came in contact with John, the Lord's disciple, testify that John taught the truth to them; for he remained with them till Trajan's time.'

"In book III of the same work he says the same thing: 'The church at Ephesus was founded by Paul, and John remained there till Trajan's time; so she [the church at Ephesus] is a true witness of what the apostles taught' " (Eusebius, *The History of the Church*, bk. 3:23). Thus, the apostle John lived into the reign of Emperor Trajan, but there is no record as to how long he lived after Trajan was made emperor. Trajan reigned from January 98 AD to August 117 AD. Apparently, his reign was peaceful, and the Church had rest from Roman persecution. It must have been a time when many copies of the final canonized New Testament were made and distributed to all the churches in Asia Minor and undoubtedly to other parts of the world.

John's Final Canonization

By the middle of 66 AD, the Jewish revolt against Rome was beginning to gain momentum. To escape the coming war, many Jews, Christian and non-Christian had heeded God's warnings that Jerusalem was to be destroyed and had fled the city. Nearly all the faithful Jewish Christians had left Jerusalem and Judea, a good number of them going to the city of Pella, 60 miles northeast of Jerusalem, on the other side of the Jordan River. However, it appears that the majority of the Christian Jews fled to Asia Minor with many settling around the city of Ephesus. Eusebius recorded that "the holy apostles and disciples of our Saviour were scattered over the whole world. Thomas, tradition tells us, was chosen for Parthia, Andrew for Sythia, John for Asia, where he remained till his

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death at Ephesus" (Eusebius, *The History of the Church*, bk. 3:1). There is very little doubt that it was in Ephesus that John completed the final canonization of the New Testament after his release from exile.

As stated previously, the three apostles who canonized the New Testament—Paul, Peter and John—were all renamed to signify their authority to perform the special work that Christ had called them to. These three finalized and canonized the twenty-seven books of the New Testament as the Word of God for the world. Before his death, John finished writing his gospel and epistles and wrote the book of Revelation and canonized the New Testament. On this Martin wrote: "James and John were to have the distinction of being 'the Sons of Thunder'—to *thunder* forth his words to the people *as did Moses*. And though James died early without being able to show his own authority in a lasting way, his brother John was responsible for writing every word of the Book of Revelation. This was Jesus Christ using John to be his spokesman, to be the Voice of God to the people of the world. He was 'the Thunderer' to the world of God's message of judgment....The apostle John was specifically commissioned to write what the Voice of God (like the Thunder) would relate to him. This is why he wrote his Gospel and the Book of Revelation to be included in the canon of the New Testament. Such a task shows that John was more specially selected to produce a canon of scriptures which would proclaim the official Voice of God than even Peter and Paul" (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, pp. 312-313).

Although Paul and Peter had canonized their writings before they died, the official final canonization, together with the final arrangement of the books of the entire New Testament, was accomplished by the apostle John in 96-99 AD, thirty to thirty-two years later. As one of the last living apostles and the last living eyewitness of the vision of Jesus Christ's transfiguration, the apostle John was uniquely qualified and chosen by Jesus Christ to canonize the entire New Testament in its final form.

The Qualifications of John to Finalize the Canonization of the New Testament

In order to fully understand the apostle John's qualifications as the one whom Jesus had chosen to canonize the New Testament, one must go back to the time before John the Baptist, the son of a priest, was born. The scriptural records reveal that the apostle John was also of the priestly line of Aaron. In addition, there was an important family relationship between Jesus Christ and the apostle John.

The Family Connection and the Daughters of Aaron: The important family connection between Jesus and the apostle John has a profound bearing on the canonization of the New Testament. Martin noted the significance of this unique family connection: "It is usually not understood, but the mother of James and John was none other than Salome (Matthew 27:56 with Mark 15:40) who was the sister of Mary, the mother of Christ (Hastings, *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, vol. I. p. 846). This means that Christ and John were *first cousins* as far as legal matters were concerned among the Jewish people. James, the head of the Christians at Jerusalem, and Jude (the writer of the short epistle) were His half-brothers. Unlike Peter or Paul, the apostle John would have been acquainted with Christ from childhood. No wonder he had been close to Christ. It seems that a 'family tie' to Christ was important in an authority sense. The first cousin status of John to Christ may account, in one way, why he and his brother were afforded such a high position of rank" (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, p. 313).

There are several clues about Jesus' relationship to the apostle John, beginning with Luke's account of the conception and birth of John the Baptist. John the Baptist's father, Zacharias, was a priest of the line of Aaron. Likewise, his mother, Elizabeth,

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“was of **the daughters of Aaron**” (Luke 1:5). Luke tells us that Elizabeth was also a “kinswoman” of Mary the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:36). The KJV renders the Greek word συγγενης, *syggenees*, or συγγενις, *syggenis*, as “cousin.” This is not an accurate translation because the word means “kinswoman” or “relative,” not necessarily a cousin.

What exactly was the relationship between Mary and Elizabeth? From Luke’s account it is known that Elizabeth and her husband were “*well* advanced in years [KJV—well stricken]” (Luke 1:7, 18). Luke did not give their exact ages; however, from other scriptures, it is possible to estimate with reasonable accuracy the ages of Elizabeth and Zacharias. In the Old Testament, the age of King David at his death gives a sound basis for estimating the ages of Elizabeth and Zacharias. This record of King David is found in II Samuel 5:4: He “... was thirty years old when he began to reign, *and* he reigned for forty years.” Therefore, David died at age seventy, and he was “stricken in years” (I Kings 1:1). Furthermore, “threescore and ten” or seventy years was considered the average length of a man’s life, but with strength it might be “fourscore” or eighty years (Psa. 90:10). From these scriptures, it can be concluded that Elizabeth and Zacharias were in their seventies when John the Baptist was conceived and born.

On the other hand, Mary, the “kinswoman” of Elizabeth, was a young woman—a virgin. Scripture does not specify how old Mary was. But perhaps, it is not unreasonable to estimate that she was about twenty years old when Jesus was conceived. Therefore, there must have been a difference of fifty years or more between the ages of Elizabeth and Mary, making it more likely that Elizabeth was Mary’s aunt, rather than a cousin. This means that Mary’s mother and Elizabeth were sisters. From this, it can be concluded that Mary’s father was from the line of Judah, of the house of David; and, her mother was a daughter of Aaron. Moreover, Mary’s lineage was officially reckoned from her father’s side as a descendant of Judah. Therefore, Christ was from the tribe of Judah, of the house of David. (Mary’s physical genealogy from the house of David of the tribe of Judah is recorded in Luke 3:31 and 33.) Yet, at the same time, Mary could have been considered of the line of Aaron because her mother, the sister of Elizabeth, was also a daughter of Aaron.

Martin wrote of this family connection between the apostle John and Jesus: “Not only were his [John’s] mother and Christ’s mother both sisters (and this gave John some preeminence), but we find that Mary (and obviously her sister, Salome) [as daughters of Aaron] were in some way connected with the priestly ancestry. Polycrates in the late second century said that ‘John, who leaned back on the Lord’s breast, became a sacrificing priest, wearing the mitre, a martyr and a teacher, he too sleeps in Ephesus’ (Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist. III.31; V.24*). If John was indeed of priestly ancestry, then it follows that his father Zebedee was a priest. As for his mother (Salome, who was sister to Mary), both Salome and Mary could have had Aaronic (priestly) ancestry as well. One should recall that Mary was a kinswoman to Elizabeth (the wife of Zacharias who was an Aaronic priest and the father of John the Baptist), and Elizabeth herself was recognized as ‘a daughter of Aaron’ (Luke 1:6). This means that both Mary and Salome could be reckoned as being of priestly descent” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, pp. 314-315).

Martin’s analysis that the apostle John’s mother and father, Salome and Zebedee, were both of Aaronic priestly ancestry is quite correct. However, it appears that Zebedee was not a practicing priest at the time of Jesus’ ministry. Mark, Matthew and Luke record that Zebedee was a fisherman. Mark recounts: “He [Jesus] saw James, the *son* of Zebedee, and his brother John; and they *were* in the ship, mending the nets. And He called them at once; and leaving their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, they followed Him” (Mark 1:19-20).

The gospel accounts do not give any indication as to why Zebedee was not a

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practicing priest at the time that Jesus called James and John. However, several reasons can be surmised: 1) When the priests were not serving at the temple, they were probably free to pursue a secondary occupation as did Josephus who was a soldier. This might be the reason why Zebedee was a fisherman when he was not performing his priestly duties in Jerusalem. The priests served at the temple in courses, or shifts, at certain set times during the year (Luke 1:5). They would serve for eight days during the first six months of the year and for eight days in the last six months of the year. Josephus, the noted Jewish historian, was a priest of the first course or shift. He confirmed that the priestly courses established by King David were still functioning in New Testament times. Josephus recorded, "He [King David] divided them also into courses ... and he found [or established] these priests, twenty-four courses ... and he ordained that one course should minister to God eight days, from sabbath to sabbath ... and this partition hath remained to this day" (*Ant.*, 7:14:7). Only at the three festival seasons did all the priests serve at the temple. 2) Zebedee might have retired from the priesthood and become a fisherman. 3) Possibly Zebedee chose to be a fisherman, instead of a practicing priest, because of the corruption of the priesthood in Jerusalem. King Herod had taken upon himself to appoint the high priest, rather than allowing the proper succession of the high priest to take place as appointed by the Law (Josephus, *Antiquities*, book 20:1:3). Thus, as Herod's appointee, the office of high priest was more of a political position rather than an office of service to the people for God.

Regardless of the reasons why Zebedee was not a practicing priest, from the evidence there is little doubt that John was of the priestly lineage of Aaron. Although Polycrates wrote that the apostle John "became a sacrificing priest, wearing the mitre," it is highly doubtful that John was a practicing priest. However, before Jesus called John, he might have had training in the priestly duties. This could account for the high priest knowing John (John 18:16), and for Polycrates' comments. Furthermore, as an apostle of Jesus Christ, John would have fully understood that the animal sacrifices and rituals performed at the temple were of no spiritual value. Therefore, it can be concluded that when Jesus called John, he was not a practicing priest, but a fisherman. **The fact that John was of Aaronic priestly descent was a primary reason that Jesus chose him to make the final canonization of the New Testament.**

John Was an Eyewitness of the Vision of Transfiguration: Jesus informed all the apostles that some would "not taste of death until they had seen the Son of man coming in His Kingdom" (Matt. 16:28). Then six days later, Jesus took Peter, James and John with Him up on a high mountain, and they saw the vision of the transfiguration. John was the only apostle still alive who had seen the vision of the transfiguration and had heard the voice of God the Father, and this gave him special authority from Jesus Christ to canonize the New Testament.

As the last remaining apostle to see the vision of the transfiguration, John would see the coming of Jesus Christ in the visions that he received and recorded in the Book of Revelation. These special visions are prophecies of the events leading up to the Day of the Lord and the return of Jesus Christ to the earth. So, in final analysis, John was the only apostle to see the coming of Christ twice—once in the vision of the transfiguration and the second time in the visions recorded in the book of Revelation.

Jesus Prophesied that John Would Write the Book of Revelation: The apostle John recorded that Jesus prophesied he would remain alive until "the coming" of the Lord. This occurred some time during the forty days that the apostles saw Jesus after His resurrection, but before He ascended to heaven. On one of those occasions, Jesus came to some of the apostles and ate with them by the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-14). When they had finished eating, Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved him. After Peter answered Jesus that he did, indeed, love Him, Jesus commanded Peter three times to feed

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His sheep and lambs (verses 15-17). Next, Jesus revealed to Peter how he would die—apparently signifying his future martyrdom by crucifixion (verse 18).

Upon hearing this, Peter was not satisfied that Jesus had prophesied how he would die; he also wanted to know what John's fate would be: "Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, what *shall happen* to this one?' Jesus said to him, 'If I desire that he remain alive until I come, what *is it* to you? You follow Me.' Then this saying went out among the brethren, that that disciple would not die. However, Jesus did not say to him that he would not die; but, 'If I desire that he remain alive until I come, what *is it* to you?' " (John 21:21-23).

While John did not remain alive until the literal return of Jesus Christ, which is yet to occur in the future, he did live an extremely long life. He may have died about 100 years old, between 99-100 AD. However, from the time of the deaths of Paul and Peter (67-68 AD), because of this saying by Jesus, many believers thought that Christ would return before John died. Jesus' prophecy actually found fulfillment when John saw His return in the visions while he was in exile on the island of Patmos. In these visions, Jesus spoke directly to John, instructing him to write what he had seen (Rev. 1:11, 19; 2:1, 8, 12; 3:1, 7, 14; 14:13; 19:9; 21:5). What John wrote became the book of Revelation—the capstone—the crowning glory of the Bible.

As such, the apostle John of the lineage of Aaron was uniquely qualified by God the Father and Jesus Christ to complete the official final canonization of the books of the New Testament—the most magnificent book in the world. When this task was finished, the New Testament could then be added to the Old Testament; thus, the full revelation of God to mankind was completed by the disciple whom Jesus loved—the apostle John.

Parallels Between Canonization of the Old and New Testaments

There are parallels between Ezra's canonization of the Old Testament and John's canonization of the New Testament: God used the same pattern of canonization for the New Testament that He had used for the canonization of the Old Testament. This pattern reveals the inspiration of God the Father and Jesus Christ, thus, demonstrating that the New Testament was the work of God and not man.

The Priestly Line: As stated previously, God used Ezra to canonize the Old Testament. Ezra was a priest of God of the house of Aaron, the great grandson of Hilkiah, who was high priest during the reign of Josiah (624-593 BC) before the Babylonian captivity (Ezra 7:1; II Chron. 34:14-15). After the seventy-years captivity in Babylon, Ezra lead several hundred priests and Levites and people to Jerusalem: "This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he was **a ready scribe in the law of Moses**, which the LORD God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him...**For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.** Now this is the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto **Ezra the priest, the scribe, even a scribe of the words of the commandments of the LORD, and of his statutes to Israel**" (Ezra 7:6, 10-11).

History records that God used Ezra, the priest, to finish writing and canonizing the Old Testament. In the same way, He used the apostle John, a descendant of the priestly line, to finish writing and canonizing the New Testament.

The Helpers of Ezra and the Helpers of John: When Ezra canonized the Old Testament, he had the "Great Assembly" of 120 priests and Levites to assist him in finalizing and editing the books. In like manner, the apostle John also had helpers who as-

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sisted him in editing and finalizing his Gospel and epistles for canonization and in setting the final order of the New Testament books.

Martin commented on those assistants as follows: "John did not create the New Testament on his own. He had helpers. If one will read the writings of John carefully, these assistants can be recognized, and they played a very important part in the overall canonization. References to them are found from time to time cropping up within the contexts of John's compositions. The elders who helped John were very important....Many of them were eyewitnesses to the teachings of Jesus in Judaea and they also saw Him alive after His resurrection from the dead. They were part of those 500 people still alive in A.D. 55 whom Paul said were witnesses to Christ's resurrected body (I Corinthians 15:6). This means that they were certainly *Jewish Christians*" (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, p. 398).

Martin is quite correct in his analysis of the apostle John's helpers. However, it is more probable that the eyewitnesses who helped John were of the original 120 disciples (Acts 1:15), rather than from the 500 of whom Paul wrote. Also, there is very little doubt that within this group of 120, there were several other apostles who were still living, and they helped John. Some traditions mention that the apostles Phillip and Andrew were included among the "elders" that were with John. Martin commented, "It can be almost certain that they *were all Jews*, and that they later lived near John [close to the city of Ephesus] when he was performing his job of canonizing the New Testament. These men were those that could be called *Elders* that helped John in the canonization.

"Papias (around A.D. 110) makes an interesting comment about the *Elders* who were the disciples of John and who succeeded him. Since Papias [Irenaeus wrote that Papias had personally heard John and was a disciple of Polycarp] was in contact with these *Elders* and was interested in their testimonies concerning the early truths taught by Christ and the apostles, his comments are valuable. Note what he said. 'But I shall not hesitate also to put down for you along with my interpretations whatsoever things I have at any time *learned from the Elders* and carefully remembered, guaranteeing their truth. For I did not, like the multitude, take pleasure in those that speak much, but in those that speak the truth; not in those that relate strange commandments, but in those that deliver the commandments given by the Lord to faith and springing from the truth itself. If, then, anyone came who had been a follower *of the Elders*, he questioned him in regard to the words *of the Elders*, what Andrew or what Peter said, or what was said by Philip, or by Thomas, or by James, or by John, or by Matthew, or by any other of the disciples of the Lord, and what things Ariston and the presbyter John, the disciples of the Lord say. For I did not think that what was to be gotten *from the books* would profit me as much as what came from the living and abiding voice' [Eusebius, *History of the Church*, bk. 3.39:2]. This account makes it clear that the apostles were dead by the time Papias made this remark about A.D. 110. But, there was still a body of *Elders* who had firsthand knowledge of what many of the apostles had taught" (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, pp. 404-405).

Internal Evidence of John's Helpers—the "We" Sections: The evidence of John's helpers is found in the "we" passages or sections in John's Gospel and epistles. Undoubtedly, these were some of the final edits that were added to complete these books. An obvious edit is found in John 21:24, where there is a sudden injection of a "we" passage: "This is the disciple [John] who testifies concerning these things and *who* wrote these things; and **WE know that his testimony is true.**" (John 21:24). It is obvious that John was writing of himself, "this is the disciple," but, suddenly, the next phrase shifts to the third person plural "we." Apparently, the elders, the helpers of John, added their testimony to verify that what John had written was true. Because of their added stamp of

approval, the final expanded Gospel of John would be fully accepted by the churches of God.

Additional “we” passages become very obvious when the Epistle of First John is further examined. The opening verses of the first chapter convey that the remaining original apostles were alive and assisting John when he finished writing his epistle. This supports the tradition that Phillip and Andrew were with John at this time. John wrote: “That which was from *the* beginning, that which **WE have heard, that which WE have seen with OUR own eyes, that which WE observed for OURselves and OUR own hands handled**, [the apostles handled Jesus Christ after He had been resurrected and showed Himself alive (Luke 24:36-43)] **concerning the Word of life**; (And the life was manifested, and **WE have seen, and are bearing witness, and are reporting to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us**;) That which **WE have seen** and have heard **WE are reporting to you**, in order that you also may have **fellowship with us** [the apostles]; and truly the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son, Jesus Christ. **These things WE are also writing to you**, so that your joy may be completely full. And this is the message that **WE have heard from Him** and are declaring to you: that God is light, and there is no darkness at all in Him” (I John 1:1-5). The remaining verses in Chapter One that have a collective “we” appear to shift from John and his helpers to their readers.

When Chapter Two is examined, additional evidence of an earlier writing of the first epistle of John can be found. In this chapter, the apostle John writes in the first person singular. Perhaps this section is John’s original version of this epistle before the elders were with him. The contrast between the first chapter and the second chapter is most striking: 1. My little children, **I am writing** these things to you ... 7. Brethren, **I am not writing** a new commandment to you ... 8. On the other hand, **I am writing** a new commandment to you ... 12. **I am writing to you** ... 13. **I am writing** to you, fathers ... **I am writing** to you, young men ... **I am writing** to you, little children ... 14. **I wrote to you**, fathers, because you have known Him Who *is* from *the* beginning ... **I wrote** to you, young men ...” When John writes “we” in the rest of the epistle, it is apparent that he is including himself with those he is writing to. A final “we” passage is found in I John 4:14.

Martin wrote extensively of the “we” passages found in John’s writing, commenting on the short epistle of III John: “John began to speak to a man called Gaius in the first person singular: ‘**I pray** that in all things you may be prospering and having good health’ (verse 2). Then we find a long string of ‘**I rejoiced**’ (verse 3), ‘**I am thankful**’ (verse 4), ‘**I wrote**’ (verse 9), and ‘**I will call to remembrance**’ (verse 10). But then, and out of the blue, John introduces a plural intrusion into the text. In this book it says: ‘in fact, **WE are also bearing witness**, and *you know* that the witness **WE give is true**’ (verse 12). Then immediately the context of Third John returns to: ‘**I had** many things to write you, yet **I do not wish to go on writing you** with ink and pen. But **I am hoping to see you directly** (verses 13, 14)’ ” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, p. 399, bold emphasis added). It is clear that the words in verse 12 show the same pattern of multiple testimony that is found at the end of the Gospel of John (21:24).

Additional Internal Evidence of John’s Final Edits: As previously noted, the initial writing of the Gospel of John was probably completed by 42 AD. However, from the internal evidence, it is obvious that John added many details later. An example of John’s editing in his Gospel is evident in John 20, where the ending of this chapter appears to be the natural finish to the original version. This chapter ends: “Now then, Jesus did many other miracles in *the* presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book. But these have been written, so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you may have life through His name” (John 20:30-31).

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If an "Amen" were put after verse 31, it would have indeed ended the book. Perhaps, that is where John finished his gospel when he first wrote it. John must have added chapter 21 when his helpers were with him and they added their testimony: "And we know that his testimony is true" (John 21:24). This affirmation of truth must have included all the other edits in John's writings as well.

Evidence of later editing can again be seen in the prologue of the Gospel of John. These edits reflect the later revelation of the "mystery of godliness" (I Tim 3:16) that Jesus Christ had given to the apostles in 63 AD. It was not until this time that they fully understood Jesus Christ was indeed "God manifested in the flesh," and He was none other than the Creator God, the LORD God of the Old Testament. John wrote in Chapter Four of his first epistle that Jesus Christ had indeed come in the flesh: "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the* flesh is from God. And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the *spirit* of antichrist, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world" (I John 4:1-3).

In his Gospel, John expanded on what he had written in Chapter Four of his first epistle: "**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men ... **And the Word became flesh,** and tabernacled among us (and **we ourselves beheld His glory,** *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth ... The true light was that which enlightens everyone who comes into the world. He was in the world, and **the world came into being through Him,** but the world did not know Him ... And of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; *but* the grace and the truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; **the only begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father,** He has declared *Him*" (John 1:1-4, 9-10, 14, 16-18).

These verses reveal that Jesus Christ was the Word, and the Word was God. The Word was none other than the one Who had created all things. The Word, Who was God, was with God the Father before He was made flesh and came to the earth. Verse 18 states, "the only begotten Son, **Who is in the bosom of the Father.**" This statement informs us that John knew at the time he wrote his Gospel that Jesus was in the bosom of the Father in heaven.

John's original opening to his Gospel probably began with the account of John the Baptist, as did the Gospel of Mark. In the verses that pertain to John the Baptist, one can detect what must have been the apostle John's original opening to his Gospel: "There was a man sent by God, whose name *was* John. He came for a witness, that he might testify concerning the light, so that through him all might believe. He was not the light, but *came* that he might testify concerning the light ... John testified concerning Him, and proclaimed, saying, 'This was He of Whom I said, "He Who comes after me has precedence over me, because He was before me." ' ... And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' Then he *freely* admitted, and did not deny, but declared, 'I am not the Christ.' And they asked him, 'Then who *are* you? Are you Elijah?' And he said, 'I am not.' *Then they asked,* 'Are you the Prophet?' And he answered, 'No.' Therefore, they said to him, 'Who are you? What do you say about yourself so that we may give an answer to those who sent us?' He said, 'I *am* a voice crying in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of *the* Lord," as Isaiah the prophet said.' Now those who had been sent belonged to *the*

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sect of the Pharisees” (John 1:6-8, 15, 19-24). When the differences between what might have been John’s original opening and his completed version are compared, the later additions made by John become quite apparent and give a completeness and finality to his gospel.

There are other edits in the Gospel of John that are quite detectable. In the beginning of the Gospel of John, there is an insertion of a “we” passage. The KJV translators apparently realized that this “we” comment was a later addition to the text and set it off in parentheses: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and **WE beheld His glory**, *the glory as of the only begotten with the Father*), full of grace and truth” (John 1:14, KJV). The insertion of this “we” passage set off by parentheses is clearly what John’s helpers, the elders, added as their testimony. It is similar to the “we” insertions of I John 1:1-4 previously noted.

Martin commented about the elders who were assisting John and the apparent insertions that bear their added testimony in his final canonization: “The fact is, there appear to be a number of editorial remarks in John’s Gospel, either in relation to the “WE sections” or distinct from them. The King James Version shows some of them by placing their occurrences within parentheses. For example, John 3:13 states: ‘And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven (*even the Son of man which is in heaven*).’ Obviously, the italicized words represent a later editorial remark because Christ was certainly on earth when he uttered the first part of the verse, but only after his resurrection was he actually *in heaven*. There is John 4:23. Christ said to the Samaritan woman: ‘But the hour cometh, *and now is*, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.’ Christ was telling her that the Temple in Jerusalem was no longer important, but at the time Christ mentioned his teaching to the Samaritan woman the Temple *was still* the proper site for assembly. But the editors (at the time the Gospel was canonized) put in the reference ‘*and now is*’ to show that what Christ had predicted had now come true. Another is John 5:25. ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming (*and now is*) when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.’ The italicized words are a later insertion which could only have been stating the truth after the resurrection of Lazarus and those who were made alive after Christ’s resurrection (John 11:1-46); Matthew 27:52, 53). . . . There is also John 17:3. Jesus was talking and said: ‘And this is life eternal, that they may know thee the only true God (*and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent*).’ And lastly, let us note John 19:35: ‘And he that saw it bare record (*and his record is true and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe*)’ ” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, pp. 402-403).

Two Additional Important Edits by John and His Helpers: As noted, the edits that John and his helpers made to his books are vital. These edits reveal that John and the elders finalized and sealed the New Testament in a detailed and systematic manner. Such edits and additions also reveal that during their final canonization process they must have scrutinized every book of the New Testament word for word. There are two additional edits that are generally overlooked but again show the hand of John and his helpers, who actually heard Jesus speak these words. These edits were probably added to the texts in 96-99 AD and were intended to give the reader a warning that Jesus’ prophecy concerning “the abomination of desolation” had not yet occurred. The insertion of these parenthetical statements to the words of Jesus’ prophecies occur in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark: “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world for a witness to all the nations; and then shall the end come. Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (**the one who reads, let him understand**), then let those who are in Judea flee into the mountains” (Matt. 24:14-16). The parallel account in Mark reads: “And you shall be hated by all *men* for My name’s sake; but the one who

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endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved. Now when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it should not *stand* (**let the one who reads understand**), then let those *who are* in Judea flee into the mountains" (Mark 13:13-14).

It is quite apparent that the parenthetical statements in Matthew, "(the one who reads, let him understand)"; and likewise in Mark, "(let the one who reads understand)," were not spoken by Jesus at the time He was speaking to his disciples. Clearly, these are later editorial comments added by John and his helpers when they were finalizing the New Testament. The reason these statements were edited into the text was because John and his helpers fully understood that when the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple occurred in 70 AD, "the abomination of desolation" had not occurred.

In addition, in the book of Revelation John records a vision God gave him concerning the city of Jerusalem and the temple. John wrote: "Then *the angel* gave me a measuring rod like a staff, saying, '**Arise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it. But leave out the court that is within the temple area**, and do not measure it because it has been given *up* to the Gentiles; and they shall trample upon the holy city *for* forty-two months' " (Rev. 11:1-2). Since the temple was still lying in ruins at the time the apostles were finalizing the text, they knew there had to be a time in the future when the city and temple would be rebuilt, fulfilling this prophecy. Moreover, when they were canonizing the New Testament in 96-99 AD, there was no sign that the temple was going to be rebuilt.

When John and his helpers were in the process of canonizing the books of the New Testament, they undoubtedly realized that the apostle Paul's prophecy in II Thessalonians Two gave a detailed description of the abomination of desolation: "Now we beseech you, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken in mind, nor be troubled—neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as if from us, *saying* that the day of Christ is present. Do not let anyone deceive you by any means because *that day will not* come unless the apostasy shall come first, and **the man of sin shall be revealed—the son of perdition, the one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is an object of worship; so that he comes into the temple of God and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God**" (II Thes. 2:1-4).

When they read what Paul had written, they also fully understood that this prophecy of the abomination of desolation had not been fulfilled in 70 AD. Although the city and temple were destroyed as Jesus had prophesied, "no man of sin, the son of perdition" had gone "into the temple of God proclaiming himself to be God." Therefore, Jesus and Paul's prophecies would have to occur in the distant future. While they understood that the abomination of desolation was to be a future event, they had no idea as to when it would be fulfilled. However, later in Jesus' prophecy, He emphatically declared, "The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away" (Matt. 24:35). Not only did John and his helpers have the Gospels of Matthew and Mark before them as they edited the books of the New Testament, but they had personally heard Jesus speak these words. Therefore, they knew that this prophecy would be fulfilled exactly as Jesus had predicted. Since there was no evidence that it would happen in the near future, they added the statements "(the one who reads, let him understand)" and "(let the one who reads understand)." This way future generations would know that the return of Jesus Christ would not take place until the temple would be rebuilt. Only then could the prophecy of the abomination of desolation be fulfilled.

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The Book of Revelation Proves That John Canonized the New Testament

The book of Revelation is, perhaps, the most unique book in the entire Bible—Old Testament and New Testament. It is the capstone and crowning glory of the Word of God. Not only is it the last book in the New Testament, but also it is the last book in the entire Bible. The opening verses of the book of Revelation reveal that the apostle John was the one to whom Jesus Christ had given the visions of Revelation. John was commanded by Jesus to write everything that he saw, for a witness both to the Church and to the world. John wrote: “*The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him, to show to His servants the things that *are* ordained to come to pass shortly; and **He made it known, having sent it by His angel to His servant John; who gave witness to the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, and all the things he saw.** Blessed is the one who reads, and those who hear the words of this prophecy and who keep the things *that are* written therein; for the time *is* at hand*” (Rev. 1:1-3).

The book of Revelation bears witness: 1) “to the Word of God,” meaning that the Revelation of Jesus Christ substantiates the entire Word of God—Old Testament and New Testament. 2) “to the testimony of Jesus Christ,” which is contained in the Gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The testimony of Jesus Christ reveals that Jesus Christ is the Son of God—God manifested in the flesh; and that He was the lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world for the sins of the world. 3) and “all the things he saw,” which means all the recorded visions of the entire book of Revelation.

This final witness that Jesus gave to the apostle John, the book of Revelation, is actually a fulfillment of the command that Jesus gave to the apostles when they began their ministry. At the end of the Gospel of Luke and the beginning of the book of Acts it is recorded, Jesus said, “According as it is written, it was necessary for the Christ to suffer, and to rise from *the* dead the third day. **And in His name, repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. For you are witnesses of these things**” (Luke 24:44-48). Jesus again repeated this command as Luke recorded: “You shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto *the* ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

To this day, the true believers and ministers of Jesus Christ, who preach and proclaim the Word of God, continuously proclaim the witness of Jesus Christ through the writings of the apostles.

The completeness of the Word of God becomes very evident when one studies the book of Revelation. It is fitting that it is the last book in the New Testament and Bible. The book of Revelation ties together the beginning in Genesis with the ending in Revelation. Jesus Christ made this clear when He began giving His visions to John: “**‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* Ending,’** says the Lord, ‘Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come—the Almighty.’ I, John, who *am* also your brother and joint partaker in the tribulation and in the kingdom and endurance of Jesus Christ, was on the island that *is* called Patmos because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in *the* Spirit on the day of the Lord; and I heard a loud voice like a trumpet behind me, saying, **‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last’**” (Rev. 1:8-9).

Since the book of Revelation is the capstone and crowning glory of the Word of God, it is fitting that nearly every verse in this profound book should have direct or indirect reference to every other book in the Bible. One has only to look at the multitude of cross references to the book of Revelation in margins of virtually any Bible to understand that this is true. Toward the end of Revelation, the theme of “the beginning and ending”

is repeated: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, *the* new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from heaven say, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men [those men and women made perfect according to the plan of God]; and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people; and God Himself shall be with them *and be* their God. And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and *there* shall not be any more death, or sorrow, or crying; neither shall *there* be any more pain, because the former things have passed away.' And He Who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.' And He said to me, '**Write, for these words are true and faithful.**' And He said to me, '**It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.** To the one who thirsts I will give freely of the fountain of the water of life. The one who overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son' " (Rev. 21:1-7). Thus, what God began in the Beginning, as recorded in Genesis, God will finish at the End, as recorded in the book of Revelation.

Warning Against Adding to or Diminishing from the Old Testament: In the Old Testament, God gave a stern warning to the children of Israel not to add to or take away from the written words that He had commanded Moses to write. Moses admonished the children of Israel: "Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you" (Deut. 4:1-2, *KJV*).

So important was the Word of God that God inspired Moses to warn the children of Israel a second time not to add to or diminish from it: "Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the LORD thy God. When the LORD thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land; **take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou inquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise.** Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. **What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it**" (Deut. 12:28-32, *KJV*).

After the death of Moses, God admonished Joshua to have courage because He would fight for him and the children of Israel to cut off their enemies. Joshua was to lead Israel into the Promised Land with God's blessing and protection. However, after God had encouraged Joshua, He commanded him not to deviate from the words of the law that Moses had written: "Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them. **Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein:** for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Joshua 1:6-8, *KJV*).

Again in the book of Proverbs, God inspired a written warning not to add to His words, "Every word of God *is* pure: He *is* a shield to them that put their trust in Him.

Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar” (Prov. 30:5-6, *KJV*). So important is God’s Word that He has magnified His Word above His name (Psa. 138:2). Because the Bible is the Word of God, He expects those who have His Word to speak His Word faithfully. God has revealed that He will bless those who keep His Word and obey His commandments and will curse those who sin and transgress His laws and commandments (Deut. 28). Furthermore, God has made known His judgment against false prophets who twist and distort, add to or diminish from His Word. God says that they are stealing His Word. Through the prophet Jeremiah, God has pronounced His judgment against all false prophets: “The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and **he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully**. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD. **Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words every one from his neighbour**. Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD” (Jer. 23:29-32, *KJV*).

God has warned that anyone, especially a minister, preacher and priest, who perverts His words will receive His judgment likened to a fire and a hammer. The whole legacy of the children of Israel and Judah is that they continually perverted God’s Word, transgressed His laws and commandments, followed false prophets and worshipped false gods. As a result, they received His stern judgment.

Warning Against Traditions That Reject God’s Commandments: As previously noted, Jesus Christ made it absolutely clear that He did not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. Matthew recorded Jesus’ words: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled. Therefore, whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever shall practice and teach *them*, this one shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:17-19).

Jesus also proclaimed that mankind was to live by every word of God: “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of *the* mouth of God’ ” (Matt. 4:4; see also Luke 4:4, Deut. 8:3).

However, the scribes and Pharisees corrupted the Way of the Lord and devised their own traditions, which nullified and rejected the Word of God. Jesus soundly corrected them and condemned their traditions. Mark recorded one of Jesus’ encounters with the Pharisees and scribes concerning their religious traditions: And He answered *and* said to them, ‘Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you hypocrites, as it is written, “This people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me.” But in vain do they worship Me, teaching *for* doctrine the commandments of men. **For leaving the commandment of God, you hold fast the tradition of men, such as** the washing of pots and cups; and you practice many other things like *this*.” Then He said to them, ‘**Full well do you reject the commandment of God, so that you may observe your own tradition ... nullifying the authority of the Word of God by your tradition which you have passed down; and you practice many traditions such as this**’ ” (Mark 7:6-13).

In the days leading up to His crucifixion, Jesus intensified His condemnation of the hypocritical practices of the Pharisees and scribes. The entire chapter of Matthew 23 records Jesus’ scathing denunciation and condemnation. As the Lord God manifested in

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the flesh, Jesus' authority in correcting them is without parallel! His excoriating words against those who perverted the Word of God and substituted their own traditions and teachings for the commandments of God is documented. Jesus also warned them that if they did not repent, they would be destroyed: "Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the Scriptures, *"The Stone that the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner. This was from the Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes"*? Because of this, I say to you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and it shall be given to a nation *that* produces the fruits of it. **And the one who falls on this Stone shall be broken; but on whomever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.**' Now after hearing His parables, the chief priests and the Pharisees knew that He was speaking about them" (Matt. 21:42-45).

True to Jesus' warnings, God did destroy the temple and Jerusalem, and sent the Jews into their second captivity. History records that from the time of the destruction of the first temple by the Babylonians in 586 BC to the destruction of the second temple by the Romans in 70 AD, they were disbursed throughout the entire world because they rejected the Word of God.

Warning Against Adding to or Diminishing from the New Testament: In the New Testament, God has intensified the penalty for rejecting His Word. Jesus said that anyone who rejected Jesus Christ's words would be subject to the final judgment of God—the second death in the lake of fire (Rev. 21:8). Jesus left no doubt about the consequences for rejecting His words; His words will judge each person at the last day. The apostle John wrote: **"The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him; the word which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day.** For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I speak, I speak exactly as the Father has told Me" (John 12:48-50).

In his second epistle, the apostle Peter wrote of the absolute certainty of the "inspiration" of the Scriptures of God. He called the Scriptures of the New Testament "the confirmed prophetic Word" because they were the direct personal teachings of Jesus Christ to His disciples. Moreover, through the power of the Holy Spirit, He moved His apostles to write the New Testament. Peter penned these words: "We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word to which you do well to pay attention, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and *the* morning star arises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture originated as anyone's own *private* interpretation; because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the holy men of God spoke as they were moved by *the* Holy Spirit" (II Pet. 1:19-21).

Beginning in the Second Chapter of this epistle, Peter wrote of false teachers, who would introduce damnable heresies and bring swift destruction upon themselves: "But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you, **who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies, personally denying the Lord who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves.** And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of them, the way of the truth will be blasphemed" (II Pet. 2:1-2).

In the same way that Peter called the New Testament Scriptures "the confirmed prophetic word," Paul likewise referred to his epistles as "the prophetic scriptures," proving that the New Testament is nothing less than the inspired Word of God: "Now to Him who has the power to establish you, according to **my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ**, according to *the* revelation of *the* mystery that in past ages has been kept secret; but **now is made manifest, and by the prophetic scriptures, according to the commandment of the eternal God**, has been made known to all the nations unto *the*

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obedience of faith” (Rom. 16:25-26).

The apostle Paul charged Timothy to preach the Word, and he also prophesied that after his death many people would no longer adhere to the truth of the Word of God. They would turn aside to fables and myths and exchange the truth of God for lies: “I charge you, therefore, in the sight of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is ready to judge *the* living and *the* dead at His appearing and His kingdom; **preach the Word!** Be urgent in season, out of season; convict, rebuke, encourage, with all patience and doctrine. **For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine;** but according to their own lusts they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of* teachers, having ears itching *to hear what satisfies their cravings*; and **they shall turn away their own ears from the truth; and they shall be turned aside unto myths**” (II Tim. 4:1-4).

History shows that is precisely what happened! True to Paul’s prophecy, after the death of the apostles, the apostasy in Rome and Egypt gained momentum. An apostate church arose that exchanged the true teachings of Jesus Christ and His apostles for “Christianized” pagan myths and doctrines of demons. Jesse Lyman Hurlbut wrote of the church that emerged after the apostolic era: “We name the last generation of the first century, from 68 to 100 A. D. ‘The Age of Shadows,’ partly because the gloom of persecution was over the church; but more especially because of all periods in the history, it is one about which we know the least. We have no longer the clear light of the Book of Acts to guide us; and no author of that age has filled the blank in the history. We would like to read of the later work by such helpers of St. Paul as Timothy, Apollos and Titus, but all these and St. Paul’s other friends drop out of the record at his death. For fifty years after St. Paul’s life a curtain hangs over the church, through which we strive vainly to look; and when at last it rises, about 120 A. D. with the writings of the earliest church-fathers, we find a church in many aspects very different from that in the days of St. Peter and St. Paul” (Hurlbut, *The Story of the Christian Church*, p. 41).

True to the prophecies that John recorded in the book of Revelation, a great false “Christ-professing” religious system arose in Rome (Rev. 13:11-18 and 17:1-17). Its leaders did not heed the warnings of God in the Bible about perverting the truth of His God-breathed Word; neither did they pay attention to John’s final written warning not to add to or take away from the Word of God. They even changed the commandments of God.

The Apostle John Recorded Jesus’ Final Warning: The apostle John was especially selected and set aside by Jesus Christ to finish writing and canonizing the New Testament. At the end of the book of Revelation, Jesus Christ inspired John to summarize the requirements for salvation and to reveal the fate of sinners. John wrote what Jesus had spoken to him: “And behold, I am coming quickly; and My reward is with Me, to render to each one according as his work shall be. **I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.**”

“Blessed are those who keep His commandments, that they may have the right to eat of the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. But excluded *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and fornicators, and murderers, and idolaters, and everyone who loves and devises a lie. I, Jesus, sent My angel to testify these things to you in the churches” (Rev. 22:12-16).

Jesus Christ ended the book of Revelation with a profound warning against adding to or taking away from the words of the Bible: “For I jointly testify [Jesus Christ and John] to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book, **that if anyone adds to these things, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the book of life, and from the holy city, and from the things that are**

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written in this book" (Rev. 22:18-19). This warning is the same kind of warning that God gave in the Old Testament. Therefore, when the warnings of the Old Testament are combined with this warning in the book of Revelation, compiled with the other warnings in the New Testament, there is no doubt that Jesus Christ intended Revelation's warning to be the final warning that applies to the whole Bible.

Thus, with this final warning, the apostle John finished the canonization of the New Testament—the most magnificent book in the world.

CHAPTER EIGHT

A TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM TYNDALE The “Father” of All English Bibles

“ ‘The history of our English Bible begins with the work of Tyndale and not with that of Wycliffe,’ says Dr. Westcott in his *History of the English Bible*, p. 316, and it is true that one of the most striking features of the work of Tyndale is its independence” (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th Edition, vol. 3, p. 898).

The history of the modern English Bible rightly begins with William Tyndale, rather than Wycliffe, because he was the first man to translate both the New Testament from the Byzantine Greek and the Old Testament from the Hebrew text into English. So profound was his work that all subsequent English Bibles stand in the shadow of his translations. Noted Tyndale biographer David Daniell wrote: “William Tyndale (1494-1536) was the first person to translate the Bible into English from its original Greek and Hebrew and the first to print the Bible in English, which he did in exile. Giving the laity access to the word of God outraged the clerical establishment in England: he was condemned, hunted, and eventually murdered. However, his masterly translation formed the basis of all English bibles—including the ‘King James Bible’, many of whose finest passages were taken unchanged, though unacknowledged, from Tyndale’s work” (Daniell, *William Tyndale a Biography*, dust jacket sleeve).

Daniell commented that “Tyndale grew up to be a remarkable linguist, noted in Europe for knowing seven languages as well as English, like a native.” Apparently, at age twelve Tyndale attended Oxford University in 1506. Afterwards he attended Cambridge University from 1517-1520, where he and other fellow students were converted to Christ after studying the Greek New Testament—Erasmus’ 1516 Edition (*Ibid.*, pp. 14, 27, 49).

From the evidence of his life and work, there is no doubt that God the Father and Jesus Christ had specially set apart, prepared, called and converted William Tyndale for the task of translating the Holy Scriptures into English. He was led by the Holy Spirit and by a holy passion to translate the Word of God so that common men and women—even the plowboy—could have the Holy Scriptures of God to read and study for themselves.

Daniell wrote of a key turning point in Tyndale’s life, revealing his unflinching resoluteness to make the Word of God available in English for the ordinary man: “Until it was available in English as a whole book, the humble layman and woman had even less chance of knowing what the New Testament said: it might have been in Chinese for all the sense the Latin made, though some scattered New Testament phrases circulated in proverbs in English, and a few might have seen parts of the Lollard Bible [Wycliffe’s translation in Old English from Jerome’s Latin Vulgate in 1380]. Tyndale saw that what was needed was a New Testament in English from the Greek. Richard Webb’s narrative concludes, famously: ‘And soon after Master Tyndall happened to be in the company of a learned man, and in communing and disputing with him drove him to that issue that the learned man said, **we were better be without God’s law than the pope’s**: Maister Tyndall hearing that, answered him, **I defy the Pope and all his laws**, and said, **if God spare my life ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough, shall know more of the scripture than thou dost.**’

A Tribute to William Tyndale

“The words echo Erasmus in his *Paraclesis*. Tyndale’s problem was finding a high enough authority [in the church] to work under, to exempt him from the fatal charge of heresy under the Constitutions of Oxford [of 1410—which strictly outlawed the Scriptures in English under penalty of death]” (Ibid., pp. 78-79, bold emphasis and bracketed comments added).

Thus, William Tyndale was single-minded and undaunted in his purpose of translating and printing the Bible in English. His calling had many parallels to the apostle Paul’s calling: Just as Jesus Christ had called Saul, who was a top leader in Judaism, out of the spiritual depths and darkness of Judaism to become the apostle Paul, in like manner, Jesus Christ called William Tyndale, who was a priest, out of the darkest spiritual bondage of Roman Catholicism. In the same way that Paul rejected Judaism, preached and wrote the Gospel of Jesus Christ and was martyred by the Roman authorities of his time, William Tyndale rejected Catholicism and was despised by the corrupt, intolerant religious establishment of his time and eventually martyred. As Paul was chased by the Jewish religious authorities from city to city and country to country, likewise while in exile, Tyndale was chased throughout Germany and the Low Countries. He was hated, rejected, and hounded as a common criminal by the Roman Catholic religious and civil authorities. Finally, he was betrayed by Henry Phillips in Antwerp and was arrested, tried and convicted as a heretic. He was strangled to death and burned at the stake in 1536 because he dared to defy the pope and the Roman Catholic Church authorities by translating and printing the first English New and Old Testaments from the original language.

So thorough and powerful was Tyndale’s knowledge of English that his translation of the Scriptures set the foundation for today’s modern English. It was not Shakespeare who established the power and beauty of the English language—it was William Tyndale, who lived two generations before Shakespeare (1564-1616). Shakespeare, by God’s grace, built on the foundation that Tyndale had established through His translation of the English Bible.

Tyndale Sets Out to Translate the New Testament: In the summer of 1523, six years after Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five theses to the Wittenberg Catholic church door, Tyndale went to London to seek permission from the bishop of London, Cuthbert Tunstall, to translate the Scriptures. Because Lutheranism—which rejected Roman Catholic traditional practices and the authority of the pope—had begun to influence England, Tunstall denied Tyndale permission to translate the New Testament into English (Ibid., p. 83). Therefore, Tyndale exiled himself to Europe, leaving England in April 1524. He first went to Hamburg, Germany, then to Wittenberg where he met Martin Luther, and then on to Cologne in 1525, where he not only translated the Greek New Testament into English but also proceeded to have it printed. However, in the midst of printing the Gospel of Matthew, he had to flee the authorities who were seeking to arrest him (Ibid., pp. 108-109). Tyndale and his helper William Roye escaped and went to Worms, where Tyndale first published his translation of the New Testament in 1526.

Daniell wrote extensively of Tyndale’s 1526 New Testament: “The small city of Worms, with its Roman Cathedral and eight-hundred-year-old history of meetings of the Diet, so recently linked with Luther’s name, was hospitable to ‘the English apostates’ who had fled from Cologne. Tyndale, assisted by Roye, successfully completed the printing of the translation of the whole New Testament at the press of Peter Schoeffer, probably in 1526. It was a simple, small, octavo (roughly hymn-book size), without prologue or marginal notes, with simple chapter-breaks, printed in exceptionally clear Bastard type (*Schwabacher*) with small illuminations at the start of each book. It is little else but seven hundred pages of text. Of a print-run said to be either three or six thousand, two copies survive, one imperfect. Neither has a title-page, but we know from Tyndale’s re-

marks in the preface to *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon* that he did not put his name to the book, following the counsel of Christ to do 'good deeds secretly and to be content with the conscience of well doing'. The date on a title page might have been late 1525, or more probably 1526. Copies were brought to England and were already being sold openly, for example by 'Master Garrett, Curate of All Hallows in Honey Lane London' by early February 1526.

"It was Tyndale's revision of this New Testament eight years later in 1534 which not only went forward into later Renaissance Bibles, most notably the Authorized Version [King James Version], but is still dominant, even today. Yet the 1534 Testament, important as it is, is a revision. We must not lose sight of the extraordinary quality of that first printed New Testament in English, as it was welcomed and read in London and southern and eastern England. Here was suddenly the complete New Testament, all twenty-seven books, the four gospels, the Acts, the twenty-one Epistles and Revelation, in very portable form, clearly printed. Here was the original Greek, in English. The bare text itself was complete, and without an iota of allegorising commentary. Everything that had been originally written was here, to be read freely without addition or subtraction. The only constraints were the implicit command to read it, and in reading to relate one text to another, even one book to another, so that the high theology of Paul in the Epistles could be understood in relation to the words and work of Jesus in the Gospels.

"It was the Greek in English, the common *koine* of the first-century Mediterranean in the common spoken language of England. Phrase after phrase after phrase came from English life as lived in the 1520s by English people: 'A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid ... No man can serve two masters ... Ask and it shall be given you. Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you ... and the floods came, and the winds blew ... as sheep having no shepherd ... give unto one of these little ones to drink, a cup of cold water only ...' These phrases, here taken at random from the earlier chapters of Matthew, would have been on the sheets of the abandoned Cologne edition and possibly were therefore already familiar to some readers. But here were no longer scattered fragments, but the whole thing, the precious first-century documents in which the Christian faith was first formulated, in modern English.

"What still strikes a late-twentieth-century reader is how modern it is. There are occasional words that have been lost to common use since 1526, like 'noosell' for nurture, or have changed their meaning, like 'naughty' for valueless, or 'haunt' for remain. But both vocabulary and syntax are not only recognisable today, they still belong to today's language. This seems to be for two reasons. First, Tyndale goes for clear, everyday, spoken, English. Because it was largely the current language of his day, it remains largely a current language of ours. He is not out to make antiquarian effects, as the Authorised Version did, for partly political reasons. The result is that Tyndale usually feels more modern than the Authorised Version, though that revision was made nearly a century later. The second reason is that Tyndale makes a language for the Word of God, which speaks to the heart: 'And all that heard it wondered, at those things which were told them of the shepherds. But Mary kept all those sayings, and pondered them in her heart.' (Luke 2) ... Such phrases have gone deep into the consciousness of English-speakers ever since" (Daniell, *William Tyndale a Biography*, pp. 134-135).

Tyndale's Translations and Writings Smuggled into England: Because of a unique secret alliance between Tyndale and his English merchant friends in Europe and London, thousands of Tyndale's English New Testaments, and later Old Testaments, as well as his other books, were smuggled into England from Germany and Antwerp. They were cleverly hidden in flour sacks and bales of cloth. "Smuggling was efficient," wrote Daniell. "Attempts at controls, forbidding people to receive books on a long list headed by the works of Tyndale, clearly did not work, for all the evidence points to there being

increasing numbers of readers of contraband books year by year—in spite of punishments for people caught. Bales of cloth (the commonest method) would be secretly marked, containing well-hidden flat printed sheets. ‘Barrels or casks, apparently full of wine or oil, might secrete water-tight boxes holding dangerous propaganda. Cargoes of wheat or grain, hides or skins were not always made up exclusively of these items. Flour sacks often held carefully packed contraband books strategically placed in the meal. Chests with false sides or bases, hidden receptacles or secret compartments brought over documents ...’ ” (Ibid., p. 186).

England was literally flooded with Tyndale’s outlawed Bibles. In order to stamp out this heretical book, Roman Catholic authorities, under orders from Bishop Tunstall, burned thousands of his New Testaments and books. However, thousands more were smuggled in and sold on the black market, in spite of the fact that those who owned or read them were subject to torture or death by burning or beheading. History does not tell us how many English men and women were punished, tortured, burned at the stake or beheaded for possessing Tyndale’s outlawed Bible—or for professing Jesus Christ as Savior by faith and rejecting Roman Catholicism. Perhaps, one may glean an understanding of the horrific human carnage during the bloody struggle of the Reformation from John Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments of Martyrs*, in three volumes. He chronicled the deaths of many thousands of martyrs of Jesus Christ throughout Europe, including England.

In addition to translating the New Testament and Old Testament, Tyndale wrote other books that explained and expounded upon the Scriptures. These are: *Parable of the Wicked Mammon*, 1527; *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, 1528; Preface to the Five Books of Moses—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, 1530; Prologues: *To the Prophet Jonas*; *The Gospels*: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; Prologues to the following Epistles: Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I and II Thessalonians, I and II Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, I and II Peter, the three Epistles of John and Jude.

Tyndale was hoping for repentance and reformation in England. He realized that whenever God sent a prophet to preach repentance and the people did not repent, God’s hand of punishment was soon to follow. If they repented, as the people of Nineveh did when Jonah preached to them, God’s blessing would be upon the nation. In Tyndale’s prologue *To the Prophet Jonas*, one can see his hope that the people of England would also repent: “And so Christ came again after the resurrection in his Spirit, and preached repentance unto them [the Jewish nation] by the mouth of his apostles and disciples, and with miracles of the Holy Ghost. And all that repented not perished shortly after, and the rest [were] carried away captive into all quarters of the world for an example, as ye see unto this day.

“And in like manner, since the world began, wheresoever repentance was offered and not received, there God took cruel vengeance immediately: as ye see in the flood of Noe, in the overthrowing of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all the country about; and as ye see of Egypt, of the Amorites, Canaanites, and afterward of the very Israelites; and then at the last, of the Jews, too, and of the Assyrians and Babylonians; and so throughout all the empires of the world.

“Gildas [516-570] preached repentance unto the old Britains that inhabited England. They repented not, and therefore God sent in their enemies upon them on every side, and destroyed them up, and gave the land unto other nations. And great vengeance hath been taken in that land for sin since that time.

“Wickliffe [1320-1384] preached repentance unto our fathers not long since. They repented not; for their hearts were indurate [hardened], and their eyes blinded with their own pope-holy righteousness, wherewith they had made their souls gay [light-

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hearted] against the receiving again of the wicked spirit, that bringeth seven worse than himself with him, and maketh the latter end worse than the beginning: for in open sins there is hope of repentance, but in holy hypocrisy none at all. But what followed? They slew their true and right king, and set up three wrong kings [in] a row, under which all the noble blood was slain up, and half the commons thereto, what in France, and what with their own sword, in fighting among themselves for the crown; and the cities and towns decayed, and the land brought half into a wilderness, in respect of that it was before.

“And now Christ, to preach repentance, is risen yet once again out of his sepulchre, in which the pope had buried him, and kept him down with his pillars and poleaxes, and all disguisings of hypocrisy, with guile, wiles and falsehood, and with the sword of all princes, which he had blinded with his false merchandise. And as I doubt not of the ensamples that are past, so am I sure that great wrath [against England] will follow, except repentance turn it back again, and cease it” (Parker Society, *Prologue to the Prophet Jonas*, pp. 458-459).

In the end, Tyndale’s works, especially his New Testament and *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, ignited the fires of reformation in England and changed the course of history, for many did repent and turn to God. As a result, after Henry VIII read *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, given to him by his second wife, Anne Boleyn, he saw the Scriptural rationale that enabled him to take action and sever all ties with Rome. In 1534, he renounced the Pope and Rome’s control of the church in England and established himself as head of the Church of England, for he had previously received, in 1521, the title of *Defender of the Faith* from Pope Leo X.

In Langer’s *An Encyclopedia of World History* we find this summary: “1534. ACT OF SUPREMACY, appointing the king and his successors *Protector and only Supreme Head of the Church and Clergy of England*. This may be taken as the decisive beginning of the English Reformation. The break with Rome had political and personal origins; at first there were no real differences in dogma and liturgy. Refusal to take the oath of supremacy was made high treason, under which vote Sir Thomas More was condemned and beheaded (1535)” (p. 370).

The separation from Rome was the first step that eventually led Henry VIII to order the English Bible to be placed in all churches in England, printed under license from the king in 1537. The English Bible was actually Tyndale’s translation of the Old and New Testaments renamed the “Thomas Matthews” Bible. In 1538, also by the king’s authority, the “Great Bible,” published by Miles Coverdale, another one of Tyndale’s associates, was printed and placed in all the churches in England.

Tyndale’s Old Testament Translation: Not only did Tyndale translate the New Testament from Greek into English, but he translated the Old Testament as well. It is evident that he translated one-half of the Old Testament—the Pentateuch, Joshua to II Chronicles and Jonah. These subsequently were published. John Rogers, who assisted Tyndale while he was in prison awaiting execution, put together the rest of the Old Testament books that Tyndale had translated before he was arrested. Concerning Tyndale’s Old Testament and the Thomas Matthew Bible, Daniell wrote: “William Tyndale’s Old Testament translations laid the foundation of our English Bible. They have been even more hidden from general view than his work on the New Testament....Tyndale published his first translations from Hebrew into English—the earliest ever from that language into this—in 1530, when he printed his Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament. He gave us our Bible language: the words and rhythms, for example, of the story of the Creation and the Fall—‘Let there be light and there was light’, ‘male and female created he them’, ‘who told thee that thou wast naked?’ and much else. **Two generations later, in 1611, the scholars and divines who made the Authorised Version**

under King James were happy to use what Tyndale had given them, though without acknowledgement. Very many great passages from the Pentateuch come to us from Tyndale” (Daniell, *Introduction to Tyndale’s Old Testament*, p. ix, bold emphasis added).

In his biography of Tyndale, Daniell wrote of Tyndale’s Pentateuch: “Some time in January 1530 there began to appear in England, smuggled in from Antwerp, copies of a well-made little book, again printed by Hoochstraten of Antwerp ... the title-page of which simply announced *The first book of Moses called Genesis*, and nothing more. The next page began a prologue with the words ‘W.T. To the Reader’; so there could be no doubt about its origins” (Daniell, *William Tyndale a Biography*, p. 283).

“These opening chapters of Genesis are the first translations—not just the first printed, but the first translations—from Hebrew into English. This needs to be emphasised. Not only was the Hebrew language only known in England in 1529 and 1530 by, at the most, a tiny handful of scholars in Oxford and Cambridge, and quite possibly by none; that there was a language called Hebrew at all, or that it had any connection whatsoever with the Bible, would have been news to most of the ordinary population. Religion was in Latin: the Mass was in Latin; all the other services, like baptism, were in Latin; everything the priest did was in Latin; the Psalms in the Mass were in Latin; the Bible-readings in the services, such as they were, were in Latin; the Bible, when visible, was a big Latin volume; some priests, and most laymen ... [understood] only a few words of Latin, if that. The Bible was thought of only by a very few as a whole and complete thing, referring throughout, backwards and forwards, not just to itself from Genesis to Revelation, but also from Creation to the end of history—an entity. Now here in 1530 was Genesis, from the Hebrew, in English, in a form that fitted a pocket” (Ibid., p. 287).

“Tyndale’s Hebrew work did not stop in 1530. He printed a second edition of his Pentateuch in 1534, with some revisions in Genesis. At the back of his 1534 New Testament are fifteen pages containing forty Old Testament passages, for use in services in church, and translated not from the Latin of the service-books but from the original Hebrew and from the Greek of the Apocrypha. They again mark the first appearance of portions of scripture, from the prophets, Proverbs and Song of Solomon, in English direct from the Hebrew. Moreover, where the Greek New Testament writers quote from the Old Testament, Tyndale in his 1534 version tends to translate from the original Hebrew rather than through the Greek....A thousand years before Tyndale, the Bible had existed in a fourth-century Latin version known latterly as the Vulgate, very much the property of the Church. In Tyndale’s time, to go behind the Latin to the scriptural Greek and Hebrew, and then **furthermore to seek to make those Bible texts available in portable volumes printed in English, so that anyone at all could have a copy and read it, was blasphemous and treasonable, punishable by torture or death or both—**until the King, Henry VIII, altered course for his own reasons, tragically soon after Tyndale’s martyrdom in 1536 [sic]” (Daniell, *Introduction to Tyndale’s Old Testament*, p. ix, bold emphasis added).

“Yet that volume [the Pentateuch] was less than half his Old Testament work. Two years after his execution in 1536 [sic] there appeared a thick folio Bible, also printed abroad, which announced itself as both ‘set forth with the King’s most gracious licence’ (marking a change in Henry VIII’s policy) and ‘truly and purely translated into English by Thomas Matthew’. Matthew is a cover name. The volume was in fact assembled by Tyndale’s close friend John Rogers, who later became the first Protestant martyr in England under Catholic Queen Mary. In his ‘Matthew’s’ Bible, Rogers reprinted the Pentateuch and all the New Testament directly from Tyndale. The section after the Pentateuch, from Joshua to 2 Chronicles, was also Tyndale’s work. For this assertion, there is, it has to be said, no direct evidence. Yet the strong likelihood, together

with an overwhelming accumulation of internal effects, convinces both the general reader and the scholar that this is Tyndale—probably from his manuscripts, entrusted to Rogers at his death” (Ibid., pp. ix-x).

“For the Christian, Tyndale insisted, it is essential to be able to study the whole of the Hebrew Law in order to understand what Christ did with it.... Moreover, Tyndale discovered that Hebrew goes wonderfully into English—better than into Latin, and better even than Latin goes into English. All that he did in translating Hebrew rings with that discovery, which is very much his own, and one which only ignorance and prejudice have prevented the English nation from properly praising.

“Tyndale, and Tyndale alone (with his one or two occasional helpers in Antwerp like George Joye, or in Hamburg like Miles Coverdale, whose Hebrew was not more than basic, if that), was engaged in a full-scale work of translating Hebrew into English. His discovery of the happy linguistic marriage of the two languages, though not *quite* as important as Newton’s discovery of universal gravitation, was still of high significance for the history of western Christian theology, language and literature—a high claim, but not difficult to support, though the work on it has largely still to be done: the immense influence of Hebrew forms on the English language has not been properly recognised even now.... All Old Testament English versions descend from Tyndale; even of the books of the Old Testament which he did not reach. Miles Coverdale, who first gave us printed in English the second half of the Old Testament, had worked with Tyndale, and imitated him” (Daniell, *William Tyndale a Biography*, pp. 288-289).

Tyndale—Grace, Faith and Law

Today, Protestant theology is an odd mixture of grace and lawlessness. On the one hand, it claims the grace of God for the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life, which is accepted, praised and loudly preached; on the other hand, it insists that Jesus came to abolish the law. The conclusion is that once one has been “saved,” he or she no longer needs to keep the laws and commandments of God except to love God in one’s heart. The result is a counterfeit warm, fuzzy, emotional gospel mostly devoid of any need to obey God’s commands or to understand the doctrines of Jesus Christ. Hence, the hallmark of Protestantism today is a lawless grace that is contrary to the teachings of Jesus Christ and His apostles.

Had all of Tyndale’s writings been retained, published and taught, perhaps the course of Protestantism in England would have been much different, because he did not teach a lawless grace. In the beginning of the Reformation in England, Tyndale was perhaps the most powerful influence through his translations of the Old and New Testaments as well as his other writings. Yet, the clergy of England, for political reasons as well as jealousy, rejected his clear teachings on law and grace. As a result, when the Bible was finally allowed to be printed in English, beginning in 1537, only the Scriptures were printed. All of Tyndale’s other writings that revealed the clear scriptural truth about law and grace were excluded. None of Tyndale’s forwards to the reader, prologues to the Gospels and Epistles, or any of his marginal notes were allowed. Thus, an uninspired clergy, through faulty interpretations of the Scriptures, gradually developed a lawless grace.

Tyndale wrote about human nature, Satan, sin, law, grace, mercy, forgiveness and the love of God. He fully believed in keeping the laws and commandments of God “from the bottom ground of the heart.” Furthermore, he taught repentance toward God, justification of sin through the blood of Jesus Christ and salvation by faith, not by works.

In *A Pathway to the Holy Scripture* Tyndale wrote: “The fall of Adam hath made us heirs of the vengeance and wrath of God, and heirs of eternal damnation; and hath

brought us into captivity and bondage under the devil. And the devil is our lord, and our ruler, our head, our governor, our prince, yea, and our god. And our will is locked and knit faster unto the will of the devil, than could an hundred thousand chains bind a man unto a post. Unto the devil's will consent we with all our hearts, with all our minds, with all our might, power, strength, will and lusts; [so that the law and will of the devil is written as well in our hearts as in our members, and we run headlong after the devil with full zeal, and the whole swing of all the power we have; as a stone cast up into the air cometh down naturally of his own self, with all the violence and swing of his own weight.] With what poison, deadly, and venomous hate hateth a man his enemy! With how great malice of mind, inwardly, do we slay and murder! With what violence and rage, yea, and with how fervent lust commit we advoutry [adultery], fornication, and such like uncleanness! With what pleasure and delectation, inwardly, serveth a glutton his belly! With what diligence deceive we! How busily seek we the things of this world! Whatsoever we do, think, or imagine, is abominable in the sight of God. [For we can refer nothing unto the honour of God; neither is his law, or will, written in our members or in our hearts: neither is there any more power in us to follow the will of God, than in a stone to ascend upward of his own self.] And [beside that,] we are as it were asleep in so deep blindness, that we can neither see nor feel what misery, thralldom, and wretchedness we are in, till Moses come and wake us, and publish the law. When we hear the law truly preached, how that we ought to love and honour God with all our strength and might, from the low bottom of the heart, [because he hath created us, and both heaven and earth for our sakes, and made us lord thereof,] and our neighbours (yea, our enemies) as ourselves, inwardly, from the ground of the heart, [because God hath made them after the likeness of his own image, and they are his sons as well as we, and Christ hath bought them with his blood, and made them heirs of everlasting life as well as us; and how we ought to] do whatsoever God biddeth, and abstain from whatsoever God forbiddeth, with all love and meekness, with a fervent and a burning lust [desire] from the center of the heart; then beginneth the conscience to rage against the law, and against God. No sea, be it ever so great a tempest, is so unquiet. For it is not possible for a natural man to consent to the law, that it should be good, or that God should be righteous which maketh the law; [inasmuch as it is contrary unto his nature, and damneth him and all that he can do, and neither sheweth him where to fetch help, nor preacheth any mercy; but only setteth man at variance with God, (as witnesseth Paul, Rom. iv) and provoketh him and stirreth him to rail on God, and to blaspheme him as a cruel tyrant. For it is not possible for a man, till he be born [begotten] again [by of the Spirit of God], to think that God is righteous to make him of so poison a nature, either for his own pleasure or for the sin of another man, and to give him a law that is impossible for him to do, or to consent to;] his wit, reason, and will being so fast glued, yea, nailed and chained unto the will of the devil. Neither can any creature loose the bonds, save the blood of Christ [only].

"This is the captivity and bondage, whence Christ delivered us, redeemed and loosed us. His blood, his death, his patience in suffering rebukes and wrongs, his prayers and fastings, his meekness and fulfilling of the uttermost point of the law, appeased the wrath of God; brought the favour of God to us again; obtained that God should love us first, and be our Father, and that a merciful Father, that will consider our infirmities and weakness, and will give us his Spirit again (which was taken away in the fall of Adam) to rule, govern, and strength us, and to break the bonds of Satan, wherein we were so strait bound. When Christ is thuswise preached, and the promises rehearsed, which are contained in the prophets, in the psalms, and in divers places of the five books of Moses, [which preaching is called the Gospel or glad tidings;] then the hearts of them which are elect and chosen, begin to wax soft and melt at the bounteous mercy of God, and kindness shewed of Christ. For when the evangelion [the gospel] is preached, [upon repen-

tance and baptism] the Spirit of God entereth into them which God hath ordained and appointed unto eternal life; and openeth their inward eyes, and worketh such belief in them. When the woful consciences feel and taste how sweet a thing the bitter death of Christ is, and how merciful and loving God is, through Christ's purchasing and merits; they begin to love again, and to consent to the law of God, how that it is good and ought so to be, and that God is righteous which made it; and desire to fulfil the law, even as a sick man desireth to be whole, and are an hungred and thirst after more righteousness, and after more strength, to fulfil the law more perfectly. And in all that they do, or omit and leave undone, they seek God's honour and his will with meekness, ever condemning the unperfectness of their deeds by the law.

"Now Christ standeth us in double stead; and us serveth, two manner wise. First, he is our Redeemer, Deliverer, Reconciler, Mediator, Intercessor, Advocate, Attorney, Solicitor, our Hope, Comfort, Shield, Protection, Defender, Strength, Health, Satisfaction and Salvation. His blood, his death, all that he ever did, is ours. And Christ himself, with all that he is or can do, is ours. His blood-shedding, and all that he did, doth me as good service as though I myself had done it. And God (as great as he is) is mine, with all that he hath, [as a husband is his wife's,] through Christ and his purchasing.

"Secondarily, after that we be overcome with love and kindness, and now seek to do the will of God (which is a Christian man's nature), then have we Christ an example to counterfeit; as saith Christ himself in John, 'I have given you an example.' And in another evangelist he saith, 'He that will be great among you, shall be your servant and minister; as the Son of man came to minister, and not to be ministered unto.' And Paul saith, 'Counterfeit Christ' " (Parker Society, pp. 17-20).

Contrary to Protestant or Catholic theology, Tyndale correctly understood law and grace. He clearly discerned the difference between practicing vain works of human religious traditions and superstitions as opposed to keeping the commandments and laws of God from the heart. Moreover, he fully comprehended that justification of past sins comes only by deep personal repentance toward God and faith in the blood of Christ for forgiveness, followed by baptism. He understood that eternal life cannot come through any law; rather it is the gift of God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In an era of gross superstition and spiritual ignorance, it is astounding that William Tyndale had such a deep and profound spiritual understanding of the Scriptures. It is evident that he was led by the Holy Spirit into the truth of the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Word of God.

W. T. unto the Reader—1534 Revised New Testament. The following selected excerpts are from Tyndale's forward to the reader as found in Daniell's modern spelling edition. These excerpts show that Tyndale never taught a lawless grace: "Moreover, because the kingdom of heaven, which is the scripture and word of God, may be so locked up, that he which readeth or heareth it, cannot understand it: as Christ testifieth how that the scribes and Pharisees had so shut it up (Matt. 23) and had taken away the key of knowledge (Luke 11) that their Jews [who followed the Pharisees] which thought themselves within, were yet so locked out, and are to this day that they can understand no sentence of the scripture unto their salvation, though they can rehearse the texts everywhere and dispute thereof as subtly as the popish doctors of the dunce's dark learning, which with their sophistry, served us, as the Pharisees did the Jews. Therefore (that I might be found faithful to my father and Lord in distributing unto my brethren and fellows of one faith, their due and necessary food: so dressing it and seasoning it, that the weak stomachs may receive it also, and be better for it, I thought it my duty (most dear reader), to warn thee before, and to shew thee the right way in [to understanding the Scriptures], and to give thee the true key to open it withal, and to arm thee against false prophets and malicious hypocrites, whose perpetual study is to leaven the scriptures with glosses, and

there to lock it up where [instead] it should save thy soul, and to make us shoot at the wrong mark, to put our trust in those things that profit their bellies only and slay our souls.

"The right way: yea and the only way to understand the scripture unto our salvation, is, that we earnestly and above all thing, search for the profession of our baptism or covenants made between God and us...If ye shall forgive men their faults, your heavenly father shall forgive you: but and if ye shall not forgive men their faults, no more shall your father forgive you your faults. Here also by the virtue and strength of this covenant wherewith God of his mercy hath bound himself to us unworthy, may he that forgiveth his neighbour, be bold when he returneth and amendeth to believe and trust in God for remission of whatsoever he hath done amiss. And contrary-wise, he that will not forgive, cannot but despair of forgiveness in the end, and fear judgement without mercy.

"The general covenant wherein all other are comprehended and included, is this. **If we meek ourselves to God to keep all his laws**, after the example of Christ: then God hath bound himself unto us to keep and make good all the mercies promised in Christ, throughout all the scripture.

"**All the whole law** which was given to utter [to expose] our corrupt nature, **is comprehended in the ten commandments**. And the ten commandments are comprehended in these two: love God and thy neighbour. And he that loveth his neighbour in God and Christ, fulfilleth these two, and consequently the ten, and finally all the other ..." (David Daniell, *Tyndale's New Testament, Modern Spelling*, W. T. Unto the Reader, pp. 3-4, bold emphasis and bracketed comments added).

"**Now if any man that submitteth not himself to keep the commandments, do think that he hath any faith in God: the same man's faith is vain, worldly, damnable, devilish and plain presumption, as it is above said, and is no faith that can justify or be accepted before God.** And that is it that James meaneth in his Epistle. For how can a man believe saith Paul, without a preacher (Rom. 10). **Now read all the scripture and see where God sent any to preach mercy to any, save unto them only that repent and turn to God with all their hearts, to keep his commandments.** Unto the disobedient that will not turn, is threatened, wrath, vengeance and damnation, according to all the terrible curses and fearful examples of the Bible.

"Faith now in God the father through our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the covenants and appointment made between God and us, is our salvation ..." (Ibid., pp. 4-5).

"Also ye see that two things are required to begin a Christian man. The first is a steadfast faith and trust in almighty God, to obtain all the mercy that he hath promised us, through the deserving and merits of Christ's blood only, without all respect to our own works. And the other is, that **we forsake evil and turn to God, to keep his laws and fight against ourselves and our corrupt nature perpetually**, that we may do the will of God every day better and better.

"This have I said (most dear reader) to warn thee, lest thou shouldest be deceived, and shouldest not only read the scripture in vain and to no profit, but also unto thy greater damnation. For the nature of God's word is, that whosoever read it or hear it reasoned and disputed before him, it will begin immediately to make him every day better and better, till he be grown into a perfect man in the **knowledge of Christ and the love of the law of God**: or else make him worse and worse, till he be hardened that he openly resist the spirit of God, and then blaspheme, after the example of Pharaoh, Coza [Cora, Numbers 16], Abiram, Balaam, Judas, Simon Magus and such other" (Ibid., p. 5, bold emphasis added).

"Let us therefore that have now at this time our eyes opened again through the tender mercy of God, keep in mean [keep this in mind]. **Let us so put our trust in the**

mercy of God through Christ, that we know it our duty to keep the law of God and to love our neighbours for their father's [God the Father's] sake which created them and for their Lord's sake which redeemed them, and bought them so dearly with his blood. Let us walk in the fear of God, and have our eyes open unto both parts of God's covenants, certified that **none shall be partaker of the mercy, save he that will fight against the flesh, to keep the law.** And let us arm ourselves with this remembrance, that as Christ's works justify from sin and set us the favour of God, **so our deeds through the working of the spirit of God, helps us to continue in the favour and grace, into which Christ hath brought us; and that we can no longer continue in favour and grace [other] than our hearts are to keep the law.**

"Furthermore concerning the law of God, this is the general conclusion, that the whole law, whether they be ceremonies, sacrifices, yea or sacraments either, or precepts of equity between man and man throughout all degrees of the world, all were given for our profit and necessity only, and not for any need that God hath of our keeping them, or that his joy is increased thereby or that the deed for the deed itself, doth please him. That is, all that God requireth of us when we be at one with him and do put our trust in him and love him, is that we love every man his neighbour to pity him and to have compassion on him in all his needs and to be merciful unto him. This to be even so, Christ testi-fieth (Matt. 7) saying: this is the law and the prophets" (Ibid., p. 7).

"For only love and mercifulness understandeth the law, and else nothing. And he that hath not that written in his heart, shall never understand the law, no: though all the angels of heaven went about to teach him. And he that hath that graven in his heart, shall not only understand the law but also shall do of his own inclination all that is required of the law....The gospel is glad tidings of mercy and grace and that our corrupt nature shall be healed again for Christ's sake and for the merits of his deservings only: **Yet on the condition that we will turn to God [in repentance], to learn to keep his laws spiritually,** that is to say, of love for his sake, and will also suffer [bring about] the curing of our infirmities [that is, the weaknesses of human nature]" (Ibid., p. 8, bold emphasis and bracketed comments added).

It is evident that Tyndale taught an active living faith, based on repentance, forgiveness and grace. In addition, he taught that Christians are to keep the commandments of God, to love God and neighbor from "the bottom ground of the heart."

The Sabbath and Holy Days: Tyndale knew that living faith caused a Christian to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and become more perfect day by day. Likewise, through translating the Scriptures, he himself was learning and growing in grace and knowledge. In his *Pathway Into the Holy Scripture*, there is evidence that perhaps he was beginning to understand the commands of God to keep the seventh day Sabbath, and the annual holy days. Tyndale mostly lived alone, because he was hiding from the authorities in order to do his work of translating; therefore, of necessity, if he kept the Sabbath and holy days, he had to keep them by himself.

The following excerpts from Tyndale's *Pathway Into the Holy Scripture* reveal his growing knowledge of the Sabbath and holy days. In this book he did not mention Sunday, as he did in *Obedience of a Christian Man*: "These things to know: first, the law; how that it is natural right, and equity; that we have but one God to put our hope and trust in, and him to love with all the heart, all the soul, and all our might and power, and **neither to move heart nor hand but at his commandment,** because he hath first created us of nought, and heaven and earth for our sakes; and afterwards when we had marred ourself through sin, he forgave us, and created us again, in the blood of his beloved Son:

"And that we have the name of our one God in fear and reverence; and that we dishonour it not, in swearing thereby about light trifles or vanity, or call it to record for

the confirming of wickedness or falsehood, or aught that is to the dishonour of God, which is the breaking of his laws, or unto the hurt of our neighbour: and inasmuch as he is our Lord and God, and we his double possession, by creation and redemption, and therefore ought (as I said) neither to move heart or hand without his commandment; **it is right that we have needful holy days to come together, and learn his will, both the law which he will have us ruled by, and also the promises of mercy which he will have us trust unto;** and to give God thanks together for his mercy, and to commit our infirmities to him through our Saviour Jesus, and to reconcile ourselves unto him, and each to other, if aught be between brother and brother that requireth it. **And for this purpose and such like, as to visit the sick and needy, and redress peace and unity, were the holy days ordained only; and so far forth are they to be kept holy from all manner works that may be conveniently spared for the time,** till this be done [the observing of the holy day], and no further, but [after the holy day] then lawfully to work” (Parker Society, 1968, Tyndale, *Pathway Into the Holy Scripture*, pp. 24-25, bold emphasis and bracketed comments added).

“And even so he that trusteth in any thing, save in God only and in his Son Jesus Christ, keepeth no commandment at all, in the sight of God. For he that hath trust in any creature, whether in heaven or in earth, save in God and his Son Jesus, can see no cause to love God with all his heart ... neither to abstain from dishonouring his name, nor **to keep the holy day for the love of his doctrine,** nor to obey lovingly the rulers of this world; nor any cause to love his neighbour as himself, and to abstain from hurting him, where he may get profit by him, and save himself harmless. And in like wise, against this law, ‘Love thy neighbor as thyself,’ **I may obey no worldly power, to do aught at any man's commandment** unto the hurt of my neighbor that hath not deserved it, though he be a Turk:

“And to know how contrary this law is unto our nature, and how it is damnation not to have this law written in our hearts, though we never commit the deeds; and how there is no other means to be saved from this damnation, than through repentance toward the law, and faith in Christ's blood; which are the very inward baptism of our souls, and the washing and the dipping of our bodies in the water is the outward sign. The plunging of the body under the water signifieth that we repent and profess to fight against sin and lusts, and to kill them every day more and more, with the help of God, and our diligence in following the doctrine of Christ and the leading of his Spirit; and that we believe to be washed from our natural damnation in which we are born, and from all the wrath of the law, and from all the infirmities and weaknesses that remain in us after we have given our consent unto the law, and yielded ourself to be scholars thereof; and from all the imperfectness of all our deeds done with cold love, and from all actual sin which shall chance on us, while we enforce the contrary and ever fight there against, and hope to sin no more. **And thus repentance and faith begin at our baptism, and first professing the laws of God; and continue unto our lives' end, and grow as we grow in the Spirit: for the perfecter we be, the greater is our repentance, and the stronger our faith.**

“And thus, as the Spirit and doctrine on God's part, and repentance and faith on our part, beget us anew in Christ, even so they make us grow, and wax perfect, and save us unto the end; and never leave us until all sin be put off, and we clean purified, and full formed, and fashioned after the similitude and likeness of the perfectness of our Savior Jesus, whose gift all is” (Ibid., Society, pp. 26-27, bold emphasis added).

There is no question that Tyndale fully understood and taught that Christians are obligated to keep the laws and commandments of God, motivated by love. Yet, at the same time, they are to trust in God's grace and mercy through Jesus Christ for forgive-

ness of sin, justification and eternal life. Tyndale also conveyed that those who love God and keep His commandments ought not keep any commandments of men that were contrary to the Word of God. Could it be that he was coming to an understanding that true Christians ought to keep the holy days of God, which had to include the weekly Sabbath—the seventh day of the week? Could it be, if Tyndale’s life had not been cut short by martyrdom, he would also have rejected the Christianized pagan Sunday and holidays of Roman Catholicism and would have embraced the biblical Sabbath and holy days?

Perhaps, if his teachings had not been deliberately ignored and rejected because of ecclesiastical politics and envy by secret Romanists and Latinists (who preferred the Latin text over the Greek text), English Protestantism would not have eventually succumbed to a lawless grace and would instead have accepted the full gospel of Jesus Christ, including the Sabbath and holy days of God. If Tyndale had lived and been free to teach and preach publicly, there is little doubt that the English Reformation would have resulted in a more complete separation from Roman Catholicism. Unfortunately, because the Church of England did not wholly accept the Scriptures as its final authority, it removed itself only a few steps away from Catholic doctrines.

The English Reformation caused Protestants to reject the following false doctrines: papal authority; that Peter was the first pope; the perpetual virginity of Mary; Mary as a mediator; celibacy of priests; confession of sins to a priest; transubstantiation of the bread and wine of the Eucharist; vows of chastity and celibacy, the rosary; prayers for the dead; prayers to saints; purgatory; and most idols. However, they, as well as most other Protestants in Europe, retained these major doctrines that are based solely on the authority of the pope of Rome: the Trinity; Sunday keeping; infant baptism; Christmas, Easter, and Halloween observance; and a hierarchical church government. Instead of a full return to the Word of God to follow the Scriptures only, “sola scriptura”—which was the original Protestant slogan—they fell short. As a result, Protestants merely substituted the orthodox Catholic doctrine of salvation by works and sacraments for salvation through a lawless grace. Both doctrines of salvation are unscriptural. (See: Appendix K, p. 790, *Rome’s Challenge to the Protestants*).

Tyndale Exposed and Rejected the Evils and Corruption of Roman Catholicism

Tyndale wrote extensively against the evils and corruption of Roman Catholicism using the most impassioned words possible. He denounced the foolish ceremonies of the Mass and the evil and fearful superstitions instilled in the people by the clergy in order to keep the people in bondage to Rome. “What helpeth it also that the priest, when he goeth to mass, disguiseth himself with a great part of the passion of Christ, and playeth out the rest under silence, with signs and proffers, with noddings, becking and mowing [gestures with the mouth], as it were jackanapes, when neither he himself, neither any man else wotteth [knows] what he meaneth? Not at all, verily; but hurteth, and that exceedingly; for as much as it not only destroyeth the faith, and quencheth the love that should be given unto the commandments, and maketh the people unthankful, in that it bringeth them into such superstition, that they think that they have done abundantly enough for God, yea, and deserved above measure, if they be present once in a day at such mumming; but also maketh the infidels to mock us and abhor us, in that they see nothing but such apes’ play among us, whereof no man can give a reason.

“All this cometh to pass to fulfill the prophecy which Christ prophesied; that there shall come in his name, which shall say that they themselves are Christ. That do verily the pope and our holy orders of religion. For they, under the name of Christ, preach themselves, their own word and their own traditions, and teach the people to be-

lieve in them. The pope giveth pardons of his full power, of the treasure of the church, and of the merits of saints. The friars likewise make their benefactors (which only they call their brethren and sisters) partakers of their masses, fasting, watchings, prayings, and woolward goings. Yea, and when a novice of the Observants is professed, the father asketh him, Will ye keep the rules of holy St Francis? And he saith, Yea. Will ye so in deed? saith he. The other answereth, Yea, forsooth [in truth], father. Then saith the father, And I promise you again everlasting life. Oh blasphemy! If eternal life be due unto the pilled [bare] traditions of lousy friars, where is the testament become that God made unto us in Christ's blood? Christ saith, 'That there shall come pseudo-Christi'; which though I, for a consideration, have translated false Christs, keeping the Greek word, yet signifieth it in the English 'false anointed,' and ought so to be translated. 'There shall come,' saith Christ 'false anointed, and false prophets, and shall do miracles and wonders so greatly, that if it were possible, the very elect, or chosen, should be brought out of the way.' Compare the pope's doctrine unto the word of God, and thou shalt find that there hath been, and yet is, a great going out of the way; and that evil men and deceivers (as Paul prophesied in 2 Tim. iii.) have prevailed, and waxed worse and worse, beguiling other as they are beguiled themselves. Thou tremblest and quakest, saying, Shall God let us go so sore out of the right way? I answer, It is Christ that warneth us; which, as he knew all that should follow, so prophesied he before, and is a true prophet, and his prophecies must needs be fulfilled. (Parker Society, *Doctrinal Treatises and Introductions to Different Portions of the Holy Scriptures by William Tyndale, Obedience of a Christian Man*, pp. 226-228).

The Protestant Reformers Show Antichrist Is the Pope of Rome: In his day, William Tyndale was one of many who were raising their voices against the Church of Rome and the abuses of the papacy. However, because he was translating and printing the Bible in English, he was their number one enemy. John Foxe's (Last Unabridged Edition) *Acts and Monuments of Martyrs*, vol. 1, pp. 887-893 published in 1684, reveals, without a doubt, that the pope is, in fact, Antichrist. The decrees given by various popes down through the centuries show how the Catholic Church sought to destroy the Reformation. The true freedom in Christ found in the Scriptures struck at the very heart of Rome's religious bondage and political power. The following excerpts of various papal decrees illustrate Rome's intent to establish supremacy:

"For asmuch as it standeth upon necessity of Salvation, for every human Creature to be subject to me the Pope of *Rome*, it shall be therefore requisite and necessary for all Men that will be saved, to learn and know the Dignity of my See and Excellency of my Domination, as here is set forth according to the truth and very words of mine own Laws, in style as followeth: First my Institution began in the *Old Testament*, and was consummate and finished in the *New*, in that my Priesthood was prefigured by *Aaron*; And other bishops under me were prefigured by the Sons of *Aaron*, that were under him. Neither is it to be thought that my Church of *Rome* hath been preferred by any General Council, but obtained the Primacy only by the Voice of the Gospel, and the mouth of the Saviour. And hath in it neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such like thing. Wherefore as other Seats be all inferior to me, and as they cannot Absolve me: so have they no power to bind me or to stand against me, no more than the Axe hath power to stand or presume above him that heweth with it, or the Saw to presume above him that ruleth it. This is the Holy and Apostolick Mother-Church of all other Churches of Christ."

"Thus then forasmuch as the holy Church of *Rome* whereof I am Governor, is setup the whole World for a glass [a mirror] or example, reason would what thing soever the said Church determineth, or ordaineth; that to be received of all Men for a general and a perpetual rule for ever. Whereupon we see it now verified in this Church, that was fore-prophesied by *Jeremy* [Jeremiah], saying, *Behold, I have set thee up over Nations*

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and Kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to build and to plant &c. Whoso understandeth not the Prerogative of this my Priesthood, let him look up to the Firmament, where he may see two great Lights, the Sun and the Moon, one ruling over the day, the other over the night; So in the Firmament of the Universal Church, God hath set two great Dignities, the Authority of the Pope, and of the Emperor. Of which two, this our Dignity is so much more weightier, as we have the greater charge to give account to God for Kings of the Earth, and the Laws of Men. Wherefore [be] it known to you Emperors, which know it also right well, that you depend upon the judgment of us; we must not be brought and reduced to your will. For (as I said) look what difference there is betwixt the Sun and the Moon, so great is the power of the Pope ruling over the day, that is, over the Spirituality, above Emperors and Kings, ruling over the night; that is, over the Laity. Now seeing then the Earth is Seven times bigger than the Moon, and the Sun Eight times greater than the Earth; it followeth that the Popes Dignity fifty six times doth surmount the Estate of the Emperors.”

“... Now I say to all other Emperors, That they receiving of me their Approbation, Unction, Consecration, and Crown Imperial, must not disdain to submit their heads under me, and Swear unto me their Allegiance....By reason whereof, seeing my power is not of Man, but of God, who by his Celestial Providence hath set me over his whole Universal Church, Master and Governor, it belongeth therefore to my office, to look upon every mortal sin of every Christian Man....Thus you see all must be judged by me, and I of no man. Yea, and though I Pope of *Rome*, by my negligence or evil demeanour, be found unprofitable, or hurtful, either to my self or others; yea, if I should draw with me innumerable Souls by heaps to Hell, yet may no mortal Man be so hardy, so bold, or so presumptuous to reprove me....Wherefore be it known to all Men, that my Church of *Rome* is Prince and Head of all Nations, the Mother of the Faith, the Foundation Cardinal, whereupon all Churches do depend, as the Door doth depend by the Hinges, the first of all other Seats, without all spot or blemish. Lady, Mistress and Instructor of all Churches, a glass [mirror] and a spectacle unto all Men, to be followed in all whatsoever she observeth....Against which Church of *Rome* whosoever speaketh any evil, is forthwith an Heretick, yea, a very Pagan, a Witch, and an Idolater or Infidel, [the Church] having fulness of power only in her own hands in ruling, deciding, absolving, condemning, casting out, or receiving in.”

“By the Authority of which Church of *Rome* all Synods and Decrees of Councils stand confirmed. And hath always full Authority in her hands to make new laws and Decremments; And to alter Statutes, Priviledges, Rights of Documents of Churches, to separate things joyned, and to joyn things separated upon right consideration, either in whole or in part, either personally or generally. Of the which Church of *Rome* I am head as a King is over his Judges, the Vicar of *St. Peter*, yea, not the Vicar of *Peter* properly, but the Vicar of Christ properly, an successor of Peter, Vicar of Jesus Christ, Rector of the Universal Church, director of the Lords Universal flock, Chief Magistrate of the whole World ... head and chief of the Apostolick Church, Universal Pope, and Diocesan in all places exempt, as well as every Bishop is in places not exempt, most mighty Priest ... a living Law in the Earth judged to have all Laws in the cleft of my Brest, bearing the room of no pure Man, being neither God nor Man, but the admiration of the World, and a middle thing betwixt both. Having both Swords in my power, both of the Spiritual and Temporal Jurisdiction, so far surmounting the Authority of the Emperor, that I of mine own power alone without a Council, have Authority to depose him, or to transfer his Kingdom, and to give a new Election...”

“What power then or potentate in all the World is comparable to me, who have Authority to bind and loose both in Heaven and Earth? That is, who have power both of Heavenly things, and also of Temporal things, To whom Emperors and Kings be more

inferior, than Lead is inferior to Gold. For do you not see the necks of great Kings and Princes bend under our knees, yea and think themselves happy and well defended if they may kiss our hand....If we, I say, have Power to bind and loose in Heaven, how much more then is it to be thought, that we have Power in Earth to loose and to take away Empires, Kingdoms, Dukedoms, and what else soever mortal Men may have, and to give them where he will? And if we have authority over Angels, which be the Governours of Princes, what then may we do upon their inferiors and servants? And for that you shall not marvel that I say Angels be subject to us, you shall hear what my blessed Clerk *Antoninus* writeth of the matter, saying, That our power, of *Peter* and me is greater than Angels in four things; 1. In jurisdiction, 2. In administration of Sacraments, 3. In knowledge, 4. and in reward, &c....Briefly, who is able to comprehend the greatness of my Power and of my Seat? For by me only general Councils take their force and confirmation, and the interpretation of the said Councils, and of all other causes hard and doubtful, ought to be referred and stand to my determination. By me the Works of all Writers, whatsoever they be, either be reprov'd or allowed. Then how much more ought my Writings and Decrees to be preferred before all other? Insomuch that my Letters and Epistles Decretal be equivalent with the general Councils, And whereas God hath ordained all causes of Men to be judged by Men, he hath only reserved me, that is, the Pope of *Rome*, without all question of Men, unto his own judgment. And therefore where all other creatures be under their Judge, only I, which in Earth am the Judge of all, can be judged of none, either of Emperor, nor the whole Clergy, nor of Kings, nor of the People. For who hath the power to judge upon his Judge? This Judge am I, and that alone without any other resistance of any Council joyned to me. For I have Power upon Councils; Councils have no Power upon me....Only my Sentence and judgment must stand ... Wherefore it is manifest, and testified by the voice of Holy Bishops, that the Dignity of this my Seat is to be revered through the whole World, in that all the faithful submit themselves to it as to the head of the whole body.

“Wherefore as I condemn all such worthily which will not obey my Decrees, to be dispossessed of all their honour without restitution; So all they that believe not my Doctrine, or stand against the priviledge of the Church, especially the Church of *Rome*, I pronounce them Hereticks....Only I am subject to no Creature, no not to my self, except I lift ... to my ghostly Father submitting my self as a sinner, but not as Pope. So that my papal Majesty ever remains unpunished; Superior to all Men, whom all persons ought to obey, and follow, whom no Man must judge nor accuse of any Crime, either of Murder, Adultery, Simony, or such like; No man depose, but I my self; No man can Excommunicate me, yea though I Communicate with the Excommunicate, for no Canon bindeth me. Whom no Man must lie to, For he that lieth to me is a Church Robber, And who obeyeth not me is an Heretick, and an excommunicate Person ... I am greater than the Angels; and that in four things, as is afore declared; and have power to bind and loose in Heaven, and to give Heaven to them that fight in my Wars ... I have power to deliver out of Purgatory whom I please ...”

“And to the intent I would all Men to see and understand that I lack not witnesses mo[r]e besides these, if I list [desire] to bring them out, you shall hear the whole Quire of my divine Clergy brought out, with the full voice testifying in my behalf in their Books, Tractations, Distinctions, Title, Glosses, and Summaries, as by their own words here followeth. The Pope (say they) being the Vicar of Jesus Christ through the whole World, in the stead of the living God, hath that Dominion and Lordship which Christ here in Earth would not have, although he had it in *habitu*, and gave it to *Peter* in *Actu*, that is, the Universal jurisdiction both of Spiritual things, and also of Temporal, which double jurisdiction was signified by the two swords in the Gospel, and also by the offering of the wise men, who offered not only Incense, but also Gold, to signifie not only the spiritual

Dominion, but also the Temporal to belong to Christ and to his Vicar. For as we read, *The Earth is the Lords and the fulness thereof*; as Christ saith, *All power is given to him both in Heaven and earth*: So it is to be affirmed *Inclusive*, that the Vicar of Christ hath Power on things Celestial, Terrestrial, and Infernal.... For I owe to Emperors no due Obedience that they can claim; but they owe to me as their Superior ... And as I am Superior to them, so am I Superior to all Laws, and free from all constitutions. Which am able of my self, and by my interpretation to prefer equity not being written before the Law written; having all Laws within the cleft of my Brest ...”

“All the Earth is my Diocess, and I the Ordinary of all men, having the Authority of the King of all Kings upon Subjects. I am all in all, and above all, so that God Himself and I the Vicar of God have both one Consistory, and I am able to do almost all that God can do ... It is said of me, that I have an heavenly Arbitrement, and therefore am able to change the nature of things ... and of nothing to make things to be; and of a Sentence that is nothing to make it stand in effect; In all things that I list [desire], my will to stand for reason. For I am able to the Law to dispense above the Law, and of Wrong to make Justice, in correcting Laws and changing them....Do you not see there manifestly expressed, how not Man, but God alone separateth that which the Bishop of *Rome* doth dissolve and separate? Wherefore if those things that I do be said to be done not of man, but of God; **What can you make me but God?** Again if Prelates of the Church be called and counted of *Constantinus* for gods, **I then being above all Prelates seem by this reason to be above all gods. Wherefore no marvel, if it be in my power to change time and times, to alter and abrogate Laws, to dispense with all things, yea with the Precepts of Christ**” (various excerpts from John Foxe’s (Last Unabridged Edition) *Acts and Monuments of Martyrs*, vol. 1, pp. 887-893, bold emphasis and brackets added).

Contrary to these presumptuous and blasphemous edicts of various popes, Tyndale fully understood that anyone who professed to represent God and His Word would believe, teach and follow God’s Word as led by the Holy Spirit. He vehemently opposed the pope, the Roman Catholic Church and their teachings as those of Antichrist. Tyndale wrote: “Antichrist of another manner hath sent forth his disciples, those ‘false anointed,’ of which Christ warneth us before, that they should come and shew miracles and wonders, even to bring the very elect out of the way, if it were possible. He [the pope] anointeth them after the manner of the Jews; and shaveth them and sheareth them after the manner of the heathen priests, which serve the idols. He sendeth them forth not with false oil only, but with false names also: for compare their names unto their deeds, and thou shalt find them false. He sendeth them forth, as Paul prophesied of them, with lying signs and wonders. What sign is the [true] anointing [of God]? That they be full of the Holy Ghost. Compare them to the signs of the Holy Ghost, which Paul reckoneth, and thou shalt find it a false sign. ‘A bishop must be faultless, the husband of one wife.’ Nay, saith the pope, the husband of no wife, but the holder of as many whores as he listeth [desires]. God commandeth all degrees [of church leaders], if they burn, and cannot live chaste, to marry. The pope saith, If thou burn, take a dispensation for a concubine, and put her away when thou art old; or else, as our lawyers say, *Si non caste, tamen caute*; that is, If ye live not chaste, see ye carry clean, and play the knave secretly. ‘Harborous’: yea, to whores and bawds [brothel keepers, perhaps including homosexuals] for a poor man shall as soon break his neck as his fast with them, but of the scraps and with the dogs, when dinner is done. ‘Apt to teach,’ and, as Peter saith, ‘ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that ye have, and that with meekness.’ Which thing is signified by the boots [symbolic of being shod with the preparation of preaching the gospel] which doctors of divinity are created in, because they should be ready always to go through thick and thin, to preach God’s word; and by the bishop’s two-horned mitre, which betokeneth the absolute and perfect knowledge that

they ought to have in the new Testament and the old. Be not these false signs? For they beat only, and teach not. “Yea,” saith the pope, “If they will not be ruled, cite them to appear; and pose [interrogate] them sharply, what they hold [believe] of the pope’s power, of his pardons, of his bulls, of purgatory, of ceremonies, of confession and such like creatures of our most holy father’s. If they miss in any point, make heretics of them, and burn them. If they be of mine anointed, and bear my mark, disgrace them, (I would say disgraduate them,) and after the ensample of noble Antiochus (2 Macc. vii) pare [by scraping with sharp shards of glass] the crowns [heads] and the finger[nail]s of them, and torment them craftily, and for very pain make them deny the truth.” (“But now,” say our bishops, “because the truth is come too far abroad, and the lay-people begin to smell our wiles, it is best to oppress them with craft secretly, and to tame them in prison. Yea, let us find the means to have them in the King’s prison, and to make treason of such doctrine: yea, we must stir up some war, one where or another, to bring the people into another imagination.”) “If they be gentlemen, abjure them secretly. Curse them four times in the year. Make them afraid of every thing; and namely, to touch mine anointed; and make them to fear the sentence of the church, suspensions, excommunications and curses. Be they right or wrong, bear them in hand that they are to be feared yet. Preach me [the pope] and mine authority, and how terrible a thing my curse is, and how black it maketh their souls. On the holidays, which were ordained to preach God’s word, set up long ceremonies, long matins [midnight and daybreak prayers—with mandatory attendance], long masses, and long evening songs, and all in Latin, that they understand not; and roll them in darkness, that ye may lead them whither ye will. And lest such things should be too tedious, sing some, say some, pipe some, ring the bells, and lull them and rock them asleep [in spiritual darkness and keep them from God’s word].” And yet Paul (1 Cor. xiv.) forbiddeth to speak in the church or congregation, save in the tongue that all understand. For the layman thereby is not edified or taught. How shall the layman say Amen (saith Paul) to thy blessing or thanksgiving, when he wotteth [knows] not what thou sayest? He wotteth not whether thou bless or curse.”

“What then saith the pope? ‘What care I for Paul? I command by virtue of obedience, to read the gospel in Latin. Let them not pray but in Latin, no, not their *Pater noster*. If any be sick, go also and say them a gospel, and all in Latin: yea, to the very corn and fruits of the field, in the procession week, preach the gospel in Latin: make the people believe, that it shall grow the better.’ It is verily as good to preach it to a swine as to men, if thou preach it in a tongue they understand not. How shall I prepare myself to God’s commandments? How shall I be thankful to Christ for his kindness? How shall I believe the truth and promises which God hath sworn, while thou tellest them unto me in a tongue which I understand not?” (Parker Society, Tyndale, *Obedience of a Christian Man*, pp. 232-234).

Tyndale’s writings clearly show that he understood the Roman Catholic Church to be the “Great Whore” and “Antichrist” spoken of in Revelation 13 and 17. Both from history and the current events of his time, he understood that she was the apostate church, exercising great power to rule over kingdoms and to instigate wars in order to reign supreme over kings of the earth as depicted in Revelation. The false religious system she propagates appears as if it is Christian, but it is counterfeit, receiving its authority from the dragon—Satan the devil: “And I saw another beast rising out of the earth; and he had **two horns like a lamb, but spoke like a dragon**; and he exercises all the authority of the first beast before him; and he causes the earth and those who dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed” (Rev. 13:11-12).

In Revelation 17, a full description of this ruling world religious and political system is revealed: “And one of the seven angels who had the seven vials came and spoke with me, saying to me, ‘Come here; I will show you the judgment of the great whore

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who sits upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.' Then he carried me away in *the* spirit to a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet beast that had seven heads and ten horns, full of names of blasphemy. And the woman *was* clothed in purple and scarlet, and *was* adorned with gold and pearls and precious stones; *and* she had a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominations and *the* filthiness of her fornication; and across her forehead a name *was* written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. **And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.** And after seeing her, I wondered with great amazement....Then he said to me, 'The waters that you saw, where the whore sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages. But the ten horns that you saw on the beast shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall burn her with fire; for God has put into their hearts to do His will, and to act with one accord, and to give their kingdom to the beast until the words of God have been fulfilled. **And the woman whom you saw is the great city that has royal power over the kings of the earth'** " (Rev. 17: 1-6, 15-18).

In the most resolute terms, Tyndale wrote of the political power and intrigue of the Roman Catholic Church, the only church in the world that is a sovereign state and has diplomatic relations with nearly every nation in the world: "Traitors they are to all creatures, and have a secret conspiracy between themselves. One craft they have, to make many kingdoms, large and small; and to nourish old titles or quarrels; that they may ever move them to war at their pleasure; and if much lands by chance fall to one man, ever to cast a bone in the way, that he shall never be able to obtain it, as we now see in the emperor. Why? For as long as the kings be small, if God would open the eyes of any to set a reformation in his realm, then should the pope interdict his land, and send other princes to conquer it....**They are not content to reign over king and emperor, and the whole earth; but challenge authority also in heaven and in hell. It is not enough for them to reign over all that are quick [living], but have created them a purgatory, to reign also over the dead, and to have one kingdom more that God himself hath**" (Parker Society, p. 235, bold emphasis added).

Little did Tyndale realize that what he wrote would turn out to be a prophecy for England. After Tyndale died, King Henry VIII severed all ties with Rome, furthering the reformation and establishing the Church of England as the state church. In turn, Rome did exactly as Tyndale prophesied and tried to destroy the English Reformation; and for a time under Catholic Queen "bloody" Mary (1553-1558), those loyal to the pope again seized political and religious power. They then instituted an intense inquisition against the reformers, whom they tortured and executed by burning or beheading. Afterwards, during Queen Elizabeth's reign (1558-1603)—the daughter of Henry VIII by his second wife, Ann Boyelyn—the reformed Protestant Church of England was re-established. True to Tyndale's words, Rome did indeed raise up the Catholic Empire of Spain in a final attempt to retake England and once again make it a Catholic realm. The Spanish assembled the largest army possible and the greatest fleet of war ships that the world had ever seen—the Spanish Armada. However, by the hand of God, the Spanish were totally defeated in this epoch battle with the destruction of their entire armada in 1588. After this providential intervention, England finally had rest from the foreign wars that were instigated by the papacy against her.

Toward the end of his book, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, Tyndale again exposed the hypocrisy of the apostate religious system of Roman Catholicism, comparing its teachings to the teachings of Scripture. He wrote: "Thus is God and Christ all in all; good and bad receive I of God. Them that are good I love, because they are in

Christ; and the evil, to bring them to Christ. When any man doth well, I rejoyce that God is honoured; and when any man doth evil, I sorrow because God is dishonoured. Finally, inasmuch as God hath created all, and Christ bought all with his blood, therefore ought all to seek God and Christ in all, and else nothing.

“But contrariwise unto monks, friars, and to the other of our holy spirituality, the belly is all in all, and the cause of all love. Offer thereto; so art thou father, mother, sister and brother unto them. Offerest thou not? so know they thee not; thou art neither father, mother, sister, brother, nor any kin at all to them. ‘She is a sister of ours, he is a brother of ours,’ say they; ‘he is verily a good man, for he doth much for our religion: she is a mother of our convent; we be greatly bound to pray for them. And as for such and such, (say they,) we know not whether they be good or bad, or whether they be fish or flesh, for they do nought for us: we be more bound to pray for our benefactors (say they) and for them that give us, than for them that give us not.’ For them that give little are they little bound, and them they love little: and for them that give much they are much bound, and them they love much: and for them that give nought are the nought bound, and them they love not at all. And as they love thee when thou givest, so hate they thee when thou takest away from them, and run all under a stool, and curse thee as black as pitch. So is the cloister-love belly-love; cloister-prayer, belly-prayer; and cloister-brotherhood, belly-brotherhood” (Ibid., p. 299).

“The spirituality increaseth daily. More prelates, more priests, more monks, friars, canons, nuns, and more heretics, (I would say heremites,) with like draff [drawing in as with a fish net]. Set before thee the increase of St Francis’s disciples in so few years. Reckon how many thousands, yea, how many twenty thousands, not disciples only, but whole cloisters, are sprung out of hell of them in so little space. Pattering of prayers increaseth daily. Their service, as they call it, waxeth longer and longer, and the labour of their lips greater; new saints, new service, new feasts, and new holidays. What take all these away? Sin? Nay; for we see the contrary by experience, and that sin groweth as they grow. But they take away first God’s word, with faith, hope, peace, unity, love and concord; then house and land, rent and fee, tower and town, goods and cattle, and the very meat out of men’s mouths. All these live by purgatory. When other weep for their friends, they sing merrily; when other lose their friends, they get friends. The pope, with all his pardons, is grounded on purgatory. Priests, monks, canons, friars, with all other swarms of hypocrites, do but empty purgatory, and fill hell. Every mass, say they, delivereth one soul out of purgatory. If that were true, yea, if ten masses were enough for one soul, yet were the parish priests and curates of every parish sufficient to scour purgatory: all the other costly workmen might be well spared” (Ibid., pp. 302-303).

These extended quotes from Tyndale and Foxe convey the overwhelming oppression and tyranny of the popes and the Roman Catholic Church, which sparked the Reformation. History records the fierce, hellish inquisition unleashed by the lawless, antichrist popes and clergy in torturing, burning, killing, and warring against those persons and nations who opposed them. The bloodbath of millions of innocent people, who were slaughtered because they loved God more than their own lives, is a perpetual witness against such a lawless, satanic and ungodly system.

Tyndale’s Betrayal, Arrest and Execution: During the years 1525 to 1535, Tyndale was able to evade the authorities who were seeking to arrest and execute him. In the spring of 1535, Tyndale was living in Antwerp with Thomas Poyntz. Little did he realize that a traitor named Henry Phillips was stalking him at the behest and hire of the Catholic authorities of England and Brussels. Using stealth, cunning and charm, Phillips discovered where Tyndale was living. After befriending Tyndale, Phillips arranged to betray him and led the authorities to entrap and arrest him. Tyndale was arrested in May 1535, and authorities imprisoned him at Vilvorde Castle, near Brussels, where he remained until

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his death in October 1536. (Daniell, *Biography of William Tyndale*, pp. 361-384).

Of Tyndale's execution Daniell wrote: "... Early in the morning of one of the first days of October 1536, Tyndale was executed. Tradition has it that it was the sixth day of the month, and the Anglican Church has always commemorated his death on that day. We have only Foxe's meagre account of what happened. He was not burned alive, a fiercer punishment reserved for lesser creatures. He was strangled at the stake, and his dead body then burned: 'At last, after much reasoning, when no reason could serve, although he deserved no death, he was condemned by virtue of the emperor's decree ... and, upon the same, brought forth to the place of execution, was there tied to the stake, and then strangled first by the hangman, and afterwards with fire consumed, in the morning at the town of Vilvorde, A. D. 1536: crying thus at the stake with a fervent zeal, and a loud voice, "**Lord! Open the king of England's eyes**" ' ' ' (Daniell, *Biography of William Tyndale*, pp. 382-383).

From other records of similar executions, Daniell reconstructed the scene of Tyndale's last moments and death in vivid, gruesome details: "We have, however, eyewitness accounts of two such executions, one in Brussels and one in Louvain, recorded by Enzinas, a Spaniard arrested at Brussels seven years later for translating the New Testament into Spanish. From it we can reconstruct Tyndale's last hour. We are to imagine a large crowd held back by a barricade. In the middle of the circular space two great beams were raised in the form of a cross, with at the top iron chains, and a rope of hemp passing through holes in the beams. Brushwood, straw and logs were heaped ready near by. At a set time, the procurer-general and his colleagues on the commission came and sat on prepared chairs within the circle. The crowd parted to let the guards bring the prisoner through the barricade. As they crossed the space and approached the cross, the prisoner was allowed a moment to pray, with a last appeal for him to recant. Then he alone moved to the cross, and the guards busily knelt to tie his feet to the bottom of the cross. Around his neck the chain was passed, with the hempen noose hanging slack. The brushwood, straw and logs were packed close round the prisoner, making a sort of hut with him inside. A scattering of gunpowder was added. The executioner went to stand behind the cross, and looked across at the procurer-general. It is at this moment, most probably, that Tyndale cried, '**Lord, open the king of England's eyes.**' When the procurer-general was ready, he gave the signal, and the executioner quickly tightened the hempen noose, strangling Tyndale. The procurer-general watched Tyndale die, and as soon as he judged him dead, he reached for a lighted wax torch being held near him, took it and handed it to the executioner, who touched off the straw, brushwood and gunpowder" (Ibid., p. 383).

Thus, William Tyndale was martyred. He was executed for his "high crimes" against the pope and emperor, because he loved God the Father and Jesus Christ with all his heart, all his soul, all his mind and all his strength; and for translating the Bible from the Greek and Hebrew into English for the common man and woman—even the plow-boy.

How God Answered Tyndale's Prayer: Almost immediately God began to answer William Tyndale's prayer, "Lord, open the king of England's eyes." Unknown to Henry Phillips, Tyndale's "Judas," Tyndale had a friend named John Rogers who assisted him at the time he was betrayed and arrested. Apparently, John Rogers fell heir to all of Tyndale's notes and unpublished translations of the Old Testament. God inspired Rogers to finalize the rest of Tyndale's work on the Old Testament, making it ready for printing.

God continued His intervention to answer Tyndale's prayer in a profound way. He caused King Henry VIII to change his mind and allow the Bible to be printed in English. Daniell wrote of this extraordinary incident: "The King's policy about the Bible in

English had been changing, and Cromwell had been able to persuade him to license this book. This volume is generally considered to be the primary version of our English Bible” (Ibid., p. 335).

Thus, in 1537, less than two years after Tyndale’s prayer, King Henry VIII authorized a license for the Thomas Matthew Bible to be printed. As Daniell recorded: “In 1537 there appeared a large folio Bible, well printed (probably in Antwerp) in double columns of black-letter, and on the title-page [it read as follows]: ‘The Bible, which is all the holy Scripture: In which are contained the Old and New Testaments truly and purely translated into English by Thomas Matthew Esq. Hearken to ye heavens and thou earth give ear: For the Lord speaketh. MD XXXVII. Set forth with the King’s most gracious licence’ ” (Ibid., p. 334).

“ ‘Thomas Matthew’ with his good New Testament names, making this whole Bible, is a fiction, to hide Tyndale’s presence. That has been understood from the earliest time. John Bale in 1548, and Foxe in 1563 and 1570, refer to a Bible ‘under the name of Thomas Matthew’. Both authorities, further, say that the volume was in fact prepared by Tyndale’s friend John Rogers” (Daniell, p. 335). However, John Rogers made it clear that the translation of the entire Old Testament was, in fact, William Tyndale’s. On the last page of the Old Testament, Rogers intentionally placed the huge initials, “ ‘W.T.’... which may be intended to stand for the larger presence of William Tyndale in the whole” (Ibid., p. 335).

Unfortunately, as history records, John Rogers “returned to England, and early in [Catholic Queen “bloody”] Mary’s reign [1553-1558 and wife of Philip II of Spain] was in serious trouble for his reformer’s views. In that year [1553] he went to the stake, the first of the three hundred or so Protestants burned by Mary. Official documents about him refer to ‘John Rogers alias Matthew’ ” (Ibid., p. 335).

Tyndale’s Humility and His Mistakes

Tyndale’s godly humility shines forth in all of his writings. Without a doubt, through the Spirit of God, he understood the evil depths of human nature. Daily, he realized his own weaknesses and proclivity to sin and cried out to God the Father and Jesus Christ for His Spirit, His mercy, His forgiveness and His love. Likewise, his humble spirit was evident when he wrote about his translations of the Word of God. It was his consuming desire to translate the Word of God from the Greek and Hebrew into English as faithfully as possible so that their true meaning would be conveyed.

In spite of his best effort and work, he realized that he made some errors, mistakes, or misinterpretations. For this reason, Tyndale was always revising his translations as he grew in grace and knowledge. He was constantly refining and improving his work, endeavoring to present the pure words of God in English.

In the opening sentence “W. T. to the Reader,” which prefaced His Old Testament, Tyndale wrote, “When I had translated the new testament, I added an epistle unto the latter end, in which I desired them that were learned to amend if ought were found amiss” (Daniell, *Tyndale’s Old Testament, a Modern Spelling Edition*, p. 1). This appeal also occurs in a footnote at the beginning of *A Pathway Into the Holy Scripture*, where he wrote: “I have here translated, brethren and sisters, most dear and tenderly beloved in Christ, the New Testament, for your spiritual edifying, consolation, and solace; exhorting instantly and beseeching those that are better seen in the tongues than I, and that have better gifts of grace, to interpret the sense of the Scripture, and meaning of the Spirit, than I, to consider and ponder my labour, and that with the spirit of meekness; and if they perceive in any places that I have not attained the very sense of the tongue, or meaning of the scripture, or have not given the right English word, that they put to their hands to

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amend it, remembering that so is their duty to do. For we have not received the gifts of God for ourselves only, or for to hide them; but for to bestow them unto the honouring of GOD and Christ, and edifying the congregation, which is the body of Christ" (Parker Society, p. 7).

In his *Introduction to Tyndale's New Testament, Modern Spelling*, Daniell notes some of Tyndale's mistakes, showing the probable reasons for them: "Understanding the original Greek has become a more formidable task than Tyndale could have imagined, as modern translators are faced with so many families of textual variants and vast accumulations of knowledge of vocabulary, idiom and social and religious contexts. By modern standards, Tyndale got things wrong. He followed Erasmus's Greek New Testament. Though he pursued true Greek manuscript readings like a modern scholar, Erasmus had occasional second thoughts between his first (1516) edition, and the four more he published (1519, 1522, 1527, 1535). Tyndale used the second and third editions, where Erasmus sometimes went astray, as in including (albeit in parentheses) the sentences in 1 John 5 that have no proper Greek authority. Tyndale misunderstood the Greek word *asson* ('nearer') in Acts 27, and also the Greek word for serving as a soldier in James 4, which he translates as 'rain' (i.e., reign). Also in James 4 Tyndale has 'ye envy', following a conjecture of Erasmus, instead of 'ye kill'. Tyndale was, as any translator must be, an incessant reviser, and he restored in 1534 the doxology at the end of the Lord's Prayer (omitted by the Vulgate) in Matthew 6; and so on.... More seriously, Tyndale can be accused, on occasion, of not properly appreciating the importance of Greek particles, the little words which give the language its character suppleness. Most seriously of all, he never satisfactorily solved the problem of what to do consistently with proper names—whether to transliterate or translate them. Thus in the gospels he can give 'Sabot' (Sabbath) and then, anachronistically, 'Sunday', leading to 'Good Friday', 'Easter', and in Acts, 'Whitsunday', leaving him wide open to all those attacks on him as 'homely' and rather comic. Today it seems an unfortunate decision to have followed Luther's German and given 'sweet bread' for *azumos* (ἄζυμος)—what, since the Geneva Bible, we know as 'unleavened bread' " (Daniell, pp. xx-xxi). These mistakes are easily noted and are readily corrected, as later translations have done. For Tyndale's treatment of three key doctrinal subjects, "born again," "born of God" and "the works of the law" please see Appendices L, M and N.

William Tyndale, one man against the world, empowered by the Holy Spirit of God, filled with the love of God, thirsting for the Word of God, with selfless sacrifice and dedicated determination, translated the Bible into English so that even the plowboy could read the Holy Bible. From his day to this, the English Bible, beginning with his translations, has impacted the civilizations of English-speaking people more than any other book. Tyndale could never have imagined that nearly five hundred years after his prayer to open the king of England's eyes, God would cause the English language to become the predominant language to be used to preach and publish the Gospel worldwide.

Part Two

History and Preservation of the Bible

The Word of God

“Forever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.” Psa. 119:89

“Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever.” Psa. 119:160

“The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away.” Matt. 24:35

“Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.” Psa. 138:2

“The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.” Psa. 12:6

“Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” Prov. 30:5-6

“Sanctify them in Your truth; Your Word is the truth.” John 17:17

“Thy righteousness is an ever-lasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.” Psa. 119:142

“Thou art near, O LORD; and all thy commandments are truth.” Psa. 119:151

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” Psa. 119:105

“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” Psa. 119:11

“I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.” Psa. 130:5

“I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold ... I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way.” Psa. 119:127-128

“For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and is able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart.” Heb. 4:12

“For He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God; and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him*.” John 3:34

“It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you, they are spirit and they are life.” John 6:63

“He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully.” Jer. 23:28

“The one who is of God hears the words of God.” John 8:47

CHAPTER NINE

OVERVIEW

Which Texts Comprise the Pure Words of God?

The question of which texts comprise the pure words of God is generating more controversy and argument today than at any time since this “great debate” began in earnest in the late nineteenth century. In best-selling books, leading theological journals and especially on the Internet, every aspect of biblical textual criticism is being intensely debated. The mass of textual data collected by researchers over the centuries presents many “facts” about the history, form and readings of the manuscripts that testify to the original writings of the biblical authors. However, the opposing interpretations of these facts, and even the misinformation created by vocal members of this debate, have often left Bible believers confused and frustrated.

It is understandable why the question about the purity of the biblical texts attracts so much attention. The Bible has affected our society, at least Western civilization, more than any other book. No other book has done more to shape our view of ourselves and how we interact with the world. The Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, respectively, undergird two of the world’s most influential religious faiths: Judaism and Christianity.

Origins of the Current Debate

The current debate over the biblical texts stems largely from the 1881 revision of the Authorized or King James Version (KJV) of the New Testament. History records that the English monarchy and segments of the Church of England refused to be associated with the revision of this venerable translation, itself a product of the English Reformation. In fact, numerous scholars, even those on the actual revision committee, differed widely in their beliefs on how to proceed with improving the KJV for purposes of public worship.

In short, committee members were initially commissioned to correct only “plain and clear errors” in the Greek text underlying the KJV. According to the committee’s second chairman, Dr. Charles John Ellicott, the revisers agreed to “**make the current Textus Receptus the standard**; departing from it only when critical or grammatical considerations show that it is clearly necessary” (Ellicott, *Considerations on Revision*, p. 30, quoted by Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, pp. 39, 414 and bold added).

(The “current” Textus Receptus was the 1550 Stephens Text, one of the Reformation printed editions of the Greek New Testament. The term Textus Receptus was first assigned to the 1633 Elzevir Greek text because this Latin phrase (meaning Received Text) appeared in its preface. This expression was later used to refer collectively to the editions of Erasmus (1516), Stephens (1550), Beza (1598) and Elzevir (1633). Professor George Ricker Berry noted that “In the main they [in particular the Stephens and Elzevir texts] are one and the same; and either [i.e., any] of them may be referred to as the Textus Receptus” (Berry, *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament*, p. ii). The text of these early editions reflects a near-identical agreement with the common text of the Byzantine manuscript family, which consists of the vast majority of Greek scribal copies of the New Testament. Even though many of these copies date later than the fifth century AD,

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most of their readings circulated in Byzantium, Greece, Asia Minor and elsewhere and are confirmed by the early papyri, ancient versions and writings of the early “Christian” scholars and theologians. Other types of Greek texts include the Alexandrian, Western and Caesarean, generally reflecting the geographical areas from which their manuscripts originated.)

Instead of holding to their agreed upon standard text, a majority of the revisers established a radically different Greek text as the basis for the New Testament translation and produced the 1881 English Revised Version (ERV). This different text was largely founded on the Greek New Testament of two Anglican scholars, Drs. B.F. Westcott and F.J.A. Hort. In building their own text, Westcott and Hort showed undeserved partiality to two previously unused Greek manuscripts from the Sinai desert and Vatican library. Most scholars consider these two manuscripts, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, to be the chief representatives of what is known as the Alexandrian (Egyptian) text.

What might have been an excellent opportunity to correct the KJV and its underlying Greek text was lost amidst inner-committee clashes over the comparative value of the manuscript evidence.

The late John William Burgon (1813-1888), an Anglican theologian and textual scholar, was one of the most vocal opponents of the committee and its work. In *The Revision Revised*, published in 1883, Burgon released a barrage of evidence from the manuscripts; ancient versions and early church scholars that highlighted the deficiencies of the Westcott-Hort Greek text, the theory behind that text and the 1881 New Testament translation based largely upon it.

The ERV was not the first attempt to emend the Greek text and revise the KJV. In the eighteenth century, several men produced English versions using supposedly “better” manuscripts to correct critically the readings and language of the KJV. Probably the most famous endeavor was undertaken by William Whiston, the translator of the Jewish historian Josephus. Whiston published his *Primitive New Testament* in 1745. Many other scholars labored in the 1700s and 1800s to correct the Textus Receptus via marginal footnotes or by actually producing new Greek editions based on differing principles and manuscripts.

The 1881 revision caused a violent shift to occur in New Testament textual criticism, which entailed a wholesale rejection of the Textus Receptus and the vast majority of manuscripts for establishing the Greek text and translating the New Testament into English. Modern eclectic or critical Greek texts differ significantly in many places from the accepted text (Textus Receptus) used for almost all Protestant translations of the New Testament into English from the Reformation down to the late nineteenth century. These modern Greek editions are over 97 percent identical to the 1881 Westcott-Hort text that underlies the ERV (Fowler, *Evaluating Versions of the New Testament*, p. 66).

An objective listing of the most significant translatable differences between the modern eclectic or critical Greek texts and the Textus Receptus texts is available in a book titled *Evaluating Versions of the New Testament* by Everett W. Fowler. This publication records whole verses, significant portions of verses and divine names that have been omitted by the Westcott-Hort, Nestle and the latest United Bible Societies (Nestle-Aland) editions, all of which depend heavily on an Alexandrian type of text. It also highlights the differences between the various modern and early Protestant translations, which stem from the opposing Greek texts. More than 40 of these differences directly involve Christian doctrine and over 480 substantially affect the meaning of scripture (Fowler, p. 21). Many have been adopted by translators of contemporary English versions, including the popular New International Version (NIV). More specific information on each variant reading is available by consulting the respective printed editions of the Greek New Testament.

Overview: Which Texts Comprise the Pure Words of God?

Why Study the Biblical Texts?

Since the 1880s, advocates and antagonists of the various Greek texts have traded barbs and directed charges of “conspiracy” at one another. At one extreme, some American fundamentalist ministers and scholars have labeled modern Greek texts as “satanic” and filled with heresy. Conversely, some textual critics and theologians have blamed evangelicalism and a so-called “dumbing down” of Christianity as the real culprit behind the rise of conspiracy theories about the biblical texts (cf. Wallace, “The Conspiracy Behind the New Bible Translations,” www.bible.org).

No doubt there are elements of truth in all positions assumed in this debate. The difficult task for most people is sorting out the valuable kernels of truth from the often highly prejudiced chaff.

The debate has escalated in recent decades to include the various modern English versions. One major point of contention is the glaring differences in wording between the various modern translations and those of the Protestant Reformers, including the 1611 KJV. In some modern versions, words, phrases and even whole verses have been relegated to the margins or sometimes omitted without notice (e.g., the account of the woman taken in adultery in John 7:53-8:11 and Mark 16:9-20).

These omissions, especially evident in the NIV published in the late 1970s, have drawn considerable attention. According to one fundamentalist pundit, the NIV contains 64,000 fewer words than the KJV (Riplinger, *New Age Bible Versions*, p. 28). If this is true, can it with confidence be labeled an accurate translation?

In addition, in the last decade, Bible versions trafficking a more gender-neutral language have begun to appear. A recent example is *The New Testament and Psalms*, an adaptation of the liberally-translated New Revised Standard Version. The editors of this inclusive version state that their goal was to replace all “pejorative references to race, color or religion, and all identifications of persons by their physical disability alone, by means of paraphrase, alternative renderings and other acceptable means of conforming language to the work of an inclusive idea” (*The New Testament and Psalms*, pp. viii and ix). Zondervan Publishing House and the International Bible Society are planning to release a complete gender-inclusive revision of the NIV by 2005. This new version will be titled TNIV (Today’s NIV). The language of these versions is in line with the anti-patriarchal agendas of modern feminists and the ideologies of other groups who want to use the English Bible as a forum for activism—the eradication of social, economic and political inequities in society. Publishers of such inclusive versions bank on sales in the market-driven Bible industry, soaring due to these compromises with the sacred text.

Even more scandalous is the release of the scholars’ version of the Gospels produced by the Jesus Seminar and Westar Institute of Santa Rosa, Calif. Notoriously known for their radical redaction (editing) of the Gospel narratives, the fellows of the Jesus Seminar have tried to salvage the integrity of the New Testament (as they see it) by systematically going through the four Gospels and voting on which passages to accept as authentic and which to reject as myth. Through majority vote, 82-84 percent of the Gospel records have been categorized as partial or complete fiction, while only 16 percent of the events and 18 percent of the sayings of Jesus as recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John have been accepted as authentic, or nearly authentic. They have also added the Coptic Gnostic gospel of Thomas to their leaner canon of the authentic Gospels.

This bold move heralds future plans by the Jesus Seminar to reduce (by eliminating the book of Revelation) and expand the current biblical canon (collection of books) of the New Testament. A “Canon Seminar” has been convened to consider which ancient “Christian” documents to include in its forthcoming version of *The Complete New Testament*. This proposed canon will probably contain many documents that were never

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a part of the Bible, including the Gnostic writings found in the area of Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt (cf. Funk, "The Once and Future New Testament," *The Canon Debate*, pp. 541ff). Such a venture, if published, will undoubtedly cause greater division among the ranks of larger Protestant denominations and other non-denominational Christian organizations.

Christians who desire the truth about God's Word need to possess a basic understanding of how their English Bibles relate to the original texts and some knowledge of the theories scholars use to translate those texts into English.

Type of Text: The process of establishing the most reliable or pure text of the Bible belongs to the realm of textual criticism. The key is whether the original God-breathed letters, syllables and words of the biblical authors have been accurately preserved in the surviving documents. The type of text ultimately produced for translation is dependent on its editor's view of the history and canon of the Bible and the value he or she places on the comparative textual data. If text editors believe the original text of the books of the Bible has been lost through the centuries, they will choose methods and manuscripts to produce a text different from those editors who are otherwise-minded. The methods and manuscripts employed can significantly alter the accuracy of the readings. The result can greatly affect exegesis (technical interpretation of the text) and preaching.

Translation Theory: Different theories and practices of translation can affect the purity of the original words when rendered into English. According to English professor and biblical literary stylist Leland Ryken, "In some translation processes this care to preserve the original text is repeatedly and casually disregarded when translators turn the original into English. Words are changed, added, and deleted with apparent ease and frequency. Surely there should be some carryover of principle between the scrupulousness of attention to the actual words of the Bible in the original languages and the way in which that text is transcribed into English" (Ryken, *The Word of God in English*, pp. 29-30).

The NIV and TNIV demonstrate how translators can begin with the same Greek base, yet produce vastly different versions that in many instances only loosely resemble the original wording. "The basic distinction between the Renaissance [a time period marked by increased artistic and scientific activity that laid the foundation for the Reformation and translation of the Bible into English] and the modern translators is one of fidelity to their original [text]," writes University of Manchester Professor of English Language and Literature Gerald Hammond. "Partly the loss of faith in the Hebrew and Greek as the definitive word of God has led to the translators' loss of contact with it, but more responsibility lies in the belief that a modern Bible should aim not to tax its readers' linguistic or interpretative abilities one bit. If this aim is to be achieved then it seems clear that a new Bible will have to be produced for every generation—each one probably moving us further away from the original text, now that the initial break has been made" (Hammond, *The Making of the English Bible*, pp. 12-13).

What will the next decade of English translations bring? Many conservative scholars predict the trend will probably lead to a universally accepted Bible and a one-world religion under the authority of Babylon the Great (cf. Revelation 17-18).

Christian Concerns

While the present debate originated with the 1881 revision of the KJV in the nineteenth century, its seeds were actually sown in the Protestant Reformation. The question for Bible believers today, to a large extent, is the same as that for Reformers: "Have the original texts of the Old and New Testaments come down to us pure and uncorrupted?"

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This was the question raised by Francis Turretin (1623-1687), a Reformed scholar of the Academy of Geneva, in his *Institutio Theologicae Elencticae*. It served as a prelude to his discussion about the purity of the Hebrew Masoretic and Greek Byzantine manuscripts upon which the Reformation texts were based. Turretin's query concisely captured the essence of the divisive debate in his day between the Roman church and Protestants over the use of the original language texts for translation.

What is often lost in the rhetorical monologue offered by all sides in this dispute is the clear teaching of Scripture. What does the Bible have to say about its divine authorship? It states unequivocally that "All Scripture is God-breathed" (II Tim. 3:16).

Does the Bible explicitly state how God would preserve His word? The Bible offers numerous general promises that the Word of God would be preserved intact. The Bible was written over a 1,500-year time period by about 40 authors who originally penned its messages in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, often on highly perishable papyrus scrolls and later, parchment codices. Today we possess literally thousands of witnesses to the original writings of the biblical authors. Some of the oldest passages of Holy Writ were copied by hand for more than 2,800 years.

How can we bridge the gap between the surviving manuscripts and the autographs or original writings of the prophets, apostles and their scribes? Do the texts of the surviving manuscripts represent the *ipsissima verba*—that is, the "very words" of the original writings? For many theologians and scholars, the debate over the biblical texts involves proper scholarship, namely textual, historical and literary criticism. However, there are shortfalls within the fields of textual and biblical criticism.

Shortfalls of Textual and Biblical Criticism

It is important to remember that all attempts by textual critics to recover or reconstruct the original text of the Bible are restricted to the existing evidence and their critical judgments of it. In short, one textual theory may have certain merits over others, but in the end all are based on conjecture and incomplete information. For example, some manuscripts with ancient readings referenced by the early church scholars no longer exist. In terms of quantity and quality, these readings are 3:2 in favor of the Byzantine Text (Burgon, *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels Vindicated and Established*, vol. 1, pp. 94-122).

In addition, all events relating to the literary history of the biblical texts that occurred prior to their copying are beyond the scope of the so-called textual specialists (Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 297). A graphic example concerns the Pauline Epistles. From their copying and transmission, Paul's letters have had the same general form as they have today (cf. Aland, p. 296). The evidence of textual criticism (manuscript record) cannot explain how Paul's Epistles were compiled in their present form before they began to be circulated as an entire group or as several smaller groups. Scholars have presented various theories over the years to explain how this process occurred. Only the Bible offers clues to this textual mystery. They are recorded in II Timothy 4:11-13 and II Peter 3:16.

Yet, another example involves the discovery of the Bodmer Papyrus 75 (P⁷⁵), a codex of the third century AD that contains portions of the Gospels of Luke and John. Before the mid-1900s AD, scholars presumed that the earliest "pure" copy of the Alexandrian text was the fourth-century Vatican manuscript; the discovery of P⁷⁵ in 1955 changed that (Robinson, "New Testament Textual Criticism: The Case for the Byzantine Priority," *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism*, par. 79). Many scholars, including Professor J.C. O'Neill, now doubt whether Vaticanus is a carefully preserved text with ties to the late second or early third century. A careful study of scribal habits sug-

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gests instead that it was the result of a deliberate editing process at an Alexandrian scriptorium or copying center (O'Neill, "The Rules Followed by The Editors of the Text Found in Codex Vaticanus," *New Testament Studies*, vol. 35, p. 220).

Similarly, before the mid-1900s, scholars believed that Greek manuscripts with Byzantine readings did not exist before the fourth century. This notion stems from the flawed textual theory of Westcott and Hort, in which they speculated that the Byzantine Text was a creation of fourth-century church scholars. Most modern textual critics have followed the lead of Westcott and Hort on this issue and have dismissed the Byzantine Text for purposes of textual criticism. However, the discovery of early Egyptian papyri with distinctively Byzantine readings (not shared with other text types), has now made it increasingly difficult for scholars to reject the Byzantine Text in producing a Greek New Testament (cf. Sturz, *The Byzantine Text-Type & New Testament Textual Criticism*). In fact, the editors of the United Bible Societies third edition of the Greek New Testament restored nearly 300 Byzantine readings to their text, which they had earlier rejected due to an alleged lack of support among the early surviving Alexandrian witnesses (Robinson, "Investigating Text-Critical Dichotomy: A Critique of Modern Eclectic Praxis from a Byzantine-Priority Perspective," *Faith & Mission*, vol. 16, no. 2, p. 28).

Today we can better understand Westcott and Hort's partiality toward the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, including Hort's motive for labeling the Textus Receptus as "vile." The influence of Attic Greek was not well-known during the nineteenth century. During the second century there was a tendency by Alexandrian scribes to correct the New Testament text stylistically to the Attic. This type of Greek was known for its brevity akin to classical Greek, which both Anglican scholars were accustomed to. In contrast, the New Testament (Textus Receptus) was almost always written in *Koiné* Greek (Kilpatrick, "Atticism and the Future of ZHN," *Novum Testamentum*, vol. 25, p. 151).

The Nature of Modern Biblical Scholarship

Bible readers are unlikely to be familiar with the texts underlying the English Bibles they read and study and even less acquainted with the methods of textual criticism used to produce those texts.

Consequently, they might be surprised to know that scholars today, in many instances, cannot agree on the original wording of the sacred text. In fact, interpretation of the textual evidence varies widely depending on one's personal theology and worldview. Modern textual criticism is largely a product of The Enlightenment or Age of Reason, a seventeenth- and eighteenth-century philosophical movement that followed the Renaissance and Protestant Reformation and exalted human reason (rationalism) as the sole guide in establishing truth. Out of this movement arose a way of thinking known as naturalism, which denies the supernatural significance behind historical events. Naturalism uses science and logic to explain all phenomena.

According to the late Dr. David Fuller, former director of the Institute for Biblical Textual Studies, "The one feature that separated the Enlightenment from the Reformation [a religious movement during the Renaissance period] regarding text [textual] critical matters was the latter's firmly held belief that the texts of scripture were canonically established by the providence of God. The Enlightenment replaced the idea that God was behind historical circumstance...with the idea that man was his own measure and must determine for himself what he will regard as scripture" (Letis, *The Majority Text: Essays and Reviews in the Continuing Debate*, p. i).

It is the modern age that has injected naturalistic thinking into the study of the biblical texts (known as textual criticism). The two are diametrically opposed to each other. Historical examples of naturalistic thought include attributing the miracles sur-

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rounding Jesus' feeding of the five thousand and His resurrection to trivial circumstances and natural laws. Skeptical scholars, like those of the Jesus Seminar, maintain that the biblical books were not "inspired" in the traditional sense but were written decades, if not centuries, after the deaths of the prophets and apostles.

In Burgon's day, the naturalistic approach was becoming widespread in textual criticism. He wrote: "For we assume that the Bible is to be taken as inspired [God-breathed], and not regarded upon a level with the Books of the East....It is chiefly from inattention to this circumstance that misconception prevails in ... 'Textual Criticism.' Aware that the New Testament is like no other book in its origin, its contents, its history, many critics of the present day nevertheless permit themselves to reason concerning its Text, as if they entertained no suspicion that the words and sentences of which it is composed were destined to experience an extraordinary fate also. They make no allowances for the fact that influences of an entirely different kind from any with which profane literature is acquainted have made themselves felt in this department ... therefore ... **those principles of Textual Criticism which in the case of profane authors** are regarded as fundamental **are often out of place here**" (Burgon, p. 9, emphasis added).

Though it is not often clearly stated, naturalistic textual scholars contend that the text of the Greek New Testament, like that of other ancient books, has been damaged and lost during its journey through time. The only way to recover the original wording in places where the manuscripts disagree, they argue, is to appeal to the testimony of the "earliest and best" Greek copies. (Ironically, the Christian Church has rejected many of these manuscripts and their readings for over 1,000 years!)

In the twentieth century, scholars have favored the eclectic method to recover the original text of the New Testament in places where the Greek manuscripts disagree. **Eclecticism** is a method of textual criticism that relies heavily on human instinct in establishing the biblical text by selecting readings randomly from one witness and then another based on a number of subjective criteria. The methods and manuscripts used by many modern eclectics have often led to self-refuting and questionable results regarding the form and readings of the New Testament. Therefore, it is a myth to presume modern eclectic Greek texts and English translations are more accurate than those printed during the Reformation period. (Oddly, the most popular Greek texts on the market today are eclectic in nature.)

More than four decades ago, the late Dr. Edward F. Hills (1912-1981), an internationally recognized textual critic, anticipated this eclectic trend in textual criticism and translation. He wrote: "Thus naturalistic New Testament textual criticism is inclining more and more toward a free handling of the text. The final authority is not the testimony of the extant manuscripts, even in places in which they all disagree, but the subjective insight and judgment of the critics. Thus the future of the New Testament text is unpredictable, since it depends on these intangible forces. The way is open for a multiplicity of texts—as many as there are critics....The Moffat [sic] version (1913) has already made a start in this direction with its rearrangement of chapters and its all too frequent employment of conjectural emendation" (Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, 1956 ed., p. 14).

The eclectic method is only partially responsible for the many different critical editions and translations of the New Testament text since the early 1900s. The loss of a recognized standard edition of the Greek New Testament within Christendom during the last century has been used by some as a license to revise, add and omit letters, syllables, words and whole sentences of the biblical narrative.

The work of the Jesus Seminar is a prime example of modern scholars who have exploited the differences (variant readings) found in the Greek manuscripts and modern editions for their own purposes. Robert Funk, the director of the Westar Institute and a leading seminar scholar, holds to the erroneous belief that variant readings make the text

of the New Testament uncertain. He wrote: "So far as I know, no one has ever canonized the Greek text of the New Testament; the United Bible Societies are claiming copyright of the Nestle-Aland version, but they have not canonized it. Both Protestant and Catholic scholars simply buy each new edition of Nestle-Aland critical edition of the Greek New Testament as it appears and use it as though it were the real New Testament. **Which edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament with its catalogue of more than seventy thousand significant variants is canonical? No one has yet been willing to say**" (Funk, p. 546, emphasis added).

Naturalistic methods and principles have permeated every aspect of biblical criticism so that any reading created in the transcription process and copied by some ancient scribe of the sacred text is held up and justified as legitimate. **The result of the indiscriminate acceptance of such readings has led to confusion over what actually constitutes the pure words of God, both in terms of the texts produced and the translations upon which they are based.**

A Christian Approach to the Texts

While only the Lord knows the hearts of the men and women who have studied the biblical texts over the centuries from a naturalistic perspective, their actions have left the biblical texts in a state of uncertainty as previously noted. This does not imply that all textual critical methods need to be discarded. Many sincere textual scholars have contributed to the discovery of evidence that attests to the reliability of the sacred texts.

There is an honest and defensible method that allows us to avoid the pitfalls of unbelieving and naturalistic scholarship. Dr. Hills advocated a "consistently Christian" approach to the study of the biblical texts. He rightly discerned that this approach was the only resolution to the dilemmas concerning the biblical texts. His approach was starkly different from the neutral, naturalistic methods followed by most of his fellow textual scholars, who viewed the Bible as "nothing more than just a human book." Dr. Hills built his analysis of the Greek New Testament text "squarely and solidly on the historic doctrines of divine inspiration [authorship] and providential preservation of the Holy Scripture" and interpreted the evidence of textual criticism accordingly (Hills, 1984 ed., pp. vi, 3, 113).

Dr. Hills believed that when faithful Christians discarded "unbelieving thought" and followed this "consistently Christian" approach in their textual criticism, they would "find themselves led back step by step (perhaps, at first, against their wills) to the text of the Protestant Reformation, namely, that form of the New Testament text which underlies the King James Version and the other early Protestant translations" (Ibid., p. 1). As such, Dr. Hills was a defender of the Byzantine Text, which is reflected in the vast majority of Greek manuscripts. He preferred to call it the Traditional Text as Burgon did, because it is the "text which has been handed down by the God-guided tradition of the Church from the time of the Apostles unto the present day" (Ibid., p. 106).

From his perspective as a textual scholar and classicist, Dr. Hills asserted that he has witnessed many Bible students "panic and become virtual unbelievers in their biblical studies" because they have felt "obligated to depend almost entirely on the writings" of scholars, "most of whom are unbelievers" (Ibid., p. 113). To avoid possible "catastrophes of unbelief" that could accompany such an indepth study of the biblical texts, Hills wrote: "... we must always emphasize the Christian starting point that all our thinking ought to have. If we are Christians, then **we must begin our thinking not with the assertions of unbelieving scholars and their naturalistic human logic, but with Christ and the logic of faith**" (Ibid., emphasis added).

In his book, *The King James Version Defended*, Dr. Hills discussed how the early

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Reformers followed the methodology he called the “logic of faith” in compiling, editing and printing the Greek texts used in translating the early Protestant English versions. As noted previously, these texts became known collectively as the Textus Receptus and are essentially identical to the common text used by the Greek Orthodox church for centuries.

While Dr. Hills “did not hold an uncritical, perfectionist view of the Textus Receptus,” he did contend that it best represented the Greek canon and its true readings (Ibid., p. viii). He believed that the Textus Receptus offered Christians “maximum certainty” for their faith in contrast to the uncertainty of the dubious eclectic or critical texts offered by naturalistic textual criticism (Ibid., pp. 3, 106-108, 224-225).

While our approach to this topic is similar to that of Dr. Hills because of his Bible-believing viewpoint, references to his research are not necessarily an endorsement of all his conclusions. However, his work and intimacy with the issues involved in this study, along with that of other defenders of the traditional Hebrew and Greek texts, form the basis of our technical study of the biblical texts.

Furthermore, our study of the sacred text is based on the same premise as Dr. Hills: “In the past true believers won great victories for God through their faith....Today we also can be victorious through faith if we *doubt not*, **if we take God and His revelation of Himself in holy Scripture as the starting point of all our thinking**....in New Testament textual-criticism, and in every other field of intellectual endeavor, our thinking must differ from the thinking of the unbelievers. We must begin with God” (Ibid., p. 61, bold added).

Historical Reliability of the Text

Scholars estimate that almost all Greek manuscripts, regardless of their origin, agree on at least 90 percent of the New Testament text. This percentage “presents the autograph [original] form of the NT [New Testament] text with *no* variation” (cf. Robinson, par. 107, n. 9). Scholars disagree over how to treat the remaining 10 percent of variant readings, many of which, depending on the New Testament book, are minor and have no bearing on how the text is translated into English.

The historical reliability of the biblical manuscripts can be verified using the same principles for confirming the reliability of other historical documents. Author Josh McDowell offers an indepth review of this evidence. It can be found on pages 23-109 in his book *The Best of Josh McDowell: A Ready Defense* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993). In addition to the historical reliability of the documents, the actual wording of the Bible can be determined in nearly every case by examining faithful representatives of the original text in accordance with the precepts given in Scripture, a Christian approach to textual criticism and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Under these circumstances, 98-99 percent of the original wording of the Greek New Testament text, for example, can be recovered. In the remaining 250-400 places where two closely competing readings make it impossible to determine the original wording of the autographs, textual scholar, author and linguist Dr. Wilbur N. Pickering wrote that in most of these instances “the difference of meaning is slight” (Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, www.esgm.org). In a personal correspondence, Dr. Pickering clarified that 80 percent or more of these places relate to “matters of spelling, word order, absence of a pronoun (where it [i.e., the pronoun] must be understood anyway), and change in verb tense that doesn’t alter the point [i.e., meaning of the text]. In those places where the meaning is altered no doctrinal problem is created” (Pickering, “Personal interview,” Sept. 5, 2003). There are still unknowns in the wording of Scripture because most of the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament have not been thor-

oroughly studied and their readings made available to scholars (Aland, “The Significance of the Papyri for New Testament Research,” *The Bible in Modern Scholarship*, p. 330).

Some of the principles of a Christian approach to textual criticism are outlined by the late Dr. Edward F. Hills in his book entitled *The King James Version Defended* (cf. pp. 2-3, 86, 111-114). The late John William Burgon also established principles of sound textual criticism. A description of his seven principles is available on pages 40-67 in his book *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels Vindicated and Established* (London: George Bell, 1896).

Believers can approach the Old and New Testament texts of their Bibles with confidence when faithful and reliable manuscripts are employed and sound methods of textual criticism and translation are followed. **Ultimately, believers must place their confidence in God’s promises to preserve His word intact.** These promises were made to reassure true believers that they would possess His very words in every age. Thus, they could with confidence fulfill the commissions that He had given them, which were contingent on their having an accurate record of the words spoken by Jesus and written by the New Testament prophets and apostles (Matt. 28:19-20; II Tim. 3:15-17, 4:2-3).

A Standard, Reliable Greek Text

-A great deal of uncertainty about the state of the Greek New Testament needlessly exists among the ranks of textual critics today. The editors of the two popular eclectic or critical Greek New Testaments inform us that they do not yet consider their texts as established (cf. Aland, *The Greek New Testament*, p. viii). These texts include the various Nestle-Aland editions (NA²⁷) and those of the United Bible Societies (UBS⁴) and form the basis of almost all recent English translations of the New Testament such as the NIV and TNIV.

The editors of *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982) are equally explicit and inform us that they “do not imagine that the text of this edition represents in all particulars the exact form of the originals. Desirable as such a text certainly is, **much further work must be done** before it can be produced....the present work ... is both **preliminary and provisional**” (Hodges, *The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text*, p. x, bold added).

In spite of the uncertainty being expressed by the editors of the most popular Greek texts on the market today, there is a standard, reliable Greek text available for use. After researching the alternate Greek texts—eclectic or critical and Majority Text—we stand firmly behind the tradition of the Textus Receptus (1550 Stephens Text). Our choosing the Textus Receptus does not imply that it is perfect in every detail, for no text has been untouched by human hands; however, the Stephens Text is a highly reliable New Testament text, which is **98 percent or more** in agreement with the Byzantine Text, which was the dominant form of the Greek text during the age of manual copying. We believe that the Byzantine Text, more than any other, represents the original God-breathed words of the New Testament.

There is a modern Greek text whose editors claim reflects the primary and dominant form of the Byzantine Text and likely represents the canonical autographs more accurately than any other text type (i.e., Alexandrian, Western and Caesarean). This text, *The New Testament in the Original Greek according to the Byzantine/Majority Textform* by Dr. Maurice Robinson and the late William G. Pierpont (1991, 2004), had a seasoned textual critic as one of its editors and a sound underlying theory; yet, being a recent edition of the Greek New Testament, it needs further evaluation.

What sets the Textus Receptus (and its various editions) apart from all other Greek texts, including the Robinson-Pierpont edition, is its unique, proven pedigree

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rooted in the ancient history of the Greek-speaking church. From the first printing by Erasmus and Johann Froben in 1516 AD, it had the near universal acceptance of Bible-believing Protestants for nearly 375 years. The Textus Receptus is largely a product of the pre-critical era, having been edited without being fully subjected to the musings of the human mind.

The excerpt that follows is from an article written in 1983, in which historian S.M. Houghton evaluated the Majority Text. At that time, he concluded the Textus Receptus was sufficient and preferable in light of the alternatives. It seems fitting to recall Houghton's words in our study of the Greek text: "For scholars to suggest that a particular translation of the Word is faulty is one thing; to suggest that the *final* form of the divine revelation is still remote—a form, as some might even say, that will never be reached—would appear to not a few to place the Christian Faith itself in jeopardy. Finality belongs to the Faith, and in a very true and real sense finality belongs to the Word on which that Faith is based and in which it is rooted.

"We are not infrequently told by liberal theologians that the Christian Faith is a progressive Faith. They intend to convey a very different meaning from that of the Puritan John Robinson who, in taking leave as their pastor of some of the Pilgrim Fathers of 1620, expressed himself as 'very confident the Lord had more truth and light yet to break forth out of His holy word.' We thank God that it is so. At the same time we can surely thank Him, too, that across 'the running centuries' He has never left His Word at haphazard. The discovery some thirty years ago of the Dead Sea scrolls gave us amazing confirmation of the accuracy with which OT Scripture has been transmitted to us, and we may be sure that God has taken no less care of the NT Scripture" (Letis, p. 208).

Our Approach to This Study

As you read this lengthy volume, containing a modern English translation of the New Testament and many essays pertaining to the texts and canon of the Bible, you may encounter numerous terms and concepts that are unfamiliar. We have attempted to present the information contained in this publication in an understandable format. Some sections may require multiple readings in order to fully comprehend them.

We encourage you to persevere in your efforts to understand the information presented in this publication because it concerns the Holy Bible, the most important book ever written. A Bible that accurately reflects the original texts (letters, syllables and words) given by God is extremely critical for Christians. If we cannot have confidence in the words of the Bible, we cannot base our lives and doctrine on it. Since very few of us are fluent in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, we must rely on text editors and Bible translators for the Word of God. The subject matter of this volume is vital because of the confusion created by many modern English versions of the Bible, which are based on highly questionable texts and translation methods. It is also vital because of the many prophecies concerning a one-world government and religion that have yet to be fulfilled. These prophecies will have a direct impact on the Bible, its texts and the lives of Christians.

In our analysis of the divine authorship, preservation and translation of the biblical texts, we have endeavored to "prove all things" (I Thes. 5:21). Our goal, as far as is humanly possible, has been to furnish you with an accurate and thorough understanding of the history of the Bible and its sacred texts. If you believe that we have strayed from this task, we encourage you to offer your evaluation in a Christ-like manner.

This volume does contain extra-biblical material, such as citations from the apocrypha, Jewish or rabbinic literature and writings of certain historical figures. Citations taken from these writings are not an uncritical endorsement of them or of the beliefs and actions of the writers. Also, the authors are not bona fide textual critics, and those sec-

tions pertaining to textual matters have not been peer reviewed by seasoned professionals. In an effort to present reliable evidence in these areas, we have included the research of scholars, whose scholarship has been distilled through the filter of truth contained in the Bible.

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate how God has faithfully preserved His Word for us today. Our hope is that readers will be strengthened in knowing that God has indeed kept His promises and the veracity of His Word intact.

This publication is not intended to replace other resources on biblical criticism. That would be an impossible task, considering the width, breadth and depth of this subject, which in many cases covers a span of almost 2,000 years. One essay alone on Mark 16:9-20 fills a 300-page book (cf. Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to Mark, Vindicated Against Recent Critical Objectors and Established*, Oxford: Parker and Co., 1871). For this reason, only a few indepth reviews of selected important passages of Scripture have been offered for your edification.

A Base of Knowledge: An introductory chapter has been written to assist readers in acclimating to the numerous terms and concepts that pertain to an indepth study of the biblical texts. Charts, appendices and a glossary of terms have been provided for easy reference. In addition, a recommended reading list has been furnished for those readers who wish to further explore any of the textual and historical topics in this publication (see Appendix X, page 874).

Westcott and Hort: As a part of this historical overview of the biblical texts, we have briefly reconstructed the steps leading to the change in the Greek New Testament text in the late 1800s. We have also assessed the main elements of the theory of Westcott and Hort in our study of the preservation of the Greek New Testament.

The Historic and Modern Controversy: Numerous chapters offer abbreviated historical accounts of this controversy and review the words of scholars, translators, theologians and Bible publishers, allowing their own rhetoric to reveal if an alleged “conspiracy” surrounds the biblical texts and modern translations. We have highlighted ways in which the Roman Church and its various agents, including the papacy and the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), have tried to keep the Bible from true believers and the masses at large.

At various points, we have examined how the rhetoric and arguments of prominent theologians and scholars have obscured honest textual criticism over the centuries, and how their actions have unwittingly concealed the true doctrines of the Bible and set stumbling blocks before Bible-believing Christians.

Today, these same forces, including the various Bible societies, are using the latest scholarship and the common language of the masses to keep the truth of God’s Word from Bible readers, marshaling in another “Dark Age” through their critical arguments, theology and the various ecumenical, humanistic Bible translations.

Divine Authorship and Preservation of the Bible: When viewed in the light of clear scriptural evidence, the historical record offers clues and proof of the Bible’s integrity. Chapters Eleven through Fifteen frame this subject for us by highlighting the Bible’s view of divine authorship (i.e., inspiration in the traditional sense), canonization and preservation.

Chapters Three through Seven provide a scriptural and historical reconstruction of how the New Testament authors and scribes composed and sealed their autographs or original writings. Charts tracing this process, and how the scribal copies of the original writings were preserved throughout history, are included.

Early and Modern Texts and Translations: It is beyond the scope of this publication to review the reliability of every English translation available today. Leland Ryken’s book entitled *The Word of God in English* explores common fallacies and sound principles of Bible translation. It also offers standards for comparing contemporary English versions.

CHAPTER TEN

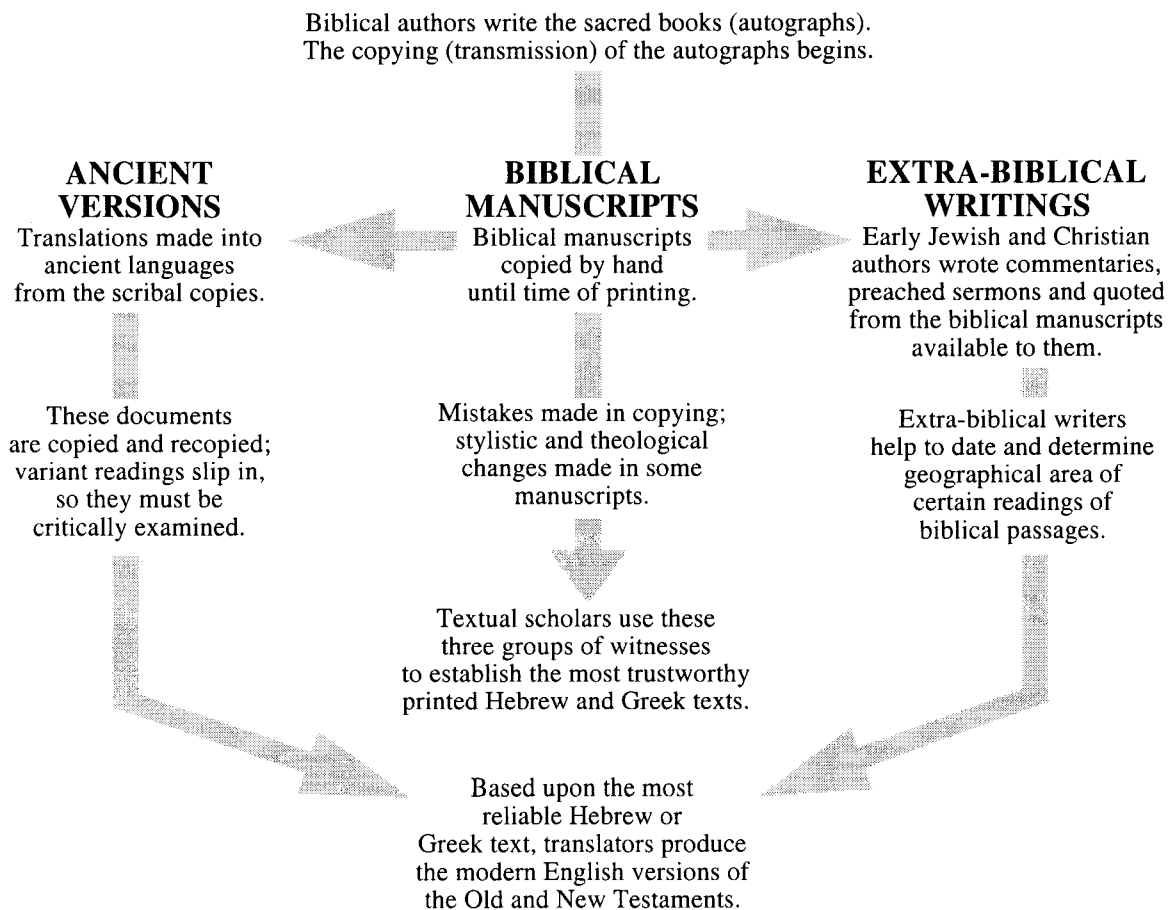
WHERE ARE THE WITNESSES?

It is a well-known fact that the original documents penned by the prophets, apostles and their scribes no longer exist. Most likely they were worn out through extensive use early on. For many Bible believers, this truth can be disconcerting. Yet, there is hope. Thousands of handwritten scribal copies (i.e., manuscripts) exist today that testify to the original text of the God-breathed sacred writings. **The dispute over the biblical texts centers on how well these copies and their texts have been preserved.** In order to come to an understanding on this issue, we must follow the trail of witnesses to the sacred writings.

Witnesses to the Sacred Writings

Text editors use three major groups of witnesses to produce what they believe to be the most trustworthy Hebrew and Greek texts for translating: 1) biblical manuscripts, 2) ancient versions and 3) extra-biblical writings (see Figure 1).

Figure 1
Witnesses to the Biblical Texts



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These witnesses are very important in evaluating the reliability of the printed texts used today for translating. A review of each group follows.

Biblical Manuscripts

Before the invention of movable type printing in the mid-1400s AD, all biblical manuscripts were copied by hand. The process of transmission began the very first time scribes made copies (apographs) of the God-breathed writings (known as autographs or the original text depending on the context). For more than 2,800 years, priests and Levitical scribes copied portions of the Hebrew Scriptures (the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible). Early believers, monks and professional scribes transcribed manuscripts of the Greek Scriptures (i.e., New Testament) for almost 1,500 years. The process of copying and recopying over centuries has produced thousands of manuscripts of the biblical books. These surviving documents form the **primary** witnesses to the original text of the Old and New Testaments.

Each manuscript has its own history and character. Some are more reliable witnesses than others, depending on the scribes who copied them. These scribes operated under very different circumstances from one another.

The word “manuscript” traditionally refers to any handwritten or printed document that contains some part of scripture on it. This term could include anything from papyrus fragments of any book of the Bible to a lectionary (liturgical work). For our purposes and for clarity, we have confined the use of the word “manuscript(s)” to the original biblical writings or their handwritten scribal copies, whether Hebrew or Greek. For example, an early papyrus fragment of the Gospel of John has been classified as a manuscript. All other evidence, such as lectionaries or ancient versions, has been referred to by its specific descriptive term. We have used the word “text(s)” to refer to the handwritten or printed letters, syllables, words and sentences that appear on the page of a manuscript of any book of the Bible.

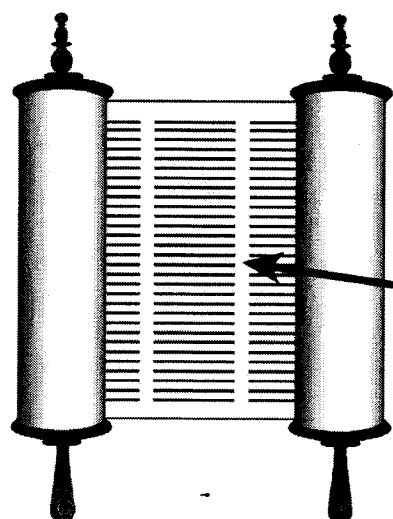
Over the last two centuries, archaeologists have discovered hundreds of manuscripts that can be dated closer in age to the autographs. These newly discovered papyrus or vellum manuscripts have often consisted of fragments of books of the Bible.

Many modern textual theories are linked to manuscript age. One theory held by many scholars, albeit wrongly, is that the “oldest” manuscripts offer a more trustworthy witness to the text of the autographs. The scholarly-designated term “older” used to describe manuscripts is a misnomer. Most of the early Greek manuscripts, for instance, contain a text that was copied at least 150-400 years after the text of the New Testament autographs were written. More appropriate terms for these manuscripts would be “earliest” or “oldest surviving” or some variation thereof. We have adopted these labels except in direct quotes.

Scholars use the material that a manuscript is written on to determine its age. Radiocarbon (carbon-14) testing and paleography (study of ancient writings) are also employed to determine a relative dating if the condition of the manuscript permits.

The Bible reveals that stone, wooden tablets and other materials were used to record a limited number of words for specific short-term purposes (e.g., Ex. 34:1; Is. 30:8; Luke 1:63). It is the long-term, widespread preservation of the Word of God that concerns our study; hence, we have confined our review to the usage of papyrus, leather and paper to preserve the books of the Bible in the scroll and codex formats (see Figure 2).

Figure 2
Biblical Manuscripts



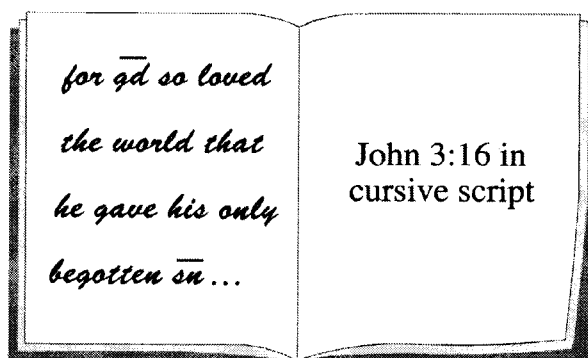
Scrolls (Rolls)

Old and New Testament books were copied on papyrus and leather scrolls averaging 30 feet in length and 9-10 inches in height. The book of Luke was this size and the book of Isaiah was 24 feet in length.

Scribes wrote scrolls
in columns like this.

Codex

Developed in the first century AD, the codex or modern book form made it possible to gather the New Testament books into one or two volumes. Old Testament books were not copied in codex form until the 700s AD.



Papyrus Codex
50-300 AD

Vellum Codex
300-1100 AD

Paper Codex
1100 AD-present

Three General Transmission Periods

Papyrus (antiquity to ca. 800 AD): Papyrus was produced from the fibrous pith of a water plant that grew in Egypt or northern Galilee. It was widely used in Egypt from 2000-3000 BC, about a thousand years before Moses' time (Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, p. 5).

The pith of the papyrus plant was cut into thin strips, and the strips were placed side by side vertically, overlapping slightly. More strips were laid across this first layer horizontally. The two layers were then glued together. After the assembled sheet dried, manufacturers polished it to produce a white smooth surface, giving it the consistency of

paper. Scribes normally wrote on the side with the horizontal strips (known as *recto*), but sometimes on other side (*verso*) as well (Kenyon, *The Text of the Greek Bible*, p. 15).

Papyrus was common in Palestine until about 300 AD. Scribes frequently used it when copying Old Testament synagogue scrolls (cf. Mark 12:26 as a possible example). The apostles and their amanuenses (scribes) apparently wrote the Gospels, Acts, general Epistles and Revelation with ink and a split reed on papyrus scrolls, the accepted publication form of the first century AD (Bromiley, *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 4, p. 815). John used the Greek word *chártou*, meaning papyrus, to describe the material upon which he composed his Second Epistle (II John 12).

The earliest biblical papyrus manuscripts found by archaeologists are the Dead Sea Scrolls, comprising the earliest remains of the Old Testament text. The earliest New Testament manuscripts from this period include fragments of papyrus codices (modern book form) written in uncial script (capital letters). Because papyrus is very perishable, only about 100 papyri (mostly fragments) exist today. Archaeologists have discovered all of these papyri in Egypt, which alone offers the climatic conditions favoring the preservation of early manuscripts (Aland, "The Text of the Church," *The Trinity Journal*, p. 138). The most important of these early manuscripts is Papyrus 66 (containing most of John's Gospel) and Papyrus 75 (containing portions of Luke and John), copied about 150 years after the Gospels were first written.

-Leather (Parchment and Vellum, 300-1100 AD): Scribes wrote on treated animal skins from ancient times. Processors tanned leather from sheep, goat and any clean animal skin to preserve it from decay and make it pliable for writing.

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia explains that "[s]hortly before the Christian era a method was discovered of treating animal skins with lime and drying them in such a way as to produce an exceedingly fine, smooth, and firm writing surface. In precise definitions, vellum is calfskin or similar fine skin treated as described above, while parchment (named for the city of Pergamum, which produced much of it) is made from the more ordinary types of skins [i.e., sheep, goats]. At present, however, the two terms are used interchangeably" (Bromiley, p. 815). Vellum was mostly white in color, enduring in quality, and formed a good background for black ink and for decoration in color (Kenyon, p. 20).

Leather was the accepted material for official Hebrew Old Testament scrolls. Ernest Würthwein, professor emeritus at Germany's Philipps-Universität and a well-known expert in the text of the Old Testament, explains, "Jewish regulations still require that a copy of the Torah intended for liturgical use be written on leather made from a clean animal ... this surely represents ancient usage" (Würthwein, p. 6). In his study of sacred books and scrolls of ancient Israel before the Babylonian exile and during the Second Temple period (539 BC-70 AD), scholar Menahem Haran found that the transition to leather from papyrus was a normal progression for the Scriptures and was associated with their canonization (Ibid.).

An increased use of leather (vellum) for writing New Testament manuscripts was the result of a copying revolution that occurred shortly after Roman Emperor Constantine legalized mainstream Christianity in the *Edict of Milan* (313 AD). Dr. Maurice Robinson, a well-trained textual critic and professor of New Testament Greek, explains the significance of this event to the production of the New Testament manuscripts: "The church of the early fourth century [300s AD] moved from a persecuted minority to an approved entity with governmental sponsorship. It is no coincidence that a change in writing material (from cheap and fragile papyrus to costly and durable vellum) occurred at this time. The earliest extant vellum MSS [manuscripts] ... and many later uncials would have been copied directly from papyrus exemplars [model manuscripts]" (Robinson, "New Testament Textual Criticism: The Case for the Byzantine Priority," *TC: A Journal of*

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Biblical Textual Criticism, par. 60).

Early uncial and later minuscule codices comprise the manuscripts of this period. (See section titled “Greek New Testament Manuscripts.”) Parchment and vellum eventually superseded papyrus for Greek New Testament manuscripts. The change to parchment was limited at first, perhaps due to economics. An average New Testament manuscript of 250 pages required the hides of about 50-60 goats or sheep (Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 77). Larger collections of books required more hides.

There have been differing opinions about the meaning of the word “parchments” in II Timothy 4:13. In this passage, the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, requesting him to “bring the chest that I left in Troas with Carpus, and the books—especially the **parchments**.” Is there any evidence for a literal interpretation of this passage? Yes, there is.

Eighty-five percent of the biblical and religious writings found at Qumran, a monastic community northwest of the Dead Sea, were written on leather (Comfort, *The Origin of the Bible*, p. 159). Researchers believe a hide processing center at Ein Feshka, a satellite location two miles south of the main Qumran facility, likely supported this widespread use of leather by the Qumran scribes. Historically, Ein Feshka has supported sheep and goat herding (Schiffman, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scroll*, pp. 57-60). The scribal use of leather and parchment by the Qumran society before and during the time of Paul likely reflects a general Jewish scribal pattern of that era for sacred or precious books. Therefore, the apostle Paul and his scribes would have used these materials.

This conclusion is supported in II Timothy 4:13 by the presence of the Greek word *membránas*, traditionally used for parchments produced from animal skins. Paul’s use of this word suggests that the autographs of his books were initially written on parchment. Paul’s scribes would have made and sent certified papyrus scrolls from these masters to their intended destinations (cf. Gal. 6:11; II Thes. 3:17). Paul obviously knew that only parchment could provide the needed durability the sacred Scriptures demanded.

Paper (1100 AD to the present): Paper first appeared in the 800s AD and gained popularity in the 1100s AD. It was adapted from China, where it was first produced. Paper was used regularly after 1100 AD in copying and later in printing the biblical texts, including whole books. Nearly 25 percent of the surviving New Testament manuscripts and lectionaries are written on paper (Aland, p. 77).

Text Storage Formats

Scroll Format: Papyrus and parchment were ideally suited for the roll or scroll format of early published books. Papyrus sheets were glued (and parchment segments sewn) together to form scrolls of varying dimensions. Common scroll sizes were 30 feet or more in length and nine to ten inches in height. Scribes normally wrote on one side of a scroll in columns about three inches wide arranged across the sheet from right to left for Old Testament books and from left to right for Greek New Testament books. Margins between the columns were small (about one-half of an inch), allowing some space for notes. Space was left at the beginning and end of scrolls to protect the text and give the reader something on which to hold or to insert a wooden shaft (roller) for turning. Titles were usually given at the end of the manuscript (Kenyon, p. 16).

Mark used the Greek word *biblo* to refer to Exodus, a “book of Moses,” written in a papyrus scroll format (Mark 12:26). Scrolls written in Hebrew without the vowel points and accent marks are still employed today for liturgical purposes in synagogues. Jesus also read from a scroll of Isaiah, which was probably about 23-25 feet in length (Luke 4:17-20). Most New Testament books were written initially in a papyrus scroll format of about 30 feet in length. A copy of the book of Luke would have needed a scroll of this length (Moorman, *Forever Settled*, p. 65). The book of Ephesians would have been four

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feet in length, and the Acts of the Apostles might have formed a scroll about 30 feet in length (Kenyon, *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, 1898 ed., p. 94).

Sir Frederic Kenyon, the late director and principal librarian of the British Museum, explained the effect of the papyrus scroll on the early transmission of the New Testament books: "... so long as the papyrus roll [scroll] was the normal vehicle for literature, each of the Gospels and the Acts must have circulated separately. It was not possible to possess in a single volume all the four Gospels or all the Epistles of St. Paul, still less a complete New Testament. In the earliest days each book had its own separate history, and not every Christian community would have had a complete collection [initially] of all that we now know as the canonical books" (Kenyon, *The Text*, p. 16).

Codex Format: This situation changed dramatically in the latter half of the first century AD with the creation of the codex or modern book form (a document with leaves attached at the spine with writing on both sides). The codex made it possible to gather the New Testament books into a single volume. Kenyon described its effect on the production of the biblical books: "The advantage of the codex was that it could include much more matter than the roll, without becoming unduly cumbrous [clumsy]. The earliest papyrus codex known contained the books of Numbers and Deuteronomy, which would have required three rolls. Another, of the early third century, contained all four Gospels and the Acts, which would previously have occupied five separate rolls. Another, of the same date, contained all the Epistles of St. Paul, except (apparently) the Pastorals [epistles to the ministry or pastors]" (Kenyon, p. 19).

Archaeological evidence indicates that all but four of the oldest surviving New Testament papyri were written in codex form (Aland, p. 102). The earliest codex, dated 100-150 AD, is the Rylands papyrus fragment of John 18 (Papyrus 52). This historical evidence implies that the use of the codex by Christians for their writings extends back into the first century. By contrast, pagan and Jewish literature is found in the scroll format for a period of time afterwards.

This evidence supports Paul's use of the word "codex" in II Timothy 4:13 to compile, seal and preserve his books. The possible redating of an early papyrus codex of his Epistles (Papyrus 46), from 200 to 85 AD, certainly adds credibility to a literal reading of this passage (Holland, *Crowned with Glory*, p. 246). Nonetheless, Paul's use of the word parchments in this verse in connection with the words *tá biblía*, translated "the books," indicates at the very least that Paul was "canonizing" his books. Paul would have closely followed the practice of using leather for the canonization of the Hebrew Scriptures. The fact that parchment is specifically mentioned in this passage suggests that Paul's books were composed on this material. It also indicates that his books were bound and sealed in codex form for long-term preservation after they had been fully edited. Writings on parchment awaiting minor edits were not placed in the codex form.

The vellum codex was favored by scribes for copying the New Testament beginning in the fourth century AD. Sinaiticus and Vaticanus are two of the most famous Greek codices (plural of codex) of the Old and New Testaments.

Masoretic scribes began to adopt the codex form around 700 AD for copying and preserving the books of the Hebrew Scriptures (Würthwein, p. 8). The larger writing area of the codex undoubtedly offered more space to accommodate the marginal scribal notes (Masora) for correct copying and reading of the Old Testament text.

Ancient Versions

Ancient translations directly from the sacred apographs play a key role in modern textual criticism. "Translation of literature was not common in ancient times, and the translation of the Hebrew OT [Old Testament] into Greek before the time of Christ occu-

pies a unique place in ancient literature. In contrast, the NT [New Testament] was translated into other languages [e.g., Old Latin and Syriac] as early as the 2nd century" (Bromiley, p. 817).

The *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* explains why Christian missionaries of the early centuries translated the Scriptures into local languages. "When the first Christian missionaries began to carry the gospel message beyond the bounds of Judea and Samaria, the Greek language was known and spoken almost everywhere they went throughout the Roman empire. Even Latin, the official language of the Roman conquerors, was less the common language of the empire than was Greek.

"This means that many people of the lands around the Mediterranean were bilingual or even trilingual, speaking their own language as well as Greek and often Latin. To many, of course, either Greek or Latin was their native tongue; but in many areas their own language was neither of these.... Although a missionary could have preached in Greek in many areas, in order to be lastingly effective the Gospel needed to be translated into the language which the people used in their homes and in intimate conversation. An indication of this fact is seen in Paul's experience at Lystra (Acts 14:8-18), where, even though the people evidently understood Paul when he spoke in Greek, when they themselves wanted to speak of religious matters they used their own Lycaonian speech.

"The ancient versions of the New Testament, in common with virtually all subsequent versions, were missionary in origin and purpose. They were made so that the people to whom the Christian message was being taken could read it in their own language rather than in a language which they may have known, if at all, only as a language of trade and commerce [i.e., Greek]" (Tenney, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 871).

Scholars have historically used the ancient versions to reconstruct obscure passages or correct alleged errors that exist in the biblical texts. They have also utilized them to identify the source text (*Vorlage*) used by ancient translators. This information is used to date and determine the geographical area in which a text circulated. However, there are limitations in using ancient versions for these purposes.

Ernest Würthwein describes the shortcomings of early versions in textual studies, especially for reconstructing the Hebrew Old Testament text: "... each of the versions comes with its own peculiar range of problems. For a long period the versions were approached rather naively and used directly for textual criticism on the uncritical assumption that the base from which they were translated could be readily determined. But the matter is not that simple. Anyone who translates also interprets: the translation is not simply a rendering of the underlying text but also an expression of the translator's understanding of it. And every translator is a child of a particular time and of a particular culture. Consequently, every translation, and especially a translation of the Bible produced to meet the practical needs of a community, must be understood and appreciated independently in its own right.

"Translations reflect the intellectual assumptions of their translators ... and most translations of the Bible are the work of a number of anonymous translators. Therefore we must distinguish between what is derived from the original text and what is contributed by the translator. This is a formidable task to be accomplished before we can proceed to use the versions for purposes of textual criticism.

"The history of most of the versions is beset by many problems which are yet unsolved and are perhaps insoluble [incapable of being solved], especially for the early period [e.g., the Septuagint and Syriac Peshitta].... of all the problems of literary criticism, that of the biblical versions is encumbered with such a variety of diverse factors that any hope for a scientifically conclusive solution is very slight" (Würthwein, pp. 48-49).

These potential weaknesses have not deterred scholars from using ancient versions to try to establish the original wording of the biblical texts in places where manu-

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scripts differ (variant readings). Many scholars still emphasize the contributions of ancient versions to textual criticism and the translation process, especially in identifying the presence or absence of phrases or passages in the underlying text and in determining the wording where passages appear obscure.

As noted, the original documents of many of these versions are fragmentary or lost; thus their real value to textual criticism is limited in many respects. The process of recovering an original reading from an ancient version is complicated because many were subsequently copied and recopied or even revised (e.g., the Septuagint, Old Latin and Syriac Peshitta). During this process, alternate readings (letters and words) have crept into their texts. Another factor limiting the usefulness of certain versions to textual criticism is that many were translated from other versions, not the original biblical languages of Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. For example, the Septuagint has served as the basis for the Old Testament in many early Christian versions because the Hebrew language was virtually unknown to early translators in comparison to Greek.

There are also other difficulties related to grammar and translation quality. Certain ancient versions cannot confirm the presence or absence of the Greek article in the New Testament text since some languages, like Latin for instance, have no definite article (adapted from Bromiley, p. 817 and Tenney, p. 872). Other languages cannot translate the Greek verb tenses (e.g., aorist, perfect and imperfect tenses) (Tenney, p. 872). An interpretative translation (targum) will not often reflect the word order, style and characteristics of the original biblical texts in comparison to one that is more literal.

(A comprehensive description of the origins, transmission and limitations of ancient versions for use in New Testament textual criticism is available in the book titled *The Early Versions of the New Testament* by Bruce M. Metzger. The most important ancient versions for use in Old Testament criticism are evaluated by Ernst Würthwein in his book *The Text of the Old Testament*, pp. 50-104.)

Extra-Biblical Writings

Scholars often consult the citations of Jewish and Christian writers to recover the wording of the original biblical text at places where manuscripts disagree or passages seem obscure. Extra-biblical writings include those of Jewish medieval rabbis, historians such as Josephus and early Greek, Latin and Syriac Christian writers. These individuals authored commentaries and theological treatises, preached sermons and presumably quoted directly from the biblical texts.

Like translations, the original documents written by these authors have been lost. The fact that some of these writings have been translated into and preserved in a secondary language often limits their use for textual criticism. Therefore, citations must be treated judiciously. Serious questions must be answered: Did a writer carefully and directly quote from the biblical manuscripts before them, from a translation or from memory? Did scribes alter later quotations within these writings to harmonize with the text known to them? Was the author influenced in his writing by the prevailing philosophical climate of his time (i.e., Gnostic or Hellenistic Christianity)? These are some of the issues that scholars contend with when dealing with these writings (adapted from Bromiley, pp. 803, 818).

Witnesses to the Hebrew Scriptures

Figure 3 on pages 218-219 traces some of the various witnesses to the Hebrew Old Testament text. What follows is a brief overview (cf. Würthwein, pp. 10-104).

Hebrew Old Testament Manuscripts

The most important Hebrew witnesses of the Old Testament books include manuscripts of the Masoretic Text, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Samaritan Pentateuch.

Hebrew Masoretic Text (MT): The chief and most reliable witness of the Hebrew Scriptures is the Masoretic Text. It has been the authoritative Old Testament text of Judaism since the second century AD. Protestants adopted it at the beginning of the Reformation when they largely forsook the Latin Vulgate and Greek Septuagint as the basis for their translations of the Old Testament. The Roman Church has historically relied on Jerome's Latin Vulgate for its English versions of the Old Testament. Catholics have employed the MT as well, following the papal encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu* in 1943 and the translation of the New American Bible in 1970. The Greek Orthodox Church has traditionally used a Septuagint translation as its official Old Testament text.

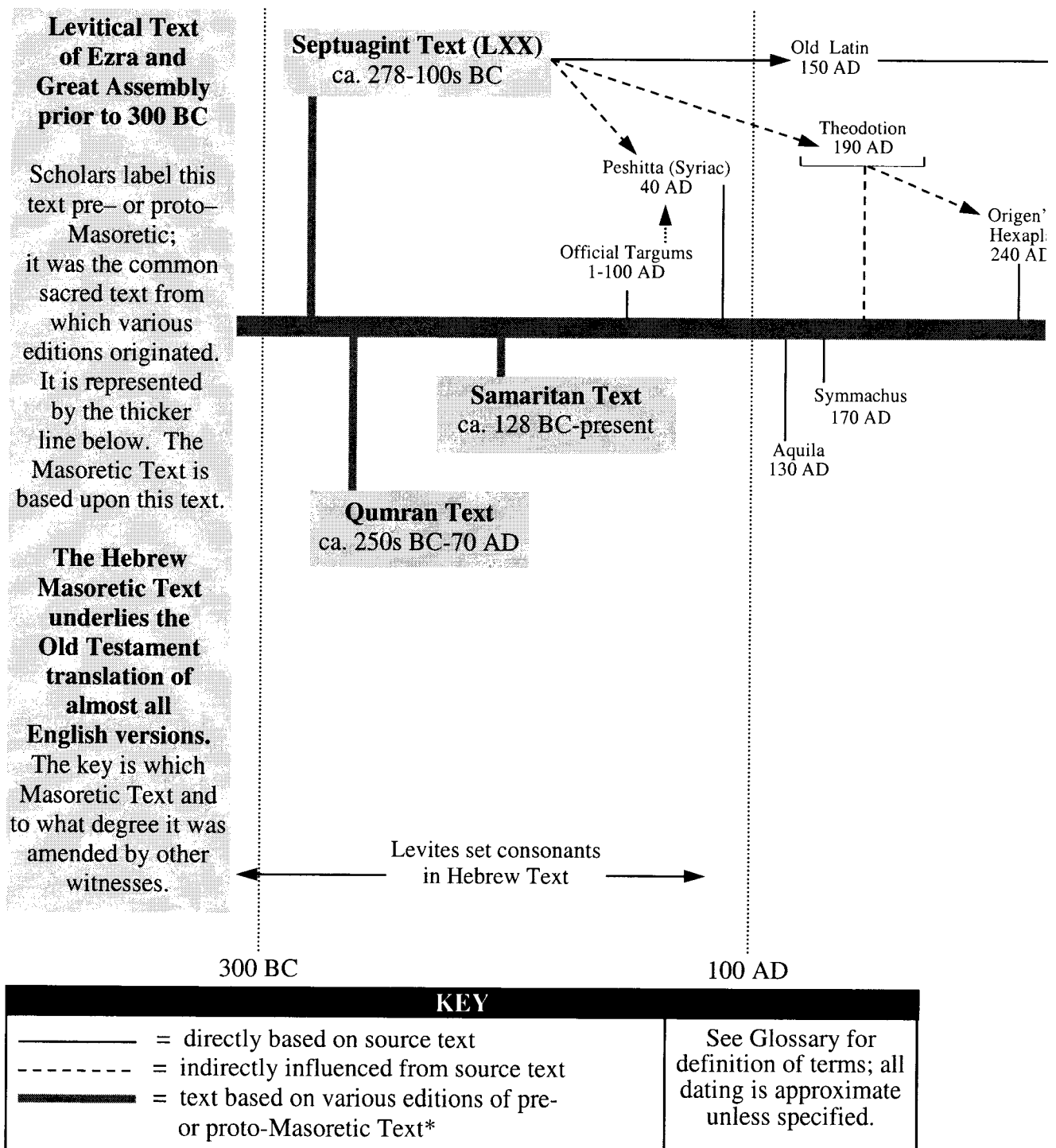
The Hebrew Bible was initially transmitted through the meticulous care of Levites who copied portions of the original text in consecutive generations from the time of Moses until the time of Ezra (cf. Deut. 17:18, 31:9, 24-26). The MT acquired its name from the Hebrew word *masora*, meaning tradition. The text in its present form is based on the Masora, the textual tradition and marginal notes of the Levitical scholars known as Masoretes. The Masoretes were active from about 500-950 AD and continued the work of earlier Levitical scribes known as Sopherim, who were appointed by Ezra as the official guardians of the Hebrew text following its revision and official "canonization" by Ezra and the Great Assembly (500s-400s BC). The Masoretes developed a system of vowel points and accent marks superimposed on the fixed consonantal text. Their goal was to preserve the proper pronunciation of the Old Testament text after Hebrew ceased to be a commonly spoken language. (Hebrew scrolls used for worship purposes do not contain the Masora, accent marks and vowel points.)

There were originally three different Masoretic vowel and accent systems: the Palestinian, Babylonian and Tiberian. By the 900s AD, the Masoretes from Tiberias in Palestine had developed a more elaborate system that represented the pronunciation and intonation of the Hebrew text in minute detail (Würthwein, pp. 21-24). Their system eventually superseded all others. The Tiberian Masoretes, led by the family of ben Asher, played a leading role in standardizing the Old Testament text for five generations (700s-900s AD). Aaron ben Moses ben Asher is credited with sealing the first codex of the complete Hebrew Bible with full Masoretic notes about 930 AD. The ben Asher text, contained in the Aleppo Codex, eventually became the accepted form of the Hebrew Old Testament text by the Jewish community in the 1100s AD after an endorsement by acclaimed Jewish scholar and theologian Maimonides. Another important manuscript reflecting the tradition of ben Asher is the Leningrad Codex.

The oldest surviving MT manuscripts date from 800-1000 AD. Twentieth-century archaeologists and scholars have discovered numerous Hebrew fragments in Egypt. One significant find was the Nash Papyrus (a liturgical text of the Decalogue and Shema of Deut. 6:4), which dates from 100-200 BC. A second group includes the Cairo Genizah fragments, consisting of thousands of parchment fragments preserved and uncovered in a storeroom (genizah) for old books and documents at Ben Ezra Synagogue in Fustat, Old Cairo. These fragments date from 500-800 AD and hold value in determining the historical development of the Masoretic vocalization system.

Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS): In 1947, two shepherd boys discovered some scrolls in a cave at Qumran, eight miles south of Jericho in Palestine, northwest of the Dead Sea. These were the first of hundreds of Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek scrolls found in 11 caves between 1947 and 1956. The biblical manuscripts found near the Dead Sea number 223 and form the earliest surviving witnesses to the Hebrew Scriptures (Schiffman,

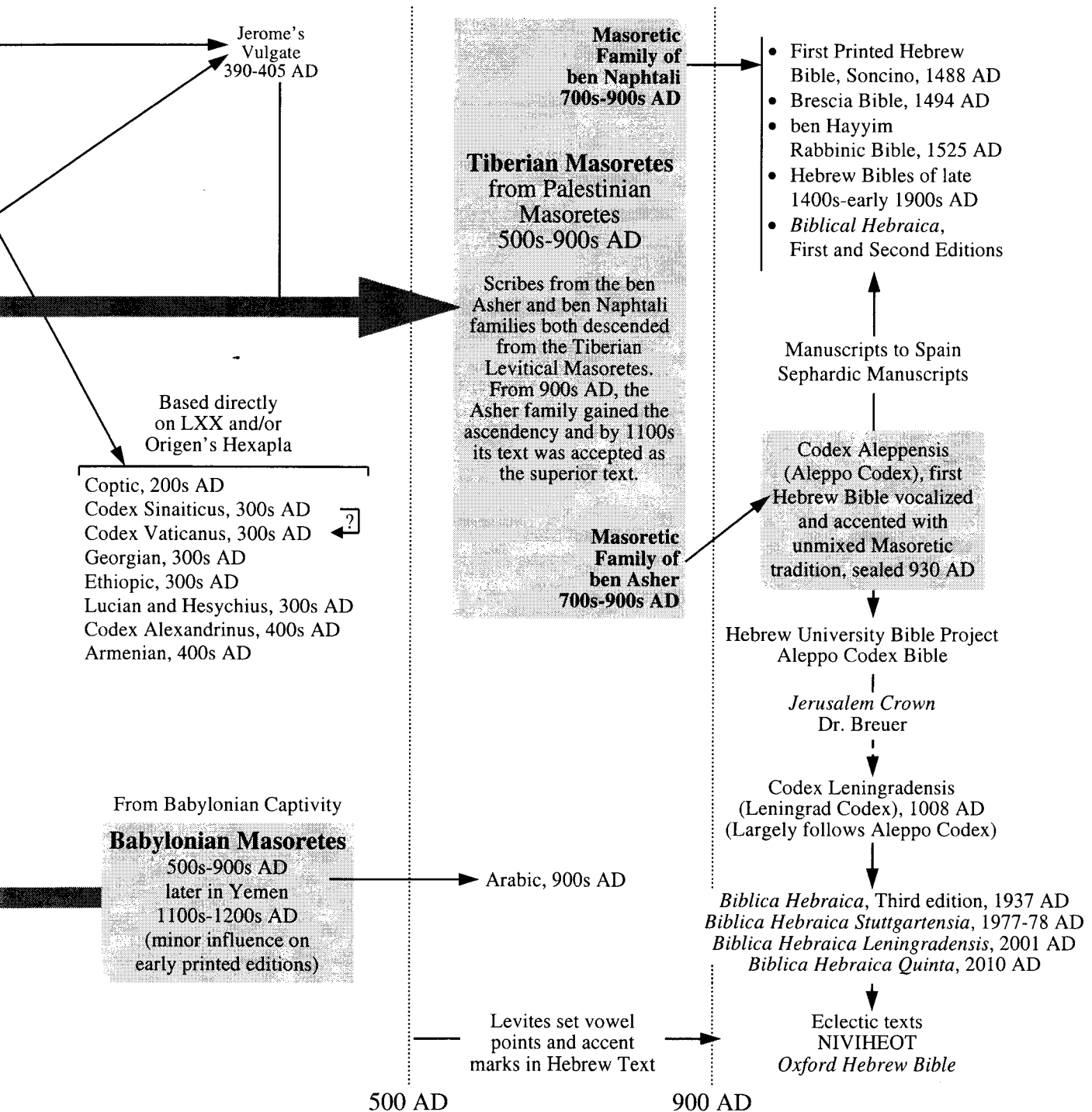
Figure 3
Transmission of the Hebrew Old Testament Text



Sources include Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, p. 191; Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, pp. 10-104.

*Temple editions/unofficial texts circulating in Palestine and elsewhere before 100 AD are represented by the thicker line for clarity. After 100 AD, this line represents the accepted Jewish (Masoretic) Text.

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pp. 34-35). These manuscripts pre-date the MT by nearly 1,000 years. Every Old Testament book is presumed to be represented among the Dead Sea documents except Esther, including two nearly complete copies of the book of Isaiah and the first two chapters of Habakkuk (Ibid., p. 163).

Manuscripts relating to the religious life of the Qumran community, the Septuagint, the Samaritan Pentateuch and various apocryphal works were also located among the archaeological remains. In addition, sets of Hebrew texts were found in the Judean Desert near Masada (ca. 73 AD), Wadi Murabba'at and Nahal Hever (copied before 135 AD). The entire collection, now known as the Dead Sea Scrolls, dates from 250 BC to about 70 AD. The scrolls comprise the most ancient documents written in the Hebrew language and have added a new dimension to Old Testament textual criticism and Hebrew philology (study and science of language). They hold value in determining the development of Judaism from the Second Temple period following the close of the Hebrew canon (400s BC) to the editing of the Mishnah (ca. 200 AD).

Samaritan Pentateuch: The first five books of the Bible (Genesis to Deuteronomy) form the official text of the renegade Levites who settled in the area of southern Samaria during postexilic Judaism (ca. 539 BC-70 AD). These books were preserved in the old Hebrew script rather than in the square script of the MT. Scholars traditionally had assumed that the Samaritan Pentateuch contained a text earlier than the MT. However, modern paleographic research dates the text to about 128 BC (Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, p. 83). It contains numerous alternate readings introduced by the Samaritan sect to preserve its cultic practices. Its only real value to textual criticism is the few out of 1,900 cases where its wording closely agrees with the Septuagint or a text supposedly quoted by some of the New Testament writers in contrast to the MT (Würthwein, p. 46).

Ancient Versions

The translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek before the time of Christ holds a unique place in the history of ancient Bible versions. Since Biblical Hebrew ceased to be the common language spoken among the Jews in Palestine and elsewhere by the time of Christ, the Greek Septuagint (later Origen's Hexapla) served as the logical source for translations of the Old Testament books. The Old Latin, Coptic, Ethiopic and Armenian versions were made from the Septuagint beginning in the mid-100s AD. This increases their value to Septuagint textual studies, while limiting their merits for textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible.

Translations made directly from the Hebrew Old Testament text consist of the Greek Septuagint, Aramaic Targums, Syriac Peshitta and Jerome's Latin Vulgate. These are the most important ancient versions for Hebrew Old Testament textual criticism because of their possible value as witnesses to the pre-Masoretic Hebrew consonantal text and its pronunciation.

Aramaic Targums: Since a portion of the Jewish community did not understand Hebrew after its return from captivity in Babylon, it became necessary to combine synagogue lessons with an Aramaic translation. The Jewish tradition of translating, called *targem*, is traced to Ezra (Neh. 8:8). Written targums for study and training of translators were in existence by the first century AD. These interpretative and paraphrased documents sometimes ignore the literal meaning and wording of the Hebrew text, making them more valuable for exegesis (technical interpretation of the text) than textual criticism (Würthwein, pp. 79-80).

Syriac Peshitta: The origins of the Peshitta Old Testament are largely unknown. Scholars believe that the Pentateuch was first translated about 40-70 AD to meet the

needs of Jewish converts, namely the ruling house of Adiabene, a kingdom east of the Tigris River. The scholarly consensus is that the Pentateuch was faithfully translated from the Hebrew text into Syriac, a dialect of Aramaic spoken in Mesopotamia. The view that the Peshitta Old Testament is of Christian origins has been proven to have no merit. It is more probable that converts to Christianity in the region later adopted it for their own use. The remaining Old Testament books, except Isaiah, are of unknown origin. They reflect a departure away from the Hebrew text and toward the Targum and Septuagint versions. Scholars consider the Peshitta an important Old Testament witness because its language is closely related to Hebrew and the type of Aramaic spoken by Jesus and His disciples (cf. Würthwein, pp. 85-87; Wilson, *A Scientific Investigation of the Old Testament*, p. 222; Moorman, pp. 34-36).

Greek Septuagint (LXX): The Septuagint is the earliest and most influential ancient translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. Its origins are shrouded in legend and contradiction. Archaeological and historical evidence suggests that the Pentateuch was translated into Greek for the royal library of the Egyptian king Ptolemy Philadelphus II by Hellenistic Jews in Alexandria about 278 BC. Whether this event actually occurred is debatable. It is reasonable to presume that Alexandrian Jews later adopted a Greek version for their own use after they could no longer understand Hebrew (Brenton, *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English*, p. ii). It is commonly believed that different Jewish scholars translated the remaining Old Testament books over the next century or so. Clearly some form of Greek Old Testament translation was used among Diaspora Jews within the centuries prior to and during Jesus' time.

It is very probable that regional Greek versions of the Prophets and Writings sections of the Old Testament existed by Jesus' time. According to Würthwein, these versions would have provided Jews and non-Jews an opportunity to study the Old Testament in the common language of the day—Greek (Würthwein, p. 54; cf. Acts 8:26ff as a possible example).

Later revisions of the LXX or new Greek translations of the Hebrew Old Testament include those of Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion and Origen (182-251 AD). Origen's Hexapla (240 AD) contained six columns consisting of the four versions listed previously, along with the fixed Hebrew consonantal text and a Greek transliteration of it. Origen's disciples in Caesarea, Pamphilus and Eusebius, copied and circulated the Hexapla for more than half a century after his death. The Sinaitic manuscript (dated 300s AD), which contains the Old Testament, was corrected against a copy of Origen's Hexapla, (Kenyon, pp. 47-48). In the fourth century AD, Lucian, a scholarly theologian of Antioch, and Hesychius, a bishop in Alexandria, produced similar revisions of the LXX text as Origen had done earlier. These two texts became popular to some extent among the Eastern churches. An unknown form of the Septuagint text was adopted by the Greek Orthodox church by the end of the fourth century AD.

Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, along with the Hexapla, were apparently the first texts to include the apocrypha among the canonical Old Testament books. Vaticanus, Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus (another Greek uncial) are the manuscripts primarily used by scholars in producing modern editions of the LXX because they contain complete or nearly complete texts of the Old Testament translated into Greek.

Jerome's Latin Vulgate: Pope Damasus I commissioned the Greek and Latin scholar Eusebius Hieronymus (also known as Jerome) in 383 AD to revise the Gospels of the Old Latin Bible. Jerome's major contribution to the Latin versions was his later translation of the Old Testament directly from the Hebrew text. Scholars use Jerome's version for textual criticism, claiming it reflects the pronunciation and text of Biblical Hebrew of the late fourth century AD.

Jerome made a first revision of the Psalms (Roman Psalter) based on the LXX

while living in Rome in 383 AD. Some time after Damasus' death in 385 AD, Jerome completed a second revision of the Psalms titled the Gallican Psalter from Origen's Hexapla. It reflected his desire to bring the Psalms more in line with the Hebrew text. He allegedly revised the entire Old Testament from the Hexapla; only the text of Job and fragments of Proverbs, Song of Solomon and Ecclesiastes have survived. He soon found working from the Hexapla unsatisfactory and realized the Hebrew text was vastly superior (cf. Sparks, *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 1, pp. 513-515, 518-521, 531; Würthwein, p. 96).

Scholars believe that it was either at the request of friends or due to his own ambition that Jerome turned to the Hebrew text used in Palestine at the time to translate the Old Testament into Latin (Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 6, p. 1021). This translation was apparently made at Bethlehem ca. 390-405 AD. Despite his return to the Hebrew text and assistance from Jewish scholars in Tiberias, he was heavily dependent on the various Greek versions (Origen, Aquila, et al.) as translation aids because no Hebrew dictionaries or grammars existed to assist him in his work (Comfort, p. 168; Würthwein, p. 97).

Scholars are divided on whether Jerome translated the entire Old Testament from the Hebrew text or simply revised the existing Old Latin translation of the Old Testament according to the Hebrew. His Hebrew version of the Psalms is found in a number of manuscripts alongside the Gallican version, which is part of the official Roman church edition of the Vulgate. The general distrust of Jerome's work by the majority of his fellow theologians, including Augustine, might have persuaded him to consider carefully how far to deviate from the Old Latin text. In contradiction to popular belief, Jerome did not revise several of the Old Testament apocryphal books (Baruch, Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom of Solomon, and Maccabees) because he believed them to be non-canonical (Würthwein, pp. 96-97, 99).

Over the centuries, Jerome's Latin version was revised numerous times. According to scholar Merrill F. Unger, it contains elements from every period, including his 1) unrevised apocryphal books; 2) Old Latin revised Psalter from the LXX; 3) free Latin translation of the apocryphal Judith and Tobit; 4) Old Testament translation from Hebrew, except the Psalter; 5) Old Latin revised Gospels; and 6) lightly revised remainder of the Old Latin New Testament (Unger, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, p. 1348). It was in this haphazard state that the Vulgate appeared in 1456 AD as the first printed book known as the Gutenberg or Mazarin Bible.

In the ensuing battle over the biblical texts with Protestant Reformers, the Council of Trent in 1546 AD declared the Vulgate, including 12 apocryphal works dispersed among the Old Testament books, as the standard text of the Roman church. The 1592 revision of the Vulgate by Pope Clement VIII finally became its official Bible. Over 8,000 Latin manuscripts of Jerome's Vulgate exist today.

Quotations from Jewish or Christian Authors

Testimony for an original text is drawn from citations from the Hebrew Scriptures, which are frequently found in Jewish literature beginning in the Second Temple period. These include references in non-canonical books and the works of Jewish theologian and Hellenistic philosopher Philo and Jewish historian Josephus. Testimony is also drawn from the Old Testament commentaries of so-called Christian writers such as Origen and Jerome. Moreover, quotations from Old Testament books found in the New Testament offer additional insight into what the original text of the Hebrew Bible might have been.

Many scholars believe that the literature of the Jewish rabbis offers a rich supply

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of data to verify the credibility of the MT. Rabbinic literature contains hundreds of deviations from the accepted, standard Masoretic Text, many from manuscripts with a supposedly different consonantal text. Rabbinic traditions often comment on scribal activities in transmitting the texts. “These tell of [alleged] ‘scribal corrections’ and of divergent readings in different scrolls....There are reports of the existence of an official Temple model scroll from which other scrolls were corrected” (Eliade, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 2, p. 161).

Witnesses to the Greek Scriptures

Figure 4 on pages 224-225 traces the various witnesses to the Greek New Testament text. A brief overview follows (cf. Holland, pp. 6-11 or Harrison, *Biblical Criticism: Historical, Literary and Textual*, pp. 125-138).

Greek New Testament Manuscripts

The Greek manuscripts form the chief witnesses to the original New Testament writings. At the time the apostles and their scribes wrote the New Testament, two styles of handwriting were commonly used: **uncial** (continuous capital letters) and **cursive** (connected or running lowercase letters). See Figure 5 on page 226. The first style was used typically for literary works, while the second was used for private, commercial and legal purposes. It is possible that the apostle Paul wrote his Epistles in a cursive script, reflecting their epistolary nature as personal correspondence to the brethren. However, it is more probable that his Epistles were written in the uncial type since the earliest known manuscripts of all books of the New Testament appear only in uncial handwriting (Bromiley, p. 815). This might have been what Paul meant in Galatians 6:11 where he wrote, “See with what large letters I have written to you with my *own* hand.”

Today there are about 100 papyri, 300 uncials and 2,800 minuscule Greek manuscripts that serve as primary witnesses to the New Testament text (Aland, pp. 87, 103, 128). Nearly 80 percent of all Greek scribal copies are kept on microfilm or otherwise stored at the Institute for New Testament Textual Research, a manuscript center in Münster, Westfalia, Germany. Virtually all copies are in the codex or modern book form. Definitions of the primary witnesses follow:

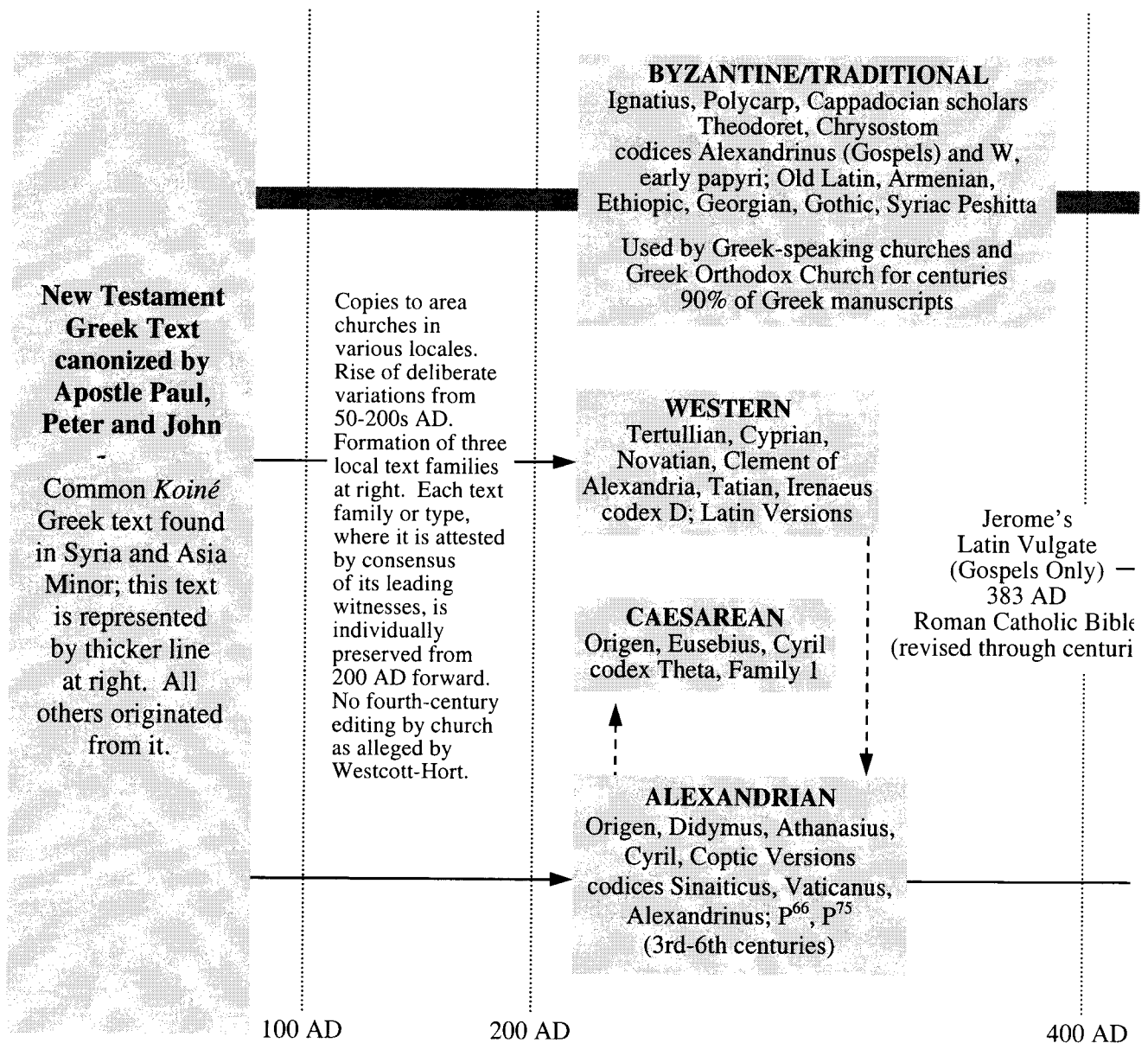
Papyri (ca. 50-800 AD): Codices with papyrus pages written in a uncial style.

Uncials (ca. 300-1100 AD): Codices with vellum pages written in uncial style.

Minuscules (Cursives) (ca. 800-1600 AD): Codices with either vellum or paper pages written in a modified cursive style adapted after centuries of use for personal, commercial and legal purposes.

A copying revolution occurred in the 800s AD, which had a direct impact on the transmission of the Greek New Testament manuscripts. According to Dr. Robinson, the handwriting of codices switched rapidly from a uncial to a cursive script. He explains, this “change likely was initiated by Theodore of Studium [a Byzantine monastic reformer, 759-826 AD] and was swiftly accepted throughout the Greek-speaking world as a replacement for the more ponderous [i.e., clumsy] uncial script. Within a century and a half uncial script had ceased to exist among continuous-text NT MSS and soon after that disappeared even from the more traditional and conservative lectionaries. The upshot of this copying revolution was similar to what transpired following the papyrus-to-vellum conversion of the fourth century: uncial MSS of far earlier date were recopied in great quantity into the new and popular minuscule script and then destroyed” (Robinson, par. 61). This revolution plays a key role in the identification of the authentic Greek text of the New Testament.

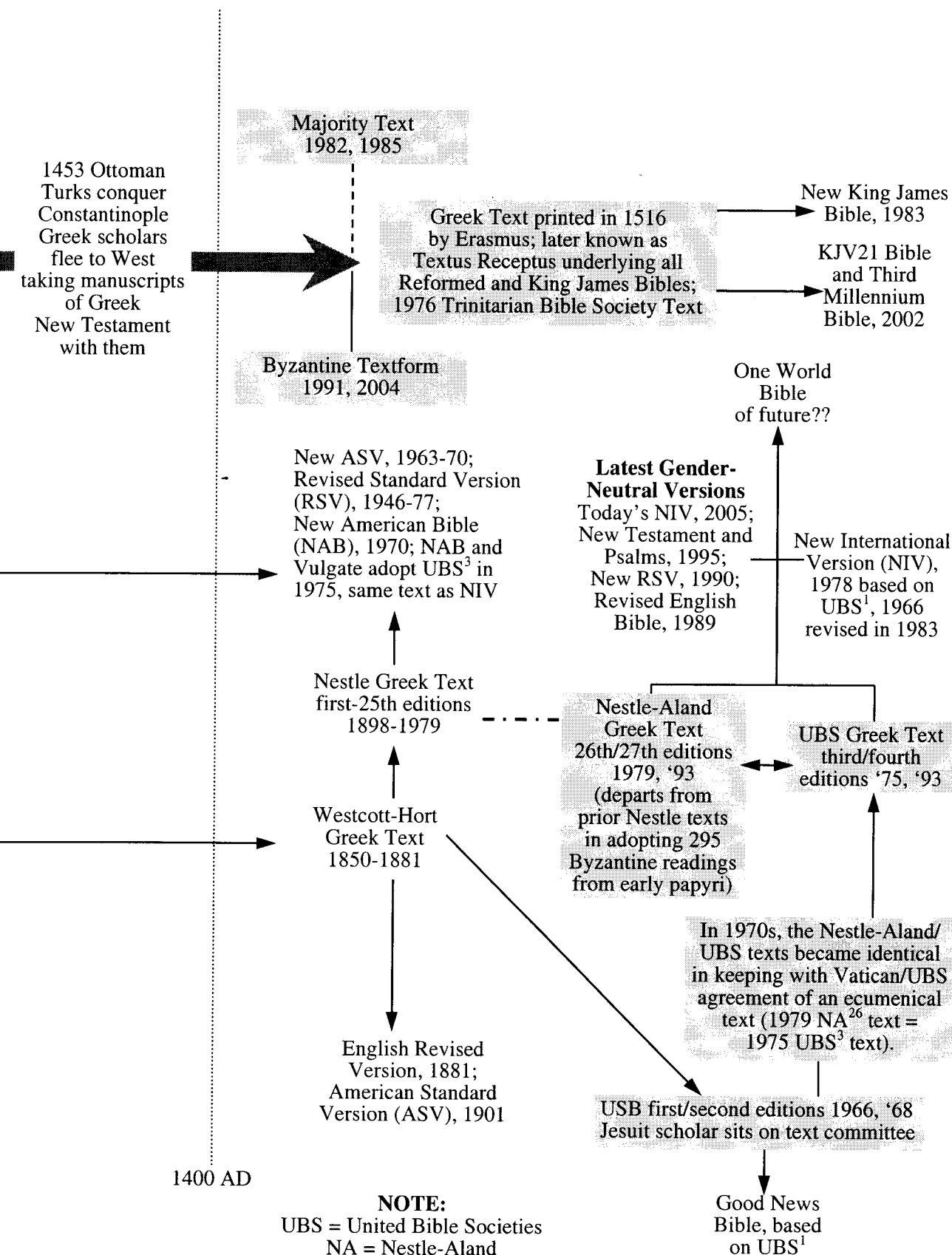
Figure 4
Transmission of the Greek New Testament Text



KEY		
—————	= direct influence from source text	See Glossary for definition of terms; all dating is approximate unless specified.
-----	= indirect influence from source text	
- . - . - .	= departure from earlier editions	
████████	= preservation of original text	

Sources include Harry Sturz, *The Byzantine Text-Type*, p. 131; Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, 1984 ed., pp. 226-229; www.bible-researcher.com

Where are the Witnesses?

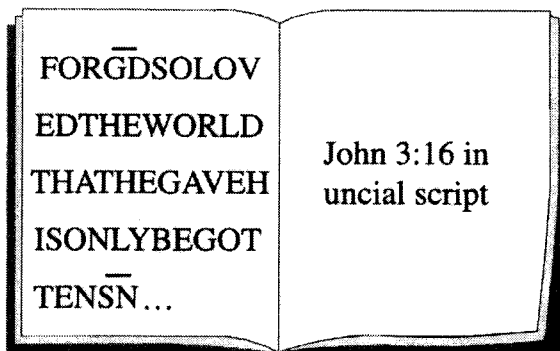


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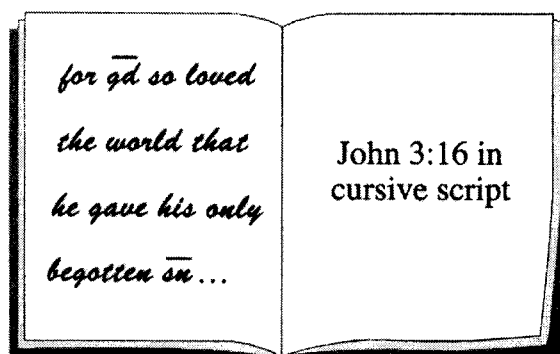
During the centuries following the printing of the Authorized Version (known as the King James Version or KJV), scholars collected, compared and classified data on variant readings (differences) found in the Greek copies of the New Testament. One fact became apparent due to these efforts: No two Greek copies were exactly identical in all their particulars. Despite the differences, enough similarities existed between the handwritten copies for scholars to group them into four **artificial** manuscript families.

Johann Bengel, a German scholar and leading Lutheran minister, was the first to propose two manuscript families in 1725: Asiatic (i.e., Byzantine) and African. Johann Selmer theorized three families: Alexandrian, Eastern (Byzantine) and Western. Johann Griesbach refined the previous scholars' classifications of the Greek manuscripts into three ancestral groups: Alexandrian, Byzantine and Western. He laid the foundation for all subsequent work on the Greek New Testament text. In the late 1800s, Dr. F.J.A. Hort classified the Greek New Testament manuscripts into four groups: Alexandrian, Neutral, Syrian (Byzantine) and Western.

Figure 5
Greek Handwriting Styles
in English



Uncial Script, 50-800 AD
text written in continuous capital letters



Cursive Style, 800-1600 AD
text written in connected or running lowercase letters, resembling handwriting

Abbreviations of Sacred Names (known as nomina sacra):

GD/gd=God; Sn/sn=Son

Where are the Witnesses?

Greek manuscripts are still grouped into four manuscript families, namely, Alexandrian, Byzantine, Caesarean and Western. Of these families, the Byzantine and Alexandrian are the most influential due to their extensive use in English Bible translation over the last 500 years.

Alexandrian (Egyptian) Text: This manuscript family generally circulated in the region of Alexandria, though elements are detected outside of Egypt in a few ancient versions and among the writings of the more scholarly Christians. Many scholars believe this text was a “refinement” of the Western text. The Alexandrian text essentially disappeared for centuries after 500 AD, only to be rediscovered again in the mid-1800s. The modern eclectic or critical Greek texts depend heavily on a minority of Alexandrian type manuscripts, due to their age. These include codices Sinaiticus, Vaticanus and related papyri (66, 75, etc.). In spite of their years, these manuscripts often disagree with one another and show significant signs of grammatical revision and the influence and refinement of Egyptian scribes. The Alexandrian text has served as the basis of most contemporary English New Testament translations since 1881.

Byzantine Text: This manuscript family obtained its primary name because it was the dominant form of the text copied by hand and used by the Greek-speaking church throughout much of the Byzantine Empire. It is also known as the Traditional Text because it was used and preserved by the Greek church from the time of the apostles until the era of movable type printing. Even today the Greek Orthodox Church has resisted scholarly efforts to revise its version of it. Yet another name for this text is the Majority Text because it is found in 90 percent of the nearly 5,500 existing Greek New Testament manuscripts and lectionaries. It is “characterized by an overall unity despite the presence of numerous variations” (Aland, *The Trinity Journal*, p. 131). Readings of this manuscript family are found in many of the early papyri and most later uncials (Alexandrinus and W) and minuscules.

The texts of the early printed editions of the Greek New Testament (i.e., Textus Receptus texts) are nearly identical to the common text of this manuscript family. These early editions closely match the Greek text underlying the King James Version of the New Testament (1611).

Textual scholar Hermann von Soden conducted one of the most expansive studies of the Byzantine Text to date. According to his analysis of the textual evidence, the Byzantine Text remained “intact throughout the whole period of perhaps 1,200 years. Only very sporadically do readings found in other text-types appear in one or another of the varieties” (von Soden, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, 1. Teil, 2. Abt., p. 712).¹ The strongest period of Byzantine dominance ranged from 350-1516 AD. In addition, von Soden claimed that the Byzantine Text “is of the highest antiquity, and within transmission history was the dominant element among the steadily increasing mass [of manuscripts] from century to century” (Ibid.).

Caesarean Text: This text can be found primarily in the area of Caesarea in Palestine and most likely originated in Egypt (Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, 1984 ed., p. 125). This family has close connections to the Alexandrian, Byzantine and Western texts. Codex Theta and a group of related minuscule manuscripts known as Family 1 are the prime witnesses of the Caesarean text (Bromiley, p. 819; Hills, p. 126).

Western Text: The evidence of the early papyri suggests that this manuscript family originated in the Eastern Roman Empire and was taken west to Rome (Sturz, *The Byzantine Text-Type & New Testament Textual Criticism*, pp. 70-76, 88). This text circulated primarily in North Africa, Italy, southern France and Egypt and was marked by

¹ The English wording provided in both citations from von Soden’s work is a translation and a reasonable representation of the original German.

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additions, long paraphrases and omissions. Codex Beza is the prime manuscript witness to the Western text.

Many scholars today refer to the Caesarean and Western families as “phantom” texts because of their brief existence and close affiliation with the other manuscript families (Aland, *The Text*, pp. 54-55, 66-67, 172).

The presence of “mixed texts” among the early papyri has forced many scholars who follow the theory of genealogy to rethink the existence of strict manuscript families. It is only possible to have a “mixed text” after, and not before, a recension or systematic revision of the text (Aland, “The Significance of the Papyri for New Testament Research,” *The Bible in Modern Scholarship*, pp. 335-337). This concession on the part of scholars means that the dominant forms of the text previously mentioned (Alexandrian and Byzantine) existed before 200 AD. This overturns Westcott and Hort’s theory that the Byzantine Text was created in the fourth century by church scholars and serves no useful purpose in the study of the New Testament text. The implication of this development is that the Byzantine Text possesses an equal, if not greater, claim to the original form of the New Testament text than other manuscript families. In spite of this evidence, we have used the previously listed manuscript names for convenience.

Ancient Versions

Early translations from the Greek copies form an important source of evidence to the Greek New Testament text. Some of these versions include Old Latin, Jerome’s Latin Vulgate, Syriac Peshitta, Coptic (Egyptian), Gothic (German), Armenian and Ethiopic. Scholars use these translations in evaluating the text that non-Greek speaking readers used.

Old Latin: Old Latin is a collective term referring to a number of New Testament versions translated completely from the Greek, which circulated by 157 AD (Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, vol. 2, p. 43). These versions served the practical worship needs of believers whose common language was Latin and who were generally unfamiliar with Greek, the dominant language of the second century. There are two general types of Old Latin manuscripts, reflecting the areas in which they circulated: African (North Africa) and European (Spain, France, Italy and Britain).

Latin Vulgate: As Latin began to replace the Greek language in the western portions of the Roman Empire in the third century AD, a need arose for a uniform Latin text for ecclesiastical purposes (Comfort, p. 168). To address this need, Damasus I authorized the famed scholar Jerome to revise the Gospels of the Old Latin Bible. The revision was completed about 383 AD. Oxford University scholar H.F.D. Sparks believed that in speaking of the New Testament, only the Gospels can be rightly called Jerome’s work. The remaining New Testament books were revised by “a person or persons unknown” over a period of years. Other historians contend that Jerome completed the entire New Testament before 390 AD (cf. Sparks, pp. 519-520, 522).

Syriac Peshitta: The Peshitta (meaning simple or plain) is the historic Bible of the Syrian church and one of the most ancient New Testament versions. The Syrian church had close contact with the apostles since Antioch was the center for Paul’s ministry (Acts 15:23). The Peshitta was probably translated from the Greek to serve the needs of the brethren in that region sometime in the second century AD (Hills, p. 119). Scholarship has been divided on its dating since the beginning of the twentieth century. (See Chapter Fourteen for more details.)

Where are the Witnesses?

Citations of Christian Writers

The writings of scholars of normative Christianity, commonly called the “Church Fathers,” offer textual critics some of the earliest extra-biblical evidence as to what might have been the readings of certain passages during the first three centuries after the writing of the autographs.

Anglican scholar John Burgon collected the largest index of these citations (86,489 total with 4,383 citations from 76 Christian authors whose writings have relevance to what the text was like before 400 AD). This collection consists of 16 thick volumes, housed in the British Museum. Burgon was a leading Anglican theologian and textual scholar of his time. He is most famous for his vigorous opposition to the Greek text and theory of Westcott and Hort published in 1881. He published over 50 works; the most famous are *The Revision Revised*, *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels* and *The Causes of Corruption of the Traditional Text*, which have been used extensively in our study of the Greek text.

Lectionaries

There are approximately 2,300 lectionaries that exist today (Aland, *The Text*, p. 169). Lectionaries were collections of selected Scriptural passages arranged according to particular days and seasons of the liturgical year. These books contain prescribed readings from the gospels or epistles. Scholars use these to reconstruct a text based on their wording and liturgical usage within the early and medieval Greek church.

The Trail of Witnesses

The Bible is the most researched and best documented ancient book. Thousands of witnesses attest to the transmission of its texts throughout history, in contrast to other ancient books and works of fiction. In this chapter, we have surveyed the witnesses to the original writings penned by the biblical authors and shown how the various witnesses relate to one another. Each witness offers direct or indirect evidence about the state of the biblical texts in antiquity and through time. Witnesses are useful in determining the most reliable manuscripts of the original writings of the Bible.

Points to Remember

- 1) The original documents penned by biblical authors no longer exist. Most likely they were worn out through much use early on.
- 2) The primary witnesses to the sacred writings are the handwritten scribal copies.
- 3) The key to solving the debate of which texts comprise the pure words of God is the preservation of those copies.
- 4) Priests and Levites copied portions of the Hebrew Scriptures for over 2,800 years. Early Christian believers, Greek Orthodox monks and professional scribes protected and transcribed the Greek Scriptures for nearly 1,500 years.
- 5) Textual scholars and editors use three major groups of witnesses to establish the Hebrew or Greek texts used by translators: biblical manuscripts, ancient versions (translations) and extra-biblical writings.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THROUGH THE LENS OF SCRIPTURE

The Bible is the only true source of doctrinal authority for Christians. Its authority originates in its divine character; therefore, the subject of “inspiration” is of prime importance for Christians. If the texts of the Bible are not God-breathed, they cease to have authority for the Christian’s life. The Bible is also the best book for learning about its texts; it offers direct statements about its divine authorship, canonization and preservation. Some principles regarding these three subjects are examined in the following pages in order to avoid fundamental errors that have produced faulty conclusions concerning the canon (books) and words of the Bible.

The Bible Offers Proof That It Is God’s Word

While other Scriptures might immediately relate to this topic of study, only II Timothy 3:15-17 explicitly declares that the biblical texts are God-breathed. In addition, II Peter 1:19-21 encapsulates how it was written.

II Timothy 3:15-17

“And that from a child you have known the holy writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus. All Scripture *is* God-breathed and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.”

II Peter 1:19-21

“We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word, to which you do well to pay attention, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and *the* morning star arises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture originated as anyone’s own *private* interpretation; because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the holy men of God spoke as they were moved by *the* Holy Spirit.”

Truths of Scripture’s Divine Authorship

Eight truths of the divine authorship of Scripture contained in the aforementioned passages that we discuss in this study are:

- 1) Every part of Scripture is God-breathed.
- 2) Only the biblical writings are God-breathed.
- 3) God is the real Author of Scripture.
- 4) The biblical authors were moved by the Holy Spirit to write the words of God.
- 5) Scripture is God’s revelation of truth.
- 6) The biblical authors reflected their own styles.
- 7) The history of the written Word of God closely followed that of oral prophecy.
- 8) All Scripture (Old and New Testaments) is profitable for Christians and serves a holy purpose.

Throughout our study, the word “inspiration” appears in quotation marks. The reason for this stylistic notation is because the word and its various forms do not adequately describe the divine character and quality of Scripture. (See Inspiration, Truth #3.) This character and quality is better defined as “God-breathed.” However, due to its popularity and to avoid confusion, we continue to use the term “inspiration” to describe the *entire* process by which Scripture became God-breathed; it is used interchangeably with the expression “divine authorship.”

Truth #1: Every Part of Scripture Is God-breathed

The first truth concerning “inspiration” is that every part of the biblical writings (letters, syllables and words) is God-breathed, each part no more or less than the other. Greek scholar Spiros Zodhiates explained that the English word “all” in II Timothy 3:16, which is translated from the Greek word *pasa*, means “every part of the whole and all of it together” (Zodhiates, “graphe,” *The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament*, p. 382). An amplified translation of this passage could read “*Every part of the whole and all of Scripture together is God-breathed*” (Ibid.).

“Inspiration” extends to the letters of the Hebrew and Greek texts, refuting the notion that only a general trustworthiness of the biblical texts is adequate. Both the details (letters, syllables and words) *and* substance (doctrines and truths) are vital in many instances to acquiring the authentic meaning of the original text.

The apostle Paul confirmed that divine authority extends to the grammatical forms of words. In his teaching on the covenant of promise in Galatians 3:16, he made the distinction between Abraham’s seed (Gk., *spermati*) and seeds (*spermasin*). The noun “seed,” whether in Hebrew, Greek or English, can be used in a singular, collective or plural sense. Paul’s argument was that in some Old Testament passages (Gen. 3:15, 22:18), seed refers to Jesus Christ, the chief representative of Abraham’s offspring. This conclusion is affirmed by Paul’s declaration a few verses later: “For you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28).

The Greek word endings *ti* and *sin* differentiate between one grammatical form of the word and another (singular and plural), effecting an accurate or a false teaching. The significance of this passage is well-known. Thus all who believe (Jew and Gentile alike) are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promises of the covenant confirmed by Christ (Rom. 15:8; II Cor. 1:19-20).

The late B.B. Warfield, former professor of theology at Princeton Theological Seminary and a leading scholar on the Bible’s divine authorship, wrote: “No doubt it is the grammatical form of the word which God is recorded as having spoken to Abraham that is in question. But Paul knows what grammatical form God employed in speaking to Abraham only as the Scriptures have transmitted it to him; and, as we have seen, in citing the words of God and words of Scripture he was **not** accustomed to make any distinction between them....**it is possible that what he [Paul] here witnesses to is rather the detailed trustworthiness of the Scriptural record** than its direct divinity—if we can separate two things which apparently were **not** separated in Paul’s mind” (Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, p. 844, bold added).

Jesus underscored the emphatic present tense of the Hebrew verb in Exodus 3:6 when defending the resurrection of the dead in his argument with the Sadducees, which is preserved for us in Matthew’s Gospel (Matt. 22:23ff). Near the end of this interchange, Jesus said, “Now concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living” (Matt. 22:31-32). Again, the difference of a few letters in the Greek text would have altered the meaning of this passage.

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By focusing on the present tense “I am” and “God is,” Jesus emphasized the perpetual covenant and promises God established with all three patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob). In order for Him ultimately to fulfill His promises to them, they “must rise and live again in the resurrection in order that He may be their God. This is what the Lord [Jesus] set out to prove (in v. 31) ‘concerning the resurrection’” (Bullinger, *The Companion Bible*, p. 1360). By doing so, Jesus silenced the Sadducees who did not believe in the resurrection.

Both Jesus and Paul showed an acute awareness of the minor details of the Hebrew and Greek texts. These details have a special purpose in God’s revelation of truth, and the authors of the Bible recorded them for both our edification and salvation.

Every Scripture Is Equally God-breathed

Some have erroneously considered certain biblical segments, such as the genealogies of the primitive, patriarchal and regal periods in I Chronicles (I Chr. 1-9) to be less a product of divine authorship than others like the Gospels. The differences between the various segments of Scripture are not a matter of “inspiration,” but of purpose.

The four Gospels, for example, provide us with a record of the words and actions of Jesus Christ that form the basis of salvation (Luke 1:4; John 20:30-31). According to scholar-Norman Geisler, the book of Chronicles in comparison provides 1) a priestly religious history of Judah; 2) teachings of the faithfulness of God, the power of His Word and the essential role of worship in the life of God’s people; and 3) a record of the Davidic kings and their descendants through whom the Messiah would come (cf. Matt. 1) (Geisler, *A Popular Survey of the Old Testament*, p. 149). Though less explicit, Chronicles also offers a typological view of the temple that points to Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God. When viewed in this light, it is clear that Chronicles is equally divine in nature and has a historical, doctrinal *and* Christological purpose that leads us to Matthew 1:1 and offers proof that God has fulfilled His promise of a Messiah.

The late John William Burgon, a textual scholar and Anglican theologian of the nineteenth century, best expressed this truism in his book *Inspiration and Interpretation*, which contains his sermons given to the undergraduate seminary students of Oriel College at Oxford University. One purpose for these sermons was to refute the heretical claims of the book entitled *Essays and Reviews*, which was written by seven authors, six of whom were from Burgon’s own denomination. Sermons three to five deal directly with the subject of the Bible’s “inspiration,” answering the claims of these critics who believed the Bible was not God-breathed in all its parts. In one sense, Burgon anticipated the biblical critics of the twentieth century (i.e., the infamous Jesus Seminar) who falsely claim that large segments of the Gospel narratives are partial or complete fiction.

Burgon wrote: “The Bible ... is the very utterance of the Eternal ... as if high Heaven were open, and we heard God speaking to us with human voice. Every book of it, is inspired alike; and is inspired entirely. **Inspiration is not a difference of degree, but of kind [purpose]**” (Burgon, *Inspiration and Interpretation*, p. 76, emphasis added).

Later Burgon analyzed some of the details of the critics’ erroneous thinking on “inspiration”: “... there is absolutely no middle state between Inspiration and non-inspiration. If a writing be inspired, it is Divine: if it be not inspired, it is human. It is absurd to shirk the alternative. *Some* parts of the Bible, it is allowed, *are* inspired; other parts, it is contended, *are not*. Let it be conceded then, for the moment, that the catalogue of the Dukes of Edom [Gen. 36] is *not* an inspired writing; and let it be ejected from the Bible accordingly. We must by strict parity of reasoning, eject the xth [10th] chapter of Genesis, which enumerates the descendants of Japheth, of Ham, and of Shem, with the countries which they severally occupied,—that truly venerable record and outline of the

primaeval [sic!] settlement of the nations! The ten Patriarchs before, and the ten after Noah: the many enumerations contained in the Book of Numbers: much of the two Books of Chronicles: together with the Genealogies of our Saviour as given by St. Matthew and St. Luke” (Ibid., pp. 96-97).

After spending the next few pages demonstrating how this erroneous logic could lead to the elimination of almost all biblical books containing any historical or moral elements, Burgon concluded his discourse: “You are requested to remember that when we call the Bible an inspired book....**The subject-matter indeed is different; but it is a confusion of thought to infer therefrom a different degree of Inspiration....**the Bible must stand or fall,—or rather, be received or rejected,—*as a whole*. A Divinity that over-ruled it, that those many Books of which it is composed should come to be spoken of collectively as if they were one Book....There is no disconnecting one Book from its fellows. There is no eliminating one chapter from the rest. There is no taking exception against one set of passages, or supposing that Inspiration has anywhere forgotten her office, or discharged it imperfectly. All the Books of the Bible must stand or fall together. ...And while you read the Bible, read it believing that you are reading an inspired Book:—not a Book inspired in parts only, but a Book inspired in *every* part:—not a Book unequally inspired, but all inspired equally:—not a Book generally inspired,—**the substance indeed given by the Spirit**, but the words left to the option of the writers; but **the words of it, as well as the matter of it, all—all given by God**” (Ibid., pp. 102, 111-112, 114-115, emphasis added).

Truth #2: Only the Biblical Writings Are God-breathed

Another truth of II Timothy 3:16 is that **only** the written texts, the details and substance of Scripture, are God-breathed, **not** the biblical writers. The Bible describes the prophets, apostles and their scribes as having been moved, driven or carried along by the Holy Spirit in such a way that what they wrote were the literal words of God. (See Inspiration, Truth #4.)

Both the Greek and English renderings of II Timothy 3:16 confirm this conclusion. Here the apostle Paul linked the idea of “inspiration” to the biblical writings with his use of the Greek word *graphe*. Translated “scripture” in English, the word *graphe* for a handwritten document comes from the verb *grapho*, which means “to write.” The English word “scripture” comes from the Latin word *scriptura* for the product of the act of writing (cf. *Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, “scripture,” p. 1056). In the New Testament, *graphe* is used 51 times to refer *only* to the written texts of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. In most of these instances, it pertains to a passage or the entire collection of the surviving copies (apographs) of the Old Testament writings. Four passages distinctly refer to the original documents (autographs) and preserved writings of the apostles and their scribes (e.g., I Tim. 5:18; II Tim. 3:16; II Pet. 1:19-21, 3:16).

In two passages, the Greek word *gramma(sin)(ta)* refers to the sacred writings of the Old Testament (John 5:47, II Tim. 3:15). Paul used the word *grammasin* to describe the written letters of his epistle to the Galatians (Gal. 6:11).

Dr. J.I. Packer, professor of theology at Regent College, further explained the connection between “inspiration” and the biblical texts: “Inspiration is a work of God terminating [ending], not in the men who were to write Scripture (as if, having given them an idea of what to say, God left them to themselves to find a way of saying it), but in **the actual written product. It is Scripture—*graphe*, the written text—that is God-breathed**. The essential idea here is that all Scripture has the same character as the prophets’ sermons had, both when preached and when written” (Comfort, *The Origin of the Bible*, p. 30, emphasis added).

Biblical Writings Final Deposit of Revelation

The second truth of “inspiration” teaches us that the **final deposit** of God’s revelation of truth for mankind resides *not* in the ink, writing materials (papyrus and vellum) and handwriting, but in the words written by His holy servants in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.

Old Testament: A complete written revelation of God was not given prior to the Noachian Flood (Gen. 6-9), perhaps because the extended life spans of our earliest human ancestors allowed for God’s truth to be orally transferred among the few people who personally walked with God, such as Enoch and Noah (Gen. 5:24, 6:9). Part of God’s revelation had openly been displayed in the messianic messages of the constellations (i.e., *Mazzaroth*) from the beginning of the creation (cf. Job 38:31-32; Psalms 19:1-6; Rom. 1:19-20; Bullinger’s *The Witness of the Stars*).

In the postdiluvian era, God specifically chose Abraham with whom to establish His covenant of promise (Gen. 12, 15). God’s promises to Abraham were no doubt transmitted orally to his immediate offspring. With the limitation of human life spans after the Noachian Flood, apparently to about 120 years (Gen. 6:3), a more precise written revelation was needed of what *Jehovah*, the covenant God, required of and promised to future generations of Abraham’s descendants. After God delivered His people from bondage in Egypt as He had promised Abraham (Gen. 15:13-15), it became imperative that the new nation possess a legal and religious system and documents that reflected its divine calling (Ex. 19:4-6). God began the process by making a covenant with the Israelites and producing a written record of truth. He revealed Himself to His people through direct communication and the visions and dreams of His holy prophets (Num. 12:1-8; Heb. 1:1). Over time, these words were written down and sealed as a lasting testimony for God’s covenant people Israel.

Jesus’ discussion with the Jews in John 5 affirmed that the Hebrew Scriptures were the final deposit of revelation for the nations of Israel and Judah until the writing of the New Testament. Jesus stated: “Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you, even Moses, in whom you have hope. But if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote of Me. And if you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?” (John 5:45-47).

How could Moses, who had been dead for nearly 1,500 years, accuse the Jews of their unbelief? The late Ernest L. Martin, a biblical historian and an early scholar of canonical studies, explained that it was common practice for people during the time of Jesus and the apostles to “consider that a letter sent to a person or a group (or even the bearer of the letter) [be] looked on as if the writer were *present* when the letter was read” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, p. 395).

The apostle Paul followed this same ancient custom, and his letters carried the same authority as if he were present. “I have previously told *you*, and I am telling you in advance the second time, as though I were present; but since I am absent now, I am writing to those who have continued to sin until now—and to all the rest—that if I come again, I will not spare” (II Cor. 13:2, cf. 13:10).

Though Moses’ writings had been copied for centuries, Jesus still considered them to be **trustworthy in all their declarations** and to carry the **same divine authority** as when they were first written. For Jesus, it was as if Moses was alive and personally accusing the Jews of their unbelief. Ironically, the Jews’ belief that Moses was a prophet of God (John 9:29) added weight to Jesus’ charge. Their refusal to heed Moses’ words in Deuteronomy 18:15, 19, pointing to Jesus as the anticipated Prophet, carried a penalty of divine judgment, which was executed over 40 years later when the Roman general Titus conquered Jerusalem and burned the temple to the ground. Jesus, the Jews and even Paul extended this same binding authority to other Old Testament writings on several

occasions in their description of them as “law” (e.g., John 10:34-35, 12:34; I Cor. 14:21).

New Testament: The context of II Peter shows that the apostles and other New Testament writers were fully aware that their ministerial duties carried an implicit command to compose and compile an accurate testimony of their writings for the brethren before their deaths. Prior to the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in 70 AD, God undoubtedly revealed to the apostles that Christ would not return in their lifetimes. This is evident by comparing the tone, tenor and content of their earlier and later writings. Peter’s urgency to complete his writings is apparent from his statement in II Peter 1:15: “But I will make every effort *that* after my departure, you may always have a written remembrance of these things [the truth of v. 12], *in order* to practice *them* for yourselves.” Peter considered this task so important that he viewed failure to accomplish it as being negligent of his divine role as an apostle and a teacher of the gospel (II Pet. 1:12).

The apostle Paul earlier wrote to the church at Rome in 57 AD that his ministry carried the important responsibility of writing to the brethren. “So then, I have more boldly written to you, brethren, in part *as a way of* reminding you, because of the grace that was given to me by God, In order that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles, to perform the holy service of teaching the gospel of God; so that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by *the* Holy Spirit” (Rom. 15:15-16; cf. Eph. 4:12).

This same attitude is also expressed, in varying degrees, by Luke, James, John and Jude in their writings (Luke 1:1-4; Jas. 1:19ff; I John 5:13; Jude 1:3, 5, 17; Rev. 1:1-3).

Within the first two decades of the church’s existence (ca. 50 AD), the epistle became one of the chief instruments for preaching and teaching. Paul directed his congregations and ministers (e.g., Timothy) to read and circulate his letters (Col 4:16; I Thes. 5:27; I Tim. 4:13). The epistolary form allowed Paul and the other apostles to instruct, edify, correct and comfort many brethren at one time without being on location. Paul exhorted the brethren at Thessalonica to “stand firm, and hold fast the traditions that you were taught, whether by word or by our epistle” (II Thes. 2:15). He also set his epistles as the standard by which brethren were to measure themselves and admonish others: “Now if anyone does not obey our word by this epistle, take notice of that man and do not associate with him, so that he may be ashamed” (II Thes. 3:14).

Peter likewise sanctioned the **divine authority and character** of the New Testament writings in declaring “We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word, to which you do well to pay attention” (II Pet. 1:19). In this passage, “we” refers to Peter and the other surviving apostles.

As previously noted, the Greek word *graphe* is used in the New Testament to refer *only* to the written texts of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. That Peter had in mind the apostles’ written rather than oral declarations is evident in his use of the words “prophecy of Scripture” (Gk., *propheteia graphes*), meaning God-breathed writings (cf. Dunzweiler, “Are the Bibles in Our Possession Inspired?” p. 2). This same truth is developed further in his epistle where Peter explicitly placed the written commands (doctrines and teachings) of the apostles of Jesus Christ on the same level as the prophets’ words in the Old Testament writings (II Pet. 3:1-2) and equated Paul’s epistles as Scripture (II Pet. 3:16).

By compiling their sermons and teachings in written form, the apostles and New Testament authors were creating a permanent record of their words through which future brethren would believe in Christ (John 17:20).

Truth #3: God Is the Real Author of Scripture

The greatest truth taught by II Timothy 3:16 is the divine authorship of Scripture. In the Greek, this passage reads *Pasa graphe theopneustos*, meaning “All Scripture is

God-breathed.” The word *theopneustos*, often translated “God-inspired,” is found only in this passage. What does this word actually mean?

Imperfect Definitions: The commonly translated English phrases “inspired of God,” “given by inspiration of God,” and their variations are derived from the Latin words *divinitus inspirata*. Considering that Latin was the dominant theological language of Western Europe during the early sixteenth century, and early translators were more familiar with the Latin than the Greek text of the New Testament, it is understandable why they embraced a Latinized rendering of the Greek word *theopneustos*. The Wycliffe (1382, 1395 AD) and Rhemish (1582) English versions of the Latin Vulgate, along with William Tyndale’s translation from the Greek (1526, 1534, 1535), no doubt exerted some influence on the entry of the words “inspired” and “inspiration” into the English language (cf. Bromiley, p. 840). For a detailed historical overview of the doctrine of “inspiration,” see *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* article in vol. 2, pp. 849-854.

Though not wholly inaccurate, these Latin-based words have obscured the real meaning of *theopneustos*. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* notes: “The Greek term has, however, nothing to say of inspiring or of inspiration: it speaks only of ‘aspiring’ or ‘aspiration.’ What it says of Scripture is, not that it is ‘breathed into by God’ or is the product of the divine ‘inbreathing’ into its human authors, but that it is breathed out by God, ‘God-breathed,’ the product of the creative breath of God. In a word, what is declared by this fundamental passage is simply that the Scriptures are a divine product, without any indication of how God has operated in producing them. No term could have been chosen, however, which would have more emphatically asserted the divine production of Scripture than that which is here employed [i.e., God-breathed]” (Bromiley, p. 840).

First-Century Usage: The Old Testament Scriptures represent the “breath of God” as the Holy Spirit or His almighty power (e.g., Job. 33:4; Psalms 33:6, 9). However, these examples do not match Paul’s usage of *theopneustos* in II Timothy 3:16, where **he linked the idea of the breath of God with the writings** (*graphe*) of the biblical authors. In this passage, the Greek word *theopneustos* is used as a predicate adjective, which means it modifies or describes the word “Scripture” (*graphe*). Thus, every part of Scripture possesses the quality of being God-breathed.

This first-century understanding is graphically portrayed in Jesus’ statement during His temptation by Satan: “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word [utterance] that proceeds out of the mouth of God’ ” (Matthew 4:4). Jesus quoted this passage from Deuteronomy 8:3, which originally described how ancient Israel depended on God’s spoken command for its food (manna) in the wilderness (Exodus 16), meaning that it was God’s words that kept the people alive, not the bread. Matthew recorded that in the ensuing struggle with Satan, Jesus conquered His weakness and hunger from 40 days of fasting by appealing to the Old Testament writings for spiritual relief and nourishment, which is evident by His use of the clause “it is written.” In so doing, He sanctioned every part of the writings as the living, authoritative utterances of God.

The context of Hebrews 3-4 reveals that Paul, like Jesus, believed that every part of Scripture, including every example, principle and psalm, originated from the mouth of God. Near the end of chapter four, Paul described the written Word of God codified in the Hebrew Scriptures as “living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit, and of both the joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). Earlier, he quoted Psalm 95:7-11, exhorting his readers to hear God’s voice speaking through these words. Though Jesus’ and Paul’s references were to Old Testament writings, the same belief about the written words being the living, authoritative utterances of God was

later transferred to the writings of the apostles. See the section entitled “Scriptures as the Written Oracles (Utterances) of God” for more details.

Scriptural Definition: Apart from the many unrelated, non-biblical and popular interpretations (e.g., “inspired” preaching) often associated with the English words “inspired” and “inspiration” (which first appeared as a part of the English language in the 1400s AD), the term “God-breathed” literally means that **every part of Scripture is the utterance (spoken word) of the living God set to writing**. Paul’s choice of the word God-breathed holds many implications for the biblical writings:

1) It is *only* possible for the biblical texts (letters, syllables and words) to possess this quality as a result of God’s direct intervention in the writing process. God is so identified with the writing of the Bible that *all* the words penned by its human authors are literally His words.

2) The words of Scripture possess sacred qualities (e.g., infallibility, authority, truth, etc.), whether they were first orally revealed and later recorded or were immediately written by an author receiving revelation under the influence of the Holy Spirit. All of the biblical writings are marked by a unity of thought and purpose throughout that reflects God’s mind.

3) The term “God-breathed” restricts these divine qualities to the original writings (autographs) penned by God’s servants in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. Only these possess the infallible, inerrant and authoritative words and doctrines and truths given by God. Scribal copies (apographs) are God-breathed and possess the same divine qualities to the degree that they faithfully and accurately reflect the details and substance of the autographs.

4) “God-breathed” describes how the sacred quality of Scripture is distinct from that of all other non-biblical religious and secular writings.

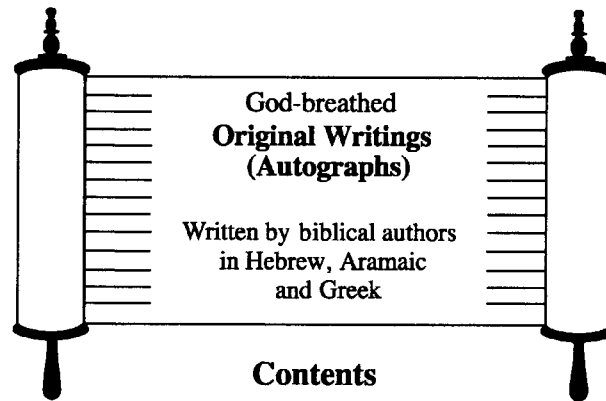
5) Translations can **never** be considered God-breathed because they do not possess the *primary* divine authorship of the autographs and apographs! Only the **doctrines and truths** of the autographs and apographs transfer in the translation process. As such, translations are subject to error and correction because they express divine truths in words that were not originally God-breathed (i.e., English). When the doctrines and truths are translated accurately into other languages from the underlying texts, these “things” in the translation possess the divine authority and sacred qualities of the autographs (Turretin, *Institutio Theologicae Elencticae*, pp. 57, 125-126). See Figure 6.

Can we know whether the Bible is imprinted with God’s “breath”? Did He guide its writing? There are at least four major discernible divine markers associated with God-breathed Scripture. These markers record the biblical authors’ conviction that the real author of their writings was God. The examples and references that follow constitute only a sampling for each category.

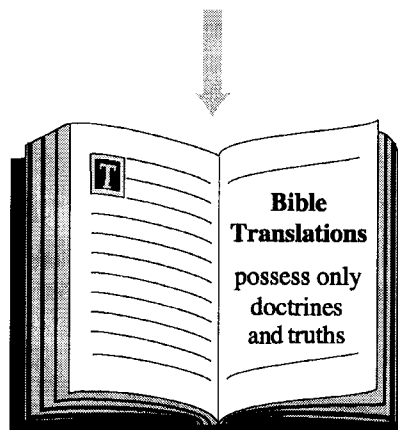
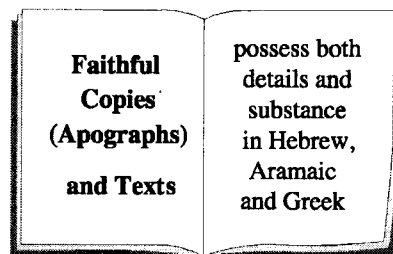
Signature #1: God Wrote Scripture by His Servants’ Hands

A true application of “God-breathed” in relationship to the Scriptures can be traced to Moses, the earliest known biblical writer. Exodus 17:14 reveals that God initiated the process of writing Scripture by instructing Moses to compose a short account of Israel’s deliverance from the Amalekites and His promise of future protection (Ex. 17:16). While this passage is the first time writing is mentioned in the Bible, it “clearly implies that it was not then employed for the first time but was so familiar that it was used for historic records” (Unger, “Writing,” *The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, p. 1374). The 10 section headings in the book of Genesis that begin with the English word “generations” (Gen. 2:4, 5:1, 6:9, 10:1, 11:10, 27, 25:12, 19, 36:1, 37:2) indicate that written narratives, histories or books of people and events existed, which Moses had ac-

Figure 6
From Ancient Manuscripts
to Modern Translations



Details
Letters, Syllables
and Words + Substance
Doctrines and
Truths



Faithful Translations
accurately communicate in
English the doctrines and truths
as given by God

(poor copies, texts and translations do not)

cess to when writing his account of Genesis (Nelson, *The King James Study Bible*, p. 9).

The book in which Moses placed his record of the Amalekite battle was likely the *Book of the Wars of the LORD* (Num. 21:14). This work probably contained collections of victory songs and writings about Israel's battles, including the song of praise the children of Israel sang after God defeated Pharaoh's army at the Red Sea (Ex. 15). Moses evidently used this book to chronicle Israel's other battles and to complete his books of Exodus and Numbers.

Moses later added these books to his complete work known as the Book of the Law, which eventually consisted of his five books (the Pentateuch). It formed the "supreme position of power and authority upon which the rest of the 22 books [original Hebrew numbering] of the Old Testament hinged" and contained God's revelation concerning subjects of spiritual, historical and cosmological importance (cf. Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, pp. 105-108). This collection of writings was later known by a variety of names pertaining to its authoritative nature: the Law, the Book of the Law, the law of Moses, the book of Moses, the book of the law of Moses, the book of the law of God and the book of the law of the LORD. Depending on the context, these phrases referred to either a part of or the entire collection of Moses' writings (II Chr. 23:18, Luke 24:44 and John 7:23).

Idiom Key to God's Authorship of Scripture: Though Moses wrote the entire Book of the Law, II Chronicles credits God with its authorship. Over 800 years after Moses had faithfully served as God's prophet to Israel, King Josiah reigned in Judah from 637-607 BC (cf. Franklin, *The Prophecy Series*, p. 4; this source serves as the basis for all dating). After cleansing the land of idolatrous practices, the king commenced a repair of the house of God (II Chr. 34:3-7).

In the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, Hilkiah the high priest found the Book of the Law amidst the temple debris. This book apparently had been "lost" for many years, possibly from the reign of the evil king Manasseh, Josiah's grandfather. For 57 years prior to Josiah's reign, the temple had been neglected and had fallen into disrepair. During that time, both Manasseh and later his son Amon, Josiah's father, did evil in the sight of the LORD. Manasseh built altars to the hosts of heaven in the courts of the temple. He even placed the carved image of Asherah, a pagan goddess, in the temple itself (II Ki. 21:2-7). The Book of the Law was perhaps hidden during this time by the Levites to prevent its destruction during the desecration of the temple for pagan worship. The Bible indicates that the book was still in use during the reign of Manasseh's father Hezekiah (II Chr. 30:22, 31:2-4).

The book of II Chronicles records the events surrounding the discovery of the Book of the Law: "... Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD *given by* [Heb., '**by the hand of**'] Moses. And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, 'I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD.' And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan" (II Chr. 34:14-15, KJV). It is very possible that the Book of the Law mentioned here contained the autographs of Moses' writings. The discovery of this book became the basis of a revival of the Mosaic religion in the land of Judah during King Josiah's reign (cf. II Chr. 34:31-35:19).

Of particular note in the previous passages is the English word "by," translated from the Hebrew idiomatic phrase "by the hand of." Scholars have often ignored this idiom when translating the Hebrew text into English, thereby obscuring its meaning. Translated into Greek at a time when this phrase was understood in literary circles, the Septuagint properly renders this passage from the Hebrew, including the Greek word *χειρ* for hand. Biblical scholar E.W. Bullinger explained that this Hebrew figure of speech is known as *metonymy* and occurs when "one name or noun is used instead of an-

other, to which it stands in ... relation.” In other words, the instrument, in this case the hand, represents the actions it performs. In contexts where the divine authorship of Scripture is the subject, Bullinger writes that **“there is an implied reference to [a] testimony preserved in writing”** or “the writing done by it [i.e., the hand] or hand-writing (sic)” (Bullinger, “Metonymy,” *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*, pp. 538, 546-547, emphasis added).

Hence, this passage could be rendered as “a book of the law of the LORD by” or “preserved in the writing of” Moses. Our understanding of the English phrase “a book of the law of the LORD” is verified by its construct relationship in Hebrew, which depicts this book as a possession of the LORD. A construct relationship is defined as the joining together of two or more nouns functioning as a single unit within a sentence. In this series the final noun is in the absolute or lexicon form (i.e., LORD), while the preceding nouns (i.e., a book and the law) are in a construct or shortened form. Therefore, these construct nouns express a possessive relationship to those in the absolute form (Kelly, “Construct Relationship,” *Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar*, pp. 58-63). Thus, the Book of the Law found by Hilkiah belonged to God, Who gave it to the Israelites for instruction and as a legal document that served as the basis of His covenant with them.

God’s perspective of Israel’s deliverance from Egyptian bondage and the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai is described in II Kings 17. As expected, this account credits God with writing the statutes, ordinances, laws and commandments: “But the LORD, Who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and a stretched out arm, Him shall you fear, and Him shall you worship, and to Him shall you do sacrifice. And the statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment, **which He** [the LORD] **wrote for you**, ye shall observe to do for evermore; and ye shall not fear other gods” (II Ki. 17:36-37, *KJV*).

How did God write the commandments, statutes, ordinances and laws? God literally wrote the words of the Ten Commandments on two tablets (tables) of stone with His own finger (Ex. 31:18, 32:15-16). The book of Nehemiah shows how God wrote the statutes, ordinances and laws. Shortly after the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, the Jews held a fast, publicly confessed their sins and read from the Book of the Law. As they fasted, the Levites stood up and praised God for His miraculous deliverance and mercy toward Israel throughout its history. In one segment of their prayer, they rehearsed the great events surrounding the giving of the Law: “Thou [the LORD God, v. 7] camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments: And madest known unto them Thy holy sabbath, and commandest them precepts, statutes, and laws, **by the hand of Moses Thy servant**” (Neh. 9:13-14, *KJV*).

Again, the Hebrew idiom “by the hand of” in Nehemiah portrays how the LORD’s words and thoughts became a part of the written records of the Book of the Law. Moses was the instrument through whom God spoke and wrote.

This same Hebrew idiom is repeated 13 additional times throughout the books of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers (e.g., Ex. 9:35, 35:29; Lev. 8:36, 10:11, 26:46; Num. 4:37, 45, 9:23, 10:13, 15:23, 16:40, 27:23, 36:13). All 13 passages refer to words, instructions or commands given by God and recorded by Moses in writing; four explicitly link God’s words to Moses’ writings:

“And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of Israel go; as the LORD had spoken by the hand of Moses” (Ex. 9:35, *KJV*).

“And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses” (Lev. 10:11, *KJV*).

“These *be* those that were numbered of the families of the sons of Merari, whom Moses and Aaron numbered according to the word of the LORD by the hand of

Moses" (Num. 4:45, *KJV*).

"*To be* a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger, which *is* not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the LORD; that he be not as Korah, and as his company: as the LORD said to him by the hand of Moses" (Num. 16:40, *KJV*).

These examples show that as God "breathed" His words, they were imparted to Moses' mind by the power of the Holy Spirit. (See Inspiration, Truth #4.) In many cases, these words were first spoken by God, then communicated orally by Moses to the people and later transferred to vellum scrolls (e.g., Lev. 21:24, 24:23). In some instances God communicated His instructions to the Israelites in written form only (e.g., Ex. 34:27-28). This evidence confirms that Moses was the agent whom God used to write the Pentateuch, serving both as God's spokesman and His scribe.

God also chose and set apart other men to serve as His spokesmen *and* scribes. The Hebrew idiom frequently associated with Moses' writings is repeated at least 12 times throughout the Old Testament in relation to other prophets, illustrating that God often imparted His revelation to His people in written form (e.g., II Sam. 12:25; I Ki. 16:7, 12; II Ki. 14:25-27; II Ki. 10:10; II Chr. 23:18; II Chr. 36:15-16; Ezra 9:10-11; Neh. 9:30; Is. 20:2-3; Jer. 37:2; Hag. 1:1, 2:1, 20; Zech. 7:12). This idiom is usually linked with prophets whose ministries span the spectrum of Israel's history *and* who wrote Scripture. Hence, the writing of the Old Testament books closely paralleled prophetic speaking in ancient Israel, a pattern that is especially noticeable after Samuel established the schools of the prophets (ca. 1090 BC).

The prophet Zechariah's words are of particular value. He used this idiom in reference to all the prophets prior to the Babylonian captivity whose writings comprise the books like Judges, Samuel and Kings: "Yea, they made their hearts *as* an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in [or by] His spirit by [Heb., by the hand of] the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath [i.e., captivity] from the LORD of hosts" (Zech. 7:12, cf. 7:7).

Prophetic Schools Key to Writing: Other Old Testament books carry indirect markers of divine authorship. These writings are portrayed as eyewitness accounts, recording historical events that transpired under God's providence (e.g., Ezra 1:1-2; Neh. 1:1-2:8; Esth. 4:14).

The Bible mentions 14 additional literary works, such as the books of *Jasher* and *Gad the Seer* (e.g., Josh. 10:13; II Sam. 1:18; I Chr. 29:29). Ezra used several of these works written by God's prophets in composing the book of Chronicles (I Chr. 9:1, 29:29; II Chr. 9:29, 12:15, 13:22, 20:34, 24:27, 26:22, 33:19). These texts also served as source materials for other Old Testament books, such as Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Esther and Job. While each of these works was written by prophets under God's guiding hand, they cannot be considered authoritative *today* because either they no longer exist *or* were not included in the final editing of the 22 Old Testament books (original Hebrew numbering).

From the days of Joshua to the high priest Eli, the Bible tells us "the word of the LORD was precious in those days; *there was* no open vision" (I Sam. 3:1, *KJV*). Prophetic revelations from God were rare due to the rampant apostasy in Israel (Judg. 21:25). During the time period of the Judges, the priesthood had degenerated to such a state that it no longer served as God's instrument in teaching His ways to Israel. Because of the sins of Eli's sons, Phinehas and Hophni, God rejected Eli's house from serving before Him in the tabernacle (I Sam. 2:12-36). The ceremonial service and duties had become mere ritual. Eli's sons used their service at the tabernacle in Shiloh for personal gain; they even committed acts of debauchery and fornicated with prostitutes at the tabernacle door. God used a battle against the Philistines as the occasion to cut off Eli's family from serving before Him as prophesied. Both Phinehas and Hophni were killed in battle as they carried the ark of the LORD before the troops. As a messenger relayed to the 98-year-old Eli the

tragic news of his sons' deaths, the great slaughter of Israel's army and the capture of the ark of God, he fell off his seat, broke his neck and died (I Sam. 4).

After Samuel's birth and his dedication to the LORD by his mother Hannah, the state of prophetic revelation in Israel changed dramatically (cf. I Sam. 1, 3). As the last judge and the first prophet since Joshua's time, the Levite Samuel figures predominantly in the continuation of prophetic writing in Israel from the period of the Judges to the close of the Hebrew canon during the Medo-Persian rule of Judea.

The New Unger's Bible Dictionary conveys the nature of this momentous turn of events: "Under these circumstances a new moral power was evoked—the prophetic order. Samuel, himself a Levite, of the family of Kohath (1 Chron. 6:28), and almost certainly a priest, was the instrument used at once for effecting a reform in the priestly order (9:22) and for giving to the prophets a position of importance that they had never before held. Nevertheless, it is not to be supposed that Samuel created the prophetic order as a new thing before unknown. The germs ... of the prophetic ... order are found in the law as given to the Israelites by Moses (Deut. 13:1; 18:18, 20-21), but they were not yet developed because there was not yet the demand for them" (Unger, "Prophet," p. 1041).

The reforms instituted by Samuel became the vehicle through which God worked in ensuring that His revelation was written down in the Old Testament era. "Samuel took measures to make his work of restoration permanent as well as effective for the moment. For this purpose he instituted companies, or colleges, of prophets [cf. I Sam. 10:5-6]. One we find in his lifetime at Ramah (1 Sam. 19:19-20); others afterward at Bethel (2 Kings 2:3), Jericho (2:5), Gilgal (4:38), and elsewhere (6:1). Into them were gathered promising students, and there they were trained for the office that they were afterward destined to fulfill. So successful were these institutions that from the time of Samuel to the closing of the canon of the OT [Old Testament] there seems never to have been wanting an adequate supply of men to keep up the line of official prophets. Their chief subject of study was, no doubt, the law and its interpretation—oral, as distinct from symbolical, teaching being henceforward tacitly transferred from the priestly to the prophetic order. Subsidiary subjects of instruction were music and sacred poetry, both of which had been connected with prophecy [and writing] from the time of Moses (Ex. 15:20) and the Judges (Judg. 4:4; 5)" (Ibid.).

Beginning with Samuel's ministry, we find an increase in prophetic activity during which written records of God's revelation and historical events were kept. (See the previously cited scriptural references to the additional writings of the various seers and prophets.)

Successive generations of prophets like Elijah and Elisha, who trained at and likely presided over these prophetic schools (II Ki. 2, 4:38, 6:1-4), served as God's chosen spokespersons and scribes to record the events of their time (II Ki. 10:10; II Chr. 21:12). The father-son prophetic team of Hanani and Jehu probably belonged to the school of the prophets (II Chr. 19:2). Jehu chronicled the events that transpired during the reigns of several kings, and his writings form part of the book of Chronicles (II Chr. 20:34). Zechariah, a prophet who descended from the lineage of the famous priest and seer Iddo (Neh. 12:16; Zech. 1:1), wrote his book after the Babylonian captivity (520-519 BC). The prophetic writings were likely preserved and protected by the prophets until they turned them over to the Levites. After Ezra's final editing of the Old Testament in the fifth century BC, the entire canon (i.e., books) was committed to the Levitical scribes (Sopherim) for copying.

Writing in the New Testament: Paul's letters were, as a rule, written by an amanuensis or scribe (e.g., Rom. 16:22). On four occasions in reference to his own written salutation in his epistles, Paul preserved the idiom of the hand as a sign of their authenticity (I Cor. 16:21; Gal. 6:11; Col. 4:18; II Thes. 3:17). While 21 of the 27 New

Testament books are classified as epistles, the word itself is used in 11 passages to indicate the intimate form of correspondence sent by the apostles, elders and brethren to each other. On more than 90 separate occasions the apostles and their scribes made reference to their writing of a letter, narration or account (treatise) that later became part of the New Testament (e.g., Rom. 15:15; I Cor. 14:37; I Tim. 5:18; II Pet. 3:1-2; II John 12; Jude 1:3; Rev. 1:1-3). In all these instances, Peter testified that the apostles and their scribes followed the same pattern as the holy prophets of ancient Israel in writing Scripture; they were all moved by the Holy Spirit, the “breath of God,” to record the words of God (II Pet. 1:20-21).

Signature #2: God’s Servants Professed to Speak and Write on God’s Behalf

The act of writing only tells part of the story of the Bible’s divine authorship. Bible researchers have counted more than 3,800 times that the writers of the Old Testament used various formulas to describe what they spoke and later wrote as the utterances of God (Connelly, *The Indestructible Book*, p. 191). An electronic Bible search program such as Online Bible can readily locate where variations of the following divine formulas appear throughout the writings of the Old Testament: “The word of the LORD came unto him, saying,” “Thus saith the LORD,” “The burden of the word of the LORD,” “The word of the LORD by,” “Hear the word of the LORD,” “Thus hath the LORD spoken unto me” and “Thus saith the LORD of hosts.”

Pentateuch/Joshua: The five books of Moses (Pentateuch) are unquestionably represented as the Word of God. In at least 65 instances, the book of Genesis uses clauses that bear witness to this fact, including “God said,” “God spake,” “the LORD said,” “the LORD God said,” “the LORD God commanded,” “the word of the LORD came,” and “the Angel of the LORD said.”

Moses recorded the LORD’s words and the events that transpired during Israel’s wilderness journey as the LORD commanded him (e.g., Ex. 17:14, 34:27, 32; Num. 33:1-2; Deut. 31:19, 22). An electronic Bible program searching the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy tallies at least 160 times that God communicated His will to ancient Israel through Moses. These instances are introduced with expressions like “And the LORD spake unto Moses.”

Moses was unique among the Old Testament authors and one of the few prophets in Israel to have seen the LORD God “face-to-face” and to have spoken with Him “mouth to mouth” as a man speaks with his friend (Ex. 33:1; Num. 12:8; Deut. 34:10). In contrast, God told Moses’ siblings (Aaron and Miriam) that He would make Himself known to future prophets in visions and dreams (Num. 12:6). Moses’ ministry became the foundation for all subsequent prophetic ministries and the standard by which they were judged (Deut. 18:18-22).

Moses’ successor, Joshua, also spoke face-to-face with God on occasion (e.g., Josh. 5:13-15). Whether at the tabernacle or elsewhere, conversations often commenced with the phrase “And the LORD said unto Joshua.” Joshua recorded in the Book of the Law all the LORD’s words and Israel’s military campaigns, which were conducted under God’s guiding hand (Josh. 24:26). The English word “Now” in Joshua 1:1 is actually translated from the Hebrew conjunction “And,” indicating that the book of Joshua is really a continuation of the Pentateuch and closely linked to Moses’ writings.

Other Prophets: Other Old Testament prophets professed to speak the words of the LORD in their prophetic forecasts and stern warnings, which called on both Israel and Gentile nations to repent (e.g., Is. 6:8-9, 7:3, 8:1; Jer. 1:2-7, 2:1, 7:1, 11:1, 14:1; Ez. 1:3, 2:1-7; Dan. 1:17, 2:19-23; Hos. 1:1; Joel 1:1; Amos 1:1-3, 3:7; Obad. 1:1; Jon. 1:1; Mic. 1:1; Nah. 1:1; Hab. 1:1; Zeph. 1:1; Hag. 1:1; Zech. 1:1; Mal. 1:1).

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Israel's refusal to heed those God-breathed words, which the prophets received of the LORD in Spirit often through dreams or visions (cf. Num. 12:6; Neh. 9:30; Zech. 7:12), ultimately brought divine judgment in God's scattering its tribes throughout the nations. Only a portion of the tribes of Judah, Levi and Benjamin returned to settle in the areas of Judea and Galilee following the Babylonian captivity. The prophets' warnings have been recorded in the pages of the Hebrew Scriptures as a perpetual witness to Israel, Judah and other nations to repent and return to God for salvation through the Messiah Jesus.

The book of Isaiah offers one of the most graphic examples of the divine authorship of Scripture. Chapters 40-66 are written from God's perspective, presenting the reader with an image of God writing a letter to exhort His people: "Yet, now hear, O Jacob My servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen" (Is. 44:1, *KJV*) and "Hearken unto Me, O Jacob and Israel, My called; I *am* He; I *am* the first, I also *am* the last" (Is. 48:12, *KJV*).

King David attested to the divine authorship of his psalms, asserting that the LORD actually put His word in his tongue (II Sam. 23:1-2). In Psalm 45:1, the sons of Korah, the Levitical servants at the temple and the writers of many psalms, also claimed that their tongues were like the pens of skillful writers, indicating how God blessed and used their ability to write poetic songs for His glory. God gave David's son Solomon wisdom and understanding to compose 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs (I Ki. 4:29, 32; Psa. 72 title, 127 title; Prov. 1:1, 25:1; Eccl. 1:1, 12:9; S. of S. 1:1).

Gospels: The Bible records that in these last days God has spoken to us by His Son Jesus (Heb. 1:1). In the fall of 26 AD, Jesus, who was God manifested in the flesh, began His ministry as *the* Apostle and Messenger of God the Father (John 5:36-38, 43, 7:16, 8:42; Heb. 3:1). Throughout His ministry, Jesus professed to speak the words of the Father Who had sent him, revealing the Father's message to His apostles and those who heard Him (John 8:26-28, 42-43, 12:49-50, 14:10, 23-24, 17:8, 14). John the Baptist, who prepared the way for the Lord, testified of Jesus that "He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God; and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him*" (John 3:34). And Jesus also told His disciples, "The words that I speak to you, *they* are spirit and *they* are life" (John 6:63).

The Online Bible lists at least 320 references from the Gospels that are marked by expressions such as "I say unto you," "And Jesus answered and said," "verily, verily (truly, truly)" and "He said unto them." These markers notify readers of instances when Jesus spoke with divine authority and introduced a spiritual truth to His apostles, the gathered crowds and others. An English New Testament that has red letter type, indicating the literal words of Jesus Christ, can be consulted for a complete inventory of Jesus' words.

Luke particularly expressed a conviction that his Gospel had spiritual import when he claimed that he had "accurately understood everything from the very first." Paul also held a high view of Luke's Gospel and assigned to it the same divine authority as the book of Deuteronomy (I Tim. 5:18; cf. Luke 10:7). The apostle John claimed that the purpose of his Gospel was to lead readers to "believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." John and various individuals alive at the time testified to its authenticity (John 21:24). Though unstated, it is logical to presume that Matthew and Mark held similar beliefs about their own Gospel writings, universally accepted as authentic by the early Church (cf. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3:24, 6:25).

Acts: In many respects, the book of Acts is equivalent to the Old Testament historical books (Judges, Samuel, Kings, etc.). Luke, its writer, gathered material from various sources to chronicle important events in early Church history. He was an eyewitness on many occasions to events that transpired on the apostle Paul's missionary travels. One unique marker of this book is its history of the spread of the gospel (i.e., Word of God) from Jerusalem to faraway places, such as Rome, through the work of the apostles and early disciples of Jesus Christ (cf. Acts 2 and 28).

Following Jesus' ascension in 30 AD, Luke established that the message the apostles taught with boldness in the temple area and to the brethren was the Word of God (Acts 3-4). The apostles dedicated themselves to prayer and ministry of this same word (Acts 6:4). The Samaritans received the Word of God preached by the evangelist Philip (Acts 8:4-5, 14), as did Cornelius and his household from Peter (Acts 11:1). It was this same word that Paul preached both in the synagogues and elsewhere on his three missionary journeys (Acts 13:5, 7, 44, 46, 48, 49; 15:35, 36; 16:32; 17:13; 18:11; 19:10). Luke wrote that it spread rapidly and widely (Acts 12:24, 13:49, 19:20). He also reported that the preaching of the Word of God was so successful that many Jews living in Jerusalem and a great number Levitical priests became disciples of Jesus (Acts 6:7).

Pauline and Other Apostolic Works: God specifically chose Paul as an instrument for proclaiming His Word to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15). He abode for a period of time in the wilderness of Arabia where Jesus personally revealed specific truths to him to enable him to accomplish his divine mission (Acts 26:16; Gal. 1:12, 17-18). Paul is considered the towering figure of early Christianity, and his books comprise over 50 percent of New Testament writings. It is from his published works that we often obtain a fuller understanding of the divine authorship of Scripture.

Written early in 50 AD by the apostle Paul, the book of I Thessalonians displays one of the most powerful examples of Paul's conviction that what he wrote was God-breathed. Paul began by praising the Thessalonians for their "work of faith" (I Thes. 1:3) and for having received the message he had preached not "as the word of men, but ... the word of God" (I Thes. 2:13). He repeated Jesus' words from Luke 10:16 in warning the brethren that whoever rejected his apostolic commands rejected the Father (I Thes. 4:8) and solemnly commanded the brethren by the Lord to read his epistle in the congregation (I Thes. 5:27). Paul made similar claims of divine sanction for his other epistles. To the Corinthians he wrote: "... Did the Word of God originate with you? Or did it come only to you *and no one else*? If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write to you are commandments of the Lord" (I Cor. 14:36-37).

The apostle Paul opened almost all his epistles with a prescript of his divine calling and the divine authority with which he wrote, like the one in Romans: "Paul, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, a called apostle, set apart to preach the gospel of God" (Rom. 1:1). In the four letters where this divine marker was omitted, Paul opened with a greeting that establishes a sacred tone: "Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:2; I Thes. 1:1; II Thes. 1:2; Philem. 1:3). Unlike Paul's other epistles, the book of Hebrews was closed with a divine postscript (Heb. 13:20-25). The reason for this adjustment is easily understood when one considers that many Jews to whom Paul wrote mistrusted him due to allegations that he was doing away with God's Law; they would never have read this epistle had he begun with his traditional opening, which included his name (cf. Acts 21-23).

James, Peter, John and Jude likewise claimed divine authority for the writing of their general epistles. In the book of Revelation, the apostle John specifically informs us that the visions, words and prophecies he recorded were the "revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave ... by his angel to His servant John" (Rev. 1:1). On 12 occasions, he recorded that a heavenly voice told him what and what not to write (Rev. 1:11, 19, 2:1, 8, 12, 3:1, 7, 14, 10:4, 14:13, 19:9, 21:5).

Textual and biblical scholar Edward F. Hills noted that it is not surprising then that "the apostle John clearly implies that it was the Holy Spirit that enabled him [and all the other apostles] to remember and record His Savior's words (John 14:26). These lofty claims of the New Testament writers the Holy Spirit took as soon as they were made and pressed home to the hearts of the faithful. Thus everywhere in the apostolic Church the New Testament books were revered as divine writings by all true believers, and soon this

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reverence grew, under the leading of the Holy Spirit, to a conscious recognition of these books as the New Testament canon of holy Scripture” (Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, 1956 ed., pp. 49-50).

Signature #3: References to God (the Holy Spirit) Having Spoken Through His Servants’ Writings

References: Mark 7:6 (Isaiah), 7:10 (Moses); 12:36 (David); Acts 1:16 (David), 4:25-26 (David), 28:25-27 (Isaiah); Romans 9:25 (Hosea), 10:5 (Moses), 19-21 (Moses, Isaiah), 11:9 (David).

Signature #4: Statements That Equate Scripture as the Utterances of God and Vice Versa

Dr. Packer explained that “Old Testament statements, not made by God in their contexts, are quoted as utterances of God (Matt. 19:4ff; Heb. 3:7; Acts 13:34, citing Gen. 2:24; Psa. 95:7; Is. 55:2 [actually verse 3] respectively). Also, Paul refers to God’s promise to Abraham and his threat to Pharaoh, both spoken long before the biblical record of them was written, as words which *Scripture* spoke to these two men (Gal. 3:8; Rom. 9:17 [also Gal. 4:30]), which shows how completely he equated the statements of Scripture with the utterance of God” (Comfort, p. 33).

Scripture as the Written Oracles (Utterances) of God

In their writings, Paul and Luke asserted that the Hebrew Scriptures were the written oracles of the living voice of God (Acts 7:38; Rom. 3:2; Heb. 5:12). In agreement with this first century mindset, Jesus and His apostles affirmed the divine authority of the Old Testament for Jews and early believers by referring to its writings on more than 70 occasions with the clauses “it is written” and “have you not read.” Warfield explained that the authority of the Old Testament “rests on its divinity and its divinity expresses itself in its trustworthiness; and the NT [New Testament] writers in all their use of it treat it as what they declare it to be—a God-breathed document, which because [it is] God-breathed, is through and through trustworthy in its assertions, authoritative in all its declarations, and down to its last particulars, the very word of God, His ‘oracles’” (Bromiley, p. 844).

The use of the expression “oracles” by the New Testament writers is significant and marks a historical progression in the formation of the canon of Scripture. Used about 50 times in the Greek Septuagint (LXX), Jamieson, Fausset and Brown explain that “[t]his remarkable expression (which the LXX use in Num. xxiv. 4, 16; Ps. xii. 6; xviii. 30), denoting ‘Divine communications’ in general ... is transferred to the sacred Scriptures, to express their oracular, divinely authoritative character” (Jamieson, *A Commentary on the Old and New Testaments*, vol. 3, p. 205).

It is no accident that Stephen spoke of Moses in his address before the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:20-44). It indicates that the Jewish leaders at the time of Christ still held this ancient prophet in high esteem, although their veneration for him was insincere at best because they did not believe his words as recorded in the Hebrew texts in their possession (John 5:37-47).

During his discourse, Stephen rehearsed how Moses had received the “living oracles” (laws, commandments, statutes and judgments) from God on Mount Sinai for ancient Israel (Acts 7:38). Jamieson, Fausset and Brown add that “Stephen represents Moses as alike near *to the angel*, from whom he received all the institutions of the ancient econ-

omy, and *to the people*, to whom he faithfully reported the living oracles as he received them....The reader will observe how, in bearing this high testimony to Moses, Stephen incidentally rebuts the main charge for which he was now on trial—that of disparaging Moses and the law ... he rises above himself ... to vindicate the ways of God against those who had all along misunderstood and sought to thwart them” (Ibid., vol. 3, p. 43).

The words “living oracles” indicates that for Stephen, Moses’ writings, after centuries of copying, still possessed **a living, divine authority as having come directly from the mouth of God** as opposed to the dead letter of Jewish unbelief (Acts 28:26-27; II Cor. 3:14-15). Stephen used this expression to impress upon the Jewish leaders that, like their ancient ancestors, they had hardened their hearts and rejected the living utterances (voice) of God as recorded by Moses and later the prophets under influence of the Holy Spirit (Neh. 9:30; Acts 7:39, 51; Heb. 3:8-19). The Bible confirms that this is exactly what occurred when ancient Israel violated their covenant with God (Ex. 19:5; Deut. 30:2, 8, 10, 20; Dan. 9:11-12). The Jews ultimately murdered Stephen for his bold remarks (Acts 7:57-60).

In his introduction to the book of Romans, Paul disclosed that salvation is a matter related to a person’s heart, not ancestry (Rom. 2:28-29). In spite of this truth, Paul explained that the Jewish people still possessed an advantage over non-Jews, namely, they were entrusted with the entirety of the *written utterances* of God penned by the Old Testament authors (Rom. 3:1-2). Paul’s remarks become even more relevant when we understand that the standard Old Testament scrolls were stored in the temple area since Ezra’s time. Scribes made official copies from these scrolls, which were then sent to the synagogues in the Diaspora. Paul insisted that Jewish unbelief did not invalidate the testimony of the Hebrew Scriptures as God’s living oracles (Rom. 3:3-4).

The readers of the book of Hebrews were generally Jews returning to Judaism, who could no longer see the substance of Christian doctrine in the Old Testament oracles (writings), through which they had by faith accepted Jesus as their Savior (Heb. 5:12). Paul wrote to his fellow Jews that at a time when they ought to have been teachers they instead needed to reestablish the beginning principles of the Christian faith. Later in the same epistle, he strongly equated their return to Judaism with a refusal to hear the voice of Jesus Christ from heaven as written by the apostle Paul (cf. Heb. 12:18-29, 13:22).

Usage Expanded: The gift of prophecy, both the foretelling and preaching of divine oracles, is listed immediately after the gift of apostleship and forms a part of the foundation of the Christian Church (I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 2:20, 3:5, 4:11). While the expression “oracles of God” was restricted elsewhere to the Old Testament writings, Peter expanded its meaning to include the *spoken and written words* of the New Testament prophets, namely, the apostles (cf. Ibid., p. 614).

In his first epistle, Peter wrote: “*Let each one, according as he has received a gift from God, be using it to serve the others, as good stewards of the grace of God, which manifests itself in various ways. If anyone speaks, let it be as the words of God [“utterances of God”] ... so that in everything, God may be glorified through Jesus Christ*” (I Pet. 4:10-11). Biblical scholar E.W. Bullinger explained that a figure of speech known as an *ellipsis* occurs in this passage, and its insertion is necessary for proper interpretation. The preceding passage with the ellipsis supplied in brackets would be translated as follows: “If anyone speaks, *let it be as the words of God [require]*” (Bullinger, *Figures*, p. 32).

Based on this insight, Peter’s exhortation can be interpreted in two ways: 1) All persons who would speak in the Church assemblies were to a) let no corrupt communication come out of their mouths, b) supply only that which was good and needful for edification and c) provide grace to the hearers (Eph. 4:29); and 2) All persons who had been given a gift of “prophecy” must prophesy in accordance with the full revelation of God,

which had *now* been entrusted to the apostles and consisted of the Old Testament writings, the Gospels and at the time most of the apostles' epistles.

Peter's injunction was similar to the one Paul gave to the church at Corinth for the regulation of prophecy (I Cor. 14:29ff). Prophets were still expected to yield to the apostles' teachings (I Cor. 14:36-38).

Peter's fullest application of the term "oracles" is implied in his second epistle (65-66 AD), written one to two years after his first epistle (63-64 AD). At this time, Peter insisted that it was the apostles of Jesus Christ who possessed the confirmed prophetic Word, to which true believers should attend (II Pet. 1:19). This was in contrast to the doctrine of false teachers whom Peter anticipated would begin to circulate among the brethren and lead them astray by stealthily introducing destructive heresies (II Pet. 2:1ff). In response to this looming crisis, Peter specifically identified Paul's epistles as Scripture, placing them, and the commandments (teachings) of the apostles, on an equal status with the existing oracles of God, the sacred Old Testament writings (II Pet. 3:1-2, 16).

Final Oracles Revealed: The expanded usage of the word "oracles" can be understood in its broadest terms by briefly surveying Peter's and Paul's earlier letters, almost all of which Peter had in his possession when he wrote his second epistle (II Pet. 3:15-16). The progression in the word's meaning can be observed in Peter's first epistle, where he wrote that though the promise of salvation had been revealed to the holy prophets of Israel by Christ through the Holy Spirit, they did not fully understand the grace about which they had prophesied (I Pet. 1:10-11). It was left to the New Testament apostles and prophets to announce the fulfillment of the written Old Testament prophecies concerning the grace and sufferings of Christ in their preaching of the gospel (I Pet. 1:12).

In First Corinthians, Paul described himself, his fellow apostles and other faithful ministers of Jesus Christ as stewards or dispensers of God's divine truth: "Let every man regard us as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Beyond that, it is required of stewards that one be found faithful" (I Cor. 4:1-2). Gentile converts would clearly have understood that Paul was comparing the truth he offered to the false knowledge of the pagan mystery religions at Corinth, primarily the cult of Aphrodite located on the city's acropolis. In contrast to Paul's methods, the pagans concealed their religious mysteries from all except the fully initiated.

Paul used the expression "mysteries" (Gk., *mysterion*) in a general sense to refer to God's truth previously kept hidden until God decided to reveal it. Paul told the Ephesians, "You have heard of the ministry of the grace of God that was given to me for you; how He [God] made known to me by revelation the mystery (**even as I wrote briefly before, so that when you read *this*, you will be able to comprehend my understanding in the mystery of Christ**), which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets by *the Spirit*" (Eph. 3:2-5; cf. Rom. 16:25-26; I Cor. 2:10, 12-13; Gal. 1:12).

Paul wanted everyone to know that God's simple wisdom pertaining to Jesus Christ crucified was a mystery and foolishness to the worldly wise (I Cor. 1:18-25; Eph. 6:19). The mystery of Christ, that both Jew and Gentile could share in the precious promises made to Abraham, was the core of Paul's teaching and ministry (Eph. 3:6-9; Col. 1:25-27, 2:2-3, 4:3).

Paul and the other apostles followed the example of Jesus, who frequently alluded to His "stewardship" of the divine words that the Father had committed to Him to preach to the multitudes and reveal to His true disciples (e.g., John 12:49-50, 17:8). Jesus told the apostles on one occasion, "To you *it* has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are without, all things are done in parables" (Mark 4:11). The prophets of ancient Israel also professed to deliver the burdens (Heb., oracles) or secret plans of God in their oral and written messages. The prophet Amos wrote,

“Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but [unless] He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets [spokesmen]. The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?” (Amos 3:7-8, *KJV*).

While the context of the third chapter of Amos refers to the giving of divine prophecies to Israel, it can also be applied to the ministries of Jesus and His apostles. On the night that Jesus was betrayed, He told the apostles, “No longer do I call you servants because the servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, because I have made known to you all *the* things that I have heard from My Father” (John 15:15). Although Jesus’ words reflect on His past ministry, the entire context of John 14-17 shows that His words held significance for the apostles’ future prophetic ministries. The fullness of Jesus’ revelation was confirmed by the apostles in their spoken messages, validated through the miracles and signs that followed them (Acts 2:43; Heb. 2:3-4) and affirmed in their writing of the New Testament. The Bible confirms that the apostles truly were faithful stewards in proclaiming God’s mysteries, specifically the Gospel message, entrusted to them by Christ (Luke 12:42ff).

Jesus said that when He returned to heaven He would send the Holy Spirit, which would teach them all things, bring to remembrance everything He had told them, lead them into all truth and disclose to them things to come as received from Him (John 14:26, 16:12-14). It is Jesus Christ then Who is the real author of the New Testament. Its words are God’s as spoken by His Son (Heb. 1:1) and revealed by the Holy Spirit to the New Testament authors before the close of the first century. It was to these oracles and God’s written utterances in the Old Testament that the primitive Christian Church and true disciples of Jesus Christ throughout all generations would make their appeal.

Points to Remember

- 1) The first fundamental truth of “inspiration” is that every part of Scripture—the letters, syllables and words—are equally God-breathed, whether historical, Christological or moral in nature.
- 2) Another truth of “inspiration” is that only the written texts are God-breathed or “inspired.”
- 3) The final deposit of God’s revelation is the writings of the Old and New Testament.
- 4) The biblical writings possess the same divine authority and character as the prophets’ and apostles’ sermons.
- 5) The word “God-breathed” literally means that every part of Scripture is the utterance (spoken word) of the living God set to writing.
- 6) It is only possible for the biblical texts to possess a God-breathed (divine) quality as a result of God’s direct intervention in the writing process.
- 7) The word “God-breathed” is restricted to the original writings and accurately and faithfully preserved scribal copies.
- 8) The sacred quality of the biblical texts separates them from that of all other writings and books.
- 9) Translations do not possess the *primary* divine authorship of the God-breathed autographs and apographs! Only the doctrines and truths are transferred in the translation process. All translations are subject to error and correction because they do not possess the original God-breathed words.
- 10) When the doctrines and truths are translated accurately into English from the underlying texts, these “things” possess the divine authority and other sacred qualities of the autographs.
- 11) Christians are to make their appeal only to the written oracles of God as found in the canonical Old and New Testament writings.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE HOLY SPIRIT, HUMAN AUTHORS AND THE VALUE OF SCRIPTURE

Is the Bible merely a collection of ancient writings penned by human authors whose only intent was to impart human wisdom or is it the infallible Word of God? What value does the Bible have for Christians today? In this chapter these vital questions are addressed in the five truths of “inspiration.”

Truth #4: The Biblical Authors Were Moved by the Holy Spirit to Write the Words of God

In his second epistle, the apostle Peter declared that what he and the other apostles wrote was of God; it was “the confirmed prophetic Word.” He insisted that their writings were not “cleverly concocted myths” originating from a private interpretation of Scripture or human will. Just as there were false prophets in ancient Israel, Peter explained that there would arise false teachers among the brethren who would stealthily introduce destructive heresies meant to lead them astray from the true revelation given by God to the apostles (II Pet. 2:1-22). Peter’s words mirror those of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, who denounced the false prophets of their time as being men who spoke “a vision of their own heart, *and* not out of the mouth of the LORD” and followed “their own spirit and have seen nothing!” (Jer. 23:16; Ez. 13:2-3, *KJV*).

In contrast, Peter wrote that the holy men of God, including the prophets and the apostles, were moved by the *same* Holy Spirit to speak and to record the utterances of God: “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture [i.e., God-breathed writings] originated as anyone’s own *private* interpretation; because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the holy men of God spoke [and wrote] as they were moved [Gk., *pheromenoi*] by *the* Holy Spirit” (II Pet. 1:20-21). The fourth truth of “inspiration” reveals how the Holy Spirit moved the servants of God to write His words.

The Holy Spirit

Greek scholar Spiros Zodhiates explained that the present passive participle *pheromenoi* in II Peter 1:21 means that the holy men of God were “being driven or carried” along by the Holy Spirit in their speaking and writing (Zodhiates, “theopneustos,” and “phero,” *The Complete Word Study Dictionary New Testament*, pp. 729, 1439). Because the Holy Spirit and its characteristics are figuratively referred to as the wind in numerous passages (e.g., John 3:8; Acts 2:2-4), it is proper to state that the biblical writers were driven, carried or moved by the Holy Spirit as a sailboat is carried by the wind to record the very utterances of God—every word, syllable and letter. The holy men of God wrote nothing of their *own minds* but were directed by God’s Spirit to record the literal words of *God’s eternal mind*.

The Spirit of Man

In Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, he referred to what he identified as the spirit of man: “For who among men understands the things of man, except *by* the spirit of man which *is* in him?” (I Cor. 2:11). In commenting on the spirit in man in this passage,

scholar Albert Barnes noted that the “essential idea is, that no man can know another; that his thoughts and designs can only be known by himself, or by his own spirit; and that unless he chooses to reveal them to others, they cannot ascertain them. So of God. No man can penetrate his designs; and unless he [God] chooses to make them known by his Spirit, they must forever remain inscrutable to human view” (Barnes, *Notes on the Bible*, vol. 14, p. 77).

What is the spirit of man? The prophet Zechariah wrote that when God created Adam, He formed the spirit of man within him (Zech. 12:1). (See Appendix S, page 856, for additional details.) This spiritual element within human beings imparts reasoning power and intellect and gives them the capacity to think, speak, learn, write, plan, devise, create, build, control, teach, choose, worship, build character and experience emotions. Animals possess a different spirit (Eccl. 3:21), which allows for rudimentary thinking power and forms of communication.

Spiritual Understanding: Earlier in the same letter to the Corinthians, Paul quoted portions of Isaiah 64:4: “But according as it is written, ‘*The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him*’ (I Cor. 2:9). A comparison of the Isaiah and Corinthian passages shows that the Corinthian passage contains an additional phrase, which is customarily translated into English as “have entered into *the* heart of man.” To obtain a proper understanding of this verse, biblical scholar E.W. Bullinger correctly translated its Greek clause and Hebrew idiom (heart of man) as follows: “*to come, or to enter into the thoughts, or the mind of man*” (Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*, p. 629). This gives us a glimpse into how the prophets and apostles spoke and wrote the literal words of God. Subsequent verses in First Corinthians clarify that the revelation of God entered into or was imparted to Paul’s thoughts and mind by the Holy Spirit interacting with his spirit (I Cor. 2:10-15). This coincides with Paul’s explanation that he delighted in the law of God according to the inward man and served the law of God in his mind (Rom. 7:22, 25).

Two graphic portrayals of this truth from the Old Testament follow. Almost 2,000 years earlier, Elihu exhibited a clear awareness of the spirit of man. When none of his four elder contemporaries offered any wisdom to explain Job’s trials (Job 32:1-5), Elihu spoke, “I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. But **there is a spirit in man**: and the **inspiration** [Heb. “breath,” a type of the divine intellect imparted by the Holy Spirit] of the Almighty gives them understanding. Great men are not *always* wise: neither do the aged understand judgment” (Job 32:7-9, *KJV*). That Elihu had a spiritual dimension within mortal man in view, and not a figure of speech, is evident in a subsequent passage: “For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me” (Job 32:18, *KJV*).

The Hebrew word for “inspiration” in Job 32:8 is the same one used for “breath” in another passage in the following chapter, which reads: “The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life” (Job 33:4, *KJV*). Both passages clearly refer to the work and power of the Holy Spirit in the process of “inspiration” and creation. In short, Elihu was asserting that God had given him “life,” so he could impart wisdom to Job (Jamieson, *A Commentary on the Old and New Testaments*, vol. 2, p. 79). God had specifically raised Elihu up to act as an arbiter between Him and Job in response to his (Job’s) many appeals for a mediator to resolve his dispute with God over his trial (Job 9:32-34, 13:3, 18-24, 33:6). It was God’s Spirit interacting with the spirit within Elihu that imparted to his mind the wisdom he shared with Job and his three friends (Job 32-37). Though acting on God’s behalf, Elihu explained to Job that he was still human; therefore, Job had no reason to fear his reproach and every obligation to heed God’s wisdom as transmitted through him (Job 33:1-2, 7).

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In the book of Proverbs, King Solomon also alluded to the divine gift of wisdom given to him by God's Spirit: "For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth [referring to God's breath and His Spirit] cometh knowledge and understanding" (Prov. 2:6, *KJV*).

Words of God Imparted

In his same letter to the congregation at Corinth, Paul described how the Holy Spirit affected his speech and preaching: "Which things [given graciously by God, v. 12] we also speak, not in words imparted by human wisdom, but in *words* imparted [i.e., taught] by *the* Holy Spirit, *in order* to communicate spiritual things by spiritual *means*" (I Cor. 2:13). Paul used the "we" in the emphatic position in the Greek to emphasize that God had communicated His wisdom, words and spiritual truths to His apostles and ministers, instead of to the self-proclaimed prophets of the Corinthian church (Nelson, *The King James Study Bible*, p. 1765).

In a protest to the Corinthians about their response to his earlier letter (I Cor. 5:9), Paul wrote: "Did the Word of God originate with you? Or did it come only to you *and no one else*? If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write to you are commandments of the Lord" (I Cor. 14:37). How was Paul able to reckon that his writings were of the Lord since it had been nearly twenty years since Jesus last taught Paul during his three-year stay in Arabia (I Cor. 9:1; Gal. 1:17-18)? It was the Holy Spirit, whatever it received of Jesus (John 16:13-15), that disclosed to Paul's mind the words that he was to write.

At the end of the book of II Samuel, King David described God's unconditional covenant to him and his royal house. This account contains the king's last words before his death, including a reference to God's authorship of his psalms through the agency of His Spirit: "... David the son of Jesse ... and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, 'The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spake to me'" (II Sam. 23:1-3, *KJV*). The apostle Peter underscored this truth in the book of Acts in relating how the Holy Spirit spoke prophetic utterances by the mouth of David, which he recorded in Psalm 41 concerning Judas, the guide for the temple guards and the officers who arrested Jesus (Acts 1:16).

On numerous occasions, God promised to "teach" other biblical writers, including Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, what to speak on His behalf (Ex. 4:11-16, 7:1-2; Is. 6:5-8, 50:4, 51:16; Jer. 1:9; Ez. 2:1-10, 3:10, 17). Jesus extended this promise of the Holy Spirit to the apostles, especially in times of persecution and distress (Luke 12:12).

The examples of Paul and David offer ample evidence that **in the same manner** God instructed or revealed to His servants what to speak, He also imparted to their minds through the agency of the Holy Spirit what to write. What was true for Paul and David must also then have been true for the other servants of God who wrote Scripture since they were all moved by the *same* Holy Spirit. This conclusion seems warranted if we believe that the books assigned to these writers accurately reflect their professions that they recorded God's words.

Commands to Write

How did the holy men of God know when to write? Robert Dunzweiler, a scholar at Biblical Theological Seminary, in discussing the elements of "inspiration" as portrayed in II Peter 1:21, wrote, "... this verse tells us that the initial impulse to set down such events [i.e., the when] and such interpretation of events in the history of revelation as God wished included [i.e., the what] both came from the Holy Spirit of God" (Dunzweiler, "Are the Bibles in Our Possession Inspired? Two Studies on the In-

spiredness of the Apographs,” p. 2).

The Bible indicates there were two ways through which the biblical authors knew when and what to write: explicit commands and implicit commands.

Explicit Commands to Write: On several occasions, God directly commanded His servants to record His words, the visions He had given them or historical events as they transpired. These words were given face-to-face, by the hand of angelic beings or transmitted to their minds through the agency of the Holy Spirit.

For example, Moses received direct commands to record God’s words and to chronicle the events of Israel’s journey to Canaan (e.g., Ex. 17:14, 34:27, 32; Num. 33:1-2; Deut. 31:19, 22). God also gave detailed instructions to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Habakkuk and the apostle John about the words they were to write (cf. Is. 8:1, 30:8; Jer. 30:2, 36:1-2, 27-28; Dan. 12:4; Hab. 2:2-4; Rev. 1:1, 11, 19, 2:1, 8, 12, 3:1, 7, 14, 10:4, 14:13, 19:9, 21:5).

Implicit Commands to Write: In lieu of a direct command, other servants of God were moved by the impulse of the Holy Spirit because their prophetic or ministerial duties carried an implicit obligation to write.

In the later half of the 1600s, Roman Catholic scholars tried to lessen the authority of the Greek texts printed by Protestant Reformers. These papal scholars asserted that the New Testament had been written in a haphazard manner and without divine command. To combat this, Genevan reformer Frances Turretin wrote a direct rebuttal. A portion that has relevance to our study follows: “A command may be implicit and general or explicit and special. Although all the sacred writers might not have had a special command to write ... yet they all had a general command to write, since persons at a distance and posterity can be taught only by writing [an allusion to Matt. 28:19-20; John 17:20 and Rom. 16:25-26]. Hence, preaching is sometimes said to be ‘in writing,’ at others ‘in deed’ and again ‘in word.’ Further, **immediate inspiration and the internal impulse of the Holy Spirit by which the writers were influenced was to them in place of a command.... A command is not more efficacious [i.e., sufficient] than the inspiration of the things to be written;** nor does a faithful ambassador ever depart from his instructions” (Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, p. 60, emphasis added).

As Turretin related, faithful writers (i.e., ambassadors) never departed from their instructions, whether given by special command or the impulse of the Holy Spirit. God specifically considered Moses a faithful servant (Num. 12:7; cf. Heb. 3:2). As previously noted, his ministry sets the standard for all other biblical prophets (Deut. 18:15, 18).

God intimately revealed Himself to Moses on at least 160 separately recorded occasions during Israel’s 40-year wilderness journey. During many of these exchanges, God spoke with Moses from a cloud or in similitude, meaning akin to bodily form (Num. 12:8). Before the construction of the tabernacle, God often conferred with Moses in a small structure known as the tent of meeting (cf. Ex. 33:8-11). Following the tabernacle’s construction, God regularly met with Moses from above the mercy seat within the Holy of Holies or at the tabernacle door (Ex. 25:22, 30:6; Lev. 1:1; Num. 1:1). “And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with Him [God], then he [Moses] heard the voice of One [the LORD] speaking unto him [Moses] from off the mercy seat that was upon the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubims: and He [God] spake unto him [Moses]” (Num. 7:89, *KJV*).

These conversations are preserved in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy and marked with expressions like “And the LORD spake unto Moses.” The presence of these accounts in the Pentateuch is one proof that Moses’ ministry carried an implicit or general command to record God’s words to instruct the nation of Israel.

In other instances, Moses wrote in response to specific civil needs and national events, such as the ratification of God’s covenant with Israel. The Bible re-

cords that God revealed to him additional details of the covenant's legal terms (judgments and instructions) based upon the framework of the Ten Commandments, which He had earlier disclosed directly to the people from the top of Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:5-24:2; Deut. 4:13-14). After Moses had recounted these conditions to the people and they accepted them (Ex. 24:3), Moses wrote these words in a book for the ratification ceremony the following day (Ex. 24:4). The details of the ceremony (pillars of stone, animal sacrifices, sprinkling of blood, reading of the terms, an oath and common meal) are consistent with the ancient customs of covenants of that time period. Written documents were often an essential part of these covenants, depending on their nature and the parties involved. In this case, the nation's enduring need for an accurate record of the covenant's detailed terms offers a sensible explanation for Moses' writing the book of the covenant.

The Holy Spirit brought to Moses' remembrance everything God had spoken to the prophet on the mount (cf. Is. 63:11). This explains how Moses was able to recount accurately all the words of the LORD to the people before he committed them to writing as indicated in Exodus 24:4. This miracle obviously was repeated a second time when Moses wrote all these words in the book of the covenant. (See "Functions of the Holy Spirit" on page 256 for additional examples of how subsequent biblical authors also experienced this miracle.) Thus, the Holy Spirit was the *real* impetus behind Moses' decision to write the book of the covenant and to combine this record with others in compiling the book of Exodus.

The use of other completed writings by the biblical authors is well-known and is not contrary to the concept of the divine authorship of Scripture. Moses no doubt was directed by the Holy Spirit to locate the source materials (genealogical listings, narratives, etc.) needed to complete the Genesis and Exodus accounts of the earliest civilizations and lives of the patriarchs up to their captivity in Egypt. (See page 237 for more details.)

There are parallels between the ministry of Moses and that of others who wrote Scripture.

God subsequently warned and admonished succeeding generations of Israelites by His Spirit in His prophets to repent of their apostasy and to return to that covenant (Neh. 9:29-30; Zech. 7:12). The presence of these prophetic books in the Bible is one proof that the ministries of these same ancient prophets, like Moses, contained an implicit command to simultaneously record the LORD's words as a permanent testimony against the unfaithfulness of the nation and its descendants.

The apostles received face-to-face instructions from Jesus Christ, Who was God manifested in the flesh, similarly as Moses received directions from God in the tabernacle. These initial instructions pertained to their preaching, teaching and evangelistic outreach. The Bible indicates that there were many among the first disciples, probably including John Mark, who were early witnesses of Jesus' ministry (Mark 14:51-52; John 6:66; Acts 1:21-22). Luke claimed to possess an accurate understanding of the details of Jesus' life "from the very first," probably meaning from his (Luke's) personal conversion to Christianity (Luke 1:3). Since Luke had not been an eyewitness *and* a minister of the Word of God like the apostles, he consulted the most reliable narrative and eyewitness accounts in completing his Gospel of Jesus' life (Luke 1:1-4) and a historical supplement of the early Church known as *The Acts of the Apostles* (Acts 1:1). It is believed that both Mark and Luke wrote under the supervision of the apostles Peter and Paul, respectively. The presence of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John in the early New Testament canon and their universal acceptance by the early Church are indicators that their writers possessed unspoken commands to produce eyewitness accounts of Jesus' life and teachings to instruct, edify and exhort Christians (cf. Matt. 1:1, 28:19-20; Mark 1:1; Luke 1:1-4; John 20:30-31). "Many heretical gospels arose within the Church, but they

never occupied a place alongside [these] canonical four” (Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 1, p. 604). Moreover, both John’s and Luke’s Gospels carry internal claims of their divine authority as reliable accounts of Jesus’ life and ministry (Luke 1:4; John 20:30-31).

The same Holy Spirit that moved Moses to write of the Prophet who was to come (Deut. 18:15-19; I Pet. 1:11) filled the mind of the apostle Peter with the understanding of how Jesus fulfilled this ancient prophecy (Acts 3:22-23). John was later moved to record these instances in his Gospel (John 1:45, 6:14, 7:40).

See “Biblical Writings Final Deposit of Revelation” on page 234 for additional evidence that the ministries of the New Testament writers carried implicit commands to write Scripture.

A review of the methods God used to communicate to His servants shows that they consistently remained the same throughout history in both the Old Testament and New Testament eras. In their book, *Interpreting The Scriptures*, authors Kevin Conner and Ken Malmin have identified 20 ways in which God has spoken to mankind, and in particular, to the biblical writers. (Appendix T, page 857, offers a listing with scriptural references.)

Promises of the Spirit

Promises: Because the apostles and other New Testament authors needed spiritual discernment to understand God’s truth (I Cor. 2:14), Jesus pledged to send the Holy Spirit to dwell in them after He had returned to the Father (Luke 24:49; John 14:17, 15:26). On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus made certain promises to the apostles that would accompany the receipt of the Holy Spirit and affect their ability to write the New Testament: “But *when the Comforter comes, even the Holy Spirit ... that one shall teach you all things, and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you*” (John 14:26). These promises directly affected the apostles’ capacity to witness of Jesus. “But when the Comforter has come, which I will send to you from the Father, *even the Spirit of the truth, which proceeds from the Father, that one shall bear witness of Me. Then you also shall bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning*” (John 15:26-27). Jesus finally added, “I have yet many things to tell you, but you are not able to bear them now. However, when that one has come, *even the Spirit of the truth, it will lead you into all truth because it shall not speak from itself, but whatever it shall hear it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come. That one shall glorify Me because it shall disclose to you the things that it receives of Me. Everything that the Father has is Mine; for this reason, I said that it shall receive from Me and shall disclose these things to you*” (John 16:12-15).

The Helper: According to biblical scholar E.W. Bullinger, the Greek word *parakleetos*, translated as “Comforter” in English “meant in classical Greek merely *called to one’s aid, assisting*, especially in a court of justice. Hence a *legal advisor or helper*. But this falls short of the meaning it afterwards obtained: *viz., not only of helping another to do a thing, but to help him by doing it for him*. It is used only in John of the Holy Spirit’s help (by Christ)” (Bullinger, *Figures*, p. 854). A similar form of the word is used by the apostle John in his First Epistle to refer to Jesus as the Christian’s Advocate with the Father—a role that only Jesus as high priest can fulfill on behalf of sinners (Heb. 4:14-16; I John 2:1-2).

A careful review of the usage of this Greek word in John’s Gospel and First Epistle reveals that Bullinger has accurately described its meaning. Only the Holy Spirit could enable the apostles to remember the words and works of Jesus (e.g., John 2:22, 12:16, 15:26-27), so they could preach the Gospel and testify effectively of Jesus. Without this spiritual understanding, the apostles, and those under their supervision, could not

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accurately record God's truth (Jesus' words) for future generations who would believe their words (John 17:17, 20).

Functions of the Holy Spirit: John 14-17 lists five functions that the Holy Spirit performed for the apostles that they were unable to do for themselves in their roles as authors of Scripture:

- 1) Teach them all things (what to speak and write).
- 2) Bring to remembrance everything Jesus had spoken to them.
- 3) Bear witness of Christ, so they could effectively bear witness of Him.
- 4) Lead them into all truth.
- 5) Disclose to them things to come (a foretelling of events, i.e., prophecy).

Biblical Examples: A graphic example of how the Holy Spirit stimulated the memory of the sacred writers to remember things that had long been forgotten is found in the book of Jeremiah. In the fourth year of Judah's King Jehoiakim, the LORD directed Jeremiah to record all the words that He had communicated to him during his ministry, which began 20 years earlier during the reign of King Josiah (Jer. 36:1-2). The Bible records that Jeremiah's secretary Baruch "wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which He had spoken unto him, upon a roll [scroll] of a book" (Jer. 36:4).

The miraculous nature of these events continued beyond the initial recording of Jeremiah's prophecies. After the wicked King Jehoiakim destroyed the autographs (original documents) of Jeremiah's prophecies, God instructed these two sacred authors to rewrite a second scroll and imparted to them additional prophetic warnings for the Gentile nations as found in chapters 25 and 45-51 of our present English Bibles (Jer. 36:27-32). Jeremiah prepared a special scroll of some of the added prophecies (chs. 50-51) to be read in Babylon by Baruch's brother Seraiah, the chief steward of Judah's king (Jer. 51:59-64). This reading served as a witness against Babylon and as a means of encouraging the Jews living in captivity there.

Baruch is first introduced in Jeremiah 36:4. He is mentioned earlier in Jeremiah 32:12; however, this account is not ordered chronologically in the Hebrew text. It actually occurred later in the tenth year of the reign of Zedekiah, Judah's last king. These details are significant for they prove that none of Jeremiah's prophecies had previously been recorded and refute the claims of naturalistic scholars who wish to deny the miraculous nature of these events.

In their commentary on this section of Scripture, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown remarked that "God so directed the sacred writers [Jeremiah and Baruch] that they should be able to remember all that otherwise they might have forgotten, thereby stereotyping for the Church of all ages the originally *spoken* 'words' of prophecy; God also, whilst not fettering the individual writer as to style, so superintended the choice of words and modes of expression that nothing should be in the original autograph which would not be suited for the exact revelation of His will, and nothing should be omitted which is necessary" (Jamieson, vol. 2, p. 128).

The series of events previously cited becomes even more noteworthy when one considers that the nation of Israel, comprised of the northern 10 tribes, had been in captivity and dispersion for more than 120 years by the time Jeremiah and Baruch recorded these prophecies. The initial writing and subsequent rewriting of the scrolls by Jeremiah and Baruch in 603-602 BC was intended for both a present testimony against Judah *and* a faraway future witness against Judah and Israel. This example demonstrates how God planned thousands of years in advance that a permanent testimony would be preserved for Israel, Judah and all the nations of the Earth.

Witness of the Spirit

Fulfilled prophecies and archaeological discoveries are only a few ways of verifying the truthfulness and accuracy of the biblical accounts. Paul offered another in the book of Romans, where he devoted three chapters to explaining how it was possible for Israel, and ultimately the whole world, to be saved (Rom. 9-11). Notice Paul's simple declaration: "I speak the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my own conscience in [Gk., *en*, "resting in"] *the Holy Spirit bears witness with me*" (Rom. 9:1).

Two truisms emerge from Paul's declaration:

Precept #1: The evidence for the integrity and authenticity of the biblical documents begins with the personal testimony of their individual writers. How can we be certain that Paul and the other biblical writers were telling the truth? The implication of Paul's declaration is that the conscience can be trusted to bear a faithful testimony of a person's thoughts and actions *when* it is under the influence of (resting in) the Holy Spirit and the human heart, mind and actions are evaluated against the standards of God's Word (cf. Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23; Tit. 3:5; Heb. 4:12-13).

The spirit of man apparently unites the heart (feelings, attitudes and motives) and mind (center of thought, intellect and reasoning), providing human beings with a sense of being, self-consciousness or awareness. This makes it the likely catalyst for the internal "faculty" known as the conscience, which enables human beings to examine and bear witness to their own thoughts and actions (Rom. 2:15). The spirit of man also functions as the bridge between the human and divine, allowing the Holy Spirit to bear witness directly with a person's inner thoughts and intentions (Rom. 8:16). When people violate their consciences, they normally experience an automatic sense of guilt, unless their hearts, minds and consciences have been defiled or become reprobate with unbelief and sin (Rom. 1:28; I Tim. 4:2; Tit. 1:15-16). As a candle allows one to search a darkened room, the spirit of man allows God to search and to understand the *hidden* motives of the heart and the *secret* thoughts of the mind (I Chr. 28:9; Psa. 44:21; Prov. 16:2, 20:27; Jer. 17:10).

Therefore, according to Paul, the truthfulness of his statements could be confirmed by his conscience and by the Holy Spirit bearing witness to his personal motives and purposes for writing (as established in his heart and mind). This joint testimony fulfilled the requirement of the Law of God that the truth be established by at least two reliable witnesses (See Deut. 17:2-7; Heb. 10:28).

At a hearing before the Jewish Council, Paul testified that from the time of his conversion his life and ministry had been in harmony with God's will, and his conscience was clear before God and men (Acts 23:1). (See Acts 24:16; II Cor. 1:12; II Tim. 1:3 and Heb. 13:18 for occasions when Paul used similar language to describe his conduct and testimony.) Paul appealed to the witness of every believer's conscience before God that he had "personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain" and had not walked in cunning craftiness, nor handled the Word of God deceitfully (II Cor. 4:2). In facing false accusations about his apostleship, he called upon God the Father's testimony as confirmation of his ministry's authenticity (Rom. 1:9; II Cor. 11:31; Phil. 1:8; I Thes. 2:5). He finally extended the Father's witness to the writing of his epistles: "Now the things that I write to you, behold, before God, I am not lying" (Gal. 1:20).

Precept #2: The reliability of the biblical writings, including their details, is intricately tied to their authors' testimonies of their personal lives and witness for God. Are the accounts of their personal lives consistent with the events and customs of their day? Are these writers believable as real-life personalities? If the biblical authors were faithful in describing the intimate details of their personal lives and ministries, then it is reasonable to presume they were also trustworthy in writing other details (promises, prophecy, etc.) found in their accounts.

Chapter Twelve

The truthfulness of Paul's statements extended to *more* than his proclamation of the gospel. In the book of Romans, for example, Paul disclosed his deepest sorrow over Israel's unbelief (Rom. 9:2, 10:1). Paul's epistles present frank, detailed accounts of his sins, weaknesses, struggles, sufferings, prayers and emotional turmoil for the brethren (cf. Acts 8:1-4, 9:1-31, 13:1-28:31; Rom. 7:14-25; I Cor. 9:1-27; II Cor. 11:5-33; 12:7-9; Gal. 1:11-2:21; Phil. 3:1-11). There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of Paul's remarks on such personal issues; therefore, his statements in other segments of his epistles cannot be scornfully dismissed because of *alleged* contradictions.

The record of Moses' error at Kadesh (Num. 20:1-13), the episode of Elijah's perilous flight to save his life from the wicked queen Jezebel and subsequent depression (I Ki. 19) and the account of Peter's Judaizing at Antioch (Gal. 2:11-21) serve as reminders of the biblical writers' humanity and their commitment to truthful reporting, even at the expense of their own dignities. A careful examination of the personal testimonies and stated motives of the biblical authors reveals they are united in their witness: The entire collection of ancient biblical writings represents a faithful and reliable record of God's words and of the events that their authors witnessed.

Power and Signs of the Holy Spirit

Many of the biblical writers encountered long and difficult trials. A review of the accounts of the lives of prophets such as Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Paul shows that they suffered greatly at the hands of their fellow countrymen. Ironically, the books they authored contain some of the most profound expressions of God's love for the nation of Israel and all humankind. Such tribulations demanded that the biblical authors possess both the will and desire to complete their work. As noted previously, the Greek word *pheromenoi* in II Peter 1:21 conveys a sense of motion, of being "carried or borne along" by the Holy Spirit as a sailboat is borne along by the wind. In the Old Testament, the phrase "the hand of the LORD" represented the power of God's Spirit to supply the needed energy to His servants to complete their missions, sustain them through trials and persecutions or impart to them His words to communicate to His people (Bullinger, p. 880; Nelson, p. 1197; e.g., I Ki. 18:46; II Ki. 3:15; Ez. 1:3, 3:14, 22, 8:1, 33:22).

The prophet Jeremiah described his disposition while under the direct influence of the Holy Spirit. Though the following segment was written as a lament of his inner turmoil after his persecution and release from prison, it displays his burning desire to communicate God's word (whether verbally or in writing) in spite of the physical obstacles: "Then I said, 'I will not make mention of Him [God], nor speak any more in His name. But *His word* was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not *stay*'" (Jer. 20:9, 10 *KJV*). Even though he was free from prison, Jeremiah's enemies endeavored to entrap him again. Yet, amid all these trials, Jeremiah was stirred to write, "But the LORD *is* with me as a mighty terrible One: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail" (Jer. 20:11, *KJV*).

The word "burden" is used on several occasions by Jeremiah to describe the sense of duty that accompanied the word imparted to him via the Spirit, essentially signifying the word God had entrusted to him to communicate (Jer. 23:33-37). "The Hebrew word translated burden can also mean 'oracle.' Coming from a root meaning to 'lift up,' it signifies that which God places upon the prophet's heart to hear" (Nelson, p. 1136). In describing God's word given to them as a burden, Isaiah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zechariah and Malachi related how the Spirit of God compelled them to share through oral and written means God's warning of impending judgment for the nation's sins (Is. 13:1; Nah. 1:1; Hab. 1:1; Zech. 9:1; Mal. 1:1). In contrast to the false prophets of his time (Mic. 2:6-11),

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Micah wrote that the Spirit of the LORD gave him power, judgment and might to fulfill his prophetic duty and to boldly declare God's word to the nation of Israel (Mic. 3:8).

At His ascension, Jesus again pledged to send the promise of the Father to the apostles. He commanded them to remain in Jerusalem until they had been clothed with the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5, 8). That promise was fulfilled 10 days later on Pentecost.

In the New Testament, Paul made reference to how God's Spirit empowered him to preach the Gospel and, by extension, complete the writing of God's Word: "Of which I became a servant, according to the administration of God that *was* given to me for you, *in order* to complete the word of God ... For this cause I also labor, striving according to His inner working power [of the Holy Spirit] which works in me" (Col. 1:25, 29; cf. I Cor. 2:1, 4; Eph. 3:7, 20).

Permanent Testimony: The Bible is the written record of the words God has spoken in the past by the prophets and in these last days by His Son Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1). In the book of Hebrews, Paul wrote that this revelation was confirmed to the brethren by those who heard Jesus (Heb. 2:3). This group included the original apostles who accompanied Jesus during His earthly ministry (Acts 1:21-26); it later contained the apostles Paul and Barnabas (Gal. 2:9).

Just as God performed miracles confirming the words and authority of His servants to ancient Israel (e.g., Num. 16-17), He also bore witness to the authenticity of the apostles' message through signs, wonders, miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit (Heb. 2:4). With the completion of the New Testament writings, the Bible indicates that some of the gifts and signs given to validate the apostles' spoken words ended. The final standard for believers and new converts became God's revelation permanently set in writing in the canonical Scriptures. Paul made reference to the **primary** cessation of tongues as a means of verifying new revelation apart from or **for the writing** of Scripture in his First Epistle to the Corinthians: "Love never fails. But whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* languages, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part and prophecy in part; but when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be set aside" (I Cor. 13:8-10).

John MacArthur, a biblical and Greek scholar, explained that there "may be a distinction made on how prophecy and knowledge come to an end, and how the gift of languages does. This is indicated by the Greek verb forms used. In the case of prophecy and knowledge, they are both said to 'be abolished' (in both cases the verb indicates that something will put an end to those functions). Verses 9, 10 indicate that what will abolish knowledge and prophecy is 'that which is perfect.' When that occurs, those gifts will be rendered inoperative. The 'perfect' is **not** the completion of the Scripture, since there is still operation of those two gifts and will be in the future kingdom (cf. Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17; Rev. 11:3). The Scriptures do not allow us to see 'face to face' or have perfect knowledge as God does (v. 12)....The perfect must be the eternal state, when we in glory see God face to face (Rev. 22:4) and have full knowledge....

"On the other hand, Paul uses a different word for the end of the gift of languages, thus indicating it will 'cease' by itself....It will not end by the coming of the 'perfect,' for it will already have ceased. The uniqueness of the gift of languages and its interpretations was, as all sign gifts [gifts as signs for unbelievers], to authenticate the message and messages of the gospel before the New Testament was completed (Heb. 2:3, 4)....'Tongues' were also **not a sign to believers, but unbelievers** ... specifically those unbelieving Jews. Tongues also ceased [on the whole] because there was no need to verify the true messages of God once the Scripture was given" (MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, p. 1750, emphasis added).

Truth #5: Scripture Is God's Revelation of Truth

The major differences in wording between the various modern critical Greek texts and English versions of the New Testament, and those of the Protestant Reformers, have needlessly raised doubts about the Bible's accuracy and trustworthiness. Many of these differences are related to the manuscripts upon which these texts and versions are based. Most modern Greek texts and versions of the New Testament are based largely upon the testimony of the earlier uncials (manuscripts with capital letters), while the later dated minuscules (those with lowercase letters) form the basis for those versions produced before the 1880s AD. How ought one view this textual dilemma?

When a number of readings of the modern critical or eclectic Greek texts used today for translating the New Testament are examined, it is apparent that some scholars have abandoned sound principles of textual criticism and followed faulty principles, blindly dismissing a large portion of the documentary evidence. Two glaring examples that display how the methods of naturalistic textual criticism have diminished the trustworthiness of the Bible follow.

Example #1: In the royal genealogy in the Gospel of Matthew, the Alexandrian text contains the erroneous reading of Asaph, a psalmist, instead of the true one of Asa, a king of Judah (Matt. 1:7-8). Instead of relinquishing their partiality for a few earlier uncials (e.g., Sinaiticus and Vaticanus) and their allies, the editors of the United Bible Societies (UBS) Greek New Testament (UBS3/4) wrongly argue that Matthew "may have derived material for the genealogy, not from the Old Testament directly, but from subsequent genealogical lists, in which the erroneous spelling occurred" (Metzger, *A Textual Commentary of the Greek New Testament*, 2002 ed., p. 1). However, this same editorial committee has been unable to reproduce a solitary manuscript of the Septuagint (LXX) with the name Asaph in First Chronicles to corroborate its fallacious theory that Matthew obtained the erroneous reading from the LXX (Ibid., fn. 1). Furthermore, these editors incorrectly argue that Byzantine-era scribes tended to correct such blatant errors, thereby accounting for the prevalence of the Asa reading in later minuscule manuscripts (Ibid.). This assertion is based on their appeal to false assumptions about scribal habits in order to discredit the Byzantine reading of Asa (Robinson, "New Testament Textual Criticism: The Case for the Byzantine Priority," *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism*, par. 44, fn. 66). Thus, these modern scholars have incorrectly charged Matthew with error instead of faulting the ancient copyists or editors who either transmitted the erroneous reading to other manuscripts or changed the genuine reading.

Example #2: The writers of each of the Synoptic Gospels, in describing the events of the crucifixion, record that "there was darkness" (Matt. 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44). In a subsequent verse (Luke 23:45), Luke added the following clause to his account: "And the sun was darkened." In an article entitled "Re-Examining New Testament Textual-Critical Principles and Practices Used to Negate Inerrancy," textual scholar Dr. James Borland closely examined the error needlessly introduced into the Greek text of Luke 23:45 by modern editors. (The following material has been adapted from *The Majority Text: Essays and Reviews in the Continuing Debate*, pages 46-57.)

The Greek manuscripts essentially offer two competing readings in describing what happened to the sun on that solemn day. The Greek word *eskotisthe* has the earliest and widest support and is found in the Reformation Greek text (Textus Receptus), which is virtually identical with the Byzantine Text. This word means "darkened" and is the authentic reading for this passage. (For a review of this evidence, see pages 61-65 of *The Revision Revised* by textual scholar John William Burgon.)

The second word *eklipontos* is poorly supported among the documentary evidence. The major critical Greek texts (Westcott-Hort, Nestle-Aland and UBS) have fol-

lowed some form of this second reading, advocating either the present tense *ekleipo* or aorist *eklipontos*. That this Greek word has historically *only* meant “eclipsed” when used in respect to the sun is well-known (Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, p. 65).

After examining the various printed texts, translations (including the New International Version) and differing scholarly views of Luke’s account of the crucifixion, Dr. Borland offered this summary: “Thus the textual-critical guidelines that tolerated and even promoted this ill-advised, poorly-attested reading [*eklipontos*] have given rise to numerous bold assertions of errors in the autographs. The reason for this is that a solar eclipse is impossible astronomically during the full moon of the Passover when sun and moon are 180 degrees apart in relation to the earth” (Letis, *The Majority Text*, p. 54).

When translators have adopted the reading of the critical texts, Borland explains their versions “... clearly teach that the words *tou heliou eklipontos* mean that the sun was eclipsed by the moon. When *ekleipo* is used in relation to the sun that is precisely what it indicates” (Ibid., p. 53). In order to conceal the error in adopting the critical reading, some scholars, like those who produced the Revised Standard Version, have cleverly translated the clause *tou heliou eklipontos* as “the sun’s light failed” (Revised Standard Version, p. 190). However, these same translators have exposed the inconsistency in their thinking by informing the reader in the margin that the clause actually means “the sun was eclipsed.”

By moving the unexplainable miracle of Luke 23:45 to the realm of a natural occurrence, the actions of scholars and translators have unwittingly questioned Luke’s credibility as a first century witness who accurately recorded the supernatural intervention of Almighty God in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Dr. Borland offered these comments on textual criticism that tolerates the adoption of such erroneous readings: “If we accept the inerrancy of the Scriptures and yet countenance a textual criticism that voids inerrancy, something is amiss—and I would suggest that it is not the Word of God that needs reconsideration but rather our principles of textual criticism. For too long, lower [textual] criticism has been guided by those who cared little about the inerrancy of the autographs. The time has come for a change. We must re-examine our premises, and divorce ourselves from a biased, narrow and settled view of the field. Unless we do, it will not be long before some in our own ranks will be singing the tune against inerrancy” (Letis, p. 57).

Standard of Evaluation

In an article cited previously, scholar Robert Dunzweiler wrote that “... either revelation has been truly (i.e., inerrantly, for truth by definition must exclude error) inscripturated [i.e., written], or human finiteness and fallibility have conditioned (at least to some degree) the inscripturation of revelation. If the latter is true, then either we need an absolute principle external to Scripture in order to distinguish divine truth from human error; or, lacking such a principle, we cannot know what is true and what is false, and thus cannot help being reduced to agnosticism or skepticism with regard to any absolute truth in Scripture” (Dunzweiler, p. 8).

Dunzweiler reviewed the two standards used historically to evaluate the truthfulness and accuracy of the biblical texts during their literary history, meaning during their writing and prior to their copying (for clarification, Dunzweiler has labeled the writing of Scripture as “inscripturation”). These standards include 1) the *kerygma* or “gospel” proclamation and 2) the judgment of critical scholarship (modern biblical and textual criticism). Dunzweiler rejected both standards for judging Scripture’s integrity. The gospel proclamation is an inappropriate criteria because it invalidates itself due to the fact that it was *a part* of the writing process. The downfall of using this method is evi-

dent in Martin Luther's hasty criticism of several canonical books, such as James, because he thought they did not contain a clear gospel message. Critical scholarship, a product of The Enlightenment, is an inadequate standard because it was designed only to measure empirical evidence, not spiritual realities, such as the divine influence on the authorship of Scripture and preservation of the biblical texts (Ibid.). Furthermore, the accuracy of the autographs cannot be judged by the errors made by copyists and found in the surviving biblical manuscripts.

Dunzweiler concluded this section of his article with a solution to the dilemma of establishing a standard of evaluation: "This consideration prompts a necessary review of the basis[,] approach and method in discovering the true doctrine of inspiration. If we approach this question via the 'critical data of Scripture' [i.e., textual criticism] or via the 'phenomena of Scripture,' [i.e., the *kerygma*] it would appear unlikely that we could ever arrive at any confidence concerning the Bible as the Word of God. If on the other hand we approach this question via the witness of Scripture to itself, **we discover that with one voice the prophets, Christ and the apostles proclaim that God's revelation of truth has been truly inscripturated! The teaching of Scripture concerning its own inspiration must be permitted to speak.** What God has said concerning the nature and extent of the inscripturation of revelation must be taken as normative [i.e., the standard] in defining the true doctrine of inspiration. Only when we are armed with this doctrine are we equipped to undertake the task of attempting to resolve the problems presented by the 'critical data of Scripture'" (Ibid., bold added).

The Bible testifies to the accuracy of the autographs in its use of figures of speech and direct references to the Holy Spirit and to God, the real author of Scripture. What follows are the some facts of Scripture, which address this particular topic and form the basis for the fifth truth of divine authorship.

Precept #1: The autographs reflect God's nature. Inasmuch as a book reflects the character of its writer, so Scripture reflects the attributes of its real author, God (Nelson, p. 1646). The Bible indicates that God is not like human beings; He is faultless, cannot lie and has no need to repent of falsehood and error (Num. 23:19; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18). The psalmist introduces us to a basic biblical principle: "The word of the LORD is right [Heb., correct]; and all His works *are done* in truth" (Psa. 33:4, *KJV*; cf. Psa. 111:7). Hence, God's work of producing Scripture was done in truth. To suggest that God revealed His Word in error would essentially make Him the author of a lie, which the Bible teaches is impossible (I John 2:21; Heb. 6:18; Titus 1:2).

Dunzweiler noted that if "God could not help revealing error, then either He is *not omniscient* (i.e., He was ignorant of the fact that He was revealing error), or He is *not omnipotent* (i.e., He simply could not inerrantly communicate His thoughts and words to men). That God is omniscient is so clearly taught in Scripture that we must reject the alternative. To the alternative claim that God is not able inerrantly to communicate His thoughts to man, we must ask, 'What man is that who dares to presume to say what God can and cannot do, apart from revelation [as found in Scripture]?' It is clear in Scripture that there are some things which God cannot do, but His revelation of truth to man is never mentioned as one of them! ... Thus we must reject this alternative. If God, who created man's mind, can communicate one truth to man, then in principle there is no reason why He cannot communicate any finite of number of truths to man" (Dunzweiler, p. 8).

Since there is no other standard for judging the accuracy of what God has revealed, except the statements of Scripture, then **the assumptions that God deliberately revealed or could not help revealing error are false.** Dunzweiler explained, "There is no hint of such error in the teachings of the prophets, of Christ, or of the apostles. And there is no evidence that there were errors in revelation itself ... as originally communicated....There is abundant evidence of errors of transcription [copying]; but what evi-

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dence is there of errors of revelation, especially since neither side of the question possesses the original manuscripts of Scripture! Thus we must reject the concept that God deliberately revealed error, on two counts (1) it is antithetical to His nature; and (2) there is no evidence to substantiate it" (Ibid.).

Precept #2: The accuracy of the autographs was unaffected by the biblical writers' humanity. In discussing the biblical idea of the divine authorship of Scripture as it relates to its reliability, theologian Dr. J.I. Packer stated, "The fact that in inspiration God did not obliterate the personality, style, outlook and cultural conditioning of his penmen does not mean that his control of them was imperfect, or that they inevitably distorted the truth they had been given to convey in the process of writing it down" (Comfort, *The Origin of the Bible*, p. 35, emphasis added).

Balaam, son of Beor or Bosor, whom the Bible depicts as a false prophet and an opponent of ancient Israel (cf. Num. 31:16; II Pet. 2:1, 15; Jude 11) offers an example. Admittedly, Balaam was not a writer of Scripture. Yet, he was fully aware of God's command to communicate faithfully the prophecies revealed to him concerning Israel (Num. 22:20, 35, 23:12, 26, 24:13). If it was impossible for Balaam, a false prophet, to corrupt the revelation given to him directly by the LORD or in vision via His Spirit (Num. 23:5, 16, 24:2-4, 16), how could the biblical authors, who were generally willing vessels in God's hands by virtually all accounts, inaccurately transmit His revelation to the autographs? (See the book of Jonah for an example of a prophet and biblical writer who could not thwart the communication of God's prophecy to Nineveh, nor its later "inscripturation.")

Therefore, it is logical to conclude that God's revelation, both in its oral form as spoken by His servants and in its written form (i.e., the Bible) as penned by the biblical authors, was accurately recorded because the Spirit of truth ensured that it was recorded in truth (John 16:13; II Pet. 1:20-21). To suggest otherwise would make the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, the agent of a lie—an utter impossibility.

The Purity of the Autographs

In spite of its human co-authors, the Bible reveals that all the words of God are pure: "The words of the LORD *are* pure words: *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever" (Psa. 12:6-7, KJV).

When properly translated, Psalm 12:6 affirms the complete trustworthiness of the biblical autographs, and verse seven holds relevance for the reliability of the biblical manuscripts down through time. In his book *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*, Bullinger wrote, "It has been a great difficulty with many to think that the LORD's words should require purifying, especially after the declaration in the first part of the verse, that they are 'pure'" (Bullinger, *Figures*, p. 71). Bullinger commented that the presence of an ellipsis (a figure of speech that means there is something missing from most English translations of this passage from the Hebrew text) and the incorrect translation of the Hebrew word *eretz* (earth) have added to the passage's interpretative difficulties. He further noted that the word *eretz* is generally understood by translators to mean "a crucible made of earth or clay." Bullinger explained that this understanding is incorrect because the context would require that the Hebrew word *adamah* for ground, soil or clay be used, and not *eretz*, meaning the whole earth (Ibid.).

According to Bullinger, the difficulty of this verse disappears when the word *eretz* (earth) is properly translated with its preposition *lamed* (Hebrew letter "l") and the ellipsis is supplied. Traditionally, this word has been translated as if it were in the genitive case, which depicts the furnace as belonging to or of the earth. Bullinger clarified

that a *lamed* indicates the word earth is in the dative case (acting as an indirect object), requiring translators to render the phrase “to or pertaining to the earth”(Ibid.). The ellipsis is supplied by repeating the noun “words” from the beginning of the verse. After making these adjustments, Bullinger offered this fitting English translation of Psalm 12:6 from the Hebrew: “The words of the LORD are pure words, *as* silver tried in a furnace; [words] of the earth: (or pertaining to the earth), purified seven times.”

In biblical numerology, the number seven signifies perfection. Hence, the words found in the Bible had “to be perfectly purified” before they could be used as “the words of Jehovah” (Bullinger, *Number in Scripture*, p. 169). In comparison to man’s often deceitful and impure statements, the precepts, words and promises of the LORD are pure and without dross (Psa. 12:2-4, 6; cf. Psa. 18:30, 19:7-11, 119:140; Prov. 30:5). The primary meaning of Psalm 12:6 is that only God’s promises (words) can offer comfort to the oppressed (Psa. 12:1, 5, 7-8). The entire context of Psalm 12:1-8 limits the interpretation of verse six to the words spoken by the holy men of God and penned by the biblical authors.

While the context of Psalm 12 refers to the giving of promises to the oppressed, it can be applied to the ministry of the apostles and their writing of the New Testament. Following His last Passover, Jesus petitioned the Father to **keep** (i.e., preserve) His apostles from the evil one, Satan (John 17:15). Yet, while they were in the world, Jesus asked the Father to “Sanctify them in Your truth; Your Word is the truth” (John 17:17). What was this word of truth? The answer is found in Jesus’ statements found earlier in His prayer: “For I have given them the words that You gave to Me” and “I have given them Your words” (John 17:8, 14). It was the words and teachings of Jesus “as an express communication from the Father, through the Faithful and True Witness [i.e., Jesus], [that] was that ‘word of truth’ through which He prays that they might be sanctified” (Jamieson, vol. 3, p. 452).

As Jamieson, Fausset and Brown noted, it was after Jesus ascended to heaven and the promised Holy Spirit was given on Pentecost that the “full sanctifying effect” of the Father’s word of truth was upon the apostles (Ibid.). That sanctification process enabled the apostles to complete the mission for which they had been set apart by the Father and sent into the world by Christ (John 17:9, 18). That work primarily consisted of preaching the Gospel of truth (Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:5) and writing the New Testament, so that succeeding generations of believers might have a permanent, truthful record of Jesus’ words (cf. Matt. 28:19-20 and John 17:20). The Father’s words, revealed by His Son Jesus to the apostles, would of necessity have to have been recorded accurately by the apostles for Jesus’ previous prayer to have lasting validity. It is the perfectly purified words as found in the Old Testament and completed by the New Testament that have been given to the saints for salvation, edification and perfection.

Purification of Human Words: Bullinger continued his remarks on this passage by explaining that “the words in which *Jehovah* has been pleased to make His revelation, are not the words of angels (1 Cor. xiii.1), nor the ‘unspeakable words of Paradise’ (2 Cor. xii.4), but they were words pertaining to man in this world—human words—but refined and purified as silver” (Ibid., pp. 71-72). In revealing His Word, God purified human words for His purpose by giving some found in Scripture exalted meanings and others new definitions from their previous ones found in Classical Greek. He also coined some new words especially for use in the sacred texts. The Greek word *epiousios*, for example, which is rendered “daily,” is used only in the Lord’s Prayer in Matthew 6:11 and Luke 11:3 (Bullinger, *Figures*, pp. 72-73).

The Need for Purity: The need for purity in communicating God’s revelation arose early in Israel’s religious life. Moses, a contemporary of Balaam, instructed the people that one condition for prophets who *presumed* to speak in God’s name was that they communicate *only* what God had commanded or imparted to them to speak (Deut.

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18:20-22; cf. Jer. 14:14-15). The penalty for a prophet in ancient Israel who falsely spoke a word in God's name was death. Another important requirement was that all new revelation had to conform to the content of existing oracles and prophecies (Deut. 13:1-5; cf. Gal. 1:8). At the height of Judah's apostasy, the prophet Jeremiah penned a severe denunciation of the lying prophets who led the people astray, stating that these prophets had spoken "a vision of their own heart" that was not of God (Jer. 23:9-32).

From the beginning, this injunction was transferred to the writing of Scripture. In the face of a confrontation with Korah, Dathan, Abiram and others over the priesthood and his divine appointment as Israel's human leader, Moses stated, "Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for I *have not done them* of mine own mind" (Num. 16:28, *KJV*). The context shows that Moses' statements referred collectively to all his works, including his writing of Scripture. The presence of the phrase "by the hand of Moses" in Numbers 16:40 reveals that the section designating Aaron and his lineage as priests (Num. 3:1-10) was written before this confrontation. It is apparent that it was to this section of Scripture that the rebels objected, fancying that Moses had composed it from his own imagination in order to acquire power for himself and his brother Aaron.

By the first century AD, this attitude toward the Hebrew Scriptures had become so ingrained in the psyche of the Palestinian Jews that the historian Josephus wrote, "... how firmly we have given credit to those books of our own nation, is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them, or to make any change in them" (Josephus, *Against Apion*, 1:8:42).

Though the prophets of ancient Israel did not often understand the meaning of their messages or prophecies (Dan. 12:4, 8-9; Zech. 4:5; I Pet. 1:10-11), they accurately recorded what God had revealed to them. The testimonies of Jesus and the apostles were unanimous in claiming that the Hebrew Bible in all its details (every jot and tittle) was a faithful and authoritative record of God's revelation. (See page 246 for details.)

The apostles were mindful of the previous injunction for purity. To differentiate authentic apostolic instruction and writings from those of false teachers active in the first century, Peter boldly declared, "We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word ... no prophecy of Scripture [i.e., God-breathed writings] originated as anyone's own *private* interpretation" (II Pet. 1:19-20; see also 2:1). Peter's intent was to clarify to the brethren that the apostles had not spoken or written their own words, but only those they had faithfully received of God by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (II Pet. 1:21).

The Bible contains several prohibitions against altering the words of its texts (see Deut. 4:2, 12:32; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18-19). Two of these prohibitions carry warnings of penalties: "Every word of God is pure ... Add thou not unto His words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Prov. 30:5-6, *KJV*) and "... if anyone adds to these things, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of *the* book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from *the* book of life, and from the holy city, and from the things that are written in this book" (Rev. 22:18-19). There would be no need for these prohibitions if either God's communication of His revelation or the autographs contained errors. If this indeed were true, the words of the Bible would have been rejected by even their own adherents as mere fable soon after their initial writing because no one would have been able to differentiate truth from error.

Truth #6: The Biblical Writers Reflected Their Own Styles

The sixth truth of "inspiration" is largely self-evident: The biblical authors retained their own unique styles and free will during their writing of Scripture.

The New Unger's Bible Dictionary describes a "writer's characteristic manner of

expression” as his *style*. “The sacred writers form no exception; each one maintains his individuality; and it is therefore perfectly proper to speak of the style of Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc. But apart from the style that is the expression of the mental and moral idiosyncrasies of the prophets there is a style that characterizes them as prophets. This arises from the method of prophetic revelation. When inspired [i.e., moved] of God their intellectual and emotional nature was quickened. They knew by intuition....They were in the region of spirit as contradistinguished from that of sense and time. At the same time they retained their personal characteristics and native susceptibility” (Unger, *The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, pp. 1043-1044).

Packer summarized the biblical and historical evidence on this subject as follows: “The idea [of inspiration] is not of mechanical dictation, or automatic writing, or any process which involved the suspending of the action of the human writer’s mind. Such concepts of inspiration are found in the Talmud, Philo, and the Fathers [early Christian scholars], but not in the Bible. The divine direction and control under which the biblical authors wrote was not a physical or psychological force, and it did not detract from but rather heightened the freedom, spontaneity, and creativeness of their writing” (Comfort, p. 35). J.N.D. Kelly’s *Early Christian Doctrines*, pages 60-64, offers a survey of the ante-Nicene Christian teaching concerning “inspiration” and the state of the biblical authors while under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

That the Biblical writers retained possession of their minds and self-consciousness as they penned the utterances of God adds credibility to their testimonies. (See “Witness of the Spirit” on page 257.) For this reason, the personalities, intellects, abilities and cultural, educational and occupational backgrounds of the biblical authors came to the fore as they wrote their compositions. They borrowed heavily from the language of the time and the circumstances affecting the nation of Israel and Judah. The prophets of ancient Israel, for example, incorporated poetic imagery, as cultivated at the prophetic colleges founded by Samuel, in order to lead the hearts and consciences of the people to repentance (Unger, p. 1044; see also page 241 for details about Samuel’s prophetic institutions).

Likewise, in New Testament times, Paul’s style reflected his learning as a Pharisee, sitting at the feet of Gamaliel, the learned doctor of the Law (Acts 5:33, 22:3). The vocabulary and style of Luke are so refined that literary scholars have often compared his writings to those of other Classical Greek authors (Zodhiates, *The Hebrew-Greek Key Study Bible*, p. 1261). Luke’s use of *Koiné* Greek reflected his precise technical training as a physician (Col. 4:14). John’s simple and easy-to-understand literary style was evidence of his “gentle, untutored, affectionate soul” and his knowledge of the Greek, and the sermons and epistles of Peter hold traces of the “impetuous earnestness of his noble yet faultless character” (Zodhiates, p. 1315; Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, p. 2).

With this insight, it is possible to appreciate how the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke offer differing accounts of an event that occurred during the three and a half years of Christ’s ministry. What might seem like a conflict, error or discrepancy to some skeptics probably in reality is nothing more than a differing perspective. If one compares the three Synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke with the fourth Gospel of the apostle John, this truth becomes even more self-evident.

Truth #7: The History of the Written Word of God Closely Followed That of Oral Prophecy

As previously noted, the subject of II Peter 1:20-21 pertains to written prophecy: “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture [Gk., *propheteía graphes*, God-

breathed writings] originated as anyone's own *private* interpretation; because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the holy men of God spoke as they were moved by *the Holy Spirit*" (I Pet. 1:20-21).

One truth taught by these passages is that the *writings* of the apostles (and all biblical authors) possessed the same divine character and origin as their preaching. A closer examination of these and other passages in Second Peter reveals another important truth of the divine authorship of Scripture: "**But I will make every effort that after my departure** [i.e., death, v. 14], **you may always have a written remembrance** of these things [contained II Pet. 1:1-12], *in order to practice them for yourselves*" (II Peter 1:15). And again in chapter three, Peter wrote, "Now, beloved, I am writing this second epistle to you; **in both** [epistles], **I am stirring up your pure minds by causing you to remember**, *in order for you to be mindful of the words that were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of the Lord and Savior, spoken by us, the apostles*" (II Pet. 3:1-2).

As we examine the words in bold type in the previous passages against the backdrop of II Peter 1:19-21, a pattern emerges: The history of the writing of the New Testament books closely followed the lives and ministries of the apostles. When Peter wrote his Second Epistle in 65-66 AD, he had been a minister of Jesus Christ for more than 35 years. He realized his death was nearing, which is evident by his statements in II Peter 1:12-15. Thus, Peter and the apostles were preparing a permanent truthful record of the prophetic word they had received from the Lord Jesus and had preached to the brethren (I Pet. 1:25). The only way that Peter and the other apostles could stir up the brethren's memory of the truth, so they could practice these things for themselves after the apostles' deaths, was through a God-approved document. The authors of New Testament were following a pattern established by Moses, the prophets and the other writers of the Hebrew Bible. A review of this pattern, which comprises the seventh truth of "inspiration," follows.

Holy Men of God: The expression "holy men of God" found in II Peter 1:21 is essential to obtaining an accurate understanding of this seventh truth. The Greek language reveals that this term can refer to *any* human being called by God to speak on His behalf, without reference to gender. This understanding corresponds to the general New Testament use of the Greek word *anthropos*, a form of which the English word "men" is translated. (See Matt. 19:3, 5, 10 for one exception where the word *anthropos* is translated as "man" instead of "woman" or person. This shows the translation of this word is context driven.)

The Online Bible program lists 73 instances throughout the Bible where the term "man of God" refers to individuals who served as God's spokespersons. The Bible explicitly connects this expression with 13 people: Moses (Deut. 33:1), Samuel (I Sam. 9:6-10, 14), David (Neh. 12:24), Elijah (I Ki. 17:18), Elisha (II Ki. 4:7), Shemiah (II Chr. 11:2), Igdaliah (Jer. 35:4), Timothy (I Tim. 6:11), and five additional unnamed people (Judg. 13:6; I Sam. 2:27, I Ki. 13:1, 20:28; II Chr. 25:7). It is no coincidence that it was first applied to Moses and last to Timothy. It is apparent that Paul entrusted his final writings to Timothy and expected him to use them in proclaiming God's Word to the brethren at Ephesus, where he served as a minister (I Tim. 1:3; II Tim. 4:9, 11-13).

The use of the term "men of God" can be expanded to other biblical characters, such as Abraham, whom the Bible describes as a prophet (Gen. 20:7), and Huldah the prophetess, who communicated God's word to the emissaries sent by King Josiah (II Ki. 22:14ff). Though all the holy servants of God (prophets, prophetesses, apostles and the like) were obligated to speak for Him, only some were moved to preserve a written record for future generations. Therefore, we have confined our study to those servants of God whom He called to be writers of Scripture (cf. Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*,

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pp. 301-304). As such, there are about 40 men who can be classified as “holy men of God” as defined by II Peter 1:20-21.

Most of the biblical writers were prophets in the strictest sense of the word, in that they predicted future events (Deut. 18:22). Haggai and Zechariah were called of God to serve as prophets and labored among the people of Judah to lead them to repentance and to incite them to complete the second temple. Others, such as Joshua, Ezra and Nehemiah, were prophets in the sense that they spoke for God and interpreted His oracles (cf. Josh. chs. 1, 23-24; Ezra 9, Neh. 8:2-3, ch. 13). Moses is an example of a biblical author who belongs to both categories. Some of these writing prophets authored historical, poetic or prophetic books. Moses and Samuel are examples of men who wrote books belonging to the first category; David, the second; and Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, the third.

When God Spoke Through His Servants: The following passages provide key markers that allow us to examine history and ascertain when the trail of prophetic speaking began and ended. More importantly, these basic markers also allow us to pinpoint the general time period when the biblical authors wrote and “canonized” Scripture. This process occurred **over a period of 1,500 years.**

In his introduction to the book of Hebrews, the apostle Paul outlined how, when and through whom God spoke His words to mankind: “God, Who spoke to the fathers **at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by His Son**, Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds” (Heb. 1:1-2).

The first section of Hebrews concludes with a warning to consider carefully the words of the Bible, especially those of the Greek New Testament Scriptures, which contain the complete revelation of salvation through Jesus Christ, the Son of God: “For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away. For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense, How shall we escape, *if we* have neglected so great a salvation; **which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him**; God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders, and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will” (Heb. 2:1-4).

A Chronology of Prophetic Speaking

Period #1: Old Testament Era

God spoke directly to the fathers (the patriarchs, including Moses): When: Gen. 2:16–Ex. 3:4; Ex. 20. How: Spoke in similitude, vision and dreams to individuals from Adam onward and to the Israelites on Mount Sinai.

God spoke by His prophets to ancient Israel and Judah: When: From the call of Moses (Ex. 3:4) through the prophetic succession begun by Samuel, which ended with Malachi (Mal. 1:1). This authority lasted until John the Baptist (Luke 16:16). How: Face-to-face as in the case of Moses who served as mediator between God and the people, and through His Spirit (vision, etc.) in His prophets (Neh. 9:29-30; Zech. 7:12).

Period #2: New Testament Era

God spoke by John the Baptist to ancient Judah: When: From the beginning of John’s ministry in 25 AD (Luke 3:2) until his death (Matt. 4:12). How: In the spirit and power of Elijah, meaning the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:17, 76; 7:26).

The Holy Spirit, Human Authors and the Value of Scriptures

God spoke by His Son to ancient Judah: When: From the beginning of Jesus' ministry in 26 AD (Matt. 4:12; Mark 1:14-15) to His ascension in 30 AD (Acts 1:8). How: By direct revelation from the Spirit of the Father dwelling in Jesus (John 8:38, 12:49, 14:10).

God spoke by those who heard Jesus: When: 30–70 AD. How: By apostolic and prophetic testimony confirmed by miracles, wonders and gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit revealed to the apostles things concerning Christ and led them into all truth (John 16:12-15). God also spoke to John in 95–96 AD on the Island of Patmos by His angel and the Holy Spirit (Rev. 1:1, 10).

(The previous chart has been adapted from a similar graphic portrayal by E.W. Bullinger, cf. *The Companion Bible*, App. 95).

Hebrew Scriptures

Moses was the first prophet of Israel and first writer of what is now known as the Old Testament (see page 237). He was a leader and prophet in ancient Israel during the 1400s BC. Malachi is traditionally considered to be the last prophet and biblical writer of the Hebrew Scriptures (Mal. 1:1). Three extra-biblical proofs attest to when prophetic speaking and writing ceased in Israel:

Proof #1: The Jewish historian Josephus was from one of the leading priestly families of his time. He is considered by many scholars to be a reliable witness to the general state of the Hebrew canon (authoritative list of books) during the inter-testamental period through the first century AD.

Writing about 90 AD, Josephus offers testimony that allows for an exact dating of the beginning and ending of prophecy and the writing of the Old Testament. The citation that follows is from his *Against Apion*, a work written to Greek readers in defense of the antiquity of the “Jewish” religion and culture: “For we have ... but only twenty-two books ... of them five belong to Moses ... but as to the time **from the death of Moses till the reign of Artaxerxes** [464-424 BC], king of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes, the prophets, who were after Moses, wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining four contain hymns to God, and precepts for the conduct of life. It is true, our history [a reference to noncanonical writings] hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former of our forefathers, because **there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time**; and how firmly we have given credit to those [canonical] books of our nation, is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them, to take anything from them, or to make any change in them; but it becomes natural to all Jews, immediately and from their very birth, to esteem those books to contain divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and, if occasion be, willingly to die for them” (Josephus, 1.8.38-42, emphasis added).

The writings of Josephus have come under closer scrutiny and even ridicule in recent decades in the ongoing debate over the first-century Hebrew canon. In an essay entitled “Josephus and His Twenty-Two Book Canon,” York University professor of humanities Steven Mason reviewed Josephus' writings (*The Antiquities of the Jews* and *Against Apion*) for the scope of his canon and the credibility of his statements. Mason concluded that Josephus' “use of scriptural materials in *Antiquities* agrees by and large with the summary statement in *Against Apion*: he really did believe at some deep level that uniquely inspired ‘prophets’ wrote the records in a bygone age. Although much is omitted from his biblical paraphrase [in *Antiquities*], what we have represents the heart

of the traditional Hebrew and Greek canons; he seems aware, without saying as much, that books like 1 and 2 Maccabees are later and separate....the circumstantial evidence of Josephus's own use of the Bible in the *Antiquities* does not mean what it might otherwise have seemed to mean: it does not, after all, imply an open canon. Indeed, once we know *Against Apion*, we can go back to *Antiquities* and discover that Josephus really does believe that the succession of prophets has ceased, and we can discern a seam after the 'records' have been exhausted. *Against Apion* was written as a deliberate sequel to *Antiquities*, so it is unlikely that Josephus is aware of any substantial conflict between the two. This means that his willingness to alter the biblical text in manifold ways proves nothing about his formal view of canon. His example removes the force from appeals to circumstantial evidence as proof that the Dead Sea Scrolls' authors or Philo or Ben Sira [Sirach] had an open canon" (McDonald, *The Canon Debate*, pp. 125-126).

Admittedly, the writings of Josephus do not give a detailed account of the closing of the canon. He simply assumes that from birth all Jews esteemed the Hebrew Scripture as divine. Josephus' testimony is consistent with "most traditional views" of the early Hebrew canon and cannot be taken to support any theory of an open canon (Ibid., p. 127). Although Mason's research shows it is impossible to clearly determine the internal shape of the first-century Hebrew Bible from Josephus' statements, it does demonstrate that Josephus' testimony as it relates to the dating of the writing and close of the Hebrew canon remains unshaken.

Proof #2: Consistent with Josephus' testimony, the Jews of the inter-testamental period recognized that prophecy had ceased in Judah. Following the temple's desecration in 167 BC by the Seleucid king of Syria, Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 BC), the writer of the apocryphal history *First Maccabees* states that the Jews cleansed the temple and set aside the polluted stones of the altar "until there should come a prophet to shew what should be done with them" (*I Maccabees* 4:46).

Proof #3: In writing of Jonathan's succession as head of the Hasmonean dynasty and of the ensuing turmoil in Palestine, the writer of *First Maccabees* once again states, "So was there great affliction in Israel [161-158 BC], the like whereof was not since the time that a prophet was seen among them" (*I Maccabees* 9:27).

The Facts Refute an Open Canon: The famous Dutch rationalist philosopher Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677 AD) was apparently the first to theorize the selection of the sacred Old Testament books by a pharisaical council (McDonald, p. 159). In 1871 the German historian and biblical scholar Henrich Graetz proposed that a rabbinical synod held at Jamnia (or Yavneh), located on the Mediterranean coast, closed the Hebrew canon about 90 AD (Ibid., p. 146). Versions of Graetz's theory have become widely accepted by modern scholars over the years and have led to a wholesale rejection of the traditional description of the canonization of the Hebrew Scriptures by Ezra and the Great Assembly. In the process, these scholars have largely ignored the biblical clues pointing to Ezra's role in shaping the Hebrew text and canon.

Therefore, many scholars now blindly believe that the Hebrew canon was settled at rabbinical synods held in 90 and 118 AD in Jamnia. Ironically, the only official discussions of the canonicity of specific Old Testament books are preserved in the tractates (*Yadaim* and *Shabbath*) of the Mishnah (ca. 200 AD). According to rabbinical discussions found there, three or possibly four Old Testament books (e.g., Esther, Ecclesiastes, Proverbs and Song of Solomon) were open to dispute due to alleged internal contradictions (e.g., Prov. 26:4-5) or, in the case of Esther, that the name of God was not found in it (Bromiley, pp. 598-599). However, previously the books of Esther, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon were part of the *Megillot*, the five books read by the priests to Jews as part of the holy day liturgy at the temple in Jerusalem. Dr. Ernest L. Martin, biblical historian and scholar in canonical studies, cogently observed: "Since the official priests

were ordered to read these books ... no one suspected that they were anything but canonical. Indeed, most criticism concerning the canonicity of these five books came after the Temple services ceased in 70 A.D. when the books were no longer being read at regular intervals" (Martin, p. 164).

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia offered this evaluation of the tradition of these two councils and rabbinical doubts surrounding these books: "... it is far from certain that there ever were such 'councils' in the strictest sense, and very little is known about the actual occasions of meeting. While Jamnia became a center of Jewish study and learning under Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai after A.D. 70, **there is nothing to indicate that anything formal or binding was decided in connection with the OT [Old Testament] canon**, even though certain books such as Esther, Canticles, and Ecclesiastes may have been discussed in this regard" (Bromiley, pp. 598-599, emphasis added).

In addition, Harding University professor emeritus Jack P. Lewis' essay, entitled "Jamnia Revisited," re-examined the scholarly arguments and historical data surrounding the Jamnian theory of canonization (McDonald, pp. 146-162). Lewis soundly exposed the fallacy of the Jamnian hypothesis and confirmed the findings presented thus far, that is, no reference to a synod exists in the Jewish sources used to support it, and it is impossible to know what effect the rabbinical scholars at Jamnia had on the formation of the Hebrew text and its canon. As a result of Lewis' work, modern scholarship has essentially been stripped of a definitive substitute for explaining the formation of the Hebrew Old Testament canon and text.

Thus, scholars have appealed to the Dead Sea Scrolls for evidence of an open Hebrew canon. Lawrence Schiffman, professor of Hebrew and Judaic studies at New York University, served as part of a group of scholars that studied the Dead Sea Scrolls. In his book *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Schiffman evaluated the scholarly claims for such conventions against the evidence of the Dead Sea Scrolls: "... the textual evidence does not support that claim....Because mishnaic Judaism [ca. 70-200 AD] had already inherited a tradition, predating the Yavnean period [ca. 70-150 AD] and ordaining which books were part of the biblical canon, the Rabbis at Yavneh had only to make a few final rulings to complete the corpus. And even for this rather limited agenda **there is no evidence that any such meeting ever took place at Yavneh**" (Schiffman, p. 162, emphasis added).

The Dead Sea Scrolls can only provide information about the biblical canon during the late Hasmonean and Herodian periods (ca. 152 BC onward). Professor Schiffman commented "... despite certain differences in biblical books ... **nothing in the Qumran corpus suggests that the contents of canonical books had not yet been fixed**. Rather, by this time, the books constituting the Bible were fixed and closed" (Schiffman, pp. 162, 169, emphasis added).

Roland K. Harrison, professor of Old Testament studies, also clarified that the evidence reflects a canon inherited from earlier generations: "The evidence from Qumran shows clearly that no canonical OT [Old Testament] composition could have been compiled later than the Persian period [333 BC], regardless of when it was deemed canonical" (Bromiley, p. 599). This evidence refutes the liberal scholarly notion that the book of Daniel was written ca. 165 BC.

The authors of the New Testament quote from every Old Testament book except Esther, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Ezra, Nehemiah, Obadiah, Nahum and Zephaniah (Ibid., p. 597). According to Professor Harrison, the difficulties surrounding these books are removed when one considers that the "Twelve Minor Prophets were always treated by the Jews *en bloc* as one canonical work; hence if one of the twelve was quoted all were recognized" (Ibid.). The fact that Chronicles (II Chr. 24:20ff) is quoted in Matthew

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23:35 and Luke 11:51 “presupposes also the canonicity of Ezra-Nehemiah, as originally these books were one with Chronicles, though they may possibly have already been divided in Jesus’ day. As for Esther, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles [Song of Solomon], it is easy to see why they are not quoted: they probably failed to furnish NT [New Testament] writers material for quotation. The NT writers simply had no occasion to make citations from them. What is much more noteworthy is that they never quote from the apocryphal books, though they show an acquaintance with them....Everything depends upon the manner in which the quotation is made. In no case is an apocryphal book cited by NT authors as Scripture, or as the work of the Holy Spirit. As a witness, therefore, the NT is of paramount importance. For, though it nowhere tells us the exact number of books contained in the OT canon, it gives abundant evidence of the existence already in the 1st cent. A.D. of a definite and fixed canon” (Ibid.).

Many of the apocryphal books were read by Jews everywhere. Rabbis explicitly had to prohibit the reading of the apocryphal book *The Wisdom of Jesus, Ben Sirach*, also known as *Ecclesiasticus* (dated 180 BC), which indicates that it had become popular among many Jews, apparently for its pearls of wisdom and its emphasis on the Law (Ibid., p. 167). The popularity of this book is understandable when one considers that it was at a time when many Jews, including many priests, in Palestine began embracing Hellenism (Greek language, culture and lifestyle) and rejecting the Mosaic customs (cf. *II Maccabees* 4:13-15).

Yet, none of these apocryphal works **ever** became a part of the Hebrew canon in Palestine. The **only** Palestinian Jews who did not recognize the traditional Hebrew canon were of the renegade sect that lived in Samaria. (They acknowledged only the first five books of Moses). The Old Testament apocryphal books, written during the inter-testamental period, were rejected by official Judaism as part of the Hebrew Scriptures.

What about the Jews of Alexandria, Egypt? After reviewing the evidence for an expanded canon among the Alexandrian Jews, Professor Harrison offered these conclusions: “the LXX [Septuagint] version as we know it from the Christian MSS [uncial manuscripts, dated 300s AD] extant is by no means a sufficient proof that Alexandrians [Jews] possessed a ‘larger’ canon which included the Apocrypha ... Philo’s testimony is negative, in that he witnesses against the apocryphal books as an integral part of Holy Scripture” (Bromiley, p. 599).

Jesus Himself offered no indication that any part of the Hebrew Scriptures was missing or in dispute. He affirmed that both its traditional tripartite canonical form (Moses, Prophets and Psalms) and its text were quite settled in stating “one jot or tittle shall in no way pass” from it (Matt. 5:17-18; Luke 24:27, 44).

These facts more accurately represent the state of the Hebrew canon during the Second Temple period (539 BC-70 AD). (For a concise overview of the historical and textual evidence, see *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 1, pp. 591-601).

Proposed Dating for the Old Testament: Josephus’ statements in *Against Apion* clearly link the prophets’ ministries to the writing of the Old Testament books. For Josephus, prophetic speaking ceased in Israel with the reign of the Persian King Artaxerxes (464-424 BC). The historical evidence, including the testimony of an apocryphal book, confirms that the recognized era of prophecy began in Israel with Moses in ca. 1486 BC and ended with Malachi somewhere before 424 BC. Granted, allusions to open prophecy exist in the book of *Sirach* (*Sirach* 24:33). However, the testimony from the apocryphal book of *Maccabees* counters these statements and confirms Josephus’ testimony that no prophets appeared in Judah between 424 to 158 BC, about 150 years before Jesus’ birth.

From these sources, we can conclude that a 445-year period of prophetic silence reigned from the time Malachi wrote his book until the advent of John the Baptist in 25

AD. Although this period has often been described as “silent” in regard to its prophetic significance, it was bursting with activity vital to the state of the Hebrew text, the coming of Jesus Christ and the proclamation of the gospel. An honest evaluation of the textual evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls shows that a fixed canon was commonly accepted among the Jews of Palestine during the inter-testamental period. Josephus expressed the one Jewish standard: Only those books and their contents that had been written in Hebrew and Aramaic before 424 BC were included in the Old Testament canon.

The time frame above closely parallels the traditional dating of the Old Testament books and the sealing of the Hebrew canon under Ezra, Nehemiah and the Great Assembly from 515 to ca. 400 BC. This dating bars the door to the entry of any apocryphal books into the Hebrew canon. Almost all of the apocryphal works were written after 200 BC, paralleling the rise of Hellenism (the spread of Greek language, culture and art) in Palestine.

While the Jewish people readily recognized John the Baptist as a prophet of God, their leaders generally refused to heed his call to repentance (Matt. 21:26; Luke 3:15, 20:1-8; John 1:19-28). For nearly 45 years, the Jewish leaders stubbornly resisted the preaching efforts of John, Jesus, the apostles and other servants of God like Stephen. Their unbelief ironically functioned as a safeguard of the Hebrew Scriptures in that it focused the Jewish people’s attention on preserving the Old Testament text from outside forces, especially Christian, no matter what the risk. In this sense, they did fulfill the statement of the apostle Paul, “in that they were entrusted with the oracles of God” (Rom. 3:2). The unbelief of the Jews, the Levitical scribes in particular, did not nullify the promise of God to preserve His Word in the Hebrew Bible.

Greek Scriptures

The revelation given to the holy apostles and New Testament era prophets laid the foundation for the early Church (Eph. 2:20, 3:5). The trail of witnesses reveals that the New Testament period of prophecy rightfully began with John the Baptist in 25-26 AD, and ended with the apostle John in ca. 96 AD. (See Inspiration, Truth #8.) Two proofs are offered for a general dating of oral and written prophecy during New Testament times:

Proof #1: While some might consider John the Baptist a part of the Old Testament era of prophecy, we have included him with the New Testament era because he came speaking in the spirit and power of Elijah to preach repentance and prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ and His gospel (Luke 1:17); and he was the object of a prophecy given by Malachi, the last recognized prophet of ancient Israel (Mal. 3:1). Jesus proclaimed, “The Law and the Prophets *were* until John; from that time the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone zealously strives to enter it” (Luke 16:16). Hence, John the Baptist serves as a transition between the administration of the Law and the Prophets and the gospel of the kingdom and grace.

Prior to 26 AD, the truth about Jesus and His kingdom was contained in the Old Testament types and shadows and in the writings of the prophets (cf. Heb. 10:1; I Pet. 1:10-12). Following John the Baptist’s imprisonment and death by the hand of King Herod, Jesus boldly proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom (Matt. 4:12-17; Mark 1:14). After Jesus’ ministry, His apostles preached the fullness of the gospel of the kingdom and grace, thus fully establishing the New Testament prophetic era (Acts 20:24-25, 28:23, 30-31).

Proof #2: Internal clues within the book of Revelation indicate that it was the final New Testament book to be written. External clues to its dating are found in the writings of the early church historian Eusebius, who quoted from the writings of Irenaeus, Tertullian

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and Polycrates. All three men lived within a century of John's death. Polycrates was a disciple of Polycarp (a disciple of the apostle John) and Irenaeus was a pupil of Polycarp.

Eusebius noted that John was condemned to the Island of Patmos, a Roman penal colony about 35 miles off the coast of Asia Minor, in the fifteenth year of the Roman Emperor Domitian (95 AD) (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3:18). The apostle John wrote that he was on Patmos for "the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:1-3, 9). During his stay on Patmos, he wrote the revelation God gave to him through visions, pertaining to the days immediately following John's life and continuing until after the return of Jesus Christ.

The Roman Emperor Nerva released John from Patmos in 96 AD following the murder of Domitian, as part of a reparation program decreed by the Roman senate for the atrocities Domitian committed. After his release, John returned to Ephesus with his testimony of the visions, which the glorified Jesus Christ commanded him to write (Rev. 1:11, 22:18). John's Revelation offered answers to the questions circulating for more than 30 years in the apostolic Christian Church as to when and how the second coming of Jesus would take place. *Apocalypse*, the Greek name for this book, served as the capstone to the New Testament era of prophecy.

Eusebius recorded that John lived until the time of Emperor Trajan (98-117 AD). Prior to his death around 98-99 AD or thereabouts, John, along with the apostle Philip and other brethren, apparently collected and sealed the New Testament writings (Ibid., 3:20, 23, 31; 5:24).

A comparison of Genesis and Revelation reveals that they are perfect bookends. Bullinger noted 30 parallels between the contents of these two books, demonstrating how they compliment each other (cf. Bullinger, App. 3). The subject matter of the book of Genesis indicates that it is a book of beginnings. The latter is a book of end time events. The prohibitions in Revelation 22 against altering the text strongly indicate that this book marked the close of what became known as the New Testament (Rev. 22:18-19). Similar injunctions marked Moses' sealing of the Book of the Law, which included the book of Genesis (Deut. 4:2, 12:32).

Proposed Dating for the New Testament: The internal and extra-biblical evidence places the general period of prophetic speaking and revelation in the first century from 25-96 AD. This time period closely parallels a more accurate dating of the writing and canonization of the New Testament books by the apostles and other New Testament writers (see Chapters Three through Seven).

Truth about Canonization

In recent decades, a great deal of confusion has arisen over which of the 27 books of New Testament constitute Scripture. The difficulties surrounding the New Testament canon are easily resolved when one understands the true meaning of "canonization."

In biblical criticism, the term "canon" refers to a collection of authoritative biblical books that met the standard of ancient "canonizers," who regarded them as God-breathed. The process by which these Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek books became authoritative for Jews and Christians is known as canonization. The English word "canon" originated from the Greek word *kanon*, which was likely derived from the Hebrew word *qaneh*, meaning reed or cane. Essentially, *kanon* denoted any rule or standard of measurement, such as a plumb line for the construction of a building.

The apostle Paul is the only New Testament writer to use this Greek word. The most important verse is found in the book of Galatians: "And as many as walk according to this rule [Gk., *kanon*], peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16; cf. Phil. 3:16). The context reveals that the guiding rule in matters of

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salvation were the words Paul had preached to the brethren in Galatia (vv. 14-15). Paul later used *kanon* to refer to the “limits of the responsibility in gospel service as measured and appointed by God” (II Cor. 10:13-16; Vine, *Vine’s Expository Dictionary*, p. 900).

Near the end of his life, the apostle Paul wrote a second epistle to Timothy to encourage him in the work of his ministry. Paul warned him to deal wisely with false teachers and to stand firm for the testimony of Jesus Christ. Timothy was to commit to faithful men the truth Paul had given him so that the tradition and doctrine of the early Church could be passed along (II Tim. 2:2). Part of that tradition included the words of the apostles that had now been set to writing. The context of II Timothy 4:1-5 clearly links preaching, convicting, rebuking and encouraging to the standard given in the God-breathed writings (Gk., *graphe*), as noted earlier in II Timothy 3:16-17.

In summary, the word “canon” simply refers to the standard given in Scripture by which Christians are to measure themselves. That standard (writing) was sealed by each biblical writer before his death (cf. Deut. 31:9, 24-26; II Pet. 1:12-15). Those who refused to live by that standard would eventually lose the knowledge of it.

Dating of Apocrypha

The books that comprise the Old Testament wisdom, historical and romance apocryphal literature were written generally from 200 BC to 100 AD (Bromiley, p. 165). Archaeological, paleographic (study of ancient writings) and carbon-14 tests have established that the scrolls of the apocryphal and pseudepigraphic writings found among the Qumran community fit within this traditional timeframe (Schiffman, pp. 32-33, 181-195). The names of books that belong to the Old Testament apocrypha are listed in the Glossary of Terms.

Over 100 different works belong to the New Testament apocrypha (see Glossary for a partial listing). It is “doubtful whether one of them appeared before the second century of our era [100 AD]” (Unger, p. 86). The earliest verifiable noncanonical work associated with the New Testament was I Clement, written about 95 AD to the brethren of Corinth from those at Rome (Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 48). Even if we grant that the apocryphal *Epistle of Barnabas* was written before the turn of the first century, the English editors of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* explain that “the numerous inaccuracies ... with respect to Mosaic enactments and observances—the absurd and trifling interpretations of Scripture ... and the many silly vaunts of superior knowledge [i.e., Gnosticism] in which its writer indulges” would deter anyone from considering this the authentic work of Barnabas, Paul’s fellow apostle and missionary to the Gentiles (Roberts, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, p. 251). It was only in the second century that Christian scholars, like Clement of Alexandria, began to consider it authentic (Ibid.).

As noted earlier, the writing and sealing of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures closely followed prophetic speaking in both ancient Israel and the days of the apostles. This truth is clearly revealed in II Peter 1:15, 19-21, 3:1-2. All the evidence shows that the apocryphal and pseudepigraphic works never gained entrance into the official authoritative Hebrew or Greek canons until after the first century AD. Thus God ordained that the official canon of the Bible be limited to the 66 books (Genesis through Revelation) of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures as found in most English Bibles today.

Truth #8: All Scripture (Old and New Testaments) Is Profitable for Christians and Serves a Holy Purpose

In II Timothy 3:15-16, the apostle Paul contrasted “the sacred writings” (Gk., *tá hierá grammata*) with “All Scripture” (Gk., *pasa graphe*). Paul used the literary device

of contrast to reveal to Timothy a deeper truth about what constituted God-breathed writings.

The correct rendering of the words *tá hierá grammata* is important to the interpretation of these passages.

The Greek definite article *tá* ("the" in English) is either in dispute or missing from modern critical texts of the Greek New Testament. Because of this omission, some scholars have wrongly assumed that this phrase relates to sacred learning acquired through rabbinical exegetical methods (Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, pp. 315-316). The use of the word *grammata* in another passage with respect to Jesus Christ offers clarification.

As Jesus was teaching in the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles, the Jews were amazed, saying, "How does this man know letters [Gk., *grammata*], not having been schooled?" (John 7:15). As the late Marvin Vincent, professor of sacred literature at Union Theological Seminary, explained, "That a Jew should know the Scriptures was not strange. The wonder lay in the exegetical skill of one who had not been trained by the literary methods of the time" (Ibid., p. 316). The latest literary methods of Jesus' time were taught in the rabbinical schools in Jerusalem. Jesus had not been "schooled" in a rabbinical institution as the apostle Paul had, being instructed by Gamaliel, the famed pharisaical teacher of the Law (Acts 22:3).

A further source of clarification for *tá hierá grammata* can be found in the historical usage of this expression among Greek-speaking Jews of that era. Both Philo and Josephus used this expression to refer to the Hebrew Scriptures (cf. Josephus, *Antiquities*, Pref. 3, 4; 10.10.4; Philo, *On Rewards*, sec. 14; *On the Embassy*, sec. 29).

The proofs above show that Paul's encouragement to Timothy to "**continue in the things you did learn ... knowing from whom you have learned them,**" means that *tá hierá grammata* could only refer to the sacred writings of the Hebrew Scriptures, *not* rabbinical learning. Timothy's father was a Greek, which is evident in that Timothy was not circumcised (Acts 16:1, 3). As such, it was left to his mother and grandmother to teach him the proper interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures. Both his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois were Christians, in whom the Holy Spirit dwelt (II Tim. 1:5). As a result, they were able to impart to Timothy a true understanding of the allusions and references to Jesus in the Hebrew Scriptures. This understanding would lead Timothy to salvation and to his calling later in life.

Equally important to the understanding of these passages is the correct interpretation of the phrase *pasa graphe*, "All Scripture."

In II Timothy 3:16, Paul did not insert a Greek definite article before *graphe*, "Scripture." Jamieson, Fausset and Brown explain how its absence affects the interpretation of this passage. "One reason for the Greek article not being before 'Scripture,' may be that, if it had, it *might* have seemed to limit 'Scripture' to the *hiera grammata*, 'Holy Scriptures' (v. 15) of the Old Testament, whereas the assertion is general" (Jamieson, vol. 3, p. 511).

Paul likewise did not include the verb "is" in the Greek text in verse 16. Its absence "marks that not only the Scripture *then* existing, but what was *still to be written till the canon should be completed*, is included as *God-inspired*" (Ibid.). When Paul wrote his Second Epistle to Timothy in 67 AD, his letters were already recognized as "Scripture" by Peter as indicated in Peter's Second Epistle, written a year or two before Paul's second letter to Timothy (II Pet. 3:15-16). In addition, nearly all of the New Testament books had been written, edited and sealed by this time. (See Chapter Four on page 72 for more details on when the New Testament books were written.)

When Paul wrote to Timothy that "all Scripture" was God-breathed, he evidently had in mind the Hebrew scrolls of the Old Testament in the synagogues and in private

use in some Jewish homes, along with the autographs of almost all his books stored safely at Troas on the western coast of Asia Minor (II Tim. 3:15, 4:13). Paul informed Timothy that Scripture was profitable for: 1) making one wise unto salvation, 2) doctrine, 3) reproof, 4) correction and 5) instruction in righteousness (II Tim. 3:15-16). Everything—the narratives, histories, prophecies, parables, phrases, clauses, words and figures of speech—found in the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures was profitable for Timothy in his work as a minister. By adhering to the God-breathed Scripture as the standard, he would be fully equipped to fulfill his divine calling (II Tim. 3:17).

With this background, Paul's subsequent charge to Timothy to "preach the word" takes on greater significance. The New Testament books set apart by the apostles before 100 AD constituted God's complete, authoritative and prophetic revelation. As previously noted, Ezra, Nehemiah and the Great Assembly (with guidance from the prophets Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi) completed this process for the Hebrew Scriptures sometime before 424 BC. Timothy was to instruct and encourage faithful believers from every God-breathed writing and rebuke those who refused to hold to the standard of sound words the apostles had preached, which had now been set to writing (II Tim. 1:13; 4:2). Public reading of Scripture was intended to stem the rising tide of apostasy (II Tim. 4:3-4).

Law and Prophets Fulfilled

Jesus' life, death and resurrection literally fulfilled hundreds of Old Testament prophecies (cf. Luke 24:25-26, 44-46; I Pet. 1:10-12). Jesus also came as the spiritual lawgiver to amplify and magnify the commandments and laws of God, as prophesied by Isaiah, "The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness' sake; He will magnify the law, and make *it* honourable [or glorious]" (Is. 42:21, *KJV*). As the spiritual lawgiver, Jesus fulfilled the Law of God by revealing its complete spiritual meaning and intent in much the same manner as Moses expounded the Law for ancient Israel (cf. Matt. 5-7). While the Old Testament writings contain moral teachings as well, the writings of the Gospels and the New Testament epistles more vividly reflect the spiritual intent and application of the Law of God. For more on how Jesus fulfilled the Law and the Prophets, see Appendix E, page 729.

Jesus' words in Matthew 5:17, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill [Gk., *pleeroo*, meaning to complete or make full]," found their **ultimate** fulfillment in the writing of the New Testament. While on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-13), Peter, James and John saw Jesus in a vision talking with Moses and Elijah, who represented both aspects of the Old Testament—the Law and the Prophets, respectively. Suddenly the three were covered with a cloud, from which a voice came and said, "This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight. Listen to Him" (Matt. 17:5). These words clearly transferred the authority and revelation of God from the Law and Prophets to Jesus and His apostles.

When we consider the historical significance of passages like II Timothy 3:15-17, 4:6-8, 11-13 and II Peter 1:12-21, 3:1-2, 16 to the writing of Scripture, it becomes apparent that the apostles and the other New Testament writers were the very agents through whom Jesus was fulfilling the Old Testament Law and Prophets. This conclusion is bolstered by the apostle Paul's description of his ministry: "Of which I became a servant, according to the administration of God that *was* given *to* me for you, *in order* to complete [Gk., *pleeroo* as found in Matt. 5:17] the Word of God" (Col. 1:25). While the word "complete" in this passage primarily refers to Paul's preaching of the gospel (Col. 1:23), it can be expanded to his writing of Scripture, a duty which Paul describes was part of his ministry (Rom. 15:15).

The Confirmed Prophetic Word

About three years after Paul sent his letter to Colosse, Peter wrote: “We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word, to which you do well to pay attention, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and *the* morning star arises in your hearts; Knowing this first, that any prophecy of Scripture [Gk., *propheteía graphes*, God-breathed writings] did not originate of one’s own *private* interpretation; prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (II Pet. 1:19-21).

Two meanings can legitimately be derived from Peter’s remarks.

The Light of Revelation: As we consider the English translation of II Peter 1:19, it is evident that the apostle used a figure of speech known as simile, which compares two unlike things and is often introduced with “like” or “as.” Peter employed this literary device to convey a deeper spiritual truth to his readers. Contained in Peter’s references to light, the dawn and the morning star is a historical outline of the New Testament era of prophecy.

The light shining in the darkness could refer to the ministry of John the Baptist. The apostle John described him as “a burning and shining lamp [or light, *KJV*]” in whose light the Jews were willing to rejoice for a time (John 5:35). Even King Herod heard him gladly, until his wife used deceptive tactics to have John killed (cf. Mark 6:14-29). The Word of God revealed to John in the wilderness was to preach the baptism of repentance and remission of sins to prepare the Jewish people to meet their LORD, a fulfillment of the prophecies of Isaiah 40 (Luke 3:2-6). Hence, John’s preaching was like a light shining into ancient Judah’s spiritual darkness (Luke 1:79).

The events on the Mount of Transfiguration left an imprint on Peter’s memory. As Peter recounted the events surrounding that day in his Second Epistle, it is evident that the glory and majesty he witnessed confirmed for him that Jesus was the morning star, the Sun of righteousness spoken of by the prophet Malachi (Mal. 4:2; Rev. 2:28, 22:16). The revelation and ministry of Jesus Christ was a type of a new day dawning. For even Jesus declared, “I have come *as* a light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness” (John 12:46; cf. John 8:12, 9:5). And Matthew records, “The people who were sitting in darkness have seen a great light; and to those who were sitting in the realm and shadow of death, light has sprung up” (Matt. 4:14-16). Jesus was that great Light and His ministry to the people of Galilee and his preaching of the gospel was one fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecies (Is. 9:1-2; John 1:4-9). By extension, the ministry of the apostle Paul, who preached the gospel of Christ, was a light unto the Gentiles (Acts 13:47-48; Gal. 3:16).

It was the gospel declaration, the present truth contained in the apostles’ preaching and their God-breathed writings (II Pet. 1:12), that God the Father and Jesus Christ used to shine into the hearts of the early believers (II Cor. 4:4, 6). The glorious light of the gospel, along with the work of the Holy Spirit, was able to make sinful humans fruitful through conversion to the point of growing into the fullness of God’s love (II Pet. 1:3-8). In contrast, those who refused to accept the truth (light) of the gospel, including the false teachers of Peter’s day, chose to remain in their blindness and sin (John 3:19-21; II Cor. 4:1-3; II Pet. 1:9; 2:1ff).

When Peter wrote his Second Epistle in 65-66 AD, the early Church possessed nearly all of the New Testament writings. The writings of the apostles, especially those of Paul, clearly explained more fully the gospel and God’s magnificent mercy in bringing all humans—Jew and Gentile alike—into fellowship with Him through Jesus Christ, Who confirmed the promises made to Abraham (Rom. 15:8-13; Eph. 2:11-3:21; Col 1:24-29).

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The Light of the Written Word: With this understanding, the significance of Peter's words in II Peter 1:19-21 cannot be overstated. To confirm the authenticity and authority of the apostles' writings, Peter recited the miraculous vision he, James and John witnessed on the Mount of Transfiguration. He referred to the voice that they heard, which had instructed them to hear Jesus' words (II Pet. 1:16-18). This was Peter's way of refuting the critics of his day who denied the trustworthiness of the apostles' writings as the authoritative revelation of God.

Biblical scholar Dr. D.A. Waite explained that the writings of the New Testament authors were a direct fulfillment of Jesus' words in John 14-16 (Waite, *Defending the King James Bible*, pp. 11-12). The following chart highlights Dr. Waite's description of the parallels between Jesus' words and His authorship of the various New Testament books via the agency of the Holy Spirit:

Jesus' Words

John 14:26: "everything that I have told you"

John 15:27: "you also shall bear witness"

John 16:13: "lead you into all truth"

John 16:13: "it shall disclose to you the things to come"

New Testament Book(s)

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

Acts of the Apostles

Pauline and General Epistles

Revelation

As Paul would later do in his Second Epistle to Timothy, Peter now encouraged his readers to consider the New Testament writings on an equal footing with the Hebrew Scriptures: "Now, beloved, I am writing this second epistle to you; in *both*, I am stirring up your pure minds by causing you to remember, *in order* for you to be mindful of the words that were spoken by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of the Lord and Savior, *spoken* by us, the apostles" (II Pet. 3:1-2).

Hence, the writings of Peter and the other New Testament authors had become the final witness for succeeding generations and the only means of instructing future brethren who would believe on Jesus through their words (Matt. 28:20; John 17:20). To reject the combined testimony of the prophets' and apostles' God-breathed writings meant that one rejected Christ's words, which He had received directly from the Father. Ultimately, this led to a rejection of God the Father (John 12:48-50). Jesus referred to this truism in his instructions to the seventy, whom he appointed to preach the word in every city as a herald of His ministry, "The one who hears you hears Me; and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and the one who rejects Me rejects Him Who sent Me" (Luke 10:16).

For true believers, II Peter 1:19 is an admonition to pay attention to the *entire* prophetic word until the return of Jesus Christ. Christians are encouraged to view the Word of God as a light for their walk in this spiritually dark world. This conviction was expressed by King David who described God's Word as "a lamp [or candle] unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa. 119:105, *KJV*). In order for God's Word to be effective, Christians must hide it in their hearts, allowing it to judge their innermost thoughts and intentions (Heb. 4:12-13). Again, as David wrote, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psa. 119:11, *KJV*). Though this passage has direct reference to the Law of God, its application can be expanded to all Scripture. This principle was echoed by Jesus Who told Nicodemus, "But the one who practices the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*" (John 3:21). Only Scripture, *especially* the words of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit can truly direct a Christian's path.

Revelation No Longer Given for Scripture: There was one aspect of the prophetic word that was incomplete, that of the *foretelling* of the return of Jesus Christ and

Chapter Twelve

the establishment of the Kingdom of God on Earth. The apostles earnestly longed to know when this event would occur (Acts 1:6). Even Peter did not fully understand when Jesus' return would occur. He cautioned the brethren not to give credence to the claims of mockers of God's Word who would scornfully ask, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the forefathers died, everything has remained the same as from *the* beginning of creation" (II Pet. 3:3-4). Peter reassured the brethren by focusing their attention on God's merciful love for all human beings: "The Lord Jesus is not delaying the promise of *His coming*, as some in their own minds reckon delay; rather, He is long-suffering towards us, not desiring that anyone should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Pet. 3:9).

It would take another 30 years before the complete plan of God would be revealed and recorded in the book of Revelation. After the deaths of Peter and Paul in the late 60s AD, there is no record that God gave new revelation for the writing of Scripture to the surviving apostles until John's visions on the remote Island of Patmos. Only John was chosen to see in vision the prophetic events leading to Jesus' second coming. This 30-year gap in time between open prophetic revelation offers a plausible reason why many Christians in the eastern Roman Empire were reluctant to accept this book at first.

The visions of Revelation were a final fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy that some would not die until they saw the Son of man with his angels coming in His kingdom (Matt. 16:26-27; John 21:21-23). With the writing of the book of Revelation, the word of God had now been confirmed by the hand of Jesus Christ to the apostle John (Rev. 1:1). A new day had dawned as recorded in this final book of the Greek canon: Christians now possessed the complete understanding of God's love in the light of the gospel and the fully confirmed word of prophecy.

Since 96 AD, another period of silence in the giving of revelation for the writing of Scripture has reigned. This quiet will be broken as Psalm 50 and Revelation chapters 11 and 14 reveal. Just before the return of Jesus Christ, the Bible records that God will speak supernaturally to this world through His two witnesses and the three angels' messages (Rev. 11, 14). He will come first to judge Israel and then all peoples of the earth, leading them to repentance and offering them salvation. Until that time, God has given us a most precious gift—His God-breathed word, preserved in writing.

Points to Remember

- 1) The biblical writers were driven, carried or moved by the Holy Spirit—as a sailboat is carried by the wind—to record the very utterances of God.
- 2) Writing was the best safeguard against the uncertainties of oral tradition and the corruption of false ministers.
- 3) In the same manner that God instructed His servants what to speak, He also imparted to the biblical authors' minds through the agency of the Holy Spirit the words to write.
- 4) There were two ways that the biblical authors knew when and what to write: explicit commands and implicit commands (impulse of the Holy Spirit).
- 5) There are five functions that the Holy Spirit performed for the apostles that they were unable to do for themselves in their roles as authors of Scripture: teach them all things (as what to speak and write); bring to remembrance everything Jesus had spoken to them; bear witness of Christ, so they could effectively bear witness of Him; lead them into all truth; and disclose to them things to come.
- 6) The conscience can be trusted to bear a faithful testimony of a person's thoughts and actions *when* it is under the influence of (resting in) the Holy Spirit and the human heart, mind and actions are evaluated against the standards of God's Word.

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- 7) The truthfulness of the biblical writers' statements is confirmed by their consciences and the Holy Spirit bearing joint witness to their personal motives and purposes for writing.
- 8) The reliability of the biblical writings, including their details, is intricately tied to their authors' testimonies of their personal lives and witness for God.
- 9) Just as God performed miracles to confirm the words and authority of His servants to ancient Israel, He also bore witness to the authenticity of the apostles' message through signs, wonders, miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- 10) Scripture became the standard by which all prophetic messages were to be evaluated.
- 11) Most modern Greek texts and versions of the New Testament are based largely upon the testimony of the earlier uncials (manuscripts with capital letters), while the later dated minuscules (those with lowercase letters) form the basis for those produced before the 1880s AD.
- 12) When a number of readings of the modern critical or eclectic Greek texts used today for translating the New Testament are examined, it is apparent that some scholars have intentionally abandoned sound principles of textual criticism.
- 13) Critical scholarship is an inadequate standard for evaluating the accuracy of Scripture because it was designed only to measure empirical evidence, not spiritual realities.
- 14) The accuracy of the autographs cannot be judged by the errors made by copyists found in the surviving biblical manuscripts.
- 15) In revealing His Word, God purified human words for His purpose by giving some found in Scripture exalted meanings and others new definitions than those found in Classical Greek.
- 16) There would be no need for the prohibitions against altering God's Word if either God's communication of His revelation or the autographs contained errors.
- 17) The biblical authors retained their own unique styles and free will during their writing of Scripture.
- 18) "Inspiration" was not of mechanical dictation, or automatic writing, or any process which involved the suspending of the action of the biblical writer's mind.
- 19) What might seem like a conflict, error or discrepancy in the biblical accounts to skeptics probably is nothing more than one writer's perspective of a particular event.
- 20) The history of the written word of God closely followed that of prophetic speaking in both ancient Israel and the time of the apostles.
- 21) Though all the holy servants of God (prophets, prophetesses, apostles and the like) were bound to preach, only some (including their scribes or secretaries) were moved to preserve a written record for future generations.
- 22) The basic markers described in the book of Hebrews allow us to pinpoint the general time period when the Biblical authors wrote and sealed the Scriptures: 1486-424 BC for the Hebrew OT Scriptures and 26-98 AD for the Greek NT Scriptures.
- 23) Since the Old and New Testament apocryphal works were written outside of the historical and prophetic time frames, we can conclude that the original canon of the Bible excluded them.
- 24) In II Timothy 3:15-17, Paul was exhorting Timothy to recognize those apostolic writings, which had been set apart as Scripture, on the same level as God's revelation found in the Hebrew Scriptures.
- 25) Jesus' words in Matthew 5:17 found their ultimate fulfillment in the writing of the New Testament. The apostles and the other New Testament writers were the very agents through whom Jesus was fulfilling the Old Testament Law and Prophets.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

A SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF PRESERVATION

The writing of Scripture was truly a miracle. The testimony of the biblical authors is united in claiming that God's revelation to humankind was recorded without error in the original documents (autographs). On the other hand, the handwritten scribal copies (apographs) exhibit signs of scribal errors. Other manuscripts show symptoms of heretical tampering, and a few show the edits of copyists with noble intent.

Has God promised to preserve the original God-breathed texts throughout history? If so, does this preservation extend to the letters, syllables and words of the manuscripts or merely to the basic thoughts and truths of the Bible? How can we bridge the gap between the autographs and surviving manuscripts? Do the texts of the surviving manuscripts represent the *ipsissima verba*—that is, the “very words” of God?

Answers to these questions vary, depending on a person's view of history and the textual data. Various scholarly theories have been devised to reconcile the textual evidence collected by researchers over the centuries with the statements of the Bible. These theories have influenced the production of the Hebrew and Greek texts used for translating purposes. For this reason, it is crucial to accurately understand the subject of preservation.

God Has Preserved His Word as Promised

The Bible offers many statements that relate to the preservation of God's revelation recorded in the autographs. From these statements and the clear facts of the textual data, five major truths have been established:

- 1) God gave general promises of preservation.
- 2) God's focus was on the apographs (copies) of the autographs (originals).
- 3) God preserved His Word as promised.
- 4) Faithful apographs are God-breathed, authoritative, infallible and trustworthy.
- 5) The accuracy of faithful handwritten apographs can be verified.

The adjectives “providential,” “divine” and “biblical” have been used by various scholars to describe the process by which God preserved His Word. This process is better defined as “scriptural preservation” because the written word was Paul's emphasis in II Timothy 3:16. This expression has been adopted in this study, except in direct citations.

Truth #1: God Gave General Promises of Preservation

There are many passages that are commonly used to confirm or to deny the doctrine of scriptural preservation. Many ministers and scholars have selected only portions of these passages in order to support their positions, instead of searching for what they actually prove. The following is an in-depth examination of the major biblical proofs and their contexts.

Passage #1: “Know now that there shall fall unto the earth nothing of the **word** of the LORD, which the LORD spake concerning the house of Ahab: for the LORD hath

done *that* which He spake by [Heb., by the hand of] His servant Elijah” (II Ki. 10:10, KJV).

Comments: These remarks were made by King Jehu, God’s chief agent in bringing about the fulfillment of His prophecies of the destruction of Jezebel and Ahab’s royal dynasty (cf. I Ki. 19:17, 21:17-24; II Ki. 9:30-10:11). The proper meaning of the idiomatic expression “there shall fall unto the earth nothing” is that biblical prophecy shall be fulfilled, nothing of the LORD’s words shall fail (cf. Is. 46:9-10). To understand this passage’s relevance to the preservation of the sacred texts, it is important to realize that it had been about 12-15 years since God had given these prophecies to Elijah, and his ministry in Israel had ended (II Ki. 2). The Bible reveals that Elijah privately communicated these warnings to Ahab while in the king’s vineyard (I Ki. 21:18-29). The presence of the idiom “by the hand of” in this verse confirms that Elijah had compiled a written record of them before his ministry ended. These facts indicate that the unnamed writer of Jehu’s words (cf. II Ki. 10:34) had access to the original document of Elijah’s prophecies (likely preserved by other prophets) in order to verify that they had been written at the time professed. Hence, Jehu’s remarks serve as one sign confirming the authenticity of Elijah’s ministry (cf. Deut. 18:20-22). This same practice was repeated more than a century later by Isaiah (cf. Isaiah 8:1-4).

Passage #2: “The **words** of the LORD *are* pure **words**: *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, Thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever” (Psa. 12:6-7, KJV).

Comments: We have already examined these passages for their relevance to the divine authorship of Scripture. (See Inspiration, Truth #5 on page 263.)

Do these passages have relevance to the preservation of the biblical texts? Proponents of preservation often cite Psalm 12:7 as *the* major proof to support their position, claiming that the words “keep them” and “preserve them” in this verse refer to the “words of the Lord” in the previous verse. Opponents argue that the words in verse seven refer to the “poor” and “needy” in verse five, based upon the customary agreement between Hebrew pronouns and their antecedents in respect to their gender and number. (The Hebrew pronouns “them” in verse seven and the Hebrew nouns “poor” and “needy” in verse five are all masculine in gender and plural in number. The Hebrew nouns for “words” in verse six are feminine in gender and plural in number.)

Scholar Doug Kutilek has written an essay that examines the Hebrew grammar, context of this psalm in light of the rest of the book of Psalms, and the ancient and modern commentaries and translations of these verses. He concluded, “Based on clear evidence from grammar and context and confirmed by the best Biblical expositors, it can only be concluded that Psalms 12:6-7 has nothing at all to do with the preservation of God’s Word. It says nothing for or against it. It does not speak to the issue at all. It is, therefore, wholly irrelevant to the discussion and must not be appealed to as a proof text regarding Bible preservation” (Kutilek, “Why Psalm 12:6-7 Is Not a Promise of the Infallible Preservation of Scripture,” p. 4, www.kjvonly.org).

Ironically, Kutilek admits that exceptions to the principle of agreement between Hebrew pronouns and their antecedents do exist (see Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar, 135 o). For this reason, a few well-known commentators have concluded that verse seven refers to the “words of the LORD.” Because the “Book of Psalms is exceptionally regular [uniform] on the matter of gender agreement” between pronouns and their antecedents, the exegete is cautioned against violating the principles of Hebrew grammar in this instance (Ibid., p. 1).

On the surface, it seems that Psalm 12:7 has no direct value for scriptural preservation. However, the promises of preservation made in this psalm to persecuted saints (Psa. 12:1, 3, 5, 7) extend beyond “this generation forever.” It follows that in order for

future saints to obtain any lasting value from God's pledges of deliverance, the words of this and other psalms must be preserved. Herein lies this passage's value to scriptural preservation. This same connection between the purity of God's Word, His faithfulness and preservation is found in one of the proverbs: "Every word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him" (Prov. 30:5, KJV).

Passage #3: "The **law** of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the **testimony** of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple" (Psa. 19:7, KJV).

Comments: Psalm 19 discusses God's revelation as displayed in the heavens (Psa. 19:1-6) and preserved in His written Word (Psa. 19:7-14). The obvious intent of this passage is that God's law and testimony are faultless and reliable; no one can be led astray by following them. This passage **indirectly** serves as a proof of preservation. David's description of God's Word is as something more desirable than fine gold and sweeter than honey (Psa. 19:10), and numerous references to the various literary forms of the Pentateuch (e.g., law, statutes, judgments and testimonies), indicate that he was familiar with and meditated on its words. In order for David to have kept God's law and testimony (Psa. 19:11-13), he had to have possessed a trustworthy reproduction of His words in the Pentateuch as recorded by Moses nearly 400 years earlier. If this were not true, David's statements elsewhere in the book of psalms, especially Psalms 119, would retain no meaning.

Passage #4: "The **counsel** of the LORD standeth for ever, the **thoughts** of His heart to all generations" (Psa. 33:11, KJV).

Comments: David exhorts his readers in Psalm 33 to praise and fear God because His "Word is right" and "all His works *are done* in truth" (Psa. 33:4). For proof, he reminds them of God's sovereign power over His creation and His righteousness, judgment and goodness (Psa. 33:5-9). In verses 10-11, "a sharp contrast is drawn between mankind's shaky plans and the LORD's sovereign plans" (MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, p. 770). God's plans for and His protection of His people are expressed in the remainder of this psalm (Psa. 33:12-22). God's people can trust His care and judgment because He alone inhabits eternity and His truth, displayed in creation, serves as a confirmation of His goodness. The psalmist **shows** that succeeding generations would understand the goodness of God (the thoughts of His heart) because some means of describing His plans would exist (i.e., a written document).

Passage #5: "For the LORD *is* good; His mercy *is* everlasting; and His **truth** *endureth* to all generations" (Psa. 100:5, KJV).

Comments: This psalm serves as a thank offering to God. Verse five recognizes His eternal traits of goodness, mercy and truth. Verse three, however, offers **evidence** for preservation: "Know ye that the LORD *He is* God: *It is He That* hath made us, and not we ourselves; *We are* His people, and the sheep of His pasture." According to biblical scholar E.W. Bullinger, "The Hebrew accent places the chief pause on 'God'; and the minor pauses on 'know' and 'made': [implying] the knowledge of Jehovah as our God reveals to His People that He made them such, and that they are His 'sheep' and His care" (Bullinger, *The Companion Bible*, p. 817). Since eternal life is based on a truthful knowledge of God's goodness and mercy (John 17:3; Eph.1:18ff), it follows that a trustworthy document must be preserved that communicates His revelation and love to His people.

Passage #6: "He hath remembered His **covenant** for ever, the **word** *which* He commanded to a thousand generations" (Psa. 105:8, KJV).

Comments: Psalms 105 and 106 review Israel's history from God's perspective. This verse describes how God made an everlasting covenant with Abraham (cf. Psa. 105:7-12). A proper interpretation of this verse rests with the understanding that "word" means "promise" (Psa. 105:42). A generation is usually 20-40 years, implying that God

has been faithful in remembering His covenant and promise(s) to Abraham throughout the millennia. The real value of this verse to scriptural preservation is that it alerts the reader to other books of the Bible that preserve God's original promise to the patriarch (cf. Gen. 12, 15, 17, 22) and display the many fulfillments of this promise as a witness of God's faithfulness to Abraham and his descendants, both spiritual and physical (e.g., Ex. 3:6-17; Luke 1:72-73; Rom. 15:8-13; Gal. 3:14-18).

Passage #7: "Thy **word** is very pure: therefore Thy servant loveth it" (Psa. 119:140, KJV).

Comments: Psalm 119 extols the written Word of God. The English word "pure" in this passage in Hebrew literally means "refined or tried." This obviously pertains to God's guarantee that His Word is reliable and truthful. Based on this understanding, it more appropriately relates to the purity of the autographic form of God's words (cf. Psalm 12:6). In order for the psalmist to express such esteem for God's written Word, it is logical that he possessed a trustworthy copy of the original words of God's revelation. (See explanation for passage #3.)

Passage #8: "For ever, [art Thou] O LORD [For ever], Thy **word** is settled in heaven. Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth" (Psa. 119:89-90).

Comments: According to Bullinger, in the first part of both verses "we have Jehovah" featured (Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*, p. 39). In the second part of both verses, "we have what He has settled and established," meaning His Word and the Earth (Ibid.). While God's will and Word are only perfectly known in heaven, these passages offer assurances that God's revealed Word is unchangeable and as settled as the heavens. This promise is based on the fact that God lives forever (cf. Psalms 102:12, 26-28). His faithfulness is as lasting as the Earth, which He established through His spoken Word (Psa. 33:6, 9, 148:5). This passage, therefore, offers a **general** promise of Scriptural preservation.

Passage #9: "Concerning Thy **testimonies**, I have known of old that Thou hast founded them for ever" (Psa. 119:152, KJV).

Comments: This verse pertains to the unchangeable and eternal nature of God's testimonies. However, from the phrase "of old," one can **deduce** that the psalmist possessed a preserved document of God's testimonies.

Passage #10: "Thy **word** is true from the beginning: and every one of Thy righteous **judgments** endureth for ever" (Psa. 119:160, KJV).

Comments: Many English translations of this passage render the phrase "from the beginning" as "entirely," meaning God's Word is entirely true. Jamieson, Fausset and Brown note that a literal wording of the Hebrew clause in the first part of this verse is "the beginning of Thy Word is truth" and it is contrasted with "endureth forever" (Jamieson, *A Commentary on the Old and New Testaments*, vol. 2, p. 373). The commentators continue by relating how the phrase "from the beginning" actually "implies positively from the time when first it came to the knowledge of man; and by implication, from everlasting, as it shall be unto everlasting" God's word is true (Ibid., p. 374). As a result, we can **conclude** from this passage that God's Word has been preserved from the moment it was first given by God to man and will be forever.

Passage #11: "I will worship toward Thy holy temple, and praise Thy name for Thy lovingkindness and for Thy **truth**: for Thou hast magnified Thy **word** above all Thy name. In the day when I cried Thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul. All the kings of the earth shall praise Thee, O LORD, when they hear the **words** of Thy mouth" (Psa. 138:2-4, KJV).

Comments: Psalm 138 is one of many psalms in which David sings praises to God for the perpetual promise He made to him and his royal dynasty (Ibid., p. 392). A

proper interpretation of this psalm is possible when we recognize that it contains several figures of speech. “Word” represents the promise God made to David, that is the Davidic covenant (cf. I Chr. 17:23-27). God’s name in verse two is a figure of speech that stands for God Himself (Bullinger, pp. 409, 608). In other words, God’s promise to David is based on His very existence (cf. Ps. 89:35-37). There is another historical parallel in the Bible that verifies this conclusion. When God made His promise to Abraham, He “swore by Himself, since He could swear by none greater” (Heb. 6:13).

Verse four provides an answer to the unspoken question in verse two: “How will God magnify His word above Himself?” Nathan, the prophet, was the one who revealed God’s promise to David and recorded it as a future witness of God’s faithfulness (cf. II Sam. 7:4-29; I Chr. 29:29). These verses **show** that the preservation of the Hebrew text is tied to the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant. When the kings of the Earth hear of God’s love for king David, which they will likely read from the ancient Hebrew text, they shall praise the LORD for His faithfulness in keeping His promise to David.

Passage #12: “Every **word** of God *is* pure: he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar” (Prov. 30:5-6, KJV).

Comments: See comments for passage #2.

Passage #13: “Have not I **written** to thee excellent **things in counsels and knowledge**, that I might make thee know the certainty of the **words** of truth; that thou mightest answer the **words** of truth to them that send unto thee?” (Prov. 22:20-21, KJV).

Comments: These passages offer an **implied** declaration of scriptural preservation. Solomon explained that he wrote these proverbs, so readers could build trust in the LORD, know the certainty of His truth and be able to give a truthful answer to those who inquire after God (Prov. 22:19, 21; cf. I Pet. 3:15). Readers can only have confidence in the instruction of God’s Word if the original words have been faithfully preserved.

Passage #14: “The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh *is* grass, and all the goodness thereof *is* as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people *is* grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the **word** of our God shall stand for ever” (Is. 40:6-8, KJV).

Comments: Chapter 40 commences a section of Isaiah that highlights the hope and comfort of Israel’s future restoration by God after the nation’s judgment in captivity. Through the use of metaphor these verses offer **general** promises of the continued preservation and complete reliability of the biblical texts. In comparing the temporary and fading condition of nature and human beings, these passages more specifically declare that the fulfillment of the prophetic promises made to Israel is guaranteed (Is. 46:10-11; 55:10-11; Zech. 1:4-6; John 12:34).

Passage #15: “So shall My **word** be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it” (Is. 55:11, KJV).

Comments: The fifty-fifth chapter of Isaiah is a prophecy about the calling and repentance of Gentiles. It highlights the covenant God will make with them, according to the promises made to Abraham (cf. Is. 55:3-5; Rom. 15:8-13; Eph. 2:11-13). As snow and rain accomplish their ultimate work by bringing forth nourishment that satisfies human hunger, the gospel message, which is primarily in view here, shall accomplish its purpose in bringing repentance to the Gentiles. As such, this passage has relevance for the long-term preservation of the New Testament, specifically the Gospel accounts. For succeeding generations of Gentiles to believe on Jesus through the words of the apostles, a trustworthy record of their writings must have been preserved (John 17:20).

Passage #16: “As for Me, this *is* My covenant with them, saith the LORD; My

spirit that *is* upon thee, and My **words** which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever" (Is. 59:21, KJV).

Comments: This verse focuses on the future restoration of Israel under the New Covenant (cf. Is. 59:20; Rom. 11:26-27). Prophecy shows that God's Spirit will be poured out upon the Israelites and His Words will be in their mouths, minds and hearts; that is, every one of them will know the LORD (Heb. 8:7-13; Jer. 31:27-40). At that time, God's Word will truly exist forever in the hearts of the Israelites. As a result, this verse is a prophecy of the future restoration of Israel and **not a present promise** of scriptural preservation.

Passage #17: "But He answered *and* said, 'It is **written**, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every **word** that proceeds out of *the* mouth of God'" (Matt. 4:4; cf. Luke 4:4).

Comments: This passage is one of the strongest **direct** proofs for scriptural preservation of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. Greek scholar Dr. D.A. Waite explained that the Greek word for "written" is *gegraptai*, the perfect tense of the verb *grapho*, meaning to write (Waite, *Defending the King James Bible*, p. 9). Dr. Waite continued to explain how "the perfect tense indicates that an action has begun in the past and the results of that act continue right on down to the very present" (Ibid., citing from *The Intermediate Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, pp. 200-205). Dr. Waite added that Jesus' use of this Greek verb "... means that the verse He quoted to Satan had been written down in the past in the Hebrew language by Moses, and those very Hebrew words were preserved to the very day and hour when the Lord was quoting them to the Devil. Every time *gegraptai* is used or some other form of the perfect tense of that verb (and we have it scores of times in the New Testament) that is a proof of the **Bible's preservation**" (Ibid., p. 10, bold original).

More specifically, Jesus' confidence was in the word of the Hebrew text. In the first century, the words of the Hebrew text were comprised only of consonants, a few serving as vowel indicators (*matres lectionis*).

Passage #18: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one **jot** or one **tittle** shall in no way pass [Gk., *ou me*, an emphatic expression] from the Law until everything has been fulfilled" (Matt. 5:17-18; cf. Luke 16:16-17).

Comments: While Scripture does foretell of the passing of the heavens and earth (Psa. 102:24-27), Jamieson, Fausset and Brown note that "the prevalent representation of the heavens and earth in Scripture, when employed as a popular figure, is that of their *stability*" (Jamieson, vol. 3, p. 31; cf. Psa. 119:89-90; Eccl. 1:4; Jer. 33:25-26). This means that Jesus' *primary* intent in these verses was to affirm the continuing authority and truth of the writings of the Law and Prophets (the Old Testament), even in their smallest details as typified by the *jot* and *tittle* (Matt. 5:19-20). The *jot* (Gk., *iota*) was the smallest Hebrew letter and *tittle* (Gk., *kerata*) an ornamental extension on some Hebrew letters.

Jesus' reference to the *jot* and *tittle* would be incomprehensible if His focus was not on both the details (letters and words) and substance (doctrines and truths) of the Old Testament text. The Lord's comments in this passage **reveal** that the Hebrew text of the Old Testament of the first century AD was a trustworthy reproduction of the autographs and was more stable than the physical universe.

Three proofs follow that show Jesus' point of reference was the *entire* Hebrew text of the Old Testament and not just the "the Law," meaning the five books of Moses.

First, Jesus' second reference to the "Law and the Prophets" in Matthew 7:12

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clearly proves that the intervening material from Matthew 5:17-7:12 should be taken as a complete unit. This section of Scripture shows how Jesus fulfilled or magnified the writings of *both* the Law and Prophets, making their authority more binding (Is. 42:21). The term “the Law” in Matthew 5:18 must be interpreted in this context. The same scenario is displayed in Luke 16. At the beginning of Luke’s account Jesus declared, “The Law and Prophets *were* until John; from that time the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone zealously strives to enter it” (Luke 16:16). Near the end of this narrative (Luke 16:29), Jesus used the terminology “Moses and the prophets” in the same sense.

Through the use of parallel structure, E.W. Bullinger has demonstrated in *The Companion Bible* (pp. 1316-1317) how Jesus’ words and commands in Matthew 5-7 fulfilled the Law and exceeded the teachings of the Jewish Pharisees and scribes, who considered themselves the rightful successors of the Old Testament prophets in interpreting God’s Word (see talmudic tractate *Baba Bathra* 12a).

Parallel Structure of Jesus’ Words in Matthew 5:17-7:12

E	F Matthew 5:17-20: They fulfill the Law and the Prophets.
	G Matthew 5:21-48: They transcend the Law of Moses.
	G Matthew 6:1-7:11: They excel the Tradition of the Elders.
	F Matthew 7:12: They fulfill the Law and the Prophets.

Bullinger’s parallel structure of Luke’s account shows how the Pharisees voided the scriptural teaching on divorce and death (Bullinger, *The Companion Bible*, p. 1483). It is clear that the context of Luke 16:16-31 is different from that of Matthew 5:17-7:29. Hence, it offers a **separate** affirmation that Christ’s words dealt with *both* the Law and Prophets.

Parallel Structure of Jesus’ Words in Luke 16:15-31

S	A Luke 16:15: What the Pharisees esteemed (God’s abomination).
	B Luke 16:16-17: The Law and the Prophets Proclaimed.
	A Luke 16:18-30: What the Pharisees taught (God’s abomination).
	C ¹ Luke 16:18: Concerning divorce (the Law).
	C ² Luke 16:19-30: Concerning the dead (the Prophets).
	B Luke 16:31: The Law and the Prophets. Not believed (by the Pharisees).

Following the ministry of John the Baptist, prophetic authority and revelation shifted to Jesus Christ and His ministry. According to Bullinger, a comparison of Psalm 15 and Matthew 5:3-7:29 shows how Jesus used His prophetic office to proclaim “the character and conditions of a true citizen” of God’s kingdom based on the writing of the prophet and psalmist David (Ibid., App. 70; see appendix for Bullinger’s original outline, which has been modified due to space limitations.)

Comparison of Psalm 15 and Matthew 5:3-7:27

Psalm 15

The Citizen of the Kingdom

- 15:1 Introduction
- 15:2 Walking uprightly
 - Works of righteousness
 - Speaking truth from heart

Matthew 5:3-7:27

The Subjects of the Kingdom

- 5:3-12 Introduction
- 5:13-16 Walking in light
- 5:17-20 Work of righteousness
- 5:21-6:34 Truth in the heart

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15:3	No backbiting or reproach of neighbor Do no evil to neighbor	7:1-5 5:43-48	No condemnation of brother Love your enemies
15:4	Vileness rejected, godly fear honored Accountability	7:15-23 5:33-37	False prophets Accountability
15:5	Borrowing, bribery Guarantee	5:38-42 7:24-27	Vengeance, borrowing Guarantee

Second, there is ample evidence to demonstrate that the term “Law and Prophets” in first-century usage comprised more than two of the threefold divisions (Law, Prophets and Writings) of the current Hebrew Bible.

In many instances, the expression “the prophets” was used to designate books not normally associated with those written by prophets like Isaiah or Jeremiah. F.F. Bruce, former professor of biblical criticism and exegesis at the University of Manchester, explained: “The divine revelation that the Old Testament records was conveyed in two principal ways—by mighty works and prophetic words. These two modes of revelation are bound up indissolubly together. The acts of mercy and judgment by which the God of Israel made Himself known to His covenant people would not have carried their proper message had they not been interpreted to them by the prophets—the ‘spokesmen’ of God who received and communicated His word....The interplay of mighty work and prophetic word in the Old Testament explains why history and prophecy are so intermingled throughout its pages; it was no doubt some realization of this that led the Jews to include the chief historical books among the Prophets” (Comfort, *The Origin of the Bible*, p. 7).

In the first century AD, the weekly reading of Scripture in the Jewish synagogues was known by the term “the reading of the Law and the Prophets” (Acts 13:15). The Hebrew text was divided into 154 sections (*Sedarim*), allowing for a three-year lectionary cycle of the entire Old Testament. These divisions follow the ancient Palestinian cycle, which Ezra instituted upon his return from Babylon. Poetical books like Psalms, Proverbs and Job were read as part of this triennial Palestinian cycle in use during the time of Jesus and Paul. (Most synagogues follow the Babylonian annual cycle today.) This practice indicates the expression “the Prophets” used in the book of Acts was an ancient designation, including more than the traditional prophetic books. (A complete listing of the *Sedarim* for each Old Testament book is available in Christian D. Ginsburg’s *Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible*, pp. 32-65.)

Paul’s general use of the expression “the prophets and Moses” shows that it was a phrase commonly used in the first century to describe the writings of the entire Old Testament (cf. Acts 26:22). In pleading his case before King Agrippa, Paul specifically made reference to the sufferings of Jesus (Acts 26:23), aspects of which can be found in each of the threefold divisions of the current Hebrew Bible, including Genesis, Isaiah and Psalms (e.g., Gen. 3:15; Is. 52:13-53:12; Psa. 22).

Luke’s use of the term “Moses, and from all the prophets” in Luke 24:27 could easily be used interchangeably with the expressions “the Law of Moses and *in the Prophets* and *in the Psalms*” found in Jesus’ later statement (Luke 24:44). Both instances show how Jesus opened the minds of His listeners to understand “the things concerning Himself” as found “in **all** the Scriptures” of the Old Testament (Luke 24:27, 45).

Third, the expression “the Law” must be interpreted in a manner that is consistent with both the context of Matthew 5-7 and its first-century usage. Jesus, the Jews and the apostle Paul used this term on numerous occasions to describe the authoritative nature of the teachings of specific Old Testament writings. The following chart shows that it was used on many occasions to refer to segments of the Hebrew Old Testament other than the books of Moses:

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Scripture

John 10:35

John 12:34

John 15:25

Romans 3:19

I Corinthians 14:21

Possible References

Psa. 82:6

Psa. 89:36-37; Is. 9:7; Ez. 37:25; Dan. 2:44; Mic. 4:7

Psa. 35:19, 69:4

Job 5:16; Psa. 107:42; Ez. 16:63

Is. 28:11-12

The parallel structures of Bullinger show that Jesus' entire discussion about the Law and the Prophets focused on making their spiritual meaning and intent more binding as a pattern of life. This is evident in how Jesus taught with authority and by His numerous statements, "But, I say unto you," "Verily I say unto thee" or "Take heed" (Matt. 5:20, 22, 26, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44, 6:1-2, 5, 16, 25, 29, 7:28-29).

In light of the literary and historical usage, the term "the Law" in Matthew 5:18 ought to be viewed as a reference to the authoritative nature of the Old Testament writings. As a result, Matthew 5:17-18 offers the **strongest detailed promise** of the continued authority *and* preservation of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.

Passage #19: "Truly I say to you, this generation shall in no wise pass away until all these things have taken place. The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My **words** shall never pass away" (Matt. 24:34-35; cf. Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33).

Context: During His sermon known as the Olivet prophecy, Jesus stated in the most *emphatic* language that His words possessed more stability than the physical universe and would be fulfilled. This passage offers the strongest **general** promises for the continued authority and preservation of Jesus' words, which are embodied in the New Testament writings as claimed by their authors (e.g., II Pet. 3:1-2; I John 1:1-3, 5).

Passage #20: "But if anyone hears My **words** [*rema*] and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. The one who rejects Me and does not receive My **words** [*rema*] has one who judges him; the **word** [*logos*] which I have **spoken** [*laleo*], that shall judge him in the last day. For I have not **spoken** [*laleo*] from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should **say** [*eipon*] and what I should **speak** [*laleo*]. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I **speak** [*laleo*], I **speak** [*laleo*] exactly as the Father has **told** [*epion*] Me" (John 12:47-50; notice base words in brackets in verses for later reference).

Comments: Jesus' words here constitute his final earthly invitation to the Jewish leaders for salvation. The Bible and history record that, by and large, the Jewish nation rejected it (John 12:37-43; Rom. 9-11). The actions of the Jewish leaders were grounded in their personal desire for power and prestige (John 12:42-43). Their refusal to heed Jesus' words of salvation placed them under the divine judgment spoken of by Moses nearly 1,500 years earlier (Deut. 18:18-19).

Do these passages hold any relevance for the preservation of Scripture? They **reveal** that Scripture, specifically Jesus' words, would be preserved until the judgment on the last day. If we believe that the apostles accurately recorded Jesus' words and actions, then the New Testament writings become a powerful witness in the day of judgment.

When the Greek words *rema*, *laleo*, *eipon* and *logos*, or their various forms, are used in respect to God the Father and Jesus Christ, they refer to Their spoken words. The presence of these words in this passage offers a graphic reminder of the need for accuracy and faithfulness in producing texts and translations of the Bible. The following working definitions have been adapted from *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon*: 1) *rema*, "speech or discourse, consisting of few or many words (i.e., teaching)"; 2) *laleo*, "to use words in order to declare one's mind and disclose one's thoughts," thus "having refer-

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ence to the sound and pronunciation of the words and in general the form of what is uttered"; 3) *eipon*, "to declare in words, use language"; and 4) *logos*, "those things which are put together in thought ... gathered together in the mind [and] expressed in words," hence a thing spoken or written (cf. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, vol. 2, pp. 2, 4, 40, 616, 619).

With this background, the importance of whether the original God-breathed letters, syllables and words of the biblical authors have been preserved in the surviving documents becomes apparent.

Jesus' Galilean dialect (Gk., *lalia* from the verb *laleo*) was distinguished from others of his time by specific features of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation (John 8:43). When He spoke to the Jewish rulers, for example, He uttered specific sounds (letters), words and parts of human speech that conveyed what God the Father had revealed directly to Him. If the New Testament authors accurately understood and recorded what Jesus said and what God revealed to their minds through the agency of the Holy Spirit, then the New Testament writings comprise God's literal words set to paper. The previous four Greek words offer principles for evaluating the reliability of manuscripts. If a manuscript repeatedly omits or changes letters, words and phrases vital to obtaining the original meaning of the text, then it must be considered an unfaithful witness for textual criticism. Both the substance (doctrines and truth) and the details (letters, syllables and words) have a special purpose in God's revelation of truth. Their preservation is vital in many instances to acquiring the authentic, accurate meaning of the original text.

Passage #21: "For you have been begotten again, not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible *seed*, by the living **Word** of God, *which* remains forever. For all flesh *is* like grass, and all *the* glory of man *is* like *the* flower of *the* field; the grass has withered, and its flower has fallen away. But the **Word** of *the* Lord remains forever; and this is the **message that was preached** to you through the gospel" (I Peter 1:23-25).

Comments: The apostle Peter adopted much of the phraseology of Isaiah 40:6-8 in his writing of these verses, omitting those words unnecessary for his purpose. When Peter wrote that the Word of God "remains forever," he was emphasizing God's **ongoing general promise** to preserve His Word, especially the words of Jesus, as the instrument through which believers would be begotten (Jas. 1:18; I Pet. 1:3). In contrast to the mortality of man, the gospel message is enduring and reveals the only means through which sinful humans can be saved and receive eternal life (I Pet. 1:2-9, 10-22). These verses affirm that the Bible is living and powerful (Heb. 4:12) and that God imparts eternal life to believers through Jesus' words preserved in the text of the Gospels. Faithful translations made from reliable Greek texts (i.e., Textus Receptus) ensure that believers possess the life-giving truths of Jesus expressed in English words (John 6:63, 68).

Summary

A review of these passages confirms that the preservation of God's Word is promised in Scripture. However, an honest evaluation of these Scriptural references reveals that many of them offer indirect promises. More direct and general ones are found more frequently in the New Testament, primarily Matthew's Gospel. This insight might tempt some to conclude that scriptural preservation is not a biblical doctrine. Such a conclusion would be mistaken. The real questions that must be answered are "Why must God preserve His Word?" and "What purpose do these promises serve?"

God's Obligation to Preserve the Texts

The preservation of the biblical texts is solidly grounded in God's covenant with Abraham. In the postdiluvian era, God specifically chose Abraham with whom to establish His covenant of promise (Gen. 12, 15, 17, 22). Abraham became God's divinely-chosen instrument through whom the entire world would be blessed (Gen. 12:3). The Bible is essentially a record of God's fulfillment of those promises, many of which pertain to Abraham's physical descendants and some to his spiritual heirs, the Israel of God or the New Testament Church (Gal. 6:16).

God's promises to Abraham were no doubt transmitted orally to his few immediate offspring. An increase in the size of Abraham's family and the limitation of human life spans after the Noachian Flood necessitated that a precise written revelation be made of what *Jehovah*, the covenant God, required of and promised to future generations of Abraham's descendants. After God delivered the Israelites from bondage in Egypt as He had promised Abraham (Gen. 15:13-15), it became imperative that the new nation possess a legal and religious system and document that reflected its divine calling (Ex. 19:4-6). God began the process by making a covenant with the Israelites and producing a written record of truth to instruct them in His ways.

Instruction, Testimony Integral to Covenant: The enduring need for instruction and testimony (witness) formed an integral part of God's covenant relationship with Israel. A brief survey of the nation's history verifies that the preservation of the Hebrew text served as the basis for these two activities.

God's own example served as the model for instruction in ancient Israel. He gave the people His words in written form as a means of teaching them His ways (Deut. 6:1-2). His intent was that they not forget Him, nor His covenant when they entered Canaan, the land of their inheritance (Deut. 6:10-12).

Upon completing most of the book of Deuteronomy (chs. 1-30), Moses entrusted it to the Levites and elders of Israel for safekeeping (Deut. 31:9). This action symbolized the official "transfer of responsibility for enforcement" of the covenant from Moses to Israel's priests and leaders (Nelson, *The King James Study Bible*, p. 348). Moses then charged them with the duty of teaching the people: "At the end of *every* seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing" (Deut. 31:11, KJV).

Public reading from the Book of the Law, primarily Deuteronomy, became the chief vehicle for teaching the people how to fear the LORD and to fulfill their covenant obligations (Deut. 31:12-13). The seventy-eighth psalm indicates that this regulation was also instituted to ensure that future generations of Israelites understood God's Word, so they "might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments" (Psa. 78:7, KJV).

A counterpart to public reading was **private instruction**. Deuteronomy 6:1-7 describes it as a lasting requirement of the covenant that was to continue beyond the nation's entry into Canaan. Parents were commanded to instruct their children from various parts of God's Law at every possible opportunity, strongly implying that written copies were available and circulating among the people.

God also commanded His people to bind the covenant's words as a "**sign**" upon their hands and foreheads (Deut. 6:8-9). Modern Orthodox Jews have interpreted this and other passages (Ex. 13:8; Deut. 11:18) to mean that leather pouches with written passages from the Law placed inside (known as *tephillin*) were to be worn (Nelson, pp. 123-124). Whether one takes these lasting ordinances literally or figuratively (as Deut. 6:6 suggests), they do show at the very least that the people needed ready access to written

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copies of God's Law in order to hold its words in continual remembrance.

While no written documents are mentioned in Deuteronomy 6:8-9, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown explain that it would be a mistake to assume that the people taught their children only from memory: "... a reference to their having the precepts of the law in a written form is contained in this very passage (v. 9), and abundant evidence exists to show that the Israelites were familiar with the art of writing....This injunction to write the 'words' on the door-posts of every house shows the extent of the popular attainments in reading as well as writing; and their previous education in those branches, however limited it might be, was a wise arrangement of Providence [God] for transmitting in Israelite families a knowledge of religious precepts" (Jamieson, vol. 1, p. 637).

God commanded Moses before his death to write a song that served as a **perpetual witness** against the children of Israel (Deut. 31:19). Moses then taught the people the song to help them "remember the demands of the covenant" (Nelson, p. 348; Deut. 31:20-22, 27-30). After Moses had finished composing this song, he placed it along with his earlier writings in the Book of the Law, and instructed the Levites to place this completed work in the side of the ark as a witness against Israel (Deut. 31:24-26).

This review verifies that the preservation of the Hebrew text was rooted in God's commands to the people and their own obligation to remember His words and works.

A lack of public instruction was the chief cause for Israel's repeated apostasy and covenant violations. A review of the nation's history shows that there were long uninterrupted periods during which God's Law was not taught publicly (II Chr. 15:2). The problem became so severe in ancient Israel and Judah that Hosea lamented: "My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to Me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Hos. 4:6, *KJV*). In commenting on the role of instruction in ancient Israel, scholar Spiros Zodhiates noted: "The absence of saving knowledge became a factor in their spiritual downfall ... which ultimately led to the deportation of Israel and the exile of Judah" (Zodhiates, *The Hebrew-Greek Key Study Bible*, p. 253).

As previously noted, history and prophecy were so intermingled that the Jews included the chief historical books with the writings of the prophets. Both served as God's lasting witness to His covenant people of His acts of mercy and judgment (Neh. 9:30). Poetical books, like Psalms and Proverbs, were God's way of inspiring and instructing the people to serve and obey Him more perfectly.

Upon his return from exile in Babylon, Ezra gathered the various sacred books together and established a Hebrew canon of Scripture. This allowed returning Jews to renew their identity as God's people (cf. Josephus, *Against Apion*, 1.8.42). Tradition states that Ezra instituted the triennial cycle of public reading in synagogues as part of his restoration of the Mosaic system in Judah. (See comments for passage #18 for details.) This measure inseparably joined the preservation of the entire Hebrew text to the public reading and private study of the Old Testament books.

Cycle Continues in Early Church: The cycle of instruction and testimony also played an integral part in the writing and preservation of the Greek New Testament, which records another fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises. Jesus' confirmation of those promises opened the door of fellowship into Abraham's spiritual family to all people (Rom. 15:8-13; Eph. 2:11-21). God gave to the New Testament prophets and apostles the revelation that both Jew and Gentile could be partakers of the Abrahamic promise through Christ (Eph. 3:5-6). This teaching was a major thrust of Paul's writings due to his divinely appointed ministry to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15; Gal. 2:7; Eph. 3:3).

While many Jews living in Jerusalem and a great number of priests became disciples of Jesus, the Jewish nation on the whole rejected the gospel. God in time called

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Gentiles to salvation, and they embraced the gospel as foretold by Isaiah (Is. 55:5, 11; cf. Rom. 11:13-33). Within a year or so of the founding of the church, the apostles and other evangelists conducted campaigns **witnessing** for Christ in Samaria (Acts 8:5-25). They eventually took that message to the outermost regions of the Roman Empire (Rom. 15:24).

Thousands of conversions (Acts 2:41, 4:4, 6:7) soon required that the apostles institute some method for teaching newly baptized Christians to observe the things that Jesus had commanded them during His earthly ministry (Matt. 28:20). A modest survey of the book of Acts is enough to confirm this (cf. Acts 2:42, 3:12-4:1, 6:8-10; 9:20-22). The writing of the Gospels naturally served a useful function in the teaching of Jesus' disciples.

On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus foretold of the early need for the writing and preservation of the Gospels for evangelistic outreach. In the midst of His prayer, He stated, "I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word" (John 17:20; cf. 1 Cor. 3:5-11). Jesus' thoughts were focused not only on those who would be called to repentance and faith in the first century through the apostles' preaching and writings, but also on future brethren who would be set apart by God through the truth of the gospel message (John 17:17). Textual scholar John William Burgon described this unique role of the Gospel writings: "The extraordinary value and influence of the sacred Books of the New Testament became apparent soon after their publication. They were most potent forces in converting believers: they swayed the lives and informed the minds of Christians: they were read in the services of the Church" (Burgon, *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*, p. 141).

By the end of the second decade of the church's existence (ca. 50 AD), the **epistle** became one of the chief instruments for preaching and teaching. Paul directed his congregations to read and to circulate his letters for teaching and doctrinal understanding (Col 4:16; I Thes. 5:27). The epistolary form allowed Paul and the other apostles to instruct, edify, correct and comfort many brethren at one time without being on location. Paul exhorted the brethren at Thessalonica to "stand firm, and hold fast the traditions that you were taught, whether by word or by our epistle" (II Thes. 2:15). He also set his epistles as the standard by which brethren were to measure themselves and admonish others: "Now if anyone does not obey our word by this epistle, take notice of that man and do not associate with him, so that he may be ashamed" (II Thes. 3:14). The writings of the other apostles also served as a means of instructing and exhorting the brethren (John 20:30-31; Rom. 15:14-16; I John 1:1-4; I Pet. 1:23-25; II Pet. 1:12, 15, 3:1-2; Jude 3-5, 17).

The early Church adopted the ancient model of **public reading** and instruction. This is reflected in Paul's charge to Timothy, the young evangelist at Ephesus, to devote himself to teaching and the public reading of God's Word (I Tim. 4:11, 13). A review of the fourth and sixth chapters of First Timothy shows that public instruction was the best method for curtailing the growth of apostasy and for protecting the spiritual health of a congregation (cf. I Tim. 4:1-7, 6:3-10).

The book of Acts offers a glimpse into the prevalence of public and private instruction in the early Church. In Acts 18:26, we find Aquila and Priscilla attending synagogue in Ephesus on the Sabbath to listen to the Old Testament being read. While at synagogue, they heard the Alexandrian Jew Apollos teaching boldly, but improperly about Jesus (Acts 18:24-25). Afterwards, the couple took him aside privately, instructing him in the Scripture so that he could preach Christ more effectively (Acts 18:26, 28).

One of the best sources for information concerning public and private reading in the early Church is a work entitled *Bible Reading in the Early Church*, written by Adolf Harnack, the late professor of Church history at the University of Berlin. Harnack's ex-

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tensive research into the public and private use of Scripture by Christians from 100-400 AD exposes the unfounded claims that the New Testament was not written until centuries after the apostles lived or that manuscripts of its text were not in widespread circulation before 100 AD. His investigations solidified his own belief that “among the Gentile Christians the order of public worship and private and family discipline in matters of religion and morality, took form in accordance with the Jewish (Jewish Christian) models” (Harnack, *Bible Reading in the Early Church*, p. 32).

Harnack’s research on reading within the early Church brought to public knowledge five things about the condition of the Gospels, Pauline Epistles and Old Testament before 200 AD:

1) Early Christian, apocryphal and heretical Gnostic writings “... make it quite clear that these Scriptures were known to a comparatively large number of Christians, and that this knowledge could not have been derived solely from what they heard in public worship, but that the writings must have been also in their hands....[and] had a very wide circulation and were studied by multitudes of Christians” (Ibid., pp. 36-37, cf. pp. 38-47, 63-64).

2) The post-apostolic and heretical writings of the period show that the Gospels and Pauline Epistles and Old Testament books “became in high degree and to a wide extent the subject of study and controversy in the Christian communities” (Ibid., p. 36).

The early enemies of the Church, primarily Gnostics, found within these writings, especially the Gospel of John, the means by which to “convert Primitive Christianity to a more advanced spirituality based on Hellenistic theology, [and] at the same time wean Primitive Christians away from their religious roots in the Old Testament” (Knight, *Primitive Christianity in Crisis*, p. 43).

3) “... it could not have been so very difficult ... for even poor men to obtain possession of books of the Holy Scriptures, if they made serious efforts to purchase them” (Harnack, p. 36).

4) From instructions in the apocryphal book *Shepherd of Hermas*, Harnack concluded that “house-to-house visitation” was common among early Christians and “that every divine revelation was made accessible to every individual Christian, that it was even brought into private houses and made known to the children. We could not wish for a stronger proof of the complete publicity of the Word of God” (Ibid., p. 39). The writings of Clement of Alexandria indicate that Christians met **privately** to read and study God’s Word at meal times, a practice likely reflecting the Jewish custom of the time (Ibid., p. 56).

5) While we do not know the precise form of the Greek translation of the Old Testament (Septuagint) available to early Christians, Harnack explained: “Among the Jewish Christians the private use of the Holy Scriptures [i.e., Hebrew Old Testament] simply continued; for the fact that they had become believers in the Messiahship of Jesus had absolutely no other effect than to increase this use, in so far as it was necessary to study not only the Law but also the Prophets and the Kethubim [poetical and historical books of the Hebrew Bible], seeing that these afforded prophetic proofs of the Messiahship of Jesus....This use simply and easily passed over from the Jewish to the Gentile Christians, for the Holy Scriptures in the Greek translation were fully accessible to, and were read by, the Jews of the Dispersion” (Harnack, p. 32).

At some point in time after his release from house arrest in Rome (63 AD), Paul had his remaining books written on parchment leaves and bound in the codex format (II Tim. 4:13). This suggests that Timothy either possessed scrolls of the Gospels and some of Paul’s books or that he was following the established custom of public reading and teaching from the Old Testament writings.

When Paul wrote to Timothy that “all Scripture” was God-breathed, he evidently

had in mind the Hebrew scrolls of the Old Testament in the synagogues and in private use in some Jewish homes, along with the autographs of almost all his books stored safely at Troas on the western coast of Asia Minor (II Tim. 3:15, 4:13). (See Inspiration, Truth #8, page 275 for details.) Paul informed Timothy that Scripture was profitable for: 1) making one wise unto salvation, 2) doctrine, 3) reproof, 4) correction and 5) instruction in righteousness (II Tim. 3:15-16).

With this background, Paul's subsequent charge to Timothy to "preach the word" takes on greater significance. Timothy was to instruct and encourage faithful believers from every God-breathed Scripture (writing) and rebuke those who refused to hold to the standard of sound words the apostles had preached, which had now been set to writing (II Tim. 1:13; 4:2). The practice of public reading and instruction was the only method that could effectively stem the rising tide of apostasy (II Tim. 4:3-4).

The divine obligation to preserve the Greek New Testament was rooted in the Christian community's continuing need for evangelism and instruction (Matt. 28:19-20; John 17:20). The Gospels and Pauline Epistles specifically addressed this need, which is precisely why Paul directed that his letters be circulated between neighboring churches like Colossae and Laodicea (cf. Col. 4:16).

Although congregations existed in many areas outside of Palestine by 180 AD, "the greatest concentration of churches was in Asia Minor and along the Aegean coast of Greece...Even around A.D. 325 the scene was still largely unchanged. Asia Minor continued to be the heartland of the Church....Here as in the coastal region of Thracia opposite, in Cyprus, and the hinterlands of Edessa, almost half the population was Christian, and the Church expanded with about equal strength from Asia Minor eastward to Armenia" (Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 53; the source for Aland comments was Harnack's *The Mission and Spread of Christendom in the First Three Centuries*).

For the apostolic writings to accomplish their intended purposes, the text of the New Testament needed to be preserved among people who spoke Greek and possessed a zeal and love for God. From Aland's comments, we can conclude that the demand for Greek manuscripts was greatest in Asia Minor and Greece for the first four centuries of the Christian era. This region, being the heartland of the early apostolic Church for nearly 400 years, was "best qualified in every way to watch over the faithful transmission" of the New Testament text (Pickering, "Concerning the Text of the *Pericope Adulterae*," p. 4). (See Preservation, Truth #3 on page 300 for more details.)

According to Aland, "the spread of the Church [in the second century] was largely among the common people ... who could not understand Greek" (Aland, p. 53). As a result, regional language translations "became the necessary medium for preaching the gospel" (Ibid.). By 150 AD, the need for a New Testament translation among Aramaic and Latin-speaking brethren became so great that faithful versions (Syriac Peshitta and *Itala*) were made from the Greek text in common use in those areas (Burgon, pp. 122-147; Johnson, "The Real Truth about the Waldenses Bible and the Old Latin Version," pp. 6-36).

The Purpose of Promises

God made general promises of preservation to reassure true believers that they would possess His Word in every age. Thus, they could with confidence fulfill the commissions that Jesus had given them (Matt. 28:19-20), which were contingent upon their having a faithful record of His words as recorded by the New Testament authors.

The Bible teaches that "inspiration" and preservation are connected. This truth is never stated explicitly in the Bible; it is reflected in the biblical authors' unflinching confidence in the purity of God's Word. This is no doubt part of the reason behind David's

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remarks, “As *for* God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: He *is* a buckler to all those who trust in Him” (Psa. 18:30, *KJV*). Old Testament authors, like David, were able to pen their statements because the documents that lay before them were trustworthy reproductions of the autographic form of the Hebrew text.

For the biblical writers, purity, implying preservation, of the text was rooted at the word level. This can be confirmed by a review of the bolded segments in the previous 21 passages, many of which refer to the “words” of Scripture. God’s general promise of preservation also extended to the letters (e.g., *jot*), when a change in consonants or vowels significantly altered the meaning of a word, as is frequently the case with the Hebrew text.

The first truth of preservation is founded directly on the fact that God’s Word offers promises that cannot be broken (cf. John 10:35). In numerous passages, the preservation of the Word of God has been compared to the physical creation. The immediate implication of such a connection is that the words of Scripture, especially those of Jesus, are more stable, faithful and constant than the heavens and the Earth. As God manifested in the flesh (I Tim. 3:16), Jesus had the authority to declare that His words would endure beyond the passing of the heavens and earth (Matt. 24:35). This specific promise applies not only to the broad concepts and thoughts conveyed by the accounts bearing witness to His statements, but also to the very words and forms of speech used to verbalize those thoughts. Ultimately, believers must place their confidence in God’s promises to preserve His Word. **Creation serves as a tangible confirmation that God has the power to preserve and uphold the authority of the words of Scripture.**

Truth #2: God’s Focus Was on the Apographs (Copies) of the Autographs (Originals)

The original documents penned by the prophets, apostles and their scribes have long disappeared. Most likely they were worn out through extensive use early on, which undoubtedly must have been the case with the New Testament autographs. The earliest surviving witnesses to the New Testament autographs are Greek papyri fragments of the Gospel of John (ca. 125-150 AD). The earliest manuscripts of the Hebrew Masoretic Text, date from 800-900 AD. These manuscripts are removed from the autographs by a century or several millennia, the latter being the case with Masoretic manuscripts.

The mass of textual data collected by researchers over the centuries shows that differences in wording exist between the various biblical manuscripts. Some scholars have used this data to deny the divine authorship of Scripture and God’s promises to preserve His Word intact. In an attempt to protect the Bible’s authority, some conservative ministers and scholars have transferred God promises of preservation from the biblical manuscripts to specific English translations, namely the King James Version (*KJV*). Their actions have caused unnecessary confusion and debate over the purity of the biblical texts.

The second truth of preservation bridges the gap between the autographs and surviving manuscripts, showing that God’s attention was clearly focused on the apographs of the Hebrew and Greek text.

Proof #1: Before his death, Moses entrusted the autographs of his five books, known collectively as the Book of the Law (Pentateuch), to the priests who placed them in the sides of the ark in the tabernacle’s sanctuary for safekeeping. God later commanded the kings of ancient Israel to make a copy of the law from this book found “before the priests the Levites” (Deut. 17:18). The purpose of this injunction was to teach kings how to rule the nation in righteousness. The blessing for ruling with equity was an extended life span for themselves, the nation of Israel and their children.

David apparently was the first king of Israel (1050-1011 BC) to comply with this

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requirement. A cursory review of Psalm 19 confirms that David possessed a copy of the Book of the Law. (See comments for passage #3 on page 284 for details.)

Moses sealed the autographs of his books ca. 1446 BC, nearly 400 years before David lived. David could only fulfill the requirement of Deuteronomy 17 because he had direct access to a faithful copy of the Book of the Law. This copy (autographs?) was kept in the sides of the ark located in the temporary tent David had erected next to his palace on Mount Zion (II Sam. 6:17; I Chr. 15:1-3, 16:1). Asaph, the chief Levite ministering before the ark, would bring the scrolls of the Law to David, who would make a copy of them for himself (I Chr. 16:4-5, 37). (Whether or not Deuteronomy 17:14-20 was added later to Moses' final book by the prophet Samuel has been a matter of some debate. If this account was added later by Samuel, as I Samuel 10:25 implies, it serves as a testimony to the diligence of the priests in preserving the Book of the Law for 400 years.)

A copy of the Book of the Law emerges again during the reigns of Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah and Josiah, three of Judah's righteous kings (II Chr. 17:9, 31:3, 21, 34:14). It appears one final time in the biblical narrative during Ezra's time, following Judah's return from Babylon (Neh. 8:1-12). What this means is that the priests and Levitical scribes had faithfully copied the Book of the Law by hand from the time of Moses to Ezra, a period of about 1,000 years. Interestingly, those who possessed later copies of the Law made no distinction between the divine authority of these copies and that of Moses' autographs.

In giving the command in Deuteronomy 17 to Israel's kings, God's care was not focused on the autographs, but on the copy of the Book of the Law found "before the priests the Levites." This command would have soon become meaningless if successive generations of kings were unable to trust the words of the copies of the Book of the Law by which they were expected to rule.

Proof #2: The Bible records in Matthew 19:3-9 that the Pharisees came to Jesus to test and ensnare Him with difficult questions about divorce, one of the most contentious Jewish issues of the first century (Nelson, p. 1457). After the Pharisees had asked Jesus their question, He responded to their query by immediately quoting Genesis 1:27 and 2:24. Jesus introduced His response with the words "Have you not read," directing the Pharisees' attention to the scroll of Genesis in their possession. The text of Genesis had been faithfully preserved for more than 1,400 years by this time.

Proof #3: Luke 4:16-21 records that Jesus came to Nazareth to teach in the synagogue on the day of Pentecost. As He stood up to read, the synagogue attendant gave Him the scroll of Isaiah. After reading from Isaiah 61:1-2, Jesus gave the scroll back to the attendant and sat down to speak. As all the eyes of the Jews were upon Him, Jesus said to them, "Today, **this scripture** (Gk., *graphe*) is being fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21).

The significance of this passage can easily be overlooked in the English. In the New Testament, *graphe* is used 51 times to refer *only* to the written texts of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. In almost all of these instances, it pertains to a passage or the entire collection of the **surviving apographs** of the Old Testament writings. Four passages distinctly refer to the autographs or preserved writings of the apostles and their scribes (e.g., I Tim. 5:18; II Tim. 3:16; II Pet. 1:19-21, 3:16), which is to be expected since they were writing during that time period. Jesus' point of reference in Luke 4:21 was not to the autographs of Isaiah's prophecies, which had been sealed over 700 years earlier, but to the faithful copy in the possession of the synagogue at Nazareth.

Summary

These examples affirm that God's care of His Word was focused on the preserved copies of the sacred text in the possession of His people. On more than 70 occasions,

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Jesus and the apostles referred their audiences to the public scrolls of the Old Testament through their use of the clauses “it is written” and “have you not read.” For Jesus and the apostles, the text of the Hebrew Old Testament in the custody of the Jewish nation at the time was an accurate and authoritative reproduction of the writings of Moses and the Prophets. Jesus’ example demonstrates that **“traditional texts” preserved through the unbroken usage of people who understood and spoke the language are the most reliable means** of bridging the gap between the autographs and surviving manuscripts.

Textual scholar Dr. Edward F. Hills offered his analysis of why the language texts, especially the Greek New Testament, produced from faithful manuscripts are the only continuing standard for exegesis and translation: “A distinction must be made between the providence of God in the preservation of the *Greek* New Testament text and the operation of God’s providence in the translation of that text into other languages. In regard to the *Greek* text God’s providence operates directly, preserving it in its purity throughout the ages. In regard to translations God’s providence operates indirectly. By preserving a pure Greek New Testament text He accomplishes three things: first, He encourages His people to perform the needed work of translation; second, He furnishes His people with the means to perform this work; third, He gives His people a standard with which such performances can be compared and by which they can be corrected. God does not, however, promise that such translations will be preserved from mistakes, or even from serious errors. To promise this would be to dishonor the original Greek text, for it would set up texts in other languages as equal in authority to that original. Thus God’s providential preservation of the New Testament concentrated itself especially on the *Greek* text” (Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, 1956 ed., p. 31).

Points to Remember

- 1) Matthew 5:17-18 offers the strongest detailed promise of the continued authority *and* preservation of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.
- 2) Matthew 24:34-35 offers the strongest general promise for the continued authority and preservation of Jesus’ words, embodied in the New Testament writings as claimed by their authors.
- 3) The enduring need for instruction and testimony (witness) formed an integral part of God’s covenant relationship with Israel; the preservation of the Hebrew text of Old Testament served as the basis for these.
- 4) The institution of the triennial cycle of public reading in synagogues inseparably joined the preservation of the entire Hebrew text to the public reading and private study of the Old Testament books.
- 5) The divine obligation to preserve the Greek New Testament was rooted in the Christian community’s continuing need for evangelism and instruction.
- 6) The text of the New Testament needed to be preserved among people who spoke Greek for the apostolic writings to accomplish their intended purposes.
- 7) God made general promises of preservation to reassure true believers that they would possess His Word in every age.
- 8) God’s promises of preservation were rooted at the word level, extending to the letters when a change in consonants or vowels significantly altered the meaning of a word.
- 9) Creation serves as a tangible confirmation that God has the power to preserve and uphold the authority of the words of Scripture.
- 10) Traditional texts preserved through the unbroken usage of people who understood and spoke the language are the most reliable means of bridging the gap between the autographs and surviving manuscripts.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE PRESERVATION OF GOD'S WORD

In an attempt to protect the Bible's integrity, many Bible believers have fostered the idealistic notion that God "perfectly" preserved the sacred text from any alteration. An accurate view of the textual evidence is important in order to avoid fundamental errors that have produced faulty conclusions concerning the words of the Bible. This third truth explains how God's preservation of the biblical apographs differed from the divine authorship of Scripture. In spite of these differences, Bible believers can have confidence that faithful manuscripts indeed represent the "very words" of God.

Truth #3: God Preserved His Word as Promised

Facts of Textual Transmission: All handwritten manuscripts exhibit traces of copyist mistakes and/or alteration. God in His wisdom chose not to protect the infallible, inerrant original text of the apographs from any mistakes and changes. As a result, the reading (combination of letters, syllables and words) of a passage of Scripture can differ from one manuscript to another. These differences known as "variant readings" or "textual variants" occurred in a number of ways when copyists and printers reproduced the sacred text. Some developed unintentionally (accidentally) and others were intentional (deliberate).

The listing that follows is by no means complete, but illustrates some of the commonly reported causes of variant readings. **Accidental changes** or scribal slips include misspellings; confusion of letters; omission of letters, words, and syllables; changes in word order; and the faulty division of words. **Deliberate changes** found among many manuscripts include the harmonization of immediate or parallel passages, revision of grammar, incorporation of marginal notes (glosses) into the text and the alteration of the text for theological reasons (heretical or otherwise).

Detailed discussions of the causes of textual variations in the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts are available in the following handbooks on textual criticism: Würthwein's *The Text of the Old Testament*, pages 107-112; Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, pages 236-275; and Burgon, *The Causes of Corruption of the Traditional Text*. For a discussion of this subject from a modern eclectic perspective, see Bruce Metzger's *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, pages 186ff.

Because of these variations no two Hebrew or Greek biblical manuscripts are identical in every detail. This fact even extends to the more reliable Greek Byzantine manuscripts, which served as the basis of the Reformation Greek texts (Textus Receptus). Yet, these manuscripts "have essentially the same text with a large amount of sporadic variation" (Hills, 1984 ed., p. 182). In contrast, vast variations exist between the earlier uncial and later minuscule copies of the Greek New Testament. In comparison to the Textus Receptus, for example, the two most popular critical or eclectic Greek texts on the market today (Nestle-Aland and United Bible Societies editions) omit more than 2,600 words from the New Testament text (Fowler, *Evaluating Versions of the New Testament*, p. 68). This is reflective of the character of the earlier uncial manuscripts upon which they are based.

Due to the meticulous care of the Levitical Sopherim and Masoretes, the Hebrew Masoretic manuscripts do not display the wide variations seen in the Greek manuscripts

of the New Testament. Mistakes, changes and corrections are present in Masoretic manuscripts; however, these manuscripts exhibit an overall internal unity in their readings and the range of differences in consonants, vocalization and other textual details is very *small* (cf. Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, pp. 25-79).

Statements from Reliable Scholars: Scholars who are intimately familiar with the textual data recognize that variant readings occurred in the transmission of the sacred texts. The late John William Burgon was one of the staunchest defenders of the traditional Greek Byzantine Text and did not subscribe to the doctrine of “perfect” preservation. Burgon, a textual scholar and Anglican clergyman, lived during the first major revision of the KJV, which produced the 1881 English Revised Version of the New Testament. He was one of the few textual scholars of his era who could claim firsthand knowledge of the Greek manuscripts, ancient versions, lectionaries and church writings.

In discussing the early corruption of the Greek manuscripts of the Gospels, Burgon showed a marvelous balance toward this subject, unlike that of many textual critics and professing Christians today: “There exists no reason for supposing that the Divine Agent, who in the first instance thus gave to mankind the Scriptures of Truth, straightway abdicated His office; took no further care of His work; abandoned those precious writings to their fate. **That a perpetual miracle was wrought for their preservation—that the copyists were protected against the risk of error, or evil men prevented from adulterating shamefully copies of the Deposit—no one, it is presumed, is so weak as to suppose**” (Burgon, *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*, pp. 11, bold added).

Again, Burgon’s offered this sound approach on the doctrine of preservation: “That by a perpetual miracle [like the one during the original writing], Sacred Manuscripts would be protected all down the ages against depraving influences of whatever sort,—was not to have been expected; certainly, was never promised [by God is the implication]” (Ibid., *The Revision Revised*, p. 335).

Similar sentiments can be gleaned from the works of the late Frederick H.A. Scrivener, an advocate of the Byzantine Text and a contemporary of Burgon. He is considered by nearly all scholars to have been an expert in textual matters, possessing a detailed knowledge of the surviving Greek manuscripts of the New Testament and the various KJV editions. His works on textual criticism are still considered classics. He was one of the scholars who served on the committee that revised the KJV New Testament.

Scrivener’s sober judgment was that “a continuous, unceasing miracle” in the copying of the manuscripts “could not have been reasonably anticipated” (Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, 4th ed., p. 3).

Divine Prohibitions: The presence of biblical prohibitions against tampering with the sacred text refutes the notion that “perfect” preservation was promised in Scripture. The purpose of such prohibitions was to serve as a warning to readers and copyists to respect the integrity of the details (words) *and* substance (commandments and prophecies) of the documents (cf. Deut. 4:2, 12:32; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18-19). Two of them carry warnings of divine judgment: Proverbs 30:5-6 and Revelation 22:18-19.

As noted in Chapter Twelve, the presence of these prohibitions in the Bible makes sense only because God’s communication of His revelation and the autographs were error-free. If God had promised to protect the biblical texts from *any* alteration in the transmission process, there would have been no need to offer these warnings. For this reason, the claim of “perfect” preservation cannot be maintained.

A cursory review of early church history confirms that numerous false teachers, ministers, prophets and brethren were on hand to “corrupt” the apostles’ spoken words (cf. II Cor. 2:17). These same forces seized every opportunity to distort the apostles’ written messages by sending forged documents or altering the expressions of their recorded words (II Thes. 2:2; Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 4:29:5-6). God did not pre-

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vent such textual catastrophes from occurring because it was necessary that those who cherished His Word and its truth be made manifest (cf. I Cor. 11:19).

Reconciling the Evidence with the Bible

One of the most troubling issues for Bible believers is how to handle the fact that all apographs exhibit mistakes, corrections and/or alterations. The books of Haggai, Zechariah and Romans offer historical parallels of how God has worked with His people. The principles outlined in each book can be applied to the preservation of the sacred texts.

In the book of Romans, Paul disclosed that salvation is a matter related to a person's heart, not ancestry (Rom. 2:23-29). He realized that many Jews might object to his candid remarks, which seemingly alleged that God had been unfaithful in His promises to Abraham. In anticipation of this objection, Paul explained that the Jewish nation still possessed an advantage over non-Jews, namely, they were entrusted with the *written utterances* of God penned by the Old Testament authors (Rom. 3:1-2). Paul then explained how the Jewish nation's unbelief could not nullify God's faithfulness to the promises made to Abraham (Rom. 3:3-5).

Two key conclusions can be drawn from these verses that have relevance to our study of the biblical texts:

-1) Human unbelief, fragility and sin cannot nullify God's faithfulness to His Word. In spite of the Jewish nation's near universal unbelief, it was entrusted with the oracles of God, the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. Jewish unbelief could no more invalidate the testimony of the Hebrew Scriptures as God's living oracles, than it could affect His ability to preserve it through time.

2) This pattern was repeated in the early Church, which consisted at first of "spiritual Jews." The actions of early heretics (and Gnostic Christians), the misguided attempts of early editors and the eventual spiritual decline of the Greek church could not prevent God from preserving the Greek New Testament.

The prophet Zechariah was moved by God's Spirit to convey this same lesson to Zerubbabel during the arduous rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem following Judah's Babylonian captivity: "This *is* the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit saith the LORD of hosts' (Zech. 4:6, *KJV*). The details surrounding these events are recorded in Ezra 3:8-6:15. The prophet Haggai, a contemporary of Zechariah, encouraged the people with similar words: "*According to* the word that I covenanted with ye when ye came out of Egypt, So My Spirit remaineth among you:—fear ye not" (Haggai 2:5, *KJV*). The historical understanding of this passage is clear: It was God's Spirit that strengthened Zerubbabel, the high priest Joshua and the remnant of the Jewish people to complete the house of God (Hag. 1:14). The temple was finished in 515 BC, in preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ, the Messenger of the covenant (Mal. 3:1).

The events surrounding the rebuilding the temple offer another wonderful parallel to the preservation of the sacred texts. Just as in ancient Judah with the rebuilding of the temple, God in His wisdom has invited human beings to participate in the process of preserving His Word to **demonstrate His power and mercy and the weakness of fallible man. It is ultimately His Spirit that preserves His Word.** When history is viewed from this perspective God's watchfulness over the text becomes apparent.

Transmission of the Old Testament

The preservation of the Hebrew Old Testament began *when* Moses handed the autographs of the Book of the Law to the Levites for safekeeping (Deut. 31:24-26).

Can God's guiding hand be detected in this event? The book of Isaiah contains a prayer (Is. 63:7-19), which offers a sketch of the activity of the LORD and His Spirit among ancient Israel (Is. 63:9-11, 14). This prayer shows that it was God's Spirit in Moses that led him to perform his duties on behalf of the nation, which included the committal of his books to the Levites (Is. 63:11; cf. Num. 16:28).

It was the LORD Who *chose* the tribe of Levi to serve in the tabernacle (Num. 3:5-13), after its members displayed their loyalty for Him during the sinful episode of the golden calf (Ex. 32:26-28). "The blessing which their father Levi had lost (Gen. xxxiv.25) was restored to the tribe through the noble conduct of his descendants on this occasion.... The Levites, notwithstanding the defection of Aaron, distinguished themselves by their zeal for the honour of God, and their conduct in doing the office of executioners on this occasion; and this was one reason of their being appointed to a high and honorable office in the service of the sanctuary" (Jamieson, vol. 1, p. 410).

Dr. Hills described the Levitical system that God instituted for the preservation of the text: "The Old Testament Church was under the care of the divinely appointed Aaronic priesthood, and for this reason the Holy Spirit preserved the Old Testament through this priesthood and the scholars that grouped themselves around it. The Holy Spirit guided these priests and scholars to gather the separate parts of the Old Testament into one Old Testament canon and to maintain the purity of the Old Testament text.... The Hebrew Scriptures were written by Moses and the prophets and other inspired men to whom God had given prophetic gifts. But the duty of preserving this written revelation was assigned not to the prophets but to the *priests*. The priests were the divinely appointed guardians and teachers of the law.... Thus the law 'was placed in the charge of the priests to be kept by them along side [sic] of the most sacred vessel of the sanctuary, and in its innermost and holiest apartment.'... Evidently also the priests were given the task of making correct copies of the law for the use of kings and rulers, or at least of supervising the scribes to whom the king would delegate this work (Deut. 17:18).

"Not only the Law of Moses but also the Psalms were preserved in the Temple by the priests, and it was probably the priests who divided the Hebrew psalter into five books corresponding to the five books of Moses. It was David, the sweet singer of Israel who taught the priests to sing psalms as part of their public worship service (1 Chron. 15:16, 17). Like David, Heman, Asaph and Ethan were not only singers but also inspired authors, and some of the psalms were written by them. We are told that the priests sang these psalms on various joyful occasions, such as the dedication of the Temple by Solomon (2 Chron. 7:6), the coronation of Joash (2 Chron. 23:18), and the cleansing of the Temple by Hezekiah (2 Chron. 29:30)" (Hills, 1984, ed., pp. 91-92).

While King David, the prophet Nathan and Gad the seer are often credited with the creation of the Levitical system of worship, the Bible records that it was the LORD Who established it by His commandment (II Chr. 29:25). There can be no doubt then that He was the one behind the writing of the psalms and the use of music to glorify and praise Him in the temple (cf. I Chr. 25:1-7).

Dr. Hills continued his overview of the preservation of the Old Testament text: "How the other Old Testament books were preserved during the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah we are not told explicitly, but it is likely that the books of Solomon were collected together and carefully kept at Jerusalem. Some of Solomon's proverbs, we are told, were copied out by *the men of Hezekiah king of Judah* (Prov. 25:1). Except for periodic revivals under godly rulers, such as Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, the days of the kings were times of apostasy and spiritual darkness in which the priests neglected almost entirely their God-given task of guarding and teaching God's holy law" (Ibid., p. 92).

Dr. Hills' last statement shows some confusion on the issue of preservation. It

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does not follow that preservation of the text was linked *inseparably* to public teaching. The preserved text served as the basis for it. Public teaching was dependent upon the joint effort of priests *and* elders, as Moses had originally commanded (Deut. 31:9-11). There is ample evidence to show that public teaching of God's Law was contingent on the disposition of the kings, who had usurped the elders' role in the teaching process. During the reigns of godly kings, like Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, public teaching of God's Law was widespread (cf. II Chr. 17:9, 30:22, 31:3-4, 21, 34:29-33). Josiah's reading of the covenant words to the people, priests and Levites in Jerusalem sparked the last revival of the Mosaic religion in Judah before Jerusalem's destruction (II Ki. 23:1-3).

In spite of Israel's apostasy, history establishes that the Hebrew text, specifically the Book of the Law, continued to be preserved by the Levites. David's numerous references to its various parts in Psalm 19 serve as a tangible sign that it had been preserved intact during the turbulent period of the Judges (approx. 350 years). (See Preservation, Truth #2 for additional examples.) God's Spirit no doubt guided Hilkiah, a faithful priest by all accounts, to recover *the* copy of Book of the Law after it had been mislaid or perhaps hidden in the temple during a 57-year period of apostasy (II Chr. 34:14).

Despite the unbelief of the tribe of Judah, God faithfully preserved the Hebrew Old Testament text through the Levites who understood the language. Faithful priests and Levites abandoned their property in Samaria and gathered within Judah's borders (II Chr. 11:5-14) after Israel divided into two kingdoms (ca. 970 BC) and Jeroboam instituted a non-Levitical priesthood for his pagan religious system. It is very probable that this group of loyal priests and Levites preserved the Law and later writings during the nations' repeated cycles of apostasy. The copying of Solomon's proverbs by the men of Hezekiah, most likely Levites, nearly 250 years after they had been written shows that these and implies that other Old Testament writings had been preserved. Undoubtedly it was God Who placed within the Levites the reverence for the Hebrew text as His holy Word.

The prophets and righteous kings, like Hezekiah and Josiah, must have played a role in inciting the Levites to fulfill their divine role as guardians of the sacred text. For example, it was Hezekiah and his company of Levites who placed a sign-manual (three Hebrew letters for his name) at the end of Hebrew manuscripts to seal them for public reading (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, pp. 164-165). After Hezekiah's time, the sign-manual continued to be used on all Old Testament manuscripts as a seal of their authenticity and scribes faithfully copied it from one manuscript to another.

The Hebrew text continued to be preserved during the Babylonian captivity until it was finally printed during the early Reformation. Hills wrote: "But in spite of everything, God was still watching over His holy Word and preserving it by His special providence. Thus when Daniel and Ezekiel and other true believers were led away to Babylon, they took with them copies of all the Old Testament Scriptures which had been written up to that time.

"After the Jews returned from the Babylonian exile, there was a great revival among the priesthood through the power of the Holy Spirit....The Law was taught again in Jerusalem by Ezra the priest who **had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments** (Ezra 7:10). By Ezra and his successors, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, all the Old Testament books were gathered together into one Old Testament canon, and their texts were purged of errors and preserved until the days of our Lord's earthly ministry. By that time the Old Testament text was so firmly established that even the Jews' rejection of Christ could not disturb it. Unbelieving Jewish scribes [i.e., Levitical Sopherim and Masoretes] transmitted this traditional Hebrew Old Testament text blindly but faithfully, until the dawn of the Protestant Reformation.

The Preservation of God's Word

"It was this Traditional (Masoretic) text which was printed at the end of the medieval period....In 1488 the entire Hebrew Bible was printed for the first time. A second edition was printed in 1491 and a third in 1494. This third edition was used by Luther in translating the Old Testament into German. Other faithful Protestant translations followed, including [William Tyndale's] and in due time the King James Version. Thus it was that the Hebrew Old Testament text, divinely inspired and providentially preserved, was restored to the Church, to the circle of true believers" (Ibid., pp. 92-93, bracketed comment added).

Transmission of the New Testament

God preserved the Greek New Testament (GNT) in a decidedly different manner than the Old Testament, entrusting the original text of the apostles to a spiritual priesthood of believers, rather than to a physical priesthood (Ibid., p. 103).

Dr. Hills offered a capsule of this process in his book *The King James Version Defended*: "But God in His mercy did not leave His people to grope after the True New Testament Text. Through the leading of the Holy Spirit He guided them to preserve it during the manuscript period....*First*, many trustworthy copies of the original New Testament manuscripts were produced by faithful scribes. *Second*, these trustworthy copies were read and recopied by true believers down through the centuries. *Third*, untrustworthy copies were not so generally read or so frequently recopied. Although they enjoyed some popularity for a time, yet in the long run they were laid aside and consigned to oblivion. Thus as a result of this special providential guidance the True Text won out in the end, and today we may be sure that the text found in the vast majority of the Greek New Testament manuscripts is a trustworthy reproduction of the divinely inspired Original Text. **This is the text which was preserved by the God-guided usage of the Greek Church.** Critics have called it the *Byzantine* text ... acknowledging that it was the text in use in the Greek Church during the greater part of the Byzantine period (452-1453). It is much better ... to call this text the *Traditional Text*. When we call the text found in the majority of the Greek New Testament manuscripts the Traditional Text, we signify that this is the text which has been handed down by the God-guided tradition of the Church from the time of the Apostles unto the present day" (Ibid., p. 106, emphasis added).

Greek Church Key to Preservation: As previously noted, the heartland of the early Church was in Asia Minor and the Aegean Coast of Greece for nearly 400 years. God used the apostle Paul's efforts to establish churches in this region, guaranteeing that the most reliable Greek manuscripts of the New Testament would be preserved and transmitted to us for over 1,400 years as the Byzantine or Traditional Apostolic Text. That text was first printed as the Textus Receptus by Erasmus and Johann Froben in 1516 AD.

The apostle Paul spent much of his ministry in this region, establishing congregations during his first two missionary journeys (Acts 13:4-14:25, 15:40-18:23). On his third trip to the area, he stayed in Ephesus for three years (54-57 AD), strengthening the congregation that was founded by Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18:18-19). Paul used Ephesus as the point of departure for his preaching and planting of churches throughout the Roman province of Asia, the western third of modern-day Turkey (Acts 19:1-20).

The ancient city of Ephesus boasted a population of a half million and was the proconsular capital for the Roman province (Ungers, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, pp. 366-367). It was one of Asia Minor's most important commercial cities; it was located on major trade routes and had a seaport with access to the Aegean Sea. The city also held great religious significance for the region because it was the home of the goddess Diana, whose temple was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

Apparently the Ephesian congregation served as the “mother” church for others on the same trade routes (Acts 20:17), much like Antioch was for Syria. It would play a key role in the preservation of the apostolic Greek text. Before leaving Ephesus to travel to Macedonia (57 AD), Paul appointed the young Timothy to pastor the congregation there and to address matters of false doctrine and public worship (I Tim. 1:3).

Canonization of Gospels, Paul’s Epistles: According to Dr. Ernest L. Martin, biblical historian and a scholar in canonical studies, the apostles Paul, Peter and John were the ones God used to canonize the New Testament. The evidence for his conclusions are presented in his book *Restoring the Original Bible* (pp. 282-293, 309-320, 379-391). A review of the mileposts in the formation of the New Testament canon is essential to understanding the preservation and transmission of the early apostolic text.

In the main, Dr. Martin’s assertions are undoubtedly correct and can be summarized in his own words: “There was a common goal which dominated the last few months of the lives of Peter, John and Paul. If one will read their works, when each was well aware that his death was on the immediate horizon, it can be seen what their desires were. It was most essential that a canon of divine New Testament scriptures be created which would last the world as a standard for Christian teaching until the second advent of Christ” (Martin, *Restoring the Original Bible*, p. 379).

The initial phases of canonization probably occurred at the end of a 37-year period of preaching and writing (30-67 AD) when both Peter and Paul believed their deaths were imminent (II Tim. 4:6; II Pet. 1:12-15). Paul was in prison again in Rome in 67 AD, at which time he wrote to Timothy to bring to him the chest containing his books and parchments from Troas for the final editing of his epistles (II Tim. 4:13). It appears that the book of Romans, at the very least, was written, edited and republished again.

A corpus (collection of writings) of Paul’s completed epistles existed by 65-66 AD (II Pet. 3:15-16). This reference found in Peter’s Second Epistle indicates that Peter possessed and was reviewing Paul’s letters, no doubt in preparation for their final canonization. John Mark had come to Babylon and probably delivered Peter’s Second Epistle to the brethren in the remote parts of northern Asia Minor (II Pet. 1:1; 3:16). It is probable that Mark brought Peter’s epistles to Timothy. Later, Paul asked Timothy to bring Mark to Rome, to assist with the final canonization of Paul’s epistles.

From Paul’s earlier admonishment to Timothy to “adhere to **sound words, even those of our Lord Jesus Christ**, and the doctrine *that is* according to godliness,” one can infer that the young evangelist had in his possession accurately written documents that served as a doctrinal standard (I Tim. 6:3-5). These documents would have been the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and most of John’s Gospel. This conclusion is supported by Harnack’s research establishing the early widespread usage of these books. It is reasonable to presume that Timothy became the guardian of Paul’s and Peter’s autographs and transported them back to Ephesus for safekeeping. Paul’s charge to Timothy to preach from all God-breathed *writings* strongly suggests that after this initial phase of canonization he possessed at the very least the Gospels and Paul’s epistles, and most probably Peter’s writings (II Tim. 3:16, 4:2).

Myth of a Jerusalem Canonization: According to Martin, Jerusalem served as the location of the canonization of the New Testament, primarily the final phase completed by John (cf. Martin, pp. 453-460). A closer examination of Martin’s evidence reveals his conclusion is primarily based on inferences drawn from Eusebius’ work called *The Proof of the Gospel*. This book offers details about the Christian congregation in Jerusalem following the temple’s destruction in 70 AD. Martin is correct in claiming that a Christian library existed on the Mount of Olives, a fact confirmed by the early church historian Eusebius (ca. 260-340 AD) in his *Ecclesiastical History* (6:20:1). This library had direct ties to the theological library at Caesarea, which the Alexandrian

scholar Origen (182-251 AD) helped build. Origen was Eusebius' mentor and the teacher of Pamphilus, a later curator of the Caesarean library, which stored many of the early manuscripts of the New Testament and pagan literature. Eusebius later worked and studied with Pamphilus, carrying on Origen's efforts in promoting sacred learning of *any* kind.

The fatal flaw in Martin's theory is that he dates the existence of the Olivet library to the time of the apostle John: "His [John's] emphasis on teaching the Jews must have allowed him to have intimate connections with the Mother Church and its library on the Mount of Olives....the library of Caesarea was nothing more than an extension of that library on the Mount of Olives which was the central mount of Christian influence from a historical point of view in the eyes of Eusebius" (Martin, p. 460). This is a historical **impossibility** because the Olivet library Martin references was not built until after ca. 205 AD by Alexander, a Gentile bishop of Jerusalem. This was over 100 years after John completed his canonization of the New Testament. Martin clearly overlooked this fact in his reading of Eusebius' history because his focus was on establishing a connection between Eusebius and the Olivet library (cf. Martin, p. 458, note *italics* in citation).

Eusebius's claim that the Mount of Olives was the central focus for all Christians of the time was **an attempt** to elevate the political status of Jerusalem/Caesarea in spiritual matters. Eusebius played a key role at the Council of Nicea, convened in 325 AD by the Roman emperor Constantine to settle disputes dividing the churches, including the Arian and Quartodeciman controversies. Martin conceded this point: "Indeed, Eusebius in his Ecclesiastical History [written ca. 325 AD] associates the bishops of Caesarea and Jerusalem as representing a unified political effort as far as Christian government in Palestine was concerned [see Eusebius, 5:19:16; 27]" (Martin, p. 459).

Gospels and Pauline Epistles: The fact that no canonization occurred in Jerusalem is important for the early transmission of the apostolic text. By the time Paul and Peter finished the canonization of their books (in Rome and elsewhere), the Jewish revolt against Rome was advancing. All faithful Jewish Christians in Jerusalem had heeded the warning given by God to flee the city. Jerusalem was no longer the focus for faithful Christians. An uncertain number of them went to the city of Pella, about 60 miles north-east of Jerusalem. It appears that the majority of these refugees were scattered throughout the Roman Empire (Eusebius, 3:1:1). James' and Peter's epistles confirm that a large number of Jews were living outside of Jerusalem and in Asia Minor (Jas. 1:1; I Pet. 1:1). It follows that many Jewish Christians, including the apostle John, fled to Asia Minor and settled around Ephesus. There is no indication that John returned to Jerusalem after his move to Asia Minor. The Gallic bishop Irenaeus recorded that John lived there "permanently until the times of Trajan" about 98-100 AD (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 3:3:4). Ephesus became John's home, except while he was in exile on the Island of Patmos (95-96 AD) during the Christian persecution of emperor Domitian (81-96 AD). He died in Ephesus sometime between 98-100 AD (Eusebius, 3:31:4; 5:24:4).

The systematic copying of the Gospels, Acts, the Pauline corpus and Petrine Epistles must have begun immediately in the decades following the deaths of Paul and Peter (ca. 68-69 AD) and before the short, but severe persecution of Christians under Domitian (94-96 AD). Since all manuscripts during this early period were produced by individual Christians, it is probable that brethren at Ephesus were those who made exact papyrus copies of these books and distributed them in codices to elders and brethren in the region for public reading (Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 14). It is **reasonable** to presume that **Ephesus** was the location for this undertaking. Its accessibility to the major trade and mail routes and the city's prominence in Asia Minor would have made it a frequent destination for brethren.

The likelihood that Peter's epistles circulated generally at this time is corroborated by early citations or allusions to these books in the non-canonical Epistle of Barnabas,

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written sometime between 70-130 AD, and the works of the Roman bishop Clement, ca. 95-97 AD (House, *Chronological and Background Charts of the New Testament*, p. 22).

In surveying the early literature to determine how the value early Christians placed on the New Testament writings affected their transmission, textual scholar and linguist Dr. Wilbur N. Pickering found “the faithful recognized the authority of the New Testament writings from the start—had they not they would have been rejecting the authority of the apostles, and hence not been among the faithful. To a basic honesty would be added reverence in their handling of the text, from the start. And to these would be added vigilance, since the apostles had repeatedly and emphatically warned them against false teachers. But were all the faithful equally situated for transmitting the true text? Evidently not. The possessors of the Autographs would obviously be in the best position” (Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, pp. 110-111). And it was the apostles who possessed the autographs. Peter could not have retained a collection of Paul’s letters in 65-66 AD unless papyrus copies of Paul’s autographs had been made and sent to brethren.

Manuscripts were first sent to church readers in major cities, who were “responsible not only for reading Scripture during church meetings but also for keeping accurate and fresh copies of the Scriptures. They were the New Testament counterparts to the Old Testament Sopherim [sic] and Masoretes. Some of them may have been scribes as well. For readers who were not scribes, it would have been their duty to have scribes make copies of the text for the church” (Comfort, *The Quest for the Original Text of the New Testament*, p. 15).

The **early systematic copying** of these books would have been necessary for several reasons:

1) The recent arrival of Jewish Christian emigres from Jerusalem no doubt created an urgent need for authoritative sacred books for private reading.

2) New congregations must have been formed to accommodate this influx of new brethren to the area. Many congregations, like the one in Ephesus, met in brethren’s homes, which would have been unable to adapt to such rapid growth (cf. Rom. 16:5; I Cor. 16:7-8, 19; Col. 4:15; Philem. 1:2). The demand for a complete set of authoritative books for public reading would have served as one impetus for the early widespread copying of these books. These congregations would have looked to Ephesus for manuscripts.

A systematic process of copying, exchange and collection of manuscripts between Church areas seems the best way to explain the **early widespread**, consistent circulation of the Gospels and Pauline Epistles among multitudes of Christians and pseudo-Christians (i.e., heretics) as previously indicated by Harnack’s research.

Early Church collections of Paul’s epistles in particular were incomplete and small, varying from location to location (Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 49). The explanation that these collections grew *only* by a random process of exchange over a century or more, until finally the pastoral epistles were added, does not explain the citations and allusions to some of Paul’s books in the Epistle of Barnabas, Clement and writings of Ignatius (ca. 110 AD), Polycarp (ca. 115 AD) and Hermas (ca. 115-140). The following chart lists the “canonized” New Testament books, their approximate dates of authorship, writers, initial destinations and their probable places of origin.

<u>Book, Date (AD)</u>	<u>Writer</u>	<u>Initial Destination</u>	<u>Origin</u>
Matthew, 35	Matthew	Diaspora Jews, new converts	Jerusalem
James, 40-41	James	Diaspora Jews and Israelites	Jerusalem
Mark, 42	Mark/Peter	Judea, Galilee, Samaria, Babylon	Jerusalem

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John, 30-55, 65+	John	Diaspora Jews	Jerusalem, Ephesus
I Thessalonians, 50	Paul	Thessalonica	Corinth
II Thessalonians, 51	Paul	Thessalonica	Corinth
Galatians, 53	Paul	Galatia	Antioch
I Corinthians, 56	Paul	Corinth	Ephesus
Romans, 57	Paul	Rome	Corinth
II Corinthians, 57	Paul	Corinth	Philippi
Luke, 59	Luke/Paul	Diaspora Jews and Gentiles	Jerusalem, Caesarea
Acts, 58-63	Luke/Paul	Supplement to Luke	Jerusalem, Caesarea
Hebrews, 61	Paul	Rome, Judea, Galilee, Jerusalem	Rome
Philippians, 63	Paul	Philippi	Rome
Ephesians, early 63	Paul	Ephesus, Asia Minor	Rome
Colossians, early 63	Paul	Colossae	Rome
Philemon, early 63	Paul	Philemon, Colossae	Rome
I Timothy, late 63	Paul	Timothy, Ephesus	Nicopolis
Titus, late 63	Paul	Titus, Crete	Nicopolis
I, II, III John, 63-64	John	Asia Minor	Jerusalem
I Peter, 64-65	Peter	Northern Asia Minor	Babylon
II Peter, 65-66	Peter	Jerusalem, Asia Minor	Babylon
Jude, 66-67	Jude	Jerusalem, Judea	Jerusalem
II Timothy, 67	Paul	Timothy, Ephesus	Rome
Revelation, 95-96	John	Seven churches, Asia Minor	Patmos

Scholars generally agree that most of the New Testament books *initially* circulated as independent works copied on papyrus. Copies of *some* of Paul's epistles, like the ones sent to Colossae and Laodicea, were read and exchanged between neighboring churches (Col. 4:16). It does not follow that *all* letters were exchanged.

Internal and historical evidence indicates that every New Testament book was widely distributed immediately after its initial writing, except for these twelve: Romans, I and II Corinthians, Philippians, I and II Thessalonians, Titus, I and II Timothy, Philemon, and II and III John. The 10 Pauline Epistles listed here were either addressed to specific people or congregations in Greece and Rome. Nearly all scholars, including Aland, recognize that from the beginning of their copying and **general** transmission, Paul's epistles were gathered together and circulated as a group, possibly excluding the pastorals of I and II Timothy and Titus (Aland, p. 297). It is highly improbable that Philemon and the brethren at Corinth, whom Paul had mildly or severely rebuked in his epistles, would have copied and exchanged their letters with others. Human pride as displayed by the Corinthians, and Philemon's embarrassment, would probably have driven them to keep these letters to themselves. The only way to explain the circulation of these three books and others is that Paul collected them into a final corpus as II Peter 3:15-16 records.

Thus, there were **two lines** of transmission during this early period: sporadic and systematic. As already noted, the possessors of the autographs, namely the apostles and brethren at Ephesus, would have been in the best position to transmit the text. The systematic copying of Paul's books in sets explains how all churches came to possess those epistles that were *not* widely exchanged at first.

Before this mass distribution (ca. 70-95 AD), Aland is correct in noting that congregations would have possessed only small sets of Paul's earlier letters, along with those of the other apostles. In addition, the explanation that the New Testament books

initially spread through the *sporadic* copying of private brethren remains valid: “The circulation of a document began either from the place (or church province) of its origin, where the author wrote it, or from the place to which it was addressed....Copies of the original would be made for use in neighboring churches. The circulation of a book would be like ripples of a stone cast into a pond, spreading out in all directions at once. When a book was shared by repeated copying throughout a whole diocese [area under one overseer] or metropolitan area, the close ties between dioceses would carry it from one district to another, where the process would be repeated” (Aland, p. 55).

Asiatic churches with close ties, like those on the same mail route (Rev. 2-3), could be assured that reasonably faithful manuscripts could be obtained from other brethren whom they trusted (Pickering, p. 110).

Pickering noted that “... the making of copies would have begun at once [after their initial writing]. The authors clearly intended their writings to be circulated, and the quality of the writings was so obvious that the word would get around and each assembly would want a copy....Polycarp ... in answer to a request from the Philippian church, sent a collection of Ignatius’ letters to them, possibly within five years after Ignatius wrote them. Evidently it was normal procedure to make copies and collections (of worthy writings) so each assembly could have a set. Ignatius [bishop of Antioch, ca. 110 AD] referred to the free travel and exchange between the churches and Justin [Martyr, pre-165 AD] to the weekly practice of reading Scripture in the assemblies. Already by the year 100 there must have been many copies of the various books (some more than others) while it was certainly still possible to check a copy against the original, should a question arise. **The point is that there was a swelling stream of faithfully executed copies emanating from the holders of the Autographs to the rest of the Christian world**” (Pickering, p. 111-112, bold added).

Two other conclusions can also be garnered from the previous chart:

1) Approximately 37 years were involved in the writing of the New Testament books. With the exception of Revelation, all of them were written before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD.

2) In contrast to the books of the Old Testament, those of the New Testament were authored in distant places and distributed early in a wider geographical area. Most of the books were written in Jerusalem, Rome, Greece, Asia Minor, Syria and Babylon in order of quantity. **Two-thirds** were destined for **Asia Minor or the Aegean coast**. The Gospels undoubtedly circulated in this region. Adding these to the group destined for this area, the percentage rises to 80 percent. **None** were initially sent to Egypt, the home of the Alexandrian text.

John’s Gospel, General Epistles and Revelation: For the reasons previously cited, Ephesus was the location where the apostle John and his team of editors completed the final phase of the New Testament “canonization.” This team might have included the apostle Philip, who was residing in Hierapolis (Eusebius, 3:31), Timothy and Polycarp, John’s disciple and the overseer at Smyrna. Once the task of finalizing the remaining New Testament books had been completed, copies would have been made and distributed first to church readers along the trade routes. This process must have been completed in the early years of emperor Trajan (98-117 AD). His reign was known for its relative peace. Christians were not persecuted on the whole and punished only when publicly accused of refusing to take part in emperor worship (Halley, *Halley’s Bible Handbook*, p. 761). During this period, Pliny, Trajan’s liaison to Asia Minor, wrote to the emperor that Christians in the region “had become so numerous that the heathen temples were almost forsaken” (Ibid.).

John and his team re-edited his already circulating Gospel and First Epistle, adding affidavits as a witness of their authenticity (John 21:24; I John 1:1-4). It appears he

also added a prologue and a final chapter to his Gospel.

The widespread distribution of the remaining **General Epistles** probably occurred at this time. This delay explains why citations from many of these letters rarely appear in the early Christian and apocryphal works and reading lists (House, p. 22). The remote geographical areas in which some of these books initially circulated undoubtedly caused a delay in their entry into the final canon. This would have been the case with Jude, which was apparently addressed to the remote areas of modern-day northern Turkey as was James and I and II Peter. Other epistles like II and III John were written to specific congregations in order to temporarily address their spiritual needs in preparation for John's visit (II John 12-13; III John 13-14).

After reviewing various letters available to them, it seems that John and his team of editors selected the ones that could most effectively teach and warn brethren about the corrupting influences of Gnostic and autocratic false teachers who were vying for authority in Christian congregations (III John 9). The anti-Gnostic content of many of these letters (II Peter, I and II John and Jude) may have served as a factor in their delayed acceptance by the Hellenized Christian community. For the historical significance of some of the general epistles in the first- and second-century conflicts between apostolic Christianity and Gnosticism, see Alan Knight's *Primitive Christianity in Crisis*, pages 78-81, 98-102.

John's steadfast decision to retain these books as part of the final canon and to distribute them to the church offers a reason why he and his canonization was widely ignored by professing Christians outside of Asia Minor, either personally or in their correspondence. By the end of the first century, many brethren, especially those at Rome and Alexandria, had accepted and become accustomed to Gnostic teachings, such as the keeping of the Hellenized Christian Sabbath or Sunday (cf. Knight, pp. 62-70). Statements like "sin is lawlessness," a clear reference to such antinomian practices as Sunday Sabbath, would have offended these brethren (I John 3:4).

The book of **Revelation** was distributed to all churches, primarily among the seven congregations to whom it was addressed: "From John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace and peace be to you" (Rev. 1:4). The spiritual focus apparently by this time centered on these churches: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.

Although some of the Gnostic teachers had left the church and formed their own radical groups by this time (I John 2:19), some of the congregations in Asia Minor (e.g., Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira) were being persecuted or infiltrated by false brethren and teachers whom John wrote were "Nicolaitanes," of the "synagogue of Satan," or led by "Jezebel." (See Knight's *Primitive Christianity* for a treatment of these terms in their historical relationship to Gnosticism, pp. 102-106, 207-219.)

Manuscripts of the book of Revelation began circulating in the early decades of the second century. Ireneaus (120-202 AD) noted that he had consulted the "most approved and ancient copies" of Revelation for verification of the number 666 (Rev. 13:18) (Ireneaus, *Against Heresies*, 5.30.1). Papias (130-140 AD) bore witness that the book was "inspired" (Papias, "Fragments of Papias," 8). The author of the apocryphal *Shepherd of Hermas* (ca. 115-140 AD) cited or alluded to it (House, p. 22). The early Church initially accepted Revelation as authentic. Nevertheless, some congregations and scholars in the eastern Roman Empire rejected it for nearly three centuries because its stature became tainted from connections with the Montanists, a cult that expected a "speedy outpouring of the Holy Spirit (the Paraclete) on the Church, of which it saw the first manifestation in its own prophets and prophetesses. Montanus himself, who began to prophesy either in 172 (Eusebius' *Chronicle*) or 156-7 (Epiphanius, *Haer.*, xlviii.1), proclaimed that the Heavenly Jerusalem would soon descend near Pepusa in Phry-

gia" (Cross, s.v. "Montanism," *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, p. 934).

The testimony of two of the most respected overseers in the second century confirm the widespread circulation of the New Testament, especially in Asia Minor. Both men had ties to the apostle John. In his letter to the Philippians (ca. 115 AD), Polycarp (ca. 69-156 AD) quoted directly from 18 of the New Testament books: the Gospels, Acts, Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, I and II Thessalonians, I and II Timothy, I Peter, and I and II John. He alluded to the remaining books, except Philemon (whose short length might not have provided enough quotable material).

In a letter to the Roman bishop Victor (ca. 190 AD), outlining why he and the brethren of Asia Minor would continue to observe the Passover instead of Easter, Polycrates wrote: "Last of all I too, Polycrates, the least of you all, act according to the tradition of my family, some members of which I have actually followed; for seven of them were bishops and I am the eighth, and my family have always kept the day [Passover] when the people [the Jews] put away the leaven. So, I, my friends, after spending sixty-five years in the Lord's service and conversing with Christians from all parts of the world, and **going carefully through all Holy Scripture**, am not scared of threats. Better people than I have said: 'We must obey God rather than men'" (Louth, *Eusebius: The History of the Church*, p. 172, emphasis added). Polycrates' boast would have been meaningless if he had not actually studied all the Old and New Testament Scriptures since his conversion, dating back to 125 AD. Since he was an overseer at Ephesus and Polycarp's disciple, it follows that he possessed all the canonized New Testament books.

Hills' assessed the transmission of the text during the first- and early-second century: "At any rate, because the New Testament books were first gathered together and accorded full recognition as Scripture in Asia Minor and Antioch, the copying of these books would be done more carefully in this region than in other places. Thus it is reasonable to believe that during the late first and early second centuries an usually pure type of New Testament text was in circulation in Asia Minor and Antioch and that this soon became the traditional text (as it were) of this area" (Hills, 1956 ed., pp. 54-55).

Transmission (100-300 AD): The corruption of the apostolic text (i.e., Byzantine Text) commenced a few decades after John's canonization: "Thus during the second and third centuries [100-300 AD] a situation arose in the Christian Church which may fittingly be ascribed to the machinations of the evil one, who, as soon as the Holy Spirit had delivered the New Testament Scriptures to the Church, immediately endeavored to snatch them away. At Rome and Alexandria, the two great cultural centers of the ancient world, two corrupt text types arose which were used increasingly to drive the true New Testament text out of existence" (Ibid., p. 53).

The attack on the apostolic text occurred on two fronts: culturally and doctrinally.

Cultural Wars: The number of Christians grew rapidly and the new "religion" increased in wealth, learning and social influence during Hadrian's reign (117-138 AD) as Roman emperor (Halley, p. 762). Within 80 years of John's canonization, the apostolic text "was now in the fullest sense accessible to the public" (Harnack, *Bible Reading in the Early Church*, p. 76). This made it vulnerable to the attack of critics. The Graeco-Roman world in which the apostolic text circulated "was very conscious of style" (Elliott, *The Principles and Practice of New Testament Textual Criticism*, p. 32). A movement to revive the literary style of the Attic or Classical Greek was strong in the second century and no doubt influenced people's perception of the apostolic text. (See Appendix U, page 858, for more details.) As pagan literary critics compared the style of the *Koiné* Greek of the New Testament with that of classical Greek literature, they charged that its text was substandard and filled with ungrammatical sentences and un-Greek expressions.

The Preservation of God's Word

The second-century pagan philosopher Celsus wrote a literary attack on the Christian documents called *True Discourse* during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (161-180 AD). This work is known from Origen's later reply to Celsus entitled *Contra Celsum* (mid-200s AD). "... Celsus took offense at the poor form and the inferior style of the Holy Scriptures such as were fit only for the uneducated and barbarians, and that he makes invidious [offensive] comparisons with the writings of Plato....this aspect of the Holy Scriptures presented difficulties to the Fathers, seeing that educated Christians also took offense at it" (Harnack, p. 45).

This conflict was reflected in the later writings of Arnobius and his pupil Lactantius. Both of these Latin Christians were forced to defend the entire Bible, especially the apostolic text, from charges that it was "swarmed with barbarisms and solecisms" and "written in a rude and poor style" (Harnack, pp. 78-79). Harnack concluded: "... Lactantius finds himself forced to admit that the Bible was written in a poor style, and therefore needed explanation if it was to do its work; there was, however, a lack of experienced teachers fitted to deal with people of culture" (Ibid., p. 79).

These "same reproaches were to be heard from the lips even of members of the Christian communities. The charge of barbaric style applied to the Latin Bible [Old Latin?] in much higher degree than to the Greek Bible, and must have been deeply felt by everyone. From the work of Arnobius we have the impression that the discussion of the Bible had become a public controversy in the great world of literature, and we gain the same impression from Lactantius. This could only have happened if the Bible was in the hand of a multitude of people" (Ibid., p. 78).

A stigma came to be associated with the GNT and Christians became ashamed of it. This attitude was especially prevalent among educated and wealthier Christians, who were unwilling to relinquish their "craving" for heathen and classical literature (Harnack, pp. 58-59). This mindset toward the biblical text contributed to a decline in the reading of Scripture. Harnack summarized Origen's comments from his homilies and *Contra Celsum*: "Origen speaks in several passages of the *taedium verbi divini* [the tedium of the divine word] among Christians; the reading of the Scripture in church and at home is distasteful to them, indeed they do all they can to escape it. This is one of the characteristics of a worldly popular Christianity which we first find depicted in the works of Origen and Cyprian [d. 258 AD], and which strikes us the more forcibly because the earlier Fathers in their writings so seldom refer to it....The fact that the style of the Biblical narratives and exhortations was not in accord with a more refined taste contributed somewhat to this" (Harnack, p. 69-70).

The formation of suggested reading lists or catalogs of the sacred writings, like the Muratorian fragment (ca. 190 AD), was one attempt by the ministry to encourage the reading of the Bible, while simultaneously repressing the reading of heathen literature. The Muratorian fragment listed every New Testament book except Hebrews, James, and I and II Peter, which its author excluded for theological and not textual reasons (Aland, p. 49). Many scholars have wrongly taken this fragment and other such catalogs to be canonical lists. Their real purpose was to regulate reading as Harnack noted: "Though these lists were in the first place drawn up to make known the books to be used in public worship, they were also meant to be in force for private reading. In earlier days, however, wider bounds were given to private reading" (Harnack, p. 62, fn. 1).

Depending on the literary tastes of various writers, scholars and ministers, these lists varied from location to location (Harnack, pp. 67-68, 73-74). The Muratorian fragment contains the Apocalypse of Peter and Wisdom of Solomon for reading, but with a warning. Heathen literature was not outrightly banned until after the Imperial Church was founded by Constantine (313 AD).

Doctrinal Wars: When the apostles sealed their writings, they were acutely aware

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of how they were being handled corruptly as shown by Peter's reference to ignorant and unstable men who "twisted" and "distorted" Paul's words (II Pet. 3:16). While the context of Second Peter reveals the apostles were focusing on the interpretation rather than the copying of the text, Pickering explained that "since any alteration of the text may result in a different interpretation we may reasonably infer that their concern for the truth would include the faithful transmission of the text. Indeed, we could scarcely ask for a clearer expression of this concern than that given in Rev. 22:18-19" (Pickering, p. 107).

While many of the literary works of early heretics no longer exist, their corrupting influence on the apostolic text cannot be underestimated. Various forms of Gnosticism began to plague Christianity about 50-51 AD (II Thes. 2:7). It was not until the 400s AD that the ancient forms of Gnosticism largely passed away, only to reappear repeatedly in subtle forms throughout the centuries (Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, p. 490). Gnosticism was a movement within the early Church that combined and proclaimed the higher knowledge (Gk., *gnosis*) of the false Hellenistic religions under the guise of Christianity (cf. Knight, p. 41). It was represented by many schools of thought at different periods, and in particular affected the educated classes (Ibid., p. 489). Some of its sects departed farther than others from the apostolic Christian faith, "but even in its mildest form Gnosticism was a danger to the Church" (Ibid.).

-Historian Alan Knight described one of the insidious intents of early Gnostics: "Gnostics saw themselves as a reformation, not of Judaism but of the New Testament church, the so-called Primitive or 'Jewish' Christianity that prevailed for a time after the founding of the church in the 30s A.D. For them, Primitive Christianity was a partial enlightenment. Nevertheless, it is decidedly inferior precisely because it failed to completely break its ties with the deception of Old Testament religion....In effect, Gnosticism believed its commission in the world was to convert Primitive Christianity to a more advanced spirituality based on Hellenistic theology, at the same [time] to wean Primitive Christians away from their religious roots in the Old Testament" (Knight, p. 43).

The New Testament contains numerous warnings against Gnostics who were infiltrating the early Church and spreading their heretical views. Already in the second half of the first century AD, various competing Gnostic groups were claiming that they alone practiced genuine Christianity (Ibid., pp. 1, 41). In his second epistle to the Thesalonians (51 AD), Paul cautioned the brethren to be aware of an apostate system, which he called the "mystery of lawlessness" that was already developing in the early Church (cf. II Thess. 2:1-12). Paul's reference was undoubtedly to early Gnostic antinomianism, a belief that there was no law or restraint placed on mankind. The books of Ephesians, Colossians, I and II Timothy, Titus, II Thessalonians, II Peter, I and II John, Jude and Revelation 2-3 all speak of the influence of first-century Gnosticism.

First-century Gnostics listed in the Bible include Nicolas and Simon Magus, the sorcerer we encounter during Peter and John's tour of Samaria (Act 6:5; Acts 8; Rev. 2). The second-century Syrian heretic Saturninus was a disciple of Menander, who was a follower of Simon. Knight explained that this specific Gnostic sect advocated an ascetic lifestyle, renouncing marriages and the eating of meat, and believed that *Jehovah*, the God of the Old Testament, was one of seven angels involved in the creation. Knight added that the sect claimed the Christ came to destroy the worship of the God of the Jews and to save all who merely believed in Him, a doctrine prevalent among many Protestant sects (Knight, p. 53).

"As time progressed, Gnosticism flourished in many new forms as it continued to mix and match ideas from the broad range of Hellenistic religion and New Testament Christianity" (Ibid., p. 51). The second century AD witnessed the destructive influence of Gnostic teachers such as Carpocrates, Saturninus, Marcion, Apelles, Basilides, Valentinus

and Mani of Babylon (Ibid., pp. 51-60). Most of these early Gnostics began their "schools" in Alexandria and later moved to the empire's capital, Rome, attaching themselves to the early Roman church. A description of the first- and second-century Gnostics and their beliefs is available in Knight's *Primitive Christianity in Crisis* (cf. pp. 45-61).

It is in this period that we detect trends that influenced the copying of key Western and Egyptian uncial manuscripts and early versions. History offers numerous glimpses of false teachers and brethren who corrupted the Scriptures.

Probably the most dangerous was the Gnostic teacher **Marcion** (100-165 AD), a wealthy ship owner and the son of a bishop of Sinope in Pontus (northern Asia Minor). His father excommunicated him due to his immorality and Gnostic heresies. Marcion journeyed through Asia Minor where he met Polycarp, who rejected his false views (Eusebius, 4:14). Marcion continued westward until he arrived in Rome about 140 AD, where he purchased entry into a local congregation. There he taught for about four years until the local congregation excommunicated him for his beliefs. He then organized his followers into a separate community.

Marcion's gospel was wholly a message of love to the absolute exclusion of God's law. This extreme Gnostic antinomian doctrine led him to reject the Hebrew Scriptures and to make a distinction between the God of the Old Testament and the New Testament. He produced a version of the New Testament, including a dissected Luke's Gospel and 10 Pauline Epistles (not the pastorals), because he felt these books alone reflected the contrast between law and grace. In Luke's Gospel, Marcion carved out anything that connected Christ with nature and history. By 400 AD, His church had grown and spread to Italy, Egypt, Palestine, Arabia, Syria, Cyprus and Persia (Cross, p. 870; Bromiley, p. 490).

Tatian (ca. 160 AD), a former philosophy student, pupil of Justin Martyr and later leader of the ascetic Gnostic sect of Encratites, edited the Gospels into a collection about the life of Jesus called the *Diatessaron*. He altered the expressions of the apostles to harmonize with and to correct the style of the Gospel narratives (Eusebius, 4:29). It was among the various Encratic sects that many of the apocryphal gospels and acts were written (Cross, p. 457).

The Gnostic **Theodotus** (ca. 190 AD) and his disciples claimed that Jesus was a mere man. For this belief Victor, the bishop of Rome, excommunicated them. Eusebius described their corruption of the New Testament text in their attempts to "correct" it: "...for should any one collect and compare their copies one with another, he would find them greatly at variance among themselves. For the copies of Asclepidotus will be found to differ from those of Theodotus. Copies of many you may find in abundance, altered, by the eagerness of their disciples to insert each one his own corrections, as they call them, i.e., their corruptions....For neither can they deny that they have been guilty of the daring act, when the copies were written with their own hand, nor did they receive such Scriptures from those by whom they were instructed in the elements of the faith; nor can they show copies from which they were transcribed" (Eusebius 5:28).

Many ancient apologists record that heretics tampered with the New Testament text. Tertullian, an African Church scholar (ca. 160-225 AD), lamented: "Now **this heresy** of yours does not receive certain Scriptures; and whichever of them it does receive, it perverts **by means of additions and diminutions** [omissions], for the accomplishment of its own purpose" (Tertullian, *On Prescription Against Heresies*, 1:17:1, emphasis added).

See Appendix V, page 868, for an overview of the Gnostic roots of the Egyptian church.

Doctrinal Controversy Safeguards Text: Research shows that the majority of deliberate changes to the apostolic text, heretical or otherwise, ceased by 200 AD. The frequent condemnations of heretical activity by early apologists (defenders of Christian-

ity) like Tertullian had the effect of putting early copyists of Scripture on guard (Elliott, p. 24). According to the late George D. Kilpatrick, a British textual scholar: "From the third century onward even an Origen could not effectively alter the text....From the early third century onward the freedom to alter the text ... can no longer be practised. Tatian [160 AD] is the last author to make deliberate changes in the text of whom we have explicit information. Between Tatian and Origen Christian opinion had so changed that it was no longer possible to make changes in the text whether they were harmless or not.... If these changes had been confined to style and other indifferent features, this production of new variants may have gone on indefinitely. But the making of doctrinal changes provoked a fierce reaction. We have ample evidence on this period....Tatian also came under censure for his treatment of the Gospels and we may infer that it was the doctrinal changes of the second century heretics which led to the change in the Church's attitude. In order to avoid giving countenance to these heretical activities, even relatively harmless stylistic changes were no longer [widely] permitted and, as we have seen, Tatian's stylistic alterations were condemned....by the end of the second century A.D. Christian opinion had hardened against deliberate alteration of the text, however harmless the alteration might be" (Ibid., pp. 22-24).

It was through this process that God began gently leading all Christendom back to the pure apostolic text. According to Burgon, God allowed deliberate variations as a means of stirring His Church to action: "But the Church, in her collective capacity, hath nevertheless ... been perpetually purging herself of those shamefully depraved [Greek] copies which once everywhere abounded within her pale: retaining only such an amount of discrepancy in her Text as might serve to remind her children that they carry their 'treasure in earthen vessels,'—as well as to stimulate them to perpetual watchfulness and solicitude for the purity and integrity of the Deposit [the Biblical texts]. Never, however, up to the present hour, hath there been any complete eradication of all traces of the attempted mischief,—any absolute getting rid of every depraved copy extant. These are found to have lingered on anciently in many quarters. *A few such copies linger on to the present day.* The wounds were healed, but the scars remained" (Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, p. 335).

During the second century, clashes between Hellenized and apostolic Christianity fueled a controversy that served to protect the original text from corruption. Asia Minor and the Aegean coast of Greece continued to be the heartland of apostolic Christianity. This is confirmed by the stance the region's churches took in the Quartodeciman controversies. This dispute was over whether the Passover should be observed on a fixed day of the Hebrew lunar month Nisan as initially enjoined in the Mosaic injunction (Ex. 12:6) or Easter on the following Sunday (Cross, pp. 1037, 1150). The former practice was the ancient tradition of Asia Minor, the Aegean coast and Antioch. Both Polycarp and Polycrates figure predominately in this early battle with Hellenized Christianity. A full account of both episodes (ca. 155 and 190 AD) is available in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* (Eusebius, 5:23-25). (See page 312 for statement by Polycrates.)

In the end, the Asiatic churches refused to adopt Easter to emphasize Jesus' resurrection as had Rome, Egypt and the Western churches. The Asiatic churches instead continued to keep the Passover in commemoration of Jesus' death, as the Savior had commanded the apostles and Church (John 13:14-17; I Cor. 11:23-26). In an attempt to quell Passover observance, the Roman bishop Victor excommunicated Polycrates and the churches in Asia Minor for their refusal to keep Easter; however, Ireneaus exhorted Victor to maintain peace in the Church as his predecessor Anicetus had done 40 years earlier during a similar confrontation over the Passover (Eusebius, 5:24:9-11).

Hills described the effects of this bitter debate upon the state of the apostolic text in Asia Minor: "This controversy no doubt induced in the minds of the Christians of Asia

Minor a violent prejudice against the Western text, which they knew to have emanated from Rome. And the fact that the Alexandrian Church had sided with Rome in this controversy would combine with their traditional jealousy of that great Egyptian city to create in them a similar aversion to the Alexandrian text. Thus, throughout the second and third centuries [100-300 AD] and down into the middle of the fourth century [300s AD], the rank and file of the Christians of Asia Minor, and probably also of Antioch, remained loyal to the true New Testament text, which had become the traditional text of their native region, and resolute in their rejection of the Western and Alexandrian texts. It was in this way, no doubt, that the true text was preserved by the providence of God during these early troubled years" (Hills, 1956 ed., p. 55).

The Quartodeciman controversy did not disappear. Chrysostom (ca. 347-407 AD), bishop and expository preacher, encountered an enclave of faithful believers in 387 AD, while pastoring a church in Antioch in Pisidia (central Asia Minor). In a series of homilies entitled "Against the Jews," he reproved those whom he labeled "brothers" in the faith for forsaking the Imperial Greek church and returning to Sabbath and festival observance (Chrysostom, "Against the Jews," 1:1:6-8, 1:2:5, 1:6:14). Besides displaying his confusion over God's festivals, Chrysostom documented in his homilies the *public* subversion of apostolic Christianity in 325 AD by the ecumenical Council held at Nicea in Bithynia (Chrysostom, 1:3:1-4). One of the major issues discussed at the Council meetings was the observance of Passover. The Council finally ruled that observance of the ancient custom of Passover was a crime, punishable by death.

Letters from the Council and Constantine show the areas of the empire that had at this time accepted the custom of Easter, which was observed on the first Sunday after the full moon following the vernal equinox: Italy, Rome, North Africa, Egypt, Spain, Gaul, Britain, Libya, Achaia (Greece), portions of Asia, Pontus (northern Asia Minor) and Cilicia (near Tarsus). Those who refused were of the apostolic churches located in the south-central and western portions of Asia Minor. They remained loyal to God until they fled into the valleys and mountainous areas of Europe and Asia Minor in the fifth century (Rev. 12:6). Research also confirms that large segments of the Celtic church in Britain held fast to the doctrine of the apostles, including the observance of the Passover, upward into the sixth century AD (Hardinge, *The Celtic Church in Britain*, pp. 9-12, 20-21, 75-76).

Prestige Texts: The cultural and doctrinal wars of the second century served as the stimulus for the creation of two local Greek texts. Hills described the second-century attempts of scholars and grammarians to corrupt the apostolic text: "Beginning with the Western and Alexandrian texts, we see that they represent two nearly simultaneous departures from the True Text which took place during the 2nd century. The making of these two texts proceeded, for the most part, according to two entirely different plans. The scribes that produced the Western text regarded themselves more as interpreters than as mere copyists....they made bold alterations in the text and added many interpolations. The makers of the Alexandrian text, on the other hand, conceived of themselves as grammarians. Their chief aim was to improve the style of the sacred text. They made few additions to it. Indeed, their fear of interpolation was so great that they often went to the opposite extreme of wrongly removing genuine readings from the text. Because of this the Western text is generally longer than the True Text and the Alexandrian is generally shorter.

"As all scholars agree, the Western text was the text of the Christian Church at Rome and the Alexandrian text that of the Christian scribes and scholars of Alexandria. For this reason these two texts were prestige-texts, much sought after by the wealthier and more scholarly members of the Christian community. The True Text, on the other hand, continued in use among the poorer and less learned Christian brethren. These

humble believers would be less sensitive to matters of prestige and would no doubt prefer the familiar wording of the True Text to the changes introduced by the new prestige-texts....they would be little tempted to write the variant readings of the prestige-texts into the margins of their own New Testament manuscripts and would be even less inclined to make complete copies of these prestige-texts. And since they were poor, they would be unable to buy new manuscripts containing these prestige-texts.

"For all these reasons, therefore the True Text would continue to circulate among these lowly Christian folk virtually undisturbed by the influence of other texts. Moreover, because it was difficult for these less prosperous Christians to obtain new manuscripts, they put the ones they had to maximum use. Thus all these early manuscripts of the True Text were eventually worn out. None of them seems to be extant today. The papyri which do survive seem for the most part to be prestige-texts which were preserved in the libraries of ancient Christian schools. According to Aland (1963), both the Chester Beatty and the Bodmer Papyri may have been kept at such an institution. But the papyri with the True Text were read to pieces by the believing Bible students of antiquity. In the providence of God they were used by the Church. They survived long enough, however, to preserve the True (Traditional) New Testament Text during this early period and to bring it into the period of triumph that followed" (Hills, 1984, pp. 183-184).

(See Appendix U, page 858, for a reconstruction of the history of the Alexandrian text. Since nearly all scholars reject the Western text as a genuine representative of the apostolic text, we refer the reader to the following sources for additional detailed information: Hills, 1956 ed., pp. 39-40, 51-52; 1984 ed., pp. 121-126.)

Early Versions Emerge: The testimonies of the *Itala* and Syriac Peshitta versions of the New Testament are pivotal in the textual debate because both witness to the early existence of the Byzantine Text. Until the twentieth century, most scholars believed that the Peshitta was translated in the early 100s AD. An overview of how the testimonies of these versions became corrupted from interaction with the prestige texts follows.

The Western text gained acceptance in other parts of the empire due to the influence of the Roman church and because "it circulated from Rome, the capital and centre of all things" (Hills, 1984 ed., p. 121). By 200 AD, it had spread to Gaul, Africa and Egypt, where its readings infected the Old Latin versions and the Alexandrian text (Hills, 1956 ed., p. 51). The readings of the Western text were transported to the East through Tatian's *Diatessaron* (160 AD), which was made in Rome from manuscripts of this type (Kenyon, *The Greek Text of the Bible*, pp. 121-122). The corrupt readings of the Western text also spread to the Old Syriac version from the *Diatessaron*.

Latin-speaking brethren, living in remote areas to the west of Rome and in North Africa, would naturally have looked to the Roman church for Greek manuscripts for use in translation. This accounts for the presence of Western readings in Old Latin versions and in many of the citations of the Western Church Fathers (e.g., Ireneaus, Tertullian, Cyprian and Augustine). The charge of "barbarism" made against the Old Latin versions undoubtedly arose from the production of informal translations by Latin-speaking brethren with no training in Greek and the Italic language spoken in Rome, Milan and other large cities in the West (Miller, *A Guide to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, p. 76). This background adds clarity to the later statement of the North African bishop Augustine (354-430 AD): "in the earliest days of the faith whenever any Greek codex fell into the hands of any one who thought that he had slight familiarity ... with Greek and Latin, he was bold enough to attempt to make a translation" (Burton, p. 141 citing Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana* ii.16).

The influence of the "Christian university" at Alexandria secured for the text of that great city an unprecedented authority. As expected, readings of the Alexandrian text can be found among the more educated and scholarly Christians (Church Fathers) and in

those ancient versions whose translators obtained their Greek manuscripts from the celebrated theological library at Caesarea, which the Alexandrian scholar Origen helped build (Burgon, p. 153). The circulation of this text was enhanced because it did not exhibit the alleged "barbaric style" of the *Koiné* apostolic text.

This portrayal explains the origins of the corrupt readings in the Old Syriac and the numerous nonauthoritative Old Latin versions made independently of each other (cf. Burgon, pp. 140-141). It also accounts for the circulation of the **local** prestige texts outside of Egypt and Rome.

According to Hills, beginning in the 300s AD there appears to have been a "God-guided movement of the Church away from the readings which were false and misleading and toward those which were true and trustworthy" (Hills, 1984 ed., p. 187).

Numerous competing and highly corrupt versions of the Old Latin led Damasus to request Jerome to revise the Old Latin Bible in 383 AD. Jerome's Latin version arose from his comparison of the Old Latin versions with "old" Greek manuscripts. Comparative studies of readings indicate Jerome preferred the Alexandrian text and generally avoided the readings of the Western text (Sparks, "Jerome as a Bible Scholar," *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 1, pp. 529-530).

After completing an analysis to ascertain Jerome's choice of text, Oxford University professor H.F.D. Sparks concluded: "Frequently, no doubt, doctrinal and other considerations, apart from purely textual, determined his choice, so that it is difficult to be certain, in absence of a direct statement, on what grounds in any instance his preference for a particular reading is based. Jerome is always arbitrary" (Sparks, p. 529). This unpredictability sparked an immediate outrage by the fourth-century Latin theologian Helvidius when Jerome changed the reading of Luke 2:33 from the traditional Byzantine/Old Latin one of "And Joseph and his mother wondered," to "His father and mother wondered" (as found in the early uncials). Helvidius accused Jerome of using corrupt Greek manuscripts to perpetuate the popular doctrine that Mary had been a virgin her entire life and that the brethren of the Lord were not his natural brothers and sisters (Schaff, "The Perpetual Virginity of Blessed Mary," *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, p. 730). The charge that Jerome changed the Old Latin text solely for theological reasons cannot be *wholly* maintained in light of contemporary research, which shows that in his revision of the Gospels, he selected some readings (e.g., Luke 23:34) that support the Byzantine Text, much like those of Codex Alexandrinus (Hills, pp. 187-188). Codex Alexandrinus is Byzantine in nature in the Gospels and Alexandrian in the remaining New Testament books.

The "lineal descendants" of the *Itala* were preserved by faithful brethren in northern Italy, southern France (Vaudois) and the Celtic church of Britain (Johnson, "The Real Truth about the Waldenses Bible and the Old Latin Version," pp. 29-32, 35-36; Hardinge, p. 31). Eventually, remains of the *Itala* emerged in the earliest translations of the Waldenses about 1,200 years later during the Reformation (cf. Rev. 12:6). The Christians in Britain were able to retain faithful copies of the *Itala* until it "was gradually modified with phrases from the Vulgate" and the readings of other Old Latin versions after the Romanizing of the Celtic church in the late 500s AD (Hardinge, p. 32).

While the Old Syriac appears to have circulated to some extent in the Syrian church until the mid-300s AD, Tatian's *Diatessaron* was confined *only* to a region along the upper Euphrates valley (Hills, p. 187; Burgon, p. 134). Two incomplete surviving manuscripts containing only the Gospels support the Old Syriac: the Curetonian (400s AD) and Old Sinaitic (300s AD) (Kenyon, p. 117). The fact that the Old Sinaitic is a palimpsest, meaning that its text was erased and leaves reused, shows that Syrian Christians did not value its corrupt readings after this time. The readings of these early fragments contradict each other in 21 passages; in many instances, both manuscripts support

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the Byzantine Text (Kenyon, pp. 121-122; Hills, p. 174).

There is no solid evidence to refute the claim that the Peshitta served as the standard version among the common Syrian brethren, a position that it held long before the Old Syriac was produced probably by the sect of the Nestorians in the 200s AD (Burgon, pp. 133-134). This conclusion is supported by the fact that all opposing sects of the Syrian church (Nestorians and Monophysites) accept the Peshitta as their authoritative text (Hills, pp. 173-174). This could not have happened had the Peshitta been created by the bishop Rabbula (a Monophysite) during the fifth century when the division in the Syrian church occurred as some have wrongly supposed. According to scholar Dr. Jack Moorman, the presence of some corrupt Old Syriac verses in the Peshitta and the omission of the book of Revelation can be traced to the influence of Origen and the Caesarean library (Moorman, *Forever Settled*, p. 161). According to textual scholar A. Voobus' *Investigations into the Text of the New Testament Used by Rabbula*, the original Syriac Peshitta also possessed II Peter, II John, Jude and Revelation, which it currently omits (Moorman, p. 161).

Other versions of the New Testament based upon the apostolic (Byzantine) text were produced as Christianity spread to remote areas and Greek was no longer the common language (after 330 AD): Gothic (383 AD), Ethiopic (300/400 AD) and Armenian (early 400s AD) (Kenyon, pp. 126, 149; Moorman, p. 164). Of special note is the Armenian version, supposedly first translated in part from the Old Syriac and in part from an unknown Greek text. After the Council of Ephesus (431 AD) condemned Nestorianism (a denial that Jesus was God and man in one person), the Armenian church secured "correct" copies of the Byzantine Text from Constantinople to revise its version of the New Testament (Kenyon, p. 126). The original Georgian version (300s AD) was initially based upon the Armenian version since this Caucasus region was evangelized from neighboring Armenia (Ibid., p. 127-128). The people likewise revised their version in the 1000s AD according to accurate Byzantine manuscripts after they realized their native translation contained corrupt readings of the Old Syriac.

Transmission (300-400 AD): The single most important event of the first millennium following John's canonization of the New Testament was the institution of Hellenized Christianity in 313 AD. Prior to this time, Roman emperors had launched ten persecutions with the intent of obliterating Christianity. Countless thousands were tortured and martyred for God's Word, such as Polycarp, the Savior's brother Simeon (ca. 107 AD) and Ignatius (ca. 110 AD), the second bishop of Antioch.

None of these repeated campaigns to stamp out Christianity was as severe as the oppression of emperor Diocletian (284-305 AD). Christians had enjoyed 40 years of peace after the issuing of the Rescript of Galienus (260 AD). Encouraged by his tetrarch Galerius, Diocletian suddenly issued a series of edicts beginning in 303 AD that inaugurated the destruction of church buildings and the burning of Christian books. The army imprisoned and tortured, and at times murdered, any clergy who resisted. Church readers often gave their manuscripts to brethren to protect. In 304 AD, another edict extended the persecution and bloodshed to all Christians. Many rural brethren hid their manuscripts in clay jars (in Egypt) or walls in order to save them from destruction.

Aland described the destruction of GNT manuscripts: "Persecution then broke out again with a sudden ferocity in the reign of Diocletian as paganism rallied in a final combat against Christianity....the period of persecution which lasted almost ten years in the West and much longer in the East was characterized by the systematic destruction of church buildings (and church centers), and any manuscripts that were found in them were publicly burned. Church officials were required to surrender for public burning all holy books in their possession or custody. Although clergy who submitted to the demands of the state were branded as traitors and defectors from the faith, their number was by no

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means small. The result was a widespread scarcity of New Testament manuscripts which became all the more acute when persecution ceased" (Aland, pp. 64-65).

The scene changed drastically after 313 AD when Constantine (306-337 AD) signed the Edict of Toleration in Milan. Christianity became a legal religion, and Christians were granted full liberty (Halley, p. 759). While the subject of Constantine's conversion has been debated by numerous scholars, it appears that Constantine used Christianity as a glue to hold the factionous empire together, because by the end of the imperial persecution, half of the Roman Empire's population was Christian (Halley, p. 759). The concentration of Christians was highest in Asia Minor, northeastern Greece, Cyprus, the region around Edessa (Syria) and eastward to Armenia (Aland, p. 53).

Hence, the emperor generously extended royal favor to Christians to rebuild church buildings; ministers became exempt from taxes, and Christians were elected to public office (Halley, p. 759). Constantine was so repulsed by the addiction of Rome's aristocracy to paganism that he moved the capital from Rome to Byzantium in 327 AD, renaming it Constantinople.

Following the persecution there was an urgent need for new manuscripts for public reading. "For when Christianity could again engage freely in missionary activity there was a tremendous growth in both the size of the existing churches and the number of new churches. There also followed a sudden demand for large numbers of manuscripts in all provinces of the empire. Privately made copies contributed significantly, but they were inadequate to satisfy this growing need, which could be met only by large copying houses [scriptoria]. Bishops were no longer prevented from opening their own scriptoria: any text used as the exemplar in such a production center would naturally be widely distributed and wield a dominant influence" (Aland, p. 65).

While the local prestige texts were undoubtedly copied in educated, scholarly or "official" circles in Rome, Alexandria and Caesarea, privately-made manuscripts in predominately Christian areas would have formed the majority of the new manuscripts produced and distributed to churches. This would have occurred in Asia Minor eastward to Armenia, northeastern Greece, Cyprus and parts of Syria, where Christians comprised half of the population.

It was during this period of time that a return to the apostolic (Byzantine) text occurred. To account for the sudden and widespread appearance of the Byzantine Text at this time, some textual scholars, like Aland, have postulated that it flourished due to a centralized ecclesiastical distribution. While many bishops did control their churches more tightly after the inception of the Imperial church due to the spread of heresies like Arianism, there is no solid historical evidence that bishops replaced the manuscripts in their churches with those Byzantine in nature on a widespread scale. The only possible exception is Theodoret (ca. 423-466 AD), bishop of Cyrrhus in Syria, who removed 200 copies of Tatian's corrupt *Diatessaron* from his churches, replacing them with authentic copies of the Gospels. We can only speculate concerning the manuscript type.

"Recent studies in the Traditional (Byzantine) Text indicate still more clearly that this was not an official text imposed upon the Church by ecclesiastical authority or by the influence of any outstanding leader. Westcott and Hort, for example, regarded Chrysostom as one of the first to use this text and promote its use in the Church. But studies by Geerlings and New (1931) and by Dicks (1948) appear to indicate that Chrysostom could hardly have performed this function, since he himself does not seem always to have used the Traditional Text. Photius (815-897) also, patriarch of Constantinople, seems to have been no patron of the Traditional Text, for according to studies by Birdsall (1956-58), he customarily used a mixed type of text thought to be Caesarean. The lectionaries also indicate that the Traditional Text could not have been imposed on the Church by ecclesiastical authority. These, as has been stated, are manuscripts containing

the New Testament Scripture lessons appointed to be read at various worship services of the ecclesiastical year. According to the researches of Colwell (1933) and his associates, the oldest of these lessons are not Traditional but “mixed” in text. This would not be the case if Westcott and Hort’s theory were true that the Traditional Text from the very beginning had enjoyed official status” (Hill, 1984 ed., pp. 179-180).

In addition, scholars have tried to explain this phenomenon by alleging that Diocletian’s persecution destroyed a disproportionate number of prestige text manuscripts or that the persecutions were more severe in areas where these texts circulated.

Dr. Maurice Robinson, textual scholar and professor at Southern Baptist Seminary, examined the fallacies behind these arguments: “This really assumes too much: an initial presumption is that a non-Byzantine text dominated the Eastern Empire; then, when persecutors demanded scriptures for destruction, the Alexandrian text alone was overwhelmingly surrendered. Persecutions, however, were not selective in their textual targets. The MSS surrendered and destroyed in a given region would reflect the general proportion of existing MSS, regardless of texttype; so too those which survived. Were 1000 MSS destroyed in a local area of which only 100 were Byzantine, even a 90% decimation still would leave a survival proportion similar to that which was destroyed. One cannot stretch credulity to presume a reversal of texttype dominance as the result of basically random persecutions....had the Alexandrian text been original, it should have dominated the Greek-speaking portion of the Eastern Empire. It would retain its dominance even if the text in any other region were utterly destroyed. But if Alexandrian dominance did not continue, one should assume only a local and regional aspect for that text, and understand that before Constantine the Byzantine Textform had already become dominant in the primary Greek-speaking region of the Empire. This would exclude or minimize Alexandrian influence outside of Egypt and Palestine. Either way, the claimed early dominance of the Alexandrian text is called into question” (Robinson, “New Testament Textual Criticism: The Case for the Byzantine Priority,” *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism*, pars. 81-82).

Because no distinct Byzantine manuscripts have been found that existed before 400 AD, other scholars have speculated that the Byzantine Text was a product of a third- and fourth-century Church revision. They primarily point to Lucian (d. 312 AD), a biblical scholar from the theological school of Antioch, as the textual genius behind this revision. This explanation is inaccurate for several reasons.

First, although the theological school of Antioch was known for its accurate literal interpretation of Scripture in the first two centuries, it later became a haven for Arianism. Lucian is considered by most scholars to have been the father of Arianism, a heretical belief that Jesus was less divine than the Father and was created as an agent for creating the world. Lucian studied in schools in Edessa and Caesarea where he was influenced by the doctrines and textual studies of Origen. Early Arians like Arius and Eusebius of Nicomedia (Constantine’s court bishop) were Lucian’s pupils and they claimed “Lucian’s teaching was fundamental to their doctrine. He is thus credited with subordinationist views of Christ” (Ferguson, s.v. “Lucian of Antioch,” *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, p. 697). With the condemnation of Arius and Arianism at the Council of Nicea (325 AD), it is highly improbable that orthodox scholars and Church members would have adopted a text tainted by the Arian leanings of the later Antiochian school. The Armenian church’s rejection of its earlier version of the New Testament from the Old Syriac after the condemnation of Nestorianism by the Council of Ephesus (431 AD) serves as an ancient example of how sensitive Christians were to these matters.

Second, there is *no* historical record that the Byzantine Text was the creation of a deliberate recension (revision) as was the case with Jerome’s revision of the Old Latin versions. Dutch textual scholar Jakob Van Bruggen examined the only citations that dis-

cuss a Lucianic revision of the Septuagint (LXX) and New Testament, which are in a preface to the Latin Gospels of Jerome (Hieronymus): "The historical starting-point for this recension-idea is sought with the person of Lucianus of Antioch. That we, however, can not speak with great certainty here, appears from the fact that Hort did not do anything more than mention the possibility that Lucianus stands at the beginning of the Byzantine text....It is also not possible to prove historically that Lucianus of Antioch offered a revised text of the *New Testament*. Even though for a long time, since De Lagarde, people have anxiously searched for the assumed LXX-recension of Lucianus, some are at present even sceptical concerning Lucianus' revisionary work on the *Old Testament*. What Hieronymus' says in mutual contradictory statements about the work of Lucianus, also gives little support. In any case there is no clear indication in Hieronymus' statements of influential work that Lucianus was thought to have done on the Greek *New Testament*. If he was busy with a revision of this text, his work remained of very limited value. This also appears to be so from the fact that the later *Decretum Gelasianum* [sixth-century Latin document listing early doctrines and sacred books of the Roman church] speaks with aversion about some of Lucianic manuscripts. If the original Greek text is superseded by an inferior recension in the 4th and following centuries, then this process has left surprisingly few trails in the historiography" (Van Bruggen, *The Ancient Text of the New Testament*, pp. 17-18).

Van Bruggen added, "The fact that the Byzantine text is already used in the 4th century [300s AD] as a **normal text** proves that it must be from an earlier date and was not regarded as 'new'" (Van Bruggen, p. 24, bold added).

Robinson explained how religious tolerance created an atmosphere for the apostolic (Byzantine) text to flourish: "Once the status of the churches had become sanctioned under Constantine, however, the predominantly 'local' nature of the church was permanently altered. Official sanction engendered wider communication between churches, including regional and Empire-wide councils. Greater communication meant wider travel and exchange of manuscripts among the churches and individual Christians. It was only natural that cross-comparison and correction of one manuscript by another should then proceed on a numerical and geographical scale far greater than ever before.

"The result of this spontaneous 'improvement' of manuscripts through cross-correction would not manifest itself immediately. Over the process of time, however, all manuscripts would slowly but inexorably tend toward a common and universally-shared text—a text with its own subgroups and minor differences among the manuscripts, but a text which was basically unitary in form and content, though not itself an ingrown 'local text' nor identical with any single local text. This 'universal text' could only be one which would approach the common archetype which lay behind all the local text forms. For the Greek manuscripts, that archetype could only be the autograph form itself" (Robinson, *The New Testament in the Original Greek according to the Byzantine/Majority Textform*, www.skypoint.com, p. 6).

Van Bruggen explained: "Closer examination of the Byzantine tradition has shown, in the period after Hort, that several tendencies can be pointed out in this tradition. Von Soden distinguished various layers in these Koine manuscripts. It proved to be impossible to describe the layers as a variation arising within a group of manuscripts, which in fact go back to one archetype [i.e., a Lucianic revision]. That there is much agreement between all these manuscripts does not mean that they all come from one and the same source. The later research-work done by Lake and Colwell did change the picture given by Von Soden, but at the same time it has shown even more clearly that it is better to describe the Byzantine textual tradition as a collection of converging textual traditions than as a varying reproduction of one archetype. This fact now prevents us from thinking of one recension as the source for the text that is found in the majority of the

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manuscripts....one can not simply reduce the large majority of manuscripts to one vote and then only a secondary vote" (Van Bruggen, p. 19). **Thus, Dr. F.J.A. Hort's theory that the testimony of Byzantine manuscripts could be dismissed *en masse* because they came from the same parent manuscript is false.** Hort's theory undergirds modern New Testament textual criticism.

In addition to improved communication and some scribal cross-comparison of manuscripts, Hills noted that new heretical controversies spurred Christians to reject the deficient readings of the prestige texts: "The great 4th-century [300s AD] conflict with the Arian heresy brought orthodox Christians to a theological maturity which enabled them, under the leading of the Holy Spirit, to perceive the superior doctrinal soundness and richness of the True Text. In ever increasing numbers Christians in the higher social brackets abandoned the corrupt prestige-texts which they had been using and turned to the well worn manuscripts of their poorer brethren, manuscripts which, though meaner in appearance, were found in reality to be far more precious, since they contained the True New Testament Text. No doubt they paid handsome sums to have copies made of these ancient books, and this was done so often that these venerable documents were worn out through much handling by the scribes. But before these old manuscripts finally perished, they left behind them a host of fresh copies made from them and bearing witness to the True Text. Thus it was that the True (Traditional) Text became the standard text now found in the vast majority of the Greek New Testament manuscripts.

"The trend toward the True (Traditional) Text began with the common people ... and then rapidly built up such strength that the bishops and other official leaders were carried along with it. Chrysostom, for example, does not seem to have initiated this trend....There is evidence that the triumphal march of the Traditional (Byzantine) Text met with resistance in certain quarters. There were some scribes and scholars who were reluctant to renounce entirely their faulty Western, Alexandrian, and Caesarean texts. And so they compromised by following sometimes their false texts and sometimes the True (Traditional) Text. Thus arose those classes of mixed manuscripts described by von Soden and other scholars. This would explain also the non-Traditional readings which Colwell and his associates have found in certain portions of the lectionary manuscripts. And if Birdsall is right in his contention that Photius (815-897), patriarch of Constantinople, customarily used the Caesarean text, this too must be regarded as a belated effort on the part of this learned churchman to keep up the struggle against the Traditional Text. But his endeavor was in vain. Even before his time the God-guided preference of the common people for the True (Traditional) New Testament Text had prevailed, causing it to be adopted generally throughout the Greek-speaking Church" (Hills, pp. 185-186).

As Hills noted earlier, the older Byzantine manuscripts became worn out from overuse. This accounts for the lack of Byzantine manuscript evidence before 400 AD. A major "revolution" in the copying of the Greek manuscripts occurred at this time. Instead of using material made of cheap, fragile papyrus, scribes began copying the New Testament to costly and more durable parchment. Papyrus exemplars (model ancient manuscripts) were copied directly to parchment and then destroyed. Hills explained: "During the march of the Traditional (Byzantine) Text toward supremacy many manuscripts of the Traditional type must have perished. The investigations of Lake (1928) and his associates indicate that this was so. 'Why,' he asked, 'are there only a few fragments (even in the two oldest of the monastic collections, Sinai and St. Saba) which come from a date earlier than the 10th century? There must have been in existence many thousands of manuscripts of the gospels in the great days of Byzantine prosperity, between the 4th and the 10th centuries. There are now extant but a pitifully small number. Moreover, the amount of direct genealogy which has been detected in extant codices is

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almost negligible. Nor are many known manuscripts sister codices.'

"As a result of these investigations, Lake found it 'hard to resist the conclusion that the scribes usually destroyed their exemplars when they copied the sacred books.' If Lake's hypothesis is correct, then the manuscripts most likely to be destroyed would be those containing the Traditional Text. For these were the ones which were copied most during the period between the 4th and the 10th centuries, as is proved by the fact that the vast majority of the later Greek New Testament manuscripts are of the Traditional type. The Gothic version moreover, was made about 350 A.D. from manuscripts of the Traditional type which are no longer extant. Perhaps Lake's hypothesis can account for their disappearance. By the same token, the survival of old uncial manuscripts of the Alexandrian and Western type, such as *Aleph* [Sinaiticus], *B* [Vaticanus], and *D* [Beza], was due to the fact that they were rejected by the Church and not read or copied but allowed to rest relatively undisturbed on the library shelves of ancient monasteries" (Hills, 1984 ed., pp. 185-186).

When Constantine converted to Christianity, the *Koiné* Greek of the New Testament acquired "a largely religious hue" (Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics*, p. 16). After the Roman Empire split in 395 AD, this ecclesiastical or Byzantine Greek was primarily spoken in the Eastern Empire with its capital at Constantinople. Latin continued to be the language of the Western Empire with its capital at Rome.

In the 300s AD, the Greek church instituted a lectionary system (Cross, p. 808). Closely mirroring the custom of public reading in synagogues, regular lesson books (synaxarion) were created for the weekly reading of the Gospels, Acts, and Pauline and General Epistles. Lesson books for special occasions (menologion) were used for feast days and private reading. The book of Revelation never became part of the lectionary system.

By becoming rooted in the liturgical (lectionary) system of the Greek Orthodox church, the readings of the Byzantine Text stabilized during the intervening centuries (600-1453 AD). Textual scholar Bruce Metzger explained: "It is noteworthy that substantially the same choice of Scripture passages in lectionary manuscripts dating from the seventh or eighth century [600-700s AD] is still followed by the Greek Orthodox Church today. Scholars have only recently begun to appreciate the importance of lectionary manuscripts in tracing the history of the text of the New Testament during the Byzantine period. Inasmuch as the form of the citation of the Scriptures in official liturgical books always tends to be conservative and almost archaic [ancient], lectionaries are valuable in preserving a type of text that is frequently much older than the actual age of the manuscript" (Metzger, p. 31).

While some of the earlier lectionaries exhibit different text types, nearly all of the 2,300 surviving lectionaries contain a text almost identical to the Byzantine Text (Aland, p. 169). This is very similar to what happened to Biblical Hebrew after Ezra instituted the triennial lectionary cycle for the synagogue. Once the Hebrew consonantal text became an inseparable part of this system, the Sopherim worked on developing a uniform, stable text for reading during the following centuries [400 BC-100 AD]. This task was virtually complete for the Hebrew Bible by 100 AD.

Unlike the Old Testament, **the lectionary system can only explain the stabilization of the text, not the trend toward uniformity in the Byzantine Text.** The uniformity of the Byzantine Text can only be explained by the fact that there were several pure streams of transmission that reflected the original apostolic text. Copyists sought out the most ancient and reliable manuscripts in their geographical area and conformed to the universal ancient text found in them.

Van Bruggen explained: "... history faces us with a tradition which has a convergent character. How can this be accounted for, if there is no clear reviser's hand [i.e.,

Lucian] in the picture after all? This difficult question can be answered historically, as long as the tradition of the text is not described as secondary. The different centres of production in the 4th and following centuries aimed at a most faithful copy of the original or at a good restoration of the original text. Therefore, after the first centuries of persecution and dearth, a number of traditions [independent streams] automatically appeared which went back to the good text and came close to each other because they all orientated themselves on the most faithful copy of the original. The similar motive explains the trend towards an identical text. Yet, how is one to explain that various centres of production, independent of each other, show the same deviations? To say that government intervention caused this similarity ... has no historical grounds. If you wish the uniforming influence of the liturgy to explain this, then you are only transferring the problem into a different field.

“Summarizing we can say that the large number of manuscripts wherein the traditional or Church [Byzantine] text occurs, must carry weight. This striking number can not be disqualified with an appeal to Hieronymus’ statements about Lucianus of Antioch. It also can not be put aside as meaningless, as though it is to be traced back to one archetype in the 4th century. On the contrary, the large number deserves attention, since, in the midst of all sorts of variation, it confronts us with a growing uniformity....It rather points in the direction of a simultaneous turning-back in various centres to the same central-point of the original text. This text was sought in the oldest and most faithful manuscripts, and people conformed to it after centuries of textual disintegration [of the local prestige texts]” (Van Bruggen, pp. 20-21, bold added).

Transmission (400-1453 AD): Once the return to the Byzantine Text was set in the fourth century, it could not to be reversed. Hills described this trend: “During the Middle Ages [476-1500s AD] ... in every land there appeared a trend toward the orthodox Traditional (Byzantine) Text. Since the days of Griesbach naturalistic textual critics have tried to explain this fact by attributing it to the influence of ‘monastic piety.’ According to these critics, the monks in the Greek monasteries invented the orthodox readings of the Traditional Text and then multiplied copies of that text until it achieved supremacy. But if the Traditional (Byzantine) Text had been the product of Greek monastic piety, it would not have remained orthodox, for this piety included many errors such as the worship of Mary, of the saints, and of images and pictures. If the Greek monks had invented the Traditional Text, then surely they would have invented readings favoring these errors and superstitions. But as a matter of fact no such heretical readings occur in the Traditional Text.

“Here, then, we have a truly astonishing fact which no naturalistic historian or textual critic can explain. Not only in the Greek Church but also throughout all Christendom the medieval period was one of spiritual decline and doctrinal corruption. But in spite of this growth of error and superstition the New Testament text most widely read and copied in the medieval Greek Church was the orthodox, Traditional (Byzantine) Text. And not only so but also in the other regions of Christendom there was a trend toward this same Traditional Text. How shall we account for this unique circumstance? There is only one possible explanation....All during this corrupt medieval period God by His providence kept alive in the Greek Church ... a reverence for and an interest in the holy Scriptures....In this Traditional Text, found in the vast majority of the Greek New Testament manuscripts, no readings occur which favor Mary worship, saint-worship, or image-worship. On the contrary, the Traditional Text was kept pure from these errors and gained ground everywhere” (Hills, pp. 188-189).

By the 800-900s AD, the writing of Greek manuscripts had advanced considerably. Another copying revolution occurred when the style used for writing manuscripts changed from the uncial to cursive script. Most likely established by the gifted writer

and monastic reformer Theodore of Studium (759-826 AD), this trend became accepted throughout the Greek-speaking world.

Van Bruggen explained the significance of this copying revolution: "At this time the most important New Testament manuscripts written in majuscule [uncial] script were carefully transcribed into minuscule [cursive] script. It is assumed that after this transliteration-process the majuscule was taken out of circulation. This is also the conclusion of Lake: copyists destroyed their original after it had been 'renewed.' The import of this datum has not been taken into account enough in the present New Testament textual criticism. For it implies, that just the oldest, best and most customary manuscripts come to us in the new uniform of the minuscule script, does it not? This is even more cogent, since it appears that various archetypes can be detected in this transliteration-process for the New Testament. Therefore we do not receive one mother-manuscript through the flood-gates of transliteration, but several" (Van Bruggen, p. 26).

How do we know the earlier uncials were renewed in the form of later dated minuscules? Robinson reviewed the textual data: "This is evidenced even during the earliest portion of the minuscule era when both scripts coexisted. The minuscule MSS from the ninth through perhaps the first half of the eleventh century are very likely to represent uncial exemplars far earlier than those uncials which date from the ninth-century. Thus, many early minuscules are likely only two or three generations removed from papyrus ancestors of the fourth century or before, perhaps even closer. There are no indicators opposing such a possibility, and the ... independent nature of most early minuscule witnesses (their 'orphan' status as per Lake, Blake, and New) increases the likelihood of such a case. It becomes presumptuous to suppose otherwise, especially when many minuscules are already recognized by modern eclectics to contain 'early' texts" (Robinson, "New Testament Textual Criticism: The Case for the Byzantine Priority," par. 63).

This description of the textual data by Van Bruggen and Robinson means that the testimony of the minuscules cannot be rejected due to their age as Hort alleged. It likewise means that the *earliest* surviving papyri and uncials (Vaticanus and Sinaiticus) survived because people rejected them due to the corrupt nature of their texts: "Why do the surviving ancient manuscripts show another text-type? Because they are the only survivors of their generation, and because their survival is due to the fact that they were of a different text.... There certainly were majuscules just as venerable and ancient as the surviving Vaticanus or Sinaiticus, which, like a section of the Alexandrinus, presented a Byzantine text. But they have been renewed into minuscule script and their majuscule-appearance has vanished" (Van Bruggen, pp. 26-27).

During the Middle Ages, the knowledge of Greek was kept alive in the Byzantine Empire (312-1453 AD), which until the eleventh century also included portions of southern Italy (Hills, 1956 ed., p. 118). Competent Byzantine scholars built upon the learning of ancient Greek grammarians, writing numerous dictionaries, grammars and lexicons. These would later serve as the tools for the revival of Greek learning at universities across Europe after the fall of the Byzantine Empire.

As the Ottoman Turks were advancing on Constantinople in 1453 AD, Greek scholars escaped with their Greek minuscule manuscripts of ancient classical works and the New Testament. Hills noted that these "learned refugees" were "eager to earn their living by giving instruction in the language and literature of ancient Greece. The Greek grammars which Chrysolarus, Gaza, and other Byzantine refugees introduced into Italy were based on the original work of Dionysius Thrax, which had been produced in Alexandria more than fifteen hundred years before. And when, at the end of the fifteenth century, the revival of Greek learning spread from Italy to northern and western Europe, these same Greek grammars were studied in England by Erasmus (1466-1536 AD), the

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editor of the first printed Greek New Testament....Thus the providence of God not only preserved intact the Greek New Testament text but also kept in continual existence the language in which it was written. Under God's guidance the knowledge of the Greek language was handed down for more than fifteen centuries in an unbroken stream of tradition to the leaders of the Protestant Reformation. It was because this stream flowed through the medieval Greek Church that this Church was appointed by God to be the custodian of the Greek New Testament text" (Ibid., p. 119).

Over the next several decades as these grammars and manuscripts spread throughout western Europe and their texts were studied, theologians and scholars realized that the Latin text (Jerome's version) they were using in liturgical worship was highly inaccurate. As a result, the authority of the Latin text declined considerably. Encouraged by rampant abuse (nepotism, simony, worldliness and indulgences) in the Roman Catholic church, many within its ranks began to question its authority and teachings. This set the stage for the Protestant Reformation. On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses on the cathedral door in Wittenberg, thus inaugurating the German Reformation.

One year prior to this momentous event, another crucial milestone transpired: the publishing of the first Greek New Testament by the Dutch scholar Desiderius Erasmus, and Johann Froben in Basel, Switzerland (1516 AD). This moment marked another revolution: the transfer of the Greek New Testament from hand-copied manuscripts to the printed page, which made the New Testament text available to translators, theologians, reformers and scholars across western Europe, like Martin Luther and William Tyndale. Over the next 20 years, Erasmus continued to revise and update his Greek text, producing four additional editions. His fifth edition (1535) served as the basis for the 1550 text of Robert Stephen (Estienne). In time each of these texts became part of a collection of early printed Greek texts of the New Testament known as *Textus Receptus*.

Are these texts disadvantaged because their editors did not have access to the earlier Vatican or Sinaitic manuscripts? Sir Frederick Kenyon, the late director and principal librarian of the British Museum, related how a papal correspondent in 1533 sent Erasmus a number of selected readings from the Vaticanus, as "proof of its superiority" to the *Textus Receptus* (Kenyon, *Our Bible and The Ancient Manuscripts*, p. 138). Instead of affirming the readings, Erasmus rejected them against the overwhelming testimony of the Greek manuscripts, which he had classified and studied during the years prior to the printing of his 1516 edition.

The *Textus Receptus* is essentially 98-99 percent identical with the text found in the vast majority of Greek New Testament manuscripts (i.e., Byzantine Text). Referencing the research of Kirsopp Lake, Hills added: "As Lake (1902) remarks, there are only a 'few places' in which it has an 'unusual' (non-Byzantine) reading. These few departures of the *Textus Receptus* from the Byzantine text are nearly all attributable to Erasmus' occasional use of non-Byzantine sources, especially the Latin Vulgate. Most of these non-Byzantine readings are too trivial for special mention" (Hills, 1956 ed., p. 121).

By the end of the sixteenth century, the true apostolic (Byzantine) text had been restored to the priesthood of believers in order to fulfill the purpose for which it was written.

Verifying Scribal Accuracy

Thousands of scribes over centuries, and even millennia, manually copied the sacred texts. To gain some perspective, let us consider these facts:

- 1) Individual believers made copies of the New Testament (NT) books in the privacy of

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their homes for at least 300 years, often under persecution and duress (Metzger, p. 14). Literate people, often the church reader, most likely made copies for themselves and area congregations (Aland, pp. 55, 65; Comfort, p. 15).

- 2) There were generally no commercial scriptoria (professional copying centers) before 300 AD. The first recorded scriptorium existed in Egypt about 200 AD (Ibid., p. 59).
- 3) After Christianity received official sanction from the Roman Empire in 313 AD following the Diocletian persecutions (303-313 AD), the widespread need for NT manuscripts required that professional scribes be engaged (Ibid., p. 65).
- 4) For a millennium (400-1453 AD), Byzantine Greek monks produced copies of the New Testament books in monasteries (Metzger, p. 16).

Kenyon, described the human element involved in the copying of New Testament manuscripts. While his comments relate to the transmission of Greek copies, they can also be applied generally to Hebrew manuscripts: "...before the invention of printing every copy of a book had to be written by hand....Owing to the frailties of the human hand and eye and brain, it is impossible to copy large quantities of matter without making mistakes. These mistakes will be repeated by the next scribe who copies this manuscript, with additions of his own, so that as time goes on the text will tend to vary further and further from the true original. Attempts may be made from time to time to correct them, either by comparison with other copies or by conjecture....There thus grows up a number of *various readings* [textual variants], as they are called, with competing claims which a modern editor has to consider" (Kenyon, *The Text*, pp. 9-10).

Kenyon's comments capture the reality of copying any document by hand. Manual copying was not mechanical; scribes were vulnerable to fatigue and other factors that affected their copying. If the document was of considerable length, it was impossible for a scribe to copy a text without making some mistakes. Over time simple copying mistakes became an inevitable part of the transmission process, even in the best manuscripts.

Textual Fallacy: Kenyon's assertion that a scribe would perpetuate manuscript errors while making new errors of his own so that the text would vary further and further from the original is a false assumption. This falsehood reflects the often repeated and mostly unsupported theory of Dr. Hort: "The consequent presumption that **a relatively late text is likely to be a relatively corrupt text** is found true on application of all available texts in an overwhelming proportion of all extant MSS in which ancient literature has been preserved." Later he added that in the early centuries "**Textual purity**, as far as can be judged from the extant literature, **attracted hardly any interest**. There is no evidence to shew that care was generally taken to choose out for transcription the exemplars [model manuscripts] having highest claims to be regarded as authentic" (Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek*, vol. 2, pp. 5-6, 9, emphasis added).

Thus, Hort alleged that early brethren and Christian scribes exercised little care (textual purity) in how they copied the text, and that they did not use manuscripts of high character to monitor their work. According to Hort's false assumption, the further one moved away from the autographs, the more one would find manuscripts corrupted by the accumulation of errors. For Hort, this meant that the later Byzantine minuscules were presumed to be "corrupt and inferior" in comparison to the earlier uncials to which he appealed (i.e., Sinaiticus and Vaticanus). Since Hort's time, scholars have utilized the earlier dated Greek papyri and uncials in hope of recovering the original text of the New Testament. Hort based his appeals on the principles used in editing ancient secular literature and *assumed* scribal tendencies. A closer examination of these two areas reveals that both Kenyon and Hort were incorrect.

New Testament Scribal Habits: Each manuscript has its own history and character. Some are more reliable witnesses than others, depending on the scribes who copied

them. A knowledge of individual scribal habits is essential when evaluating a manuscript and its readings (text).

Robinson presented his doctoral dissertation on the habits of Byzantine-era scribes entitled “Scribal Habits Among Manuscripts of the Apocalypse.” His research is one of the most significant contributions to the field of New Testament textual criticism to date and has superseded all other previous studies on scribal habits because it surveyed manuscripts from “widely diverse locales and time periods” (Robinson, “Scribal Habits Among Manuscripts of the Apocalypse,” p. 19). As part of his dissertation, Robinson conducted a limited statistical sampling of the singular readings of the 220 manuscripts of the book of Revelation collated by the late Herman C. Hoskier. Singular readings are those usually found in only one manuscript and likely produced by an individual scribe; they serve as indicators of what a scribe might normally do in a given situation. The intent was to evaluate classical textual principles based on the habits of scribes.

The findings of Robinson’s study **refuted** scholarly assumptions about the customs of Byzantine-era scribes and revealed that “generalizations concerning scribal habits *are* faulty; the textual handbooks thus need *drastic* revision” and “*generalizations* as to what a scribe ‘usually’ would or would not do are useless. *General* principles simply do *not* apply to most *specific* situations!” (Ibid., pp. 2, 199).

The **most important finding** of his study was that “Scribes were *not* the ‘great corrupters’ of the text as has been supposed. *Most* scribes—and especially those of the later ‘Byzantine era’—were extremely careful, their few corruptions being mostly accidental and the deliberate alterations being mostly stylistic changes of a minor nature. Such a conclusion appears to hold good for the entire NT since, if anything, the textual problems of the Apocalypse should have tended to *increase* corruption over that of the other NT books” (Ibid., p. 190).

While most Byzantine-era scribes were careful in their copying of the text of their exemplars (model manuscripts), Robinson’s research also demonstrated that “early Egyptian scribes ... plus a *very few* Byzantine-era scribes were both extremely careless and highly ‘editorial’” (Ibid., p. 2).

Since completing his initial research on scribal habits, Robinson has collated over 1,389 manuscripts of the adulteress narrative of John 7:53-8:11. This work offers scholars a virtually complete portrait of the textual facts regarding this section of Scripture and additional data concerning scribal habits. Robinson’s conclusions are based on verifiable data from the apparatus of modern printed texts and his own 30-year study of the GNT manuscripts. He argues that variant readings ought to be evaluated based on their transmission through time and conformity to scribal habits:

“A transmissional aspect needs to be recognized: an error or deliberate alteration made in a single MS [manuscript] or a few MSS is unlikely to be perpetuated in quantity. The many singular and quasi-singular readings that exist demonstrate the unlikelihood of a transcriptionally-based scribal creation extending much beyond any MS or MSS which first produced it. The chances that any sensible alteration subsequent to the autograph would extend beyond a small group of localized witnesses **would be slim**. Indeed, such readings as characterize minority texttypes witnesses [e.g., Alexandrian text] generally remain small and localized. That any deliberate alteration or transcriptional error [copying mistake] would gain the cooperation of scribes so as to dominate the entire stream of transmission is **a null proposition**: scribes demonstrably **did not engage in such a practice on the grand scale**. Earlier exemplars would serve to nullify the growth and widespread dissemination of most scribal alterations, thus holding in check the unbridled mass of minority variants” (Robinson, “New Testament Textual Criticism: The Case for the Byzantine Priority,” pars. 40, emphasis added).

Verifiable scribal patterns reveal that errors or deliberate changes in one manu-

script seldom infected other manuscripts when both were produced by independent scribes; and the use of exemplars to monitor completed manuscripts coupled with the tendencies of scribes not to engage in such practices makes the widespread transmission of variations nearly impossible.

Robinson continued: "In both classical and NT [New Testament] traditions there thus seems to be a 'scribal continuity' of a basic 'standard text' which remained relatively stable, preserved by the unforced action of copyists through the centuries **who merely copied faithfully the text which lay before them**.... Apart from clear indication that such consensus texts were produced by formal recension [critical editing], it would appear that **normal scribal activity and transmissional continuity would preserve in most manuscripts 'not only a very ancient text, but a very pure line of very ancient text'**" (Robinson, par. 23, emphasis added).

For the mathematical probabilities against any other interpretation of the textual data, see Zane C. and David M. Hodges' work entitled "The Implications of Statistical Probability for the History of the Text," *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, pages 159-169. An excerpt follows: "... all things being equal *statistical probability* favors the perpetuation in every generation of the original majority status of the authentic reading. And it must then be kept in mind that the larger the original majority, the more compelling this argument from probabilities becomes" (Pickering, 1980 ed., p. 166).

This does not mean that a simple counting of noses is all that is needed to find the original text of the New Testament. In the 250-400 places where the evidence makes it impossible to determine the original wording of the autographs, other factors must be considered. For reasons why numerical evidence is only one valid criteria in textual criticism, the reader is referred to the essay written by the late John William Burgon in *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*, pages 43-47.

In response to arguments that scribes could not of themselves copy accurately, Dr. Robinson countered: "Were this not so, the MSS of the NT and all ancient works swiftly would have become a mass of confusion, and one would despair at ever recovering an original form of the text. While all scribes blundered and made intentional alterations to the text at various times, **the overall character of the copied text was not so affected as to preclude a reasonably accurate transmission on 'normal' terms**, thus facilitating the recovery of an original from comparison of various witnesses" (Robinson, par. 97, emphasis added).

Robinson's comments were made in response to scholar Ernest Colwell, who alleged the Byzantine Text was the result of a carefully controlled process over centuries. Colwell's argument was based on his belief that scribes needed some **outside** control to copy accurately; this, he explained, was the reason for the close agreement between text of the Byzantine manuscripts. His argument was made to compensate for the lack of archeological and historical evidence explaining how the Byzantine Text became the dominant form of the GNT.

Based on the textual evidence, Robinson concluded: "Scribes for the most part were generally *careful* and reasonably *accurate* in their copying endeavors.... **The primary locus of 'control' resided in scribes' perceived duty to be careful and accurate, duplicating the exemplar MS as precisely as possible.** This level of 'control' is wholly sufficient to explain most observable phenomena: there was **a general accuracy** in representing the text, while blunders and intentional alterations would differentiate the various texttypes and subtypes over the long period of transmissional history" (Ibid., emphasis added).

During the first three centuries that individual Christians copied the GNT, there is ample evidence to show these early scribes had an incentive to produce reasonably accurate manuscripts. Many of the early brethren in Asia Minor were Jewish Christians.

Harnack's research as already noted led him to believe that faithful Gentile Christians largely adopted Jewish Christian models, which would entail their reverence for the text. Both Jesus and Paul set the example for early brethren in showing an acute attention to the details of the Hebrew and Greek texts. (See Inspiration, Truth #1 on page 231 for these examples.)

Pickering noted "The rise of the so-called 'school of Antioch' is a further relevant consideration. Beginning with Theophilus, a bishop of Antioch who died around 185, the Antiochians began insisting upon the literal interpretation of Scripture, a position that hardened progressively in opposition to the so-called 'school of Alexandria' as it went into orbit with its allegorical interpretation of Scripture. The point is that a literalist is obligated to be concerned about the precise wording of the text since his interpretation or exegesis hinges on it. It is reasonable to assume that this 'literalist' mentality would have influenced the churches of Asia Minor and Greece and encouraged them in the careful and faithful transmission of the pure text that they had received. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the Antiochian antipathy toward Alexandrian allegorical interpretation of Scripture would rather dispose them to view with favor any competing forms of the text coming out of Egypt" (Pickering, p. 228, fn. 20).

Although later scribes were also given financial and punitive incentives, they still needed to be self-motivated in their copying of the text of their exemplar.

Following the legalization of Christianity in 313 AD, commercial book makers (scriptoria) instituted numerous regulations: "In order to ensure greater accuracy, books produced in scriptoria were commonly checked over by a corrector ... specially trained to rectify mistakes in copying. His annotations in the manuscripts can usually be detected today from the differences in styles of handwriting or tints of ink....When prose works [like the GNT] were copied, a line called a stichos, having sixteen (or sometimes fifteen) syllables, was frequently used for determining the market price of a manuscript. ...The application of stichometric reckoning served also as a rough and ready check on the general accuracy of a manuscript ... a document which was short of the total number of stichoi was a defective copy" (Metzger, pp. 15-16).

It is important to note that scriptoria scribes copied only a small portion of the manuscripts produced during the first copying revolution (ca. 313-400 AD). The majority would have been produced privately by brethren who had a higher motivation for copying the text accurately and faithfully.

Later, during the Byzantine period (312-1453 AD), monasteries established and enforced certain rules for their scriptoria: "The following are examples of such regulations prepared for the renowned monastery of Studium at Constantinople. About A.D. 800 the abbot of this monastery, Theodore the Studite, who was himself highly skilled in writing an elegant Greek hand, included in his rules for the monastery severe punishments for monks who were not careful in copying manuscripts. A diet of bread and water was the penalty set for the scribe who became so much interested in the subject-matter of what he was copying that he neglected this task of copying. Monks had to keep their parchment leaves neat and clean, on penalty of 130 penances. If anyone should take without permission another's quaternion (that is, the ruled and folded sheets of parchment), fifty penances were prescribed. If anyone should make more glue than he could use at one time, and it should harden, he must do fifty penances. If a scribe broke his pen in a fit of temper (perhaps after having made some accidental blunder near the close of an otherwise perfectly copied sheet), he had to do thirty penances" (Ibid., p. 19). In working alone in their cells, monks were able to achieve reasonably accurate copies. "Such a method of multiplying copies was not open to the same kinds of errors involved in the dictation methods" as in normal scriptoria settings like in Alexandria, Egypt (Ibid., p. 16).

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In summary, verifiable assessments of the textual evidence and scribal habits do not support the allegations of Kenyon and Hort. **Instead of getting farther from the original text, the dominant wording found in the majority of manuscripts would continue to reflect the ancient GNT text.**

Copying Mistakes

The vast majority of variant readings found in the New Testament manuscripts are probably the result of copying error. Robinson noted: "Transcriptional [copying] error is more likely to be the ultimate source of many sensible variants rather than deliberate alteration. Many variant readings have their root in transcriptional causes. While this principle includes all cases which produce pure 'nonsense,' it also includes many in which the end result in some way 'makes sense.' Sensible readings may arise from the simple omission of a letter, syllable, or word; so too readings produced by haplography [oversight and omission of text], dittography [repetition of text], homoioteleuton [see following example] or other forms of transcriptional error. Even an error that produced a nonsense reading may result later in other sensible variants, created in an attempt to correct the earlier error" (Robinson, par. 41).

Burgon classified at least 95 percent of all variant readings as the whims of scribes (Burgon, *Traditional Text*, p. 35). These mistakes can mostly be identified and dismissed as the result of unskilled, lax or weary scribes. This is one of the chief reasons why no two of the 3,200 Greek copies of the New Testament are entirely alike in all their details, indicating that they were produced by independent scribes.

Nowhere was the transmission process more susceptible to accidents than in the copying of the early Greek uncial manuscripts. This writing style was dominant from 50-800 AD (see Figure 5 on page 226). Translator Ralph Earle explained that early Greek unicals like Vaticanus had no chapter and verse divisions, no marks separating sentences (no punctuation marks) and no separation between words. "All we have are thousands of consecutive Greek letters in line after line, column after column, page after page, through a whole book of the New Testament. This made the task of copying exceedingly difficult. Even typists today will sometimes skip a line if two consecutive lines begin or end with the same word. This same error, as would be expected, is found in ancient Greek manuscripts" (Barker, "The Rationale for an Eclectic New Testament Text," *The NIV: The Making of a Contemporary Translation*, p. 54). The copying mistake to which Earle referred to is known as *homoioteleuton*, meaning "similar ending."

Researchers have access to a sufficient number of the 3,200 Greek copies and 2,300 lectionaries for the New Testament (along with other witnesses) to allow them to detect, collect, analyze, compare, classify and eliminate textual variants. The following *hypothetical* manuscript readings for Romans 8:2 demonstrate the point. The authentic reading of the following series of prepositional phrases is "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2). Copying mistakes are in bold print and omissions are indicated by ellipsis.

Manuscript A = the Spirit of life **ni** Christ Jesus

Manuscript B = the ... **file** in **Jesus Christ**

Manuscript C = ... Spirit ... in Christ Jesus

Manuscript D = the Spirit of ... Jesus

Now multiply these same effects in varying forms over thousands of copies. Based on what we know of scribal habits, we would expect these **same** errors to have **only** spread to one or a minority of manuscripts, except in cases where a common ances-

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try or textual link can clearly be demonstrated. Our hypothetical example above shows that by comparing the readings of passages, researchers can compensate for copying mistakes, even scribal changes in many cases and recover the original text of the biblical manuscripts. **Humans mistakes made during the manual copying of the biblical texts do not make them an unreliable source of God's revelation.**

Deliberate Changes

Not all manuscript variants can be explained simply as scribal mistakes. Deliberate changes to the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts are of greater concern.

Fortunately, as noted by Robinson, these deliberate changes would not have been indiscriminately perpetuated: "That any deliberate alteration ... would gain the cooperation of scribes so as to dominate the entire stream of transmission is a null proposition: scribes demonstrably did not engage in such a practice on the grand scale" (Robinson, par. 40).

A similar situation also applies to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. In fact, identifying what constitutes a deliberate change in the Hebrew text is a **highly subjective** endeavor. While it is possible to produce a list of alleged scribal changes by comparing the texts of various witnesses, Emanuel Tov, a leading Hebrew textual scholar and former editor-in-chief of the Dead Sea Scrolls publication project, noted the practice was not widespread. His comments of exegetical or interpretative changes made by scribes should suffice to capture the nature of deliberate changes to the Hebrew text: "**Few of these changes were pervasive** [widespread] **and encompassing**, since copyists would not change the text to any great extent" (Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, p. 262, emphasis added).

In other words, Bible believers can have confidence that the incidents of heretical or *unofficial* deliberate alteration of the text were confined to a minority of Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. The original text did not become hopelessly lost over time. The tell-tale signs of suspect readings, which do not reflect the original text of the biblical writers, is their limited transmission through time and their existence in only a handful or minority of witnesses. This fact can largely be confirmed in the New Testament by carefully examining the variant readings of the modern critical or eclectic Greek texts (Nestle-Aland 27th ed. or United Bible Societies 4th ed.). Where readings are not in alignment with the Byzantine Text, they tend to have minority support among the Greek manuscripts, ancient versions and early Christian citations.

Summary

While the Bible clearly promises that the Word of God would remain forever, nowhere does it teach that the apographs would remain free from **any alterations of any kind** in the transmission process. The evidence of history and textual criticism, however, proves that God was faithful in preserving His Word.

The greatest untold story of scriptural preservation is that most scribes, especially faithful brethren and those of the Byzantine-era, were extremely careful and faithful in their task of copying God's Word. A scribe's reverence for the text generally played a key role in his copying, preventing errors and corruption from ever gaining precedence over the pure Word of God. Those who held the sacred text (letters, syllables and words) in high regard strove to reproduce an accurate copy of the text of their exemplars, the model manuscripts that lay before them (cf. Robinson, "Scribal Habits," p. 225). The exceptions are the Alexandrian and a few Byzantine-era scribes who exhibited extreme carelessness or habits suggesting editorial activity.

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The true miracle lies in the fact that at the very beginning of the transmission process the first scribe possessed an accurately written manuscript of God's words from which to begin. Bible believers can have confidence that God's original words have been transmitted and preserved through time in faithful apographs, which generally constitute the majority of handwritten manuscripts.

Points to Remember

- 1) All handwritten manuscripts exhibit traces of copyist mistakes and/or alteration.
- 2) Greek Byzantine manuscripts, which served as the basis of the Reformation Greek texts (Textus Receptus), exhibit essentially the same text with sporadic variation.
- 3) Vast variations do exist between the earlier uncial and later minuscule copies of the Greek New Testament.
- 4) The two most popular critical or eclectic Greek texts (Nestle-Aland and United Bible Societies editions) omit more than 2,600 words from the New Testament text.
- 5) Masoretic manuscripts exhibit an overall internal unity in their readings and the range of differences in consonants, vocalization and other textual details is quite small.
- 6) If God had promised to protect the biblical texts from *any* alteration, there would have been no need to offer written prohibitions against altering the text.
- 7) Human unbelief, fragility and sin cannot nullify God's faithfulness to His Word.
- 8) In spite of the Jewish nation's near universal unbelief, it was entrusted with the oracles of God, the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.
- 9) Jewish unbelief could no more invalidate the testimony of the Hebrew Scriptures as God's living oracles, than it could affect His ability to preserve it through time.
- 10) The actions of early heretics, the misguided attempts of early editors and the eventual spiritual decline of the Greek church could not prevent God from preserving the Greek New Testament.
- 11) God permitted errors to occur in the process of preserving His Word to demonstrate His power and mercy and the weakness of fallible man.
- 12) The Greek text of the New Testament was preserved by the God-guided usage of the Greek church, primarily in Asia Minor and the Aegean area.
- 13) God used the apostle Paul's efforts to establish churches in Asia Minor, guaranteeing that the most reliable Greek manuscripts of the New Testament would be preserved and passed down to us for over 1,400 years.
- 14) That Byzantine Text was first printed as the Textus Receptus by Erasmus and Johann Froben in 1516 AD.
- 15) The systematic copying of the Gospels, Acts, the Pauline corpus and Petrine Epistles must have begun immediately in the decades following the deaths of Paul and Peter (ca. 68-69 AD) and before the persecution of Christians under Domitian (81-96 AD).
- 16) The possessors of the apostles autographs would obviously be the best suited to transmit the Greek text instead of the faithful brethren scattered throughout the empire.
- 17) There were two lines of transmission during the early period of the church: sporadic and systematic.
- 18) The systematic copying of Paul's books in sets explains how all churches came to possess his epistles that were *not* widely exchanged at first.
- 19) The canonization of John must have occurred between 98-99 AD, followed by the mass distribution of the John's writings, the general epistles and Revelation.
- 20) Between 100-300 AD, some scholars and scribes created two prestige texts at Rome and Alexandria that reflect those two great centers of the ancient world.

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- 21) The early so-called “canonical” catalogs were nothing more than recommended public and private reading lists that varied from location to location.
- 22) The majority of deliberate changes, heretical or otherwise, to the apostolic text ceased by 200 AD.
- 23) The condemnations of heretical activity by early apologists (defenders of Christianity) had the effect of putting early copyists of Scriptures on guard.
- 24) The Quartodeciman controversy induced in the minds of the Christians of Asia Minor a violent prejudice against the Western and Alexandrian texts.
- 25) The legalization of Hellenized Christianity in 313 AD was the impetus for a widespread return to the apostolic (Byzantine) text.
- 26) The Byzantine Text was not an official text imposed upon the Church by ecclesiastical authority or by the influence of any outstanding leader.
- 27) There is *no* historical record that the Byzantine Text was the creation of a deliberate recension (revision) as was the case with Jerome’s revision of the Old Latin versions.
- 28) Private copies made by common brethren contributed significantly to the demand for new manuscripts after the legalization of Christianity.
- 29) The absence of early surviving Byzantine manuscripts is due to the fact that they were worn out from overuse and that during the first major copying revolution the papyrus exemplars (model ancient manuscripts) were copied directly to parchment and then destroyed.
- 30) The lectionary system of the Greek Orthodox church can *only* explain the stabilization of the text, not the trend toward uniformity in the Byzantine Text.
- 31) The uniformity of the Byzantine Text can only be explained by the fact that there were several pure streams of transmission that reflected the original text and copyists conformed to that universal ancient text found in those manuscripts.
- 32) Despite spiritual decline throughout the Middle Ages (476-1500 AD), the trend toward the Byzantine Text continued. This decline did not materially affect the Byzantine Text.
- 33) The second copying revolution (ca. 800-1000 AD), produced highly accurate minuscule manuscripts copied from ancient parchment uncials.
- 34) During the Middle Ages, the knowledge of Greek was kept alive in the Byzantine Empire.
- 35) The Textus Receptus is 98-99 percent identical to the text found in the vast majority of Greek manuscripts (Byzantine Text).
- 36) Research shows that most Byzantine-era scribes produced reasonably, accurate copies of their exemplars (model manuscripts). Early Egyptian scribes and a *few* Byzantine-era scribes were extremely careless and edited the text they were copying.
- 37) The vast majority of variant readings are copying errors.
- 38) Human mistakes made during the manual copying of the biblical texts do not make them an unreliable source of God’s revelation.
- 39) Incidents of heretical or other deliberate alteration of the text were confined to a minority of Hebrew and Greek manuscripts.
- 40) Bible believers can have confidence that God’s original words have been transmitted and preserved through time in faithful apographs, which generally constitute the majority of handwritten manuscripts.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE AUTHORITY OF FAITHFUL APOGRAPHS

Has modern textual criticism (i.e., the existence of textual variations) disproved the trustworthiness and infallibility of the Bible? This vital question is addressed in the two truths of scriptural preservation that follow.

Truth #4: Faithful Apographs Are God-breathed, Authoritative, Infallible and Trustworthy

The fourth truth of preservation shows that the faithful handwritten copies of biblical manuscripts possess the same divine qualities as the autographs.

Proof #1: According to Dr. Robert Dunzweiler, the Bible's infallibility and authority can be verified. Consider John 10:34-35, where Jesus appealed to Psalms 82:6 "... to support the propriety of his own title, the Son of God, and in doing so, he [laid] down a principle which the Jews would not dare to controvert: the Scripture is not able to be set aside!" The implication of Jesus' reference to the Psalms as "law" is that "all of the Old Testament had the force of law, i.e., was binding upon the faith and obedience of the Israelite" (Dunzweiler, "Are the Bibles in Our Possession Inspired?" p. 3).

Further, when Jesus declared that Scripture could not be broken (John 10:35), He was referring to the apographs, since the originals had disappeared centuries before. Dunzweiler noted, "This text [passage] would argue not only for the 'inspiredness' (and thus the truth and divine authority) of copies, **but would also argue for the uncorrupted preservation, in the apographs, of the truths of the autographs, in spite of errors of transmission**" (Ibid., p. 4, emphasis added).

Proof #2: The Jews of Jesus' time held this same view of Scripture. John 12:31-34 records that the Jews were perplexed by Jesus' statements of His impending death because Scripture clearly states "the Christ lives forever" (cf. Mic. 4:7). In an attempt to reconcile their perceptions of Jesus as the prophesied Messiah, the Jews used the term "the law" to describe this passage in Micah, meaning that they believed its truth was authoritative and trustworthy in defining their understanding of the Messiah. They could only have done so if the text in their possession had not been compromised materially.

Proof #3: During His temptation by Satan, Jesus stated, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word [utterance] that proceeds out of the mouth of God'" (Matt. 4:4). The scripture Jesus quoted, Deuteronomy 8:3, originally described how ancient Israel depended on God's spoken words for its food (manna) in the wilderness (Ex. 16). Matthew recorded that in the ensuing struggle with Satan, Jesus conquered His weakness and hunger from 40 days of fasting by appealing to the Old Testament writings for spiritual relief and nourishment. This is shown by His use of the clause "it is written." The passages Jesus quoted to Satan in this section of Scripture are all from the book of Deuteronomy. Though Moses' writings had been copied for more than 1,400 years, Jesus still considered them to be trustworthy in all their declarations and to carry the same divine authority as when they were first written. In doing so, He sanctioned every part of the Old Testament apographs as the living, authoritative utterances of God.

Summary

Manuscripts of the Hebrew Old Testament were meticulously copied by Levitical scribes. The testimony of Jesus and the Jews confirm that the apographs, which first-century Judah possessed, were authoritative representatives because they were near letter-perfect reproductions of the original writings of Moses and the Prophets.

This same confidence was extended to the text of the Greek New Testament. In giving instructions to Timothy concerning the ministry, Paul quoted from the Gospel of Luke and the book of Deuteronomy: "For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle an ox treading out *the* corn,' and 'The workman *is* worthy of his hire'" (I Tim. 5:18; cf. Deut. 25:4; Luke 10:7). In this passage Paul explicitly placed the Gospel of Luke on the same level with Deuteronomy, designating both as God-breathed Scripture that possessed divine authority for settling matters pertaining to the ministry. The implication of Paul's statement is that Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, like their counterparts of the Old Testament, possessed divine qualities when they faithfully represented the details and substance of their autographs.

As a result, believers can view translations of the Old and New Testament texts with confidence when faithful and reliable manuscripts are employed and sound methods of textual criticism and translation are followed.

Truth #5: The Accuracy of Faithful Handwritten Apographs Can Be Verified

Hebrew Masoretic Text

The faithfulness of the Levitical scribes to their inherited roles (Deut. 17:18, 31:9, 24-26) as the human agents for preserving the Hebrew text of the Old Testament is a testimony to God's faithfulness to His promises. It was to the Jews and Levites gathered within Judah's borders that God entrusted the oracles of Old Testament (II Chr. 11:5-14; Rom. 3:2).

It is well-known that the scribes who made the Hebrew scrolls for the temple and synagogues followed numerous regulations during their copying of the manuscripts (cf. Connolly, *The Indestructible Book*, pp. 15-16; Geisler, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, pp. 240-241). Even private or common scrolls were written with great care. Almost every aspect of the copying process was strictly regulated, from the type of animal skin used to the number of columns or letters on a page to the disposal of old or worn documents. No word or letter was written from memory and every letter and verse was significant. In addition, there was a 30-day review process, and if three pages were found to be in need of correction, the entire document was rewritten.

Many Hebraic scholars, such as the late Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, consider the Masoretic Text (MT) to be a faithful representative of the Hebrew Old Testament. Dr. Wilson, who died in 1930, mastered 45 languages and dialects in order to study the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. He examined every one of the approximately 1,250,000 Hebrew consonants of the Old Testament text and reviewed every variation found in the manuscripts, Masoretic notes, ancient versions, parallel passages and critical scholarly reviews (Fuller, *Which Bible?*, p. 44). This entire endeavor took Dr. Wilson 30 years to complete. His book entitled *A Scientific Investigation of the Old Testament* offers one of the most thorough and candid investigations of the Old Testament documents ever undertaken with regard to their texts, grammar, vocabulary and history.

Dr. Wilson wrote this assessment in 1926 about the accuracy of the transmission of the Hebrew Masoretic Text: "The proof that copies of the original documents have been handed down with substantial correctness for more than 2,000 years cannot be de-

nied. That the copies in existence 2,000 years ago had been in like manner handed down from the originals is not merely possible, but, as we have shown, is rendered probable by the analogies of Babylonian documents now existing of which we have both originals and copies, thousands of years apart, and of scores of papyri which show when compared with our modern editions of the classics that only minor changes of the text have taken place in more than 2,000 years and especially with which the proper spelling of the names of kings and of the numerous foreign terms embedded in the Hebrew text has been transmitted to us" (Wilson, *A Scientific Investigation of the Old Testament*, p. 99).

After examining all the available evidence, Wilson declared, "... we are scientifically certain that **we have substantially the same text that was in the possession of Christ and the apostles and, so far as anybody knows, the same as that written by the original composers of the Old Testament documents....** The general correctness of the Hebrew text that has been transmitted to us is established beyond just grounds of controversy. The morphology, syntax, and meaning of the language of various books conform with what the face of the documents demands. The chronological and geographical statements are more accurate and reliable than those afforded by any other ancient documents; and the biographical and other historical narratives harmonize marvelously with the evidence afforded by extra-biblical documents" (Ibid., pp. 8, 213-214, emphasis added).

Since Wilson completed his evaluation of the existing evidence available to him during the 1920s, has more recent evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls substantially changed Wilson's findings?

The presence of two nearly complete copies of Isaiah among the Dead Sea Scrolls whose text virtually mirrors that of medieval Masoretic manuscripts has been perplexing for textual scholars. In comparison to Qumran Isaiah Scroll A, which agrees with the medieval Masoretic manuscripts 80 percent of the time, the agreement of a second Isaiah scroll (1QIsa^b) with the MT is "striking." Hebrew textual scholar Ernest Würthwein described this remarkable find: "The second Isaiah scroll exhibits significantly fewer variants from [the MT] than the first, and these **do not go beyond the range of variants observed in medieval manuscripts.** This fact led Paul E. Kahle to infer that 1QIs^b had been assimilated [brought into conformity] to the standard consonantal text, and therefore could not have been written before this standard text was available. But ... **the scroll cannot be dated later than the 60s of the first century A.D.** on archaeological grounds, and on the basis of paleographical evidence it should apparently be assigned several decades earlier [20-10 BC?] and could itself very well transmit the text of an even earlier exemplar" (Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, p. 156, emphasis added).

Wilson's research can be verified to at least 75 BC. Qumran Isaiah scroll B can be dated to approximately the same time period or several decades earlier, and it agrees remarkably well with today's MT. As a result, Wilson's conclusions remain unshaken.

The Jot and Tittle: In Matthew 5:18 Jesus spoke of how the Law of Moses, and by extension the entire Old Testament text, would be preserved. Archeological and textual research confirms that Jesus' statement about the *jot* and *tittle* has been fulfilled.

The "tittle" Jesus referred to in this passage were "ornaments or flourish on the top of certain letters. They implied no meaning of any kind, but, so jealously was the sacred text safeguarded, that the scribe was informed how many of each of the letters had these ornaments. These ornaments were called *Ta'agim* (or *Tagin*), meaning *little crowns*. The Greek-speaking Jews called them *little horns* (Heb. *keranoth*) because they looked like 'horns.'...It was to these *Taagin* the Lord referred in Matt. 5:18, and Luke 16:17, when He said that not only the smallest letter (׳ = *Yod* = *Y*), but that not even the merest mark or ornament (*Tag*) should pass away from the Law until all things should come to pass. So that our Lord Himself recognized these *Taagin*, which must have been

in His Bible from which He quoted” (Bullinger, *The Companion Bible*, Appendix 93).

By Jesus’ time, some portions of the Hebrew Old Testament text had been copied by hand for nearly 1,400 years. His reference to the tittle most likely related to the temple master scrolls. Hebrew manuscripts for use in the synagogues were compared to and copied from the temple master scrolls. The greatest care was exercised in their preservation. While later Masoretic codices often omit the *Taagim*, they have consistently been preserved in synagogue scrolls from Jesus’ time to the present (Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah*, p. 8).

Accuracy of the Pentateuch: The earliest Biblical scroll fragment found in the Qumran Caves is from Leviticus, and it contains Leviticus 19:31-34, 20:20-23 and 21:24-22:3-5. Only one minor discrepancy has been found in this fragment dated nearly 1,000 years earlier than the canonical Hebrew Masoretic Text. That variant reading exists in Leviticus 20:21. Textual scholar Dr. Thomas Holland evaluated this reading: “The Masoretic Text uses the Hebrew word *hoo* while the Dead Sea Scrolls use the Hebrew word *he*. It is the same Hebrew word and is a personal pronoun meaning he, she, or it. The two are used interchangeably throughout the Hebrew Old Testament” (Holland, *Crowned With Glory*, p. 113; cf. Würthwein, p. 160).

The research of Masoretic scholar Dr. Mordechai Breuer has verified that the Law of Moses has been faithfully copied. In his book entitled, *The Aleppo Codex and the Accepted Text of the Torah*, Breuer described his research and discussed his conclusions in using accurate MT manuscripts to recover the original text of the Pentateuch.

In describing Breuer’s research, Dovid Lichtman of the Center for Biblical Hebrew wrote: “Dr. Breuer began by selecting four texts of ancient origin to compare and contrast in his study. The texts were all of the type written by the Tiberian Masorites [sic] (as opposed to the Babylonian Masorites) yet [they] clearly differed from each other in certain significant formatting areas, including that they were not copied from an immediate common source” (Lichtman, *The Accuracy of Our Written Torah*, p. 3). Breuer also included the Pentateuch text of the 1525 Rabbinic Bible, the ben Chayyim text, in his analysis. There are 304,805 letters in the Torah (Pentateuch). The text of all five sources used was in total agreement, except for 220 letters. Of these, all but 20 were resolved by using a majority of at least four texts against the other one. Finally, after carefully studying thousands of Masoretic notes, Dr. Breuer was able to clarify all but six letters (Ibid.; Breuer, *The Aleppo Codex and the Accepted Text of the Torah*, p. xxv). According to Breuer’s research, **the accuracy rate of Moses’ books in faithful Hebrew MT manuscripts was 99.99998 percent.**

Entire Old Testament: Breuer also worked on the remaining books of the Hebrew Bible based on the highly accurate Aleppo Codex. He noted: “... a Torah scroll containing orthographic [spelling] errors is disqualified from being used in public readings. No such law applies for the Prophets and Hagiographa [Writings] from parchment....With this in mind one can understand that the Jewish sages took tremendous pains clarifying the text of the Torah, but did not exercise the same care with respect to the text of the Prophets and Hagiographa” (Breuer, p. xxxii).

In spite of the fact that some corrections and discrepancies do exist in the Prophets and Writings sections of the Hebrew texts, the general framework, basic historical flow and words of prophecy have been preserved remarkably intact.

To ascertain the accuracy of the Old Testament text, Benjamin Kennicott (1776 AD) conducted a study of 581 Hebrew Masoretic manuscripts. He found that nearly 85 percent of the differences in the various manuscripts involved spelling. The real errors occurred in very few, and primarily, in only one of the manuscripts studied. His findings revealed only a .0006 percent textual corruption. In other words, **the Hebrew text of the entire Old Testament was 99.9994 percent accurate** (Jones, *Which Version Is the Bible?*, p. 24).

The work of Kennicott and J.B. de Rossi (1784 AD) profoundly affected the understanding of the accuracy of the MT. “The phenomenon of the MT is unique in the field of biblical textual criticism. No other stream of scribal transmission, in either the Old Testament or New Testament, manifests such remarkable uniformity. Intense study of the MT MSS [manuscripts] since the late 18th century has shown that only a limited number of consonantal variants of substance [approximately eight] can be found in the entire tradition. When this observation is seen to hold true not only for the principal MSS of the ben Asher tradition but also for the numerous text specimens of the Cairo Genizah [500s-800s AD] antedating those [Masoretic] MSS, **the phenomenon is truly extraordinary and bears witness to a genuinely conservative and cautious scribal tradition**” (Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, p. 811, bold added).

Byzantine Text

There are an estimated 200,000 variations found among the witnesses to the New Testament text: Greek manuscripts, early translations, Christian citations and lectionaries. How does this large number of variations affect the reliability of the Greek apographs?

All Greek manuscripts are in essential agreement in 92 percent of the New Testament text. (Note: Some scholars place the figure closer to 90 percent.) Thus significant and inconsequential differences exist in only about eight percent of the text. These figures include the **faulty** Alexandrian manuscripts, whose testimony to the original text of the New Testament can be questioned in many passages because they disagree significantly among themselves as to the correct reading where they overlap. In other words, textual editors really deal with only about **eight percent** of the Greek text when producing a printed edition (about 10,000-16,000 variations).

Can we do better than 92 percent? In spite of both deliberate and accidental readings, the majority of the approximately 3,000 New Testament Greek manuscripts, excluding lectionaries, compare extremely well with ancient secular works like Homer’s *Iliad*, which has 643 surviving manuscripts. Considered sacred by some, the *Iliad* has more manuscripts than any other ancient book apart from the Greek New Testament. The New Testament has about 20,000 lines; the *Iliad* has about 15,600. Only 40 lines or about 400 words of the New Testament are in doubt, whereas 764 lines of the *Iliad* are in question. **This means the New Testament is 99.5 accurate**; the *Iliad* is about 95 percent (Giesler, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, pp. 366-367).

This level of accuracy, which reflects a reasonably high level of manuscript agreement, can only refer to the Byzantine Text represented by the later surviving uncials and almost all minuscules.

The parallels between the transmission of the New Testament text and Homer’s *Iliad* are striking. Textual scholar Maurice Robinson explained that like the text of the New Testament, the Homeric text existed in three forms: one shorter, one longer and one in-between. The first reflects Alexandrian “scholarly revisions,” while the second reflects the popular and uncontrolled expansions and scribal improvements of the Western text. Of the remaining in-between form of the *Iliad*, Robinson explained: “Between these extremes, a ‘medium’ or ‘vulgate’ text exists, which resisted both the popular expansions and the critical revisions; **this text continued in much the same form from the early period into the minuscule era** [800-1600 AD]. The NT [New Testament] Byzantine Textform reflects a similar continuance from at least the fourth century onward” (Robinson, “New Testament Textual Criticism: The Case for the Byzantine Priority,” *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism*, par. 17-20, emphasis added).

This parallel is not isolated just to Homer’s *Iliad*, but the same situation exists

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regarding the ancient works of Hippocrates. Robinson related the following facts from Thomas Allen's *Homer: The Origins and Transmission*: "... the actual text of Hippocrates in Galen's day **was essentially the same** as that of the mediaeval [sic!] MSS ... [just as] the text of [Homer in] the first century B.C. ... is the same as that of the tenth-century minuscules" (Ibid., par. 22, emphasis added).

In summary, Robinson wrote: "In both classical and NT traditions there thus seems to be a 'scribal continuity' of a basic 'standard text' which remained relatively stable, preserved by the unforced action of copyists through the centuries who merely copied faithfully the text which lay before them. Further, such a text appears to prevail in the larger quantity of copies in Homer, Hippocrates, and the NT tradition. Apart from a clear indication that such consensus texts were produced by formal recension [editing], it would appear that normal scribal activity and transmissional continuity would preserve in most manuscripts 'not only a very ancient text, but a very pure line of very ancient text'" (Ibid., par. 23).

According to textual scholar Dr. Wilbur N. Pickering, nearly all of the later minuscule manuscripts reflect the Byzantine Text: "Of the 3,000 plus Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, about 1,700 are from the 12th - 14th centuries. They, along with 640 copies from the 9th - 11th centuries, are in basic agreement on approximately 99% of the words of the New Testament" (Jones, p. iv). As a whole they comprise about an 80 percent majority of the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. Almost all of the 2,200 lectionaries exhibit a Byzantine Text. When added to the group of Greek manuscripts, the percentage of documents that represent the Byzantine Text rises to 87 percent.

The differences between this group of manuscripts and the earlier papyri and uncials are significant: "... for the past 100 years, the world of scholarship has been dominated by the view that this majority text [i.e., Byzantine Text] is a secondary and inferior text. Scholars have rejected that we have had the true text of the originals all along and have thus attempted to **reconstruct** the original text of the New Testament on the basis of a few early manuscripts [i.e., Vaticanus and Sinaiticus]. But as these copies differ considerably among themselves, the result has been a "patchwork quilt." The editors of the dominant eclectic Greek text of today have usually followed a single Greek MSS and in dozens of places they have printed a text not found in **any** known Greek copy! The discrepancy between this eclectic text and the majority reading is 8%. That would amount to 48 full pages of discrepancies in a 600 page text. Around 1/5 of that represents omissions in the [Alexandrian] 'minority text' such that it is about 10 pages shorter than the majority text" (Jones, p. iv). Nearly all of the modern English versions have been based on the Alexandrian-based Nestle-Aland or United Bible Societies texts. While 13 pages contain differences in the two texts that are inconsequential, about 25 pages are significant discrepancies, many of which affect doctrine and the Bible's inerrancy (Ibid.).

Summary

Faithful apographs of the biblical texts are highly accurate. The Hebrew Masoretic Text and the Greek Byzantine Text (represented by the 1550 Stephens Text) represent the most reliable and faithful reproductions of the true words of God. In spite of the fact that God gave no promises of "perfect" preservation, He has accurately preserved His Word.

Points to Remember

- 1) Jesus and the apostles never appealed to the autographs because they had letter-perfect reproductions of Old Testament writings in their possession.

The Authority of Faithful Apographs

- 2) Faithful Hebrew and Greek apographs of the Old and New Testament, respectively, contain the same divine qualities as the autographs.
- 3) Contemporary research shows the Hebrew Masoretic Text is substantially the same as was in the possession of Jesus and the apostles, and as written by the writers of the Old Testament.
- 4) The evidence of the Dead Sea Scrolls does not materially change the witness of the Hebrew Masoretic Text.
- 5) Jesus' promises of the *jot* and tittle in Matthew 5:18 have been fulfilled.
- 6) The accuracy rate of the Pentateuch in Masoretic manuscripts is 99.99998 percent.
- 7) The accuracy rate for the entire Old Testament as found in Masoretic manuscripts is 99.9994 percent.
- 8) The parallels between the manuscripts of classical literature and the New Testament confirm that the later minuscules possess much the same form as earlier manuscripts.
- 9) The text of the later dated minuscules is 99 percent in agreement. This text constitutes the Byzantine Text.
- 10) The discrepancy between the Byzantine and eclectic text is eight percent. That translates to 48 pages: 10 pages of omissions, 13 pages of insignificant differences and 25 pages of significant differences (affecting meaning and in many cases doctrine).

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Numerous resources have been consulted due to the inconsistent and ambiguous manner in which many of these terms have been explained in the standard reference works. We have attempted, therefore, to define these important terms in an accurate, yet understandable manner. The following entries have been adapted mainly from these sources: *Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar*, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls* and *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*.

Aleppensis (Aleppo) codex

A tenth-century Hebrew manuscript containing all the books of the Old Testament. Shelomo ben Baya'a wrote the consonantal text. The Masoretic system (vowel points, accentuation and marginal notes) of the premier Tiberian scholar Aaron ben Moses ben Asher is faithfully represented in this codex. About one quarter of this manuscript was lost during anti-Jewish riots in 1947, including most of the Pentateuch and nine books of the third division (Hagiographa) of the Hebrew Bible.

Alexandrinus (A)

A fifth-century Greek manuscript containing nearly all of the books of the Old and New Testaments, including the apocrypha and other non-canonical books such as I and II Clement. This codex is identified by the letter A.

Apocrypha

A Greek word that means "hidden things." The term refers to non-canonical books believed to have been written by Jewish writers between 200 BC and 100 AD that generally reflect the historical Jewish context before the Christian era. This word was originally used by Jerome to refer to non-canonical books written in Greek and included in the Septuagint translation and other early manuscripts among the canonical books. Some of these works are truthful historical accounts; however, most include esoteric writings that teach immoral practices and doctrines at variance with the Bible. The Old Testament apocrypha includes 14 books written after the close of the Hebrew canon: Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, I and II Maccabees, Baruch (Letter of Jeremiah), certain additions to Esther and Daniel (Song of Three Children, Bel and the Dragon and History of Susanna), I and II Esdras and the Prayer of Manasseh. Some of these books were originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic and later translated into Greek. The Roman Church officially accepted most of the preceding books as canonical in 1546. The Jews and most Protestants do not view them as part of Scripture.

New Testament apocryphal books written after 100 AD include the Arabic Gospel of the Infancy, Armenian Gospel of the Infancy, Bartholomew's Book of the Resurrection of Christ, Gospel of Bartholomew, Gospel of Basilides, Gospel of the Birth of Mary, Gospel of the Ebionites, Gospel According to the Hebrews, Protevangelium of James, History of Joseph the Carpenter, Gospel of Marcion, Gospel of Matthias, Gospel of the Nazarene, Gospel of Peter, Gospel of Philip, Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew and Gospel of Thomas. Many of these books are considered gnostic or semi-gnostic in nature. There are also numerous other apocryphal books whose titles begin with the phrases "Acts of," "Passion of," or "Epistles of."

Glossary

Apograph

A manuscript copied from another manuscript.

Aramaic

A Semitic language sharing a common script and certain structural elements with ancient (Biblical) Hebrew. Sections of the Bible were written in Aramaic, including Gen. 31:47a, Ezra 4:8-6:18 and 7:12-26, Jer. 10:11 (possible gloss) and Dan. 2:4-7:28. Syriac and Chaldean are the names given to two dialects of Aramaic. The former was spoken by people in northwestern Mesopotamia and later by the Christian communities at Edessa. It was used for several Christian literary and liturgical documents (see Peshitta). Chaldean is an Aramaic dialect of southeastern Mesopotamia, including Babylon. Certain parts of the Bible were composed in this language. The Targums of the Bible were written in Aramaic, which, like Greek, was a commonly spoken language during the time of Jesus Christ. The Masoretic notations appearing in the page margins of Hebrew codices were written in an abbreviated form of Aramaic, because that was the working language of scholars who prepared them.

Autograph

The original document of a God-breathed writing of one of the authors of the books of the Bible, from which scribes made copies.

Beza (D)

A fifth- or sixth-century Greek-Latin manuscript containing nearly all of the Gospels, Acts and a portion of III John. This uncial codex received its name from its final owner Theodore Beza, the Protestant Reformer. It is identified by the letter D and is the primary representative of the Western text and exhibits wide variations in its readings.

Canon

A Greek word that means “rule or standard of measurement.” In biblical criticism, the term refers to a collection of authoritative biblical books that met the standard of the ancient “canonizers” of Scripture and were regarded as God-breathed.

Church Fathers

Men who led normative Christianity in the first few centuries after the New Testament was completed. Many of them might have seen and handled the autographs of the apostles and other New Testament writers. The writings of the Church Fathers are considered by many to be authoritative testimony of the teaching and practices of the early Church. These testimonies are identified by abbreviations of their popular names.

Codex (*pl.* codices)

A manuscript in book form with folded pages and stitched at the spine. This word comes from Latin, meaning “book.” It is commonly believed that early Christians created the first codices.

Critical apparatus

The footnotes given in Hebrew and Greek editions of the Old and New Testaments that cite manuscript sources and significant readings that differ from those adopted in the text printed above. See Critical text and Reading.

Critical text

A printed Hebrew or Greek edition of the Old or New Testament text, usually

based on one or more available manuscripts and normally accompanied by a critical apparatus. Critical texts are labeled as such because they represent a scholar's judgments, criticisms and even conjectures concerning the original form of the biblical text. Some critical texts are hypothetical reconstructions that insert variant (alternate) readings in the text instead of a critical apparatus (see Eclectic text). See Critical apparatus.

Cursive

A handwriting style in which lowercase letters are connected instead of written singly. See Minuscule.

Dead Sea scrolls

Manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible and other non-biblical books found in caves near the Dead Sea between 1947-1956. The non-biblical writings reflect the doctrines and lifestyle of the ascetic Essene cult. Each manuscript is identified by a number for the cave in which it was found, a letter for the location, initials for the document name and a superscript for the specific copy (e.g., 4QIsa^b).

Diplomatic text

A printed edition of the Bible that strictly follows the text of only one manuscript rather than combining the readings of several witnesses. See Eclectic text.

Eclecticism

A method of textual criticism that establishes the biblical text by selecting readings for each passage where manuscripts disagree randomly from one witness than another based on a number of subjective criteria of evaluation. There are two general types of eclecticism. Reasoned (rational) eclecticism seeks to balance the use of internal and external evidence in evaluating the authenticity of variant readings. It was the dominant method used by textual scholars in the twentieth century. Rigorous (thoroughgoing or radical) eclecticism establishes the text by appealing mainly to internal evidence. See Eclectic text, External evidence and Internal evidence.

Eclectic text

A printed text whose readings are drawn from more than one manuscript and textual witness. In modern textual criticism, the term frequently refers to a critical text produced by using the methods of rigorous eclecticism. See Diplomatic text and Eclecticism.

Ephraemi Rescriptus (C)

A fifth-century Greek manuscript containing parts of the Old and New Testament books. Written initially in Alexandria, Egypt, this manuscript is a palimpsest, meaning its original script of the entire Old and New Testament was erased. It was reused by Ephraem of Syria, who recorded his sermons on the leaves of this manuscript in the 1100s AD.

External evidence

The external proof of the reliability of a document (manuscript) as a witness for textual criticism. Scholars evaluate manuscripts according to a set of criteria related to their external features (age, transcription quality, origin, location, etc.) and use this data to determine the quality of readings found in them.

Exegesis

A technical interpretation of the text.

Fragment

A scrap or portion of a manuscript with only a few words or verses on it.

Hebrew (Ancient)

The Semitic language of the ancient Hebrew Scriptures. Is. 19:18 describes Hebrew as the “language of Canaan.” In Neh. 13:24, it is called the “language of Judah.” Most scholars believe that in the period following the exile in Babylon and the establishment of the Qumran community (ca. 135 BC), Hebrew was no longer the language of daily use among Jews in Palestine, but was primarily reserved for liturgical or scribal use in the Temple or synagogue. According to Hebraist Bruce Walke, Mishnaic Hebrew and Aramaic (along with Greek) were the spoken languages of Palestine at the time of Christ.

Hexapla, Origen’s

The earliest manuscript of the Greek Old Testament prepared by Origen at the library in Caesarea in the third century AD. The Hexapla contained six parallel columns: the Hebrew Old Testament text, the Hebrew consonants transliterated into Greek letters, Aquila’s Greek version from 130 AD, Symmachus’ Greek version from 170 AD, the Septuagint and Theodotion’s Greek version from 190 AD. Only a few surviving fragments of this work still exist.

Infallibility

Used in reference to the Bible, infallibility means that the Bible is true and reliable in all matters—the promises, statements, and prophecies of the Holy Scriptures can never fail or mislead anyone who turns to them, humbly seeking God’s truth.

Inerrancy

This word was **first** used in reference to Scripture in the mid-1800s as a result of the debate over the Biblical texts and manuscripts. Prior to that time, the word infallibility was exclusively used in reference to the biblical texts. There are two definitions of this word as it is used in reference to Scripture: 1) It means that every letter and word of the biblical autographs was inspired by God without any error. 2) More broadly, it means that the Bible is free of falsehood and internal contradictions and is trustworthy and authoritative in all its assertions. Through generations of copying, editorial “corrections” and mistakes have crept into the apographs. Yet, faithful and accurate copies of the biblical writings (that is, the autographs) are appropriately described as authoritative, God-breathed and infallible, and in a general sense inerrant.

Internal evidence

The inherent proof for a reading’s authenticity. Scholars evaluate variant readings according to criteria related to their internal character (length, readability, grammar, context, style, etc.) and use this data to determine which reading is more likely to have been the original one. See Reading.

Koine Greek

The Greek dialect that spread from the Attic peninsula throughout the entire Mediterranean world following the conquest of Alexander the Great. The New Testament books were written in *Koiné* (“common”) Greek.

Lectionaries

A collection of selected Scriptural passages arranged according to the liturgical year and used in worship services or private devotion. These witnesses are identified by the letter “I” followed by a number (e.g., I45).

Leningradensis (Leningrad) codex

An eleventh-century Hebrew manuscript containing the entire Old Testament text. Samuel ben Jacob wrote the consonantal text in 1008 AD. This codex was later corrected according to the text, vowel points, accent marks and Masora of the Aleppo codex. This is the earliest dated manuscript containing the complete Hebrew Bible.

Majuscule

A block-style capital letter. The word *majuscule* is derived from Latin and means “rather large,” referring to the size of the letter. See Uncial.

Manuscript

Biblical scholars broadly use this word to refer to anything printed or handwritten, dating from any age, that has some part of Scripture on it. Hence, it could be applied to books of the Bible, or sermons, lectionaries and early commentaries that quote some portion of Scripture or reproduce a portion of a biblical passage. For clarity, the term in this book is used strictly in reference to the autographs and apographs, whether Hebrew or Greek. Editors use manuscripts to compile a text (e.g., Textus Receptus). The term comes from the Latin *manu* and *scriptus*, meaning handwritten. The abbreviations *ms/mss* refer to minuscules and *MS/MSS* to uncials. See Autograph, Cursive, Fragment, Majuscule and Minuscule.

Manuscript family

A group of manuscripts that display common textual characteristics. These mostly artificial designations include Alexandria, Byzantine, Caesarean and Western text families. The Alexandrian family, represented mainly by manuscripts Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, display the kind of text that was used mostly in Alexandria in the early centuries of the Christian era. The Byzantine text refers to the Greek text used primarily in Antioch and Byzantium, the center of the Greek-speaking Orthodox church. The Western family generally circulated in North Africa, southern France and Italy. The Caesarean family primarily circulated in the areas surrounding Caesarea in Palestine.

The Byzantine text family is also known as the Antiochian text, Syrian text, Majority text, Universal text, Reformation text, Imperial text and Traditional text. The Alexandrian text family is often referred to as the Egyptian text, Local text, Hesychian text or Minority text.

Masoretes

Levitical scholars active from 500 to 950 AD who continued the work of earlier scribes in preserving the Hebrew Scriptures (known as the Old Testament). Because Hebrew had largely ceased to be spoken in their time, the Masoretes developed a system of vowel points and accent marks superimposed on the fixed consonantal Hebrew text. The text that resulted from their efforts is known as the Masoretic text (MT).

Masoretic text (MT)

The name given to the fixed consonantal text annotated for punctuation (with accent marks) and vocalization (vowel points), including marginal notes called the *Masora* or *Massorah* (Heb., meaning “tradition”). This text, which was produced by the Tiberian

Glossary

Masorettes and sealed in the early 900s AD, eventually became the accepted standard text of the Hebrew Bible.

Midrash, midrashic

Hebrew for “to search” or “to inquire.” The interpretation of a biblical text for the purpose of discovering the biblical answer to a current question. This type of teaching was common at the time of Ezra, Nehemiah and the Great Assembly. Later the word *midrashim* (plural) came to be associated with rabbinic commentaries on Scripture that included word-for-word explanations of the biblical text. *Halakah* (legal exegesis) and *haggadah* (homiletic exegesis) are two types of rabbinic Midrash. See also Mishnah.

Minuscule

The word *minuscule* is derived from Latin and means “rather small.” In the context of biblical writing, it refers to any of a number of handwritten manuscripts dating from the 800s to the 1600s AD, in which the words written in small lowercase letters run together (cursive script). These manuscripts are by far the most numerous of the Greek copies still extant (that is, surviving). They usually are of later date than uncial manuscripts and are identified by Arabic numbers without a preceding zero (e.g., 125). See Cursive and Uncial.

Mishnah

A collection of Jewish legal teachings (*halakah*) published around 200 AD. These interpretations were developed within the oral traditions of pharisaic and rabbinic Judaism under the influence of Greek philosophy. The word is derived from *shanah*, meaning “to repeat.” Mishnah instruction is a secondary form of teaching, repeated from instructor to student and not based directly on Scripture.

Paleography

The study of ancient writings, their history and development.

Papyrus (pl. papyri)

A reed plant formerly found in the Nile Delta or near Lake Huleh in Galilee used to make a writing material in ancient times with the consistency of paper. Our word paper is derived from the Latin *papyrus*. Manuscripts from this type of material are identified by the letter “P” followed by a number (e.g., P45 or P⁴⁵) and generally date from antiquity to the 800s AD.

Parchment

Material made from animal skins and used for writing by scribes and monks from 200 BC to 1400 AD. The region surrounding Pergamum became known for the production of this material.

Patristic writers; see Church Fathers.

Peshitta

The authorized version of the Syriac church, dating from the second-century AD.

Polyglot

The word means “many tongues.” In biblical scholarship, it refers to a printed edition of the Bible that includes the Hebrew and Greek text plus translations in parallel columns.

Pseudepigrapha

A Greek word meaning “falsely entitled.” Non-canonical books dating between 200 BC and 100 AD and falsely attributed to one (e.g., Old Testament patriarchs) who did not write them. Pseudepigrapha include Enoch, Michael the Archangel, Jannes and Jambres, the Apocalypse of Elijah and the like.

Reading

A handwritten or printed character or combination of characters of which a specific text is composed (i.e., letters, syllables and words). Less precisely known as “wording.” See Text.

Recension

An official systematic revision or editing of a text by an author or another to suit specific needs. A recension results in new variant readings.

Scroll

Sheets of papyrus glued or vellum sewn together into a long strip that is used as a writing surface and rolled up for compact storage.

Septuagint

A Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. The name Septuagint comes from the Latin *septuaginta* (seventy); it is often abbreviated LXX. The Septuagint includes writings not found in the traditional Hebrew canon. These additional books are known as the “apocrypha” to Protestants and as the Deuterocanonical books to Roman Catholics. According to legend, the Egyptian king (Ptolemy II, 285-246 BC) sent a request to Jerusalem for a delegation of six men from each of the tribes of Israel to translate the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. These 72 men went to Alexandria and translated the Bible in 70 days.

Sinaiticus (Ⲛ)

A fourth-century vellum Greek manuscript discovered by Constantin Tischendorf in 1859 in a garbage bin at the monastery of St. Catherine near Mount Sinai. This codex is identified by the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet Ⲛ and contains the entire New Testament (except Mark 16:9-10 and John 7:53-8:11) and half of the Old Testament with apocrypha in Greek.

Talmud

Consists of the Mishnah and its accompanying commentary called the Gemara. Jewish rabbis compiled the Palestinian Talmud between 200-500 AD. Babylonian rabbis finished compiling their Talmud by the 600s AD.

Targums

Oral Aramaic paraphrases of the Hebrew text, later written down. These texts were used in the synagogue and early worship under Ezra for those Jews who no longer understood biblical Hebrew. One Aramaic targum from the mid-100s AD included a poorly paraphrased version of the Greek Gospel of Matthew.

Text

The term broadly refers to the handwritten or printed letters, syllables, words and sentences that appear on the page of a manuscript of any book of the Bible. It more nar-

rowly refers to a compilation of manuscript readings in a printed edition of either the Hebrew Old Testament or Greek New Testament. An example includes the *Textus Receptus*.

Text family; see Manuscript family.

Textual Criticism

Formerly known as lower criticism, this is the art and science of studying and establishing the most trustworthy text by using the various MSS, VSS, quotations or allusions in the writings of the Church Fathers, lectionaries or similar aids. In contrast, higher or biblical criticism deals with questions of a text's authorship, dating, contextual meaning and the like.

Textus Receptus (TR)

The printed Greek New Testament of the Elzevir brothers of Leiden, which appeared with a preface containing these Latin words meaning "received text." The term *Textus Receptus* was first used in reference to the Greek text of Stephanus during the 1800s, when scholars began to debate its worth for translation purposes. Until the nineteenth century, the *Textus Receptus* was the authoritative Greek text of the New Testament. This term collectively refers to the texts of Erasmus, Stephanus, Beza and Elzevir, which are based largely on the readings of the vast majority of New Testament witnesses written in Greek.

Traditional text

The Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament texts preserved through the unbroken authority of and usage by those people who understood and spoke the language.

Translation

The rendering or giving of the sense of a text from one language into another. See Version.

Uncial

A technical term for capital letters or a handwriting style using large, ornate, rounded capital letters, which was prevalent before 800 AD (see Majuscule). The word *uncial* is derived from the Latin and means "a twelfth part," implying that the letter was one-twelfth the size of a normal line. Any manuscript written in majuscule letters, usually in Greek or Latin, primarily between the 300s and 800s AD. These manuscripts are identified either by a number preceded by a zero (e.g., 035) or by a single letter (e.g., A or B).

Urtext

A German word for the original text of a book after its initial composition and editing.

Variant Reading

A place (passage of Scripture) where the reading (whether letters, syllables or words) differs from one manuscript to another. Some scholars classify any difference in the details of a text as a variant reading. More properly, the term refers to any **major translatable** inconsistency or difference between manuscripts, introduced accidentally or deliberately through generations of copying. Also known as textual variant, variation and manuscript difference. See Reading.

Vaticanus (B)

A fourth-century Greek uncial manuscript that lay hidden in the Vatican library from the 1400s to the 1800s AD, after which time it was published. It is identified by the letter *B*. This Greek manuscript contains most of the Old and New Testaments, excluding sections from Gen. 1:1-46:28, Psa. 105:27-137:6 and Heb. 9:15 to the end of Revelation. It also contains the apocrypha, but Mark 16:9-20 and John 7:53-8:11 were purposefully omitted from its text.

Vellum; see Parchment.

Version (VS; *pl.* VSS)

In textual criticism, this term is used to refer to the ancient translations of the Hebrew or Greek Scriptures into another language. In the field of Bible translation, it indicates one of several editions of the Bible produced in a single language. For example, the Authorized Version (AV) and the Revised Standard Version (RSV) are two different English versions. Many ancient versions are identified by a simple abbreviation of the translated language, followed by a superscript abbreviation of the version name. For example, the Syriac Peshitta version is identified by the sign sy^p. See Translation.

Vorlage

A German word for the copy of a biblical document used as a source by a scribe, translator or writer.

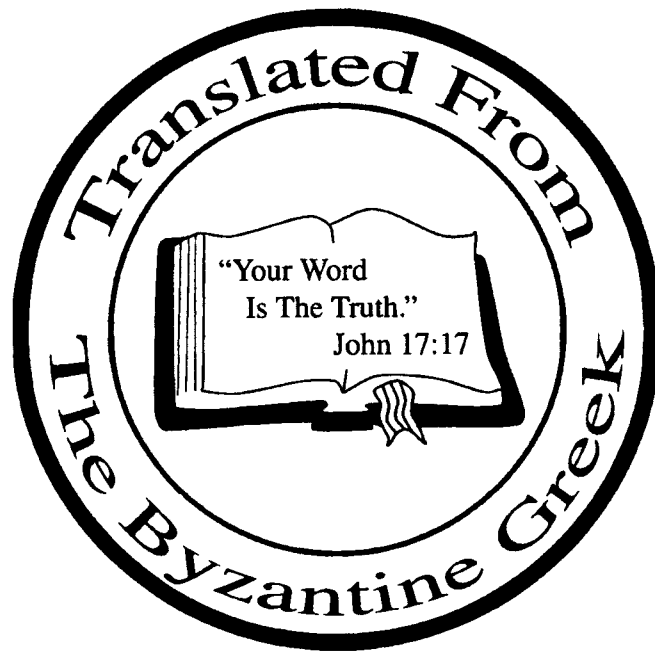
Vulgate

One of the various Latin versions of the Bible. The title comes from *vulgata editio*, meaning “the old and popular edition,” and is applied both to the early Old Latin version (it), which dates from ca. 150 AD, and to Jerome’s Latin translation (vg) of ca. 405 AD, used by the Roman Catholic Church today after many revisions through the centuries.

Part Three

THE NEW TESTAMENT In Its ORIGINAL ORDER

A Faithful Version



From the Stephens Text of 1550

Who is Jesus Christ?

"In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him." John 1:1-3

"And undeniably, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in *the* flesh, was justified in *the* Spirit, was seen by angels, was proclaimed among *the* Gentiles, was believed on in *the* world, was received up in glory." I Tim. 3:16

"Christ Jesus, Who, although He existed in *the* form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, *and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant." Phil. 2:5-7

"And the angel answered *and* said to [Mary], '*The* Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and *the* power of *the* Highest shall overshadow you; and for this reason, the Holy One being begotten in you shall be called *the* Son of God.'" Luke 1:35

"And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us (and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth." John 1:14

"And being found in *the* manner of man, He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross." Phil. 2:8

"Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world." John 1:29

"We know that this is truly the Christ, the Savior of the world." John 4:42

"I am the bread of life; the one who comes to Me shall never hunger; and the one who believes in Me shall never thirst at any time." John 6:35

"I am the light of the world; the one who follows Me shall never walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12

"Truly, truly ... before Abraham was born, I AM." John 8:58

"I am the door of the sheep ... I am the good Shepherd." John 10:7, 11

"I am the resurrection and the life." John 11:25

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me." John 14:6

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. I am the vine ... you *are* the branches." John 15:1, 6

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* Ending, says the Lord, Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come—the Almighty ... I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last ... even the one Who is living; for I was dead, and behold, I am alive into the ages of eternity. Amen." Rev. 1:8, 11, 18

Matthew

CHAPTER ONE

1. *The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham:*

2. Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judah and his brethren;

3. And Judah begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram;

4. And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon;

5. And Salmon begat Boaz of Rachab; and Boaz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;

6. And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of the one *who had been wife* of Uriah;

7. And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;

8. And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;

9. And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;

10. And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;

11. And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren *at the time* of the carrying away to Babylon.

12. And after the captivity in Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel;

13. And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor;

14. And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;

15. And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;

16. And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, from whom was born

Chap. 1

1 Gen. 12:3

Psa. 132:11

Is. 11:1

Jer. 23:5

Mat. 22:42

Luke 3:23

John 7:42

Acts 2:30

Rom. 1:3

2 Gen. 21:2,

25:26

3 Gen. 38:27

Ruth 4:18

1 Chr. 2:5

6 1 Sam. 16:1,

17:12

2 Sam. 12:24

7 1 Chr. 3:10

10 2 Ki. 20:21

1 Chr. 3:13

11 1 Chr. 3:15,

16

2 Chr. 36:10

2 Ki.

24:14-16,

25:11

Jer. 27:20,

52:11, 15

Dan. 1:2

12 1 Chr. 3:17

Ezra 3:2

Neh. 12:1

Hag. 1:1

18 Luke 1:27,

35

19 Deut. 24:1

20 Luke 1:35

21 Luke 1:31

Acts 4:12,

5:31, 13:23,

38

23 Is. 7:14

25 Ex. 13:2

Luke 2:7, 21

Jesus, Who is called *the* Christ.

17. So then, all the generations from Abraham to David *were* fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the carrying away to Babylon to the Christ, fourteen generations.

18. And the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: Now His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph; *but* before they came together, she was found to be with child of *the* Holy Spirit.

19. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous *man*, and not willing to expose her publicly, was planning to divorce her secretly.

20. But as he pondered these things, behold, an angel of *the* Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary to *be* your wife, because that which has been begotten in her is of *the* Holy Spirit.

21. And she shall give birth to a son, and you shall call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins."

22. Now all this came to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying,

23. "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall give birth to a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel"; which is, being interpreted, "God with us."

24. And when Joseph was awakened from his sleep, he did as the angel of *the* Lord had commanded, and took his wife to *wed*;

25. But he did not have sexual relations *with* her until *after* she had given birth to her son, the firstborn; and he called His name Jesus.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Now after Jesus had been born in Bethlehem of Judea, in *the* days of Herod the king, behold, Magi from *the* east arrived at Jerusalem,
 2. Saying, "Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east, and have come to worship Him."
 3. But when Herod the king heard *this*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.
 4. And after gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ should be born.
 5. Then they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written by the prophet:
 6. 'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judea, in no way are you least among the princes of Judea; for out of you shall come forth a Prince, Who shall shepherd My people Israel.' "
 7. Then Herod secretly called *for* the Magi *and* ascertained from them the *exact* time of the appearing of *the* star.
 8. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the little child; and when you have found *Him*, bring word back to me, so that I also may go and worship Him."
 9. And after hearing the king, they departed; and behold, the star that they had seen in the east went in front of them, until it came and stood over *the house* where the little child was.
 10. And after seeing the star, they rejoiced *with* exceedingly great joy.
 11. And when they had come into the house, they found the little child with Mary His mother, and they bowed down and worshiped Him; then they opened their treasures *and* presented their gifts to Him—gold and frankincense and myrrh.
 12. But being divinely instructed in a dream not to go back to Herod, they

Chap 2

1 Gen. 25:6
 1 Ki. 4:30
 Luke 2:4, 6
 2 Num. 24:17
 Is. 60:3
 Luke 2:11
 4 2 Chr. 34:13,
 36:14
 Mal. 2:7
 6 John 7:42
 Rev. 2:27
 11 Psa. 72:10
 Is. 60:6
 12 Mat. 1:20

returned to their own country by another way.

13. Now after they had departed, behold, an angel of *the* Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise and take the little child and His mother, and escape into Egypt, and remain there until I shall tell you; for Herod is about to seek the little child to destroy Him."

14. And he arose by night and took the little child and His mother, and went into Egypt,

15. And was there until the death of Herod; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I have called My Son."

16. Then Herod, seeing that he had been mocked by the Magi, was filled with rage; and he sent *and* put to death all the boys who *were* in Bethlehem and in the area all around, from two years old and under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the Magi.

17. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying,

18. "A voice was heard in Rama, lamentation and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping *for* her children; and she would not be comforted, because they were not."

19. Now when Herod had died, behold, an angel of *the* Lord appeared to Joseph in Egypt in a dream,

20. Saying, "Arise and take the little child and His mother, and go into *the* land of Israel; for those who were seeking the life of the little child have died."

21. And he arose *and* took the little child and His mother, and came into *the* land of Israel.

22. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of Herod his father, he was afraid to go there; and after being divinely in-

15 Hos. 11:1
 17 Jer. 31:15
 22 Mat. 3:13
 Luke 2:39

structed in a dream, he went into the parts of Galilee.

23. And after arriving, he dwelt in a city called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarean."

CHAPTER THREE

1. Now in those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea,

2. And saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

3. For this is he who was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet, saying, "*The voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths.'*"

4. Now John himself wore a garment of camel's hair, and a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey.

5. Then went out to him *those from* Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the country around the Jordan,

6. And were being baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

7. But after seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "*You brood of vipers, who has forewarned you to flee from the coming wrath?*"

8. Therefore, produce fruits worthy of repentance;

9. And do not think to say within yourselves, 'We have Abraham *for our father*'; for I tell you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

10. But already the axe is striking at the roots of the trees; therefore, every tree that is not producing good fruit is cut down and thrown into *the* fire.

11. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but the one Who *is* coming after me is mightier than I, of Whom I am not fit to carry His san-

23 Judg. 13:5
John 1:45

Chap 3

1 Josh. 14:10
Mark 1:4
Luke 3:2, 3

2 Dan. 2:44
Mat. 4:17

3 Is. 40:3
Luke 1:76,
3:4

John 1:23

4 Lev. 11:22

1 Sam.

14:25, 26

2 Ki. 1:8

Mark 1:6

5 Mark 1:5

Luke 3:7

6 Acts 19:4,

18

7 Mat. 12:34

Luke 3:7-9

Rom. 5:9

1 Thes. 1:10

9 John 8:33

Acts 13:26

Rom. 4:1,

11, 16

10 Mat. 7:19

Luke 13:7,

9

John 15:6

11 Is. 4:4

Mark 1:8

Luke 3:16

Acts 1:5,

2:3, 4

1 Cor. 12:13

12 Mal. 3:3,

4:1

Mat. 13:30

13 Mat. 2:22

Mark 1:9

Luke 3:21

16 Is. 11:2

Mark 1:10

Luke 3:22

John 1:32

17 Psa. 2:7

John 12:28

Mark 1:11

Luke 9:35

Col. 1:13

Chap 4

1 Ezek. 3:14

Mark 1:12

Luke 4:1

Acts 8:39

4 Deut. 8:3

5 Neh. 11:1

Mat. 27:53

★ From the

highest pin-

nacle of the

temple to the

bottom of the

Kedron Val-

ley was 650

feet

6 Psa. 91:11

dals; He shall baptize you with *the* Holy Spirit, and with fire;

12. Whose winnowing shovel *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and will gather His wheat into the granary; but the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire."

13. Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him.

14. But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and You come to me?"

15. Then Jesus answered and said to him, "You must permit *it* at this time; for in this manner it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he permitted Him *to be baptized*.

16. And after He was baptized, Jesus came up immediately out of the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him.

17. And lo, a voice from heaven said, "This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I have *great* delight."

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Then Jesus was led up into the wilderness by the Spirit in order to be tempted by the devil.

2. And when He had fasted *for* forty days and forty nights, afterwards He was famished.

3. And when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

4. But He answered *and* said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of *the* mouth of God.'" "

5. Then the devil took Him to the holy city and set Him upon the edge of the temple,★

6. And said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, cast Yourself down; for it

is written, 'He shall give His angels charge concerning You, and they shall bear You up in *their* hands, lest You strike Your foot against a stone.' "

7. Jesus said to him, "Again, it is written, 'You shall not tempt *the* Lord your God.' "

8. After that, the devil took Him to an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory,

9. And said to Him, "All these things will I give You, if You will fall down and worship me."★

10. Then Jesus said to him, "Begone, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him alone shall you serve.' "

11. Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

12. Now when Jesus had heard that John was put in prison, He went into Galilee.

13. And after leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which *is* on the seaside, on the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim;

14. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, saying,

15. "*The* land of Zabulon and the land of Nephthalim, *by the way of the sea*, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;

16. The people who were sitting in darkness have seen a great light; and to those who were sitting in *the* realm and shadow of death, light has sprung up."

17. From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

18. And as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a large net into the sea; for they were fishermen.

19. And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

7 Deut. 6:16
10 Deut. 6:13, 10:20
Josh. 24:14
1 Sam. 7:3
11 Heb. 1:14
12 Mark 1:14
Luke 3:20, 4:14, 31
John 4:43
15 Is. 9:1, 2
16 Is. 42:7
Luke 2:32
17 Mat. 3:2, 10:7
Mark 1:14
18 Mark 1:16-18
Luke 5:2
John 1:42
19 Luke 5:10
★ The Greek means that Satan was asking Jesus to worship him as God.

20 Mark 10:28
Luke 18:28
21 Mark 1:19
Luke 5:10
23 Mat. 9:35, 24:14
Mark 1:14, 21, 34, 39
Luke 4:15, 44
25 Mark 3:7

Chap 5

1 Mark 3:13
3 Psa. 51:17
Prov. 16:19, 29:23
Is. 57:15, 66:2
Luke 6:20
4 Is. 61:2, 3
Luke 6:21
John 16:20
2 Cor. 1:7
Rev. 21:4
5 Psa. 37:11
Rom. 4:13
6 Is. 55:1, 65:13
7 Psa. 41:1
Mark 11:25
8 Psa. 15:2
1 Cor. 13:12
Heb. 12:14
10 1 Pet. 3:14
2 Cor. 4:17

20. Then they immediately left their nets *and* followed Him.

21. And after leaving there, He saw two other brothers, James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them.

22. And they immediately left the ship and their father *and* followed Him.

23. And Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every bodily ailment among the people.

24. Then His fame went out into all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were sick, oppressed by various diseases and torments, and possessed by demons, and lunatics, and paralytics; and He healed them.

25. And great multitudes followed Him from Galilee, and Decapolis, and Jerusalem, and Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. But seeing the multitudes, He went up into the mountain; and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him.

2. And He opened His mouth *and* taught them, saying,

3. "Blessed *are* the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4. Blessed *are* those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

5. Blessed *are* the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

6. Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

7. Blessed *are* the merciful, for they shall find mercy.

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

9. Blessed *are* the peacemakers, for they shall be called *the* sons of God.

10. Blessed *are* those who have been

persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11. Blessed are you when they shall reproach you, and shall persecute you, and shall falsely say every wicked thing against you, for My sake.

12. Rejoice and be filled with joy, for great *is* your reward in heaven; for in this same manner they persecuted the prophets who *were* before you.

13. You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, with what shall it be salted? For it no longer has any strength, but *is* to be thrown out and to be trampled upon by men.

14. You are the light of the world. A city that *is* set on a mountain cannot be hid.

15. Neither do they light a lamp and put it under a bushelbasket, but on the lampstand; and it shines for all who *are* in the house.

16. In the same way also, you are to let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works, and may glorify your Father Who *is* in heaven.

17. Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.

18. For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled.

19. Therefore, whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever shall practice and teach *them*, this one shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20. For I say to you, unless your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, there is no way *that* you shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.

11 Luke 6:22
1 Pet. 4:14
12 Neh. 9:26
Luke 6:23
Acts 5:41,
7:52
1 Pet. 4:13
13 Mark 9:50
Luke 14:34
14 Prov. 4:18
Phil. 2:15
15 Mark 4:21
Luke 8:16
16 John 15:8
1 Pet. 2:12
1 Cor. 14:25
17 Rom. 10:4
18 Luke 16:17
19 Jas. 2:10
20 Rom. 10:3

21 Ex. 20:13
22 Jas. 2:20
1 John 3:15
23 Mat. 8:4
24 Job 42:8
1 Pet. 3:7
1 Tim. 2:8
25 Psa. 32:6
Prov. 25:8
Is. 55:6
Luke 12:58
27 Ex. 20:14
Deut. 5:18
28 Job 31:1
Prov. 6:25
29 Mark 9:43
Col. 3:5

21. You have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, 'You shall not commit murder; but whoever commits murder shall be subject to judgment.'

22. But I say to you, everyone who is angry with his brother without cause shall be subject to judgment. Now *you have heard it said*, 'Whoever shall say to his brother, "Raca," shall be subject to *the judgment* of the council.' But *I say to you*, whoever shall say, 'You fool,' shall be subject to the fire of Gehenna.

23. For this reason, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you,

24. Leave your gift there before the altar, and go *your* way; first be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

25. Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are in the way with him; lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer, and you be cast into prison.

26. Truly I say to you, there is no way that you shall come out of there until you have paid the *very* last coin.

27. You have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, 'You shall not commit adultery.'

28. But I say to you, everyone who looks upon a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

29. So then, if your right eye shall cause you to offend, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is better for you that one of your members should perish than *that* your whole body be cast into Gehenna.

30. And if your right hand shall cause you to offend, cut it off and cast *it* from you; for it is better for you that one of your members should perish than *that* your whole body be cast into Gehenna.

31. It was also said *in ancient times*, 'Whoever shall divorce his wife, let him give her a writing of divorce-ment.'

32. But I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife, except for the cause of sexual immorality, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever shall marry her who has been divorced is committing adultery.

33. Again, you have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, 'You shall not forswear yourself, but you shall perform your oaths to the Lord.'

34. But I say to you, do not swear at all, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne;

35. Nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet; nor by Jerusalem, because it is *the* city of the great King.

36. Neither shall you swear by your head, because you do not have the power to make one hair white or black.

37. But let your word be *good*, your 'Yes' be yes and your 'No' be no; for anything that *is* added to these is from the evil one.

38. You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth';

39. But I say to you, do not resist evil; rather, *if* anyone shall strike you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

40. And *if* anyone shall sue you before the law and take your garment, give him *your* coat also.

41. And *if* anyone shall compel you to go one mile, go with him two.

42. Give to the one who asks of you; and do not turn away from the one who wishes to borrow from you.

43. You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

44. But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray

31 Deut. 24:1
Jer. 3:1
Mark 10:2

32 Luke 16:18

Rom. 7:3

33 Ex. 20:7

Lev. 19:12

Deut. 23:23

Mat. 23:16

34 Is. 66:1

Mat. 23:16

Jas. 5:12

35 Psa. 48:2

37 Jas. 5:12

Col. 4:6

38 Ex. 21:24

Lev. 24:20

Deut. 19:21

39 Prov. 20:22

Is. 50:6

Lam. 3:30

Luke 6:29

1 Pet. 3:9

Rom. 12:17

1 Cor. 6:7

41 Mat. 27:32

42 Deut. 15:8

Luke 6:30

43 Lev. 19:18

Deut. 23:6

Psa. 41:10

44 Luke 6:27,

23:34

Acts 7:60

1 Pet. 2:23

Rom. 12:14

1 Cor. 4:12

45 Job 25:3

46 Luke 6:32

48 Gen. 17:1

Lev. 11:44,

19:2

Luke 6:36

Jas. 1:4

1 Pet. 1:15

Eph. 5:1

Col. 1:28,

4:12

Chap. 6

1 Deut. 24:13

Psa. 112:9

Dan. 4:27

2 Cor. 9:9

2 Rom. 12:8

4 Luke 14:4

6 2 Ki. 4:33

for those who despitefully use you and persecute you,

45. So that you yourselves may be *the* children of your Father Who *is* in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and on *the* good, and sends rain on *the* just and on *the* unjust.

46. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*?

47. And if you salute your brethren only, what have you done *that is* extraordinary? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*?

48. Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect."

CHAPTER SIX

1. "Beware *that* you do not bestow your alms in the sight of men in order to be seen by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father Who *is* in heaven.

2. Therefore, when you give *your* alms, do not sound the trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may have glory from men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward.

3. But *when* you give your alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

4. So that your alms may be in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret shall Himself reward you openly.

5. And when you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, in order *that* they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward.

6. But you, when you pray, enter into a private room; and after shutting the door, pray to your Father Who *is* in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret shall reward you openly.

7. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*; for they think that by multiplying their words they shall be heard.

8. Now then, do not be like them; for your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him.

9. Therefore, you are to pray after this manner: 'Our Father Who *is* in heaven, hallowed be Your name;

10. Your kingdom come; Your will be done on earth, as *it is* in heaven;

11. Give us this day our daily bread;

12. And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors;

13. And lead us not into temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.'

14. For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

15. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

16. And when you fast, do not be as the hypocrites, dejected in countenance; for they disfigure their faces in order that they may appear to men to fast. Truly I say to you, they have their reward.

17. But *when* you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,

18. So that you may not appear to men to fast, but to your Father Who *is* in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret shall reward you openly.

19. Do not store up treasures for yourselves on earth, where moth and rust spoil, and where thieves break through and steal;

20. But store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor rust spoils, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

21. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

22. The light of the body is the eye. Therefore, if your eye be sound, your

7 1 Ki. 18:26
Eccl. 5:2
9 Luke 11:2
10 Psa. 103:20
Mat. 26:39
Acts 21:14
11 Job 23:12
Prov. 30:8
12 Mat. 18:21
13 Mat. 26:41
John 17:15
2 Pet. 2:9
1 Cor. 10:13
Rev. 3:10
14 Mark 11:25
Eph 4:32
Col. 3:13
15 Mat. 18:35
Jas. 2:13
16 Is. 58:5
17 Ruth 3:3
Dan. 10:3
19 Prov. 23:4
Jas. 5:1
Heb. 13:5
1 Tim. 6:17
20 Mat. 19:21
Luke 12:33,
18:22
1 Pet. 1:4
1 Tim. 6:19
22 Luke 11:34

24 Luke 16:13
Jas. 4:4
1 John 2:15
Gal. 1:10
1 Tim. 6:17
25 Psa. 55:22
Luke 12:22
1 Pet. 5:7
Phil. 4:6
26 Job 38:41
Psa. 147:9
Luke 12:24
33 1 Ki. 3:13
Psa. 37:25
Mark 10:30
Luke 12:31
1 Tim. 4:8

★ The force of the Greek means: seek and keep on seeking

whole body shall be *full of light*.

23. But if your eye be evil, your whole body shall be *full of darkness*. Therefore, if the light that *is* in you be darkness, how great *is* that darkness!

24. No one is able to serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to *the* one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

25. Because of this I say to you, do not be anxious about your life *as to* what you shall eat and what you shall drink; nor about your body *as to* what you shall wear. Is not life more than food, and the body *more* than clothing?

26. Observe the birds of heaven: they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor do they gather into granaries; and your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much better than they?

27. But who among you, by taking careful thought, is able to add one cubit to his stature?

28. And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe the lilies of the field, how they grow: they do not labor, nor do they spin;

29. But I say to you, not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these.

30. Now if God so arrays the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, *shall* He not much rather clothe you, O *you* of little faith?

31. Therefore, do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we be clothed?'

32. For the nations seek after all these things. And your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things.

33. But *as for* you, seek★ first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

34. Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow; for tomorrow shall take care of the *things* of itself. Sufficient for the day *is* the evil of that *day*."

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. "Do not condemn *others*, so that you yourself will not be condemned;
 2. For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged; and with what measure you mete out, it shall be measured again to you.
 3. Now why do you look at the sliver that *is* in your brother's eye, but you do not perceive the beam in your *own* eye?
 4. Or how will you say to your brother, 'Allow *me* to remove the sliver from your eye'; and behold, the beam *is* in your *own* eye?
 5. *You* hypocrite, first cast out the beam from your *own* eye, and then you shall see clearly to remove the sliver from your brother's eye.
 6. Do not give that which *is* holy to the dogs, nor cast your pearls before the swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn around and tear you in pieces.
 7. Ask, and it shall be given to you. Seek, and you shall find. Knock, and it shall be opened to you.
 8. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it shall be opened. ★
 9. Or what man is there of you who, if his son shall ask *for* bread, will give him a stone?
 10. And if he shall ask *for* a fish, will give him a serpent?
 11. Therefore, if you, being evil, know *how* to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father Who *is* in heaven give good things to those who ask Him?
 12. Therefore, everything that you would have men do to you, so also do to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Chap. 7

1 Luke 6:37
 Jas. 4:11
 Rom. 14:3
 1 Cor. 4:3
 2 Mark 4:24
 Luke 6:38
 3 Luke 6:41
 6 Prov. 9:7, 8, 23:9
 Acts 13:45
 7 Mat. 21:22
 Mark 11:24
 Luke 11:9, 18:1
 John 14:13, 15:7, 16:23, 24
 Jas. 1:5, 6
 1 John 3:22, 5:14, 15
 8 Prov. 8:17
 Jer. 29:12
 ★ The force of the Greek means: ask and keep on asking; seek and keep on seeking; knock and keep on knocking
 9 Luke 11:11
 11 Gen. 6:5, 8:21
 12 Lev. 19:18
 Mat. 22:40
 Luke 6:31
 Rom. 13:8
 Gal. 5:14
 1 Tim. 1:5
 13 Luke 13:24
 15 Deut. 13:3
 Jer. 23:16
 Mic. 3:5
 Mat. 24:4, 5
 Mark 13:22
 Acts 20:29
 2 Pet. 2:1
 1 John 4:1
 Rom. 16:17
 Eph. 5:6
 Col. 2:8
 2 Tim. 3:5
 16 Mat. 7:20
 Luke 6:43
 17 Jer. 11:19
 Mat. 12:33
 19 Mat. 3:10
 Luke 3:9
 John 15:2
 21 Hos. 8:2
 Mat. 25:11
 Luke 6:46, 13:25
 Acts 19:13
 Jas. 1:22
 Rom. 2:13
 22 Num. 24:4
 John 11:51
 1 Cor. 13:2
 23 Psa. 5:5, 6:8
 Mat. 25:12, 41
 Luke 13:25
 2 Tim. 2:19
 24 Luke 6:47

13. Enter in through the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it;
 14. For narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it.
 15. But beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, for within *they* are ravening wolves.
 16. You shall know them by their fruits. They do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, do they?
 17. In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a corrupt tree produces evil fruit.
 18. A good tree cannot produce evil fruit, nor can a corrupt tree produce good fruit.
 19. Every tree *that is* not producing good fruit is cut down and is cast into the fire.
 20. Therefore, you shall assuredly know them by their fruits.
 21. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but the one who is doing the will of My Father, Who *is* in heaven.
 22. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name? And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name? And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?'
 23. And then I will confess to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness.'
 24. Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and practices them, I will compare him to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock;
 25. And the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; but it did not fall, for it was founded upon the rock.
 26. And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not practice

them shall be compared to a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand;

27. And the rain came down, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

28. Now it came to pass *that* when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were amazed at His teaching;

29. For He taught them as one Who had authority, and not as the scribes.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. When He came down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him.

2. And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, if You will, You have the power to cleanse me."

3. Then Jesus stretched out *His* hand *and* touched him, saying, "I will. Be cleansed." And immediately *he* was cleansed *from* his leprosy.

4. And Jesus said to him, "See *that* you tell no one; but go *and* show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a witness to them."

5. Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, beseeching Him,

6. And saying, "Lord, my servant is lying in the house paralyzed *and* grievously tormented."

7. And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

8. But the centurion answered *and* said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under *the* roof *of* my house; but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.

9. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this *one*, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another *one*, 'Come,' and he comes;

28 Mat. 13:54
Mark 1:22,
6:2
Luke 4:32
29 John 7:46

Chap. 8

2 Mark 1:40
Luke 5:12
4 Lev. 14:3,
4, 10
Mat. 9:30
Mark 5:43
Luke 5:14
5 Luke 7:1
8 Psa. 107:20
Luke 15:19,
21

and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does *it*."

10. Now when Jesus heard these words, He was amazed; and He said to those who were following, "Truly I say to you, nowhere in Israel have I found such great faith.

11. But I say to you, many shall come from *the* east and *the* west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

12. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

13. Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go, and as you have believed, *so* be it *done* to you." And his servant was healed in that hour.

14. And after coming into Peter's house, Jesus saw Peter's mother-in-law lying *sick* with a fever;

15. Then He touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she arose and served them.

16. Now when evening had come, they brought to Him many possessed with demons, and He cast out the spirits by *His* word, and healed all who were sick;

17. So that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, "*He* Himself took our infirmities and bore our diseases."

18. But when Jesus saw great multitudes around Him, He commanded *His* disciples to depart to the other side.

19. And a certain scribe came to *Him* and said, "Master, I will follow You wherever You may go."

20. Then Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of heaven *have* nests; but the Son of man has no place to lay His head."

21. And another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, allow me first to go and bury my father."

22. But Jesus said to him, "Follow

11 Gen. 12:3
Is. 2:2, 3,
11:10
Mal. 1:11
Luke 13:29
Acts 10:45,
11:18, 14:27
Rom. 15:9
Eph. 3:6
12 Mat. 13:42,
50, 21:43,
22:13, 24:51,
25:30
Luke 13:28
2 Pet. 2:17
Jude 13
14 Mark 1:29-
31
Luke 4:38,
39
1 Cor. 9:5
16 Mark 1:32
Luke 4:40,
41
17 Is. 53:4
1 Pet. 2:24
19 Luke 9:57,
58
21 1 Ki. 19:20
Luke 9:59,
60

Me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."

23. And when He entered into the ship, His disciples followed Him.

24. Now a great tempest suddenly arose in the sea, so great that the ship was being covered by the waves; but He was sleeping.

25. And His disciples came to *Him* and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing."

26. And He said to them, "Why are you afraid, O *you* of little faith?" Then He arose *and* rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.

27. But the men were amazed, saying, "What kind of *man* is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

28. And when He had come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, *there* met Him two who were possessed by demons coming out of the tombs, so violent that no one was able to pass by that way.

29. And they cried out at once, saying, "What do You have to do with us, Jesus, *the* Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before *the* time?"

30. Now there was far off from them a herd of many swine feeding;

31. And the demons pleaded with Him, saying, "If You cast us out, allow us to go into the herd of swine."

32. And He said to them, "Go!" And after coming out, they went into the herd of swine; and the entire herd of swine suddenly rushed down the steep *slope* into the sea and died in the waters.

33. But those who were tending *them* fled, and after going into the city reported everything, and what had happened to those *who had been* possessed by demons.

34. And the entire city immediately went out to meet Jesus; and when they saw Him, they besought Him to depart from their borders.

24 Mark 4:37
Luke 8:23
26 Psa. 65:7,
89:9, 107:29
28 Mark 5:1
Luke 8:26
34 Deut. 5:25
1 Ki. 17:18
Luke 5:8
Acts 16:39

Chap. 9

1 Mat. 4:13
2 Mat. 8:10
Mark 2:3
Luke 5:18
4 Psa. 139:2
Mat. 12:25
Mark 12:15
Luke 5:22,
6:8, 9:47,
11:17
9 Mark 2:14
Luke 5:27
10 Mark 2:15
Luke 5:29
11 Mat. 11:19
Luke 5:30,
15:2
Gal. 2:15
13 Hos. 6:6
Mic. 6:6-8
Mat. 12:7
1 Tim. 1:15

CHAPTER NINE

1. And after going into the ship, He passed over and came to His own city.

2. And behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. Then Jesus, seeing their faith, said to the paralytic, "Be of good courage, child; your sins have been forgiven you."

3. And immediately some of the scribes said within themselves, "This *man* blasphemes."

4. But Jesus, perceiving their thoughts, said, "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?"

5. For which is easier to say, 'Your sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'?

6. But *I speak these words so* that you may understand that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins." Then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

7. And he arose and went away to his house.

8. Now when the multitudes saw *it*, they were amazed and glorified God, Who had given such authority to men.

9. And passing from there, Jesus saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office, and said to him, "Follow Me." And he arose *and* followed Him.

10. Then it came to pass, when Jesus sat down *to eat* in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples.

11. And after seeing *this*, the Pharisees said to His disciples, "Why does your Master eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

12. But when Jesus heard *it*, He said to them, "Those who are strong do not have need of a physician, but those who are sick.

13. Now go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacri-

fice.' For I did not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners to repentance."

14. Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?"

15. And Jesus said to them, "Are the children of the bridechamber able to mourn while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they shall fast.

16. Now no one sews a new piece of cloth onto an old garment; for that which is put in to fill up *the hole* takes away from the garment, and a worse tear develops.

17. Neither do they put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins will burst, and the wine will spill out, and the wineskins will be destroyed; but they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved together."

18. While He was saying these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hands on her, and she shall live."

19. Then Jesus and His disciples arose and followed him.

20. And behold, a woman who had been *afflicted* with a flow of blood for twelve years, after coming behind *Him*, touched the hem of His garment.

21. For she said within herself, "If only I shall touch His garment, I shall be healed."

22. But Jesus turned; and seeing the woman, He said to her, "Be of good courage, daughter; your faith has made you whole." And from that hour the woman was healed.

23. Now when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the flute players and the multitude making an uproar,

24. He said to them, "Back away! For

14 Mark 2:18
Luke 5:33,
18:12

15 John 3:29
Acts 13:2,
3, 14:23

1 Cor. 7:5

18 Mark 5:22

Luke 8:41

20 Mark 5:25

Luke 8:43

22 Luke 7:50,

8:48, 17:19,

18:42

23 2 Chr. 35:25

Mark 5:38

Luke 8:51

24 Acts 20:10

26 Mat. 15:22

Mark 10:47

Luke 18:38

30 Mat. 8:4

Luke 5:14

31 Mark 7:36

32 Mat. 12:22

Luke 11:14

34 Mat. 12:24

Luke 11:15

35 Mat. 4:23

36 Num. 27:17

1 Ki. 22:17

Mark 6:35

37 Luke 10:2

John 4:35

the damsel is not dead, but is sleeping." And they laughed at Him.

25. But when the multitude had been put out, He went in *and* took hold of her hand, and the damsel arose.

26. And this report went out into all that land.

27. Now as Jesus was traveling from there, two blind *men* followed, crying and saying, "Have pity on us, Son of David!"

28. And after coming into the house, the blind *men* came to Him; and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I have the power to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."

29. Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it to you."

30. And their eyes were opened. And He sternly warned them, saying, "See that you do not let anyone know *it*."

31. But they went out *and* made Him known in all that land.

32. And as they were leaving, behold, they brought to Him a dumb man, possessed by a demon;

33. And when the demon had been cast out, the *one who had been* dumb spoke. And the multitudes wondered, saying, "Never has the like been seen in Israel."

34. But the Pharisees said, "By the prince of the demons He casts out demons."

35. Then Jesus went around to all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every bodily weakness among the people.

36. And seeing the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were wearied and scattered abroad, as sheep who did not have a shepherd.

37. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest *is* truly great, but the workmen *are* few;

38. Therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest, that He may send out workmen into His harvest."

CHAPTER TEN

1. And when He had called His twelve disciples, He gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every kind of sickness.

2. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew; James, the *son* of Zebedee, and his brother John;

3. Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew, the *former* tax collector; James, the *son* of Alphaeus; and Lebbeus, who was surnamed Thaddeus;

4. Simon, the Cananean; and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

5. These twelve Jesus sent out after commanding them, saying, "Do not go into *the* way of the Gentiles, and do not enter into a city of the Samaritans;

6. But go instead to the lost sheep of *the* house of Israel.

7. And *as you are* going, proclaim, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

8. Heal *the* sick. Cleanse *the* lepers. Raise *the* dead. Cast out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.

9. Do not provide gold, nor silver, nor money in your belts,

10. Nor a provision bag for *the* way, nor two coats, nor shoes, nor a staff; for the workman is worthy of his food.

11. And whatever city or village you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and there remain until you leave.

12. When you come into the house, salute it;

13. And if the house is indeed worthy, let your peace be upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.

14. And whoever shall not receive

38 2 Thes. 3:1

Chap.10

1 Mark 3:13

Luke 6:13

2 John 1:42

4 Luke 6:15

John 13:26

Acts 1:13

5 Mat. 4:15

John 4:9

6 Is. 53:6

Jer. 50:6

Mat. 15:24

Acts 13:46

7 Mat. 3:2

Luke 9:2,

10:9

8 Acts 8:18

9 1 Sam. 9:7

Mark 6:8

10 Luke 10:7

1 Tim. 5:18

11 Luke 10:8

13 Psa. 35:13

Luke 10:5

14 Neh. 5:13

Mark 6:11

Luke 9:5

Acts 13:51

15 Mat. 11:22

16 Luke 10:3

Eph. 5:15

Phil. 2:15

17 Mark 13:9

Luke 12:11

Acts 5:40

18 Acts 12:1

2 Tim. 4:16

19 Ex. 4:12

Jer. 1:7

Luke 21:14

20 2 Sam. 23:2

2 Tim. 4:17

21 Mic. 7:6

Luke 21:16

22 Dan. 12:12

Mark 13:13

Luke 21:17

23 Mat. 2:13,

16:28

Acts 8:1

24 Luke 6:40

John 15:20

25 Mark 3:22

John 8:48

26 Mark 4:22

Luke 8:17

you, nor hear your words, when you leave *that* house or that city, shake off the dust from your feet.

15. Truly I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for *the* land of Sodom and Gomorrha in *the* day of judgment than for that city.

16. Behold, I am sending you forth as sheep in *the* midst of wolves. Therefore, be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

17. But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

18. And you shall also be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a witness to them and to the Gentiles.

19. Now when they deliver you up, do not be anxious *about* how or what you should speak; for in that hour it shall be given to you what you shall speak.

20. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you.

21. Then brother will deliver up brother to death; and *the* father, the child; and children will rise up against *their* parents and *have* them put to death.

22. And you shall be hated by all for My name's sake; but the one who endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved.

23. But when they persecute you in this city, escape into another; for truly I say to you, in no way shall you have completed *witnessing* to the cities of Israel until the Son of man has come.

24. A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master.

25. It is sufficient for the disciple that he become as his teacher, and the servant as his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call* those of his household?

26. Therefore, do not fear them because there is nothing covered that

shall not be uncovered, and *nothing* hidden that shall not be known.

27. What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, proclaim upon the rooftops.

28. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but do not have power to destroy the life; rather, fear Him Who has the power to destroy both life and body in Gehenna.

29. Are not two sparrows sold for a coin? And yet not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father taking account of it.

30. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.

31. Therefore, do not be afraid; you are better than many sparrows.

32. Now then, whoever shall confess Me before men, that one will I also confess before My Father Who is in heaven.

33. But whoever shall deny Me before men, that one will I also deny before My Father, Who is in heaven.

34. Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.

35. For I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

36. And a man's enemies shall be those of his own household.

37. The one who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and the one who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

38. And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me.

39. The one who has found his life shall lose it; and the one who has lost his life for My sake shall find it.

40. The one who receives you receives Me, and the one who receives

28 Luke 12:4
1 Pet. 3:14
30 1 Sam. 14:45
Luke 21:18
32 Luke 12:8
Rom. 10:9
Rev. 3:5
33 Luke 9:26
2 Tim. 2:12
34 Luke 12:49
35 Mic. 7:6
36 Psa. 41:9,
55:13
John 13:18
37 Luke 14:26
38 Mark 8:34
39 Luke 17:33
John 12:25
40 Luke 9:48
John 12:44
Gal. 4:14

41 1 Ki. 17:10
2 Ki. 4:8
42 Mat. 25:40
Mark 9:41
Heb. 6:10

Chap. 11

2 Mat. 14:3
Luke 7:18
3 Gen. 49:10
Num. 24:17
Dan. 9:24
John 6:14
5 Psa. 22:26
Is. 29:18,
35:4-6,
61:1
Luke 4:18
John 2:23
Jas. 2:5
6 Is. 8:14, 15
1 Pet. 2:8
Rom. 9:32
7 Luke 7:24
Eph. 4:14
9 Luke 1:76
10 Mal. 3:1
Mark 1:2
Luke 1:76

Me receives Him Who sent Me.

41. The one who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive the reward of a prophet; and the one who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive the reward of a righteous man.

42. And if anyone shall in the name of a disciple give to one of these little ones to drink a cup of cold water only, truly I say to you, he shall in no way lose his reward."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. And it came to pass that, when Jesus had finished commanding His twelve disciples, He left there to teach and to preach in their cities.

2. Now John, having heard in prison of the works of Christ, sent two of his disciples,

3. Saying to Him, "Are You the one Who is coming, or are we to look for another?"

4. Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see:

5. The blind receive sight, and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear; the dead are raised, and the poor are evangelized.

6. And blessed is everyone who shall not be offended in Me."

7. And as they were leaving, Jesus said to the multitudes concerning John, "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

8. But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.

9. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and one more excellent than a prophet.

10. For this is he of whom it is written, 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who shall prepare

Your way before You.'

11. Truly I say to you, there has not arisen among *those* born of women *anyone* greater than John the Baptist. But the one who *is* least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12. For from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven is taken with a *great* struggle, and *the* zealous *ones* lay hold on it.

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

14. And if you are willing to receive *it*, he is Elijah who was to come.

15. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.

16. But to what shall I compare this generation? It is exactly like little children sitting in *the* markets and calling to their companions,

17. And saying, 'We have piped to you, and you did not dance; we have mourned to you, and you did not wail.'

18. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.'

19. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a man who is a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But wisdom is justified by her children."

20. Then He began to castigate the cities in which most of His miracles had taken place, because they did not repent:

21. "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that have taken place in you had taken place in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22. But I tell you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in *the* day of judgment than for you.

23. And you, Capernaum, who have been exalted to heaven, shall be cast down to the grave. For if the miracles

12 Luke 16:16
13 Mal. 4:6
14 Mal. 4:5
Luke 1:17
15 Mat. 13:9
Luke 8:8
Rev. 2:7, 11,
17, 29,
3:6, 13
16 Luke 7:31
19 Mat. 9:10
Luke 7:35
20 Luke 10:18
21 Jonah 3:7
22 Mat. 10:15,
11:24
23 Is. 14:13
Lam. 2:1

24 Mat. 10:15
25 Psa. 8:2
Mat. 16:17
Luke 10:21
1 Cor. 1:19,
2:8
2 Cor. 3:14
27 Mat. 28:18
Luke 10:22
John 1:18,
3:35, 6:46,
10:15, 13:3,
17:2
1 Cor. 15:27
29 Zech. 9:9
John 13:15
1 Pet. 2:21
1 John 2:6
Phil. 2:5, 7,
8
30 1 John 5:3

Chap. 12

1 Deut. 23:25
Mark 2:23
Luke 6:1
3 1 Sam. 21:6
4 Ex. 25:30,
29:32
Lev. 8:31,
24:5, 9

that have taken place in you had taken place in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

24. But I tell you, it shall be more tolerable for *the* land of Sodom in *the* day of judgment than for you."

25. At that time Jesus answered and said, "I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and have revealed them to babes.

26. Yes, Father, for it was well pleasing in Your sight *to do* this.

27. All things were delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son personally chooses to reveal *Him*.

28. Come to Me, all you who labor and are *overly* burdened, and I will give you rest.

29. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls.

30. For My yoke *is* easy, and My burden is light."

CHAPTER TWELVE

1. At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath day; and His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck the heads of grain and to eat *them*.

2. But after seeing *this*, the Pharisees said to Him, "Behold, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on *the* Sabbath."

3. But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he himself and those with him were hungry?

4. How he went into the house of God and he ate the loaves of showbread, which it was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but for the priests only?

5. Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbaths the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless?

6. But I say to you, there is *one* here Who is greater than the temple.

7. Now if you had known what this *means*, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless.

8. For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day."

9. And after leaving there, He went into their synagogue.

10. And, behold, a man was there who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbaths?" so that they might accuse Him.

11. But He said to them, "What man is there among you who, if he has one sheep that falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out?"

12. And how much better is a man than a sheep? So then, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbaths."

13. And He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and it was restored *as* sound as the other.

14. Then the Pharisees went out of the synagogue and held a council against Him to discuss how they might destroy Him.

15. But when Jesus knew of it, He withdrew from there; and great multitudes followed Him, and He healed all of them.

16. And He strictly commanded them not to make Him known publicly;

17. So that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying,

18. "Behold My Servant, Whom I have chosen; My Beloved, in Whom My soul has found delight. I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He shall declare judgment to the Gentiles.

5 Num. 28:9
John 7:22
6 2 Chr. 6:18
Mal. 3:1
7 Hos. 6:6
Mic. 6:6-8
Mat. 9:13
9 Mark 3:1
Luke 6:6
10 Luke 13:14,
14:3
John 9:16
14 Mat. 27:1
Mark 3:6
Luke 6:11
John 5:18,
10:39, 11:53
15 Mat. 10:23,
19:2
Mark 3:7
16 Mat. 9:30
18 Is. 42:1
Mat. 3:17,
17:5

22 Mat. 9:32
Mark 3:11
Luke 11:14
24 Mat. 9:34
Mark 3:22
Luke 11:15
25 Mat. 9:4
John 2:25
Rev. 2:23
28 Dan. 2:44,
7:14
Luke 1:33,
11:20, 17:20,
21
29 Is. 49:24
Luke
11:21-23
31 Mark 3:28
Luke 12:10
Acts 7:51
1 John 5:16
Heb. 6:4,
10:26, 29

19. He shall not strive nor cry out, neither shall anyone hear His voice in the streets.

20. A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, until He brings forth the judgment unto victory.

21. And *the* Gentiles shall hope in His name."

22. Then was brought to Him one who was possessed by a demon, blind and dumb; and He healed him, so that the one *who had been* blind and dumb both spoke and saw.

23. And the multitudes were all amazed, and said, "Is this the Son of David?"

24. But when the Pharisees heard *this*, they said, "This *man* does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, prince of the demons."

25. But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.

26. And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then shall his kingdom stand?

27. And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? On account of this, they shall be your judges.

28. But if I by *the* Spirit of God cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

29. Or how is anyone able to enter into the house of a strong *man* and plunder his goods, if he does not first bind the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.

30. The one who is not with Me is against Me, and the one who does not gather with Me scatters.

31. Because of this, I say to you, every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to men except the blasphemy against the *Holy* Spirit; *that* shall not be forgiven to men.

32. And whoever speaks a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age nor in the coming *age*.

33. Either make the tree good and the fruit good, or make the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt; for a tree is known by its fruit.

34. Offspring of vipers, how are you able to speak good things, being evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

35. The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings out good things; and the wicked man out of the wicked treasure brings out wicked things.

36. But I say to you, for every idle word that men may speak, they shall be held accountable in *the* day of judgment.

37. For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned."

38. Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Master, we desire to see a sign from You."

39. And He answered *and* said to them, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.

40. For just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, in like manner the Son of man shall be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.

41. *The* men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it, because they repented at the proclamation of Jonah; and behold, a greater than Jonah *is* here.

42. *The* queen of *the* south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to

32 Mat. 11:19, 13:55
John 7:12, 52
1 Tim. 1:13
33 Mat. 7:17
Luke 6:43
34 Mat. 3:7, 23:33
Luke 6:45
38 Mat. 16:1
Mark 8:11
Luke 11:16
John 2:18
1 Cor. 1:22
39 Is. 57:3
Mat. 16:4
Mark 8:38
John 4:48
40 Jonah 1:17
41 Jer. 3:11
Ezek. 16:51
Jonah 3:5
Luke 11:32
Rom. 2:27
42 1 Ki. 10:1
2 Chr. 9:1
Luke 11:31

43 Job 1:7
Luke 11:24
1 Pet. 5:8
45 2 Pet. 2:20-22
Heb. 6:4, 10:26
46 Mat. 13:55
Mark 3:31, 6:3
Luke 8:19-21
John 2:12, 7:3, 5
Acts 1:14
1 Cor. 9:5
Gal. 1:19
50 John 15:14
Gal. 5:6, 6:15
Col. 3:11
Heb. 2:11

Chap. 13

1 Mark 4:1
2 Luke 5:3, 8:4
3 Luke 8:5

hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here.

43. But when the unclean spirit has departed from a man, it goes through dry places seeking rest, but finds none.

44. Then it says, 'I will return to my house, from which I came out.' And after coming, it finds *it* unoccupied, swept and set in order.

45. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Likewise shall it also be with this wicked generation."

46. But while He was still speaking to the multitudes, behold, *His* mother and His brothers were standing outside, seeking to speak with Him.

47. Then one said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You."

48. But He answered *and* said to him, "Who is My mother? And who are My brothers?"

49. And stretching out His hand to His disciples, He said, "Behold, My mother and My brothers.

50. For whoever shall do the will of My Father, Who is in heaven, that one is My brother and sister and mother."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1. Now in that same day, Jesus departed from the house and sat down by the sea.

2. And so great *a* multitude gathered around Him that He went into a ship and sat down, and all the multitude stood on the shore.

3. And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, "Behold, the sower went out to sow.

4. And as he was sowing, some *of the seed* fell by the way; and the birds came and devoured them.

5. And some fell upon the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up because the soil was not deep enough;
 6. But after *the* sun rose, they were scorched; and because they did not have roots, they dried up.
 7. And some of *the seed* fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them.
 8. And some fell upon the good ground, and yielded fruit—some a hundredfold, and some sixtyfold, and some thirtyfold.
 9. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.”
 10. And His disciples came to Him and asked, “Why do You speak to them in parables?”
 11. And He answered *and* said to them, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.
 12. For whoever has *understanding*, to him more shall be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have *understanding*, even what he has shall be taken away from him.
 13. For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand.
 14. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, ‘In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, and in no way perceive;
 15. For the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and should hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them.’
 16. But blessed *are* your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.

8 Gen. 26:12
 9 Mat. 11:15
 Mark 4:9
 11 Mat. 11:25,
 16:17
 Mark 4:11,
 1 John 2:27
 1 Cor. 2:10
 12 Mat. 25:29
 Mark 4:25
 Luke 8:18,
 19:26
 14 Is. 6:9
 Ezek. 12:2
 Mark 4:12
 Luke 8:10
 John 12:40
 Acts 28:26,
 27
 Rom. 11:8
 2 Cor. 3:14,
 15
 15 Heb. 5:11
 16 Mat. 16:17
 Luke 10:23,
 24
 John 20:29
 17 1 Pet. 1:10,
 11
 Heb. 11:13
 18 Mark 4:14
 Luke 8:11
 19 Mat. 4:23
 20 Is. 58:2
 Ezek. 33:31,
 32
 John 5:35
 21 Mat. 11:6
 2 Tim. 1:15
 22 Jer. 4:3
 Mat. 19:23
 Mark 10:23
 Luke 18:24
 1 Tim. 6:9
 2 Tim. 4:10

17. For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see what you see, and have not seen; and to hear what you hear, and have not heard.
 18. Therefore, hear the parable of the sower:
 19. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand *it*, the wicked one comes and snatches away that which was sown in his heart. This is the one who was sown by the way.
 20. Now the one who was sown upon the rocky places is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;
 21. But *because* he has no root in himself, *he* does not endure; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, he is quickly offended.
 22. And the one who was sown among the thorns is the one who hears the word, but the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.
 23. But the one who was sown on good ground, this is the one who hears the word and understands, who indeed brings forth fruit and produces—one a hundredfold, another sixtyfold *and* another thirtyfold.”
 24. And He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is compared to a man who was sowing good seed in his field;
 25. But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away.
 26. Now when the blades sprouted and produced fruit, then the tares also appeared.
 27. And the servants came to the master of the house *and* said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Then where did these tares come from?’
 28. And he said to them, ‘A man *who*

is an enemy has done this.' Then the servants said to him, 'Do you want us to go out and gather them?'

29. But he said, 'No, lest while you are gathering the tares, you *also* uproot the wheat with them.

30. Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and at the time of the harvest, I will say to the reapers, "Gather the tares first, and bind them into bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my granary." ' ' "

31. Another parable He presented to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is compared to a *tiny* mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field;

32. Which indeed is very small among all the seeds; but after it is grown, it is greater- than all the herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of heaven come and roost in its branches."

33. Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is compared to leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour until all was leavened."

34. Jesus spoke all these things to the multitudes in parables, and without a parable He did not speak to them;

35. So that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, "I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from *the* foundation of *the* world."

36. And after dismissing the multitude, Jesus went into the house. Then His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

37. And He answered *and* said to them, "The one Who sows the good seed is the Son of man;

38. And the field is the world; and the good seed, these are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*.

39. Now the enemy who sowed them

30 Mat. 3:12
31 Is. 2:2, 3
Mic. 4:1
Mark 4:30
Luke 13:18
33 Luke 13:20
34 Mark 4:33
35 Psa. 78:2
Rom. 16:25, 26
1 Cor. 2:7
Eph. 3:9
Col. 1:26
38 Gen. 3:15
Mat. 24:14, 28:19
Mark 16:15
Luke 24:47
John 8:44
Acts 13:10
1 John 3:8
Rom. 10:18
Col. 1:6
39 Joel 3:13
Rev. 14:15

41 Mat. 18:7
2 Pet. 2:1, 2
42 Mat. 3:12, 8:12, 13:50
Rev. 19:20, 20:10
43 Dan. 12:3
Mat. 13:9
1 Cor. 15:42, 43, 58
44 Is. 55:1
Phil. 3:7, 8
Rev. 3:18
46 Prov. 2:4, 3:14, 15, 8:10, 19
47 Mat. 22:10
49 Mat. 25:32
52 S. of S. 7:13

is the devil; and the harvest is *the* end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

40. Therefore, as the tares are gathered and consumed in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this age.

41. The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all the offenders and those who are practicing lawlessness;

42. And they shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

43. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.

44. Again, the kingdom of heaven is compared to treasure hidden in a field; which when a man finds, he conceals, and for the joy of *finding* it, goes and sells everything that he has, and buys that field.

45. Again, the kingdom of heaven is compared to a merchant seeking beautiful pearls;

46. Who, after finding one very precious pearl, went and sold everything that he had, and bought it.

47. Again, the kingdom of heaven is compared to a dragnet cast into the sea, gathering in every kind *of fish*;

48. Which after it was filled was drawn up on shore; and they sat down and collected the good into vessels, and the unfit they threw away.

49. This is the way it will be in the end of the age: the angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the righteous,

50. And shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

51. Jesus said to them, "Have you understood all these things?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."

52. Then He said to them, "Therefore, every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like a

man *who is* a householder, who brings forth out of his treasure *things* new and old."

53. And it came to pass *that* when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed from there.

54. And after coming into His *own* country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were amazed and said, "From where did this *man* receive this wisdom and *these* works of power?"

55. Is this not the carpenter's son? *Is* not His mother called Mary, and His brothers James and Joses and Simon and Judas?

56. And His sisters, are they not all with us? From where then did this *man* receive all these things?"

57. And they were offended in Him. Then Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his *own* country and in his *own* house."

58. And He did not do many works of power there because of their unbelief.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

1. At that time Herod the tetrach heard of the fame of Jesus,

2. And said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead, and that is why these powerful deeds are at work in him."

3. For Herod had arrested John, bound him and put *him* in prison, for the sake of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip;

4. Because John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her *as your* wife."

5. And he desired to put him to death; *but* he feared the multitude because they held him to be a prophet.

6. Now when they were celebrating Herod's birthday, the daughter of Herodias danced before *them*; and it pleased Herod.

7. Therefore, he promised with an

54 Mat. 2:23
Mark 6:1
Luke 4:16
55 Is. 49:7
Mat. 12:46
Mark 6:3,
15:40
Luke 3:23
John 6:42
57 Mat. 11:6
Mark 6:3, 4
Luke 4:24
John 4:44
58 Mark 6:5, 6

Chap. 14

1 Mark 6:14
Luke 9:7
3 Mark 6:17
Luke 3:19,
20
4 Lev. 18:16,
20:21
5 Mat. 21:26
Luke 20:6

13 Mat. 10:23,
12:15
Mark 6:32
Luke 9:10
John 6:1, 2
14 Mat. 9:36
Mark 6:34
15 Mark 6:35
Luke 9:12
John 6:5
19 Job 9:8
Mat. 15:36
Mark 6:46
John 6:16

oath to give her whatever she might ask.

8. Then, being urged by her mother, she said, "Give me, here on a platter, the head of John the Baptist."

9. And the king was grieved; but because of the oaths and those who were sitting with him, he commanded *that* it be given.

10. And he sent *and* beheaded John in the prison.

11. And his head was brought on a platter and given to the damsel, and she brought *it* to her mother.

12. Then his disciples came, and took the body, and buried it; and they went and told Jesus.

13. Now after hearing *this*, Jesus departed from there by ship into a wilderness place apart. But when the multitudes heard *that He had left*, they followed Him on foot from the cities.

14. And after going out, Jesus saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion toward them, and healed their sick.

15. Now when evening was approaching, His disciples came to Him, saying, "*This* place is a wilderness, and the time *to eat* has already passed; dismiss the multitude so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves."

16. But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them *something* to eat."

17. But they said to Him, "We do not have *anything* here except five loaves and two fish."

18. And He said to them, "Bring them here to Me."

19. And He commanded the multitude to sit on the grass. Then He took the five loaves and the two fish; *and* looking up into heaven, He blessed *them*; and He broke the loaves, and gave *them* to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

20. And they all ate and were filled;

and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments that were left.

21. Now those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

22. And immediately Jesus compelled His disciples to enter the ship and go before Him to the other side, while He dismissed the multitude.

23. And after dismissing the multitude, He went up into the mountain apart to pray; and when evening came, He was there alone.

24. But the ship was now in *the* middle of the sea, being tossed by the waves, because the wind was contrary.

25. Now in *the* fourth watch of the night, Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.

26. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled and said, "It is an apparition!" And they cried out in fear.

27. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good courage; *it* is I. Do not be afraid."

28. Then Peter answered Him *and* said, "Lord, if it is You, bid me to come to You upon the waters."

29. And He said, "Come." And after climbing down from the ship, Peter walked upon the waters to go to Jesus.

30. But when he saw *how* strong the wind *was*, he became afraid; and *as* he was beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"

31. And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, "O *you* of little faith, why did you doubt?"

32. Now when they went into the ship, the wind ceased.

33. And those in the ship came and worshiped Him, saying, "You are truly the Son of God."

34. And after passing over *the* sea, they came to the land of Gennesaret.

35. And when the men of that place

33 Psa. 2:7
Mat. 16:16,
26:63
Mark 1:1
Luke 4:41
John 1:49,
6:69, 11:27
Acts 8:37
Rom. 1:4
34 Mark 6:53

36 Mat. 9:20
Mark 3:10
Luke 6:19
Acts 19:12

Chap. 15

1 Mark 7:1
2 Mark 7:5
4 Ex. 20:12,
21:17
Lev. 19:3,
20:9
Deut. 5:16,
27:16
Prov. 20:20,
23:22, 30:17
Eph. 6:2
5 Mark 7:11,
12
7 Mark 7:6
8 Is. 29:13
Ezek. 33:31
9 Is. 29:13
Col. 2:18-22
Tit. 1:14
10 Mark 7:14
11 Acts 10:15
Rom. 14:14,
17, 20
1 Tim. 4:4
Tit. 1:15

recognized Him, they sent to all the country around; and they brought to Him all those who were sick.

36. And *they* besought Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment; and as many as touched *it* were healed.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

1. Then the scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying,

2. "Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."

3. But He answered *and* said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?"

4. For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'The one who speaks evil of father or mother, let him die the death.'

5. But you say, 'Whoever shall say to father or mother, "Whatever benefit you might receive from me *is being given as a gift to the temple*," he is not at all *obligated to* honor his father or his mother.'

6. And you have made void the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition.

7. Hypocrites! Isaiah has prophesied well concerning you, saying,

8. 'This people draw near to Me with their mouths, and with their lips they honor Me; but their hearts are far away from Me.'

9. But they worship Me in vain, teaching *for* doctrine *the* commandments of men."

10. And after calling the multitude to *Him*, He said to them, "Hear, and understand.

11. That which goes into the mouth does not defile the man; but that which comes out of his mouth, this defiles the man."

12. Then His disciples came to Him and said, "Do You realize that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?"

13. But He answered *and* said, "Every plant that My heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up.

14. Leave them alone. They are blind leaders of *the* blind. And if *the* blind lead *the* blind, both shall fall into the pit."

15. Then Peter answered *and* said to Him, "Explain this parable to us."

16. But Jesus said to him, "Are you also still without understanding?

17. Do you not perceive that everything that enters the mouth goes into the belly, and is expelled into *the* sewer?

18. But *thē* things that go forth from the mouth come out of the heart, and these defile the man.

19. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnessing *and* blasphemies.

20. These are the things that defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man."

21. Then Jesus left there and withdrew into the area of Tyre and Sidon;

22. And, behold, a Canaanite woman who came from those borders cried to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is grievously possessed by a demon."

23. But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came *and* requested of Him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying out behind us."

24. But He answered *and* said, "I have not been sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

25. Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"

26. But He answered *and* said, "It is not proper to take the children's bread and throw *it* to the dogs."

27. And she said, "Yes, Lord, but

13 John 15:2
1 Cor. 3:12
14 Is. 9:16
Mal. 2:8
Mat. 23:16
Luke 6:39
15 Mark 7:17
16 Mat. 16:9
Mark 7:18
17 1 Cor. 6:13
18 Jas. 3:6
19 Gen. 6:5,
8:21
Prov. 6:14
Jer. 17:9
Mark 7:21
21 Mark 7:24
24 Mat. 10:5, 6
26 Mat. 7:6
Phil. 3:2

29 Mat. 4:18
Mark 7:31
30 Is. 35:5, 6
Mat. 11:5
Luke 7:22
32 Mark 8:1
33 2 Ki. 4:43
36 1 Sam. 9:13
Mat. 14:19
Luke 22:19
39 Mark 8:10

even the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table."

28. Then Jesus answered *and* said to her, "O woman, great *is* your faith! As you have desired, so be it to you." And her daughter was healed from that hour.

29. Now after leaving there, Jesus came toward the Sea of Galilee; and He went up into the mountain and sat there.

30. Then great multitudes came to Him, having with them *the* lame, *the* blind, *the* dumb, *the* maimed, and many others; and they laid them at the feet of Jesus, and He healed them;

31. So that the multitudes were amazed, when they saw the dumb speaking, *the* maimed *made* whole, *the* lame walking, and *the* blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.

32. And after calling His disciples to Him, Jesus said, "I am moved with compassion toward the multitude because they have been with Me for three days, and they have nothing to eat; and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint along the way."

33. Then His disciples said to Him, "Where in this wilderness can we find enough loaves *of bread* to satisfy so great a multitude?"

34. And Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven, and a few small fish."

35. Then He commanded the multitude to sit on the ground;

36. And He took the seven loaves and the fish, and gave thanks, and broke *them*, and gave *them* to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

37. And they all ate and were satisfied; and they took up seven baskets full of fragments that were left.

38. Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children.

39. And after dismissing the multi-

tude, He went into the ship and came to the area of Magdala.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

1. Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came to *Him*, tempting *Him* and asking Him to show them a sign from heaven.

2. But He answered *and* said to them, "When evening has come, you say, '*It will be* fair weather, for the sky is red.'

3. And in the morning, *you say*, 'Today *it will* storm, for the sky is red and lowering.' Hypocrites! You know *how* to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot *discern* the signs of the times.

4. A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet." Then He left them and went away.

5. Now when His disciples came to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.

6. And Jesus said to them, "Watch out, and be on guard against the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

7. Then they reasoned among themselves, saying, "*It is* because we did not take bread."

8. But when Jesus knew *this*, He said to them, "O *you* of little faith, why are you reasoning among yourselves that *it is* because you did not bring bread?

Chap. 16

1 Mat. 12:38
Mark 8:11
Luke 11:16,
12:54-56
1 Cor. 1:22
4 Mat. 12:39
5 Mark 8:14
6 Luke 12:1

9 Mat. 14:17
John 6:9
10 Mat. 15:34
13 Mark 8:27
Luke 9:18
14 Mat. 14:2
Luke 9:7-9
16 Mat. 14:33
Mark 8:29
Luke 9:20
John 6:69,
11:27
Acts 8:37
1 John 4:15
Heb. 1:2, 5
17 1 Cor. 2:10
Gal. 1:16
Eph. 2:8
18 Job 33:17
Psa. 9:13,
107:18
Is. 38:10
John 1:42
Eph. 2:20
Rev. 21:14

9. Do you still not understand? *Do you* not remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets you took *up*?

10. Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets you took *up*?

11. How is it that you do not understand that I was not speaking of bread *when I told* you to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees?"

12. Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

13. Now after coming into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus questioned His disciples, saying, "Whom do men declare Me, the Son of man, to be?"

14. And they said, "Some *say* John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."

15. He said to them, "But you, whom do you declare Me to be?"

16. Then Simon Peter answered *and* said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17. And Jesus answered *and* said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood did not reveal *it* to you, but My Father, Who *is* in heaven.

18. And I say also to you, that you are Peter;* but upon this Rock I will build My church, and *the* gates of the grave shall not prevail against it.

*Jesus was telling the apostles and disciples that He would build His church on Himself—not on Peter, as traditionally thought and claimed by many. The key to this understanding is in the Greek words that Jesus used. Jesus said to Peter, "You are Peter" (Πέτρος petros). The meaning of this word was given definition by Jesus Himself. In John 1:42, the interpretation of the name "Peter" (κηφας cephas) is "a stone." This is what Jesus was emphasizing here. Peter was a stone. Next, Jesus said of Himself, "But upon this Rock I will build My church." The Greek word translated "Rock" is πέτρα petra, which means "massive cliff." Christ Himself is that Rock, the Massive Cliff. Peter was a pebble or a stone in comparison. The Greek clearly conveys the meaning. Jesus built His church upon Himself. He did not build it upon a man. Other scriptures verify this truth. Jesus Christ is called the "Rock," πέτρα petra (1 Cor. 10:4; Eph. 2:20). Even Peter later wrote about Jesus as the Cornerstone, the foundational undergirding of the church that He said He would build (1 Pet. 2:4-6). Jesus Christ is called the Head of the church; no man can be the Head (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18). Peter himself, shortly after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, said that the Stone which the builders had set at naught had become the Head of the corner (Acts 4:11). This scripture shows that Peter knew he was not the cornerstone or the head of the church of God. 1 Corinthians 3:11 clearly states that all who are Christians must be built on the foundation of Jesus Christ, Who alone is the Head of His church. Through the direct words of Jesus Christ Himself, and through the words of His chosen apostles, we know that He has built His Church on Himself, not on Peter or any other man.

19. And I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you may bind on the earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you may loose on the earth shall be loosed in heaven."

20. Then He charged His disciples not to tell anyone that He was Jesus the Christ.

21. From that time Jesus began to explain to His disciples that it was necessary for Him to go to Jerusalem, and to suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and to be killed, and to be raised the third day.

22. But after taking *Him* aside, Peter personally began to rebuke Him, saying, "*God will be* favorable to you, Lord. In no way shall this *happen* to You."

23. Then He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, because your thoughts are not *in accord* with the things of God, but the things of men."

24. And Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and let him take up his cross and follow Me.

25. For whoever desires to save his life shall lose it; but whoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it.

26. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world, but loses his life? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?

27. For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall render to everyone according to his doings.

28. Truly I say to you, there are some of those standing here who shall not taste of death until they have seen the Son of man coming in His kingdom."

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

1. And after six days, Jesus took with *Him* Peter and James and his brother John, and brought them up into a high

19 Mat. 18:18
John 20:23
20 Mat. 17:9
Luke 9:21
21 Mat. 20:17
Mark 8:31, 9:31
Luke 9:22, 18:31
23 2 Sam. 10:22
Rom. 8:7
24 Mark 8:34
Luke 9:23, 14:27
Acts 14:22
1 Thes. 3:3
2 Tim. 3:12
25 Luke 17:33
John 12:25
26 Psa. 49:7, 8
27 Job 34:11
Psa. 62:12
Prov. 24:12
Dan. 7:10
Zech. 14:5
Mat. 25:31, 26:64
Mark 8:38
Luke 9:26
1 Pet. 1:17
Jude 14
Rom. 2:6
2 Cor. 5:10
Rev. 2:23
28 Mark 9:1
Luke 9:27

Chap. 17

1 Mark 9:2
Luke 9:28

5 Deut. 18:15, 19
Is. 42:1
Mat. 3:17
Mark 1:11
Luke 3:22
Acts 3:22, 23
2 Pet. 1:17
6 2 Pet. 1:18
7 Dan. 8:18, 9:21, 10:10, 18
9 Mat. 16:20
Mark 8:30, 9:9
10 Mal. 4:5
Mat. 11:14
Mark 9:11
11 Mal. 4:6
Luke 1:16, 17
Acts 3:21
12 Mat. 11:14, 14:3, 10, 16:21
Mark 9:12, 13
13 Mat. 11:14
14 Mark 9:14
Luke 9:37

mountain by themselves.

2. And He was transfigured before them; and His face shined as the sun, and His garments became white as the light.

3. Then behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah talking with Him.

4. And Peter answered *and* said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If You desire, let us make three tabernacles here: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

5. While he was speaking, a bright cloud suddenly overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight. Listen to Him!"

6. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces in extreme terror.

7. But Jesus came *and* touched them, and said, "Arise, and do not be terrified."

8. And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus alone.

9. Now as they were descending from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of man has risen from *the* dead."

10. Then His disciples asked Him, saying, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"

11. And Jesus answered *and* said to them, "Elijah shall indeed come first and restore all things.

12. But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him; but they did to him whatever they desired. In like manner also, the Son of man is about to suffer from them."

13. Then the disciples understood that He was speaking to them about John the Baptist.

14. And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him,

15. And saying, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is insane and suffers miserably; for he often falls into the fire, and often into the water.

16. And I brought him to Your disciples, but they were not able to heal him."

17. Then Jesus answered *and* said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you *in your unbelief*? Bring him here to Me."

18. And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it departed from him; and the boy was healed from that hour.

19. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately *and* said, "Why were we not able to cast it out?"

20. And Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief. For truly I say to you, if you have faith as a *tiny* mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, 'Remove from here,' and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you.

21. But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

22. And while they were dwelling in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of man is about to be betrayed into *the* hands of men,

23. And they shall kill Him; but the third day He shall be raised up." And they were exceedingly sorrowful.

24. Now after coming to Capernaum, those who received the tribute money came to Peter and said, "Does not your Master pay tribute?"

25. And he said, "Yes." And when he came into the house, Jesus, anticipating his *question*, said, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth receive custom or tribute? From their own children, or from strangers?"

26. Peter said to Him, "From strangers." Jesus said to him, "Then the children are indeed free.

27. Nevertheless, so that we may not

20 Mat. 21:21
Mark 11:23
Luke 17:6
1 Cor. 12:9, 13:2

22 Mat. 16:21, 20:17
Mark 8:31, 9:30, 31, 10:33
Luke 9:22, 44, 18:31, 24:6, 7

24 Ex. 30:13, 33:26
Mark 9:33

offend them, go to the sea and cast a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you have opened its mouth, you shall find a coin. Take that, and give *it* to them for Me and you."

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

1. At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who then is *the* greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

2. And after calling a little child to *Him*, Jesus set him in their midst,

3. And said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, there is no way that you shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4. Therefore, whoever shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5. And whoever shall receive one such little child in My name receives Me.

6. But whoever shall cause one of these little ones who believe in Me to offend, it would be better for him that a millstone be hung around his neck and he be sunk in the depths of the sea.

7. Woe to the world because of offenses! For it is necessary that offenses come, yet woe to that man by whom the offense comes!

8. And if your hand or your foot causes you to offend, cut it off and cast *it* from you; for it is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed than to have two hands or two feet *and* be cast into the eternal fire.

9. And if your eye causes you to offend, pluck it out and throw *it* away; for it is better for you to enter into life one-eyed than to have two eyes *and* be cast into the fire of Gehenna.

10. Take heed *that* you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that their angels in heaven continually look upon the face of My Father, Who is in heaven.

Chap. 18

1 Mark 9:33
Luke 9:46, 22:24

3 Psa. 131:2
Mat. 19:14
Mark 10:14
Luke 18:16
1 Pet. 2:2
1 Cor. 14:20

4 Mat. 20:27, 23:11

5 Mat. 10:42
Luke 9:48

6 Mark 9:42
Luke 17:1, 2

7 Mat. 26:24
Luke 17:1

1 Cor. 11:19

8 Mat. 5:29, 30

Mark 9:43, 45

10 Esth. 1:14
Psa. 34:7

Zech. 13:7
Luke 1:19

Heb. 1:14

11. For the Son of man has come to save those who are lost.

12. What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them has gone astray, *does he* not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and search for the one that went astray?

13. And if he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray.

14. Likewise, it is not *the* will of your Father Who *is* in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

15. *So* then, if your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault between you and him alone. If he is willing to hear you, you have gained your brother.

16. But if he will not listen, take with you one or two others, so that in *the* mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

17. And if he fails to listen to them, tell *it* to the church. But if he also fails to listen to the church, let him be to you as the heathen and the tax collector.

18. Truly I say to you, whatever you shall bind on the earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you shall loose on the earth shall be loosed in heaven.

19. Again I say to you, that if two of you on earth shall agree concerning any matter that they wish to request, it shall be done for them by My Father, Who *is* in heaven.

20. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in *the* midst of them."

21. Then Peter came to Him *and* said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Until seven times?"

22. Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you until seven times, but until seventy times seven.

23. Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is compared to a man, a *certain* king,

11 Luke 9:56, 19:10
John 3:17, 12:47

12 Luke 15:4

15 Lev. 19:17

Luke 17:3

Jas. 5:20

1 Pet. 3:1

16 Deut. 17:6, 19:15

John 8:17

2 Cor. 13:1

Heb. 10:28

17 2 John 10

Rom. 16:17

1 Cor. 5:9

2 Thes. 3:6, 14

18 Mat. 16:19

John 20:23

1 Cor. 5:4

19 Mat. 5:24

Luke 17:4

1 John 3:22, 5:14

22 Mat. 6:14

Mark 11:25

Col. 3:13

who would take account with his servants.

24. And after he began to reckon, there was brought to him one debtor who owed *him* ten thousand talents.

25. But since he did not have *anything* to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26. Because of this, the servant fell down *and* worshiped him, saying, 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.'

27. And being moved with compassion, the lord of that servant released him, and forgave him the debt.

28. Then that servant went out *and* found one of his fellow servants, who owed him a hundred silver coins; and after seizing him, he choked *him*, saying, 'Pay me what you owe.'

29. As a result, his fellow servant fell down at his feet and pleaded with him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.'

30. But he would not *listen*; instead, he went and cast him into prison, until he should pay the amount that he owed.

31. Now when his fellow servants saw the things *that* had taken place, they were greatly distressed; and they went to their lord *and* related all that had taken place.

32. Then his lord called him *and* said to him, '*You* wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt, because you implored me.

33. Were you not also obligated to have compassion on your fellow servant, even as I had compassion on you?'

34. And in anger, his lord delivered him up to the tormentors, until he should pay all that he owed to him.

35. Likewise shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each *of* you does not forgive his brother's offenses from the heart."

25 2 Ki. 4:1

Neh. 5:8

28 Mat. 20:2

35 Prov. 21:13

Mat. 6:12

Mark 11:26

Jas. 2:13

CHAPTER NINETEEN

1. And it came to pass *that* when Jesus had finished these sayings, He departed from Galilee and came to the borders of Judea beyond the Jordan.
 2. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them there.
 3. Then the Pharisees came to Him and tempted Him, saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?"
 4. But He answered them, saying, "Have you not read that He Who made *them* from *the* beginning made them male and female,
 5. And said, 'For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh'?
 6. So then, they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate."
 7. They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?"
 8. He said to them, "Because of your hardheartedness, Moses allowed you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it was not so.
 9. And I say to you, whoever shall divorce his wife, except *it be* for sexual immorality, and shall marry another, is committing adultery; and the one who marries her who has been divorced is committing adultery."
 10. His disciples said to Him, "If that is the case of a man with a wife, it is better not to marry."
 11. But He said to them, "Not everyone can receive this word, but *only those* to whom it has been given.
 12. For there are eunuchs who were born that way from *their* mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who is

Chap. 19

1 Mark 10:1
 John 10:40
 2 Mat. 12:15
 4 Gen. 1:27,
 5:2
 Mal. 2:15
 5 Gen. 2:24
 Mark 10:5-9
 1 Cor. 6:16,
 7:2
 Eph. 5:31
 7 Deut. 24:1
 Mat. 5:31
 9 Mat. 5:32
 Mark 10:11
 Luke 16:18
 1 Cor. 7:10
 10 Prov. 21:19
 11 1 Cor. 7:2,
 7, 9, 17
 12 1 Cor. 7:32,
 9:5, 15
 13 Mark 10:13
 Luke 18:15
 14 Mat. 18:3
 16 Mark 10:17
 Luke 10:25,
 18:18
 18 Ex. 20:13
 Deut. 5:17
 19 Lev. 19:18
 Mat. 15:4,
 22:39
 Jas. 2:8
 Rom. 13:9
 Gal. 5:14
 21 Mat. 6:20
 Luke 12:33,
 16:9
 Acts 2:45,
 4:34, 35
 1 Tim. 6:18,
 19
 23 Mat. 13:22
 Mark 10:24
 1 Cor. 1:26
 1 Tim. 6:9

able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*."

13. Then little children were brought to Him, so that He might lay *His* hands on them and pray *for them*; but the disciples rebuked *those who brought them*.

14. But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

15. And after laying *His* hands on them, He departed from there.

16. Now at that time, one came to Him *and* said, "Good Master, what good *thing* shall I do, that I may have eternal life?"

17. And He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good except one—God. But if you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments."

18. Then he said to Him, "Which?" And Jesus said, " 'You shall not commit murder'; 'You shall not commit adultery'; 'You shall not steal'; 'You shall not bear false witness';

19. 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' "

20. The young man said to Him, "I have kept all these things from my youth. What do I yet lack?"

21. Jesus said to him, "If you desire to be perfect, go *and* sell your property, and give to *the* poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come *and* follow Me."

22. But after hearing this word, the young man went away grieving, because he had many possessions.

23. Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly I say to you, it *is extremely* difficult for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

24. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through *the* eye of a needle than *for* a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

25. But after hearing this, the disciples were greatly astonished *and* said,

"Who then is able to be saved?"

26. But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."

27. Then Peter answered *and* said to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and have followed You. What then shall be for us?"

28. And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you who have followed Me: in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit upon *the* throne of His glory, you also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29. And everyone who has left houses, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit eternal life.

30. But many *of the* first shall be last, and *the* last first."

CHAPTER TWENTY

1. "The kingdom of heaven shall be compared to a man, a master of a house, who went out early in *the* morning to hire workmen for his vineyard.

2. And after agreeing with the workmen on a silver coin *for* the day's wage, he sent them into his vineyard.

3. And when he went out about the third hour, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace;

4. And he said to them, 'Go also into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.'

5. And they went. Again, after going out about *the* sixth hour and *the* ninth hour, he did likewise.

6. And about the eleventh hour, he went out *and* found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all the day?'

7. They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'Go also into my vineyard, and whatever is

26 Gen. 18:14
Job 42:2
Jer. 32:17
Zech. 8:6
Luke 1:37,
18:27

27 Deut. 33:9
Mat. 4:20
Luke 5:11

28 Mat. 20:21
Luke 22:28-30

1 Cor. 6:2
Rev. 2:26

29 Mark 10:29,
30
Luke 18:29,
30

30 Mat. 20:16,
21:31, 32
Mark 10:31
Luke 13:30

Chap. 20

1 Mat. 18:28

15 Deut. 15:9
Prov. 23:6
Mat. 6:23

Rom. 9:21
16 Mat. 19:30,
22:14

17 Mark 10:32
Luke 18:31
John 12:12

18 Mat. 16:21

19 Mat. 27:2
Mark 15:1,
16

Luke 23:1
John 18:28
Acts 3:13

20 Mat. 4:21,
19:28
Mark 10:35

right you shall receive.'

8. And when evening came, the lord of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the workmen and pay them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first.'

9. And when those who *were hired* about the eleventh hour came, they each received a silver coin.

10. But when the first ones came, they thought that they would receive more; but each of them also received a silver coin.

11. And after receiving *it*, they complained against the master of the house,

12. Saying, 'These *who came* last have worked one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who have carried the burden and the heat of the day.'

13. But he answered *and* said to them, 'Friend, I am not doing you wrong. Did you not agree with me on a silver coin *for the day*?

14. Take *what* is yours and go, for I also desire to give to the last *ones* exactly as I gave to you.

15. And is it not lawful for me to do what I will with that which *is* my own? Is your eye evil because I am good?'

16. So the last shall be first, and the first *shall be* last; for many are called, but few *are* chosen."

17. And while they were going up to Jerusalem, Jesus took the twelve disciples aside in the way and said to them,

18. "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death;

19. And they shall deliver Him up to the Gentiles to mock *Him*, and to scourge *Him*, and to crucify *Him*; but He shall rise again the third day."

20. Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Him with her sons,

worshiping Him and asking a certain thing from Him.

21. And He said to her, "What do you desire?" She said to Him, "Grant that these my two sons may sit one at Your right hand and one at *Your left hand* in Your kingdom."

22. But Jesus answered *and* said, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and to be baptized *with* the baptism that I am baptized *with*?" They said to Him, "We are able."

23. And He said to them, "You shall indeed drink of My cup, and shall be baptized *with* the baptism that I am baptized *with*; but to sit at My right hand and at My left *hand* is not Mine to give, but *shall be given to those* for whom it has been prepared by My Father."

24. And after hearing *this*, the ten were indignant against the two brothers.

25. But Jesus called them to *Him* and said, "You know that the rulers of the nations exercise lordship over them, and the great ones exercise authority over them.

26. However, it shall not be this way among you; but whoever would become great among you, let him be your servant;

27. And whoever would be first among you, let him be your slave;

28. Just as the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life *as* a ransom for many."

29. And as they were going out of Jericho, a great multitude followed Him.

30. And behold, two blind *men* sitting beside the road, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, "Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David."

31. Then the multitude rebuked them, so that they would be silent. But they

21 Mat. 19:28
22 Mat. 26:39, 40

Mark 14:36
Luke 12:50, 22:42

John 18:11
23 Mat. 24:34
Acts 12:2

Rom. 8:17
2 Cor. 1:7
Rev. 1:9

24 Mark 10:41
Luke 22:24, 25

26 Mat. 23:11
Mark 9:35, 10:43

1 Pet. 5:3
27 Mat. 18:4
28 Is. 53:10, 11

Dan. 9:24, 26
Mat. 26:28

Luke 22:27
John 11:51, 52, 13:4, 14

1 Pet. 1:19
Rom. 5:15, 19

Phil. 2:7
Heb. 9:28
1 Tim. 2:6

Tit. 2:14
29 Mark 10:46
Luke 18:35

30 Mat. 9:27

Chap. 21

1 Zech. 14:4
Mark 11:1
Luke 19:29

5 Is. 62:11
Zech. 9:9
John 12:15

6 Mark 11:4
7 2 Ki. 9:13
8 Lev. 23:40

John 12:13
9 Psa. 118:25, 26
Mat. 23:39

cried out *all* the more, saying, "Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David."

32. And Jesus stopped and called them, and said, "What do you desire *that* I do for you?"

33. They said to Him, "Lord, that our eyes may be opened."

34. And being moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

1. Now as they were approaching Jerusalem, they came to Bethphage, near the Mount of Olives; and Jesus sent two disciples,

2. Saying to them, "Go into the village, the one ahead of you, and immediately you shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her. Loose *them* and bring *them* to Me.

3. And if anyone says anything to you, tell *him*, 'The Lord has need of them.' And he will send them at once."

4. But this all took place so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,

5. "Say to the daughter of Sion, 'Behold, your King comes to you, meek and mounted on an ass, and *on* a colt *the* foal of an ass.' "

6. And the disciples left, and did as Jesus had ordered them;

7. They brought the ass and the colt, and put their garments upon them; and He sat on them.

8. And a great number *of the* multitude spread their garments on the road; and others were cutting down branches from the trees and spreading *them* on the road.

9. And the multitudes, those who were going before and those who were following behind, were shouting, saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He Who comes *in the* name of *the* Lord. Hosanna in the highest!"

10. Now when He entered Jerusalem, the entire city was moved, saying, "Who is this?"

11. And the multitudes said, "This is Jesus the prophet, the one Who is from Nazareth of Galilee."

12. And Jesus went into the temple of God and cast out all those who were buying and selling in the temple; and He overthrew the tables of the money exchangers, and the seats of those who were selling doves.

13. Then He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'; but you have made it a den of thieves."

14. And *the* blind and *the* lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.

15. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children shouting in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant,

16. And said to Him, "Do You hear what they are saying?" Then Jesus said to them, "Yes! Have you never read, 'Out of *the* mouths of little children and infants You have perfected praise'?"

17. And leaving them, He went out of the city to Bethany and spent the night there.

18. Now early in the morning, *as He* was coming back into the city, He hungered;

19. And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came *up* to it, but found nothing on it except leaves only. And He said to it, "Let there never again be fruit from you forever." And immediately the fig tree dried up.

20. And after seeing *it*, the disciples were amazed, saying, "How quickly the fig tree has dried up!"

21. Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, "Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only shall

10 Mark 11:15
Luke 19:45
John 2:13, 15

11 Mat. 2:23
Luke 7:16
John 6:14, 7:40, 9:17

12 Deut. 14:25
Mark 11:11
Luke 19:45
John 2:15

13 Is. 56:7
Jer. 7:11
Mark 11:17
Luke 19:46

16 Psa. 8:2
17 Mark 11:11
John 11:18

18 Mark 11:12
19 Mark 11:13
20 Mark 11:20
21 Mat. 17:20
Jas. 1:6
1 Cor. 13:2

22 Mat. 7:7
Mark 11:24
Luke 11:9
Jas. 5:16
1 John 3:22, 5:14

23 Ex. 2:14
Mark 11:27
Luke 20:1
Acts 4:7, 7:27

26 Mat. 14:5
Mark 6:20
Luke 20:6

31 Luke 7:29, 50

32 Mat. 3:1
Luke 3:12, 13

you do the *miracle* of the fig tree, but even if you shall say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it shall come to pass.

22. And everything that you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive."

23. Now when He entered the temple *and* was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to Him, saying, "By what authority do You do these things? And who gave You this authority?"

24. And Jesus answered *and* said to them, "I will also ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.

25. The baptism of John, where did it come from? From heaven, or from men?" Then they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'

26. But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the multitude; for everyone holds John as a prophet."

27. And they answered Jesus *and* said, "We do not know." He said to them also, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

28. But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first one and said, 'Son, go work in my vineyard today.'

29. And he answered *and* said, 'I will not'; but afterwards he repented *and* went.

30. Then he came to the second *son* *and* said the same thing. And he answered *and* said, 'Sir, I will go'; but he did not go.

31. Which of the two did the will of the father?" They said to Him, "The first *one*." Jesus said to them, "I tell you truly, the tax collectors and *the* harlots are going into the kingdom of God before you.

32. For John came to you in *the* way

of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and *the* harlots believed him. Yet you, after seeing *this*, did not afterwards repent and believe him.

33. Hear another parable: There was a certain man, a master of a house, who planted a vineyard, and put a fence around it, and dug a winepress in it, and built a tower, and *then* leased it to husbandmen and left the country.

34. Now when the season of the fruits was drawing near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen to receive his fruits.

35. But the husbandmen took his servants and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36. Again he sent other servants, more than the first *time*; and they did the same thing to them.

37. Then at last he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will have respect for my son.'

38. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us murder him and gain possession of his inheritance.'

39. Then they took him, *and* cast *him* out of the vineyard, and murdered *him*.

40. Therefore, when the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do to those husbandmen?"

41. They said to Him, "Evil *men*! He will utterly destroy them, and he will lease his vineyard to other husbandmen, who will render to him the fruits in their seasons."

42. Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures, '*The* Stone that the builders rejected, this has become *the* head of *the* corner. This was from *the* Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes'?"

43. Because of this, I say to you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and it shall be given to a nation

33 Psa. 80:9
S. of S. 8:11
Is. 5:1
Jer. 2:21
Mat. 25:14
Mark 12:1
Luke 20:9

34 S. of S.
8:11, 12
35 2 Chr. 24:21
36:16
Neh. 9:26
Mat. 5:12,
23:34, 37
Acts 7:52
1 Thes. 2:15
Heb. 11:36,
37

38 Psa. 2:2, 8
Mat. 26:3,
27:1
John 11:53
Acts 4:27
Heb. 1:2
39 Mat. 26:50
Mark 14:46
Luke 22:54
John 18:12
Acts 2:23
41 Luke 20:16,
21:24
Acts 13:46,
15:7, 18:6,
28:28
Rom. 9:10,
11
Heb. 2:3
42 Psa. 118:22
Is. 28:16
Mark 12:10
Luke 20:17
Acts 4:11
1 Pet. 2:6, 7
Eph. 2:20
43 Mat. 8:12

44 Is. 8:14-15,
60:12
Dan. 2:44
Zech. 12:3
Luke 20:18
1 Pet. 2:8
Rom. 9:33
46 Mat. 21:11
Luke 7:16
John 7:40
Chap. 22
1 Luke 14:16
Rev. 19:7, 9
4 Prov. 9:2
7 Dan. 9:26
Luke 19:27
8 Mat. 10:11
Acts 13:48
10 Mat. 13:38

that produces the fruits of it.

44. And the one who falls on this Stone shall be broken; but on whom-ever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

45. Now after hearing His parables, the chief priests and the Pharisees knew that He was speaking about them.

46. And they sought to arrest Him, but they were afraid of the multitudes, because they held Him as a prophet.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

1. And again Jesus answered and spoke to them in parables, saying,

2. "The kingdom of heaven is compared to a man *who was* a king, who made a wedding feast for his son,

3. And sent his servants to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast; but they refused to come.

4. Afterwards he sent out other servants, saying, 'Say to those who have been invited, "Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and the fatted beasts are killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding feast." '

5. But they paid no attention and went away, one to his farm, and another to his business.

6. And the rest, after seizing his servants, insulted and killed *them*.

7. Now when the king heard *it*, he became angry; and he sent his armies *and* destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

8. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast indeed is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy;

9. Therefore, go into the well-traveled highways, and invite all that you find to the wedding feast.'

10. And after going out into the highways, those servants brought together everyone that they found, both good and evil; and the wedding feast was filled with guests.

11. And when the king came in to see the guests, *he* noticed a man there who was not dressed in *proper* attire for *the* wedding feast;

12. And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you enter here without a garment *fit* for *the* wedding feast?' But he had no answer.

13. Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind his hands and feet, *and* take him away, and cast *him* into the outer darkness.' There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

14. For many are called, but few *are* chosen."

15. Then the Pharisees went and took counsel *as to* how they might entrap Him in *His* speech.

16. And they sent their disciples *along* with the Herodians to Him, saying, "Master, we know that You are true, and *that* You teach the way of God in truth, and *that* You are not concerned about *pleasing* anyone; for You do not respect *the* persons of men.

17. Therefore, tell us, what do You think? Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?"

18. But Jesus, knowing their wickedness, said, "Why do you tempt Me, *you* hypocrites?

19. Show Me the tribute coin." And they brought to Him a silver coin.

20. And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription *is on* this?"

21. They said to Him, "Caesar's." And He said to them, "Render then the things of Caesar to Caesar, and the things of God to God."

22. And when they heard *this*, they were amazed; and *they* left Him *and* went *their* way.

23. On that same day, *the* Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and questioned Him,

24. Saying, "Master, Moses said, 'If anyone dies without having children, his brother shall marry his wife and shall raise up seed to his brother.'

11 2 Cor. 5:3
Eph. 4:24
Col. 3:10,
12
Rev. 3:4,
16:15, 19:8
13 Mat. 8:12,
20:16
15 Mark 12:13
Luke 20:20
19 Mat. 20:2
21 Mat. 17:25
Rom. 13:7
23 Mark 12:18
Luke 20:27
Acts 23:8
24 Deut. 25:5

29 John 20:9
30 1 John 3:2
32 Ex. 3:6, 16
Mark 12:26
Luke 20:37
Acts 7:32
Heb. 11:16
33 Mat. 7:28
34 Mark 12:28
35 Luke 10:25
37 Deut. 6:5,
10:12,
30:6
Luke 10:27
39 Lev. 19:18
Mat. 19:18
Mark 12:31
Luke 10:27
Rom. 13:9
Gal. 5:14
Jas. 2:8
40 Mat. 7:12
1 Tim. 1:5

25. Now there were with us seven brothers; and the first one, being married, died with no seed; and he left his wife to his brother.

26. And likewise the second also, and the third, unto *the* seventh.

27. And last of all the woman died also.

28. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven shall she be, for all had her?"

29. Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, "You do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.

30. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but they are as *the* angels of God in heaven.

31. Now concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying,

32. 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not *the* God of *the* dead, but of *the* living."

33. And when the multitudes heard *this*, they were amazed at His teaching.

34. But after the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they came together *before* Him.

35. And one of them, a doctor of the law, questioned Him, tempting Him, and saying,

36. "Master, which commandment *is the* great commandment in the Law?"

37. And Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'

38. This is *the* first and greatest commandment;

39. And *the* second *one is* like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

40. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

41. While the Pharisees were assembled together, Jesus questioned them,
 42. Saying, "What do you think concerning the Christ? Whose son is He?" They said to Him, "*The Son of David.*"
 43. He said to them, "How then does David in spirit call Him Lord, saying,
 44. 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet" '?"
 45. Therefore, if David calls Him Lord, how is He his Son?"
 46. And no one was able to answer Him a word, neither dared anyone from that day to question Him any more.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

1. Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples,
 2. Saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have sat down on Moses' seat *as judges*;
 3. Therefore, every judgment that they tell you to observe, observe and do. But do not do according to their works; for they say and do not.
 4. For they bind heavy burdens and hard to bear, and lay *them* on the shoulders of men; but they will not move them with *one of* their own fingers.
 5. And they do all their works to be seen by men. They make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments;
 6. And they love the first place at the suppers, and the chief seats in the synagogues,
 7. And the salutations in the market-places, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.'
 8. But you are not to be called Rabbi; for one is your Master, the Christ, and all of you are brethren.
 9. Also, do not call *anyone* on the

41 Mark 12:35
 Luke 20:41
 44 Psa. 110:1
 Acts 2:34
 1 Cor. 15:25
 Heb. 1:13,
 10:12, 13
 46 Mark 12:34
 Luke 14:6,
 20:40

Chap. 23

2 Neh. 8:4, 8
 Mal. 2:7
 Mark 12:38
 Luke 20:45
 3 Rom. 2:19
 4 Luke 11:46
 Acts 15:10
 Gal. 6:13
 5 Num. 15:38
 Deut. 6:8,
 22:12
 Prov. 3:3
 Mat. 6:1, 2,
 5, 16
 6 Mark 12:38,
 39
 Luke 11:43,
 20:46
 3 John 9
 8 Jas. 3:1
 1 Pet. 5:3
 2 Cor. 1:24
 9 Mal. 1:6

11 Mat. 20:26,
 27
 12 Job 22:29
 Prov. 5:33,
 29:33
 Luke 14:11,
 18:14
 Jas. 4:6
 1 Pet. 5:5
 13 Luke 11:52
 14 Mark 12:40
 Luke 20:47
 2 Tim. 3:6
 Tit. 1:11
 16 Mat. 5:33,
 34, 15:14,
 23:24
 17 Ex. 30:29
 19 Ex. 29:37
 21 1 Ki. 8:13
 2 Chr. 6:2
 Psa. 26:8,
 132:14
 22 Psa. 11:4
 Mat. 5:34
 Acts 7:49

earth your Father; for one is your Father, Who *is* in heaven.

10. Neither be called Master; for one is your Master, the Christ.

11. But the greatest among you shall be your servant.

12. And whoever will exalt himself shall be humbled; and whoever will humble himself shall be exalted.

13. But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and as a pretext you offer prayers of great length. Because of this, you shall receive *the* greater judgment.

14. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven before men; for neither do you yourselves enter, nor do you allow those who are entering to enter.

15. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel the sea and the land to make one proselyte, and when he has become one, you make him twofold more a son of Gehenna than yourselves.

16. Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever shall swear by the temple, it is not binding; but whoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is obligated *to fulfill* his oath.'

17. *You* fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold, or the temple which sanctifies the gold?

18. And *you* say, 'Whoever shall swear by the altar, it is not binding; but whoever shall swear by the gift that *is* upon it, he is obligated *to fulfill* his oath.'

19. *You* fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift, or the altar which sanctifies the gift?

20. Therefore, the one who swears by the altar swears by it, and by all things that *are* upon it.

21. And the one who swears by the temple swears by it, and by Him Who dwells in it.

22. And the one who swears by

heaven swears by the throne of God, and by Him Who sits upon it.

23. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, but you have abandoned the more important *matters* of the law—judgment, and mercy and faith. These *you* were obligated to do, and not to leave the others undone.

24. Blind guides, who filter out a gnat, but swallow a camel!

25. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, but within you are full of extortion and excess.

26. Blind Pharisees! First cleanse the inside of the cup and the dish, so that the outside may also become clean.

27. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful *on the* outside, but within are full of the bones of the dead, and of all uncleanness.

28. Likewise, you also outwardly appear to men *to be* righteous, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

29. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the sepulchers of the prophets, and adorn the tombs of the righteous;

30. And you say, 'If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.'

31. So then, you are testifying against yourselves, that you are the sons of those who killed the prophets;

32. And *as for* you, you are filling up the measure of your fathers.

33. *You* serpents, *you* offspring of vipers, how shall you escape the judgment of Gehenna?

34. Because of this, behold, I send to you prophets and wise *men* and scribes; and *some* of them you shall kill and crucify, and *some* of them you

23 1 Sam. 15:22
Hos. 6:6
Mic. 6:8
Mat. 9:13, 12:7
Luke 11:42
25 Mark 7:4
Luke 11:39
27 Luke 11:44
Acts 23:3
29 Luke 11:47
31 Acts 7:51, 52
1 Thes. 2:15
32 Gen. 15:16
1 Thes. 2:16
33 Mat. 3:7, 12:34
34 Mat. 10:17, 21:34, 35
Luke 11:49
Acts 5:40, 7:58, 59, 22:19
2 Cor. 11:24, 25

35 Gen. 4:8
2 Chr. 24:20, 21
1 John 3:12
Rev. 18:24
37 Deut. 32:11, 12
2 Chr. 24:21
Psa. 17:8, 91:4
Luke 13:34
39 Psa. 118:26
Mat. 21:9

Chap. 24

1 Mark 13:1
Luke 21:5
2 1 Ki. 9:7
Jer. 26:18
Mic. 3:12
Luke 19:44
3 Mark 13:3
1 Thes. 5:1
4 1 John 4:1
Eph. 5:6
Col. 2:8, 18
2 Thes. 2:3
5 Jer. 14:14, 23:21, 25
Mat. 24:11, 24
John 5:43

shall scourge in your synagogues, and *some of them* you shall persecute from city to city;

35. So that upon you may come all *the* righteous blood poured out upon the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous, unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

36. Truly I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation.

37. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *you* who kill the prophets and stone those who have been sent to you, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her brood under *her* wings, but you refused!

38. Behold, your house is left to you desolate.

39. For I say to you, you shall not see Me at all from this time forward, until you shall say, 'Blessed is He Who comes in *the* name of *the* Lord.'

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

1. And after going out, Jesus departed from the temple; and His disciples came to *Him* to point out the buildings of the temple.

2. But Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, there shall not be left here even a stone upon a stone that shall not be thrown down."

3. And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, His disciples came to Him alone, saying, "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what *shall be* the sign of Your coming, and of the completion of the age?"

4. Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, "Be on guard, so that no one deceives you.

5. For many shall come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ'; and they shall deceive many.

6. And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. See *that* you do not let

these things disturb you. For it is necessary *that* all *these* things take place, but the end is not yet.

7. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in *different* places.

8. Now all these *things are* the beginning of sorrows.

9. Then shall they deliver you up to affliction, and shall kill you; and you shall be hated by all nations for My name's sake.

10. And then shall many be led into sin, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another;

11. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many;

12. And because lawlessness shall be multiplied, the love of many shall grow cold.

13. But the one who endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved.

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

15. Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (the one who reads, let him understand),

16. Then let those who are in Judea flee into the mountains.

17. Let the one *who is* on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house;

18. And let the one *who is* in the field not go back to take his garments.

19. But woe to those *women* who are expecting a child, and to those who are nursing infants in those days!

20. And pray that your flight be not in *the* winter, nor on *the* Sabbath;

21. For then shall there be great tribulation, such as has not been from *the* beginning of *the* world until this time, nor ever shall be *again*.

22. And if those days were not lim-

7 2 Chr. 15:6
Is. 19:2
Hag. 2:22
Zech. 14:13
9 Mat. 10:17
Luke 21:12
John 16:2
Acts 4:2, 3
10 2 Tim. 1:15,
4:10, 16
11 Acts 20:29
2 Pet. 2:1
1 Tim. 4:1
13 Mat. 10:22
Mark 13:13
Rev. 2:10
14 Mat. 4:23
Rom. 10:18
Col. 1:6, 23
15 Dan. 9:23,
27, 12:11
Mark 13:14
Luke 21:20
19 Luke 23:29
21 Dan. 9:26
Joel 2:2
22 Is. 65:8, 9
Zech. 14:2

23 Mark 13:21
Luke 17:23,
21:8
24 Deut. 13:1
John 6:37,
10:28, 29
Rom. 8:28
2 Thes. 2:9
2 Tim. 2:19
Rev. 13:13
27 Luke 17:24
28 Job 39:30
Luke 17:37
29 Ezek. 32:7
Dan. 7:11
Joel 2:10
Amos 8:9
Mark 13:24
Acts 2:20
30 Dan. 7:13
Zech. 12:12
31 1 Cor. 15:52
1 Thes. 4:16
32 Luke 21:29
33 Jas. 5:9
34 Mat. 16:28
Mark 13:30
Luke 21:32

ited, there would no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be limited.

23. Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here *is* the Christ,' or, '*He is* there,' do not believe *it*.

24. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and they shall present great signs and wonders, in order to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

25. Behold, I have foretold *it* to you.

26. Therefore, if they say to you, '*Come and see!* He is in the wilderness'; do not go forth. '*Come and see!* *He is* in the secret chambers'; do not believe *it*.

27. For as the light of day, which comes forth from *the* east and shines as far as *the* west, so also shall the coming of the Son of man be.

28. For wherever the carcass may be, there will the eagles be gathered together.

29. But immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.

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

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

32. Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branches have already become tender, and it puts forth its leaves, you know that summer *is* near.

33. In like manner also, when you see all these things, know that it is near, even at *the* doors.

34. Truly I say to you, this generation shall in no wise pass away until all

these things have taken place.

35. The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away.

36. But concerning that day, and the hour, no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

37. Now as *it was in* the days of Noah, so shall *it* also be *at* the coming of the Son of man.

38. For as in the days that *were* before the Flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark;

39. And they were not aware until the Flood came and took *them* all away; so shall *it* also be *at* the coming of the Son of man.

40. Then *two* shall be in the field; one shall be taken, and one shall be left;

41. Two *women shall be* grinding at the mill; one shall be taken, and one shall be left.

42. Watch, therefore, because you do not know in what hour your Lord is coming.

43. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have been watching, and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.

44. Therefore, you also be ready. For the Son of man is coming at a time that you do not think.

45. Who then is the faithful and wise servant whom his lord has set over his household, to give them food in due season?

46. Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he comes shall find so doing.

47. Truly I say to you, he will set him over all his property.

48. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, 'My lord delays *his* coming,'

49. And shall begin to beat *his* fellow

35 Psa. 102:26
Is. 51:6
Jer. 31:35
Mark 13:31
Luke 21:33

36 Zech. 14:7
Mark 13:32
Acts 1:7
2 Pet. 3:10
1 Thes. 5:2

37 Gen. 6:3-5
Luke 17:26
1 Pet. 3:20

40 Luke 17:34
42 Mat. 25:13
Luke 21:36

43 Luke 12:39
1 Thes. 5:2
Rev. 3:3

44 1 Thes. 5:6
45 Luke 12:42
Acts 20:28

46 Rev. 16:15
47 Mat. 25:21,
23
Luke 22:29

51 Mat. 8:12,
25:30

Chap. 25

1 Eph. 5:29,
30
Rev. 19:7,
21:2, 9

2 Mat. 13:47,
22:10

5 1 Thes. 5:6
6 Mat. 24:31
1 Thes. 4:16

7 Luke 12:35
10 Luke 13:25

11 Mat. 7:21-
23

12 Psa. 5:5
Hab. 1:13
John 9:31

13 Mat. 24:42,
44
Mark 13:33,
35

Luke 21:36

servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken,

50. The lord of that servant will come in a day that he does not expect, and in an hour that he does not know.

51. And he shall cut him asunder and shall appoint his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

1. "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be compared *to* ten virgins, who took their lamps *and* went out to meet the bridegroom.

2. And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.

3. The ones who were foolish took their lamps, *but* they did not take oil with them;

4. But the wise took oil in their vessels *along* with their lamps.

5. Now when the bridegroom was gone a long time, they all became drowsy and slept.

6. But in *the* middle of *the* night there was a cry: 'Look, the bridegroom is coming! Go out to meet him.'

7. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.

8. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us *some* of your oil, because our lamps are going out.'

9. But the wise answered, saying, '*No*, lest *there* not *be* enough for us and *for* you. But instead, go to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'

10. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut.

11. And afterwards the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us.'

12. But He answered *and* said, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.'

13. Watch, therefore, for you do not

know the day nor the hour in which the Son of man is coming.

14. For *the kingdom of heaven* is like a man leaving the country, who called his own servants and delivered to them his property.

15. Now to one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one; he *gave* to each one according to his own ability, and immediately left the country.

16. Then the one who had received five talents went and traded with them, and made an additional five talents.

17. In the same way also, the one who had *received* two *talents* also gained two others.

18. But the one who had received the single *talent* went and dug in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

19. Now after a long time, the lord of those servants came to take account with them.

20. Then the one who had received five talents came to *him* and brought an additional five talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered five talents to me; see, I have gained five other talents besides them.'

21. And his lord said to him, 'Well *done*, good and faithful servant! *Because* you were faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

22. And the one who had received two talents also came to him *and* said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; see, I have gained two other talents besides them.'

23. His lord said to him, 'Well *done*, good and faithful servant! *Because* you were faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

24. Then the one who had received the single talent also came to *him* *and* said, 'Lord, I knew that you are a hard

14 Mat. 21:33
Luke 19:12
15 Mat. 18:24
Rom. 12:6
1 Cor. 12:7,
11, 29
Eph. 4:11
21 Mat. 24:47,
25:34, 46
Luke 12:44,
22:29, 30
1 Pet. 1:8
2 Tim. 2:12
Heb. 12:2
23 Mat. 25:21

29 Mat. 13:12
Mark 4:25
Luke 8:18,
10:26
John 15:2
30 Mat. 8:12,
24:51
31 Zech. 14:5
Mat. 16:27,
19:28
Mark 8:38
Acts 1:11
Jude 14
1 Thes. 4:16
2 Thes. 1:7
Rev. 1:7
32 Ezek. 20:38
Rom. 14:10
2 Cor. 5:10
Rev. 20:12
34 Mat. 20:23
Mark 10:40
1 Pet. 1:4,
9, 3:9
Rom. 8:17
1 Cor. 2:9
Heb. 11:16
Rev. 21:7
35 Is. 58:7
Ezek. 18:7
Jas. 1:27
3 John 5
Heb. 13:2
36 Jas. 2:15,
16
2 Tim. 1:16

man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter.

25. And *because* I was afraid, I went and hid your talent in the earth. *Now* look, you have your own.'

26. His lord answered *and* said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant! You knew that I reap where I did not sow, and gather what I did not scatter.

27. Because *you knew* this, you were duty-bound to take my talent to the money exchangers, *so that* when I came, I could have received my own with interest.

28. Therefore, take the talent from him, and give *it* to the one who has ten talents.

29. For to everyone who has, *more* shall be given, and *he* shall have abundance; on the other hand, *as for* the one who does not have, even that which he has shall be taken from him.

30. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness.' There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

31. Now when the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon *the* throne of His glory;

32. And He shall gather before Him all the nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

33. And He shall set the sheep at His right hand, but the goats at *His* left.

34. Then shall the King say to those at His right hand, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from *the* foundation of *the* world.

35. For I was hungry, and you gave Me *something* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me *something* to drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me in;

36. *I* was naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was

in prison, and you came to Me.'

37. Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and fed *You*? or thirsty, and gave *You* a drink?

38. And when did we see You a stranger, and took *You in*? or naked, and clothed *You*?

39. And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and came to You?'

40. And answering, the King shall say to them, 'Truly I say to you, inasmuch as you have done *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you have done *it* to Me.'

41. Then shall He also say to those on the left, 'Depart from Me, *you* cursed ones, into the eternal fire, which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.

42. For I was hungry, and you did not give Me *anything* to eat; I was thirsty, and you did not give Me *anything* to drink;

43. I was a stranger, and you did not take Me in; *I was* naked, and you did not clothe Me; *I was* sick, and in prison, and you did not *come to* visit Me.'

44. Then they also shall answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and we did not minister to You?'

45. Then shall He answer them, saying, 'Truly I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do *it* to one of the least of these, neither did you do *it* to Me.'

46. And they shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

1. Now it came to pass *that* when Jesus had finished all these sayings, He said to His disciples,

2. "You know that after two days the Passover takes place, and the Son of

40 Prov. 14:31,
19:17
Mat. 10:42
Mark 9:41
Heb. 6:10

41 Psa. 6:8
Mat. 7:23,
13:40, 42
Luke 13:27
2 Pet. 2:4
Jude 6
Rev. 20:10

45 Prov. 14:31,
17:5
Zech. 2:8
Acts 9:5

46 Dan. 12:2
John 5:29
Rom. 2:7

Chap. 26

2 Mark 14:1
Luke 22:1
John 13:1

3 Psa. 2:2
John 11:47
Acts 4:25

6 Mat. 21:17
Mark 14:3
John 11:1,
2, 12:3

8 John 12:4
11 Deut. 15:11
Mat. 18:20,
28:20
John 12:8,
13:33,
14:19, 16:5,
28, 17:11

14 Mat. 10:4
Mark 14:10
Luke 22:3
John 13:2,
30

15 Zech. 11:12
Mat. 27:3

17 Ex. 12:6, 18
Mark 14:12
Luke 22:7

man is delivered up to be crucified."

3. Then the chief priests and the scribes and the elders of the people assembled together in the court of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas;

4. And *they* took counsel together for the purpose of seizing Jesus by treachery, and killing *Him*.

5. But they said, "Not during the feast, so that there will not be a riot among the people."

6. Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in Simon the leper's house,

7. A woman came to Him with an alabaster flask of ointment, very precious, and poured *it* on His head as He sat down *to eat*.

8. But when His disciples saw *it*, *they* became indignant *and* said, "What reason *is there* for this waste?

9. For this ointment could have been sold for much, and *the money* given to *the poor*."

10. But Jesus knew *this* and said to them, "Why do you cause trouble for this woman? For she has performed a good work toward Me.

11. For you have the poor with you always, but you do not always have Me.

12. What this *woman did* in pouring this ointment on My body, she did for My burial.

13. Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, what this *woman* has done shall also be spoken of for a memorial of her."

14. Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests,

15. *And* said, "What are you willing to give me, and I will deliver Him up to you?" And they offered him thirty pieces of silver.

16. And from that time he sought an opportunity to betray Him.

17. Now on the first of the unleav-

eneds*, the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, "Where do You desire *that* we prepare for You to eat the Passover?"

18. And He said, "Go into the city to such a man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is near; I will keep the Passover with My disciples at your *house*."' "

19. Then the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and prepared the Passover.

20. And after evening had come, He sat down with the twelve.

21. And as they were eating, He said, "Truly I say to you, one of you shall betray Me."

22. And being sorely grieved, each of them began to say to Him, "Am I *the one*, Lord?"

23. But He answered and said, "He who dipped *his* hand with Me in the dish, he shall betray Me.

24. The Son of man indeed goes, as it has been written concerning Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It would be better for him if that man had not been born."

25. Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, "Am I *the one*, Master?" He said to him, "You have said *it*."

26. And as they were eating, Jesus took the bread and blessed *it*; *then He* broke *it* and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

27. And He took the cup; and after giving thanks, He gave *it* to them, say-

20 Mark 14:17-21
Luke 22:14
John 13:21
23 Psa. 41:9
Luke 22:21
John 13:18
24 Psa. 22
Dan. 9:26
Mark 9:12
Luke 24:25, 26, 46
John 17:12
Acts 17:2
3, 26:22, 23
1 Cor. 15:3
26 Mark 6:41, 14:22
Luke 22:19
1 Cor. 10:16, 11:23
27 Mark 14:23

28 Ex. 24:8
Lev. 17:11
Jer. 31:31
Mat. 20:28
Rom. 5:15
Heb. 9:22
29 Mark 14:26
Luke 22:18
Acts 10:41
30 Mark 14:26
31 Zech. 13:7
Mat. 11:6
Mark 14:27
John 16:32
32 Mat. 28:7, 10
Mark 14:28, 16:7
34 Mark 14:30
Luke 22:34
John 13:38
36 Mark 14:32-35
Luke 22:39
John 18:1
37 Mat. 4:21
38 John 12:27

ing, "All of you drink of it;

28. For this is My blood, the *blood* of the New Covenant, which is poured out for many for *the* remission of sins.

29. But I say to you, from this time forward I will not drink at all of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink *it* anew with you in the kingdom of My Father."

30. And after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

31. Then Jesus said to them, "All of you shall be offended in Me during this night; for it is written, 'I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.'

32. But after I have been raised, I will go before you into Galilee."

33. Then Peter answered *and* said to Him, "Even if all shall be offended in You, I will never be offended."

34. Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, during this *very* night, before *the* cock crows, you yourself shall deny Me three times."

35. Peter said to Him, "Even if I were required to die with You, in no way would I ever deny You." All the disciples also spoke in like manner.

36. Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here, while I go onward and pray."

37. And He took with *Him* Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, *and* He began to be very melancholy and deeply depressed.

38. Then He said to them, "My soul is

*This phrase has caused some confusion. It is certain that this phrase does not refer to the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins after, not before, the Passover. As recorded in the Gospels, "the first of the unleaveneds" was the day that the lambs were killed. Those who obeyed God's ordinances in Exodus 12 and kept the domestic Passover killed their lambs at the beginning of the 14th of Nisan. Those who followed the traditions of Judaism killed the lambs at the temple on the afternoon of the 14th. The Gospel writers were clearly referring to the 14th, and not to the 15th, as "the first of the unleaveneds." In New Testament times, this term was commonly used for the 14th day of the first month.

"In the first century, it was commonly known that 'the day of the unleaveneds' in Luke 22:7 was the 14th Passover day. G. Amadon, in an article entitled, 'The Crucifixion Calendar,' pointed out the error of those translators who translated this verse to read 'the first day of the festival.' [The following words are cited from this article.] 'But on what authority should the Hebrew translators, as Salkinson and Delitzsch, introduce the word chag [a Hebrew word for "feast"], into these texts when the corresponding Greek has no word for "feast," and speaks only of the "first of the unleavened bread"—a common expression for the Jewish 14th with practically all first century writers' " (Journal of Biblical Literature, vol. LXIII, 1944, pp. 188-189, emphasis added).

deeply grieved, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me."

39. And after going forward a little, He fell on His face, praying, and saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."

40. Then He came to His disciples and found them sleeping. And He said to Peter, "What! Were you not able to watch with Me one hour?"

41. Watch and pray, so that you do not enter into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

42. The second time He went again and prayed, saying, "My Father, if this cup cannot pass from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."

43. Now when He came to them, He found them asleep again, because their eyes were heavy.

44. And leaving them, He went again and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

45. Then He came to His disciples and said to them, "Sleep on now, and take your rest. Behold, the hour has drawn near, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46. Arise! Let us be going. Look, the one who is betraying Me is approaching."

47. And while He was yet speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, suddenly appeared, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

48. Now the one who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, "Whomever I shall kiss, He is the One. Arrest Him!"

49. And as soon as he came to Jesus, he said, "Hail, Rabbi," and earnestly kissed Him.

50. But Jesus said to him, "Friend, for what purpose have you come?" Then they came and laid their hands on Jesus, and arrested Him.

51. And one of those with Jesus sud-

39 Mat. 20:22
Mark 14:36
Luke 22:42
John 5:30,
6:38, 12:27
Phil. 2:8
Heb. 5:7

41 Mark 13:33,
14:38
Luke 22:40,
46

Eph. 6:18
47 Mark 14:43
Luke 22:47
John 18:3
Acts 1:16

49 2 Sam. 20:9

50 Psa. 41:9,
55:13

51 John 18:10

52 Gen. 9:6
Rev. 13:10

53 2 Ki. 6:17

Dan. 7:10

54 Is. 53:7

Mat. 26:24

Luke 24:25,
44, 46

56 Lam. 4:20

John 18:15

57 Mark 14:53

Luke 22:54

John 18:12,
13, 24

60 Deut. 19:15

Psa. 27:12,
35:11

Mark 14:55

Acts 6:13

61 Mat. 27:40

John 2:19

62 Mark 14:60

63 Lev. 5:1

1 Sam.
14:24, 26

Is. 53:7

Mat. 27:12

denly stretched out his hand, drew his sword, and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

52. Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back in its place; for all who take up the sword shall die by the sword.

53. Don't you realize that I have the power to call upon the Father at this time, and He will furnish Me with more than twelve legions of angels?

54. But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled? For this is ordained to be."

55. At that point Jesus said to the crowd, "Have you come out to take Me with swords and clubs, as against a robber? I sat day after day with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not arrest Me.

56. But all this has happened so that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.

57. But those who had arrested Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

58. And Peter followed Him from a distance, even to the court of the high priest; and after going inside, he sat down with the officers to see what the end would be.

59. Now the chief priests and the elders and the whole Sanhedrin sought false evidence against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death;

60. But they did not find any. Although many false witnesses came forward, they did not find any evidence.

61. Then at the last, two false witnesses came forward and said, "This man said, 'I have the power to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.' "

62. And the high priest rose up and said to Him, "Have You no answer for what these are testifying against You?"

63. But Jesus was silent. And the high

priest answered *and* said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God that You tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God."

64. Jesus said to him, "You have said *it*. Moreover, I say to you, in the future you shall see the Son of man sitting at *the* right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

65. Then the high priest ripped his *own* garments, saying, "He has blasphemed! Why do we need any more witnesses? Behold, you have just now heard His blasphemy."

66. What do you think?" They answered *and* said, "He is deserving of death!"

67. Then they spit in His face and hit Him with their fists; and some struck Him with rods,

68. Saying, "Prophecy to us, Christ. Who is the one that struck You?"

69. Now Peter was sitting outside in the court; and a maid came to him, saying, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean."

70. But he denied *it* before everyone, saying, "I don't know what you are talking about."

71. And after he went out into the porch, another *maid* saw him and said to those there, "This man was also with Jesus the Nazarean."

72. Then again he denied *it* with an oath, *saying*, "I do not know the man."

73. After a little *while*, those who were standing by came to Peter and said, "Truly, you also are one of them, for even your speech shows *that* you *are*."

74. Then he began to curse and to swear, *saying*, "I do not know the man." And immediately a cock crowed.

75. And Peter remembered the words of Jesus, Who had said to him, "Before *the* cock crows, you yourself shall deny Me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

64 Psa. 110:1
Dan. 7:13
Mat. 16:27,
24:30,
25:31
Luke 21:27
John 1:51
Acts 7:55
Rom. 14:10
1 Thes. 4:16
Rev. 1:7
65 2 Ki. 18:37
66 Lev. 24:16
John 19:7
67 Is. 50:6,
53:3
Mat. 27:30
Luke 22:63
68 Mark 14:65
Luke 22:64
69 Mark 14:66
Luke 22:55
John 18:16,
17, 25
73 Luke 22:59
74 Mark 14:71
75 Mat. 26:34
Luke 22:61
John 13:38

Chap. 27

1 Psa. 2:2
Mark 15:1
Luke 22:66,
23:1
John 18:28
2 Mat. 20:19
Acts 3:13
3 Mat. 26:14
5 2 Sam. 17:23
Acts 1:18
8 Acts 1:19
9 Zech. 11:12
11 Mark 15:2
Luke 23:3
John 18:33,
37
1 Tim. 6:13
12 Mat. 26:63
John 19:9
13 Mat. 26:62
John 19:10

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

1. Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death.

2. And after binding Him, they led Him away and delivered Him up to Pontius Pilate, the governor.

3. Now when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He was condemned, he changed his mind *and* returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, saying,

4. "I have sinned and have betrayed innocent blood." But they said, "What *is that* to us? You see *to it* yourself."

5. And after throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he went out and hanged himself.

6. But the chief priests took the pieces of silver *and* said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is *the* price of blood."

7. And after taking counsel, they bought a potter's field with the *pieces of silver*, for a burial ground for strangers.

8. Therefore that field is called The Field of Blood to this day.

9. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "And I took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him on Whom a price was set, Whom they of *the* sons of Israel set a price on,

10. And gave them for the field of the potter, as *the* Lord had directed me."

11. Then Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor questioned Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And Jesus said to him, "*It is as you said.*"

12. And when He was accused by the chief priests and the elders, He answered nothing.

13. Then Pilate said to Him, "Don't You hear how many things they testify against You?"

14. And He did not answer even one word to him, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

15. Now at *the* feast, the governor was accustomed to release one prisoner to the multitude, whomever they wished.

16. And they had at that time a notorious prisoner called Barabbas.

17. Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you desire *that* I release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus Who is called Christ?"

18. For he understood that they had delivered Him up because of envy.

19. Now as he sat on the judgment seat, his wife sent *a message* to him, saying, "*Let there be* nothing between you and that righteous *man*, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him."

20. But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the multitudes to demand Barabbas, and to destroy Jesus.

21. Then the governor answered *and* said to them, "Which of the two do you desire *that* I release to you?" And they said, "Barabbas."

22. Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus Who is called Christ?" They all said to him, "Let *Him* be crucified!"

23. And the governor said, "Why? What evil did He commit?" But they shouted *all* the more, saying, "Let *Him* be crucified!"

24. Now Pilate, seeing that he was accomplishing nothing, but *that* a riot was developing instead, took water *and* washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, "I am guiltless of the blood of this righteous *man*. You see *to it*."

25. And all the people answered *and* said, "His blood *be* on us and on our children."

26. Then he released Barabbas to them; but after scourging Jesus, he

15 Mark 15:6
Luke 23:17
John 18:39

20 Mark 15:11
Luke 23:18
John 18:40
Acts 3:14

24 Deut. 21:6
25 Deut. 19:10
Josh. 2:19
2 Sam. 1:16

1 Ki. 2:32
Acts 5:28
26 Is. 53:5

Mark 15:15
Luke 23:16,
24, 25
John 19:1,
16

27 Mark 15:16
John 19:2

28 Luke 23:11
29 Psa. 69:19
Is. 53:3

30 Is. 50:6
Mat. 26:67

31 Is. 53:7
32 Num. 15:35

1 Ki. 21:13
Mark 15:21
Luke 23:33
Acts 7:58

Heb. 13:12
33 Mark 15:22
Luke 23:26

John 19:17
34 Psa. 69:21
Mat. 27:48

35 Psa. 22:18
Mark 15:24

Luke 23:34
John 19:24

36 Mat. 27:54
37 Mark 15:26

Luke 23:38
John 19:19

38 Is. 53:12
Mark 15:27

Luke 23:32,
33
John 19:18

39 Psa. 22:7,
109:25
Mark 15:29

Luke 23:35
40 Mat. 26:61,
63
John 2:19

delivered *Him* up so that He might be crucified.

27. Then the governor's soldiers, after taking Jesus with *them* into the Praetorium, gathered the entire band against Him;

28. And they stripped Him *and* put a scarlet cloak around Him.

29. And after plating a crown of thorns, they put *it* on His head, and a rod in His right hand; and bowing *on* their knees before Him, they mocked Him, and *kept on* saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

30. Then, after spitting on Him, they took the rod and struck *Him* on the head.

31. When they were done mocking Him, they took the cloak off Him; and they put His own garments on Him and led Him away to crucify Him.

32. Now as they came out, they found a Cyrenean man named Simon; *and* they compelled him to carry His cross.

33. And after coming to a place called Golgotha, which is called Place of a Skull,

34. They gave Him vinegar mingled with gall to drink; but after tasting it, He would not drink.

35. And when they had crucified Him, they divided His garments *by* casting lots; so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, "They divided My garments among themselves, and for My vesture they cast lots."

36. And they sat down there to keep guard over Him.

37. And they put up over His head His accusation, written, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

38. And two robbers were crucified with Him, one at *the* right hand and one at *the* left.

39. Then those who were passing by railed at Him, shaking their heads,

40. And saying, "You Who *would* destroy the temple and rebuild *it* in three

days, save Yourself. If You are *the* Son of God, come down from the cross."

41. And in the same way also the chief priests were mocking, with the scribes and elders, saying,

42. "He saved others, *but* He does not have the power to save Himself. If He is the King of Israel, let Him come down now from the cross, and we will believe Him.

43. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will *have* Him. For He said, 'I am *the* Son of God.' "

44. And the two robbers who were crucified with Him also reproached Him with the same words.

45. Now from *the* sixth hour until *the* ninth hour, darkness was over all the land. -

46. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" That is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

47. And some of those who were standing there heard *and* said, "This *one* is calling for Elijah."

48. And immediately one of them ran and, taking a sponge, filled *it* with vinegar and put *it* on a stick, *and* gave *it* to Him to drink.

49. But the rest said, "Let Him alone! Let us see if Elijah comes to save Him." *Then another took a spear and thrust it into His side, and out came water and blood. **

50. And after crying out again with a loud voice, Jesus yielded up *His* spirit.

51. And suddenly the veil of the temple was ripped in two from top to bottom, and the earth shook, and the rocks were split,

43 Psa 22:8
44 Mark 15:32
Luke 23:39
45 Amos 8:9
Mark 15:33
Luke 23:44
46 Psa. 22:1
Heb. 5:7
48 Psa. 69:21
Mark 15:36
Luke 23:36
John 19:29
50 Mark 15:37
Luke 23:46
51 Ex. 26:31
2 Chr. 3:14
Mark 15:38
Luke 23:45

★ This Sabbath was not the 7th day weekly Sabbath. This Sabbath was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—a holy day Sabbath and fell on a Thursday (See Appendix G, pp. 750-761 and Appendix R, p. 852).

54 Mat. 27:36
Mark 15:39
Luke 23:47
55 Luke 8:2, 3
56 Mark 15:40
57 Mark 15:42
Luke 23:50
John 19:38
60 Is. 53:9
63 Mat. 16:21,
17:23,
20:19,
26:61
Mark 8:31,
10:34
Luke 9:22,
13:33,
24:6, 7
John 2:19

52. And the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had died arose.

53. And after His resurrection, they came out of the tombs *and* entered into the holy city, and appeared to many.

54. Then the centurion and those with him who had been keeping guard over Jesus, after seeing the earthquake and the things that took place, were filled with fear, *and* said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

55. Now there were many women who were watching from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him;

56. With whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

57. And when evening was coming on, a rich man of Arimathea came, named Joseph, who was himself a disciple of Jesus.

58. After going to Pilate, he begged *to have* the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given over *to him*.

59. And after taking the body, Joseph wrapped it in clean linen cloth,

60. And placed it in his new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and after rolling a great stone to the door of the tomb, he went away.

61. But sitting there opposite the sepulcher were Mary Magdalene and the other Mary.

62. Now on the next day,★ which followed the preparation *day*, the chief priests and the Pharisees came together to Pilate,

63. Saying, "Sir, we remember that

*The latter half of this verse, which includes the words "...Then another took a spear and ...out came water and blood," has been omitted from the King James Version. However, some ancient manuscripts contain this part of the verse. The latter part of the verse is also found in other manuscripts that are designated by letter (L, T, Z) and by number (33, 49, 892 and 1241). Older translations which contain the complete verse are the Moffatt translation and the Fenton translation. Newer translations generally footnote this portion of Matthew 27:49 rather than including it in the text. The weight of evidence indicates that the latter half of the verse is an authentic part of the Greek text and should be included in translations of the New Testament. The veracity of this portion of Matthew 27:49 is substantiated by the records in John 19:34 and 20:27.

that deceiver said while *He* was living, 'After three days I *will* rise.'

64. Therefore, command *that* the sepulcher be secured until the third day; lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, 'He is risen from the dead'; and the last deception shall be worse than the first."

65. Then Pilate said to them, "You have a guard. Go, make *it as* secure as you know *how*."

66. And they went *and* made the sepulcher secure, sealing the stone *and* setting the guard.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

1. Now late on the Sabbath, as *the* first day of *the* weeks* was drawing near, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to observe the sepulcher.

2. And *in the morning* suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of *the* Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

3. Now his appearance was as lightning, and his raiment white as snow.

4. And for fear of him, those who were keeping guard trembled, and became as dead *men*.

5. But the angel answered *and* said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are seeking Jesus, Who was crucified.

6. He is not here; for He has risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord Himself was lying.

7. And go quickly, *and* tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead. And behold, He goes before you into Galilee; there you shall see Him. Listen! I have told you."

8. And they quickly left the tomb with fear and great joy, *and* ran to tell *it* to

66 Dan. 6:17

Chap.28

1 Mat. 27:56

Mark 16:1

Luke 24:1

John 20:1

2 Mark 16:5

Luke 24:4

John 20:12

3 Dan. 10:6

6 Mat. 12:40,

16:21,

17:23,

20:19

7 Mat. 26:32

Mark 16:7

9 Mark 16:9

John 20:14

10 John 20:17

Rom. 8:29

Heb. 2:11

16 Mat. 26:32

28:7

18 Dan. 7:13,

14

Mat. 11:27

Luke 1:32,

10:22

John 3:35

Acts 2:36

1 Pet. 3:22

Rom. 14:9

1 Cor. 15:27

Eph. 1:10,

21

Phil. 2:9, 10

Heb. 1:2

19 Is. 52:10

Mark 16:15

Luke 24:47

Acts 2:38,

39

Rom. 10:18

Col. 1:23

20 Acts 2:42

His disciples.

9. But as they were going to tell His disciples, all at once Jesus Himself met them, saying, "Hail!" And they came to *Him* and held His feet, and worshiped Him.

10. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go, tell My brethren to go into Galilee, and there they shall see Me."

11. And as they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city *and* reported to the chief priests all the things that were done.

12. Then, after gathering together with the elders and taking counsel, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers,

13. Saying, "Tell *everyone* that His disciples came by night and stole Him while you were sleeping.

14. And if the governor hears *of* this, we will persuade him to release you from responsibility."

15. And they took the money *and* did as they were instructed; and this report has been spread abroad among the Jews to this day.

16. Now the eleven disciples went into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed *for* them *to meet Him*.

17. And when they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.

18. And Jesus came *and* spoke to them, saying, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.

19. Therefore, go *and* make disciples in all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit;

20. Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, *even* until the completion of the age." Amen.

*This literal translation of the Greek words *μία σαββάτων* or *μία των σαββάτων* shows that the day which followed the weekly Sabbath was the first day of the seven-week count to Pentecost, thus identifying this day as the Wave Sheaf Day (Lev. 23:10-11, 15-16). The ascension of Jesus Christ on that day fulfilled the offering of the wave sheaf for all time.

Mark

CHAPTER ONE

1. The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, *the* Son of God;
 2. As it is written in the prophets: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who shall prepare Your way before You."
 3. *The* voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way of *the* Lord, make straight His paths.'"
 4. John came baptizing in the wilderness, and preaching *the* baptism of repentance for *the* remission of sins.
 5. And all *those* of the country of Judea went out, and those of Jerusalem, and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.
 6. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and *wore* a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.
 7. And he preached, saying, "The one Who is coming after me *is* mightier than I, of Whom I am not worthy to stoop down to loose the thong of His sandals.
 8. I have indeed baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you with *the* Holy Spirit."
 9. And it came to pass in those days *that* Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan.
 10. And immediately, as He was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens open, and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.
 11. And a voice came from heaven, *saying*, "You are My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I have *great* delight."
 12. And soon after, the Spirit compelled Him to go out into the wilderness;
 13. And He was there in the wilderness *for* forty days, tempted by Satan,

Chap. 1

1 Mat. 14:33
 Luke 1:35
 2 Mal. 3:1
 Mat. 11:10
 Luke 7:27
 3 Is. 40:3
 Mat. 3:3
 Luke 3:4
 4 Mat. 3:1
 Luke 3:3
 5 Mat. 3:5
 6 Mat. 3:4
 7 Mat. 3:11
 John 1:27
 Acts 13:25
 8 Is. 44:3
 Acts 1:5,
 2:4, 10:45,
 11:16, 19:4
 1 Cor. 12:13
 9 Mat. 3:13
 10 Mat. 3:16
 John 1:32
 11 Psa. 2:7
 Mat. 3:17
 Mark 9:7
 12 Mat. 4:1
 13 Mat. 4:11

14 Mat. 4:12, 23
 15 Dan. 9:25
 Mat. 3:2,
 4:17
 Gal. 4:4
 Eph. 1:10
 16 Mat. 4:18
 Luke 5:4
 18 Mat. 19:27
 Luke 4:40
 21 Mat. 4:13
 Luke 4:31
 22 Mat. 7:28
 24 Mat. 8:29
 25 Mark 1:34

and was with the wild animals; and *afterwards* angels ministered to Him.
 14. Now after the imprisonment of John, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom of God,
 15. And saying, "The time has been fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is near at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel."
 16. And *as* He was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a large net into the sea, for they were fishermen.
 17. And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men."
 18. And they immediately left their nets *and* followed Him.
 19. And after moving on a little way from there, He saw James, the *son* of Zebedee, and his brother John; and they *were* in the ship, mending the nets.
 20. And He called them at once; and leaving their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, they followed Him.
 21. Then they went into Capernaum; and on the Sabbath day He immediately went into the synagogue *and* taught *the* people.
 22. And they were astonished at His doctrine; for He was teaching them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.
 23. Now in their synagogue there was a man with an unclean spirit; and it cried out,
 24. Saying, "Ah! What have we to do with You, Jesus, *the* Nazarene? Have You come to destroy us? I know Who You are—the Holy *One* of God!"
 25. But Jesus rebuked it, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him."

26. And after throwing him into convulsions and crying out with a loud voice, the spirit came out of him.

27. Then all were astonished, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? What new teaching is this, that with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him?"

28. And His fame swiftly spread into all the country around Galilee.

29. And as soon as they had gone out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30. And Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever. And they spoke to Him at once about her.

31. And He came to *her*, and took her by the hand and raised her up. And immediately the fever left her, and she served them.

32. Now in *the* evening, when the sun had gone down, they brought to Him all who were diseased, and those who were possessed by demons;

33. And the entire city was gathered together at the door.

34. Then He healed many who were sick with various diseases, and He cast out many demons; but He did not allow the demons to speak because they knew Him.

35. And at *the time* of the morning watch, while it was still night, He rose up; and going out, *He* departed into a desert place, and was praying there.

36. And Simon, and those who were with him, went out after Him.

37. And after finding Him, they said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You."

38. But He said to them, "Let us go to the towns in the neighboring countryside, so that I may also preach there; because I have come for this *purpose*."

39. And He preached in all their synagogues in Galilee, and cast out demons.

26 Mark 9:20
29 Mat. 8:14
Luke 4:38
32 Mat. 8:16
Luke 4:40
34 Mark 3:12
Luke 4:41
Acts 16:17,
18
35 Luke 4:42
38 Is. 61:1
Luke 4:43
John 16:28,
17:4
39 Mat. 4:23
Luke 4:44

40 Mat. 8:2
Luke 5:12
44 Lev. 14:3, 4,
10
45 Mark 2:13
Luke 5:15
Chap. 2
1 Mat. 9:1
7 Job 14:4
Is. 43:25

40. And a leper came to Him, beseeching Him and kneeling down to Him, and saying to Him, "If You will, You have the power to cleanse me."

41. Then Jesus, being moved with compassion, stretched out *His* hand *and* touched him, and said to him, "I will. Be cleansed."

42. And as soon as He had spoken, the leprosy immediately departed from him, and he was cleansed.

43. Now after strictly commanding him, He sent him away at once,

44. And said to him, "See *that* you do not say anything to anyone; but go *and* show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them."

45. But after leaving, he began to proclaim *it* extensively and to spread the matter abroad, so that He was no longer able to enter *the* city openly, but stayed outside *the city* in desert places; and they came to Him from every region.

CHAPTER TWO

1. And after *some* days, He again entered into Capernaum, and it was reported that He was in *the* house.

2. And immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer any room, not even at the door; and He preached the Word to them.

3. Then they came to Him, bringing a paraplegic borne by four *men*.

4. And since they were not able to come near to Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was; and after breaking *it* open, they let down the stretcher on which the paraplegic was lying.

5. Now when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paraplegic, "Child, your sins have been forgiven you."

6. But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts,

7. "Why does this *man* speak such

blasphemies? Who has the power to forgive sins, except one, *and that is God?*"

8. And Jesus immediately knew in His spirit what they were reasoning within themselves, *and* said to them, "Why are you reasoning these things in your hearts?"

9. Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins have been forgiven you'? or to say, 'Arise, and take up your stretcher and walk'?

10. But in order that you may understand that the Son of man has authority on the earth to forgive sins," He said to the paralytic,

11. "I say to you, arise and pick up your stretcher, and go to your house."

12. And immediately he arose and, after picking up his stretcher, went out in the presence of them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen the like!"

13. Then He went by the sea again; and all the multitude came to him, and He taught them.

14. Now as He was passing by, He saw Levi, the *son* of Alphaeus, sitting at the tax office; and He said to him, "Follow Me." And he arose and followed Him.

15. And it came to pass that, when He sat down to eat in his house, many tax collectors and sinners sat down with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him.

16. But when the scribes and the Pharisees saw Him eating with tax collectors and sinners, *they* said to His disciples, "Why *is it* that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?"

17. And after hearing *this*, Jesus said to them, "Those who are strong do not need a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners to repentance."

18. Now the disciples of John and the

9 Mat. 9:5
13 Mat. 9:9
14 Mat. 9:9
Luke 5:27
15 Mat. 9:10
17 Mat. 9:12,
13, 18:11
Luke 5:31,
32, 19:10
1 Tim. 1:15
18 Mat. 9:14
Luke 5:33

23 Deut. 23:25
Mat. 12:1
Luke 6:1
25 1 Sam. 21:6
26 Ex. 29:32, 33
Lev. 24:9
28 Mat. 12:8

disciples of the Pharisees were fasting; and they came and said to Him, "Why do the disciples of John and the *disciples* of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?"

19. And Jesus said to them, "Can the children of the bridal chamber fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they are not able to fast.

20. But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them; and then shall they fast in those days.

21. And no one sews a piece of new cloth onto an old garment; otherwise the new *piece* filling up *the hole* tears away from the old, and a worse hole is made.

22. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine bursts the *old* wineskins, and the wine spills out, and the wineskins are destroyed; but new wine must be put into new wineskins."

23. Now it came to pass that He went through the grain fields on the Sabbath; and as His disciples made *their* way *through the fields*, they were picking *and eating* the grain.

24. Then the Pharisees said to Him, "Look *at them!* Why are they doing that which is not lawful on the Sabbath?"

25. And He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was hungry and in need *of food*, he and those with him?"

26. How in *the days of* Abiathar the high priest, he entered into the house of God and he ate the showbread, which it is not lawful to eat except for the priests, and he also gave *it* to those who were with him?"

27. And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, *and* not man for the Sabbath;

28. Therefore, the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

CHAPTER THREE

1. And again He went into the synagogue, and a man who had a withered hand was there.

2. And they were watching Him *to see* if He would heal him on the Sabbath, in order that they might accuse Him.

3. Then He said to the man who had the withered hand, "Stand up *here* in the center."

4. And He said to them, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbaths, or to do evil? To save life, or to kill?" But they were silent.

5. And after looking around at them with anger, being grieved at the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched *it* out, and his hand was restored *as* sound as the other.

6. Then the Pharisees left *and* immediately took counsel with the Herodians against Him *as to* how they might destroy Him.

7. But Jesus withdrew to the sea with His disciples; and a great multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judea,

8. And from Jerusalem, and from Idumea and beyond the Jordan; and those around Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they heard what great things He was doing, came to Him.

9. Then He told His disciples to have a small ship wait for Him on account of the multitude, in order that they might not press upon Him.

10. For He had healed so many that they *began* to crowd around Him, as many as had plagues, in order that they might touch Him;

11. And when the unclean spirits saw Him, they fell down before Him and cried aloud, saying, "You are the Son of God."

12. But He sharply rebuked them so that they would not make Him known.

Chap. 3

1 Mat. 12:9

Luke 6:6

6 Mat. 12:14,

22:16

7 Luke 6:17

11 Mat. 14:33

Mark 1:1, 23,

24

Luke 4:41

12 Mat. 12:16

Mark 1:25,

34

13. Then He went up into the mountain and called to *Him* those whom He desired, and they came to Him.

14. And He ordained twelve, that they might be with Him, and that He might send them to preach,

15. And to have authority to heal diseases and to cast out demons.

16. Then He *chose* Simon and added to *him the* name Peter;

17. And *He chose* James, the *son* of Zebedee, and John, the brother of James; and He added to them *the* name Boanerges, which means "sons of thunder."

18. And *He chose* Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas. And *He chose* James, the *son* of Alphaeus; and Thaddeus; and Simon, the Cananean;

19. And Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. And they went into a house.

20. Then a multitude gathered together again, so that they were not able even to eat bread.

21. And after hearing *of it*, those who were contrary to Him went to restrain Him; for they said, "He is out of His mind!"

22. Then the scribes who had come down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebub; and by the *power of the* prince of the demons He is casting out demons."

23. And after calling them to *Him*, He spoke to them in parables, *saying*, "How can Satan cast out Satan?"

24. For if a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom is not able to stand;

25. And if a house is divided against itself, that house is not able to stand.

26. And if Satan has risen up against himself and has been divided, he does not have the power to stand, but has an end.

27. There is no way that anyone who enters a strong man's house is able to

13 Mat. 10:1

Luke 6:12,

9:1

16 John 1:42

20 Mark 6:31

21 John 7:5,

10:20

22 Mat. 9:34,

10:25

Luke 11:15

John 7:20,

8:48, 52,

10:20

23 Mat. 12:25

27 Is. 49:24

Mat. 12:29

plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man; and then he can plunder his house.

28. Truly I say to you, all sins and every blasphemy that they may blaspheme shall be forgiven to the children of men;

29. But whoever shall commit blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven, *even* into eternity, but is subject to eternal judgment."

30. *He spoke these things* because they said, "He has an unclean spirit."

31. Then *His* brothers and His mother came and were standing outside; *and* they sent to Him, calling Him.

32. And the multitude sat around Him; and they said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers *are* outside; *and* they are seeking You."

33. But He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother and *who are* My brothers?"

34. And He looked around at those who were sitting in a circle around Him, *and* said, "Behold My mother and My brothers;

35. For whoever shall do the will of God, that one is My brother, and My sister, and mother."

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Then He again began to teach by the sea. And a great multitude gathered together to Him, so that He went aboard the ship and sat in *it* on the sea; and the whole multitude was on the land by the sea.

2. And He taught them many things in parables, and said to them in His teaching,

3. "Listen well *to this!* Behold, the sower went out to sow.

4. And it happened *that* as he was sowing, one *seed* fell by the way; and the birds of heaven came and devoured it.

5. And another *seed* fell on a rocky

28 Mat. 12:31
Luke 12:10
1 John 5:16
31 Mat. 12:46
Luke 8:19

Chap. 4

1 Mat. 13:1
Luke 8:4
2 Mark 12:38

place, where it did not have much soil; and it quickly sprang up, because it did not have depth of soil;

6. But after *the* sun rose, it was scorched; and because it did not have root, it withered away.

7. And another *seed* fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it did not yield *any* fruit.

8. And others fell into the good ground and yielded fruit, growing up and increasing; and one brought forth thirtyfold, and one sixtyfold, and one a hundredfold."

9. Then He said to them, "The one who has ears to hear, let him hear."

10. Now when He was alone, those who were around Him with the twelve asked Him *about* the parable.

11. And He said to them, "To you *it* has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are without, all things are done in parables;

12. So that *in* seeing they may see, and not perceive; and *in* hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them."

13. And He said to them, "Don't you understand this parable? Then how will you know all the *other* parables?"

14. The sower sows the Word.

15. Now the ones by the way, where the Word was sown, these are the ones who hear, but Satan comes at once and takes away the Word that was sown in their hearts.

16. And the ones which were in like manner sown upon the rocky places, these are *the ones* who when they hear the Word, immediately receive it with joy;

17. But *because* they have no root in themselves, they do not endure; when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, they are quickly offended.

8 John 15:5
Col. 1:6
10 Mat. 13:10
Luke 8:9
11 1 Cor. 5:12
Col. 4:5
1 Thes. 4:12
1 Tim. 3:7
12 Is. 6:9
Mat. 13:14
Luke 8:10
John 12:40
Acts 28:26
Rom. 11:8
14 Mat. 13:19

18. And those which were sown among the thorns, these are the ones who hear the Word,
 19. But the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things *that* come into *their* lives choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful.
 20. Now those which were sown upon the good ground, these are *the ones* who hear the Word and receive *it*, and bring forth fruit, one thirtyfold, and one sixtyfold, and one a hundredfold."
 21. And He said to them, "Is a lamp *lit* to be put under a bushelbasket or under a bed? *Is it* not rather *lit* to be put on a lampstand?
 22. For there is nothing hidden that shall not be made manifest; nor has any secret thing taken place, but that it should come to light.
 23. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."
 24. And He said to them, "Take heed to what you hear: *for* with whatever measure you use, it shall be measured back to you; and to those who hear, *it* shall be added.
 25. For whoever has, to him shall *more* be given; but the one who does not have, even that which he has shall be taken from him."
 26. Then He said, "The kingdom of God is likened to this: *It is* as if a man should cast seed upon the earth,
 27. And should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow, *but* he does not know how.
 28. For the earth brings forth fruit of itself, first a blade, then a head, then full grain in the head.
 29. And when the grain is mature, immediately he puts in the sickle, for the harvest has come."
 30. And He said, "To what *then* shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we compare it?
 31. *It is* like a *tiny* mustard seed, which, when it has been sown upon

19 1 Tim. 6:9, 17
 21 Mat. 5:15
 Luke 8:16, 11:33
 22 Mat. 10:26
 23 Mat. 11:15
 Mark 4:9
 24 Mat. 7:2
 Luke 6:38
 25 Mat. 13:12, 25:29
 Luke 8:18, 19:26
 26 Mat. 13:24
 29 Rev. 14:15
 30 Mat. 13:31
 Luke 13:18
 Acts 2:41, 4:4, 5:14, 19:20
 33 Mat. 13:34
 John 16:12
 35 Mat. 8:18, 23
 Luke 8:22
 Chap. 5
 1 Mat. 8:28
 Luke 8:26

the earth, is less than all the seeds that *are* upon the earth;
 32. But when it has been sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all the herbs, and produces great branches, so that the birds of heaven are able to roost under the shadow of it."
 33. And with many such parables He spoke the Word to them, as they were able to hear;
 34. For without a parable He did not speak to them; but He explained all things to His disciples privately.
 35. Now on the same day, when evening came, He said to them, "Let us go over to the other side."
 36. And after dismissing the multitude, they took Him with *them*, as He was *already* in the ship; and there were many other small ships with Him also.
 37. And a violent windstorm came up, and the waves were crashing into the ship so forcefully that it was rapidly filling up.
 38. Now He was at the stern sleeping on a cushion. And they aroused Him, and said to Him, "Master, don't You care that we are perishing?"
 39. And after being awakened, He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Silence! Be still." And the wind died, and there was a great calm.
 40. And He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? Why do you not have faith?"
 41. But they were afraid, and said to one another in great fear, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"

CHAPTER FIVE

1. And they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes.
 2. And as soon as He had left the ship, *there* met Him from out of the tombs a

man with an unclean spirit,
 3. Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one had the power to restrain him even with chains;
 4. For he had often been bound with fetters and chains, but the chains had been torn to pieces by him, and the fetters had been shattered; and no one had the strength to subdue him.
 5. And continually, night and day, in the mountains and in the tombs, he was screaming and cutting himself with stones.
 6. But when He saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him.
 7. And crying *out* with a loud voice, he said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of God the Most High? I adjure You by God, do not torment me." -
 8. For He was saying to it, "Unclean spirit, come out of the man."
 9. And He asked it, "What *is* your name?" And it answered, "My name *is* Legion, because we are many."
 10. And it begged Him again and again that He would not send them out of the country.
 11. Now near the mountain, there was a large herd of swine feeding;
 12. And all the demons pleaded with Him, saying, "Send us to the swine, so that we may enter into them."
 13. Then Jesus immediately permitted them *to go*. And the unclean spirits went out *of the man and* entered into the swine; and the herd stampeded down the steep *slope* into the sea (now they were about two thousand), and they *all* drowned in the sea.
 14. And those who were feeding the swine fled *in fear* and reported *it* in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what it was that had been done.
 15. And they came to Jesus and saw the man who had been possessed by demons, the one who had the Legion, sitting and clothed and of a sound

17 Mat. 8:34
 Acts 16:39
 18 Luke 8:38
 21 Mat. 9:1
 Luke 8:40
 22 Mat. 9:18
 Luke 8:41
 25 Lev. 15:25
 Mat. 9:20

mind; and they were afraid.
 16. Then those who had seen *it* reported to them what had happened to the one who had been possessed by demons, and *the things* concerning the swine.
 17. And they began to urge Him to depart from their borders.
 18. Now when He boarded the ship, the one who had been possessed by demons begged Him that he might be with Him.
 19. But Jesus did not permit him, rather he said to him, "Go to your house and to your own, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and *how He* has pitied you."
 20. Then he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and all were amazed.
 21. Now when Jesus had again crossed to the other side *of the sea* by ship, a great multitude was gathered to Him; and He was by the sea.
 22. And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name; and when he saw Him, he fell at His feet;
 23. And he earnestly besought Him, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death. *I beg* You to come *and* lay *Your* hands on her, so that she may be healed; and she shall live."
 24. And He departed with him; and a great multitude followed Him, pressing around Him.
 25. Then a certain woman who had been *afflicted with* an issue of blood *for* twelve years,
 26. And had suffered greatly under *the hand of* many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was not benefited in any way but rather was getting worse,
 27. When she heard about Jesus, came in the multitude behind *Him and* touched His garment;

28. For she said, "If I can only touch His garments, I shall be cured."
29. And at once the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she knew in *her* body that she was healed from the scourge.

30. Now Jesus knew immediately within Himself *that* power had gone out of Him; *and* turning in the crowd, He said, "Who touched My garments?"

31. But His disciples said to Him, "You see the crowd pressing around You, and You ask, 'Who touched Me?' "

32. Then He looked around to see who had done this.

33. And the woman, frightened and trembling, knowing what had been done in her, came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth.

34. Then He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has cured you. Go in peace, and be whole from your scourge."

35. *While* He was still speaking, they came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying, "Your daughter is dead. Why bother the Teacher any longer?"

36. But when Jesus heard the words that were spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not be afraid. Only believe."

37. And He did not allow anyone to accompany Him except Peter and James and John, the brother of James.

38. Now when He came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, He saw a tumult, and *people* weeping and wailing loudly.

39. And when He had entered, He said to them, "Why are you making a tumult and weeping? The child is not dead, but is *only* sleeping."

40. And they laughed at Him *in disbelief*. But after He had put *them* all out, He took with *Him* the father and the mother of the child, and those with Him, and went into *the room* where the child was lying.

41. And taking the child by the

30 Luke 6:19, 8:46
34 Mat. 9:22
Mark 10:52
Acts 14:9
35 Luke 8:49
39 John 11:11
40 Acts 9:40

43 Mat. 8:4, 9:30, 2:16, 17:9
Mark 3:12
Luke 5:14

Chap. 6

1 Mat. 13:54
Luke 4:16
2 John 6:42
3 Mat. 11:6, 12:46
Gal. 1:19
4 Mat. 13:57
John 4:44
5 Gen. 19:22, 32:25
Mat. 13:58
Mark 9:23
6 Is. 59:16
Mat. 9:35
Luke 13:22
7 Mat. 10:1
Mark 3:13, 14
Luke 9:1
8 Luke 9:3

hand, He said to her, "Talitha, cumi"; which is, being interpreted, "Little girl, I say to you, arise!"

42. And immediately the little girl arose and walked, for she was twelve years *old*. And they were filled with great amazement.

43. Then He strictly charged them that no one should know this, and He told *them* to give her *something* to eat.

CHAPTER SIX

1. And He left there and came into His *own* country, and His disciples followed Him.

2. Now when the Sabbath day came, He began to teach in the synagogue; and many *of those* who heard Him were astonished, saying, "From where did this *man* get these things? And what *is* this wisdom that has been given to Him, that by His hands many miracles are done also?"

3. Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" And they were offended in Him.

4. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his *own* country, and among *his own* kinsmen, and in his *own* house."

5. And He was not able to do any works of power there, except that He laid *His* hands on a few sick people *and* healed *them*.

6. And He was amazed by their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching *the people*.

7. And He called the twelve to *Him* and began to send them out, two by two; and He gave them authority over unclean spirits.

8. And He commanded them not to take anything for *the* journey except a staff—no bag of provisions, nor bread, nor money in the belt;

9. But *to* be shod with sandals; and not to put on two coats.

10. Then He said to them, "Wherever you *go*, *and* come into a house, remain there until you leave that *city*."

11. But as many as will not receive you, nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust that *is* under your feet as a witness against them. Truly I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in *the* day of judgment than for that city."

12. And they went out and proclaimed that *all* should repent.

13. And they cast out many demons; and *they* anointed with oil many sick people, and healed *them*.

14. Then King Herod heard *of Jesus*, because His name had become widely known; and he said, "John the Baptist has risen from *the* dead, and because of this these miracles are being worked by him."

15. Others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet, or one like the prophets."

16. But after hearing *these reports*, Herod said, "It is John, whom I beheaded. He has risen from *the* dead."

17. For Herod himself had sent and arrested John and had him bound in prison, because of Herodias, the wife of Philip his brother, whom he had married.

18. For John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

19. And Herodias held it against him, and desired to kill him, but was not able;

20. Because Herod feared John, realizing *that* he *was* a righteous and holy man, and kept him safe. And after hearing him, *he* did many things; and *he* listened to him gladly.

21. But an opportune day came when Herod prepared a banquet on his birth-

9 Gen. 40:20
10 Mat. 10:11
Luke 9:4,
10:7, 8
11 Mat. 10:14
Luke 10:10
Acts 13:51,
18:6
13 Jas. 5:14
14 Mat. 14:1
Luke 9:7
15 Mat. 16:14
Mark 8:28
16 Mat. 14:2
Luke 3:19
18 Lev. 18:16,
20:21
20 Mat. 14:5,
21:26
21 Gen. 40:20
Mat. 14:6

day for his principal men, and for the chief captains and the important *men* of Galilee.

22. And the daughter of Herodias herself came in and danced, and *it* pleased Herod and those sitting with *him at the banquet*; and the king said to the young woman, "Ask me whatever you desire, and I will give *it* to you."

23. Then he swore to her, "Whatever you ask of me I will give to you, *up* to half of my kingdom."

24. And after going out, she said to her mother, "What shall I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist."

25. Then she immediately returned to the king with haste and said, "I desire that you give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter."

26. Now although the king was personally very sorrowful, because of the oaths and those who were sitting with *him*, he would not reject *her request*.

27. Then without delay, the king sent a guardsman *and* ordered his head to be brought.

28. And he went *and* beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the young woman; and the young woman gave it to her mother.

29. Now when his disciples heard of *it*, they came and took up his body, and laid it in the tomb.

30. Then the apostles gathered together with Jesus, and they related to Him everything, both what they had done and what they had taught.

31. And He said to them, "All of you come away into a desert place, and rest a while." For there were so many people coming and going that they did not have an opportunity even to eat.

32. Then they departed alone by ship to a place in *the* wilderness.

33. But the multitudes saw them leaving, and many recognized Him; and

23 Esth. 5:3, 6,
7:2
26 Mat. 14:9
30 Luke 9:10
31 Mat. 14:13
Mark 3:20
32 Mat. 14:13

they all ran together there from all the cities, and went ahead of them; and they came together to Him.

34. And when Jesus arrived, He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion toward them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. Then He began to teach them many things.

35. Now because *it* was already a late hour, His disciples came to Him, saying, "This place is a wilderness, and the time *is* already late.

36. Dismiss them so that they may go into the country round about and buy food for themselves in the villages; for they have nothing to eat."

37. But He answered and said to them, "You give them *something* to eat." And they said to Him, "Shall we go *and* buy two hundred silver coins' worth of bread, and give *it* to them to eat?"

38. Then He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they knew, they said, "Five loaves, and two fish."

39. And He ordered them to make everyone sit down by companies on the green grass.

40. Then they sat down in ranks, by hundreds and by fifties.

41. And after taking the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up into heaven and blessed *them*; and He broke the loaves and gave *them* to His disciples, so that they might set *them* before the *people*. And the two fish He divided among *them* all.

42. And *they* all ate and were satisfied.

43. Then they took up twelve baskets full of fragments *of bread* and of fish.

44. And those who ate of the loaves were about five thousand men.

45. Then He commanded His disciples to get into the ship at once and go ahead *of Him* to the other side to Bethsaida, while He dismissed the multitude.

34 Mat. 9:36,
14:14
Luke 9:11

35 Mat. 14:15

Luke 9:12

37 Num. 11:13,

22

2 Ki. 4:43

38 Mat. 14:17,

15:34

Mark 8:5

Luke 9:13

John 6:9

41 1 Sam. 9:13

Mat. 26:26

45 Mat. 14:22

John 6:17

46. And after He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray.

47. Now when evening arrived, the ship was in the middle of the sea, and He *was* alone on the land.

48. And He saw them laboring in their rowing, because the wind was contrary to them. And about *the* fourth watch of the night, He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed by them.

49. But when they saw Him walking on the sea, they thought *it* was an apparition; and they cried out,

50. Because they all saw Him and were alarmed. And immediately He spoke to them, and said to them, "Be of good courage; *it* is I. Do not fear."

51. Then He went up to them into the ship, and the wind ceased. And they were amazed in themselves far beyond measure, and wondered.

52. For they did not understand *the miracle* of the loaves, because their hearts were hardened.

53. And after crossing over *the sea*, they came to the land of Gennesaret and drew to shore.

54. And when they came out of the ship, those *who dwelt there* immediately recognized Him.

55. Then they ran through all the country around, *and* began to carry those who were sick on stretchers, *taking them* wherever they heard that He was.

56. And wherever He entered into villages or cities or fields, they laid in the marketplaces those who were sick; and they besought Him that they might only touch the border of His garment; and all those who touched Him were healed.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Then the Pharisees and some of the scribes from Jerusalem came together to Him.

48 Luke 24:28

52 Mark 3:5,

8:17, 18,

16:14

53 Mat. 14:34

56 Mat. 9:20

Mark 5:27,

28

Acts 19:12

Chap. 7

1 Mat. 15:1

2. And when they saw some of His disciples eating with defiled hands (that is, unwashed *hands*), they found fault.

3. For the Pharisees and all the Jews, holding fast to the tradition of the elders, do not eat unless they wash their hands thoroughly.

4. Even *when coming* from the market, they do not eat unless they *first* wash themselves. And there are many other things that they have received to observe, *such as the* washing of cups and pots and brass utensils and tables.

5. For this reason, the Pharisees and the scribes questioned Him, *saying*, "Why don't Your disciples walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?"

6. And He answered *and* said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me.'

7. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching *for* doctrine the commandments of men.

8. For leaving the commandment of God, you hold fast the tradition of men, *such as the* washing of pots and cups; and you practice many other things like *this*."

9. Then He said to them, "Full well do you reject the commandment of God, so that you may observe your *own* tradition.

10. For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'The one who speaks evil of father or mother, let him be put to death.'

11. But you say, 'If a man shall say to *his* father or mother, "Whatever benefit you might receive from me is corban" (that is, *set aside as* a gift to God), he is not obligated to help his parents.'

12. And you excuse him from doing anything for his father or his mother,

13. Nullifying the authority of the

5 Mat. 15:2
6 Is. 29:13
10 Ex. 20:12,
21:17
Lev. 20:9
Deut. 5:16
Prov. 20:20
Mat. 15:4
11 Mat. 15:5,
23:18

14 Mat. 15:10
16 Mat. 11:16
17 Mat. 15:15
21 Gen. 6:5,
8:21
Mat. 15:19
24 Mat. 15:21

Word of God by your tradition which you have passed down; and you practice many *traditions* such as this."

14. And after calling all the multitude to *Him*, He said to them, "Hear Me, all of you, and understand.

15. There is nothing that enters into a man from outside which is able to defile him; but the things that come out from *within* him, those are the things which defile a man.

16. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

17. Now when He went into a house away from the multitude, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable.

18. And He said to them, "Are you likewise without understanding? Don't you perceive that anything that enters into a man from outside is not able to defile him?"

19. For it does not enter into his heart, but into the belly, and *then* passes out into the sewer, purging all food."

20. And He said, "That which springs forth from *within* a man, that defiles the man.

21. For from within, out of the hearts of men, go forth evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

22. Thefts, covetousness, wickednesses, guile, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness;

23. All these evils go forth from within, and *these* defile a man."

24. Then He rose up from there and went into the district of Tyre and Sidon; and when He came into the house, He desired *that* no one should know, but He could not be concealed.

25. For after hearing about Him, a woman who had a little daughter *with* an unclean spirit came and fell at His feet.

26. Now the woman was a Greek, Syrophenician by race, and *she* requested *of* Him that He cast the demon out of her daughter.

27. But Jesus said to her, "Allow the

children to be satisfied first; for it is not fitting to take the children's bread and cast *it* to the dogs."

28. But she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs."

29. Then He said to her, "Because of this saying, go; the demon has gone out of your daughter."

30. And when she came to her house, she found the demon gone and her daughter lying on the bed.

31. And after departing from the district of Tyre and Sidon, *and passing* through *the* middle of the borders of Decapolis, He again came to the Sea of Galilee.

32. Then they brought to Him a deaf man who spoke with difficulty, and they requested *of* Him that He lay *His* hands on him.

33. And after taking him apart from the multitude, He put His fingers into his ears; and *then* He spit *on His finger* and touched his tongue;

34. And after looking up to heaven, He groaned, and said to him, "Ephphatha"; that is, "Be opened!"

35. And immediately his ears were opened, and the band of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly.

36. Then He commanded them not to tell anyone. But although He had ordered them *to keep quiet*, they proclaimed *it* more and more.

37. For they were astonished above measure, saying, "He has done all things well; He makes both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak."

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. In those days *the* multitude *of people* was very great, and they had nothing to eat. *And* when Jesus had called His disciples to *Him*, He said to them, 2. "I am moved with compassion for the multitude because they have con-

tinued with Me three days already and have nothing to eat;

3. And if I send them to their homes fasting, they will faint on the way; for some of them have come from far away."

4. Then His disciples answered Him, "How could anyone be able to satisfy *all* these with bread in a desert?"

5. And He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven."

6. Then He commanded the multitude to sit on the ground; and He took the seven loaves; and after giving thanks, He broke *the loaves* and gave *them* to His disciples so that they might set *them* before *the people*. And they set *the loaves* before the multitude.

7. They also had a few small fish; and after blessing *them*, He commanded *His disciples* to set these before *them* also.

8. And they *all* ate and were satisfied. Then they took up over seven baskets of fragments *that were* left.

9. Now those who had eaten were about four thousand; and He sent them away.

10. And immediately *afterwards*, He went aboard the ship with His disciples, *and they* came to the district of Dalmanutha.

11. And the Pharisees came out and began to dispute with Him, tempting Him *and* seeking from Him a sign from heaven.

12. But after sighing deeply in His spirit, He said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly I say to you, there shall no sign be given to this generation."

13. Then He left them; *and* after going aboard the ship again, He departed for the other side.

14. But they had forgotten to take bread; and they did not have *any* with them, except one loaf in the ship.

15. Then He charged them, saying,

31 Mat. 15:29
32 Mat. 9:32
Luke 11:14
33 Mark 8:23
John 9:6
34 Mark 6:41
John 11:33,
38, 41, 17:1
35 Is. 35:5, 6
Mark 5:43

Chap. 8

1 Mat. 15:32

5 Mat. 15:34
Mark 6:38
7 Mat. 14:19
Mark 6:41
10 Mat. 15:39
11 Mat. 12:38,
16:1
John 6:30
14 Mat. 15:5
15 Mat. 16:6
Luke 12:1

"Watch out! Be on guard against the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."

16. And they were reasoning with one another, saying, "*It is* because we do not have *any* bread."

17. But Jesus knew *it and* said to them, "Why do you reason *that I said this* because you do not have *any* bread? Do you still not perceive or understand? Are your hearts still hardened?"

18. Don't you see with your eyes? Don't you hear with your ears? And don't you remember?

19. When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up?" They said to Him, "Twelve."

20. "And when *I broke* the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up?" And they said, "Seven."

21. Then He said to them, "Why is it that you *still* don't understand?"

22. And He came to Bethsaida, and they brought to Him a blind man and besought Him that He might touch him.

23. Then He took hold of the blind man's hand *and* led him out of the village, and He spit on his eyes *and* laid His hands on him, *and* then He asked him if he saw anything.

24. And when he looked up, he said, "I see men as trees walking."

25. Then He again laid *His* hands on his eyes and made him look up. And he was restored, and he saw everything clearly.

26. And He sent him to his house, saying, "You must not enter the village, nor tell *it* to anyone in the village."

27. Then Jesus and His disciples went into the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And along the way He was questioning His disciples, saying to them, "Whom do men say that I am?"

17 Mark 6:52
19 Mat. 14:20
Mark 6:43
Luke 9:17
John 6:13
20 Mat. 15:37
Mark 8:8
21 Mark 6:52,
8:17
23 Mark 7:33
26 Mat. 8:4
Mark 5:43
27 Mat. 16:13
Luke 9:18

28 Mat. 14:2
29 Mat. 16:16
John 6:69,
11:27
30 Mat. 16:20
31 Mat. 16:21,
17:22
Luke 9:22
34 Mat. 10:38,
16:24
Luke 9:23,
14:27
35 John 12:25
38 Mat. 10:33
Luke 9:26,
12:9
Rom. 1:16
2 Tim. 1:8,
2:12

Chap. 9

1 Mat. 16:28,
24:30
Luke 9:27

28. And they answered, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah. And some say, one of the prophets."

29. And He said to them, "But you, Whom do you say that I am?" And Peter answered and said to Him, "You are the Christ."

30. Then He strictly charged them that they should tell no one about Him.

31. And He began to teach them that it was necessary for the Son of man to suffer many things, and to be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and to be killed, but after three days to rise *from the dead*.

32. And He spoke these words openly. Then Peter took *Him* aside *and* began to rebuke Him.

33. But He turned and looked at His disciples, *and then* rebuked Peter, saying, "Get behind Me, Satan, because your thoughts are not of the things of God, but of the things of men."

34. And when He had called the multitude to *Him* with His disciples, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and let him take up his cross and follow Me.

35. For whoever desires to save his life shall lose it; but whoever will lose his life for My sake and for the gospel's, he shall save it.

36. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his life?

37. Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?

38. For whoever shall be ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

CHAPTER NINE

1. And He said to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of those stand-

ing here who shall not taste of death until they have seen the kingdom of God come with power."

2. And after six days, Jesus took with *Him* Peter and James and John, leading them alone up into a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured in their presence;

3. And His garments became exceedingly white, like glistening snow, such a white as no bleacher of cloth on earth is able to make.

4. Then appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus.

5. And Peter responded *by* saying to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here. Now let us make three tabernacles; one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

6. For he did not know what he should say because they were terrified.

7. Then a cloud came *and* overshadowed them; and there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, "This is My Son, the Beloved. Listen to Him!"

8. And suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone but Jesus alone with themselves.

9. Now as they were descending from the mountain, He charged them not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of man had risen from *the* dead.

10. And they kept that saying among themselves, questioning what was *the meaning of* rising from *the* dead.

11. Then they asked Him, saying, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"

12. And He answered them and said, "Truly, Elijah comes first and restores all things; and it is *also* written of the Son of man, how He must suffer many things and be treated with contempt.

13. But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they have done to him what they desired, as it is written of him."

2 Mat. 17:1
Luke 9:28
3 Dan. 7:9
9 Mat. 17:9
11 Mal. 4:5
Mat. 17:10
12 Psa. 22:6
Is. 53:2
Dan. 9:26
Luke 23:11
Phil. 2:7
13 Mat. 11:14,
17:12
Luke 1:17

14. And after returning to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and the scribes disputing with them.

15. And all the people who saw Him ran to *Him* at once in great amazement and saluted Him.

16. And He asked the scribes, "What are you disputing with them?"

17. Then one from the multitude said, "Master, I brought my son who has a dumb spirit to You;

18. For wherever it seizes him it dashes him down; and he foams and gnashes his teeth, and is withering away. And I spoke to Your disciples, in order that they might cast it out, but they did not have *the* power."

19. And He answered him, saying, "O faithless generation! How long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me."

20. Then they brought him to Him. But when the spirit saw Him, *it* immediately threw him into convulsions; and he fell down on the ground *and* began rolling about *and* foaming *at the mouth*.

21. And He asked his father, "How long a time has this *demon* been with him?" And he said, "From childhood.

22. For it often throws him both into the fire and into the water, that it might destroy him. But if You have the power *to do* anything, have compassion on us *and* help us."

23. And Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to the one who believes."

24. And the father of the little child cried out at once, saying with tears, "Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief."

25. Then Jesus, seeing that the multitude was running together, rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You deaf and dumb spirit, I command you *to* come out of him, and you are not allowed to go into him any more!"

26. And after crying out and throwing

14 Mat. 17:14
Luke 9:37
17 Mat. 17:14
Luke 9:38
20 Mark 1:26
Luke 9:42
23 Mat. 17:20
Mark 11:23
Luke 17:6
John 11:40

him into severe convulsions, it came out; and he became as dead, so much so that many said, "He is dead."

27. But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

28. And when He came into a house, His disciples asked Him apart, "Why were we not able to cast it out?"

29. Then He said to them, "This kind cannot *be made to* go out by anything except prayer and fasting."

30. And after leaving there, they went through Galilee; but He desired that no one know *it*,

31. Because He was teaching His disciples; and He said to them, "The Son of man is delivered into *the* hands of men, and they shall kill Him; but He shall arise on the third day after He has been killed."

32. Now they did not understand the saying, but they were afraid to ask Him *about it*.

33. Then He came to Capernaum; and when He was in the house, He asked them, "What were you discussing among yourselves on the way *here*?"

34. But they were silent because, while on the way, they had discussed who *would be* the greatest.

35. And after sitting down, He called the twelve and said to them, "If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."

36. Then He took a little child and set it in their midst; and after taking it in *His* arms, He said to them,

37. "Whoever shall receive one of such little children in My name receives Me; and whoever shall receive Me does not receive Me *only*, but Him Who sent Me."

38. Then John answered Him, saying, "Master, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbad him because he does not follow us."

39. But Jesus said, "Do not forbid

28 Mat. 17:19
31 Mat. 17:22
Luke 9:44
33 Mat. 18:1
Luke 9:46,
22:24
35 Mat. 20:26,
27
Mark 10:43
36 Mat. 18:2
Mark 10:16
37 Mat. 10:40
Luke 9:48
38 Num. 11:28
Luke 9:49
39 1 Cor. 12:3

40 Mat. 12:30
41 Mat. 10:42
42 Mat. 18:6
Luke 17:1
43 Deut. 13:6
Mat. 5:29,
18:8
Mark 9:45,
47
44 Is. 66:24
49 Lev. 2:13
Ezek. 43:24
50 Mat. 5:13
Luke 14:34
Rom. 12:18,
14:19
2 Cor. 13:11
Eph. 4:29
Col. 4:6
Heb. 12:14

Chap. 10

1 Mat. 19:1
John 10:40,
11:7

him; for no one who does a work of power in My name can easily speak evil of Me.

40. And the one who is not against you is for you.

41. For whoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you are Christ's, truly I say to you, he shall in no way lose his reward.

42. But whoever shall cause one of the little ones who believe in Me to offend, it would be better for him that a millstone be put around his neck and he be cast into the sea.

43. And if your hand shall cause you to offend, cut it off; it is better for you to enter into life maimed than to go with two hands into the unquenchable fire of Gehenna,

44. Where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.

45. And if your foot shall cause you to offend, cut it off; it is better for you to enter into life lame than to be cast with two feet into the unquenchable fire of Gehenna,

46. Where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.

47. And if your eye shall cause you to offend, thrust it out; it is better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than to be cast with two eyes into the fire of Gehenna,

48. Where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.

49. For everyone shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

50. The salt *is* good, but if the salt becomes tasteless, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

CHAPTER TEN

1. And He rose up from there and came into the borders of Judea, by the other side of the Jordan. And the multitudes again came together to Him;

and as had been His custom, He again taught them.

2. Then the Pharisees came to *Him* *and*, tempting Him, asked Him, "Is it lawful for a husband to divorce his wife?"

3. But He answered *and* said to them, "What did Moses command you?"

4. And they said, "Moses allowed a bill of divorcement to be written to divorce."

5. Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, "He wrote this commandment for you because of your hardheartedness.

6. But from *the* beginning of creation God made them male and female.

7. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife;~

8. And the two shall become one flesh. So then, they are no longer two, but one flesh.

9. Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate."

10. And when He was in the house again, His disciples asked Him concerning the same thing.

11. And He said to them, "Whoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, commits adultery against her.

12. And if a woman shall divorce her husband, and be married to another, she commits adultery."

13. Then they brought little children to Him so that He might touch them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them.

14. And after seeing *it*, Jesus was indignant, and said to them, "Allow the little children to come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.

15. Truly I say to you, whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God like a little child shall in no way enter into it."

16. And He took them up in *His* arms, laid *His* hands on them *and* blessed them.

2 Mat. 19:3

4 Deut. 24:1

Mat. 5:31,

19:7

6 Gen. 1:27,

5:2

7 Gen. 2:24

1 Cor. 6:16

Eph. 5:31

11 Mat. 5:32,

19:9

Luke 16:18

Rom. 7:3

1 Cor. 7:10,

11

13 Mat. 19:13

Luke 18:15

14 1 Pet. 2:2

1 Cor. 14:20

15 Mat. 18:3

17. And as He went out to *the* road, one came running up and knelt down before Him, *and* asked Him, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

18. But Jesus answered him, "Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good except one; *that is* God.

19. You know the commandments: 'You shall not commit adultery'; 'You shall not commit murder'; 'You shall not steal'; 'You shall not bear false witness'; 'You shall not defraud'; 'Honor your father and mother.' "

20. And he answered and said to Him, "Master, I have kept all these from my youth."

21. And Jesus, *as He* was looking upon him, loved him, and said to him, "*There is* one thing *that* you are lacking. Go and sell everything that you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross and follow Me."

22. But he was *very* sad upon *hearing* these words, *and* he went away grieving, because he had many possessions.

23. And after looking around, Jesus said to His disciples, "How difficult it is for those who have riches to enter into the kingdom of God!"

24. But the disciples were astonished at His words. And again Jesus answered *and* said to them, "Children, how difficult it is *for* those who trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25. It is easier *for* a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than *for* a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

26. And they were astonished beyond measure, saying among themselves, "Who then is able to be saved?"

27. But Jesus looked at them *and* said, "With men *it is* impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God."

17 Mat. 19:16

Luke 18:18

19 Ex. 20

Rom. 13:9

21 Mat. 6:19,

20, 19:21

Luke 12:33,

16:9

23 Mat. 19:23

Luke 18:24

24 Job 31:24

Psa. 52:7,

62:10

1 Tim. 6:17

27 Jer. 32:17

Mat. 19:26

Luke 1:37

28. Then Peter began to say to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and have followed You."

29. And Jesus answered *and* said, "Truly I say to you, there is not one who has left house, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake and for the gospel's,

30. Who shall not receive a hundred-fold now in this time: houses, and brothers, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the age that is coming, eternal life.

31. But many *of the* first shall be last, and the last *shall be* first."

32. And they were on the road going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus went in front of them; and they were amazed *at this*; and *as they* followed *Him*, they were afraid. Then He again took the twelve *and* began to tell them the things that were about to happen to Him:

33. "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be delivered up to the chief priests and the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him up to the Gentiles;

34. And they shall mock Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall spit on Him, and shall kill Him; and on the third day He shall rise again."

35. Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Master, we desire that whatever we ask, You would do for us."

36. And He said to them, "What do you desire to have Me do for you?"

37. And they said to Him, "Grant to us that we may sit one at Your right hand and one at Your left hand in Your glory."

38. But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and to be baptized *with* the baptism

28 Mat. 19:27
Luke 18:28
30 2 Chr. 25:9
Luke 18:30
31 Mat. 19:30,
20:16
Luke 13:30
32 Mat. 20:17
Mark 8:31,
9:31
Luke 9:22,
18:31
35 Mat. 20:20

that I am baptized *with*?"

39. And they said to Him, "We are able." Then Jesus said to them, "You shall indeed drink the cup that I drink; and you shall be baptized *with* the baptism that I am baptized *with*."

40. But to sit at My right hand and at My left hand is not Mine to give, but *to those* for whom it has been prepared."

41. And when the ten heard *this*, they began to show indignation toward James and John.

42. Then Jesus called them to *Him and* said to them, "You know that those who are counted worthy to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them.

43. But it shall not be this way among you; rather, whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant;

44. And whoever desires to be first among you shall be *the* bonds slave of all.

45. For even the Son of man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life *as* a ransom for many."

46. Then they came to Jericho. And as He and His disciples were going up from Jericho with a large multitude, Bartimeus the blind *man*, the son of Timeus, was sitting beside the road begging.

47. And after hearing that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

48. Then many began to rebuke him, so that he would be silent; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

49. And Jesus stood still and asked for him to be called. And they called the blind *man*, saying to him, "Be of good courage; rise up, *for* He is calling you."

50. And after casting aside his *beg-*

41 Mat. 20:24
42 Luke 22:25
43 Mat. 20:26,
28
Mark 9:35
Luke 9:48
45 Mat. 20:28
John 13:14
Phil. 2:7
1 Tim. 2:6
Tit. 2:14
46 Mat. 20:29
Luke 18:35

gar's cloak, he arose and came to Jesus.

51. Then Jesus answered him and said, "What do you desire to have Me do for you?" And the blind *man* said to Him, "Master, that I may receive sight."

52. And Jesus said to him "Go your way, *for* your faith has healed you." Then he immediately received sight, and *he* followed Jesus in the way.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. And when they came to Bethphage and Bethany, *which were* near to Jerusalem, toward the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples;

2. And He said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as soon as you enter it you will find a colt tied, upon which no man has sat. After loosing it, lead *it to Me*."

3. And if anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it'; and he will send it here immediately."

4. And they went *to the village* and found the colt tied outside, at the door *of a house* by the crossroad; and they loosed it.

5. Then some of those who were standing there said to them, "Why are you loosing the colt?"

6. And they answered them as Jesus had commanded. Then they allowed them *to take it*.

7. And they led the colt to Jesus; and they laid their garments upon it, and He sat on it.

8. Then many spread their garments in the road, and others cut down branches from the trees, and scattered *them* in the road.

9. And those who went before and those who followed *behind* were crying out, saying, "Hosanna! Blessed is He Who comes in the name of *the* Lord.

52 Mat. 9:22
Mark 5:34

Chap. 11

1 Mat. 21:1
Luke 19:45
John 2:14
8 Mat. 21:8
9 Psa. 118:26

10. Blessed is the kingdom of our father David, coming in *the* name of *the* Lord. Hosanna in the highest!"

11. And Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and *because* the hour was already late, after looking around at everything *there*, He went out to Bethany with the twelve.

12. And in the morning, after they left Bethany, He became hungry.

13. Then, seeing a fig tree afar off that had leaves, He went *to it to see* if He might possibly find something on it. But after coming to it, He found nothing except leaves because it was not yet *the* season for figs.

14. And Jesus responded *by* saying to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you any more forever!" And His disciples heard *it*.

15. Then they came into Jerusalem; and after entering the temple, Jesus began to cast out those who were buying and selling in the temple; and He overthrew the tables of the money exchangers and the seats of those who were selling doves.

16. Moreover, He did not allow anyone to carry a vessel through the temple.

17. And He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers."

18. Now the chief priests and the scribes heard *this*, and they sought how they might destroy Him; for they feared Him, because all the multitudes marveled at His teaching.

19. And when evening came, He went out of the city.

20. And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from *the* roots.

21. Then Peter remembered *and* said to Him, "Look, Master! The fig tree that You cursed has dried up."

22. And Jesus answered and said to

10 Psa. 148:1
11 Mat. 21:12
12 Mat. 21:18
13 Mat. 21:10
15 Mat. 21:12
Luke 19:45
John 2:14
17 Is. 56:7
Jer. 7:11
18 Mat. 7:28,
21:45, 46
Mark 1:22
Luke 4:32,
19:47
20 Mat. 21:19

them, "Have faith *from* God.

23. For truly I say to you, whoever shall say to this mountain, 'Be taken away and be cast into the sea,' and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he said will take place, he shall have whatever he shall say.

24. For this reason I say to you, all *the* things that you ask *when* you are praying, believe that you will receive *them*, and *they* shall be *given* to you.

25. But when you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive, so that your Father Who *is* in heaven may forgive you your offenses.

26. For if you do not forgive, neither will your Father Who *is* in heaven forgive you your offenses."

27. Then they came again to Jerusalem. And as He was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to Him;

28. And they said to Him, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority, that You do these things?"

29. Then Jesus answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, and *if* you answer Me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.

30. The baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men? Answer Me."

31. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?'

32. But if we say, 'From men' " — they feared the people, because everyone held that John was indeed a prophet.

33. And they answered Jesus by saying, "We do not know." Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

23 Mat. 17:20,
21:21
Luke 17:6
24 Mat. 7:7
Luke 11:9
John 14:13,
15:7, 16:24
Jas. 1:5, 6
25 Mat. 6:14
Col. 3:13
26 Mat. 18:35
27 Mat. 21:23
Luke 20:1
32 Mat. 3:5,
14:5
Mark 6:20

Chap. 12

1 Mat. 21:33
Luke 20:9
10 Psa. 118:22
12 Mat. 21:45,
46
Mark 11:18
John 7:25,
30, 44
13 Mat. 22:15
Luke 20:20

CHAPTER TWELVE

1. And He began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard, and put a fence around *it*, and dug a winevat, and built a tower, and leased it out to husbandmen, and *then* left the country.

2. And at the *harvest* season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, so that he might receive the fruit of the vineyard from the husbandmen.

3. But they took him *and* beat *him*, and sent *him* away empty.

4. And in turn, he sent another servant to them; but they stoned him and wounded him on the head, and after insulting *him* sent *him* away.

5. And in turn, he sent still another *servant*, and they killed him; and *he* sent many others, *and* some were beaten and others were killed.

6. Now then, he had yet one son, his own beloved. And so, last of *all* he sent him to them also, saying, 'They will have respect for my son.'

7. But those husbandmen said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.'

8. And after seizing him, they killed *him* and cast *him* out of the vineyard.

9. Therefore, what will the lord of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the husbandmen and will give the vineyard to others.

10. Have you not read even this scripture: 'The Stone that the builders rejected, this has become *the* head of *the* corner;

11. This was from *the* Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes'?"

12. Then they sought to arrest Him, but they feared the multitude; for they knew that He had spoken the parable against them. And they left Him and went their way.

13. But they sent to Him some of the Pharisees and the Herodians, in order

to entrap Him in His words.

14. And after coming to Him, they said, "Master, we know that You are true, and *that* You court no man's favor; because You do not look on *the* appearance of men, but You teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not?"

15. Should we give *it*, or should we not give *it*?" But perceiving their hypocrisy, He said to them, "Why do you tempt Me? Bring Me a silver coin, so that I may look *at it*."

16. Then they brought *it*. And He said to them, "Whose image and superscription *is on this coin*?" And they said to Him, "Caesar's."

17. And Jesus answered and said to them, "Render the things of Caesar to Caesar, and the things of God to God." And they were amazed at Him.

18. Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him, and they questioned Him, saying,

19. "Master, Moses wrote for us that if the brother of anyone should die and leave behind a wife, but leave no children, then his brother should take his wife and raise up seed for his brother.

20. *Now* there were seven brothers; the first took a wife and died, leaving no seed;

21. And the second took her and died, and neither did he leave seed; and the third likewise.

22. And the seven had her and left no seed. Last of all the woman died also.

23. Now then, in the resurrection, when they shall arise, to which of them shall she be wife? For all seven had her as wife."

24. Then Jesus answered them and said, "In *asking* this, do you not err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God?"

25. For when they rise from *the* dead, they neither marry nor are given in

15 Mat. 18:28
18 Mat. 22:23
Luke 20:27
Acts 23:8
19 Deut. 25:5
25 1 Cor. 15:42,
49, 52

26 Ex. 3:6
28 Mat. 22:35
29 Deut. 6:4
Luke 10:27
31 Lev. 19:18
Mat. 22:39
Jas. 2:8
Rom. 13:9
Gal. 5:14
32 Deut. 4:39
Is. 45:6, 14,
46:9
33 1 Sam. 15:22
Hos. 6:6
Mic. 6:6-8
34 Mat. 22:46
35 Mat. 22:41
Luke 20:41

marriage, but are as the angels who *are* in heaven.

26. But concerning the dead, that they do rise, have you not read in the book of Moses about the burning bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'?"

27. He is not the God of *the* dead, but *the* God of *the* living. Therefore, you err greatly."

28. And one of the scribes who had come up *to Him*, after hearing them reasoning together *and* perceiving that He answered them well, asked Him, "Which is *the* first commandment of all?"

29. Then Jesus answered him, "*The* first of all the commandments *is*, 'Hear, O Israel: *the* Lord our God is one Lord.

30. And you shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This *is the* first commandment.

31. And *the* second *is* like this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

32. Then the scribe said to Him, "Right, Master. You have spoken according to truth that God is one, and there is not another besides Him;

33. And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *one's* neighbor as oneself, is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

34. And Jesus, seeing that he answered with understanding, said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And no one dared to question Him any more.

35. And *while* teaching in the temple, Jesus answered *and* said, "How can the scribes say that the Christ is *the* Son of David?"

36. For David himself said by the Holy Spirit, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."'

37. Now then, *if* David himself called Him Lord, how can He be his Son?" And the whole multitude listened to Him eagerly.

38. And He said to them in His teaching, "Beware of the scribes, who take pleasure in walking around in robes, and in salutations in the marketplaces, 39. And in *the* chief seats in the synagogues and *the* chief places in the feasts;

40. Who devour the houses of widows, and for a pretext make long prayers. These shall receive *the* greater condemnation."

41. And after sitting down opposite the *temple* treasury, He observed how the people were casting money into the treasury; and many rich ones were putting *in* much.

42. And one poor widow came *and* dropped *in* two tiny coins, which is equal to one copper coin.

43. Then He called His disciples to *Him* and said to them, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow has put *in* more than all of those who are casting *money* into the treasury.

44. For everyone *else* contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her destitution put *in* as much as she had, *giving* all her living."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1. And as He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Master, see how splendid *the* stones and buildings *are*!"

2. Then Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? There shall not be left *a* stone upon *a* stone that shall not be thrown down."

36 2 Sam. 23:2
Psa. 110:1
38 Mat. 23:1
Mark 4:2
Luke 20:46,
11:43
40 Mat. 23:14
41 2 Ki. 12:9
Mat. 10:9
Luke 21:1
43 2 Cor. 8:12
44 Deut. 24:6
1 John 3:17

Chap. 13

1 Mat. 24:1
Luke 21:5
2 Luke 19:44

4 Mat. 24:3
Luke 21:7
5 Jer. 29:8
Eph. 5:6
1 Thes. 2:3
8 Mat. 24:8
9 Mat. 10:17,
18, 24:9
Rev. 2:10
10 Mat. 24:14
11 Mat. 10:19
Luke 12:11,
21:14
Acts 2:4,
4:8, 31
12 Mic. 7:6
Mat. 10:21,
24:10
Luke 21:16
13 Dan. 12:12
Mat. 10:22
24:9, 13
Luke 21:17
Rev. 2:10
14 Dan. 9:27
Mat. 24:15
Luke 21:21

3. And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives across from the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew *came* privately *and* asked Him,

4. "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what *shall be* the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?"

5. And Jesus *in* answering them began to say, "Be on guard lest anyone deceive you.

6. For many shall come in My name, saying, 'I am *the Christ*'; and they shall deceive many.

7. But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for it is necessary for *these things* to come to pass, but the end *is* not yet.

8. For nation shall rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be earthquakes in different places, and there shall be famines and disasters. These things *are* the beginning of sorrows.

9. But keep yourselves on guard, for they shall deliver you up to councils and synagogues. You shall be beaten, and you shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a witness against them.

10. And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

11. But whenever they lead you away *and* deliver you up, do not be anxious beforehand nor meditate *on what you should say*; but whatever shall be given to you in that hour, that speak. For you are not the ones who are speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

12. Then shall brother betray brother to death, and *the father the child*. And children shall rise up against *their* parents and shall put them to death.

13. And you shall be hated by all *men* for My name's sake; but the one who endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved.

14. Now when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by

Daniel the prophet, standing where it should not *stand* (let the one who reads understand), then let those *who are* in Judea flee into the mountains.

15. And let the one who is on the housetop not come down into the house, nor go in to take anything out of his house;

16. And let the one who is in the field not return to the things *he left* behind to take his garment.

17. But woe to those who are with child and to those who are nursing infants in those days!

18. And pray that your flight may not be in winter;

19. For *in* those days shall be *great* tribulation, such as has not been the like from *the* beginning of *the* creation that God created until this time, nor ever shall be *again*;

20. And unless *the* Lord had limited the days, no flesh would be saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom He has chosen, He has limited the days.

21. And then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here *is* the Christ'; or, 'Look, there *is the Christ*'; do not believe *it*.

22. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and they shall give signs and wonders, in order to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

23. But you, watch out *for them*! Behold, I have foretold all *these* things to you.

24. Now in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give its light;

25. And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that *are* in heaven shall be shaken;

26. And then they shall see the Son of man coming in *the* clouds with great power and glory.

27. And then He shall send His angels, and shall gather together His elect from the four winds, *and* from *the* extremity of earth to *the* extremity of heaven.

17 Luke 21:23
19 Dan. 9:26,
12:1
Joel 2:2
Mat. 24:21
21 Mat. 24:23
Luke 17:23,
21:8
23 2 Pet. 3:17
24 Dan. 7:10
Zeph. 1:15
Mat. 24:29
26 Dan. 7:13,
14
Mat. 16:27,
24:30
Mark 14:62
Acts 1:11
1 Thes. 4:16
2 Thes. 1:7,
10
Rev. 1:7

28 Mat. 24:32
Luke 21:29
31 Is. 40:8
33 Mat. 24:42,
25:13
Luke 12:40,
21:34
Rom. 13:11
1 Thes. 5:6
34 Mat. 24:45,
25:14
35 Mat. 24:42,
44

Chap. 14

1 Mat. 26:2
Luke 22:1
John 11:55,
13:1
3 Mat. 26:6
John 12:1, 3
Luke 7:37

28. But learn the parable of the fig tree: When its branches become tender, and it puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.

29. In the same way also, when you see these things coming to pass, know that it is near, *even at the* doors.

30. Truly I say to you, this generation shall in no way pass away until all these things have taken place.

31. The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away.

32. But concerning that day and the hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father *only*.

33. Take heed, be watching and praying. For you do not know when the time is *coming*.

34. *It is* like a man journeying to a far country, leaving his house and giving authority to his servants, and to each one his work, and commanding the doorkeeper to watch.

35. Be watching, therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming: at evening, or at midnight, or at *the* cock's crowing, or *in the* morning;

36. Lest he come suddenly and find you sleeping.

37. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

1. Now after two days was the Pass-over and the *feast of* unleavened bread, and the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they might stealthily lay hold of Him *and* kill *Him*.

2. But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be a riot among the people."

3. Now He was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper; *and* as He was sitting *to eat*, a woman came carrying an alabaster flask of ointment of

pure spikenard *worth* a great price; and after breaking the alabaster flask, she poured *it* on His head.

4. But some were indignant within themselves and said, "Why has this ointment been wasted?"

5. For it was possible *for* this to be sold for over three hundred silver coins, and to give to the poor." And they were criticizing her.

6. But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why are you causing her trouble? She has performed a good work toward Me.

7. For you have the poor with you always, and you are able to do good for them whenever you desire; but you do not always have Me.

8. She did what she could *for Me*. She came to anoint My body beforehand for the burial.

9. Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel shall be preached in all the world, what this *woman* has done shall also be spoken of for a memorial of her."

10. Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order that he might deliver Him up to them.

11. And after hearing *this*, they were delighted and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.

12. And on the first day of the unleaveneds,* when they were killing the Passover *lambs*, His disciples said to Him, "Where do You desire that we go and prepare, so that You may eat the Passover?"

13. And He sent two of His disciples, and said to them, "Go into the city, and you shall meet a man carrying a pitcher of water; follow him.

14. And whatever house he shall enter, say to the master of the house *that* the Teacher says, 'Where is the guest chamber, where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?'

15. And he shall show you a large up-

5 Mat. 18:28
Mark 12:15
10 Mat. 26:14
Luke 22:3, 4
12 Mat. 26:17
Luke 22:7

per room, furnished *and* ready. There prepare for us."

16. And His disciples went away; and *when* they came into the city, they found *it* exactly as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover.

17. Now after evening had come, He came with the twelve.

18. And as they sat and were eating, Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, one of you shall betray Me, *even* he who is eating with Me."

19. And they began to be extremely sad, and said to Him one by one, "*Is it I?*" And another, "*Is it I?*"

20. But He answered *and* said to them, "The one who is dipping a *morsel* into the dish with Me, *he is* the one of *you* twelve.

21. The Son of man indeed goes, just as it has been written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It would be better for that man if he had not been born."

22. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread; *and* after blessing *it*, He broke *it* and gave *it* to them, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

23. And He took the cup; *and* after giving thanks, He gave *it* to them; and they all drank of it.

24. And He said to them, "This is My blood, the blood of the New Covenant, which is poured out for many.

25. Truly I say to you, I will not drink again at all of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

26. And after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

27. Then Jesus said to them, "All of you shall be offended in Me in this night; for it is written, 'I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.'

28. But after I have risen, I will go before you into Galilee."

29. Then Peter said to Him, "Even if all shall be offended, yet I *shall* not."

17 Mat. 26:20
21 Mat. 26:24
Luke 22:22
22 Mat. 26:26
Luke 22:19
1 Cor. 11:23
26 Mat. 26:30
27 Zech. 13:7
Mat. 26:31
28 Mark 16:7
29 Mat. 26:33, 34
Luke 22:33, 34
John 13:37, 38

*See footnote on page 392, Matt. 26:17.

30. And Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, today, in this *very* night, before *the* cock crows twice, you shall deny Me three times."

31. But he spoke more adamantly, "If it were necessary for me to die with You, I would not deny You in any way." And they all spoke in the same manner also.

32. Then they came to a place that was *called* Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here while I pray."

33. And He took Peter and James and John with Him; and He began to be deeply troubled and heavy-hearted.

34. And He said to them, "My soul is filled with anguish, even to death; remain here and watch."

35. Then He went forward a little, dropped to the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him.

36. And He said, "Abba, Father, all things *are* possible with You. Remove this cup from Me! Yet not what I will, but what You *will*."

37. Then He came and found them sleeping. And He said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Were you not able to watch one hour?"

38. Watch and pray, so that you do not enter into temptation. The spirit truly *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak."

39. And again He went away and prayed, saying the same thing.

40. And when He returned, He again found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him.

41. And He came the third time, and said to them, "Sleep on now, and take your rest. It is enough. The hour has come. Behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

42. Arise! Let us be going. Look, the one who is betraying Me is approaching."

43. And immediately, while He was

32 Mat. 26:36
Luke 22:39
John 18:1
34 John 12:27
36 John 5:30,
6:38
Rom. 8:15
Gal. 4:6
Heb. 5:7
38 Rom. 7:23
Gal. 5:17
41 John 13:1
42 Mat. 26:46
John 18:1, 2
43 Mat. 26:47
Luke 22:47
John 18:3

speaking, Judas, being one of the twelve, came up with a great multitude with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.

44. Now the one who was betraying Him had given them a sign, saying, "Whomever I shall kiss, He *is the one*. Arrest Him and take Him securely away."

45. And as soon as he came up to Him, he said, "Master, Master," and kissed Him earnestly.

46. Then they laid their hands on Him and arrested Him.

47. But a certain one of those standing near drew out a sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

48. And Jesus answered *and* said to them, "Have you come out to take Me with swords and clubs, as against a thief?"

49. I was with you daily, teaching in the temple, and you did not arrest Me; but *this is done* so that the Scriptures may be fulfilled."

50. Then they all forsook Him and fled.

51. Now a certain young man was following Him, having a linen cloth wrapped around *his* naked *body*; and the young men seized him,

52. But he *escaped*, leaving the linen cloth behind, and ran from them naked.

53. Then they led Jesus away to the high priest. And all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes assembled with him.

54. Now Peter followed at a distance, all the way to the court of the high priest; and he was sitting inside with the officers and warming himself at the fire.

55. And the chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were trying to find testimony against Jesus, to put Him to death; but they did not find *any*.

48 Mat. 26:55
Luke 22:52
49 Psa. 22:6
Is. 53:7
Luke 22:37,
24:44
50 Psa. 88:8
Mark 14:27
53 Mat. 26:57
Luke 22:54
John 18:13
55 Mat. 26:59

56. For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree.

57. And some rose up and bore false witness against Him, saying,

58. "We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.' "

59. But neither did their testimonies agree with one another.

60. Then the high priest stood up in the center *and* questioned Jesus, saying, "Have You nothing to *say in* answer *to* what these are testifying against You?"

61. But He remained silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest questioned Him, and said to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"

62. And Jesus said, "I AM. And you shall see the Son of man sitting at *the* right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."

63. Then the high priest ripped his *own* garments *and* said, "What further need do we have of witnesses?"

64. You have heard the blasphemy! What is your verdict?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.

65. Then some began to spit on Him, and to cover His face and strike Him with their fists, saying to Him, "Prophecy!" And the officers struck Him with the palms of their hands.

66. Now Peter was in the court below; *and* one of the maids of the high priest came,

67. And saw Peter warming himself; *and* after looking at him, she said, "Now you were with Jesus the Nazarene."

68. But he denied *it*, saying, "I do not know *Him* or even understand what you are saying." And he went out onto the porch, and a cock crowed.

69. Then the maid saw him again *and*

58 Mark 15:29

John 2:19

60 Mat. 26:62

61 Is. 53:7

Mat. 26:63

62 Mat. 24:30,

26:64

Luke 22:69

66 Mat. 26:58,

69

Luke 22:55

John 18:16

69 Mat. 26:71

Luke 22:58

John 18:25

began to say to those who were standing by, "This is *one* of them."

70. And again he denied *it*. And after a little while, those who were standing by again said to Peter, "Truly you are *one* of them, for you are indeed a Galilean, and your speech confirms *it*."

71. Then he began to curse and to swear, *saying*, "I do not know this man of Whom you are speaking."

72. And the cock crowed the second time. Then Peter remembered the words that Jesus had spoken to him: "Before the cock crows twice, you shall deny Me three times." And when he thought about this, he wept.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

1. Now as soon as it was morning, the chief priests took counsel with the elders and *the* scribes and the whole Sanhedrin; *and* after binding Jesus, they led *Him* away and delivered *Him* up to Pilate.

2. And Pilate asked Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And He answered *and* said to him, "*It is as* you say."

3. And the chief priests were vehemently accusing Him of many things; but He answered nothing.

4. Then Pilate asked Him again, saying, "Have You no answer? See how many things they are testifying against You."

5. But Jesus did not say anything at all, so that Pilate was astonished.

6. Now at *the* feast he *customarily* released to them one prisoner, whom-ever they asked.

7. And there was one called Barabbas, who was bound *in chains* with those who had made insurrection *and* who had committed murder during the insurrection.

8. Then the multitude began to shout aloud, urging *Pilate to do* as he had

70 Mat. 26:73

Luke 22:59

John 18:26

Acts 2:7

72 Mat. 26:75

Chap. 15

1 Ps. 2:2

Mat. 27:1

Luke 22:66,

23:1

John 18:28

Acts 3:13,

4:26

2 Mat. 27:11

4 Mat. 27:13

5 Is. 53:7

John 19:9

6 Mat. 27:15

Luke 23:17

John 18:39

always done for them.

9. And Pilate answered them, saying, "Do you desire to have me release the King of the Jews to you?"

10. For he knew that the chief priests had delivered Him up because of envy.

11. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd *to ask* him to release Barabbas to them instead.

12. And again Pilate answered, saying to them, "What then would you have me do *with Him* Whom you call King of the Jews?"

13. And again they shouted, "Crucify Him!"

14. Then Pilate said to them, "What evil then did He commit?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify Him!"

15. So Pilate, willing to do whatever would satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas to them. And after he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him up to be crucified.

16. Then the soldiers led Him away into the court, which is *named the* Praetorium, and they called together the whole band.

17. And they put a purple robe on Him; and after weaving a crown of thorns, *they put it* on Him;

18. And they began to salute Him, and *kept on saying*, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

19. Then they struck His head with a rod, and spit on Him; and kneeling *down*, they bowed in worship to Him.

20. And when they had *finished* mocking Him, they took the purple robe off Him and put His own garments on Him; and they led Him out to crucify Him.

21. Then they compelled one who was passing by coming from a field, Simon *the* Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry His cross.

22. And they brought Him to *the place named* Golgotha; which is, being in-

11 Mat. 27:20
Acts 3:14
15 Mat. 27:26
John 19:1, 16
16 Mat. 27:27
21 Mat. 27:32
Luke 23:26
22 Mat. 27:33
Luke 23:33
John 19:17

terpreted, "*The Place of a Skull.*"

23. And they were attempting to give Him wine to drink, mixed with myrrh; but He did not take *it*.

24. And when they had crucified Him, they divided His garments, casting lots for them *to see* who would take what.

25. Now it was *the* third hour when they crucified Him.

26. And the inscription of His accusation was written, "The King of the Jews."

27. And with Him they crucified two robbers, one at *His* right hand and one at His left.

28. Then the scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered among lawbreakers."

29. And those who were passing by railed at Him, shaking their heads, and saying, "Aha, You Who would destroy the temple and rebuild *it* in three days,

30. Save Yourself and come down from the cross."

31. And in like manner the chief priests also were mocking with one another *and* with the scribes, saying, "He saved others, *but* He does not have the power to save Himself.

32. The Christ, the King of Israel! Let Him come down now from the cross so that we may see and believe." And *even* those who were crucified with Him reproached Him.

33. Now at *the* sixth hour, darkness came over all the land until *the* ninth hour;

34. And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is, being interpreted, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

35. And after hearing *it*, some of those who were standing by said, "Look, He is calling for Elijah."

36. Then one ran and filled a sponge with vinegar, and after putting *it* on a

23 Mat. 27:34
24 Psa. 22:18
Luke 23:34
John 19:23
25 Mat. 27:45
Luke 23:44
John 19:14
26 Mat. 27:37
John 19:19
27 Mat. 27:38
28 Is. 53:12
Luke 22:37
29 Psa. 22:7
Mark 14:58
John 2:19
32 Mat. 27:44
Luke 23:39
33 Mat. 27:45
Luke 23:44
34 Psa. 22:1
Mat. 27:46
36 Psa. 69:21
Mat. 27:48
John 19:29

stick gave *it* to Him to drink, saying, "Let *Him* be. Let us see if Elijah comes to take Him down."

37. And after crying out with a loud voice, Jesus expired.

38. And the veil of the temple was split in two from top to bottom.

39. Then the centurion who stood facing Him, witnessing *the words* that He cried out as He was dying, said, "Truly this man was the Son of God."

40. And there were also women who were watching from a distance, among whom was Mary Magdalene; and also Mary, the mother of James the younger and of Joses; and Salome;

41. Who also when He was in Galilee followed Him and ministered to Him; and many others who had come up with Him to Jerusalem.

42. Now evening was coming, *and* since it was *a* preparation (that is, *the day before a Sabbath*★),

43. Joseph of Arimathea, *an* esteemed member of the council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God, came; and he went in to Pilate with boldness and requested the body of Jesus.

44. But Pilate wondered if He were already dead; and after calling the centurion, he questioned him, whether He had been dead long.

45. And when he knew it *by the report* from the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

46. Now he had bought fine linen cloth; and after taking Him down, he wrapped *Him* in the linen cloth and laid Him in a tomb which had been cut out of *the* rock. Then he rolled a stone to *cover* the entrance of the tomb.

47. And Mary Magdalene and Mary, *the mother* of Joses, saw where He was laid.

37 Mat. 27:50
Luke 23:46
John 19:30
38 Mat. 27:51
Luke 23:45
39 Mat. 27:54
Luke 23:47
40 Psa. 38:11
Mat. 27:55
Luke 23:49
41 Luke 8:2, 3
42 Mat. 27:57
Luke 23:50
John 19:38
43 Luke 2:25,
38
46 Mat 27:59,
60
Luke 23:53
John 19:40

★ This Sabbath was not the 7th day weekly Sabbath. This Sabbath was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—a holy day Sabbath and fell on a Thursday (See Appendix G, pp. 750-761 and Appendix R, p. 852).

Chap. 16

1 Mat. 28:1
Luke 23:56,
24:1
John 20:1
2 Luke 24:1
John 20:1
5 Luke 24:3
John 20:11
6 Mat. 28:5
7 Mat. 26:32
Mark 14:28
8 Mat. 28:8
Luke 24:9
9 Luke 8:2
10 Luke 24:10
John 20:18
11 Luke 24:11
12 Luke 24:13

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

1. Now when the Sabbath had passed, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the *mother* of James, and Salome bought aromatic oils, so that they might come and anoint Him.

2. And very early on the first *day* of the weeks*, at the rising of the sun, they were coming to the tomb;

3. And they were asking themselves, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?"

4. For it was a massive *stone*. But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away.

5. And after entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right, clothed in a white robe; and they were very frightened.

6. But he said to them, "Do not be afraid. You are seeking Jesus the Nazarene, Who was crucified. He has risen; He is not here. Look, *there* is the place where they laid Him.

7. But go, tell His disciples and Peter that He goes before you into Galilee; there you shall see Him, as He said to you."

8. And they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them; and they did not say anything to anyone because they were afraid.

9. Now after *Jesus* had risen, early *the* first *day* of the weeks He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons.

10. She went *and* told *it* to those who had been with Him, *who* were grieving and weeping.

11. And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe *it*.

12. Now after these things, He ap-

*This literal translation of the Greek words *μία σαββάτων* or *μία των σαββάτων* shows that the day which followed the weekly Sabbath was the first day of the seven-week count to Pentecost, thus identifying this day as the Wave Sheaf Day (Lev. 23:10-11, 15-16). The ascension of Jesus Christ on that day fulfilled the offering of the wave sheaf for all time.

peared in a different form to two of them as they were walking, going away into *the* country.
 13. And they went and told *it* to the rest; *but* they did not believe them either.
 14. Afterwards, as they were sitting to eat, He appeared to the eleven and reproached *them* for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.
 15. And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation.
 16. The one who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but the one who does not believe shall be condemned.
 17. And these signs shall follow those

14 Luke 24:36
 John 20:19
 1 Cor. 15:5
 15 Mat. 28:19
 John 15:16
 Col. 1:23
 16 John 3:18,
 12:48
 Acts 2:38,
 16:30-32
 1 Pet. 3:21
 Rom. 10:9
 17 Luke 10:17
 Acts 2:4,
 1 Cor. 12:10
 18 Luke 10:19
 Acts 5:15,
 28:5
 Jas. 5:14
 19 Psa. 110:1
 Luke 24:51
 Acts 1:2, 3
 20 Acts 5:12
 1 Cor. 2:4, 5
 Heb. 2:4

who believe: in My name they shall cast out demons; they shall speak with new languages;

18. They shall remove serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them in any way; they shall lay hands on *the* sick, and they shall recover."

19. After speaking to them, the Lord was indeed then taken up into heaven, and He sat down at *the* right hand of God.

20. And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them* and confirming the Word by the signs that followed. Amen.

The Gospel According to Mark

The Gospel According to Luke

CHAPTER ONE

1. Since many have taken in hand to compile a *written* narration of the matters which have been fully believed among us,
 2. As they delivered *them* to us, those who from *the* beginning had been eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word,
 3. It seemed good to me also, having accurately understood everything from the very first, to write *these things* in an orderly sequence to you, most excellent Theophilus,
 4. So that you might know the *absolute* certainty of *the* things in which you have been instructed.
 5. There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest of *the* course of Abijah, Zacharias by name; and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elizabeth.

Chap. 1
 2 Mark 1:1
 John 15:27
 1 Pet. 5:1
 2 Pet. 1:16
 Heb. 2:3
 3 Acts 1:1,
 11:4, 15:19
 1 Cor. 7:40
 4 John 20:31
 5 1 Chr. 24:10
 Neh. 12:5
 Mat. 2:1
 6 Gen. 7:1
 1 Ki. 9:4
 2 Ki. 20:3
 8 1 Chr. 24:19
 2 Chr. 8:14
 9 Ex. 30:7, 8
 1 Chr. 23:13
 2 Chr. 29:11
 10 Lev. 16:17
 11 Ex. 30:1

6. Now they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord.

7. But they did not have a child, as Elizabeth was barren; and both were *well* advanced in age.

8. And it came to pass *that* in fulfilling his priestly service before God in the order of his course,

9. According to the custom of the priestly service, it fell to him by lot to burn incense when he entered into the temple of the Lord.

10. And all the multitude of the people outside were praying at the hour of the *burning* of incense.

11. Then an angel of *the* Lord appeared to him, standing at *the* right side of the altar of incense.

12. And when he saw *the angel*, Zacharias was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

13. But the angel said to him, "Fear not, Zacharias, because your supplication has been heard; and your wife Elizabeth shall bear a son to you, and you shall call his name John.

14. And he shall be a joy and exultation to you; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

15. For he shall be great before the Lord. And he shall not drink wine and strong drink in any form, but he shall be filled with *the Holy Spirit* even from his mother's womb.

16. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to *the Lord* their God.

17. And he shall go before Him in *the spirit and power of Elijah*, to turn *the hearts of the fathers to the children*, and *the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous*, to make ready a people prepared for *the Lord*."

18. Then Zacharias said to the angel, "By what *means* shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years."

19. And the angel answered *and* said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God; and I was sent to speak to you, and to announce this good news to you.

20. But behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day in which these things shall take place, because you did not believe my words, which shall be fulfilled in their time."

21. Now the people were expecting Zacharias, and they were wondering *why* he was taking such a long time in the temple.

22. But when he came out, he was not able to speak to them. Then they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; for he was making signs to them, but he remained mute.

23. Now it came to pass *that* when the days of his service were fulfilled, he

12 Judg. 6:22,
13:22
Dan. 10:8
Luke 2:9
Acts 10:4
Rev. 1:17
13 Luke 1:60,
63
14 Luke 1:58
15 Num. 6:3
Judg. 13:4
Jer. 1:5
Luke 7:33
Gal. 1:15
16 Mal. 4:5, 6
17 Mal. 4:5
Mat. 11:14
Mark 9:12
18 Gen. 17:17
19 Dan. 8:16,
9:21-23
Mat. 18:10
Heb. 1:14
20 Ezek. 3:26,
24:27
23 2 Ki. 11:5
1 Chr. 9:25

25 Gen. 30:23
Is. 4:1,
54:1, 4
27 Mat. 1:18
Luke 2:4, 5
28 Judg. 6:12
Dan. 9:23,
10:19
29 Luke 1:12
31 Is. 7:14
Mat. 1:21
Luke 2:21
32 2 Sam. 7:11
Psa. 132:11
Is. 9:6, 7,
16:5
Jer. 23:5
Mark 5:7
33 Dan. 2:44
Obad. 21
Mic. 4:7
John 12:34
Heb. 1:8
35 Mat. 1:20,
14:33
Mark 1:1
John 1:34,
20:31
Acts 8:37
Rom. 1:4

departed to his house.

24. And after those days, Elizabeth his wife conceived, but hid herself *for* five months, saying,

25. "The Lord has intervened for me in this, at *the time* in which He looked upon *me* to take away my reproach among men."

26. And in the sixth month *of her pregnancy*, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

27. To a virgin betrothed to a man whose name *was* Joseph, of *the* lineage of David; and the name of the virgin *was* Mary.

28. And after coming to her, the angel said, "Hail, you who are highly favored! The Lord *is* with you; blessed *are* you among women."

29. But when she saw *him*, she was *greatly* perplexed at his message, and was considering what kind of salutation this might be.

30. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, because you have found grace with God;

31. And behold, you shall conceive in *your* womb and give birth to a son; and you shall call His name Jesus.

32. He shall be great, and shall be called *the Son of the Highest*; and *the Lord God* shall give Him the throne of David, His forefather;

33. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob into the ages, and of His kingdom there shall be no end."

34. But Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?"

35. And the angel answered *and* said to her, "*The Holy Spirit* shall come upon you, and *the power of the Highest* shall overshadow you; and for this reason, the Holy One being begotten in you shall be called *the Son of God*.

36. Now behold, Elizabeth your kinswoman has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is *the* sixth month

for her who *was* called barren.

37. For with God nothing shall be impossible."

38. And Mary said, "Behold the handmaid of *the* Lord; may it be *done* to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

39. And Mary rose up in those days *and* went with haste into the hill country, to a city of Judah,

40. And entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.

41. Now it came to pass *that* when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with *the* Holy Spirit,

42. And she cried out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed *are* you among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of your womb.

43. But why is this *happening* to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

44. For behold, as soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the babe in my womb leaped in exultation.

45. And blessed *is* she who has believed, for there shall be a fulfillment of the things spoken to her from *the* Lord."

46. Then Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,

47. And my spirit has exulted in God my Savior;

48. For He has looked upon the humble estate of His handmaid; for behold, from this time forward all generations shall count me blessed,

49. Because the Mighty One has done great things to me, and holy *is* His name;

50. And His mercy *is* toward those who fear Him, from generation to generation.

51. He has worked strength with His arm; He has scattered *the* haughty in *the* imagination of their hearts.

52. He has put down rulers from

37 Gen. 18:14
Jer. 32:17
Mat. 19:26
Mark 10:27
Luke 18:27
Rom. 4:21

39 Josh. 21:9

43 Judg. 5:24

46 1 Sam. 2:1

Psa. 34:2, 3

Hab. 3:18

48 1 Sam. 1:11

Psa. 138:6

Luke 11:27

49 Psa. 71:19,

111:9, 126:2,

3

50 Gen. 17:7

Ex. 20:6

Psa. 103:17

51 Psa. 33:10,

98:1, 118:15

Is. 40:10

1 Pet. 5:5

52 1 Sam. 2:6

Job 5:11

Psa. 113:6

thrones, and has exalted *the* lowly.

53. He has filled *the* hungry with good things, and *the* rich He has sent away empty.

54. He has helped His servant Israel, in remembering *His* mercy,

55. Exactly as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever."

56. And Mary dwelt with her about three months, and returned to her house.

57. Now Elizabeth's time was fulfilled that she should give birth, and she bore a son.

58. And her neighbors and kinfolk heard that *the* Lord had magnified His mercy toward her, and they rejoiced with her.

59. And it came to pass on the eighth day *that* they came to circumcise the little child; and they were calling him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

60. Then his mother answered *and* said, "No! But he shall be named John."

61. And they said to her, "*There* is no one among your kinfolk who is called by this name."

62. Then they made signs to his father *as to* what he desired him to be named.

63. And after signaling for a writing tablet, he wrote, saying, "John is his name." And they were all amazed.

64. Then his mouth was immediately opened, and his tongue *was loosed*; and he spoke, praising God.

65. And fear came upon all those who dwelt around them; and in the entire hill country of Judea, all these things were being talked about.

66. And all who heard *these things* laid *them* up in their hearts, saying, "What then will this little child be?" And *the* hand of *the* Lord was with him.

67. And Zacharias his father was filled with *the* Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying,

53 1 Sam. 2:5

Psa. 34:10

54 Psa. 98:3

Jer. 31:3

55 Gen. 17:19

Psa. 132:11

Gal. 3:16

59 Gen. 17:12

Lev. 12:3

60 Luke 1:13

66 Gen. 39:2

Psa. 80:17

Luke 2:19

Acts 11:21

67 Joel 2:28

68. "Blessed be *the* Lord, the God of Israel, because He has visited and has worked redemption for His people,
 69. And has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David;
 70. Exactly as He spoke by *the* mouth of His holy prophets since the world began;
 71. Salvation from our enemies and from *the* hand of all those who hate us;
 72. To fulfill *the promise of* mercy *made* to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant,
 73. *The* oath that He swore to Abraham our father; to grant us *that*,
 74. Being saved from *the* hand of our enemies, we might serve Him without fear,
 75. *Walking* in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our lives.
 76. And you, little child, shall be called *the* prophet of *the* Highest; for you shall go before *the* face of *the* Lord, to prepare His ways;
 77. To give *the* knowledge of salvation to His people by *the* remission of their sins,
 78. Through *the* deep inner compassions of our God; in which *the* day-spring from on high has visited us,
 79. To shine upon those who are sitting in darkness and in *the* shadow of death, to direct our feet into *the* way of peace."
 80. And the little child grew and was strengthened in spirit; and he was in the deserts until *the* day of his appearing to Israel.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Now it happened in those days *that* a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.
 2. (This registration first occurred

68 Ex. 3:16
 1 Ki. 1:48
 Psa. 41:13,
 111:9
 Luke 7:16
 69 Psa. 132:17
 70 Jer. 23:5
 Dan. 9:24
 72 Lev. 26:42
 Ezek. 16:60
 73 Gen. 12:3
 Heb. 6:13
 74 Rom. 6:18
 Heb. 9:14
 75 Jer. 32:39
 Eph. 4:24
 2 Thes. 2:13
 76 Is. 40:3
 Mal. 3:1
 Mat. 11:10
 77 Mark 1:4
 78 Num. 24:17
 Is. 11:1
 79 Is. 9:2
 Mat. 4:16
 80 Mat. 3:1
 Luke 2:40

Chap. 2

2 Acts 5:37
 4 1 Sam. 16:1
 Mat. 1:16
 John 7:42
 5 Mat. 1:18
 7 Mat. 1:25
 9 Luke 1:12
 10 Gen. 12:3
 Mat. 28:19
 Mark 1:15
 Col. 1:23
 11 Is. 9:6
 Mat. 1:16,
 21, 16:16
 Acts 2:36
 Phil. 2:11
 13 Gen. 28:12
 Psa. 103:20,
 148:2
 Dan. 7:10
 Heb. 1:14
 Rev. 5:11
 14 Is. 57:19
 Luke 19:38
 John 3:16
 1 John 4:9
 Rom. 5:1
 Eph. 1:6,
 2:4, 7, 17
 Col. 1:20
 2 Thes. 2:16

when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)
 3. Then all went to be registered, each to his own city.
 4. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of *the* city of Nazareth, into Judea, to *the* city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was from *the* house and lineage of David
 5. To register himself along with Mary, who was betrothed to him as wife, *and* was great with child.
 6. And it came to pass *that* during the *time* they were there, the days were fulfilled for her to give birth.
 7. And she gave birth to her son, the firstborn, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.
 8. Now *there* were shepherds in the same country, who were dwelling in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night;
 9. And suddenly an angel of *the* Lord stood by them, and *the* glory of *the* Lord shined round about them; and they were seized *with* great fear.
 10. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I am announcing to you glad tidings *of* great joy, which shall be to all people;
 11. For today, in *the* city of David, a Savior was born to you, Who is Christ *the* Lord.
 12. Now this *is* the sign for you: you shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."
 13. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of *the* heavenly host praising God, and saying,
 14. "Glory to God in *the* highest, and peace on earth among men *of* goodwill."
 15. And it came to pass, as the angels were departing from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now as far as Bethlehem, and let us see this thing

that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

16. And they made haste, *and* came and found both Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger.

17. Now after seeing *Him*, they made known everywhere the proclamation that they had been told concerning this little child.

18. And all those who heard were filled with wonder by the things that were spoken to them by the shepherds.

19. But Mary stored up all these sayings, pondering *them* in her heart.

20. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all *the* things that they had heard and seen, as it was said to them.

21. Now when eight days were fulfilled for circumcising the little child, His name was called Jesus, which *He* was named by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

22. And when the days were fulfilled for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present *Him* to the Lord;

23. As it is written in *the* law of *the* Lord that every male opening the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;

24. And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in *the* law of *the* Lord: a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

25. And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name *was* Simeon; and this man *was* righteous and reverent, waiting for *the* consolation of Israel; and *the* Holy Spirit was upon him.

26. Now it had been divinely communicated to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Christ of *the* Lord.

27. And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the little child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law,

19 Gen. 37:11

Luke 1:66

21 Gen. 17:12

Lev. 12:3

Mat. 1:21, 25

Luke 1:31, 59

22 Lev. 12:2

23 Ex. 13:2, 22:29

Num. 3:13

24 Lev. 12:2

25 Is. 40:1

Mark 15:43

Luke 2:38

26 Psa. 89:48

Heb. 11:5

27 Mat. 4:1

28. He also received Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29. "Now You may let your servant depart in peace, O Master, according to Your word;

30. For my eyes have seen Your salvation,

31. Which You have prepared before *the* face of all peoples;

32. A light for *the* revelation of *the* Gentiles and *the* glory of Your people Israel."

33. And Joseph and His mother wondered at the things that were being spoken concerning Him.

34. Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary, His mother, "Behold, this *child* is set for *the* fall and rising up of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be spoken against,

35. (And you also, a sword shall go through your own soul) in order that *the* imaginations of many hearts may be revealed."

36. Now there was Anna, a prophetess, *the* daughter of Phanuel, of *the* tribe of Asher; she was of a great age, having lived with a husband seven years from her virginity;

37. And she *was* a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, serving day and night with fastings and supplications.

38. And at the same time she came up, giving praise to the Lord; and *she* spoke concerning Him to all those in Jerusalem who were waiting for redemption.

39. Now when they had completed all things according to the law of *the* Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their *own* city, Nazareth.

40. And the little child grew and became strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom; and *the* grace of God was upon Him.

41. Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover.

29 Gen. 46:30

Phil. 1:23

30 Is. 52:10

32 Is. 9:2, 42:6,

49:6, 60:1-3

Mat. 4:16

Acts 13:47,

28:28

34 Is. 8:14

Hos. 14:9

Mat. 21:44

Acts 28:22

1 Pet. 2:7, 8

Rom. 9:32

1 Cor. 1:23

2 Cor. 2:16

35 Psa. 42:10

37 Acts 26:7

1 Tim. 5:5

38 Mark 15:43

Luke 2:25,

24:21

40 Luke 1:80,

2:52

41 Ex. 23:15,

17, 34:23

Deut. 16:1,

16

42. And when He was twelve years *old*, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast.

43. But when they departed after completing the days, the child Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, and Joseph and His mother did not know *it*;

44. But supposing Him to be in the company, they went a day's journey, and looked for Him among the relatives and among the acquaintances.

45. And when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him.

46. Now it came to pass *that* after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in *the* midst of the teachers, both hearing them and questioning them.

47. And all those who were listening to Him were amazed at *His* understanding and His answers.

48. But when they saw Him, they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have you dealt with us in this manner? Look, Your father and I have been *very* distressed *while* searching for You."

49. And He said to them, "Why *is it* that you were looking for Me? Don't you realize that I must be about My Father's *business*?"

50. But they did not understand the words that He spoke to them.

51. Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He was subject to them. But His mother kept all these things in her heart.

52. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Now in *the* fifteenth year of the government of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip his brother was tetrarch of

47 Mat. 7:28
Mark 1:22
Luke 4:22,
32
John 7:15,
46
49 John 2:16
50 Luke 9:45,
18:34
51 Dan. 7:28
Luke 2:19
52 1 Sam. 2:50
Luke 2:40

Chap. 3

2 John 11:49,
51, 18:13
Acts 4:6
3 Mat. 3:1
Mark 1:4
Luke 1:77
4 Is. 40:3
Mat. 3:3
Mark 1:3
John 1:23
6 Psa. 98:2
Is. 52:10
Luke 2:10
7 Mat. 3:7
9 Mat. 7:19
10 Acts 2:37
11 Luke 11:41
Jas. 2:15, 16
1 John 3:17,
4:20
2 Cor. 8:14
12 Mat. 21:32
Luke 7:29
13 Luke 19:8

Iturea and *the* region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene,
2. In *the time of the* priesthood of An-
nas and Caiaphas, *the* word of God
came unto John, the son of Zacharias,
in the wilderness.

3. And he went into all the country
around the Jordan, proclaiming *the*
baptism of repentance for *the* remis-
sion of sins;

4. As it is written in *the* book of *the*
words of the prophet Isaiah, saying,
"The voice of one crying in the wil-
derness, 'Prepare the way of *the* Lord;
make straight His paths.'

5. Every valley shall be filled, and
every mountain and hill shall be made
low; and the crooked *places* shall be
made into straight *paths*, and the
rough *places* into smooth ways;

6. And all flesh shall see the salvation
of God."

7. For this reason, he said to the multi-
tudes who were coming out to be bap-
tized by him, "You offspring of vipers,
who has forewarned you to flee from
the coming wrath?

8. Therefore, bring forth fruits worthy
of repentance; and do not begin to say
to yourselves, 'We have Abraham *for*
our father,' because I tell you that
God has the power to raise up children
to Abraham from these stones.

9. But the axe is already being laid to
the roots of the trees. Therefore, every
tree *that* is not producing good fruit is
cut down and is cast into *the* fire."

10. And the multitudes asked him,
saying, "What then shall we do?"

11. And he answered *and* said to
them, "The one who has two coats, let
him give to the one who has none; and
the one who has food, let him do the
same."

12. Now the tax collectors also came
to be baptized, and they said to him,
"Master, what shall we do?"

13. And he said to them, "Exact nothing
beyond that which is appointed to you."

14. Then those who were soldiers also asked him, saying, "And we, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not oppress or falsely accuse anyone, and be satisfied with your wages."

15. But as the people were *filled* with expectation, and they were all reasoning in their hearts about John, whether or not he might be the Christ,

16. John answered all *of them*, saying, "I indeed baptize you with water; but He is coming Who *is* mightier than I, of Whom I am not fit to loose the thong of His sandals. He shall baptize you with *the* Holy Spirit, and with fire;

17. Whose fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His granary; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."

18. And *with* many other exhortations he preached the gospel to the people.

19. But Herod the tetrarch, after being reproved by him for *marrying* Herodias, the wife of Philip his brother, and for all *the* evils that Herod had done,

20. Added this to all that: he locked up John in prison.

21. Now it came to pass after all the people were baptized, and Jesus was baptized and was praying, *that* the heaven was opened,

22. And the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in a bodily form like a dove; and there came a voice from heaven, saying, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."

23. And Jesus Himself began *to be* about thirty years *old*, being, as was supposed, *the son of Joseph, the son-in-law of Eli,*

24. *The son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Janna, the son of Joseph,*

25. *The son of Mattathias, the son of*

14 Ex. 23:1
Lev. 19:11
16 Mat. 3:11
17 Mic. 4:12
Mat. 13:30
19 Mat. 14:3
Mark 6:17
21 Mat. 3:13
John 1:32
23 Num. 4:3,
35, 39, 43,
47
Mat. 13:55
John 6:42

31 2 Sam. 5:14
1 Chr. 3:5
Zech. 12:12
32 Ruth 4:18
1 Chr. 2:10
34 Gen. 11:24,
26
36 Gen. 5:6,
11:10, 12
38 Gen. 5:1, 2

Chap. 4

1 Mat. 4:1
Mark 1:12
Luke 2:27,
4:14
2 Ex. 34:28
1 Ki. 19:8

Amos, *the son of Naoum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai,*

26. *The son of Maath, the son of Mat-tathias, the son of Semei, the son of Joseph, the son of Juda,*

27. *The son of Joannes, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zorobabel, the son of Salathiel, the son of Neri,*

28. *The son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmodam, the son of Er,*

29. *The son of Joses, the son of Eliezer, the son of Joreim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi,*

30. *The son of Simeon, the son of Juda, the son of Joseph, the son of Jo-nan, the son of Eliakim,*

31. *The son of Meleas, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David,*

32. *The son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Naasson,*

33. *The son of Aminadab, the son of Aram, the son of Esrom, the son of Phares, the son of Juda,*

34. *The son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nachor,*

35. *The son of Saruch, the son of Ra-gau, the son of Phalek, the son of Eber, the son of Sala,*

36. *The son of Cainan, the son of Ar-phaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noe, the son of Lamech,*

37. *The son of Mathusalah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalelel, the son of Cainan,*

38. *The son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.*

CHAPTER FOUR

1. And Jesus, filled with *the* Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilder-ness

2. *For* forty days to be tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing in those

days; and after they had come to an end, He hungered.

3. Then the devil said to Him, "If You are *the* Son of God, command that this stone become bread."

4. But Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'"

5. Then the devil led Him up into a high mountain *and* showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6. And the devil said to Him, "I will give You all this authority, and the glory of them *all*; for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom-ever I desire.

7. Therefore, if You will worship me in *my*-presence, all things shall be Yours."★

8. But Jesus answered *and* said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan; for it is written, 'You shall worship *the* Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.'"

9. Then he led Him to Jerusalem and set Him upon the edge of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, cast Yourself down from here;★★

10. For it is written, 'He shall give His angels charge concerning You to keep You;

11. And in *their* hands they shall bear You up, lest You strike Your foot against a stone.'"

12. But Jesus answered *and* said to him, "It is *clearly* stated, 'You shall not tempt *the* Lord your God.'"

13. Now when the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from Him for a time.

14. Then Jesus returned in the power

4 Deut. 8:3
6 John 12:31,
14:30
Rev. 13:2, 7
8 Deut. 6:13,
10:20

9 Mat. 4:5
10 Psa. 91:11
12 Deut. 6:16
13 John 14:30
Heb. 4:15

14 Mat. 4:12
John 4:43
Acts 10:37
★ The Greek
means that
Satan was
asking Jesus
to worship
him as God.

★★ From the
highest pin-
nacle to the
bottom of the
Kedron Val-
ley was 650
feet.

16 Mat. 2:23,
13:54
Mark 6:1
Acts 13:14,
17:2

18 Is. 61:1
22 Psa. 45:2
Mat. 13:54
Mark 6:2
Luke 2:47
John 6:42

23 Mat. 4:13,
11:23, 13:54
Mark 6:1

24 Mat. 13:57
Mark 6:4
John 4:44

of the Spirit to Galilee; and word about Him went out into the entire country around.

15. And He taught in their syna-
gogues, *and* was glorified by all.

16. And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and accord-
ing to His custom, He went into the
synagogue on the Sabbath day* and
stood up to read.

17. And there was given Him *the* book
of the prophet Isaiah; and when He
had unrolled the scroll, He found the
place where it was written,

18. "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon
Me; for this reason, He has anointed
Me to preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal those who are
brokenhearted, to proclaim pardon to
the captives and recovery of sight to
the blind, to send forth in deliverance
those who have been crushed,*

19. To proclaim *the* acceptable year of
the Lord."

20. And after rolling up the scroll *and*
delivering *it* to the attendant, He sat
down; and the eyes of everyone in the
synagogue were fixed on Him.

21. Then He began to say to them,
"Today, this scripture is being ful-
filled in your ears."

22. And all bore witness to Him and
were amazed at the words of grace
that were coming out of His mouth;
and they said, "Is not this the son of
Joseph?"

23. And He said to them, "Surely, you
will say this parable to Me: 'Physician,
heal Yourself! Whatever we have
heard being done in Capernaum, do
also here in Your *own* country.'"

24. But He said, "Truly I say to you,
no prophet is acceptable in his *own*
country.

*The words "on the Sabbath day" are translated from the Greek words εν τη ημερα των σαββατων. A literal trans-
lation would be, "Now on the day of the sabbaths"; or, "Now on the day of the weeks." The use of the Greek των σα
ββατων, meaning "Sabbaths" or "weeks," indicates that this verse is referring to the day of Pentecost. Because this
day is observed after counting a period of seven full weeks, it was known in New Testament times as "the day of the
weeks." The day of Pentecost does not fall on the weekly Sabbath but is an annual Sabbath.

25. For in truth, I say to you, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up for three years and six months, and there was great famine upon all the land;

26. And Elijah was not sent to any of them, but only to a widow in Sarepta, a city of Sidonia.

27. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them were cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian."

28. Now all in the synagogue who heard these things were filled with indignation.

29. And they rose up *and* cast Him out of the city, and led Him to the edge of the mountain on which their city was built, in order to throw Him down headlong;

30. But He passed *safely* through their midst *and* departed.

31. Then He went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath days.

32. And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority.

33. Now a man who had an unclean spirit was in the synagogue; and he cried out with a loud voice,

34. Saying, "Ah! What have we to do with You, Jesus the Nazarean? Have You come to destroy us? I know Who You are, the Holy *One* of God."

35. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him." And after throwing him into the midst, the demon came out of him *and* did not hurt him in any way.

36. Then astonishment came upon everyone, and they spoke to one another, saying, "What message *is* this, that with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out?"

37. And news of His *powerful deeds*

25 1 Ki. 17:9, 18:1
Jas. 5:17
27 2 Ki. 5:14
30 John 8:59, 10:39
31 Mat. 4:13
Mark 1:21
32 Mat. 7:28, 29
33 Mark 1:23
34 Psa. 16:10
Dan. 9:24
Luke 1:35, 4:41

38 Mat. 8:14
Mark 1:29
40 Mat. 8:16
Mark 1:32
41 Mark 1:25, 34, 3:11
4:34, 35
42 Mark 1:35
44 Mark 1:39

Chap. 5

1 Mat. 4:18
Mark 1:16

spread through every place in the surrounding country.

38. Now after going out of the synagogue, He went into Simon's house. And Simon's mother-in-law was sick with a great fever; and they asked Him *to intervene* for her.

39. Then He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them.

40. Now as the sun was going down, all those who had sick *persons* with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on each one of them *and* healed them.

41. And demons went out from many, crying out and saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of God." But He rebuked them *and* did not allow them to speak, because they knew *that* He was the Christ.

42. Now when day came, He departed and went into a desert place; but the multitudes searched for Him, and came to Him and were detaining Him, that He might not leave them.

43. Then He said to them, "It is necessary for me to preach the gospel *of* the kingdom of God to the other cities; for this *is* the reason that I have been sent."

44. And He went *about* preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Now it came to pass that while the multitude was pressing on Him to hear the Word of God, He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret;

2. And He saw two ships standing by the *shore of the* lake, but the fishermen had left them and were washing *their* nets.

3. And after going into one of the ships, which was Simon's, He asked him to put out from the shore a little; and He sat down *and* taught the multitudes from the ship.

4. Now when He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep, and let your nets down for a haul."

5. Then Simon answered *and* said, "Master, we have labored through the entire night, *and* we have taken nothing; but at Your word, I will let the net down."

6. And when they did this, they enclosed a great school of fish; and their net was breaking.

7. Then they signaled to their partners, those in the other ship, that they should come *and* help them; and they came and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

8. And when he saw *this*, Simon Peter fell at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord."

9. For great astonishment came upon him and all those with him, on account of the *miraculous* haul of fish that they had taken;

10. And in like manner also *upon* James and John, *the* sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Fear not; from this time forth you shall be catching men."

11. And after bringing the ships to land, they forsook everything and followed Him.

12. Now it came to pass that as He was in one of the cities, a man full of leprosy saw Jesus *and* immediately fell on *his* face, beseeching Him *and* saying, "Lord, if You will, You have *the* power to cleanse me."

13. And after stretching out *His* hand, He touched him, saying, "I will. Be cleansed!" And the leprosy instantly left him.

14. Then He charged him to tell no one, and *said*, "Go *and* show yourself to the priest, and bring an offering for your cleansing as Moses commanded, for a witness to them."

15. But reports of His *miracles* were

4 John 21:6
8 2 Sam. 6:9
1 Ki. 17:18
10 Mat. 4:19
Mark 1:17
11 Mat. 4:20,
19:27
Mark 1:18
Luke 18:28
12 Mat. 8:2
Mark 1:40
14 Lev. 14:4,
10, 21, 22
Mat. 8:4
15 Mat. 4:25
Mark 3:7
John 6:2

spread abroad even more; and great multitudes came to hear *Him* and to be healed by Him of their infirmities.

16. Then He withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.

17. Now it came to pass that on one of the days when He was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there who had come out of every village from Galilee and from Judea, including *the villages* around Jerusalem. And *the* power of *the* Lord was *there* for healing the *sick*.

18. And behold, men *came*, carrying on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed; and they sought to bring him in and place *him* before Him.

19. But when they could not find a way to bring him in because of the multitude, they went up on the rooftop and lowered him with the stretcher through the tiles into the midst, *directly* in front of Jesus.

20. And seeing their faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins have been forgiven you."

21. Then the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this Who speaks blasphemies? Who has the power to forgive sins, except God alone?"

22. But Jesus, perceiving their thoughts, answered *and* said to them, "Why do you reason in your hearts?"

23. Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins have been forgiven you'? or to say, 'Arise and walk'?

24. But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on the earth to forgive sins," He said to the one who was paralyzed, "I say to you, arise and take up your stretcher, and go to your house."

25. And he immediately stood up in front of them; *and* after taking up *the* stretcher on which he had been lying, he went to his house, glorifying God.

26. And amazement seized everyone, and they glorified God, and were

16 Mat. 14:23
Mark 6:46
18 Mat. 9:2
Mark 2:3
21 Psa. 32:5
Is. 43:25
Mat. 9:3
Mark 2:6, 7

filled with fear, saying, "We have seen strange things today."

27. Now after these things, He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the tax office, and said to him, "Follow Me."

28. Then he arose, leaving everything, and followed Him.

29. And Levi made a great feast for Him in his house, and there were a large number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them.

30. But the scribes and the Pharisees complained to His disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

31. Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are in good health do not need a physician, but those who are sick."

32. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

33. Then they said to Him, "Why do the disciples of John fast often and make supplications, and those of the Pharisees do the same, but Your disciples are eating and drinking?"

34. And He said to them, "Can you make the children of the bride chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?"

35. But the time will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and in those days they shall fast."

36. Then He also spoke a parable to them: "No one puts a piece of new cloth on an old garment, or the new cloth will make a tear; for the piece that is from the new cloth is not compatible with the old piece."

37. And no one puts new wine into old skins, or the new wine will burst the skins and will spill out, and the skins will be destroyed;

38. But new wine must be put into

27 Mat. 9:9
Mark 2:13, 14
29 Mat. 9:10
Mark 2:15
Luke 15:1
32 Mat. 9:13
1 Tim. 1:15
33 Mat. 9:14
Mark 2:18
36 Mat. 9:16, 17
Mark 2:21, 22

new skins, and both will be preserved together.

39. And no one after drinking the old wine immediately desires the new; for he says, 'The old is better.' "

CHAPTER SIX

1. Now it came to pass on the second Sabbath of the first rank* that He was walking through the grain fields; and His disciples were plucking the ears and were eating, after rubbing them in their hands.

2. But some of the Pharisees said to them, "Why are you doing that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbaths?"

3. And Jesus answered and said to them, "Have you not read even this, that which David did when he himself hungered, and those who were with him?"

4. How he went into the house of God and took the loaves of showbread, and he ate of them, and also gave some to those with him, which it is not lawful to eat except for the priests only?"

5. And He said to them, "The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

6. Now it also came to pass on another Sabbath that He went into the synagogue and taught; and a man was there whose right hand was withered.

7. And the scribes and the Pharisees were watching Him, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, so that they might find an accusation against Him.

8. But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, "Arise and stand in the midst." And he arose and stood in their midst.

9. Then Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one thing: is it lawful to do good

Chap. 6

1 Mat. 12:1
Mark 2:23
2 Ex. 20:10
3 1 Sam. 21:6
4 Lev. 24:9
6 Mat. 12:9
Mark 3:1
Luke 13:14, 14:3
John 9:16

*The Greek phrase εν σαββατο δευτεροπροτος, used here by Luke, is literally translated "on the second-first Sabbath," or "on the second Sabbath of the first rank or order." The Sabbaths of the first order or rank are annual Sabbaths, which take precedence over the weekly Sabbath. Luke is clearly recording that Jesus and the disciples were going through the grain fields on the second annual Sabbath, which was the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

or to do evil on the Sabbaths? to save life or to destroy *it*?"

10. And after looking around on them all, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored *as* sound as the other.

11. But they were filled with rage, and consulted with one another *as to* what they should do with Jesus.

12. Now it came to pass in those days *that* He went up into the mountain to pray, and He spent the *entire* night in prayer to God.

13. And when it was day, He called His disciples to *Him* and chose from them twelve, whom He also named apostles:

14. Simon, whom He also named Peter, and his brother Andrew; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew;

15. Matthew and Thomas; James, the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called Zealot;

16. Judas, brother of James; and Judas Iscariot, who also became *the* betrayer.

17. And after descending with them, He stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples; and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and *from* the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, came to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases;

18. And those who were tormented by unclean spirits *also came*; and they were healed.

19. And all the crowd sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed all.

20. And He lifted up His eyes upon His disciples *and* said, "Blessed *are* you, the poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

21. Blessed *are* those who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed *are* those who weep now, for you shall laugh.

13 Mat. 10:1
14 John 1:42
16 Jude 1
17 Mat. 4:25
Mark 3:7
19 Mat. 14:36
Mark 5:30
Luke 8:46
20 Mat. 5:3,
11:5
Jas. 2:5
21 Is. 55:1,
61:3, 65:13
Mat. 5:4, 6

22 Mat. 5:11
John 16:2
1 Pet. 2:19,
3:14, 4:14
23 Mat. 5:12
Acts 5:41,
7:51
Jas. 1:2
Col. 1:24
24 Amos 6:1
Mat. 6:2, 5,
16
Luke 12:21,
16:25
Jas. 5:1
25 Prov. 14:13
Is. 65:13
26 John 15:19
1 John 4:5
27 Ex. 23:4
Prov. 25:21
Mat. 5:44
Luke 6:35
Rom. 12:20
28 Luke 23:34
Acts 7:60
29 Mat. 5:39
1 Cor. 6:7
30 Deut. 15:7,
8, 10
Prov. 21:26
Mat. 5:42
31 Mat. 7:12
32 Mat. 5:46
34 Mat. 5:42
35 Psa. 37:26
Mat. 5:45
Luke 6:27,
30

22. Blessed are you when men shall hate you, and when they shall cut you off, and shall reproach *you*, and cast out your name as wicked, for the Son of man's sake.

23. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy; for behold, great *is* your reward in heaven; for their fathers did these same things to the prophets.

24. But woe to you, the rich, for you are receiving your consolation!

25. Woe to you who have been filled, for you shall hunger! Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep!

26. Woe to you when all men shall speak well of you! For their fathers did these same things to the false prophets.

27. But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, *and* do good to those who hate you.

28. Bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.

29. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other *cheek* also; and if anyone takes your cloak, do not forbid your coat also.

30. Give to everyone who asks you; and if anyone takes what *is* yours, do not ask *for it* back.

31. And exactly as you would have men do to you, you do the same to them also.

32. But if you love *only* those who love you, what praise is it to you? For even sinners love those who love them.

33. And if you do good *only* to those who are doing good to you, what praise is it to you? For even sinners do the same.

34. And if you lend *to those* from whom you hope to receive, what praise is it to you? For even sinners lend to sinners, that they may receive as much again.

35. But love your enemies, and do

good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and you shall be *the* children of the Highest; for He is good to the unthankful and *the* wicked.

36. Therefore, you also be compassionate, *even* as your Father is compassionate.

37. And do not judge *others*, so that you yourself will not be judged in any way. Do not condemn *others*, so that you will not be condemned in any way. Forgive, and you shall be forgiven.

38. Give, and it shall be given to you. Good measure, pressed down and shaken together and running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with the same measure that you mete out, it shall be measured again to you."

39. Then He spoke a parable to them, saying, "Is a blind *man* able to lead a blind *man*? Will not both fall into the ditch?

40. A disciple is not above his teacher; but everyone who is perfected shall be like his teacher.

41. And why do you look at the sliver that *is* in your brother's eye, but you do not perceive the beam that *is* in your own eye?

42. Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, allow me to cast out the sliver that *is* in your eye,' *but* you do not see the beam that *is* in your own eye? Hypocrite! First cast out the beam from your *own* eye, and then shall you see clearly to cast out the sliver that *is* in your brother's eye.

43. For there is not a good tree that is producing corrupt fruit; nor *is there* a corrupt tree that is producing good fruit.

44. For every tree is known by its own fruit; for they do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather a bunch of grapes from a bramble.

45. The good man out of the good

36 Mat. 5:48
37 Mat. 7:1
38 Prov. 19:17
Psa. 79:12
Mat. 7:2
Mark 4:24
Jas. 2:13
39 Mat. 15:14
40 Mat. 10:24
John 13:16,
15:20
41 Mat. 7:3
43 Mat. 7:16, 17
44 Mat. 12:33
45 Mat. 12:34,
35

treasure of his heart brings forth that which *is* good; and the wicked man out of the wicked treasure of his heart brings forth that which *is* wicked; for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

46. And why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' but *you* do not practice what I say?

47. Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and practices them, I will show you what he is like:

48. He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid *the* foundation on the rock; and a flood came, and the torrent beat against that house, but could not shake it, because it was founded on the rock.

49. But the one who has heard *My words* and has not practiced *them* is like a man who built a house on *top of* the ground, without a foundation; and *when* the torrent beat against it, it fell at once, and the ruin of that house was great."

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. And when He had finished all His sayings in the ears of the people, He went into Capernaum.

2. Now a certain centurion's servant, who was cherished by him, was ill and about to die.

3. And after hearing about Jesus, he sent *the* elders of the Jews to beseech Him to come and heal his servant.

4. And after coming to Jesus, they besought Him earnestly, saying that he was worthy to whom He should grant this.

5. "For he loves our nation," *they said*, "and he built the synagogue for us."

6. Then Jesus went with them; but when He was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble *Yourself*, for I am not worthy that You should come under my roof;

46 Mal. 1:6
Mat. 7:21,
25:11
Luke 13:25
47 Mat. 7:24
Chap. 7
1 Mat. 8:5

7. Therefore, neither did I count myself worthy to come to You; but say *the* word, and my servant shall be healed.

8. For I also am a man appointed under authority, having soldiers under myself, and I say to this *one*, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does *it*."

9. And when He heard these things, Jesus was amazed at him; and turning to the multitude following Him, He said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith."

10. And when those who had been sent returned to the house, *they* found the sick servant in good health.

11. Now it came to pass on the next *day* *that* He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a great multitude.

12. And as He drew near to the gate of the city, behold, *one* who had died was being carried out, an only son to his mother, and she was a widow; and a considerable crowd from the city *was* with her.

13. And when the Lord saw her, He was moved with compassion for her and said to her, "Do not weep."

14. And He came up to the bier *and* touched *it*, and those who were bearing *it* stopped. Then He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise!"

15. And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and He gave him to his mother.

16. Then fear seized everyone, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us," and, "God has visited His people."

17. And this report about Him went out into all Judea and all the country around.

18. Then John's disciples brought word to him about all these things.

19. And after calling two certain disciples, John sent *them* to Jesus, saying,

14 Luke 8:54
John 11:43
Acts 9:40
Rom. 4:17
16 Luke 1:65,
68, 24:19
John 4:19,
6:14, 9:17
18 Mat. 11:2

"Are You He Who was to come, or are we to look for another?"

20. And when the men came to Him, *they* said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You He Who was to come, or are we to look for another?' "

21. Now in the same hour, He healed many of diseases and scourges and evil spirits, and He granted sight to many *who were* blind.

22. And Jesus answered *and* said to them, "When you have gone, relate to John the things you have seen and heard: that *the* blind receive sight, *the* lame walk, *the* lepers are cleansed, *the* deaf hear, *the* dead are raised, *and* the gospel is preached to *the* poor.

23. And blessed is everyone who shall not be offended in Me."

24. Now after the messengers of John had left, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to gaze at? A reed shaken by *the* wind?

25. But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who *dress* in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in the palaces.

26. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and *one* more excellent than a prophet.

27. This is he concerning whom it is written, 'Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who shall prepare Your way before You.'

28. For I tell you, among *those* who have been born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but the one who *is* least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

29. Now all the people and the tax collectors who heard this justified God *because* they had been baptized *with* the baptism of John.

30. But the Pharisees and the doctors of the law had set aside the counsel of

22 Is. 35:5
Mat. 11:4, 7
Luke 4:18
27 Mal. 3:1
29 Mat. 3:5
Luke 3:12
30 Acts 20:27

God concerning themselves, *and* had not been baptized by him.

31. And the Lord said, "To what then shall I compare the men of this generation? And what are they like?"

32. They are like little children sitting and calling to one another in the marketplace, and saying, 'We have piped to you, but you did not dance; we have mourned to you, but you did not weep.'

33. For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you said, 'He has a demon.'

34. The Son of man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners';

35. But wisdom is justified by all her children."

36. Now one of the Pharisees invited Him to eat with him. And after going into the Pharisee's house, He sat down *at the table*.

37. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that He was sitting in the Pharisee's house, took an alabaster flask of ointment;

38. And she stood weeping behind Him, *and knelt* at His feet, *and* began to wash His feet with *her* tears and to wipe *them* with the hairs of her head; and she was ardently kissing His feet and anointing *them* with the ointment.

39. But when he saw *this*, the Pharisee who had invited Him spoke within himself, saying, "This *man*, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what the woman *is* who is touching Him because she is a sinner."

40. Then Jesus answered *and* said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he said, "Teacher, say *on*."

41. "There were two debtors of a certain creditor; one owed five hundred silver coins, and the other fifty.

31 Mat. 11:16
33 Mat. 3:4
Mark 1:6
Luke 1:15
35 Mat. 11:19
36 Mat. 26:6
Mark 14:3
John 11:2
39 Luke 15:2
41 Mat. 18:28

46 Psa. 23:5
47 1 Tim. 1:14
48 Mat. 9:2
Mark 2:5
49 Mat. 9:3
Mark 2:7
50 Mat. 9:22
Mark 5:34,
10:52,
Luke 8:48,
18:42

Chap. 8

2 Mat. 27:55,
56
Mark 16:9

42. But when they did not have *anything with which* to pay *him*, he forgave *them* both. Tell *Me* then, which of them will love him most?"

43. And Simon answered *and* said, "I suppose *the one* whom he forgave the most." And He said to him, "You have judged rightly."

44. And after turning to the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house, and you did not provide *any water to wash* My feet; but she has washed My feet with *her* tears and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head.

45. You did not give *Me* a kiss; but she, from the *time* I came in, has not ceased to ardently kiss My feet.

46. You did not anoint My head with oil; but she has anointed My feet with ointment.

47. For this cause, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven because she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, he loves little."

48. And He said to her, "Your sins have been forgiven."

49. Then those who were sitting with *Him* began to say within themselves, "Who is this, Who even forgives sins?"

50. But He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Now it came to pass afterwards that He traveled through *all the land*, city by city and village by village, preaching and proclaiming the gospel *of* the kingdom of God; and the twelve *were* with Him,

2. And certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary who is called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out;

3. And Joanna, wife of Chuza, a steward of Herod; and Susanna, and many others who were ministering to Him

from their own substance.

4. And *as* a great multitude *was* assembling, and those who were coming to Him from every city, He spoke a parable:

5. "The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some *seed* fell by the road; and it was trampled upon, and the birds of heaven devoured it.

6. And other *seed* fell upon the rock; and after it had sprung up it withered because it did not have *any* moisture.

7. And other *seed* fell among the thorns; and after springing up together, the thorns choked it.

8. And other *seed* fell upon the good ground, and after springing up produced fruit a hundredfold." And when He had said these things, He cried aloud, saying, "The one who has ears to hear; let him hear."

9. Then His disciples asked Him, saying, "What might this parable be?"

10. And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God; but to the rest *it is given* in parables, so that *in* seeing they may not see, and *in* hearing they may not understand.

11. Now this is the parable: The seed is the Word of God;

12. And those *that fell* by the road are the ones who hear, but the devil comes and takes away the Word from their heart, lest they should believe *and* be saved.

13. And those *that fell* upon the rock *are* the ones who, when they hear, receive the Word with joy; but these do not have any root, who believe *only* for a while, and in time of trial fall away.

14. And those that fell into the thorns are the ones who have heard, but are choked *while* pursuing *the* cares and riches and pleasures of life, and do not bring *any fruit* to maturity.

15. And those that *fell* on the good ground are the ones who, in a right and good heart, hear the Word *and*

4 Mat. 13:2
Mark 4:1
9 Mat. 13:10
Mark 4:10
10 Is. 6:9
Mark 4:12
11 Mat. 13:18
Mark 4:14

keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with endurance.

16. Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it with a vessel, or puts *it* under a couch, but puts *it* on a lampstand, so that those who are entering may see the light.

17. For *there* is nothing hidden that shall not be made manifest, nor *any* secret that shall not be known and come to light.

18. Therefore, take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him shall be given; but whoever does not have, even what he seems to have shall be taken from him."

19. Then *His* mother and His brothers came to Him, but were not able to get to Him because of the multitude.

20. And it was told Him, saying, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You."

21. But He answered *and* said to them, "My mother and My brothers are those who are hearing the Word of God and are doing it."

22. Now it came to pass on one of those days that He and His disciples went into a ship; and He said to them, "Let us go over to the other side of the lake." And they put off *from the shore*.

23. And as they sailed, He fell asleep; and a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were being filled *with water*, and were in danger.

24. Then they came to *Him and* awoke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And He arose *and* rebuked the wind and the raging of the water; and they ceased, and there was a calm.

25. And He said to them, "Where is your faith?" But they were afraid, *and* wondered, saying to one another, "Who then is this that He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him?"

26. Then they sailed down to the

16 Mat. 5:15
Mark 4:21
Luke 11:33
17 Mat. 10:26
Luke 12:2
18 Mat. 13:12,
25:29
Luke 19:26
19 Mat. 12:46
Mark 3:31
22 Mat. 8:23
Mark 4:35
26 Mat. 8:28
Mark 5:1

country of the Gadarenes, which is across from Galilee. 31 Rev. 20:3

27. And when He went out on the land, *there* met Him a certain man from the city who had *been possessed* by demons for a long time; and he was not wearing *any* clothes, and did not dwell in a house, but in the tombs.

28. Now when he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down in front of Him, and said with a loud voice, "What do You have to do with me, Jesus, Son of God the Most High? I beseech You, do not torment me."

29. For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For many times it had seized him, and *each time* he was restrained, being bound with chains and fetters; but *after* breaking the bonds, he was driven by the demon into the desert.

30. And Jesus asked it, saying, "What is your name?" And it said, "Legion," because many demons had entered into him.

31. Then it begged Him that He would not command them to go away into the abyss.

32. Now there was a herd of many swine feeding there on the mountain, and they begged Him that He would allow them to enter into the *swine*; and He gave them permission.

33. And the demons went out of the man *and* entered into the swine, and the *whole* herd rushed *headlong* down the steep *slope* into the lake and were drowned.

34. Now when those who were feeding *the swine* saw what had taken place, they fled; and they went *and* reported *it* to the city and to the country.

35. And those *who heard* went out to see what had taken place; and they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had gone out, clothed and of a sound mind, seated at Jesus' feet. And they were afraid.

37 Mat. 8:34
Acts 16:39
38 Mark 5:18
41 Mat. 9:18
Mark 5:22
43 Mat. 9:20
46 Mark 5:30
Luke 6:19

36. And those who had seen *it* related to them how the one who had been possessed by demons was healed.

37. Then all the multitude of the Gadarenes from the country around asked Him to depart from them; for they were filled with great fear. And He went into the ship to return.

38. And the man from whom the demons had gone out begged to be *taken* with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying,

39. "Return to your own house and declare all that God has done for you." And he went throughout the whole city, proclaiming all that Jesus had done for him.

40. Now it came to pass *that* when Jesus returned, the multitude gladly received Him; for they had all been looking for Him.

41. And behold, a man came whose name *was* Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue; and after falling at Jesus' feet, he begged Him to come to his house,

42. Because his only daughter, about twelve years *old*, was dying. And as He went, the multitudes were thronging Him.

43. And a woman who had been *afflicted* with a flow of blood for twelve years, *and* had spent *her* whole living on physicians, *but* could not be cured by anyone,

44. Came behind *Him and* touched the border of His garment; and immediately the flow of her blood stopped.

45. And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" And as everyone began to deny *it*, Peter and those with Him said, "Master, the multitudes are thronging and pressing You, and You ask, 'Who touched Me?' "

46. But Jesus said, "Someone touched Me, because I know *that* power went out from Me."

47. Then the woman, seeing that her *act* was not concealed, came trem-

bling; and after falling down in front of Him before all the people, she declared for what cause she had touched Him, and how she had immediately been healed.

48. And He said to her, "Be of good courage, daughter; your faith has healed you. Go in peace."

49. While He was yet speaking, one came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying to him, "Your daughter has died. Do not trouble the Master."

50. But hearing *this*, Jesus answered him, saying, "Do not be afraid. Only believe, and she shall be restored."

51. And when He went into the house, He did not allow anyone to go in *with Him* except Peter and James and John, and *thē* father and the mother of the child.

52. And they were all weeping and bewailing her. But He said, "Do not weep. She is not dead, but is sleeping."

53. Then they laughed at Him, knowing that she was dead.

54. But after putting everyone outside, He took hold of her hand and called out, saying, "Child, arise."

55. And her spirit returned, and she immediately arose; and He directed *that something* to eat should be given to her.

56. And her parents were amazed, but He charged them not to tell anyone what had happened.

CHAPTER NINE

1. Then He called His twelve disciples together *and* gave them power and authority over all the demons, and to heal diseases;

2. And He sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God, and to heal those who were sick.

3. And He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey—neither staffs, nor

49 Mark 5:35
52 John 11:11, 13

54 Luke 7:14
John 11:43

56 Mat. 8:4, 9:30
Mark 5:43

Chap. 9

1 Mat. 10:1
Mark 3:13, 6:7

2 Mat. 10:7, 8
Mark 6:12

3 Mat. 10:9
Mark 6:8

Luke 10:1, 9
Mark 6:8, 22:35

provision bag, nor bread, nor money, nor two coats apiece.

4. And whatever house you may enter, lodge there and go forth from there.

5. But whoever will not receive you, *as* you are departing from that city, shake off even the dust from your feet for a testimony against them."

6. Then they went out *and* passed through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

7. Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all the things *that* were being done by Him; and he was perplexed because it was said by some that John had been raised from *the* dead,

8. And by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the ancient prophets had arisen.

9. And Herod said, "I beheaded John, but Who is this about Whom I hear such things?" And he desired to see Him.

10. Now when they returned, the apostles related to Him everything they had done. Then He took them *and* withdrew privately into a desert place of a city called Bethsaida.

11. And when the multitudes knew *it*, they followed Him; and He received them *and* spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and He healed those who had need of healing.

12. But when the day began to decline, the twelve came to Him and said, "Dismiss the multitude, so that they may go into the villages and the country round about, and may find lodging and provisions; for we are here in a desert place."

13. Then He said to them, "You give them *something* to eat." But they said, "There is nothing more than five loaves and two fish with us, unless we go *and* buy food for all the people."

14. For there were about five thousand men. Then He said to His disciples, "Make them sit in companies by fifties."

4 Mat. 10:11
Mark 6:10

5 Mat. 10:14
Acts 13:51

6 Mark 6:12
7 Mat. 14:1

9 Luke 23:8
10 Mat. 14:13

Mark 6:30
12 Mat. 14:15

Mark 6:35
John 6:1, 5

15. And they did so, and made everyone sit down.

16. Then He took the five loaves and the two fish; *and* looking up into heaven, He blessed them and broke *them*, and gave *them* to the disciples to set before the multitude.

17. And they ate, and everyone was satisfied; and that which was left by them was taken up, twelve baskets *full*.

18. Now it came to pass as He was praying alone, and the twelve disciples were with Him, *that* He questioned them, saying, "Whom do the multitudes declare Me to be?"

19. And they answered *and* said, "*Some say* John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and others, that some prophet from ancient times has risen *from the dead*."

20. Then He said to them, "But Whom do you declare Me to be?" And Peter answered *and* said, "The Christ of God."

21. And He charged them, strictly forbidding *them* to tell this to anyone,

22. Saying, "It is necessary for the Son of man to suffer many things, and to be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and to be killed, and to be raised the third day."

23. Then He said to all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and let him take up his cross daily, and let him follow Me;

24. For whoever desires to save his life shall lose it; but whoever will lose his life for My sake shall save it.

25. For what is a man profited by gaining the whole world, if he himself is lost or destroyed?

26. For whoever shall be ashamed of Me and My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and *in the glory* of the Father and of the holy angels.

27. But I tell you in truth, there are

18 Mat. 16:13
Mark 8:27
19 Mat. 14:2
Luke 9:7, 8
20 Mat. 16:16
John 6:69
21 Mat. 16:20
22 Mat. 15:21,
17:22
23 Mat. 10:38,
16:24
Mark 8:34
Luke 14:27
25 Mat. 16:26
Mark 8:36
26 Mat. 10:33
Mark 8:38
2 Tim. 2:12
27 Mat. 15:28
Mark 9:1

some of those standing here who shall not taste of death until they have seen the kingdom of God."

28. Now it came to pass about eight days after these words, that He took Peter and John and James and went up into the mountain to pray.

29. And it came to pass *that* as He prayed, the appearance of His face was changed, and His clothing *became* radiantly white.

30. And suddenly two men *appeared*, talking with Him; they were Moses and Elijah,

31. Who appeared in glory *and* spoke of His departure, which He was about to accomplish in Jerusalem.

32. But Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory, and the two men who were standing with Him.

33. And it came to pass *that*, as these were departing from Him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; now let us make three tabernacles, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—not realizing what he was saying.

34. But as he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they feared as those *three* entered into the cloud.

35. Then a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My Son, the Beloved. Listen to Him!"

36. And as the voice ended, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent, and told no one in those days of anything that they had seen.

37. Now it came to pass *that* on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great multitude met Him.

38. And a man in the crowd immediately cried out, saying, "Master, I beseech You, look upon my son, because he is my only child;

39. And a spirit takes him, and he sud-

28 Mat. 17:1
Mark 9:2
32 Dan. 8:13,
10:9
35 Mat. 3:17
Acts 3:22
36 Mat. 17:9
37 Mat. 17:14
Mark 9:14,
17

denly cries out; and it throws him into convulsions with foaming, and *then* departs from him with difficulty, leaving him bruised.

40. And I besought Your disciples, that they might cast it out; but they were not able."

41. Then Jesus answered *and* said, "O faithless and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you, and bear with you? Bring your son here."

42. And as he was approaching, the demon flung him down and threw *him* into convulsions. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and gave him back to his father.

43. And all were astonished at the majesty of God. And *while* everyone was wondering about all *the things* that Jesus had done, He said to His disciples.

44. "Let these words sink deep into your ears, for the Son of man is about to be delivered into *the* hands of men."

45. But they did not understand this saying; for it was concealed from them, so that they would not perceive it. And they were afraid to ask Him about this saying.

46. Then an argument arose among them *which was* this: who would be *the* greatest among them.

47. And when Jesus perceived the thoughts of their hearts, He took hold of a little child *and* set it by Him,

48. And said to them, "Whoever shall receive this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever shall receive Me receives Him Who sent Me. For the one who is least among you all shall be great."

49. Then John answered *and* said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us."

50. But Jesus said to him, "Do not for-

44 Mat. 17:22

45 Mark 9:32
Luke 2:50,
18:34

46 Mat. 18:1
Mark 9:34

48 Mat. 10:40,
18:5, 23:11,
12

Mark 9:37
John 12:44,
13:20

49 Num. 11:28
Mark 9:38

50 Mat. 12:30
Luke 11:23

bid *him*, because everyone who is not against us is for us."

51. Now it came to pass, when the days were being fulfilled that He should be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.

52. And He sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they came to a village of Samaritans to prepare for Him;

53. But they did not receive Him, because His face was *as if He were* going to Jerusalem.

54. And seeing *this*, His disciples James and John said, "Lord, will You have us call fire to come down from heaven and consume them, as Elijah did?"

55. But He turned *and* rebuked them, and said, "You do not understand of what spirit you are.

56. For the Son of man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save *them*." And they went to another village.

57. Now it came to pass *that* as they were going along the road, someone said to Him, "I will follow You wherever You may go, Lord."

58. But Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven *have* nests; but the Son of man does not have *any* place to lay *His* head."

59. Then He said to another, "Follow Me." And he said, "Lord, allow me first to go and bury my father."

60. But Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God."

61. And another also said, "I will follow You, Lord, but allow me first to bid farewell to those who are at my house."

62. But Jesus said to him, "No one who sets his hand to *the* plow, and looks back at the things behind, is fit for the kingdom of God."

51 Mark 16:19
Acts 1:2

53 John 4:4, 9

54 2 Ki. 1:10,
12

56 John 3:17,
12:47

57 Mat. 8:19

59 Mat. 8:21
61 1 Ki. 19:20

CHAPTER TEN

1. Now after these things, the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them two by two before His face, into every city and place where He Himself was about to come.

2. And so He said to them, "The harvest is indeed great, but the workmen are few. Therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest that He may send out workmen into His harvest.

3. Go forth! Behold, I am sending you out as lambs in *the* midst of wolves.

4. Carry no purse, nor provision bag, nor sandals, and do not salute anyone on the way.

5. But whatever house you may enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house.'

6. And if indeed a son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; but if, on the other hand, *it be* not so, *your peace* shall return to you.

7. And lodge in the same house, eating and drinking that which *is supplied* by them; for the workman is worthy of his hire. Do not move from house to house.

8. And whatever city you may enter, and they receive you, eat the things set before you,

9. And heal the sick in it, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has drawn near to you.'

10. But whatever city you may enter, and they do not receive you, go into the streets *and* say,

11. 'Even the dust of your city, which clings to us, we wipe off against you; yet know this, that the kingdom of God has drawn near to you.'

12. For I tell you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom in that day than for that city.

13. Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which have been taking place in you had taken place in Tyre and

Chap. 10

1 Mat. 10:1
Mark 6:7
2 Mat. 9:37
John 4:35
2 Thes. 3:1
3 Mat. 10:16
4 2 Ki. 4:29
Mat. 10:9
Mark 6:8
Luke 9:3
5 Mat. 10:12
7 Mat. 10:10,
11
1 Cor. 9:4,
10:27
1 Tim. 5:18
9 Mat. 3:2,
4:17, 10:7
Luke 9:2,
10:11
11 Mat. 10:14
Luke 9:5
Acts 13:51,
18:6
12 Mat. 10:15
Mark 6:11
13 Ezek. 3:6
Mat. 11:21

15 Gen. 11:4
Deut. 1:28
Is. 14:13
Jer. 51:53
Ezek. 26:20,
32:18
Mat. 11:23
16 Mat. 10:40
Mark 9:37
John 5:23,
13:20
1 Thes. 4:8
17 Luke 10:1
18 John 12:31,
16:11
Rev. 9:1,
12:8, 9
19 Mark 16:18
Acts 28:5
20 Ex. 32:32
Psa. 69:28
Is. 4:3
Dan. 12:1
Phil. 4:3
Heb. 12:23
Rev. 13:8,
20:12
21 Mat. 11:25
22 Mat. 28:18
John 1:18,
3:35, 5:27,
6:44, 46,
17:2
23 Mat. 13:16
24 1 Pet. 1:10

Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

14. But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you.

15. And you, Capernaum, who have been lifted up to heaven, shall be brought down to *the* grave.

16. The one who hears you hears Me; and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and the one who rejects Me rejects Him Who sent Me."

17. Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us through Your name."

18. And He said to them, "I beheld Satan fall as lightning from heaven.

19. Behold, I give you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall injure you in any way.

20. Yet do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

21. In the same hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit, and said, "I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You did hide these things from *the* wise and intelligent, and did reveal them to babes. Yes, Father, for it was well pleasing in Your sight *to do so*."

22. Then He turned to the disciples *and* said, "All things were delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows Who the Son is, except the Father; and Who the Father is, except the Son, and the one to whom the Son personally chooses to reveal *Him*."

23. And He turned to His disciples *and* said privately, "Blessed *are* the eyes that have seen the things that you see.

24. For I tell you, many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard *them*."

25. Now a certain doctor of the law suddenly stood up, tempting Him and saying, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

26. And He said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?"

27. Then he answered *and* said, "You shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."

28. And He said to him, "You have answered correctly. Do this, and you shall live."

29. But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

30. And taking *it* up, Jesus said, "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and was encircled by thieves; *and* after they had stripped him *of his goods* and inflicted *him with wounds*, they went away, leaving *him* half dead.

31. Now by coincidence, a certain priest went down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side.

32. And in like manner also, a Levite, when he was at the place, came and saw *him*, and passed by on the opposite side.

33. But a certain Samaritan, *as* he was journeying, came to him; and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion.

34. And he went *to him* and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he put him on his own beast *and* brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35. And when he left on the next day, he took out two silver coins *and* gave *them* to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him, and whatever you may expend above *this*, I will repay you when I come back.'

25 Mat. 19:16, 22:35
27 Lev. 19:18 Deut. 6:5
28 Lev. 18:5 Neh. 9:29 Ezek. 20:11, 13, 21 Rom. 10:5
29 Luke 16:15
31 Psa. 38:11
33 John 4:9
35 Mat. 20:2

38 John 11:1, 12:2, 3
39 Luke 8:35 Acts 22:3
1 Cor. 7:32
42 Psa. 27:4

Chap. 11

2 Mat. 6:9

36. Therefore, which of these three seems to you to have been a neighbor of him who fell among the thieves?"

37. And he said, "The one who showed compassion toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "You go and do likewise."

38. Now it came to pass as they were going that He came into a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house.

39. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat down at Jesus' feet and was listening to His message.

40. But Martha was distracted because of much serving; and she came *to Jesus and* said, "Lord, is it of no concern to You that my sister has left me to serve alone? Now then, speak to her, so that she will help me."

41. Then Jesus answered *and* said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are full of care and troubled about many things;

42. But there is one need *above all else*; and Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken from her."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. Now it came to pass *that* as He was praying in a certain place, when He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us how to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

2. And He said to them, "When you pray, say, 'Our Father Who *is* in heaven, hallowed be Your name; Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, *so* also upon the earth.

3. Give us our bread *as* needed day by day;

4. And forgive us our sins, as we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.' "

5. Then He said to them, "Who among you has a friend that he shall go to at

midnight, and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves;

6. For a friend of mine has come to me on a journey, and I do not have anything to set before him';

7. And from within he shall answer, saying, 'Do not disturb me. The door has already been shut, and my children are in bed with me. I cannot get up to give to you.'

8. I say to you, even if he will not rise to give to him on account of being his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as much as he needs.

9. And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.★

10. For everyone who asks receives; and the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, it shall be opened.

11. But which of you who *is* a father, if a son shall ask for bread, will give him a stone? Or if *he shall ask for* a fish, will give him a serpent instead of a fish?

12. Or if he shall ask *for* an egg, will give him a scorpion?

13. Therefore if you, being evil, know *how* to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father Who *is* in heaven give *the* Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

14. Now He was casting out a demon, and it was dumb; but it came to pass *that* when the demon had gone out, the *one who had been* dumb spoke. And the multitudes were amazed.

15. But some of them said, "He is casting out demons by *the power of* Beelzebub, prince of the demons."

16. And others, tempting Him, were seeking a sign from heaven.

17. But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house *divided* against a house falls.

8 Luke 18:1

9 Mat. 7:7, 21:22

Mark 11:24

John 15:7

Jas. 1:6

1 John 3:22

11 Mat. 7:9

14 Mat. 9:32, 12:22

15 Mat. 9:34, 12:24

Luke 11:18, 19

16 Mat. 12:38, 16:1

17 Mat. 12:25

Mark 3:24

John 2:25

★ The force of the Greek means: ask, and keep on asking; seek, and keep on seeking; knock, and keep on knocking.

18. And if Satan also is divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? *Consider now*, because you are saying *that* I cast out demons by Beelzebub.

19. And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Because of this, they shall be your judges.

20. But if I by *the* finger of God cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

21. When a strong *man* who is armed guards his own dwelling, his goods are safe.

22. But when a stronger man than he comes upon *him*, he overcomes him, *and* takes away his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoil.

23. The one who is not with Me is against Me, and the one who does not gather with Me scatters.

24. When the unclean spirit has gone out of a man, it goes through waterless places, seeking rest; and *when it does* not find *any*, it says, 'I will return to the house from which I came out.'

25. And when it comes, it finds *it* swept and adorned.

26. Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they enter in *and* dwell there; and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first."

27. And it came to pass *that* as He spoke these things, a certain woman lifted up *her* voice from the multitude *and* said to Him, "Blessed *is* the womb that bore You, and *the* breasts that You sucked."

28. And He said, "Yes, rather, blessed *are* those who hear the Word of God and keep it."

29. Now when the multitudes had crowded around even more, He began to say, "This is an evil generation, seeking after a sign; but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.

20 Ex. 8:19

21 Mat. 12:29

Mark 3:27

22 Is. 53:12

Col. 2:15

23 Mat. 12:30

24 Mat. 12:43

26 John 5:14

2 Pet. 2:20

Heb. 6:4, 10:26

27 Luke 1:28, 48

28 Mat. 7:21

Luke 8:21

Jas. 1:25

29 Mat. 12:38, 39

30. For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, in the same way also shall the Son of man be *a sign* to this generation.

31. *The* queen of *the* south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and shall condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here.

32. *The* men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it, because they repented at Jonah's proclamation; and behold, a greater than Jonah *is* here.

33. Now no one who lights a lamp sets it in a secret *place* or under a bushelbasket, but on a lampstand, so that those who are entering may see the light.

34. The light of the body is the eye. Therefore, when your eye is without guile, your whole body is light; but when *your eye* is evil, your body also *is* dark.

35. Therefore, beware *that* the light that *is* in you is not darkness.

36. Now then, if your whole body *is* light, not having any part dark, it shall be full of light, as when a lamp shining brightly gives you light."

37. Now while He was speaking, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him; and He went in *and* sat down.

38. But the Pharisee, seeing *this*, wondered why He had not first washed before dinner.

39. Then the Lord said to him, "Now, you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are full of greediness and wickedness.

40. Fools, *did* not He Who made the outside also make the inside?

41. Rather, give alms *from* the things that are within; and behold, all things are clean to you.

42. But woe to you, Pharisees! For

30 Jonah 1:17, 2:10
31 1 Ki. 10:1
32 Jonah 3:5
33 Mat. 5:15
Mark 4:21
Luke 8:16
34 Mat. 6:22
38 Mark 7:3
39 Mat. 23:25
Tit. 1:15
41 Is. 58:7
Dan. 4:27
Luke 12:33
42 Mat. 23:23

43 Mat. 23:6
Mark 12:38, 39
44 Psa. 5:9
Mat. 23:27
46 Mat. 23:4
47 Mat. 23:29
49 Mat. 23:34
51 Gen. 4:8
2 Chr. 24:20, 21
52 Mat. 23:13

you pay tithes of mint and rue and every herb, but you pass over the judgment and the love of God. It is obligatory *for you* to do these things, and not to set aside those *lesser things*.

43. Woe to you, Pharisees! For you love the chief seat in the synagogues and the salutations in the market-places.

44. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are as unseen tombs, and men who walk over *them* do not know *it*."

45. And one of the doctors of the law answered *and* said to Him, "Teacher, *by* saying these things You are also insulting us."

46. And He said, "Woe to you also, doctors of the law! For you weigh men down *with* burdens heavy to bear, but you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers.

47. Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, whom your fathers killed.

48. Therefore, you are bearing witness and consenting to the works of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and you build their tombs.

49. Because of this, the wisdom of God also said, 'I will send prophets and apostles to them; and *some* of them they shall kill, and *others they shall* drive out

50. So that the blood of all the prophets, poured out from *the* foundation of *the* world, may be required of this generation

51. From the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias, who perished between the altar and the house *of God*.'

Yes, I tell you, it shall be required of this generation.

52. Woe to you, doctors of the law! For you have taken away the key of knowledge; you yourselves did not enter, and you prevented those who were entering."

53. And as He was saying these things to them, the scribes and the Pharisees began vehemently to press and provoke Him to speak about many things,

54. While they kept a close watch on Him, seeking to catch something out of His mouth so that they might accuse Him.

CHAPTER TWELVE

1. During this *time*, an innumerable multitude was gathering, *crowding* so *close* together that they were stepping on one another. First of all He began to speak to His disciples, *saying*, "Guard yourselves from the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy;

2. For there is nothing covered that shall not be uncovered, nor hidden that shall not be known.

3. Therefore, whatever you have spoken in the darkness shall be heard in the light; and what you have spoken in the ear in closed rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops.

4. But I tell you, My friends, you should not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that are not able to do anything more.

5. But I will show you Whom you should fear. Fear Him Who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into the *fire of Gehenna*. Yes, I tell you, fear Him!

6. Are not five sparrows sold for two coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God.

7. But even the hairs of your head have all been numbered. Therefore, do not be afraid; you are of greater value than many sparrows.

8. And I tell you, everyone who shall confess Me before men shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God;

9. But the one who has denied Me be-

54 Mark 12:13

Chap. 12

1 Mat. 16:6,
12
Mark 8:15
2 Mat. 10:26
Mark 4:22
Luke 8:17
4 Is. 51:7, 8,
12, 13
Jer. 1:8
Mat. 10:28
John 15:14,
15
6 Mat. 10:29
8 Mat. 10:32
Mark 8:38
1 John 2:23
2 Tim. 2:12

10 Mat. 12:31,
32
Mark 3:28
1 John 5:16
11 Mat. 10:19
Mark 13:11
14 John 18:36
15 1 Tim. 6:7
19 Eccl. 11:9
Jas. 5:5
1 Cor. 15:32
20 Job 20:22,
27:8
Psa. 39:6,
52:7
Jer. 17:11
Jas. 4:14
21 Mat. 6:20
Luke 12:33
Jas. 2:5
1 Tim. 6:18,
19
22 Mat. 6:25

fore men shall be denied before the angels of God.

10. And everyone who shall say a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but the one who has blasphemed against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven.

11. But when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious *about* how or what you should reply in defense, or what you should say;

12. For the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that same hour what needs to be said."

13. Then one from the multitude said to Him, "Master, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

14. But He said to him, "Man, who has appointed Me a judge or a divider over you?"

15. And He said to them, "Watch out, and keep yourselves from covetousness, for no one's life is in the abundance of the things that he possesses."

16. Then He spoke a parable to them, saying, "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth abundantly.

17. And he was reasoning within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to lay up my fruit?'

18. And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my granaries and build greater *ones*, and there will I lay up all my produce and my good things.

19. Then I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many good things laid up for many years; take your rest, eat, drink, *and* be merry." '

20. But God said to him, 'Fool, this night your soul shall be required of you; and to whom will you leave what you have prepared for yourself?'

21. So *shall it be* to the one who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

22. And He said to His disciples, "Because of this, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you

shall eat; nor about your body, what you shall put on.

23. The life is more than food, and the body *is more* than clothing.

24. Consider the ravens; for they do not sow, nor reap; neither have they a storehouse or granary; but God feeds them. *Of* how much greater value are you than the birds?

25. And which one of you, *by* taking *careful* thought, has the power to add one cubit to his stature?

26. Therefore, if you do not have the power *to do* even *the* least, why are you anxious about the rest?

27. Consider the lilies, how they grow; they do not labor, nor do they spin; but I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory was adorned like one of these.

28. But if God so adorns the grass that today is in the field, and tomorrow is cast into an oven, how much more *shall He clothe* you, O *you* of little faith?

29. Then do not be seeking what you shall eat or what you shall drink, and do not be anxious.

30. For all the nations of the world seek after these things; and your Father knows that you have need of these things.

31. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.

32. Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father delights in giving you the kingdom.

33. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make for yourselves purses *that* do not grow old, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief can come near, and no moth can destroy.

34. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

35. Let your loins be girded about and *your* lamps burning,

36. And you yourselves be like men who are waiting for their lord, whenever

24 Job 38:41
Psa. 147:9
31 Mat. 6:33
32 Mat. 11:25,
26
33 Mat. 6:20
19:21
Luke 16:9
Acts 2:45,
4:34
1 Tim. 6:19
35 Mat. 25:1
1 Pet. 1:13
Eph. 6:14

37 Mat. 24:46
39 Mat. 24:43
2 Pet. 3:10
1 Thes. 5:2
Rev. 3:3,
16:15
40 Mat. 24:44,
25:13
Mark 13:33
Luke 21:34,
36
2 Pet. 3:12
1 Thes. 5:6
42 Mat. 24:45,
25:21
1 Cor. 4:2
44 Mat. 24:47
45 Mat. 24:48
46 Mat. 24:51
47 Num. 15:30
Deut. 25:2
John 9:41,
15:22
Acts 17:30
48 Lev. 5:17
1 Tim. 1:13

he shall return from the wedding feast; so that when he comes and knocks, they may immediately open to him.

37. Blessed *are* those servants whom the lord, when he comes, shall find watching. Truly I say to you, he will gird himself, and will make them sit down, and will come *and* serve them.

38. And if he comes in the second watch, or comes in the third watch, and finds *them watching*, blessed are those servants.

39. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.

40. Now you, therefore, be ready; for the Son of man is coming in an hour *that* you do not think."

41. Then Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You speaking this parable to us *only*, or also to all?"

42. And the Lord said, "Who then is the wise and faithful steward, whom the lord shall put in charge of his household, to give *to each one* the portion of food in season?

43. Blessed *is* that servant whom the lord, when he comes, shall find so doing.

44. Of a truth, I tell you, he will set him over all his possessions.

45. But if that servant shall say in his heart, 'My lord delays *his* coming,' and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidservants, and to be gluttonous and become drunk,

46. The lord of that servant will come in a day that he does not expect, and in an hour that he does not know, and will cut him asunder, and will appoint his portion with the unbelievers.

47. And that servant who knew the will of his lord, but did not prepare, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*;

48. But the one who did not know,

and did *things* worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For to whomever much has been given, from him shall much be required; and to whom much has been committed, from him they will demand the more.

49. I came to cast fire into the earth, and what will I, if it already be kindled?

50. For I have a baptism to be baptized *with*, and how burdened I am until it be accomplished!

51. Do you think that I came to bring peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division;

52. Because from this time forward there shall be five in one house divided, three against two and two against three.

53. Father shall be divided against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against mother; mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

54. Then He also said to the multitudes, "When you see a cloud rising up from *the* west, immediately you say, 'A rainstorm is coming.' And so it happens.

55. And when a south wind *is* blowing, you say, 'It will be hot.' And it happens.

56. Hypocrites! You know *how* to discern the appearance of the earth and the sky; how then do you not discern this time?

57. And why even among yourselves do you not judge what *is* right?

58. For as you are going with your adversary before *the* magistrate, be diligent to settle with him *while* you are on the way; lest he drag you off to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer cast you into prison.

59. I tell you, *there is* no way *that* you shall come out of there until you have paid the very last coin."

49 Luke 12:51
50 Mat. 20:22
Mark 10:38
51 Mic. 7:6
Mat. 10:34
Luke 12:49
John 7:43,
9:16, 10:19
52 Mat. 10:35,
16:2
58 Psal. 32:6
Prov. 25:8
Is. 55:6
Mat. 5:25
59 Mark 12:19

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1. Now at the same time, *there* were present some who were telling Him about the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

2. And Jesus answered *and* said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were sinners above all Galileans, because they suffered such things?

3. No, I tell you; but if you do not repent, you shall all likewise perish.

4. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, do you suppose that these were debtors above all men who dwelt in Jerusalem?

5. No, I tell you; but if you do not repent, you shall all likewise perish."

6. And He spoke this parable: "A certain *man* had planted a fig tree in his vineyard; and he came seeking fruit on it, but he did not find *any*.

7. Then he said to the vinedresser, 'Look *here!* For three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and have not found *any*. Cut it down. Why should it *continue* to waste *space* in the ground?'

8. But he answered *and* said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig about it and put *in* manure,

9. And *see* if in fact it will bear fruit; but if not, after that you shall cut it down.' "

10. Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on *one of* the Sabbaths;

11. And lo, there was a woman who had *been afflicted with* a spirit of infirmity *for* eighteen years, and she was bent over and unable to straighten herself up.

12. And when He saw her, Jesus called *her* to *Him* and said to her, "Woman, you have been loosed from your infirmity."

13. Then He laid *His* hands on her; and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God.

Chap. 13

4 Mat. 18:24
Luke 11:4
6 Is. 5:2
Mat. 21:19
13 Mark 16:18
Acts 9:17

14. But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, *and* said to the people, "There are six days in which *men* are obligated to work; therefore, during those *days* come and be healed, but not on the Sabbath day."

15. Therefore, the Lord answered him and said, "Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the manger and lead it away to drink?"

16. And is it not *just as* necessary for this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound, lo, eighteen years, to be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?"

17. And after He said these things, all those -who opposed Him were ashamed; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were being done by Him.

18. Then He said, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it?"

19. It is like a *tiny* mustard seed, which a man took and cast into his garden; and it grew and developed into a great tree, and the birds of heaven roosted in its branches."

20. And again He said, "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God?"

21. It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour until all was leavened."

22. Now He was going through *the* cities and villages teaching, *while* making progress toward Jerusalem.

23. And one said to Him, "Lord, *are* those who are being saved few?" Then He said to them,

24. "Strive with *your* whole being to enter in through the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, will seek to enter in, but shall not be able.

25. Once the Master of the house has risen up and has shut the door, and you begin to stand outside the door

14 Ex. 20:9
Mat. 12:10
Mark 3:2
Luke 6:7,
14:3
15 Luke 14:5
16 Luke 19:9
18 Mat. 13:31
Mark 4:30
21 Mat. 13:33
22 Mat. 9:35
Mark 6:6
24 Mat. 7:13
John 7:34,
8:21, 13:33
Rom. 9:31
25 Psa. 32:6
Is. 55:6
Mat. 7:23,
25:10, 12
Luke 6:46

27 Psa. 6:8
Mat. 7:23,
25:41
Luke 13:25
28 Mat. 8:11,
12, 13:42,
24:51
30 Mat. 19:30,
20:16
Mark 10:31
32 Heb. 2:10
34 Mat. 23:37
35 Lev. 26:31
32
Psa. 69:25,
118:26
Is. 1:7
Dan. 9:27
Mic. 3:12
Mat. 21:9
Mark 11:10
Luke 19:38
John 12:13

and knock, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us'; then shall He answer *and* say to you, 'I do not know you *or* where you are from.'

26. And you shall begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You have taught in our streets.'

27. And He shall say, 'I tell you, I do not know you *or* where you are from. Depart from Me, all *you* workers of unrighteousness.'

28. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves are cast out.

29. Then they shall come from *the* east and *the* west, and from *the* north and *the* south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

30. And behold, there are *the* last who shall be first, and *the* first who shall be last."

31. On the same day certain Pharisees came to Him, saying, "Go out and depart from this place because Herod desires to kill You."

32. And He said to them, "Go *and* say to that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and complete healings today and tomorrow, and the third *day* I shall be perfected;

33. But it is necessary for Me to proceed today and tomorrow and the following *day*; because it is not possible for a prophet to perish outside of Jerusalem.'

34. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those who have been sent to you; how often would I have gathered your children, as a hen *gathers* her brood under *her* wings, but you refused!

35. Behold, your house is left to you desolate. And truly I say to you, you shall not see Me at all until *the time* comes that you say, 'Blessed is He Who comes in *the* name of *the* Lord.' "

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

1. Now it came to pass, when He went into a house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees on *the* Sabbath to eat bread, that they were watching Him.

2. And behold, there was a certain man *who had* dropsy *standing* in front of Him.

3. Then Jesus answered *and* spoke to the doctors of the law and to *the* Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"

4. But they were silent. And after taking hold *of him*, He healed him and *then* let *him* go.

5. And He answered *and* said to them, "Who among you shall have an ass or an ox fall into a pit, and will not immediately *pull* it out on the Sabbath day?"

6. But again, they were not able to answer Him concerning these things.

7. Then, observing how those who were invited were choosing out the chief places, He spoke a parable to them, saying,

8. "When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit in the chief place, lest someone more honorable than you has been invited by him.

9. For the one who invited you and him shall come to you and say, 'Give place to this one,' and then shall you begin with shame to take the last place.

10. But when you are invited, go and sit down in the last place, so that when the one who invited you comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, come up higher.' Then shall you have honor in the presence of those who are sitting *at the table* with you.

11. For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and the one who humbles himself shall be exalted."

12. And He also said to him who had invited Him, "When you make a dinner or supper, do not call your friends,

Chap. 14

3 Mat. 12:10
5 Ex. 23:5
Deut. 22:4
Luke 13:15
10 Prov. 25:6,
7
11 Job 22:29
Psa. 18:27
Prov. 29:23
Mat. 23:12
Luke 18:14
Jas. 4:6
1 Pet. 5:5

nor your brethren, nor your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return, and a recompense be made to you.

13. But when you make a feast, call *the* poor, *the* crippled, *the* lame, and *the* blind;

14. And you shall be blessed, for they do not have *the means* to repay you. But you shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

15. Then one of those who sat *at the table* with *Him*, after hearing these things, said to Him, "Blessed *is* the one who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God."

16. But He said to him, "A certain man made a great supper, and invited many.

17. And he sent his servants at supper time to say to those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.'

18. But everyone with one *consent* began to excuse himself. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I need to go out to see it; I beg you to have me excused.'

19. And another said, 'I have bought five pairs of oxen, and I am going to try them out; I beg you to have me excused.'

20. And another said, 'I have married a wife, and because of this I am unable to come.'

21. And that servant came and reported these things to his lord. Then the master of the house was angry; *and* he said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor, *the* crippled, *the* lame and *the* blind.'

22. And the servant said, 'Sir, it has been done as you commanded, and there is still room.'

23. Then the lord said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, so that my house may be filled.

13 Neh. 8:10, 12
15 Rev. 19:9
16 Mat. 22:2
17 Prov. 9:2, 5

24. For I tell you, not one of those men who were invited shall taste of my supper.' "

25. And great multitudes were going with Him; and He turned *and* said to them,

26. "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.

27. And whoever does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple;

28. For which one of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has *sufficient* for its completion;

29. Lest perhaps, after he has laid its foundation and is not able to finish, all who see *it* begin to mock him,

30. Saying, 'This man began to build, and was not able to finish'?

31. Or what king, when he goes out to engage another king in war, does not first sit down *and* take counsel, whether he will be able with ten thousand to meet him who is coming against him with twenty thousand?

32. But if not, while his *enemy* is still far off, he sends ambassadors and desires the *terms* for peace.

33. In the same way also, each one of you who does not forsake all that he possesses cannot be My disciple.

34. Salt *is* good; but if the salt becomes tasteless, with what shall it be seasoned?

35. It is fit neither for the land, nor for the manure; *but* they cast it out. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear."

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

1. Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were drawing near to hear Him;

2. And the Pharisees and the scribes criticized *Him*, saying, "This *man*

24 Mat. 21:43, 22:8

Acts 13:46

26 Deut. 13:6,

33:9

Mat. 10:37

Rom. 9:13

Rev. 12:11

27 Mat. 16:24

Mark 8:34

Luke 9:23

2 Tim. 3:12

28 Prov. 24:27

34 Mat. 5:13

Mark 9:50

Chap. 15

1 Mat. 9:10

2 Acts 11:3

Gal. 2:12

welcomes sinners and eats with them."

3. Then He spoke this parable to them, saying,

4. "Which man of you who has a hundred sheep, and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost, *searching* until he finds it?

5. And when he finds *it*, he lays *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing;

6. And after coming to his house, he calls together *his* friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.'

7. I tell you that likewise, *there* shall be joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, *more* than over ninety-nine righteous ones who have no need of repentance.

8. Or what woman who has ten coins, if she should lose one, does not light a lamp and sweep the house, and search diligently until she finds *it*?

9. And after finding *it*, she calls together *her* friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I lost.'

10. I tell you *that* in like manner, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

11. Then He said, "A certain man had two sons;

12. And the younger of them said to *his* father, 'Father, give me that portion of the property which falls to me.' And he divided to them *his* living.

13. And not many days after, the younger son gathered everything together *and* departed into a distant country. And there he wasted *all* his substance, living *in* debauchery.

14. But after he had spent everything, there arose a severe famine throughout that country, and he began to be in need.

15. Then he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that coun-

4 Mat. 18:12

6 1 Pet. 2:10,

25

7 Luke 5:32

8 Mat. 18:28

12 Mark 12:44

try, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16. And he was longing to fill his stomach with the husks that the swine were eating, but no one gave *anything* to him.

17. And when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have *an* abundance of bread, and I am dying of hunger?

18. I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you;

19. And I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired servants."

20. And he arose *and* went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and ran *and* embraced him, and ardently kissed him.

21. And his son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

22. But the father said to his servant, 'Bring out a robe, the best robe, and clothe him, and give *him* a ring for his hand and sandals for *his* feet;

23. And bring the fattened calf and kill *it*, and let us eat and be merry.

24. For this my son was dead, but is alive again; and he was lost, but is found.' And they began to be merry.

25. But his elder son was in a field; and when he was coming *back*, *and* approached the house, he heard music and dancing.

26. And after calling one of the servants nearby, he inquired what these things might be.

27. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come *home*, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him safe and well.'

28. Then he was angry and would not go in. As a result, his father came out and pleaded with him.

20 Acts 2:39
Eph. 2:13, 17
21 Psa. 51:4
24 Luke 15:32

29. But he answered *and* said to *his* father, 'Behold, I have served you so many years, and never did I transgress your commandment; yet you never gave me a kid, so that I might make merry with my friends;

30. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed the fattened calf for him.'

31. Then he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that *is* mine is yours.

32. But it was fitting to make merry and rejoice because your brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, but is found.' "

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

1. And He also said to His disciples, "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and he was accused of wasting his *master's* goods.

2. And after calling him, he said to him, 'What *is* this I hear concerning you? Render an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.'

3. Now the steward said within himself, 'What shall I do, for my lord is taking away the stewardship from me? I am not able to dig; I am ashamed to beg.

4. I know what I will do, that, when I have been removed *from* the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.'

5. And after calling each one of his lord's debtors to *him*, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my lord?'

6. And he said, 'A hundred baths of oil.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down immediately *and* write fifty.'

7. Then to another he said, 'And how much do you owe?' And he said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' And he

32 Luke 15:24

Chap. 16

6 Ezek. 45:10,
11, 14

said to him, 'Take your bill and write eighty.'

8. And the lord praised the unrighteous steward, because he had acted prudently. For the children of this world are more prudent in their own generation than the children of light.

9. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; so that, when you fail, they may receive you into the everlasting dwellings.

10. The one who *is* faithful in *the things that are* least is also faithful in much; and the one who *is* unrighteous in *the things that are* least is also unrighteous in much.

11. Therefore, if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will entrust to you the true riches?

12. And if you have not been faithful in that which *is* another's, who will give to you your own?

13. No servant is able to serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and he will love the other; or he will hold to *the* one and will despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

14. Now the Pharisees who were also covetous, heard all these things; and they ridiculed Him.

15. And He said to them, "You are those who justify themselves before men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination before God.

16. The Law and the Prophets *were* until John; from that time the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone zealously strives to enter it.

17. But it is easier *for* heaven and earth to pass away than *for* one tittle of the law to fail.

18. Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and everyone who marries a woman

8 John 12:36
Eph. 5:8

1 Thes. 5:5

9 Dan. 4:27

Mat. 6:19,

19:21

Luke 11:41

1 Tim. 6:17-

19

10 Mat. 25:21

Luke 19:17

13 Mat. 6:24

14 Mat. 23:14

15 1 Sam. 16:7

Psa. 7:9

Luke 10:29

16 Mat. 4:17,

11:12, 13

Luke 7:29

17 Psa. 102:26,

27

Is. 40:8, 51:6

Mat. 5:18

1 Pet. 1:25

18 Mat. 5:32,

19:9

Mark 10:11

1 Cor. 7:10,

11

who is divorced from her husband commits adultery.

19. Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, and daily indulged himself in luxury.

20. And there was a certain poor man named Lazarus, who was laid at his porch, full of sores.

21. And he longed to be nourished with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table; and the dogs even came and licked his sores.

22. Now it came to pass *that* the poor man died, and he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also died and was buried.

23. And in the grave he lifted up his eyes and was in torment, *for* he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24. And he cried out *and* said, 'Father Abraham, have compassion on me and send Lazarus, so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am suffering because of this flame.'

25. Then Abraham said, 'Child, remember that in your lifetime you received good things to the full, and likewise Lazarus evil things. But now he is comforted, and you are suffering.'

26. And besides all these things, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed; so that those who desire to pass from here to you are not able, nor can those from there pass to us.'

27. And he said, 'I beseech you then, father, that you would send him to my father's house,

28. For I have five brothers; so that he may earnestly testify to them, in order that they also may not come to this place of torment.'

29. Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets. Let them hear them.'

24 Is. 66:24

Zech. 14:12

Mark 9:44

25 Job 21:13

Luke 6:24

29 Is. 8:20,

34:16

John 5:39, 45

Acts 15:21,

17:11

30. But he said, 'No, Father Abraham, but if one from *the* dead would go to them, they would repent.'

31. And he said to him, 'If they will not hear Moses and the prophets, they would not be persuaded even if one rose from *the* dead.' "

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

1. Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses will come, but woe *to the one* by whom they come!

2. It is better for him that a millstone be put around his neck and he be cast into the sea, than that he should cause one of these little ones to offend.

3. Watch yourselves; and if your brother commits a sin against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.

4. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him."

5. Then the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."

6. But the Lord said, "If you had faith as a *tiny* mustard seed, you might say to this sycamine tree, 'Be rooted up, and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

7. But which of you having a servant plowing or shepherding will immediately say *to him when* he comes in from the field, 'Come and sit down *and eat*'?

8. Rather, will he not say to him, 'Prepare what I may eat, and gird yourself, *and* serve me while I eat and drink; and afterwards you may eat and drink'?

9. Is he thankful to that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not.

10. Likewise you also, when you have done all *the* things that are com-

31 John 12:10, 11

Chap. 17

1 Mat. 18:6, 7
Mark 9:42
1 Cor. 11:19

3 Lev. 19:17
Prov. 17:10
Mat. 18:15, 21

Jas. 5:19
6 Mat. 17:20, 21:21
Mark 9:23, 11:23

8 Luke 12:37
10 Job 22:3, 35:7
Psa. 16:2

Mat. 25:30
Rom. 3:12, 11:35
1 Cor. 9:16, 17

Philem. 11

11 Luke 9:51, 52
John 4:4

12 Lev. 13:46
14 Lev. 13:2, 14:2

Mat. 8:4
Luke 5:14

19 Mat. 9:22
Mark 5:34, 10:52

Luke 7:50, 8:48, 18:42

21 Luke 17:23
John 1:26

Rom. 14:17
22 Mat. 9:15

John 17:12
23 Mat. 24:23

Mark 13:21
Luke 21:8

24 Mat. 24:27

manded you, say, 'We are unprofitable servants, because we have done that which we were obligated to do.' "

11. Now it came to pass that as He was going up to Jerusalem, He passed through *the* middle of Samaria and Galilee.

12. And as He went into a certain village, He was met *by* ten leprous men, who stood at a distance.

13. And they lifted up *their* voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"

14. And when He saw *them*, He said to them, "Go show yourselves to the priests." And it came to pass *that* while they were going, they were cleansed.

15. Then one of them, seeing that he was healed, turned back, glorifying God with a loud voice;

16. And he fell on *his* face at His feet, giving thanks to Him; and he was a Samaritan.

17. And answering, Jesus said, "Were not ten cleansed? But where *are* the *other* nine?"

18. Are not *any* found returning to give glory to God except this stranger?"

19. Then He said to him, "Arise *and* go. Your faith has healed you."

20. Now when the Pharisees demanded *of Him* when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation;

21. Neither shall they say, 'Behold, *it is* here!' Or, 'Behold, *it is* there!' For behold, the kingdom of God is *standing* in the midst of you."

22. Then He said to the disciples, "*The* days will come when you shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and shall not see *it*."

23. And they shall say to you, 'Look here,' or, 'Look there.' Do not go, neither follow *them*."

24. For as the light of day, whose

light shines from *one end* under heaven to the *other end* under heaven, so also shall the Son of man be in His day.

25. But first it is necessary *for* Him to suffer many things and to be rejected by this generation.

26. Now as it was in the days of Noah, so also shall it be in the days of the Son of man.

27. They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day *that* Noah went into the ark, and the Flood came and destroyed *them* all.

28. And it was the same way in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building;

29. But on the day *that* Lot went out from Sodom, it rained fire and sulphur from heaven and destroyed *them* all.

30. This *is* how it shall be in the day *that* the Son of man is revealed.

31. In that day, let not the one who is on the housetop, and his goods in the house, come down to take them away; and likewise, let not the one who is in the field return to the things behind.

32. Remember Lot's wife.

33. Whoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whoever shall lose *his life* shall preserve it.

34. I tell you, in that night there shall be two in one bed; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

35. Two *women* shall be grinding together; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

36. Two men shall be in the field; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left."

37. And they answered, saying to Him, "Where, Lord?" And He said to them, "Where the body *is*, there will the eagles be gathered together."

25 Mark 8:31, 9:31, 10:33
Luke 9:22
26 Gen. 7
Mat. 24:37
28 Gen. 19
29 Gen. 19:16, 24
30 2 Thes. 1:7
31 Mat. 24:17
Mark 13:15
32 Gen. 19:26
33 Mat. 10:39, 16:25
Mark 8:35
Luke 9:24
John 12:25
34 Mat. 24:40, 41
1 Thes. 4:17
37 Job 39:30
Mat. 24:28

Chap 18

1 Luke 11:5, 21:36
Rom. 12:12
Eph. 6:18
Col. 4:2
1 Thes. 5:17
5 Luke 11:8
7 Rev. 6:10
8 2 Pet. 3:8, 9
Heb. 10:37
9 Luke 10:29, 16:15
11 Psa. 135:2
Is. 1:15, 58:2
Rev. 3:17
★ Greek means "the sinner."

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

1. And He also spoke a parable to them to show that it is necessary to pray always, and not to give up,

2. Saying, "There was in a certain city a certain judge who neither feared God nor respected man.

3. And there was a widow in that city; and she kept coming to him, saying, 'Avenge me of my adversary.'

4. Now for a time he would not; but afterwards he said within himself, 'Although I do not fear God and do not respect man,

5. Yet because this widow is causing me trouble, I will avenge her, lest she wear me out by *her* continual coming.' "

6. Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says.

7. And shall not God execute vengeance for His elect, who cry out to Him day and night, and patiently watch over them?

8. I tell you that He will execute vengeance for them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, shall He find the *true* faith on the earth?"

9. And to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, He also spoke this parable:

10. "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one *was* a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

11. The Pharisee stood and prayed with himself in this manner: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers—or even as this tax collector.

12. I fast twice in the week, *and* I give a tithe *of* everything that I gain.'

13. And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat himself on *the* chest, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner.' ★

14. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled; and the one who humbles himself shall be exalted."

15. Then they brought to Him infants also, so that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them.

16. But Jesus called them to *Him* and said, "Permit the little children to come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.

17. Truly I say to you, whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God like a little child shall in no way enter into it."

18. And a certain ruler asked Him, saying, "Goōd Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

19. Then Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good except one—God.

20. You know the commandments: 'You shall not commit adultery. You shall not commit murder. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness. Honor your father and your mother.' "

21. And he said, "I have kept all these *commandments* from my youth."

22. And after hearing these things, Jesus said to him, "You still lack one thing; sell everything that you have, and distribute to *the* poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come *and* follow Me."

23. But when he heard these things, he became very sorrowful; for he was quite rich.

24. Now when Jesus saw him become so sorrowful, He said, "How difficult *it is* for those who have riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25. For it is easier *for* a camel to go through an eye of a needle than *for* a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

14 Job 22:29
Mat. 23:12
Luke 14:11
Jas. 4:6
1 Pet. 5:5
15 Mat. 19:13
Mark 10:13
16 1 Pet. 2:2
1 Cor. 14:20
17 Mark 10:15
18 Mat. 19:16
Mark 10:17
20 Ex. 20:12,
16
Deut. 5:16-20
Rom. 13:9
Eph. 6:2
Col. 3:20
22 Mat. 6:19,
20, 19:21
1 Tim. 6:19
24 Prov. 11:28
Mat. 19:23
Mark 10:23

27 Jer. 32:17
Zech. 8:6
Mat. 19:26
Luke 1:37
28 Mat. 19:27
29 Deut. 33:9
30 Job 42:10
31 Psa. 22
Is. 53
Mat. 16:21,
17:22, 20:17
Mark 10:32
32 Mat. 27:2
Luke 23:1
John 18:28
Acts 3:13
34 Mark 9:32
Luke 2:50,
9:45
John 10:6,
12:16
35 Mat. 20:29
Mark 10:46

26. And those who heard *this* said, "Who then is able to be saved?"

27. But He said, "The things *that are* impossible with men are possible with God."

28. Then Peter said, "Behold, we have left everything and have followed You."

29. And He said to them, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house, or parents, or brothers, or wife, or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God,

30. Who shall not receive manifold more in this time, and in the age that is coming—eternal life."

31. And after taking the twelve *aside* to *Himself*, He said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that have been written about the Son of man by the prophets shall be fulfilled.

32. For He shall be delivered up to the Gentiles, and shall be mocked and insulted and spit upon.

33. And after scourging *Him*, they shall kill Him; but on the third day, He shall rise again."

34. But they understood none of these things, and this saying was hidden from them, and they did not comprehend what was said.

35. Now it came to pass *that* as He drew near to Jericho, *there was* a certain blind *man* who sat begging beside the road.

36. And hearing a multitude passing by *him*, he asked what this might be.

37. And they told him, "Jesus the Nazarean is passing by."

38. Then he called out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me."

39. And those who were going in front rebuked him, so that he would be silent; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me."

40. Then Jesus stopped *and* commanded him to be brought to Him.

And when he came near, He asked him,

41. Saying, "What do you desire to have Me do for you?" And he said, "Lord, that I may receive sight."

42. Then Jesus said to him, "Receive sight. Your faith has healed you."

43. And immediately he received sight; and he followed Him, glorifying God. Now after seeing *this*, all the people gave praise to God.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

1. Then *Jesus* entered Jericho and was passing through.

2. And behold, a man named *Zaccheus* was *there*. Now he was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.

3. And he was seeking to see Jesus, Who He was; but he was not able because of the multitude, for he was a man of small stature.

4. But after running ahead, in front of *the multitude*, he climbed up into a sycamore *tree* so that he might see Him; for He was about to pass that way.

5. And when He came to the place, Jesus looked up *and* saw him, and said to him, "Zaccheus, make haste to come down, for today it is necessary for Me to stay at your house."

6. And he came down in haste and received Him joyfully.

7. But after seeing *this*, everyone began to criticize, saying, "He has gone in to lodge with a sinful man."

8. Then Zaccheus stood *and* said to the Lord, "Behold, the half of my possessions, Lord, I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I return fourfold."

9. And Jesus said to him, "Today, salvation has come to this house, inasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

10. For the Son of man has come to seek and to save that which is lost."

11. Now as they were listening to

42 Luke 17:19

43 Luke 5:26
Acts 4:21,
11:18

Chap. 19

7 Mat. 9:11

Luke 5:30

8 Ex. 22:1

1 Sam. 12:3

2 Sam. 12:6

Luke 3:14

9 Luke 13:16

Rom. 4:11,

12, 16

Gal. 3:7

10 Mat. 10:6,

15:24, 18:11

11 Acts 1:6

these things, He went on to speak a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately.

12. Therefore, He said, "A certain nobleman set out to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and to return.

13. And after calling ten of his servants, he gave to them ten pounds, and said to them, 'Trade until I come *back*.'

14. But his citizens hated him and sent an ambassador after him, saying, 'We are not willing to have this man reign over us.'

15. And it came to pass that when he returned after receiving the kingdom, he directed that those servants to whom he had given the money be called to him, in order that he might know what each one had gained by trading.

16. And the first one came up, saying, 'Lord, your pound has produced ten pounds.'

17. Then he said to him, 'Well *done*, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.'

18. And the second one came, saying, 'Lord, your pound has made five pounds.'

19. Then he also said to this one, 'And you be over five cities.'

20. But another came, saying, 'Lord, behold your pound, which I kept laid up in a handkerchief.

21. For I was afraid of you, because you are a harsh man. You take up what you did not lay down, and you reap what you did not sow.'

22. Then he said to him, 'Out of your *own* mouth I will judge you, *you* wicked servant! You knew that I am a harsh man, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow.

23. Then why didn't you deposit my

12 Mat. 25:14

Mark 13:34

14 John 1:11

15 Luke 19:23

17 Mat. 25:21

Luke 16:10

21 Mat. 25:24

22 2 Sam. 1:16

Job 15:6

Mat. 12:37,

25:26

money in the bank, so that at my coming I might have received it with interest?’

24. And he said to those who were standing by, ‘Take the pound from him, and give *it* to the one who has ten pounds.’

25. (And they said to him, ‘Lord, he has ten pounds.’)

26. For I tell you that to everyone who has, *more* shall be given; but the one who does not have, even what he has shall be taken from him.

27. Moreover, bring my enemies, those who were not willing *for* me to reign over them, and slay *them* here before me.’ ”

28. And after saying these things, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

29. Now it came to pass *that* as He approached Bethphage and Bethany, toward the mountain called *the Mount of Olives*, He sent two of His disciples,

30. Saying, “Go into the village across from *you*. Upon entering it, you shall find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat; loose it, and bring *it* to Me.

31. And if anyone asks you why you are loosing *it*, this is what you shall say to him: ‘Because the Lord has need of it.’ ”

32. And those who had been sent went *and* found *it* exactly as He had said to them.

33. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, “Why are you loosing the colt?”

34. Then they said, “The Lord has need of it.”

35. And they led it to Jesus; and after laying their garments on the colt, they put Jesus on *it*.

36. Now as He went *along*, they spread their garments in the road.

37. And as He drew near *to the city*, already *being* at the descent of the Mount of Olives, all the multitude of

26 Mat. 13:12,
25:29
Mark 4:25
Luke 8:18
28 Mark 10:32
29 Mat. 21:1
Mark 11:1
35 2 Ki. 9:13
Mat. 21:7
Mark 11:7
John 12:14

38 Psa. 118:26
Luke 2:14,
13:35
Eph. 2:14
40 Hab. 2:11
41 John 11:35
43 Is. 29:3, 4
Jer. 6:3, 6
Luke 21:20
44 1 Ki. 9:7, 8
Mic. 3:12
Dan. 9:24
Mat. 24:2
Mark 13:2
Luke 1:68,
78, 21:6
1 Pet. 2:12
45 Mat. 21:12
Mark 11:11,
15
John 2:14, 15
46 Is. 56:7
Jer. 7:11
47 Mark 11:18
John 7:19,
8:37
48 Acts 16:14

Chap. 20

1 Mat. 21:23

the disciples began to rejoice *and* to praise God with a loud voice for all *the* works of power that they had seen, 38. Saying, “Blessed *be* the King, Who comes in *the* name of *the* Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in *the* highest!”

39. And some of the Pharisees in the multitude said to Him, “Master, rebuke Your disciples.”

40. But He answered *and* said to them, “I tell you that if these were silent, the stones would cry out.”

41. And when He came near *and* saw the city, He wept over it,

42. Saying, “If you had known, even you, at least in this your day, the things for your peace; but now they are hidden from your eyes.

43. For *the* days shall come upon you that your enemies shall cast a rampart about you, and shall enclose you around and keep you in on every side,

44. And shall level you to the ground, and your children within you; and they shall not leave in you a stone upon a stone, because you did not know the season of your visitation.”

45. Then He went into the temple *and* began to cast out those who were selling and those who were buying in it,

46. Saying to them, “It is written, ‘My house is a house of prayer’; but you have made it a den of robbers.”

47. Now He was teaching day by day in the temple; and the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people were seeking to destroy Him,

48. But could not find what they might do; for all the people were listening *intently*, hanging on His *every word*.

CHAPTER TWENTY

1. Now it came to pass on one of those days, as He was teaching the people in the temple and proclaiming the gospel, *that* the chief priests and the

scribes came up with the elders,
2. And spoke to Him, saying, "Tell us by what authority You do these things, and who gave You this authority?"

3. And He answered *and* said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, and you tell Me:

4. The baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men?"

5. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?'

6. But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, for they are persuaded *that* John was a prophet."

7. And they replied *that* they did not know where *it was* from.

8. Then Jesus said to them, "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."

9. And He began to speak this parable to the people: "A certain man planted a vineyard, and leased it out to husbandmen, and left the country for a long time.

10. And in *the harvest* season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, so that they might give him *some* of the fruit from the vineyard; but the husbandmen beat him *and* sent *him* away empty.

11. And after that he sent another servant; but they also beat him and scorned *him and* sent *him* away empty.

12. And after that he sent a third *servant*; but they also wounded him *and* cast *him* out.

13. Then the lord of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps when they see him, they will respect *him*.'

14. But when they saw him, the husbandmen reasoned among themselves, saying, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, so that the inheritance may be ours.'

2 Acts 4:7,
7:27
6 Mat. 14:5,
21:26
Luke 7:29
9 Mat. 21:33
Mark 12:1

15. And they cast him outside the vineyard *and* killed *him*. Therefore, what will the lord of the vineyard do to them?

16. He will come and destroy these husbandmen, and will give the vineyard to others." Now after hearing *this*, they said, "May *it* never be!"

17. But He looked at them *and* said, "What then is this that is written: '*The Stone that the builders rejected, this one has become the head of the corner?*' "

18. Everyone who falls on that Stone shall be broken; but on whomever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.' "

19. And the chief priests and the scribes sought to lay hands on Him in that hour, because they knew that He had spoken this parable against them; but they feared the people.

20. And they kept *Him* under surveillance, *and* sent out secret agents who pretended that they were righteous, so that they might catch Him in His words, in order to deliver Him up to the power and authority of the governor.

21. And they questioned Him, saying, "Master, we realize that You speak and teach rightly, and do not accept *any man's* person, but teach the way of God in truth.

22. Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?"

23. But perceiving their craftiness, He said to them, "Why do you tempt Me?

24. Show Me a silver coin. Whose image and inscription does it have?" And they answered *and* said, "Caesar's."

25. Then He said to them, "Render therefore the things of Caesar to Caesar, and the things of God to God."

26. And they were not able to catch Him in His speech in the presence of the people. But being filled with amazement by His answer, they were silent.

17 Psa. 118:22
Mat. 21:42
18 Dan. 2:34,
35
Mat. 21:44
20 Mat. 22:15
21 Mat. 22:16
Mark 12:14
24 Mat 18:28

27. Then some of the Sadducees, who do not believe there is a resurrection, came *and* questioned Him,
 28. Saying, "Master, Moses wrote to us that if anyone's brother who had a wife should die, and he should die childless, his brother should take his *dead* brother's wife and raise up seed for his brother.
 29. Therefore, there were seven brothers; and the first one, after taking a wife, died childless;
 30. And the second one took the woman, and he died childless;
 31. And the third one took her, and likewise the *rest of the* seven, and died, and did not leave children;
 32. And last of all, the woman died also.
 33. Therefore, in the resurrection, of which of them shall she be wife? For all seven had her as wife."
 34. And Jesus answered *and* said to them, "The children of this age marry and are given in marriage;
 35. But those who are accounted worthy to obtain that age, and the resurrection from *the* dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage;
 36. And neither can they die any more, for they are equal to *the* angels, and are *the* children of God, being children of the resurrection.
 37. But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed *by his words* at the *burning* bush, when he called *the* Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;
 38. For He is not *the* God of *the* dead, but of *the* living; for all live unto Him."
 39. And some of the scribes answered *and* said, "Master, You have spoken well."
 40. And *after that* they did not dare to ask Him any more *questions*.
 41. Then He said to them, "Why do they say *that* the Christ is *the* Son of David?"

27 Mat. 22:23
Mark 12:18
Acts 23:6,
8

36 1 John 3:2
Rom. 8:23
1 Cor. 15:42,
49, 52

37 Ex. 3:6

38 Rom. 6:10,
11

41 Mat. 22:42
Mark 12:35

42. Even David himself says in *the* book of Psalms, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand
 43. Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."'
 44. Therefore, *since* David calls Him Lord, how is He his Son?"
 45. And as all the people were listening, He said to His disciples,
 46. "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk in robes, and love salutations in the marketplaces, and *the* chief seats in the synagogues, and *the* chief places at the suppers;
 47. Who devour the houses of widows, and as a pretext pray at great length. These shall receive the greater judgment."

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

1. When He looked up, He saw the rich men tossing their offerings into the treasury.
 2. Then He also saw a certain poor widow drop in two small coins.
 3. And He said, "Of a truth, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all *of them*;
 4. For all these have from their abundance cast into the offerings to God; but she, out of her poverty, did put *in* all the livelihood that she had."
 5. And while some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and consecrated gifts, He said,
 6. "*As for* these things that you now see, *the* days will come in which *there* shall not be left *one* stone upon another that shall not be thrown down."
 7. And they asked Him, saying, "Master, when shall these things be? And what *shall be* the sign that these things are about to take place?"
 8. And He said, "Beware *that* you be not deceived; for many shall come in My name, saying, 'I am *Christ*'; and, 'The time has drawn near.' Therefore,

42 Psa. 110:1
Acts 2:34

45 Mat. 23:1
Mark 12:38

46 Mat. 23:5
Luke 11:43

47 Mat. 23:14

Chap 21

1 Mark 12:41
2 Mark 12:42

3 2 Cor. 8:12

5 Mat. 24:1
Mark 13:1

6 Luke 19:44

8 Mat. 3:2,
4:17, 24:4

Mark 13:5
Eph. 5:6
2 Thes. 2:3

- do not go after them.
9. And when you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be terrified; for it is necessary *that* these things take place first, but the end *will* not *come* immediately.”
10. Then He said to them, “Nation shall rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom;
11. There shall also be great earthquakes in different places, and famines and pestilences; and there shall be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.
12. But before all these things, they shall lay their hands on you and shall persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to synagogues and prisons, *and* bringing *you* before kings and governors, for My name’s sake.
13. But it shall turn to you for a testimony.
14. Settle therefore in your hearts not to premeditate what you shall answer.
15. For I will give you a mouth and wisdom that all those who are opposing you shall not be able to reply to nor resist.
16. But you shall be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they shall put *some* of you to death;
17. And you shall be hated by all because of My name.
18. But not a hair of your head shall by any means perish.
19. By your patient endurance you *shall* gain your lives.
20. But when you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, then know that her desolation has drawn near.
21. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those within her go out, and let not those in the countries come into her;
22. For these are *the* days of vengeance, so that all things that have been written may be accomplished.
23. But woe to those who are with
- child and those who are giving suck in those days! For there shall be great distress upon the land and wrath upon this people.
24. And they shall fall by *the* edge of *the* sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by *the* Gentiles, until *the* times of *the* Gentiles be fulfilled.
25. And there shall be signs in *the* sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress and anxiety among *the* nations, *the* seas roaring with rolling surges;
26. Men dying of heart attacks from fear and dread of the things that are coming on the whole world; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.
27. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with great power and glory.
28. But when these things begin to take place, look up, and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”
29. Then He spoke a parable to them: “Observe the fig tree, and all the trees.
30. When they have already begun to bud, *and* you look *at them*, you yourselves know that summer is near.
31. In the same way also, when you see these things coming to pass, know that the kingdom of God is near.
32. Truly I say to you, *there is* no way that this generation shall pass away until all *these things* have taken place.
33. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away.
34. Watch yourselves, lest your hearts be preoccupied with high living and drinking and *the* cares of *this* life, and that day come upon you suddenly.
35. For as a snare it shall come upon all those who dwell on the face of the earth.
36. Watch therefore, *and* pray at all times that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall

10 Mat. 24:7
12 Mark 13:9
Acts 4:3,
5:18, 12:4,
16:24, 25:23
1 Pet. 2:13
Rev. 2:10
13 Phil. 1:28
2 Thes. 1:5
14 Mat. 10:19
Mark 13:11
Luke 12:11
15 Acts 6:10
16 Mic. 7:6
Mark 13:12
Acts 7:59,
12:2
17 Mat. 10:22
18 Mat. 10:30
20 Mat. 24:15
Mark 13:14
22 Dan. 9:26, 27
Zech. 11:1
23 Mat. 24:19

24 Dan. 9:27,
12:7
Rom. 11:25
25 Mat. 24:29
Mark 13:24
2 Pet. 3:10,
12
26 Mat. 24:29
27 Mat. 24:30
Rev. 1:7,
14:14
28 Rom. 8:19,
23
29 Mat. 24:32
Mark 13:28
33 Mat. 24:35
34 1 Pet. 4:7
Rom. 13:13
1 Thes. 5:6
35 2 Pet. 3:10
1 Thes. 5:2
Rev. 3:3,
16:15
36 Psa. 1:5
Mat. 24:42,
25:13
Mark 13:33
Luke 18:1
Eph. 6:13

come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

37. And during *the* day He was in the temple teaching, and at night He went out and lodged on the mountain called *the Mount* of Olives.

38. And all the people came to Him in the temple early in the morning to hear Him.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

1. Now the feast of unleavened *bread*, which *is* called Passover, was approaching;

2. And the chief priests and the scribes were speculating as to how they might put Him to death, for they feared the people.

3. Then Satan entered into Judas, who was surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

4. And he went away, *and* spoke with the chief priests and the captains about a way by which he might betray Him to them.

5. And they rejoiced, and agreed to give him money.

6. And he promised, and sought *an* opportunity to betray Him to them away from *the* multitude.

7. Then came the day of the unleaveneds* in which it was obligatory to kill the Passover *lambs*.

8. And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go *and* prepare the Passover for us that we may eat."

9. But they said to Him, "Where do You desire *that* we prepare *it*?"

10. And He said to them, "Watch, *and* when you come into the city, you will meet a man carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house that he enters;

11. And you shall say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest chamber, where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"'

37 Luke 22:39
John 8:1, 2

Chap. 22

1 Mat. 26:2

Mark 14:1

2 Psa. 2:2

John 11:47

Acts 4:27

3 Mat. 26:14

Mark 14:10

John 13:2,

27

5 Zech. 11:12

7 Mat. 26:17

Mark 14:12

14 Mat. 26:20

Mark 14:17

16 Luke 14:15

Acts 10:41

Rev. 19:9

18 Mat. 26:29

Mark 14:25

19 Mat. 26:26

Mark 14:22

1 Cor. 11:24

20 1 Cor. 10:16

21 Psa. 41:9

Mat. 26:21,

23

Mark 14:18

John 13:21,

26

22 Mat. 26:24

Acts 2:23,

4:28

23 Mat. 26:22

John 13:22,

25

24 Mark 9:34

Luke 9:46

25 Mat. 20:25

Mark 10:42

26 Mat. 20:26

Luke 9:48

1 Pet. 5:3

12. And he shall show you a large upper room furnished; there prepare."

13. Then they went *and* found *every-thing* exactly as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover.

14. Now when the hour had come, He sat *down*, and the twelve apostles with Him.

15. And He said to them, "With *earn-est* desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.

16. For I tell you that I will not eat of it again until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

17. And He took a cup; *and* after giving thanks, He said, "Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves.

18. For I say to you, I will not drink at all of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God has come."

19. And He took bread; *and* after giving thanks, He broke *it* and gave *it* to them, saying, "This is My body, which is given for you. This do in the remembrance of Me."

20. In like manner also, *He took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup *is* the New Covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you.

21. Behold, even *now* the hand of him who is betraying Me *is* with Me at the table;

22. And the Son of man indeed goes, according as it has been appointed, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!"

23. Then they began to question this among themselves, which of them it might be who was about to do this.

24. And there was also an argument among them, *even* this: which of them should be considered *the* greatest.

25. And He said to them, "The kings of the nations lord over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called benefactors.

26. But *it shall* not be this way *among* you; rather, let the one who is greatest among you be as the younger, and the

*See footnote on page 392, Matt. 26:17.

one who is leading as the one who is serving.

27. For who *is* greater, the one who is sitting *at the table*, or the one who is serving? *Is* not the one who sits *at the table*? But I am among you as one who is serving.

28. Now you are the ones who have continued with Me in My temptations.

29. And I appoint to you, as My Father has appointed to Me, a kingdom;

30. So that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and may sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

31. Then the Lord said, "Simon, Simon, listen *well*. Satan has demanded to have you, to sift *you* as wheat.

32. But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and when you are converted, strengthen your brethren."

33. And he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You both to prison and to death."

34. But He said, "I tell you, Peter, *the* cock shall in no wise crow today before you have denied knowing Me three times."

35. And He said to them, "When I sent you without purse and provision bag and sandals, did you lack anything?" And they said, "Nothing."

36. Then He said to them, "Now, however, let the one who has a purse take *it*, and likewise *his* provision bag; and let the one who does not have a sword sell his garment and buy *one*.

37. For I say to you, that which has been written must yet be accomplished in Me: 'And He was reckoned with *the* lawless'; for the things concerning Me have a fulfillment."

38. And they said, "Lord, see, here *are* two swords." And He said to them, "It is enough."

39. Then He left *the house and* went, as He was accustomed, to the Mount

27 Mat. 20:28
Luke 12:37
John 13:13,
14
Phil. 2:7
28 Heb. 4:15
29 Mat. 24:47
Luke 12:32
30 Psa. 49:14
Mat. 8:11,
19:28
Luke 14:15
1 Cor. 6:2
Rev. 3:21,
19:9
31 Amos 9:9
1 Pet. 5:8
32 John 17:9,
11, 15
34 Mat. 26:34
Mark 14:30
John 13:38
35 Mat. 10:9
Luke 9:3,
10:4
37 Is. 53:12
Mark 15:28
39 Mat. 26:36
Mark 14:32
Luke 21:37
John 18:1

40 Mat. 6:13,
26:41
Mark 14:38
Luke 22:46
41 Mat. 26:39
Mark 14:35
42 John 5:30,
6:38
43 Mat. 4:11
44 John 12:27
Heb. 5:7
46 Luke 22:40
47 Mat. 26:47
Mark 14:43
John 18:3
50 Mat. 26:51
Mark 14:47
52 Mat. 26:55
Mark 14:48
53 John 12:27

of Olives; and His disciples also followed Him.

40. And when He arrived at the place, He said to them, "Pray *that* you do not enter into temptation."

41. And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw; and falling to *His* knees, He prayed,

42. Saying, "Father, if You are willing to take away this cup from Me—; nevertheless, not My will, but Your *will* be done."

43. Then an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him.

44. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. And His sweat became as great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

45. And after rising up from prayer, He came to *His* disciples and found them sleeping for grief.

46. Then He said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Arise and pray, so that you do not enter into temptation."

47. And while He was still speaking, a crowd suddenly *appeared*, with the one who was called Judas, one of the twelve, going in front of them; and he came near to Jesus to kiss Him.

48. But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of man with a kiss?"

49. And when those who were with Him saw what was about to happen, they said to Him, "Lord, shall we strike with *the* sword?"

50. Then a certain one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.

51. But Jesus answered *and* said, "That is enough!" Then He touched his ear *and* healed him.

52. And Jesus said to those who had come out against Him, *the* chief priests and captains of the temple and elders, "Have you come out, as against a thief, with swords and clubs?

53. When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not stretch out *your*

hands against Me; but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.”

54. And after arresting Him, they led *Him* away and brought Him into the house of the high priest. Now Peter was following at a distance.

55. And when they had kindled a fire in *the* middle of the court, and had sat down together, Peter sat among them.

56. And a certain maid saw him sitting by the light; and after looking at him intently, she said, “Now this one was with Him.”

57. But he denied Him, saying, “Woman, I do not know Him.”

58. And after a little *while*, another saw him *and* said, “You also are *one* of them.” But Peter said, “Man, I am not.”

59. Now after about an hour had passed, a certain other *man* strongly affirmed, saying, “In truth, this one also was with Him, for he is indeed a Galilean.”

60. And Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about.” And immediately, while he was yet speaking, the cock crowed.

61. Then the Lord turned *and* looked at Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, “Before *the* cock crows, you shall deny Me three times.”

62. And Peter went outside *and* wept bitterly.

63. Then the men who were holding Jesus mocked Him *and* beat Him.

64. And after covering His *head*, they *repeatedly* struck His face and asked Him, saying, “Prophecy! Who is it that struck You?”

65. And many other things they blasphemously said against Him.

66. Now as soon as it was day, the elders of the people assembled together, *with* both *the* chief priests and *the* scribes, and they led Him into their Sanhedrin, saying,

54 Mat. 26:57, 58
John 18:15
55 Mat. 26:69
Mark 14:66
John 18:17, 18
58 Mat. 26:71
Mark 14:69
John 18:25
59 Mat. 26:73
Mark 14:70
John 18:26
61 Mat. 26:34, 75
Mark 14:72
John 13:38
63 Mat. 26:67, 68
Mark 14:65
66 Mat. 27:1
Acts 4:26, 22:5

67 Mat. 26:63
Mark 14:61
69 Mat. 26:64
Mark 14:62
Heb. 1:3, 8:1
70 Mat. 26:64
Mark 14:62
71 Mat. 26:65
Mark 14:63

Chap 23

1 Mat. 27:2
Mark 15:1
John 18:28
2 Mat. 17:27, 22:21
Mark 12:17
John 19:12
Acts 17:7
3 Mat. 27:11
1 Tim. 6:13
4 1 Pet. 2:22
7 Luke 3:1
8 Mat. 14:1
Mark 6:14
Luke 9:9

67. “If You are the Christ, tell us.” And He said to them, “If I should tell you, you would not believe *Me* at all;

68. And if I should also ask *you*, you would not answer Me at all, nor let *Me* go.

69. Hereafter shall the Son of man be sitting at *the* right hand of the power of God.”

70. And they all said, “Then You are the Son of God?” And He said to them, “I am that *one*, *as* you say.”

71. Then they said, “What need do we have of any other witness? For we ourselves have heard from His *own* mouth.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

1. And when the entire assembly of them arose, they led Him to Pilate.

2. And they began to accuse Him, saying, “We found this *man* subverting the nation and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, claiming *that* He Himself is Christ, a King.”

3. But Pilate questioned Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?” And He answered *and* said, “*It is as* you say.”

4. Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, “I find nothing blameworthy in this man.”

5. But they were insistent, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all of Judea, beginning from Galilee even to here.”

6. And when he heard Galilee *named*, Pilate asked whether the man were a Galilean;

7. And after determining that He was from Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, *since* he also was in Jerusalem in those days.

8. And when Herod saw Jesus, he rejoiced greatly; for he had long been desiring to see Him because he had heard many things about Him, and he

- was hoping to see a miracle done by Him.
9. And he questioned Him with many words; but He answered him nothing.
10. All the while, the chief priests and the scribes stood vehemently accusing Him.
11. Then Herod and his soldiers treated Him with contempt; and after mocking *Him*, he put a splendid robe on Him *and* sent Him back to Pilate.
12. And on that same day, Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, because before there was enmity between them.
13. And when Pilate had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people,
14. He said to them, "You brought this man to me as one who was turning away the people; and behold, I have examined *Him* in your presence *and* have found nothing blameworthy in this man concerning *the* accusation which you bring against Him;
15. Nor even *has* Herod; for I sent you to him, and observe, nothing worthy of death was done by Him.
16. Therefore, after I chastise Him, I will release *Him*."
17. Now *of* necessity, he had to release one to them at *the* feast.
18. But they all cried out at once, saying, "Away with this *man*, and release Barabbas to us."
19. *He was* the one who had been cast into prison on account of making a certain insurrection in the city and *committing* murder.
20. Therefore, Pilate again called to *them*, wishing to release Jesus.
21. But they kept crying out, saying, "Crucify *Him*, crucify Him!"
22. And a third *time* he said to them, "But what evil did this *man* commit? I have not found any cause *worthy* of death in Him. Therefore, after chastising Him, I will release *Him*."
23. But they were urgent with loud voices, asking for Him to be crucified. And their voices, and *those* of the chief priests, prevailed.
24. Then Pilate decreed *that* their request be granted.
25. And he released to them the one whom they had asked for, who on account of insurrection and murder had been cast into prison, but he delivered Jesus up to their will.
26. And as they led Him away, they laid hold on a certain Cyrenian *named* Simon, who was coming from a field; *and* they put the cross on him, that he might carry *it* behind Jesus.
27. And following Him was a great multitude of people with *many* women, who also were bewailing and lamenting Him.
28. But Jesus turned to them *and* said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.
29. For behold, *the* days are coming in which they shall say, 'Blessed *are* the barren, and *the* wombs that did not bear, and *the* breasts that did not give suck.'
30. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us.'
31. For if they do these things in the green tree, what shall take place in the dry?"
32. And two other malefactors were also led away with Him to be put to death.
33. And when they came to the place called *Place of a Skull*, there they crucified Him and the malefactors, one on *the* right and one on *the* left.
34. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And as they divided His garments, they cast lots.
35. Now the people stood *by* observing, and the rulers among them were also deriding *Him*, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself, if this is

11 Is. 53:3
12 Acts 4:27
13 Mat. 27:23
Mark 15:14
John 18:38, 19:4
14 Luke 23:1, 2, 4
16 Mat. 27:26
John 19:1
17 Mat. 27:15
Mark 15:6
John 18:39
18 Acts 3:14

24 Ex. 23:2
Mat. 27:26
Mark 15:15
John 19:16
26 Mat. 27:32
Mark 15:21
John 19:17
29 Mat. 24:19
Luke 21:23
30 Is. 2:19
Hos. 10:8
Rev. 6:16, 9:6
31 Prov. 11:31
Jer. 25:29
Ezek. 20:47, 21:3, 4
1 Pet. 4:17
32 Is. 53:12
Mat. 27:38
33 Mat. 27:33
Mark 15:22
John 19:17, 18
34 Mat. 5:44, 27:35
Mark 15:24
John 19:23
Acts 3:17, 7:60
1 Cor. 4:12
35 Psa. 22:17
Zech. 12:10
Mat. 27:39
Mark 15:29

the Christ, the chosen of God.”

36. And the soldiers also mocked Him, coming near and offering Him vinegar,

37. And saying, “If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself.”

38. And there also was an inscription over Him written in Greek and Latin and Hebrew: “This is the King of the Jews.”

39. Then one of the malefactors who was hanging *there* railed at Him, saying, “If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.”

40. But the other *one* answered *and* rebuked him, saying, “Do not even you fear God, you who are under the same condemnation?”

41. And we indeed justly, for we are receiving *due* payment for what we did; but this *man* did nothing wrong.”

42. Then he said to Jesus, “Remember me, Lord, when You come into Your kingdom.”

43. And Jesus said to him, “Truly, I tell you today, you shall be with Me in paradise.”

44. Now it was about *the* sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until *the* ninth hour.

45. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was split down *the* middle.

46. And after crying out with a loud voice, Jesus said, “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.” And when He had said these things, He expired.

47. Now after seeing the things that took place, the centurion glorified God, saying, “Truly, this man was righteous.”

48. And all the people who had gathered together to this sight, after seeing the things that took place, returned beating their breasts.

38 Mat. 27:37
Mark 15:26
John 19:19
39 Mat. 27:44
Mark 15:32
44 Mat. 27:45
Mark 15:33
45 Mat. 27:51
Mark 15:38
46 Psa. 31:5
Mat. 27:50
Mark 15:37
John 19:30
1 Pet. 2:23
47 Mat. 27:54
Mark 15:39

★ This Sabbath was not the 7th day weekly Sabbath. This Sabbath was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—a holy day Sabbath and fell on a Thursday (See Appendix G, pp. 750-761 and Appendix R, p. 852).

49 Psa. 38:11
Mat. 27:55
Mark 15:40
John 19:25
50 Mat. 27:57
Mark 15:42
John 19:38
51 Mark 15:43
Luke 2:25, 38
53 Mat. 27:59
Mark 15:46
54 Mat. 27:62
55 Mark 15:47
Luke 8:2
56 Ex. 20:10
Mark 16:1

Chap 24

1 Mat. 28:1
Mark 16:1
Luke 23:56
John 20:1
2 Mat. 28:2
Mark 16:4
3 Mark 16:5
Luke 24:23
4 John 20:12
Acts 1:10

49. But all those who knew Him stood off at a distance observing these things, *the* women also who had accompanied Him from Galilee.

50. And behold, *there came* a man named Joseph, a member of the council, a good and righteous man,

51. (He did not consent to the council and their deed.) from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, and who was also himself waiting for the kingdom of God.

52. He, after going to Pilate, begged *for* the body of Jesus.

53. And after taking it down, he wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb hewn in a rock, in which no one had ever been laid.

54. Now it was *a* preparation day, and *a* Sabbath★ was coming on.

55. And *the* women also, who had come with Him from Galilee, followed *and* saw the tomb, and how His body was laid.

56. And they returned *to the city*, and prepared spices and ointments, and *then* rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

1. Now on the first *day* of the weeks,* they came to the tomb at early dawn, bringing *the* spices that they had prepared; and certain *others came* with them.

2. But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb;

3. And when they entered *it*, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

4. And it came to pass that while they were puzzling over this, suddenly two men in shining garments stood by them.

5. And *as* they bowed their faces to

*This literal translation of the Greek words *μία σαββατων* or *μία των σαββατων* shows that the day which followed the weekly Sabbath was the first day of the seven-week count to Pentecost, thus identifying this day as the Wave Sheaf Day (Lev. 23:10-11, 15-16). The ascension of Jesus Christ on that day fulfilled the offering of the wave sheaf for all time.

the ground, being filled with fear, they said to them, "Why are you seeking the living among the dead?"

6. He is not here, but has risen: remember when He spoke to you *while He was yet in Galilee*,

7. Saying, 'It is necessary for the Son of man to be delivered into *the* hands of sinful men, and to be crucified, and to arise the third day'?"

8. Then they remembered His words;

9. And after returning from the tomb, they related these things to the eleven and to all the rest.

10. Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary, *the mother* of James, and the others with them, who told these things to the apostles.

11. But their words appeared to them as idle talk, and they did not believe them.

12. Then Peter rose up *and* ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen clothes lying alone; and he went home wondering about the things that had come to pass.

13. And behold, on the same day, two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, which was about sixty furlongs from Jerusalem.

14. And they were talking with one another about all the things that had taken place.

15. And it came to pass, as they were talking and reasoning, that Jesus Himself drew near *and* went with them;

16. But their eyes were restrained, *so that* they did not know Him.

17. And He said to them, "What *are* these words that you are exchanging with one another as you walk, and *why* are you downcast in countenance?"

18. Then the one named Cleopas answered *and* said to Him, "Are You only traveling through Jerusalem, and have not known of the things that

6 Mat. 16:21,
17:23
Mark 8:31,
9:31
Luke 9:22
8 John 2:22
9 Mat. 28:8
Mark 16:10
10 Luke 8:3
11 Luke 24:25
12 John 20:3
13 Mark 16:12
15 Mat. 18:20
16 John 20:14,
21:4
18 John 19:25

19 Mat. 21:11
Luke 7:16
John 3:2,
4:19, 6:14
Acts 2:22,
7:22
20 Luke 23:1
Acts 13:27
21 Luke 1:68,
2:38
Acts 1:6
22 Mat. 28:8
Mark 16:10
Luke 24:9,
10
John 20:18
24 Luke 24:12
26 Acts 17:3
1 Pet. 1:11
27 Gen. 3:15,
22:18, 26:4,
49:10
Num. 21:9
Deut. 18:15
Psa. 16:9, 10,
22, 132:11
Is. 7:14, 9:6,
40:10, 11,
50:6
Jer. 23:5,
33:14, 15
Ezek. 34:23,
37:25
Dan. 9:24
Mic. 7:20
Mal. 3:1, 4:2
Luke 24:45
John 1:45
28 Gen. 32:26,
42:7
Mark 6:48
29 Gen. 19:3
Acts 16:15
30 Mat. 14:19

have happened in these days?"

19. And He said to them, "What things?" And they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus the Nazarean, a man Who was a prophet, Who was mighty in deed and word before God and all the people;

20. And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him up to *the* judgment of death, and crucified Him.

21. And we were hoping that He was the one Who would redeem Israel. But besides all these things, as of to-day, the third day has already passed since these things took place.*

22. And also, certain women from among us astonished us, after they went to the tomb early;

23. For when they did not find His body, they came *to us*, declaring that they had indeed seen a vision of angels, who said, 'He is living.'

24. And some of those with us went to the tomb and found *it* exactly as the women had said, but they did not see Him."

25. Then He said to them, "O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!

26. Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into His glory?"

27. And beginning with Moses, and from all the prophets, He interpreted to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

28. And *as* they approached the village where they were going, He appeared to be going on farther.

29. But they constrained Him, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is declining." And He entered in *as if* to stay with them.

30. And it came to pass, as He sat *at the table* with them, He took the bread *and* blessed *it*; and after breaking *it*, He gave *it* to them.

*See Appendix G, page 756.

31. Then their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He disappeared from them.

32. And they said to one another, "Did not our hearts burn within us as He was speaking to us on the road, while He was opening the Scriptures to us?"

33. And they rose up that very hour *and* returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and those with them assembled together,

34. Saying, "In truth, the Lord has risen! And He has appeared to Simon."

35. Then they related the things that had happened *to them* on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

36. Now as they were telling these things, Jesus Himself stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace *be* to you."

37. But they were terrified and filled with fear, thinking *that* they beheld a spirit.

38. Then He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts come up in your hearts?"

39. See My hands and My feet, that it is I. Touch Me and see *for yourselves*; for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see Me having."

40. And after saying this, He showed them *His* hands and *His* feet.

41. But while they were still disbelieving and wondering for joy, He said to them, "Do you have anything here to eat?"

42. Then they gave Him part of a

34 1 Cor. 15:5
36 Mark 16:14
John 20:19
1 Cor. 15:5
37 Mark 6:49
39 John 20:20
41 Gen. 45:26
John 21:5

43 Acts 10:41
44 Mat. 16:21,
17:22, 20:18
Mark 8:31
Luke 9:22,
8:31, 24:6
45 Acts 16:14
46 Psa. 22
Acts 17:3
47 Psa. 22:27
Jer. 31:34
Dan. 9:24
Mic. 4:2
Acts 13:38
48 Acts 1:8
49 Is. 44:3
Joel 2:28
50 Acts 1:12
51 Mark 16:19
52 Mat. 28:9
53 Acts 2:46

broiled fish and a *piece* of honeycomb.

43. And He took these *and* ate in their presence.

44. And He said to them, "These *are* the words that I spoke to you when I was yet with you, that all *the* things which were written concerning Me in the Law of Moses and *in the* Prophets and *in the* Psalms must be fulfilled."

45. Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,

46. And said to them, "According as it is written, it was necessary for the Christ to suffer, and to rise from *the* dead the third day.

47. And in His name, repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48. For you are witnesses of these things.

49. And behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you; but remain in the city of Jerusalem until you have been clothed with power from on high."

50. Then He led them out as far as Bethany; and He lifted up His hands *and* blessed them.

51. And it came to pass *that* as He was blessing them, He was separated from them and was carried up into heaven.

52. And after worshipping Him, they returned to Jerusalem with great joy,

53. And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

The Gospel According to Luke

John

CHAPTER ONE

1. In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2. He was in *the* beginning with God.

3. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him.

4. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

5. And the light shines in the darkness, but the darkness does not comprehend it.

6. There was a man sent by God, whose name *was* John.

7. He came for a witness, that he might testify concerning the light, so that through him all might believe.

8. He was not the light, but *came* that he might testify concerning the light.

9. The true light was that which enlightens everyone who comes into the world.

10. He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, but the world did not know Him.

11. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him;

12. But as many as received Him, to them He gave authority to become *the* children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name;

13. Who were not begotten by bloodlines, nor by *the* will of *the* flesh, nor by *the* will of man, but by *the* will of God.

14. And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us (and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth.

15. John testified concerning Him, and proclaimed, saying, "This was He of Whom I said, 'He Who comes after me has precedence over me because He was before me.' "

Chap. 1

1 Prov. 8:22, 30

John 17:5
1 John 1:1, 5:7

2 Gen. 1:1

3 Psa. 33:6

Eph. 3:9

Col. 1:16

4 John 8:12

1 John 5:11

5 John 3:19

6 Mal. 3:1

Mat. 3:1

Luke 3:2

7 Acts 19:4

9 Is. 49:6

10 Heb. 1:2

11 Luke 19:14

12 Gal. 3:26

13 1 Pet. 1:23

14 Is. 40:5

Mat. 1:16

Luke 1:31

Gal. 4:4

Col. 1:19

Heb. 2:11

15 Mat. 3:11

Mark 1:7

Luke 3:16

John 3:32

Col. 1:17

16 Col. 1:19

17 Ex. 20:1

John 8:32

Rom. 5:21

18 Ex. 33:20

Mat. 11:27

1 John 4:9

1 Tim. 6:16

19 John 5:33

20 Luke 3:15

Acts 13:25

21 Deut. 18:15

Mal. 4:5

23 Is. 40:3

Mat. 3:6

26 Mal. 3:1

Mat. 3:11

27 Acts 19:4

28 Judg. 7:24

John 10:40

16. And of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

17. For the law was given through Moses, *but* the grace and the truth came through Jesus Christ.

18. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.

19. And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

20. Then he *freely* admitted, and did not deny, but declared, "I am not the Christ."

21. And they asked him, "Then who *are you?* Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." *Then they asked,* "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."

22. Therefore, they said to him, "Who are you? What do you say about yourself so that we may give an answer to those who sent us?"

23. He said, "I *am* a voice crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of *the* Lord,' as Isaiah the prophet said."

24. Now those who had been sent belonged to *the sect* of the Pharisees,

25. And they asked him, saying to him, "Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

26. John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there is one *Who* stands among you Whom you do not know.

27. He it is Who comes after me, *but* Who has precedence over me; of Whom I am not worthy to loose the thong of His sandal."

28. These things took place in Bethabara across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29. On the next day, John sees Jesus coming to him, and he says, "Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world.

30. He is the one concerning Whom I said, 'After me comes a man Who has precedence over me, because He was before me.'

31. And I did not know Him; but that He might be manifested to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."

32. And John testified, saying, "I myself beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and it remained upon Him.

33. And I did not know Him *before*; but He Who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon Whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, He is the one Who baptizes with *the* Holy Spirit.'

34. And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

35. On the next day, John was again standing *there*, and two of his disciples *with him*.

36. And as he gazed upon Jesus walking, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

37. And the two disciples heard him say *this*, and they followed Jesus.

38. Now when Jesus turned and saw them following, He said to them,

39. "What are you seeking?" And they said to Him, "Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, "Teacher"), where do You dwell?"

40. He said to them, "Come and see." They went and saw where He was dwelling, and they remained with Him that day. Now it was about *the* tenth hour.

41. Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who heard *this* from John and followed Him.

42. First, he found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is, being

29 Ex. 12:3
Is. 53:7, 11
Acts 8:32
1 Pet. 1:19,
2:24, 3:18
1 John 2:2,
3:5
1 Cor. 15:3
Gal. 1:4
Heb. 1:3,
2:17, 9:28
Rev. 1:5,
5:6

30 John 1:15,
27
31 Mal. 3:1
Mat. 3:6
Luke 1:17,
76, 77, 3:3, 4
32 Mat. 3:16
Mark 1:10
John 5:32
33 Mat. 3:11
Acts. 2:4,
10:44
36 John 1:29
42 Mat. 16:18

44 John 12:21
45 Gen. 3:15,
49:10
Deut. 18:18
Is. 4:2, 7:14,
9:6
Mic. 5:2
Zech. 6:12
Mat. 2:23
Luke 2:4,
24:27
John 21:2
46 John 7:41, 42
47 Psa. 32:2,
73:1
John 8:39
Rom. 2:28,
9:6
49 Mat. 14:33,
21:5
John 18:37
51 Gen. 28:12
Mat. 4:11
Luke 2:9
13, 22:43
Acts 1:10

Chap. 2

1 Josh. 19:28

interpreted, "the Christ").

43. And he led him to Jesus. And when He saw him, Jesus said, "You are Simon, the son of Jona. You shall be called Cephas" (which is, *being* interpreted, "a stone").

44. On the next day, Jesus desired to go into Galilee; and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."

45. Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

46. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found *Him* of Whom Moses wrote in the Law, and *also* the prophets, Jesus, the son of Joseph; He *is* from Nazareth."

47. And Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

48. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said concerning him, "Behold, truly an Israelite in whom *there* is no guile."

49. Nathanael said to Him, "How did you know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, *when you* were under the fig tree, I saw you."

50. Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel."

51. Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I told you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? Greater things than these shall you see."

52. And He said to him, "Truly, truly I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God descending to and ascending from the Son of man."

CHAPTER TWO

1. Now on the third day, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there.

2. And Jesus and His disciples were also invited to the marriage *feast*.

3. And *when* there was a shortage of wine, Jesus' mother said to Him, "They have no wine."
 4. Jesus said to her, "Woman, what *do* you *desire to have* Me *do*? My time has not yet come."
 5. *Then* His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, *do*."
 6. Now there were six water vessels of stone standing there, in accordance with the *traditional* purification of the Jews, each one *having* a capacity of two or three firkins.★
 7. Jesus said to them, "Fill the water vessels with water." And they filled them to *the* brim.
 8. Then He said to them, "Now draw *some* out and bring *it* to the master of the feast." And they brought *it* to *him*.
 9. Now when the master of the feast tasted the water that had become wine, not knowing from where it had come (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom,
 10. And said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first; and when the *guests* have drunk freely, then *he* serves the inferior wine. *But* you have kept the good wine until now."
 11. This beginning of the miracles *that* Jesus did *took place* in Cana of Galilee, and revealed His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.
 12. After this He went down to Capernaum, He and His mother and His brothers and His disciples; and they remained there not many days.
 13. Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.
 14. And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money exchangers sitting *there*;
 15. And after making a scourge of cords, He drove them all out of the

4 2 Sam. 16:10
 John 7:6,
 19:26
 6 ★ A firkin is
 equal to 8
 gallons
 Mark 7:3
 9 John 4:46
 11 John 1:14
 12 Mat. 12:46
 13 Ex. 12:14
 Deut. 16:1
 John 5:1
 14 Mat. 21:12
 Mark 11:15
 Luke 19:45

temple, *with* both the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money exchangers, and overturned the tables.

16. And to those who were selling the doves, He said, "Take these things out of here! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise."

17. Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "The zeal of Your house has eaten Me up."

18. As a result, the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, seeing that You do these things?"

19. Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

20. Then the Jews said, "This temple was forty-six years in building, and You will raise it up in three days?"

21. But He spoke concerning the temple of His body.

22. Therefore, when He was raised from *the* dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scriptures, and the word that Jesus had spoken.

23. Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed on His name, as they observed the miracles that He was doing.

24. But Jesus did not entrust Himself to them, because He knew all *men*;

25. And He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Now there was a man of the Pharisees, Nicodemus by name, a ruler of the Jews.

2. He came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher *Who* has come from God; because no one is able to do the miracles that You are doing unless God is with him."

16 Luke 2:49
 17 Psa. 69:9
 18 Mat. 12:38
 John 6:30
 19 Mat. 26:61,
 27:40
 Mark 14:58,
 15:29
 21 Col. 2:9
 Heb. 8:2
 1 Cor. 3:16,
 6:19
 2 Cor. 6:16
 22 Luke 24:8
 25 1 Sam. 16:7
 1 Chr. 28:9
 Mat. 9:4
 Mark 2:8
 John 6:64,
 16:30
 Acts 1:24
 Rev. 2:23

Chap. 3

2 John 7:50,
 9:16, 33,
 19:39
 Acts 2:22,
 10:38

3. Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly I say to you, unless anyone is born again,★ he cannot see the kingdom of God."

4. Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man who is old be born? Can he enter his mother's womb a second time and be born?"

5. Jesus answered, "Truly, truly I say to you, unless anyone has been born of water and of Spirit,* he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

6. That which has been born of the flesh is flesh; and that which has been born of the Spirit is spirit.

7. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'It is necessary for you to be born again★.'

8. The wind blows where it wills, and you hear its sound, but you do not know *the place* from which it comes and *the place* to which it goes; so *also* is everyone who has been born of the Spirit."

9. Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?"

10. Jesus answered and said to him, "You are a teacher of Israel, and you do not know these things?

11. Truly, truly I say to you, We speak that which We know, and We testify of that which We have seen; but you do not receive Our testimony.

12. If I have told you earthly things, and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

13. (And no one has ascended into heaven, except He Who came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man, Who is in heaven.)

14. And even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, in the same way it is ordained that the Son of man be lifted up,

15. So that everyone who believes in

3 ★ anew
5 Mark 16:16
Acts 2:38
7 ★ anew
8 Eccl. 11:5
1 Cor. 2:11
9 John 6:52, 60
11 Mat. 11:27
John 1:18, 3:32, 7:16, 8:28
13 Prov. 30:4
John 6:33, 38
Acts 2:34
1 Cor. 15:47
Eph. 4:9
14 Num. 21:9
John 8:28, 12:32
15 John 3:36, 6:47

16 1 John 4:9
Rom. 5:8
17 Luke 9:56
John 5:45, 8:15, 12:47
1 John 4:14
18 John 5:24, 6:40, 47, 20:31
19 John 1:4, 9-11, 8:12
20 Job 24:13
Eph. 5:13
22 John 4:2
23 1 Sam. 9:4
Mat. 3:5, 6
24 Mat. 14:3
26 John 1:7, 15, 27, 34

Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life.

16. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes** in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life.

17. For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

18. The one who believes in Him is not judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19. And this is the judgment: that the light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.

20. For everyone who practices evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, so that his works may not be exposed;

21. But the one who practices the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be manifested, that they have been accomplished by *the power of God*."

22. After these things, Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea; and there He stayed with them and was baptizing.

23. And John was also baptizing in Aenon, near Salim because there was much water there; and the *people* were coming and were being baptized,

24. For John had not yet been cast into prison.

25. Then there arose a question *between* the disciples of John and *some of the Jews* about purification.

26. And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He Who was with you beyond Jordan, to Whom you have borne witness, behold, He is baptiz-

*To be "born of water" refers to one's natural fleshly birth. To be "born of Spirit" refers to the resurrection from the dead to eternal life as a glorified spirit being, and not to an emotional "conversion experience." See Appendix L, p. 807

**The Greek present tense participle ο πιστευων pisteuon means, "everyone who continually believes in Him." Such belief is a continuous deep, life-long, inner conviction of faith accompanied by loving obedience to God the Father and Jesus Christ, rather than a mere mental or verbal acknowledgement of Jesus Christ.

ing, and all are coming to Him."

27. John answered and said, "No one is able to receive anything unless it has been given to him from heaven.

28. You yourselves bear witness to me that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but that I am sent before Him.

29. The one who has the bride is *the* bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands by and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the voice of the bridegroom; *in* this then, my joy has been fulfilled.

30. It is ordained that He increase, and that I decrease.

31. He Who comes from above is above all. The one who is of the earth is earthy, and speaks of the earth. He Who comes from heaven is above all;

32. And what He has seen and heard, this *is what* He testifies; but no one receives His testimony.

33. The one who has received His testimony has set his seal that God is true; 34. For He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God; and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him*.

35. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand.

36. The one who believes in the Son has everlasting life; but the one who does not obey the Son shall not see life, for the wrath of God remains on him."

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John,

2. (Although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples,)

3. He left Judea and departed again into Galilee.

4. Now it was necessary for Him to pass through Samaria.

5. And He came to a city of Samaria

27 Jas. 1:17
1 Cor. 4:7
Heb. 5:4
28 Mal. 3:1
Mark 1:2
Luke 1:17
John 1:20,
27

29 S. of S. 5:1
Mat. 22:2
2 Cor. 11:2
Eph. 5:25, 27
Rev. 21:9
31 Mat. 28:18
John 1:15,
27, 3:13,
6:33, 8:23
Rom. 9:5
1 Cor. 15:47
Eph. 1:21
Phil. 2:9

32 John 3:11,
8:26, 15:15
33 1 John 5:10
Rom. 3:4
34 John 1:16,
7:16

35 Mat. 11:27,
28:18
Luke 10:22
John 5:20,
22, 13:3,
17:2
Heb. 2:8

36 John 1:12,
3:15, 16,
6:47
1 John 5:10
Rom. 1:17

Chap. 4

1 John 3:22,
26
5 Gen. 33:19,
48:22
Josh. 24:32

9 2 Ki. 17:24
Luke 9:52,
53
Acts 10:28
10 Is. 12:3, 44:3
Jer. 2:13
Zech. 13:1,
14:8
14 John 6:35,
58, 7:38
15 John 6:34,
17:2, 3
1 John 5:20
Rom. 6:23

called Sychar, near the land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

6. And Jacob's fountain was there; Jesus, therefore, being wearied from the journey, sat there by the fountain. It was about *the* sixth hour.

7. A woman came out of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me *some water* to drink."

8. For His disciples had gone away into the city, so that they might buy provisions.

9. Therefore, the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How *is it that* You, being a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, *to give You water* to drink? For Jews do not associate with Samaritans."

10. Jesus answered and said to her, "If you had known the gift of God, and Who it is that said to you, 'Give Me *some water* to drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

11. The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing with *which* to draw *water*, and the well is deep; how then do You have the living water?"

12. Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it, and his sons, and his cattle?"

13. Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again;

14. But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; rather, the water that I will give him shall become a fountain of water within him, springing up into everlasting life."

15. The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not thirst or *need to* come here to draw *water*."

16. Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband and come *back* here."

17. The woman answered and said, "I do not have a husband." Jesus said to her, "You have spoken well in saying,

'I do not have a husband';

18. For you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband. This you have spoken truly."

19. The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.

20. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, but you say that the place where it is obligatory to worship is in Jerusalem."

21. Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you shall neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father.

22. You do not know what you worship. We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.

23. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father is indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner.

24. God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth."

25. The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming, Who is called Christ; when He comes, He will tell us all things."

26. Jesus said to her, "I Who speak to you am *He*."

27. Now at this *time* His disciples came, and they were amazed that He was speaking with a woman; however, no one said, "What are You seeking?" or, "Why are You talking with her?"

28. Then the woman left her waterpot and went away into the city, and said to the men,

29. "Come *and* see a man who told me everything that I have done. Can it be that He is the Christ?"

30. Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

31. But in the meantime, the disciples were urging Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."

19 Luke 7:16,
24:19

John 6:14

20 Deut. 12:5,
11

Judg. 9:7
1 Ki. 9:3

2 Chr. 7:12

21 Mal. 1:11
1 Tim. 2:8

22 2 Ki. 17:29
Is. 2:3

Luke 24:47
Rom. 9:4, 5

23 John 1:17
Phil. 3:3

24 2 Cor. 3:17
25 John 4:29, 39

26 Mat. 26:63,
64

Mark 14:61,
62

29 John 4:25

32. And He said to them, "I have meat to eat that you are not aware of."

33. Then the disciples said to one another, "Did anyone bring Him *something* to eat?"

34. Jesus said to them, "My meat is to do the will of Him Who sent Me, and to finish His work.

35. Do not say that there are yet four months, and *then* the harvest comes. I say to you, look around. Lift up your eyes and see the fields, for they are already white to harvest.

36. And the one who reaps receives a reward, and gathers fruit unto eternal life; so that the one who is sowing and the one who is reaping may both rejoice together.

37. For in this the saying is true, that one sows and another reaps.

38. I sent you to reap that in which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

39. Now many of the Samaritans from that city believed on Him because of the word of the woman, who testified, "He told me everything that I have done."

40. Therefore, when the Samaritans came to Him, they asked Him to remain with them; and He remained there two days.

41. And many more believed because of His word;

42. And they said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of your word, for we have heard *Him* ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Christ, the Savior of the world."

43. And after two days, He departed from there and went into Galilee;

44. For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.

45. Therefore, when He came into Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all *the* things that He did in Jerusalem during the feast, for they

34 Job 23:12
John 6:38,

17:4, 19:30

35 Mat. 9:37
Luke 10:2

36 Dan. 12:3
39 John 4:29

42 John 17:8
1 John 4:14

44 Mat. 13:57
45 Deut. 16:16

John 2:23,
3:2

also had gone to the feast.

46. Then Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee, where He had made the water *become* wine. And there was a certain royal official in Capernaum whose son was sick.

47. When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, *he* went to Him and asked Him if He would come down and heal his son; for he was about to die.

48. Therefore, Jesus said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe at all."

49. The royal official said to Him, "Sir, come down before my little child dies."

50. Jesus said to him, "Go; your son shall live." And the man believed the word that Jesus said to him and went away. -

51. Now as he was going down *to his house*, his servants met him and reported, saying, "Your child is alive *and well*."

52. Then he inquired of them at what hour he began to improve. And they said to him, "Yesterday, *at the seventh hour*, the fever left him."

53. Therefore, the father knew that *it was* at the hour that Jesus said to him, "Your son shall live." And he himself believed and his whole household.

54. This *was* the second miracle *that* Jesus did after again coming out of Judea into Galilee.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. After these things *there* was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

2. And there is in Jerusalem at the sheep gate a pool, called Bethesda in Hebrew, which has five porches.

3. And in these *porches* were lying a great multitude of those who were sick, blind, lame *and* withered. They were waiting for the stirring of the water.

4. For from time to time, an angel de-

46 John 2:1, 11
48 1 Cor. 1:22

Chap. 5

1 Lev. 23:2
Deut. 16:1
John 2:13
2 Neh. 3:1,
12:39

scended into the pool and agitated the water; and the first one to enter after the agitation of the water was made well from whatever disease he had.

5. Now a certain man was there who had been *suffering with* an infirmity for thirty-eight years.

6. Jesus saw him lying *there*, and, knowing that he had been there a long time, said to him, "Do you desire to be made whole?"

7. And the infirm *man* answered Him, "Sir, I do not have anyone to put me in the pool after the water has been agitated. But while I am going, another *one* steps down before me."

8. Jesus said to him, "Arise, take up your bedroll and walk."

9. And immediately the man was made whole; and he took up his bedroll and walked. Now that day was a Sabbath.

10. For this reason, the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is *the Sabbath day*. It is not lawful for you to take up your bedroll."

11. He answered them, "The one Who made me whole said to me, 'Take up your bedroll and walk.' "

12. Then they asked him, "Who is the one Who said to you, 'Take up your bedroll and walk'?"

13. But the man who had been healed did not know Who it was, for Jesus had moved away, *and* a crowd was in the place.

14. After these things, Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "Behold, you have been made whole. Sin no more, so that something worse does not happen to you."

15. The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus Who had made him whole.

16. And for this cause, the Jews persecuted Jesus and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on a Sabbath.

17. But Jesus answered them, "My

8 Mat. 9:6
Mark 2:11
Luke 5:24
9 John 9:14
10 Ex. 20:10
Neh. 13:19
Jer. 17:21
Mat. 12:2
Mark 2:24
Luke 6:2
14 Mat. 12:45
John 8:11
17 John 9:4,
14:10

Father is working until now, and I work."

18. So then, on account of this *saying*, the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, not only because He had loosed the Sabbath,* but also *because* He had called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.

19. Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, "Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself, but only what He sees the Father do. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner.

20. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him everything that He Himself is doing. And He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may be fillēd with wonder.

21. For even as the Father raises the dead and gives life, in the same way also, the Son gives life to whom He will.

22. For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son

23. So that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father Who sent Him.

24. Truly, truly I say to you, the one who hears My word, and believes Him Who sent Me, has everlasting life and does not come into judgment; for he has passed from death into life.

25. Truly, truly I say to you, *the* hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live.

26. For even as the Father has life in Himself, so also has He given to the Son to have life in Himself;

27. And has also given Him authority

18 John 7:19, 10:30
Phil. 2:6
19 John 5:30, 8:28, 9:4
20 Mat. 3:17
John 3:35
21 Luke 7:14, 8:54
John 11:25
22 Mat. 11:27, 28:18
John 3:35, 17:2
Acts 17:31
1 Pet. 4:5
23 1 John 2:23
24 John 3:16, 18, 6:40, 47, 8:51
1 John 3:14
25 Eph. 2:1, 5, 5:14
Col. 2:13
27 Dan. 7:13, Acts 10:42, 17:31

29 Is. 26:19
Dan. 12:2
Mat. 25:32, 33, 46
1 Cor. 15:52
30 Mat. 26:39
John 4:34, 5:19, 6:38
31 John 8:14
Rev. 3:14
32 Mat. 3:17, 17:5
John 8:18
1 John 5:6
33 John 1:15, 19, 27, 32
35 Mat. 13:20
Mark 6:20
2 Pet. 1:19
36 John 3:2, 10:25, 15:24
1 John 5:9
37 Deut. 4:12
Mat. 3:17, 17:5
John 1:18, 6:27, 8:18
1 John 4:12
1 Tim. 1:17
39 Deut. 18:15, 18
Is. 8:20, 4:16
Luke 6:29, 24:27
John 5:46
Acts 17:11

to execute judgment because He is *the* Son of man.

28. Do not wonder at this, for *the* hour is coming in which all who are in the graves shall hear His voice

29. And shall come forth: those who have practiced good unto a resurrection of life, and those who have practiced evil unto a resurrection of judgment.

30. I have no power to do anything of Myself; but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father, Who sent Me.

31. If I bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true.

32. There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the testimony that he witnesses concerning Me is true.

33. You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth.

34. Now I do not receive witness from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved.

35. He was a burning and shining light, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.

36. But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works that the Father gave Me to complete, the *very* works that I am doing, themselves bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.

37. And the Father Himself, Who sent Me, has borne witness of Me. You have neither heard His voice nor seen His form at any time.

38. And you do not have His word dwelling in you, for you do not believe Him Whom He has sent.

39. You search the Scriptures, for in

*The Greek verb λύω luoo is properly translated into the English word "loosed." Luoo means "to loose," as in loosing a law or regulation. In this case, Jesus loosed a law of Judaism that the Jews had added to the commandment of God. In loosing this law of Judaism, He did not break the Sabbath or transgress against the Fourth Commandment, which prohibits working on the Sabbath. Jesus Christ did not abrogate the seventh day as the Sabbath. Rather, He "loosed" the Sabbath from a traditional law of Judaism, which prohibited a person from carrying his bedroll on the Sabbath day.

them you think that you have eternal life; and they are the ones that testify of Me.

40. But you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life.

41. I do not receive glory from men;

42. But I have known you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.

43. I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; *but* if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.

44. How are you able to believe, you who receive glory from one another, and do not seek the glory that *comes* from the only God?

45. Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is *one* who accuses you, *even* Moses, in whom you have hope.

46. But if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote about Me.

47. And if you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?"

CHAPTER SIX

1. After these things, Jesus crossed over the Sea of Galilee (*or* Sea of Tiberias);

2. And a great multitude followed Him, because they had seen the miracles that He worked upon those who were sick.

3. Then Jesus went up into a mountain and sat there with His disciples.

4. Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near.

5. And when Jesus lifted up *His* eyes and saw a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "How shall we buy enough loaves to feed *all* these?"

6. But He said this to test him, because He knew what He was about to do.

40 John 1:11, 3:19

41 John 5:34

1 Thes. 2:6

44 John 12:43

Rom. 2:29

45 Rom. 2:12

46 Gen. 3:15,

12:3, 18:18,

22:18, 49:10

Deut. 18:15,

18

John 1:45

Acts 26:22

Chap. 6

1 Mat. 14:15

Mark 6:35

Luke 9:10,

12

4 Lev. 23:5, 7

Deut. 16:1

Mat. 14:14

Mark 6:35

Luke 9:12

John 2:13,

5:1

7. Philip answered Him, "Two hundred silver coins would not be sufficient to buy enough loaves for each of them to receive a little."

8. *Then* one of His disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said to Him,

9. "Here is a little boy who has five barley loaves and two small fish; but what are these for so many *people*?"

10. Then Jesus said, "Have the men sit down." Now there was much grass in the place; therefore the men sat down, about five thousand in number.

11. And Jesus took the loaves; and when He had given thanks, He distributed *them* to the disciples, and the disciples to those who were sitting; and in like manner the small fish, as much as they desired.

12. And when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather together the fragments that are left over, so that nothing may be lost."

13. Then they gathered *them* together, filling twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, which were left over by those who had eaten.

14. Now when the men saw the miracle that Jesus had done, they said, "Of a truth, this is the Prophet Who was to come into the world."

15. Because Jesus perceived that they were about to come and seize Him, so that they might make Him king, He withdrew again to a mountain by Himself alone.

16. Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea;

17. And they went into a ship *and* were crossing the sea to Capernaum; for it had already become dark, and Jesus had not come to them.

18. But the sea was tossing because a strong wind was blowing.

19. And after rowing about twenty-five or thirty furlongs, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and approaching the ship; and they were afraid.

7 Num. 11:21,

22

9 2 Ki. 4:43

14 Gen. 49:10

Deut. 18:15,

18

Mat. 11:3

John 1:21,

4:19, 25,

7:40

16 Mat. 14:23

Mark 6:47

20. But He said to them, "I am *He*. Do not be afraid."
 21. Then they willingly received Him into the ship; and immediately the ship was at the land to which they were going.
 22. On the next day, the multitude standing *on* the other side of the sea, who had observed that no other small ship was there besides the one into which the disciples had entered, and that Jesus had not gone into the small ship with His disciples, but that His disciples had departed alone;
 23. (But other small ships had come from Tiberias near the place where they had eaten the bread, after the Lord had given thanks;)
 24. Accordingly, when the multitude saw that Jeſus was not there, nor His disciples, they also went in the ships and came to Capernaum, looking for Jesus.
 25. And after finding Him *on* the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You come here?"
 26. Jesus answered them and said, "Truly, truly I say to you, you do not seek Me because you saw *the* miracles, but because you ate the bread and were satisfied.
 27. Do not labor *for* the food that perishes, but *for* the food that endures unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give to you; for Him has God the Father sealed."
 28. Therefore, they said to Him, "What shall we do, in order that we ourselves may do the works of God?"
 29. Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God: that you believe in Him Whom He has sent."
 30. Therefore, they said to Him, "What sign will You perform, that we may see *it* and believe You? What work will You do?"
 31. Our fathers ate manna in the wilderness, as it is written: 'He gave them bread to eat *that came down*

27 Mat. 3:17, 17:5
 Mark 1:11, 9:7
 Luke 3:22, 9:35
 John 4:14, 5:37
 Acts 2:22
 2 Pet. 1:17
 29 1 John 3:23
 30 Mat. 12:38
 16:1
 Mark 8:11
 1 Cor. 1:22
 31 Ex. 16:15
 Num. 11:7
 Neh. 9:15
 Psa. 78:24
 1 Cor. 10:3
 34 John 4:15
 35 John 4:14, 6:48, 58, 7:37
 36 John 6:26, 64
 37 Mat. 24:24
 John 6:45, 10:28, 29
 1 John 2:19
 2 Tim. 2:19
 38 Mat. 26:39
 John 4:34, 5:30
 39 John 10:28, 17:12, 18:9
 40 John 3:15, 16, 4:14, 6:27, 47, 54
 42 Mat. 13:55
 Mark 6:3
 Luke 4:22
 44 S. of S. 1:4
 John 6:65
 45 Is. 54:13
 Jer. 31:34
 Mic. 4:2
 John 6:37
 Heb. 8:10

from heaven.' "
 32. Then Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven; but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.
 33. For the bread of God is He Who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."
 34. Therefore, they said to Him, "Lord, give this bread to us always."
 35. Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; the one who comes to Me shall never hunger; and the one who believes in Me shall never thirst at any time.
 36. But *as* I said to you, you also have seen Me, yet you do not believe.
 37. All whom the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.
 38. For I did not come down from heaven to do My own will, but the will of Him Who sent Me.
 39. And this is the will of the Father, Who sent Me: that *of* all whom He has given Me, I should not lose any, but should raise them up in the last day.
 40. And this is the will of Him Who sent Me: that everyone who sees the Son, and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."
 41. Then the Jews were complaining against Him, because He said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven."
 42. And they were saying, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? Why then does He say, 'I came down from heaven'?"
 43. For this reason, Jesus answered them and said, "Do not be complaining among one another.
 44. No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.
 45. It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.'

Therefore, everyone who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me.

46. No one has seen the Father except He Who is from God; He has seen the Father.

47. Truly, truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me has eternal life.

48. I am the bread of life.

49. Your fathers ate manna in the desert, but they died.

50. This is the bread which comes down from heaven so that anyone may eat of it and not die.

51. I am the living bread, which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is even My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

52. Because of this, the Jews were arguing with one another, saying, "How is He able to give us *His* flesh to eat?"

53. Therefore, Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you do not have life in yourselves.

54. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day;

55. For My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink.

56. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him.

57. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me.

58. This is the bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers ate manna, and died. The one who eats this bread shall live forever."

59. These things He said in *the* synagogue as He was teaching in Capernaum.

60. Therefore, after hearing *these words*, many of His disciples said, "This is a hard saying. Who is able to hear *it*?"

46 Mat. 11:27
Luke 10:22
John 1:18,
7:29

47 John 3:16,
18

48 John 6:33,
35

49 John 6:31
50 John 6:51,
58

51 John 3:13
Heb. 10:5

52 John 7:43,
9:16, 10:19

53 Mat. 26:26

54 John 4:14,
6:27, 40

56 1 John 3:24,
4:15, 16

58 John 6:49-
51

60 Mat. 11:6
John 6:66

62 Mark 16:19
John 3:13
Acts 1:9

Eph. 4:8
63 2 Cor. 3:6

64 John 2:24,
25, 6:36,
13:11

65 John 6:44, 45

66 John 6:60

68 Acts 5:20

69 Mat. 16:16
Mark 8:29
Luke 9:20

John 1:49,
11:27

70 Luke 6:13
John 13:27

Chap. 7

1 John 5:16, 18

2 Lev. 23:34

3 Mat. 12:46
Mark 3:31
Acts 1:14

61. But Jesus, knowing that His disciples were complaining about this, said to them, "Does this offend you?"

62. What if you shall see the Son of man ascending up where He was before?

63. It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you, *they* are spirit and *they* are life.

64. But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from *the* beginning who were the ones that did not believe, and who would betray Him.

65. And He said, "For this reason, I have said to you, no one can come to Me unless it has been given to him from My Father."

66. From that *time*, many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him.

67. Therefore, Jesus said to the twelve, "Are you also desiring to go away?"

68. Then Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life;

69. And we have believed and have known that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

70. Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you twelve, and one of you is *the* devil?"

71. Now He spoke of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*; for he was about to betray Him, being one of the twelve.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. After these things, Jesus was sojourning in Galilee, for He did not desire to travel in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him.

2. Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was near.

3. For this reason, His brothers said to Him, "Leave this place and go into Judea, so that Your disciples may see the works that You are doing;

4. Because no one does anything in secret, but seeks to be *seen* in public.

If You do these things, reveal Yourself to the world."

5. For neither did His brothers believe in Him.

6. Therefore, Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready.

7. The world cannot hate you; but it hates Me because I testify concerning it, that its works are evil.

8. You go up to this feast. I am not going up to this feast now, for My time has not yet been fulfilled."

9. And after saying these things to them, He remained in Galilee.

10. But after His brothers had gone up, then Jesus also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

11. As a result, the Jews were seeking Him at the feast, and said, "Where is He?"

12. Now there was much debating about Him among the people. Some said, "He is a good man." But others said, "No, but He is deceiving the people."

13. However, no one spoke publicly about Him for fear of the Jews.

14. But then, about the middle of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and was teaching.

15. And the Jews were amazed, saying, "How does this man know letters, having never been schooled?"

16. Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His Who sent Me.

17. If anyone desires to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it is from God, or *whether* I speak from My own self.

18. The one who speaks of himself is seeking his own glory; but He Who seeks the glory of Him Who sent Him is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

19. Did not Moses give you the law, and not one of you is practicing the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?"

5 Mark 3:21

6 John 2:4, 8:20

7 John 3:19, 15:19

8 John 8:20

11 John 11:56

12 Mat. 21:46

Luke 7:16

John 6:14,

7:40, 9:16,

10:19

13 John 9:22,

12:42, 19:38

15 Mat. 13:54

Mark 6:2

Luke 4:22

Acts 2:7

16 John 3:11,

8:28, 12:49,

14:10, 24

17 John 8:43

18 John 5:41,

8:50

19 Ex. 24:3

Deut. 33:4

Mat. 12:14

Mark 3:6

John 1:17,

5:16, 18,

10:31, 39,

11:53

Acts 7:38

20 John 8:48,

52, 10:20

22 Gen. 17:10

Lev. 12:3

23 John 5:8, 9,

16

24 Deut. 1:16

Prov. 24:23

John 8:15

Jas. 2:1

26 John 7:48

27 Mat. 13:55

Mark 6:3

Luke 4:22

28 John 1:18,

5:32, 43,

8:14, 26,

42, 55

Rom. 3:4

29 Mat. 11:27

John 10:15

30 Mark 11:18

Luke 19:47,

20:19

John 7:44,

8:37

31 Mat. 12:23

John 3:2

33 John 13:33,

16:16

20. The people answered and said, "You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?"

21. Jesus answered and said to them, "I did one work, and you were all amazed.

22. Now then, Moses gave you circumcision—not that it was from Moses, but from the fathers—and on *the* Sabbath you circumcise a man.

23. If a man receives circumcision on *the* Sabbath, so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with Me because I made a man entirely whole on *the* Sabbath?

24. Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment."

25. Then some of those from Jerusalem said, "Is not this the one Whom they seek to kill?"

26. But look, He is speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to Him. Can it be that the authorities have recognized that this man truly is the Christ?

27. Now this man, we know where He comes from. But the Christ, whenever He may appear, no one knows where He comes from."

28. Then Jesus spoke out, teaching in the temple and saying, "You know Me, and you also know where I come from; yet I have not come of Myself; but He Who sent Me is true, Whom you do not know.

29. But I know Him because I am from Him, and He sent Me."

30. Because of this *saying*, they were looking *for a way* to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him because His time had not yet come.

31. Then many of the people believed in Him, saying, "When the Christ comes, will He do more miracles than those that this *man* has done?"

32. The Pharisees heard the crowds debating these things about Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to arrest Him.

33. Then Jesus said to them, "I am

with you yet a little while, and *then* I go to Him Who sent Me.

34. You shall seek Me, but shall not find Me; and where I am *going*, you are not able to come."

35. Therefore, the Jews said among themselves, "Where is He about to go, that we shall not find Him? Is He about to go to the Diaspora among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks?"

36. What is this saying that He said, 'You shall seek Me, but shall not find Me'; and, 'Where I am *going*, you are not able to come'?"

37. Now in the last day, the great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and called out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

38. The one who believes in Me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

39. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, which those who believed in Him would soon receive; for *the* Holy Spirit was not yet *given* because Jesus was not yet glorified.

40. Now after hearing these words, many of the people said, "This is truly the Prophet."

41. Others said, "This is the Christ." But others said, "Does the Christ then come out of Galilee?"

42. Does not the scripture say that the Christ comes from the seed of David, and from Bethlehem, the town where David was?"

43. Therefore, a division arose among the people because of Him.

44. Now some of them desired to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

45. As a result, *when* the officers came to the chief priests and the Pharisees, they said to them, "Why did you not bring Him?"

46. The officers answered, "Never has a man spoken like this man."

47. Then the Pharisees answered them, "Are you also being deceived?"

48. Has even one of the rulers or of

34 Hos. 5:6
John 8:21,
13:33

35 Is. 11:12
Jas. 1:1
1 Pet. 1:1

37 Lev. 23:36
Is. 55:1
John 6:35
Rev. 22:17

38 Deut. 18:15
Prov. 18:4
Is. 12:3, 44:3

John 4:14
39 Is. 44:3
Joel 2:28

John 12:16,
16:7
40 Deut. 18:15

John 1:21,
6:14
41 John 1:46,
4:42, 6:69,
7:52

42 1 Sam. 16:1,
4
Psa. 132:11

Jer. 23:5
Mic. 5:2
Mat. 2:5

Luke 2:4
43 John 7:12,
9:16, 10:19

44 John 7:30
48 John 12:42
Acts 6:7

1 Cor. 1:20,
26, 2:8

50 John 3:2
51 Deut. 1:17,
17:8, 19:15

52 Is. 9:1, 2
Mat. 4:15
John 1:46,
7:41

Chap. 8

5 Lev. 20:10
Deut. 22:22

7 Deut. 17:7
Rom. 2:1

9 Rom. 2:22

the Pharisees believed in Him?

49. But these people who do not know the law are accursed."

50. *Then* Nicodemus (being one of them, the one who came to Him by night) said to them,

51. "Does our law judge any man without first hearing from him in person, and knowing what he does?"

52. They answered and said to him, "Are you also from Galilee? Search and see, for no prophet has *ever* come out of Galilee."

53. And each one went to his house.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

2. And at dawn He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them.

3. Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought to Him a woman who had been taken in adultery; and after setting her in *the* center,

4. They said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery.

5. And in the law, Moses commanded us that those who commit such *a sin* should be stoned. Therefore, what do You say?"

6. Now they said this to tempt Him, so that they might have *cause* to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down *and* wrote on the ground with *His* finger.

7. And as they continued to ask Him, He lifted Himself up *and* said to them, "Let the sinless one among you cast the first stone at her."

8. And again He stooped down *and* wrote on the ground.

9. But after hearing *this*, they were convicted *each* by *his own* conscience, and went out one by one, beginning with the older ones until the last. And

Jesus was left alone, with the woman standing in *the* center.

10. And when Jesus lifted Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are your accusers? Did anyone condemn you?"

11. And she said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and sin no more."

12. Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world; the one who follows Me shall never walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

13. Therefore, the Pharisees said to Him, "You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true."

14. Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, because I know where I have come from and where I am going. But you do not know where I come from and where I go."

15. You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one.

16. Yet if I do judge, My judgment is true, for I am not alone; but I and the Father Who sent Me.

17. And it is written in your law that the testimony of two men is true.

18. I am *one* Who bears witness of Myself, and the Father, Who sent Me bears witness of Me."

19. Then they said to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would also have known My Father."

20. Jesus spoke these words in the treasury *while* teaching in the temple; but no one arrested Him because His time had not yet come.

21. Then Jesus said to them again, "I am going away; and you shall seek Me, but you shall die in your sin. Where I am going, you are not able to come."

22. Therefore, the Jews said, "Will He

11 Luke 9:56, 12:14
John 3:17, 5:14
12 John 1:4, 5, 9, 3:19, 9:5, 12:35, 36, 46
13 John 5:31
14 John 7:28, 9:29
15 John 3:17, 7:24, 12:47, 18:36
16 John 16:32
17 Deut. 17:6, 19:15
Mat. 18:16
2 Cor. 13:1
Heb. 10:28
18 John 5:37
19 John 14:7, 16:3
20 Mark 12:41
John 7:8, 30
21 John 7:34, 8:24, 13:33
23 John 3:31, 15:19, 17:16
1 John 4:5
24 Mark 16:16
John 8:21
26 John 3:32, 7:28, 15:15
28 John 3:11, 14, 5:19, 30, 12:32
Rom. 1:4
29 John 4:34, 5:30, 6:38, 8:16, 14:10
30 John 7:31, 10:42, 11:45
32 Rom. 6:14, 18, 22
Jas. 1:25, 2:12
33 Lev. 25:42
Mat. 3:9
34 2 Pet. 2:19
Rom. 6:16
35 Gal. 4:30

kill Himself? *Is* that *why* He says, 'Where I am going, you are not able to come'?"

23. And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world."

24. That is why I said to you that you shall die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I AM, you shall die in your sins."

25. Then they said to Him, "Who are You?" And Jesus said to them, "The one that I said to you from the beginning."

26. I have many things to say and to judge concerning you; but He Who sent Me is true, and what I have heard from Him, these things I speak to the world."

27. *But* they did not know that He was speaking to them of the Father.

28. Then Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you yourselves shall know that I AM, and *that* I do nothing of Myself. But as the Father taught Me, these things I speak."

29. And He Who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone because I always do the things that please Him."

30. As He spoke these things, many believed in Him.

31. Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, "If you continue in My word, you are truly My disciples."

32. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free."

33. They answered Him, "We are Abraham's seed, and have never been in bondage to anyone. What do You mean by saying, 'You shall become free'?"

34. Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a servant of sin."

35. And the servant does not live in

the house forever; *but* the Son lives forever.

36. Therefore, if the Son shall set you free, you shall truly be free.

37. I know that you are Abraham's seed; but you are seeking to kill Me, because My words do not enter into your *minds*.

38. I speak the things that I have seen from My Father, and you do the things that you have seen from your father."

39. They answered and said to Him, "Our father is Abraham." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.

40. But now you seek to kill Me, a man who has spoken the truth to you, which I have heard from God; Abraham did not do this.

41. You are doing the works of your father." Then they said to Him, "We have not been born of fornication. We have one Father, *and that is* God."

42. Therefore, Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, because I proceeded forth and came from God. For I have not come of Myself, but He sent Me.

43. Why don't you understand My speech? Because you cannot *bear* to hear My words.

44. You are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father you desire to practice. He was a murderer from *the* beginning, and has not stood in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he is speaking from his own *self*; for he is a liar, and the father of it.

45. And because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.

46. Which *one* of you can convict Me of sin? But if I speak *the* truth, why don't you believe Me?

47. The one who is of God hears the words of God. For this reason you do not hear, because you are not of God."

48. Then the Jews answered and said

36 Rom. 8:2
Gal. 5:1
37 John 7:19
38 John 3:32,
5:19, 30,
14:10, 24
39 Mat. 3:9
Rom. 2:28,
9:7
Gal. 3:7, 29
40 John 8:26, 37
41 Is. 63:16,
64:8
Mal. 1:6
42 John 5:43,
7:28, 29,
16:27,
17:8, 25
1 John 5:1
43 John 7:17
44 Mat. 13:38
1 John 3:8
Jude 6
47 John 10:26
1 John 4:6
48 John 7:20,
8:52, 10:20

to Him, "Are we not right in saying that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?"

49. Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon. But I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me.

50. Yet I do not seek My own glory; there is one Who seeks and judges.

51. Truly, truly I say to you, if anyone keeps My words, he shall not see death forever."

52. Then the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham and the prophets died; yet You say, 'If anyone keeps My words, he shall not taste of death forever.'

53. Are You greater than our father Abraham who died? And the prophets, *who* died? Whom do You make Yourself *to be*?"

54. Jesus answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing. It is My Father Who glorifies Me, *of* Whom you say that He is your God.

55. Yet you have not known Him; but I know Him. And if I say that I do not know Him, I shall be a liar, like you. But I know Him, and I keep His Word.

56. Abraham your father was overjoyed to see My day; and he saw *it*, and rejoiced."

57. Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not even fifty years *old*, and You have seen Abraham?"

58. Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM."

59. Then they picked up stones to throw at Him. But Jesus concealed Himself and went out of the temple, passing through the midst of them, and in this manner departed.

CHAPTER NINE

1. Now *as Jesus was* passing by, He saw a man who was blind from birth.

50 John 5:41,
7:18
51 John 5:24,
11:26
52 Zech. 1:5
Heb. 11:13
54 John 5:41,
16:14, 17:1
Acts 3:13
55 John 7:28, 29
56 Luke 10:24
Heb. 11:13
58 Ex. 3:14
Is. 43:13
John 17:5, 24
Col. 1:17
Rev. 1:8
59 Luke 4:30
John 10:31,
39, 11:8

2. And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

3. Jesus answered, "Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; rather, *this blindness came* so that the works of God might be manifested in him.

4. I must work the works of Him Who sent Me while it is still day. When *the* night comes, no one is able to work.

5. As long as I am in the world, I am *the* light of the world."

6. After saying these things, He spat on *the* ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to the eyes of the blind man.

7. And He said to him, "Go *and* wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is, by interpretation, "Sent"). Then he went and washed, and came *from there* seeing.

8. Therefore, the neighbors and those who had seen him before, *and knew* that he was blind, said, "Isn't he the one who was sitting and begging?"

9. Some said, "It is he." But others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am *the one*."

10. Then they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?"

11. He answered and said, "A man called Jesus made clay, and applied *it* to my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash'; and after I went and washed, I received sight."

12. Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know."

13. They brought him who *was* once blind to the Pharisees.

14. Now it was *the* Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.

15. Therefore, the Pharisees in turn also asked him how he had received sight. And he said to them, "He put

Chap. 9
2 John 9:34
3 John 11:4
4 John 4:34,
5:19, 36,
11:9, 12:35,
17:4
5 John 1:5, 9,
3:19, 8:12,
12:35, 46
6 Mark 7:33,
8:23
7 2 Ki. 5:14
Neh. 3:15
11 John 9:6, 7

16 John 3:2,
7:12, 43,
9:33, 10:19
17 John 4:19,
6:14
22 John 7:13,
9:34, 12:42,
16:2, 19:38
Acts 5:13
24 Josh. 7:19
1 Sam. 6:5
John 9:16

clay on my eyes, and I washed; and *now* I see."

16. Then some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God because He does not keep the Sabbath."* Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such miracles?" And there was a division among them.

17. They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him since He opened your eyes?" And he said, "He is a prophet."

18. However, the Jews did not believe *this* about him, that he was blind and had received sight, until they called the parents of the one who had received sight.

19. And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

20. His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind.

21. But how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself."

22. His parents said these things because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed among themselves that if anyone confessed Him *to be the* Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue.

23. For this reason, his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

24. Therefore, they called a second time *for* the man who had been born blind, and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner."

25. Then he answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner, I do not know. One *thing* I do know, that I was blind, *and* now I see."

*The Pharisees were judging Jesus' action of making the clay on the Sabbath as a sin. Because in their view He was laboring, they condemned Jesus and claimed that He did not keep the Sabbath. But Jesus Christ is Lord of the Sabbath day and never broke the command to refrain from servile work on the Sabbath. The records of the New Testament make it explicitly clear that Jesus never sinned by breaking any of the Ten Commandments, including the Fourth Commandment, which sanctifies the Sabbath day.

26. And they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?"

27. He answered them, "I have already told you, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear *it* again? Do you desire to become His disciples, too?"

28. Then they railed at him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples.

29. We know that God spoke to Moses. As for this man, we do not know where He has come from."

30. The man answered and said to them, "This is truly an amazing thing, that you do not know where He has come from, yet He has opened my eyes.

31. Now we know that God does not hear sinners. But if anyone is God-fearing and is doing His will, He hears him.

32. From the beginning of the world it has never been heard of that anyone has opened *the* eyes of *one* who was born blind.

33. If this *man* were not from God, He could do nothing."

34. They answered and said to him, "You were born wholly in sin, and you are teaching us?" And they cast him out.

35. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?"

36. He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?"

37. And Jesus said to him, "You have seen Him, and He is the one Who is even now speaking to you."

38. Then he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him.

39. And Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world so that those who do not see might see, and those who see might become blind."

40. And those of the Pharisees who

29 John 8:14
30 John 3:10
31 Job 27:9,

35:12
Psa. 18:41,
34:15, 66:18
Prov. 1:28,
15:29, 28:9
Is. 1:15
Jer. 11:11,
14:12
Ezek. 8:18
Mic. 3:4
Zech. 7:13

33 John 9:16
34 John 9:2,
22

35 Mat. 14:33,
16:16
Mark 1:1
John 10:36
1 John 5:13

37 John 4:26
39 Mat. 13:13
John 3:17,
5:22, 27
12:47

40 Rom. 2:19

41 John 15:22,
24

Chap. 10

9 John 14:6
Eph. 2:18
11 Is. 40:11
Ezek. 34:12,
23, 37:24
1 Pet. 2:25,
5:4
Heb. 13:20
12 Zech. 11:16,
17

were with Him heard these things; and they said to Him, "Are we also blind?"

41. Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now you say, 'We see.' Therefore, your sin remains."

CHAPTER TEN

1. "Truly, truly I say to you, the one who does not enter the sheepfold through the door, but climbs up some other way, that one is a thief and a robber.

2. But the one who enters through the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

4. When he brings the sheep out, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.

5. But they will never follow a stranger for they will flee from him because they do not know the voice of strangers."

6. Jesus spoke this parable to them, but they did not understand what He was saying to them.

7. Therefore, Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

8. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.

9. I am the door. If anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and shall find pasture.

10. The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life, and may have *it* more abundantly.

11. I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

12. But the one who is a hireling, and

who is not *the* shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep, and flees. And the wolf seizes the sheep and scatters them.

13. Now the hireling flees because he is a hireling and has no concern for the sheep.

14. I am the good Shepherd, and I know those who *are* Mine, and am known of those who *are* Mine.

15. Just as the Father knows Me, I also know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

16. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring those also, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock *and* one Shepherd.

17. On account of this, the Father loves Me: because I lay down My life, that I may receive it back again.

18. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have authority to lay it down and authority to receive it back again. This commandment I received from My Father."

19. Therefore, there was a division again among the Jews because of these words.

20. And many of them said, "He has a demon and is crazy. Why do you listen to Him?"

21. Others said, "These sayings are not *those* of one who is possessed by a demon. Does a demon have the power to open *the* eyes of *the* blind?"

22. Now it was winter, and the feast of dedication was taking place at Jerusalem.

23. And Jesus was walking in the temple in Solomon's porch.

24. Then the Jews encircled Him and said to Him, "How long are You going to hold us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."

25. Jesus answered them, "I have told you, but you do not believe. The works that I am doing in My Father's name, these bear witness of Me.

14 2 Tim. 2:19
15 Mat. 11:27
John 15:13
16 Is. 56:8
Ezek. 37:22
1 Pet. 2:25
Eph. 2:14
17 Is. 53:7, 8,
12
Heb. 2:9
18 John 2:19,
6:38, 15:10
Acts 2:24,
32
19 John 7:43,
9:16
20 John 7:20,
8:48, 52
21 Ex. 4:11
Psa. 94:9,
146:8
John 9:6, 7,
32, 33
23 Acts 3:11,
5:12
25 John 3:2,
5:36, 10:38

26 John 8:47
27 John 10:4,
14
29 John 14:28,
17:2, 6
30 John 17:11,
22
31 John 8:59
33 John 5:18
34 Psa. 82:6
35 Rom. 13:1
36 Luke 1:35
John 3:17,
5:17, 18, 36,
37, 6:27,
8:42, 9:35,
37, 10:30
37 John 15:24
38 John 5:36,
14:10, 11,
17:21
39 John 7:30,
44, 8:59
40 John 1:28
41 John 3:30

26. But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you.

27. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

28. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; and no one shall take them out of My hand.

29. My Father, Who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one has the power to seize *them* from My Father's hand.

30. I and the Father are one."

31. Then the Jews again picked up stones so that they might stone Him.

32. Jesus answered them, "Many good works I have showed you from My Father. For which of them are you about to stone Me?"

33. The Jews answered Him, saying, "We will not stone You for a good work, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a man, are making Yourself God."

34. Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods" '?"

35. If He called them gods, to whom the Word of God came (and the Scriptures cannot be broken),

36. *Why* do you say *of Him* Whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am *the* Son of God'?"

37. If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me.

38. But if I do, even if you do not believe Me, believe the works; so that you may perceive and may believe that the Father *is* in Me, and I in Him."

39. Then they again sought to take Him; but He escaped out of their hands,

40. And departed again beyond Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing; and He remained there.

41. And many came to Him and said, "John did not do even one miracle, but

everything that John said concerning this *man* is true.”

42. And many believed in Him there.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. Now there was a certain *man* who was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, *which* was the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

2. And it was Mary who *later* anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

3. Therefore, the sisters sent to Him, saying, “Lord, take notice: the one whom You love is sick.”

4. But after hearing *this*, Jesus said, “This sickness is not unto death, but for the-glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.”

5. Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

6. But when He heard that he was sick, He deliberately remained in the same place two days.

7. And after this, He said to the disciples, “Let us go into Judea again.”

8. The disciples said to Him, “Master, the Jews were just seeking to stone You, and You are going there again?”

9. Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble because he sees the light of the world.

10. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles because the light is not in him.”

11. These things He said; and after that He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going so that I may awaken him.”

12. Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will get well.”

13. Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of the rest of sleep.

14. For this reason, Jesus then said to

42 John 8:30, 11:45

Chap. 11

1 Luke 10:38, 39

2 Mat. 26:7

Mark 14:3

John 12:3

4 John 9:3,

11:40

6 John 10:40

8 John 10:31

9 John 9:4

10 John 12:35

11 Deut. 31:16

Dan. 12:2

Mat. 9:24

Acts 7:60

1 Cor. 15:18,

51

them plainly, “Lazarus has died.

15. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, in order that you may believe. But let us go to him.”

16. Then Thomas, called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us go also, so that we may die with Him.”

17. And so, when Jesus came, He found *that* he had already been lying in the tomb *for* four days.

18. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs away,

19. And many of the Jews had come to *join* those around Martha and Mary, so that they might console them concerning their brother.

20. And when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she *went and* met Him. But Mary was sitting in the house.

21. And Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.

22. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.”

23. Jesus said to her, “Your brother shall rise again.”

24. Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

25. Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he die, shall live *again*;

26. And everyone who lives and believes in Me shall not die forever. Do you believe this?”

27. She said to Him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, Who was to come into the world.”

28. And after saying these things, she went away and secretly called her sister Mary, saying, “The Teacher has come and is calling *for* you.”

29. When she heard *this*, she rose up quickly and came to Him.

30. Now Jesus had not yet come into

22 John 9:31

24 Luke 14:14

John 5:29

25 John 3:36,

5:21, 6:39,

40, 44

1 John 5:10

27 Mat. 16:16

John 4:42,

6:14, 69

the town, but was in the place where Martha had met Him.

31. Therefore, when the Jews who were with Mary in the house, consoling her, saw that she had quickly risen up and gone out, they followed her, saying, "She is going to the tomb to weep there."

32. Then Mary, when she came where Jesus was *and* saw Him, fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

33. As a result, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in spirit and was Himself inwardly moved.

34. And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see."

35. Jesus wept.

36. Then the Jews said, "See how much He loved him!"

37. But some of them said, "Could not this man, Who had the power to open the eyes of the blind, also have caused this one not to die?"

38. Because of this, Jesus again groaned within Himself *as* He came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was laid over the opening.

39. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who had died, said to Him, "Lord, he already stinks, for it has been four days."

40. Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you will believe, you shall see the glory of God?"

41. Then they removed the stone *from the tomb* where the dead man had been laid. And Jesus lifted *His* eyes upward and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.

42. And I know that You hear Me always; but because of the people who stand around I say *this*, so that they may believe that You did send Me."

43. And after He had spoken these

31 John 11:19
32 John 11:21
35 Luke 19:41
37 John 9:6
40 John 11:4,
23
42 John 12:30

44 John 20:7
45 John 2:23,
10:42, 12:11,
18
47 Psa. 2:2
Mat. 26:3
Mark 14:1
Luke 22:2
John 12:19
Acts 4:16
49 Luke 3:2
John 18:14
Acts 4:6
50 John 18:14
52 Is. 49:6
John 10:16
1 John 2:2
Eph. 2:14-17
54 2 Chr. 13:19
John 4:1, 3,
7:1
55 John 2:13,
5:1, 6:4

things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth."

44. And he who had been dead came forth, his feet and hands bound with grave clothes, and his face bound up with a napkin. Jesus said to them, "Loose him and let *him* go."

45. Then many of the Jews who had come to *console* Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in Him.

46. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

47. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this man does many miracles.

48. If we allow Him to continue in this manner, all will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away from us both this place and the nation."

49. But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You have no understanding,

50. Nor consider that it is better for us that one man die for the people, than that the whole nation should perish."

51. Now he did not say this of himself, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation;

52. And not for the nation only, but also that He might gather together into one the children of God who were scattered abroad.

53. Therefore, from that day they took counsel together, so that they might kill Him.

54. For this reason, Jesus no longer walked publicly among the Jews, but went away from there into the country near the desert to a city called Ephraim; and He stayed there with His disciples.

55. Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up out of the country to Jerusalem before the Pass-

over, so that they might purify themselves.

56. Then they were watching for Jesus, and were saying to one another *while* standing in the temple, "What do you think, that He will not come to the feast at all?"

57. For both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command that if anyone knew where He was, he should reveal *it*, so that they might seize Him.

CHAPTER TWELVE

1. Now six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had died, *and* whom He had raised from *the* dead.

2. There they made a supper *for* Him, and Martha served; and Lazarus was one of those who sat with Him.

3. Mary then took a pound of pure spikenard ointment worth a great price *and* anointed Jesus' feet, wiping His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the aroma of the ointment.

4. As a result, one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, who was about to betray Him, said,

5. "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred silver coins, and given to *the* poor?"

6. Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and carried what was put in *it*.

7. Then Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has been keeping it toward the day of My burial.

8. For you have the poor with you always, but you do not always have Me."

9. Then a great crowd of the Jews found out that He was there. And they came, not only because of Jesus, but also that they might see Lazarus, whom He had raised from *the* dead.

10. But the chief priests took counsel

56 John 7:11

Chap. 12

1 John 11:1, 43

2 Mat. 26:6

Mark 14:3

3 Luke 10:38,

39

John 11:2

6 John 13:29

8 Mat. 26:11

Mark 14:7

9 John 11:43,

44

10 Luke 16:31

in order that they might kill Lazarus also;

11. Because by reason of him, many of the Jews were leaving *them* and believing in Jesus.

12. On the next day, a great crowd of *people* who had come for the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming into Jerusalem,

13. Took branches from palm trees and went out to meet Him, and were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is He Who comes in *the* name of *the* Lord, the King of Israel."

14. Now after finding a young ass, Jesus sat upon it, exactly as it is written:

15. "Fear not, daughter of Sion. Behold, your King comes, sitting on a colt of an ass."

16. And His disciples did not understand these things at the beginning; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him, and that they had done these things to Him.

17. Then the group that was with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb, and raised him from *the* dead, testified of *what they had seen*.

18. Because of this, the people also met Him, for they had heard of this miracle that He had done.

19. Then the Pharisees said among themselves, "Do you see that we are not gaining in any way? Look! The world has gone after Him."

20. Now there were certain Greeks among those who had come up to worship at the feast.

21. And these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee; and they asked him, saying, "Sir, we desire to see Jesus."

22. Philip came and told Andrew, and Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

23. But Jesus answered them, saying, "The time has come for the Son of man to be glorified.

11 John 11:45,

12:18

12 Mat. 21:8

Mark 11:8

Luke 19:35,

36

13 Psa. 118:25,

26

14 Mat. 21:7

15 Zech. 9:9

16 Luke 18:34

John 7:39,

14:26

18 John 12:11

19 John 11:47,

48

20 1 Ki. 8:41,

42

John 1:44

Acts 8:27,

17:4

23 John 13:32,

17:1

24. Truly, truly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

25. The one who loves his life shall lose it, and the one who hates his life in this world shall keep it unto eternal life.

26. If anyone will serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall My servant be also. And if anyone serves Me, him shall the Father honor.

27. Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this *very* purpose I have come to this hour.

28. Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, *saying*, "I have both glorified *it* and will glorify *it* again."

29. Then the people standing *there*, who heard *it*, said, "It thundered." Others said, "An angel spoke to Him."

30. Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come because of Me, but because of you.

31. Now is *the* judgment of this world. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

32. And if I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all to Myself."

33. But He said this to signify by what death He was about to die.

34. The people answered Him, "We have heard out of the law that the Christ lives forever, and why do You say that the Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?"

35. Then Jesus said to them, "Yet a little while the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, so that *the* darkness will not overtake you. For the one who walks in darkness does not know where he is going.

36. While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become *the* children of light." Jesus spoke these things and *then* departed from

24 1 Cor. 15:36
25 Mat. 10:39, 16:25
Mark 8:35
Luke 9:24, 17:33
26 John 14:3, 17:24
1 Thes. 4:17
27 Mat. 26:38, 39
Luke 12:50, 22:53
John 13:21, 18:37
28 Mat. 3:17
30 John 11:42
31 Mat. 12:29
Luke 10:18
John 14:30, 16:11
Acts 26:18
2 Cor. 4:4
Eph. 2:2, 6:12
32 John 3:14, 8:28
Rom. 5:18
Heb. 2:9
33 John 18:32
34 Psa. 89:36, 37, 110:4
Is. 9:7, 53:8
Ezek. 37:25
Dan. 2:44, 7:14, 27
Mic. 4:7
35 Jer. 13:16
John 1:9, 8:12, 9:5, 11:10
1 John 2:11
Eph. 5:8
36 Luke 16:8
John 8:59, 11:54
1 John 2:9-11
Eph. 5:8
1 Thes. 5:5
38 Is. 53:1
Rom. 10:16
40 Is. 6:9, 10
Mat. 13:14
41 Is. 6:1
42 John 7:13, 9:22
43 John 5:44
44 Mark 9:37
1 Pet. 1:21
45 John 14:9
46 John 3:19, 9:5, 39, 12:35, 36
47 John 3:17, 5:45, 8:15,
48 Deut. 18:19
Mark 16:16
Luke 10:16
49 Deut. 18:18
John 8:38, 14:10

them *and* was *in* hiding.

37. Although He had done so many miracles in their presence, they did not believe in Him,

38. So that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled who said, "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of *the* Lord been revealed?"

39. For this *very* reason they could not believe because again Isaiah said,

40. "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts so that they would not see with *their* eyes and understand with *their* hearts, and be converted, and I would heal them."

41. Isaiah said these things when he saw His glory and spoke concerning Him.

42. But even so, many among the rulers believed in Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him*, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue;

43. For they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.

44. Then Jesus called out and said, "The one who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him Who sent Me.

45. And the one who sees Me sees Him Who sent Me.

46. I have come *as* a light into the world so that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness.

47. But if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.

48. The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him; the word which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day.

49. For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak.

50. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I speak, I speak exactly as the Father has told Me."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1. Now before the feast of the Passover, knowing that His time had come to depart from this world to the Father, Jesus, having loved His own who *were* in the world, loved them to the end.
2. And during supper (the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, that he should betray Him),
3. Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into *His* hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God,
4. Rose from supper and laid aside *His* garments; and after taking a towel, He secured it around Himself.
5. Next, He poured water into a washing basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel which He had secured.
6. Then He came to Simon Peter; and he said to Him, "Lord, are You going to wash my feet?"
7. Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you shall know after these things."
8. Peter said to Him, "You shall not wash my feet, not ever." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."
9. Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head."
10. Jesus said to him, "The one who has been washed does not need to wash *anything other* than the feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all."
11. For He knew the one who was betraying Him; this was the reason He

Chap. 13

- 1 Mat. 26:2
John 12:23,
17:1, 11
- 2 Luke 22:3
- 3 Mat. 11:27,
28:18
John 3:35,
17:2
Acts 2:36
1 Cor. 15:27
Heb. 2:8
- 4 Luke 22:27
Phil. 2:7, 8
- 6 Mat. 3:14
- 7 John 13:19
- 8 John 3:5
1 Cor. 6:11
Eph. 5:26
Tit. 3:5
Heb. 10:22
- 10 John 15:3
- 11 John 6:64
- 13 Mat. 23:8
Luke 6:46
1 Cor. 8:6,
12:3
Phil. 2:11
- 14 Luke 22:27
1 Pet. 5:5
Rom. 12:10
Gal. 6:1, 2
- 15 Mat. 11:29
1 Pet. 2:21
1 John 2:6
Phil. 2:5
- 16 Mat. 10:24
Luke 6:40
John 15:20
- 17 Jas. 1:25
- 18 Psa. 41:9
Mat. 26:23
John 13:21
- 19 John 14:29,
16:4
- 20 Mat. 10:40,
25:40
Luke 10:16
- 21 Mat. 26:21
Mark 14:18
Luke 22:21
John 12:27
Acts. 1:17
1 John 2:19
- 23 John 19:26,
20:2, 21:7,
20

said, "Not all of you are clean."

12. Therefore, when He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, *and* had sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?"
13. You call Me the Teacher and the Lord, and you speak rightly, because I am.
14. Therefore, if I, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also are duty-bound to wash one another's feet;
15. For I have given you an example, *to show* that you also should do exactly as I have done to you.
16. Truly, truly I tell you, a servant is not greater than his lord, nor a messenger greater than he who sent him.
17. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.
18. I am not speaking of you all; *for* I know whom I have chosen, in order that the scripture might be fulfilled: 'He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.'
19. I am telling you at this time, before it happens, so that when it does happen, you may believe that I AM.
20. Truly, truly I tell you, the one who receives whomever I send is receiving Me; and the one who receives Me is receiving Him Who sent Me."
21. *As He* was saying these things, Jesus was troubled in spirit, and testified, saying, "Truly, truly I tell you, one of you shall betray Me."
22. Then the disciples looked at one another, wondering of whom He was speaking.
23. Now one of His disciples, the one whom Jesus loved, was leaning on Jesus' chest.
24. And so, Simon Peter motioned to him to ask who was the one of whom He was speaking.
25. Then he leaned back on Jesus' chest *and* asked Him, "Lord, who is it?"

26. Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I shall give a sop after I have dipped *it*." And when He had dipped the sop, He gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*.

27. And after the sop, Satan entered into him. Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly."

28. But not one of those sitting at the table knew why He said *this* to him;

29. For some thought, since Judas had the bag, that Jesus was telling him, "Buy the things that we need for the feast"; or that he should give something to the poor.

30. So then, after receiving the sop, he immediately went out; and it was night.

31. When he was gone, Jesus said, "Now has the Son of man been glorified, and God has been glorified in Him.

32. If God has been glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall immediately glorify Him.

33. Little children, I am with you yet a little while. You shall seek Me; but as I told the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' I am now telling you also.

34. A new commandment I give to you: that you love one another in the same way that I have loved you, that *is how* you are to love one another.

35. By this shall everyone know that you are My disciples—if you love one another."

36. Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going, you cannot follow Me now; but you shall follow Me afterwards."

37. Peter said to Him, "Why can't I follow You now? I will lay down my life for You."

38. Jesus answered him, "You will lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly I tell you, *the* cock shall not crow until you have denied Me three times."

27 Luke 22:3
John 6:70
29 John 12:6
31 John 12:23,
14:13
1 Pet. 4:11
32 John 12:23
33 John 8:21
34 Lev. 19:18
John 15:12,
17
Jas. 2:8
1 Pet. 1:22
1 John 2:7,
3:11, 23
Eph. 5:2
1 Thes. 4:9
35 1 John 2:5,
4:20
36 John 21:18
2 Pet. 1:14
37 Mat. 26:33
Mark 14:29
Luke 22:33

Chap. 14

1 John 14:27
2 John 13:33
3 John 12:26,
17:24
Acts 1:11
1 Thes. 4:17
6 John 8:32,
10:9, 11:25
Heb. 9:8
7 John 8:19
9 John 12:45
Col. 1:15
Heb. 1:3
10 John 5:19,
8:28, 10:38,
17:21, 23
11 John 10:38
12 Mat. 21:21
Mark 16:17
Luke 10:17
13 Mat. 7:7,
21:22
Mark 11:24
Luke 11:9
John 15:7,
16, 16:23, 24
Jas. 1:5
1 John 3:22,
5:14

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

1. "Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me.

2. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were otherwise, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you.

3. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; so that where I am, you may be also.

4. And where I am going you know, and the way you know."

5. Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going; how then can we know the way?"

6. Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

7. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. But from this time forward, you know Him and have seen Him."

8. Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and that will be sufficient for us."

9. Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long a time, and you have not known Me, Philip? The one who has seen Me has seen the Father; why then do you say, 'Show us the Father'?

10. Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I speak to you, I do not speak from My own self; but the Father Himself, Who dwells in Me, does the works.

11. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; but if not, believe Me because of the works themselves.

12. Truly, truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me shall also do the works that I do; and greater works than these shall he do because I am going to the Father.

13. And whatever you shall ask in My

name, this will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14. If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.

15. If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.

16. And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age:

17. *Even* the Spirit of the truth,* which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you, and shall be within you.

18. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

19. Yet a little while and the world shall see Me no longer; but you shall see Me. Because I live, you shall live also.

20. In that day, you shall know that I am in My Father, and you *are* in Me, and I am in you.

21. The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him."

22. Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?"

23. Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.

24. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me.

25. I have spoken these things to you while I am yet present with you.

26. But *when* the Comforter *comes*, *even* the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in My name, that one shall

15 John 14:21, 23, 15:10

1 John 5:3

16 John 15:26,

16:7

Rom. 8:15

17 John 15:26,

16:13

1 John 2:27,

4:6

1 Cor. 2:14

18 Mat. 28:20

John 14:3, 28

19 John 16:16

1 Cor. 15:20

20 John 10:38

21 1 John 2:5,

5:3

22 Luke 6:16

23 1 John 2:24

Rev. 3:20

24 John 5:19

26 Luke 24:49

John 2:22,

12:16, 15:26

1 John 2:20

teach you all things, and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you.

27. Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give *it* to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it fear.

28. You have heard Me say to you that I am going away, and *that* I will come to you *again*. If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced that I said, 'I am going to the Father' because My Father is greater than I.

29. And now I have told you before it happens, so that when it comes to pass, you may believe.

30. I will not speak with you much longer because the ruler of this world is coming; but he does not have a single thing in Me.

31. Yet *he comes* so that the world may know that I love the Father, and that I do exactly as the Father has commanded Me. Arise, let us go out."

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

1. "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.

2. He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit; but He cleanses each one that bears fruit, in order that it may bear more fruit.

3. You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to you.

4. Dwell in Me, and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine, neither *can* you *bear fruit* unless you are dwelling in Me.

5. I am the vine, *and* you *are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; because apart from Me you can do nothing.

6. If anyone does not dwell in Me, he is cast out as a branch, and is dried up; and men gather them and cast *them*

27 Phil. 4:7

Col. 3:15

28 John 5:18,

10:30, 14:3,

18, 16:16,

20:17

Phil. 2:6

29 John 13:19,

16:4

30 John 12:31,

16:11

31 John 10:18

Phil. 2:8

Heb. 5:8

Chap. 15

2 Mat. 15:13

3 John. 13:10

1 Pet. 1:22

Eph. 5:26

4 1 John 2:6

Col. 1:23

5 Hos. 14:8

Acts 4:12

Phil. 1:11,

4:13

6 Mat. 3:10,

7:19

*See Appendix H, page 762.

into a fire, and they are burned.

7. If you dwell in Me, and My words dwell in you, you shall ask whatever you desire, and it shall come to pass for you.

8. In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples.

9. As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love.

10. If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and live in His love.

11. These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you, and *that* your joy may be full.

12. This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you.

13. No one has greater love than this: that one lay down his life for his friends.

14. You are My friends, if you do whatever I command you.

15. No longer do I call you servants, because the servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends because I have made known to you all *the* things that I have heard from My Father.

16. You yourselves did not choose Me, but I have personally chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go *forth* and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain; so that whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He may give you.

17. These things I command you, that you love one another.

18. If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you.

19. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. However, because you are not of the world, but I have personally chosen you out of the world, the world hates you for this.

20. Remember the word that I spoke to you: a servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will

7 John 16:23
8 Mat. 5:16
John 8:31
Phil. 1:11
10 John 14:15,
16:24, 17:13
1 John 1:4
12 John 13:34
1 Pet. 4:8
1 John 3:11
1 Thes. 4:9
13 John 10:11
1 John 3:16
Rom. 5:7, 8
Eph. 5:2
14 Mat. 12:50
John 14:15
15 Gen. 18:17
John 17:26
16 Mat. 28:19
Mark 16:15
John 6:70,
13:18, 15:7
1 John 4:10
Col. 1:6
18 1 John 3:13
19 John 17:14
1 John 4:5
20 Ezek. 3:7
Mat. 10:24
Luke 6:40

21 Mat. 10:22,
24:9
22 John 9:41
Jas. 4:17
Rom. 1:20
23 1 John 2:23
24 John 3:2
25 Psa. 35:19,
69:4
26 Luke 24:49
John 14:17
1 John 5:6
27 Luke 1:2,
24:48
Acts 1:21,
2:32, 3:15,
4:20, 33,
5:32, 10:39,
13:31
1 Pet. 5:1
2 Pet. 1:16
1 John 1:1

Chap. 16

1 Mat. 11:6,
24:10, 26:31
2 John 13:3,
Acts 8:1,
9:1, 26:9, 10
3 John 15:21
Rom. 10:2
1 Cor. 2:8
1 Tim. 1:13
4 John 13:19,
14:29
5 John 7:33
14:28

persecute you also. If they kept My word, they will keep your *word* also.

21. But they will do all these things to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him Who sent Me.

22. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have had sin; but now they have nothing to cover their sin.

23. The one who hates Me hates My Father also.

24. If I had not done among them the works that no other man has done, they would not have had sin; but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father.

25. But this has happened so that the saying might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without *a* cause.'

26. But when the Comforter has come, which I will send to you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of the truth, which proceeds from the Father, that one shall bear witness of Me.

27. Then you also shall bear witness, because you have been with Me from *the* beginning."

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

1. "I have spoken these things to you so that you will not be offended.

2. They shall cast you out of the synagogues; furthermore, the time is coming that everyone who kills you will think that he is rendering service to God.

3. And they shall do these things to you because they do not know the Father, nor Me.

4. But I have told you these things so that when the time comes, you may remember that I said *them* to you. However, I did not say these things to you at *the* beginning because I was with you.

5. But now I am going to Him Who sent Me; and none of you asks Me,

'Where are You going?'

6. But because I have spoken these things to you, grief has filled your hearts.

7. But I am telling you the truth. It is profitable for you that I go away because if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you. However, if I go, I will send it to you.

8. And when that one has come, it will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment:

9. Concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me;

10. Concerning righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you no longer will see Me;

11. And concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.-

12. I have yet many things to tell you, but you are not able to bear them now.

13. However, when that one has come, *even* the Spirit of the truth, it will lead you into all truth because it shall not speak from itself, but whatever it shall hear, it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come.

14. That one shall glorify Me because it shall disclose to you *the things that* it receives from Me.

15. Everything that the Father has is Mine; for this reason, I said that it shall receive from Me and shall disclose *these things* to you.

16. A little *while*, and you shall not see Me; and again a little *while*, and you shall see Me, because I am going to the Father."

17. Then *some* of His disciples said to one another, "What is this that He is saying to us, 'A little *while*, and you shall not see Me; and again a little *while*, and you shall see Me,' and, 'because I am going to the Father'?"

18. Therefore they said, "What is this that He is saying, the 'little *while*'?"

7 John 7:39,
14:16, 26,
15:26
Acts 2:33
Eph. 4:8
9 Acts 2:22
10 John 5:32
Acts 2:32
11 Luke 10:18
Acts 26:18
Eph. 2:2
Col. 2:15
Heb. 2:14
12 Mark 4:33
1 Cor. 3:2
Heb. 5:12
13 John 14:17,
26
1 John 2:20
15 Mat. 11:27
John 3:35
16 John 13:3

21 Is. 26:17
22 Luke 24:41
John 14:1,
27, 20:20
Acts 2:46,
13:52
1 Pet. 1:8
23 Mat. 7:7
John 14:13,
15:16
24 John 15:11
27 John 3:13,
14:21
28 John 13:3

We do not understand what He is saying."

19. Then Jesus, knowing that they desired to ask Him, said to them, "Why are you inquiring among one another about this that I said, 'A little *while*, and you shall not see Me; and again a little *while*, and you shall see Me'?"

20. Truly, truly I tell you, you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be grieved, but your grief shall be turned into joy.

21. A woman when she is giving birth has grief because her time of *travail* has come; but after she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world.

22. And likewise, you indeed have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and no one shall take your joy from you.

23. And in that day you shall ask Me nothing. Truly, truly I tell you, whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give you.

24. Until this day, you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full.

25. These things I have spoken to you in allegories; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in allegories, but I will plainly disclose to you *the things* of the Father.

26. In that day, you shall ask in My name; and I do not tell you that I will beseech the Father for you,

27. For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.

28. I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and am going to the Father."

29. Then His disciples said to Him, "Behold, now You are speaking plainly and are not speaking *in* an allegory.

30. Now we know that You understand all things, and do not need to have someone ask You. By this we believe that You came forth from God."

31. Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe?"

32. Listen, the time is coming, and has already come, that you shall be scattered each to his own, and you shall leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone because the Father is with Me.

33. These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation. But be courageous! I have overcome the world."

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

1. Jesus spoke these words, and lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your own Son, so that Your Son may also glorify You;

2. Since You have given Him authority over all flesh, in order that He may give eternal life to all whom You have given Him.

3. For this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom You did send.

4. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work that You gave Me to do.

5. And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with the glory that I had with You before the world existed.

6. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, and You have given them to Me, and they have kept Your Word.

7. Now they have known that all things that You have given Me are from You.

8. For I have given them the words that You gave to Me; and they have received *them* and truly have known

30 John 17:8, 21:17

32 Mat. 26:31
Mark 14:27
John 8:29, 20:10

33 Is. 9:6
1 John 4:4
Rom. 5:1, 8:37
Eph. 2:14
2 Tim. 3:12

Chap. 17

1 John 12:23

2 Dan. 7:14

Mat. 11:27

John 3:35,

6:37, 17:6,

9, 24

Phil. 2:10

Heb. 2:8

3 Is. 53:11

Jer. 9:24

John 3:34

1 Cor. 8:4

1 Thes. 1:9

4 John 4:34,

13:31, 14:31

5 Phil. 2:6

Col. 1:15

Heb. 1:3

6 Ps. 22:22

John 6:37

8 John 8:28,

16:27

9 1 John 5:19

10 John 16:15

11 John 10:30,

13:1

1 Pet. 1:5

Jude 1

12 Ps. 109:8

John 6:70,

Acts 1:20

1 John 2:19

Heb. 2:13

14 John 8:23

1 John 3:13

15 Mat. 6:13

1 John 5:18

Gal. 1:4

17 Ps. 119:142,

151

Acts 15:9

1 Pet. 1:22

Eph. 5:26

18 John 20:21

19 1 Cor. 1:2

1 Thes. 4:7

Heb. 10:10

21 John 10:16,

38

Rom. 12:5

Gal. 3:28

that I came from You; and they have believed that You did send Me.

9. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world, but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

10. All Mine are Yours, and all Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them.

11. And I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, those whom You have given Me, so that they may be one, even as *We are one*.

12. When I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. I protected those whom You have given Me, and not one of them has perished except the son of perdition, in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

13. But now I am coming to You; and these things I am speaking *while yet* in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in them.

14. I have given them Your words, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

15. I do not pray that You would take them out of the world, but that You would keep them from the evil one.

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

17. Sanctify them in Your truth; Your Word is the truth.

18. Even as You did send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

19. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, so that they also may be sanctified in *Your* truth.

20. I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word;

21. That they all may be one, even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, in

order that the world may believe that You did send Me.

22. And I have given them the glory that You gave *to* Me, in order that they may be one, in the same way *that* We are one:

23. I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one; and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

24. Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me may also be with Me where I am, so that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me; because You did love Me before *the* foundation of *the* world.

25. Righteous Father, the world has not known You; but I have known You, and these have known that You did send Me.

26. And I have made known Your name to them, and will make *it* known; so that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

1. After saying these things, Jesus went out with His disciples *to a place* beyond the winter stream of Kidron, where *there* was a garden into which He and His disciples entered.

2. And Judas, who was betraying Him, also knew of the place because Jesus had often gathered there with His disciples.

3. Then Judas, after receiving a band and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with torches and lamps and weapons.

4. Jesus, therefore, knowing all *the* things that were coming upon Him, went forward *and* said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"

5. They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarean." Jesus said to them, "I AM." And Judas, who was betraying

22 John 14:20
1 John 1:3
23 Col. 3:14
24 John 12:26,
17:5
1 Thes. 4:17
25 John 7:29,
8:55, 10:15,
15:21, 16:3,
27, 17:8
26 John 15:9,
15, 17:6

Chap. 18

1 2 Sam. 15:23
Mat. 26:36
Mark 14:36
Luke 22:39
2 Luke 21:37,
22:39
3 Mat. 26:47,
Mark 14:43
Luke 22:47
Acts 1:16

Him, was also standing with them.

6. But when He said to them, "I AM," they went backward and fell to *the* ground.

7. Then He asked them again, "Whom are you seeking?" And they said, "Jesus the Nazarean."

8. Jesus answered, "I told you that I AM. Therefore, if you are seeking Me, allow these to go their way";

9. So that the saying might be fulfilled which He had said, "Of those whom You have given Me, not one of them have I lost."

10. Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And the servant's name was Malchus.

11. But Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given Me?"

12. Then the band and the chief captain and the officers of the Jews took hold of Jesus, and bound Him;

13. And they led Him away to Annas first; for he was *the* father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year.

14. Now it was Caiaphas who had given counsel to the Jews that it was profitable for one man to perish for the people.

15. But Simon Peter and the other disciple followed Jesus. And that disciple was known to the high priest, and entered with Jesus into the court of the high priest.

16. But Peter stood outside at the door. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought Peter in.

17. Then the maid who was the doorkeeper said to Peter, "Are you not also a disciple of this man?" He said, "I am not."

18. Now the servants and the officers had made a fire, for it was cold; and

9 John 17:12
10 Mat. 26:51
Mark 14:47
Luke 22:49,
50
11 Mat. 20:22,
26:39, 42
13 Mat. 26:57
Luke 3:2
John 18:24
14 John 11:50
15 Mat. 26:58
Mark 14:54
Luke 22:54
16 Mat. 26:69
Mark 14:66
Luke 22:54

they were standing *there* warming themselves, and Peter was *also* standing and warming himself.

19. Then the high priest questioned Jesus concerning His disciples and concerning His teachings.

20. Jesus answered him, "I spoke openly to the world; I always taught in the synagogue and in the temple, where the Jews always assemble, and I spoke nothing in secret.

21. Why do you question Me? Ask those who have heard what I spoke to them; behold, they know what I said."

22. But after He said these things, one of the officers who was standing by struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Do You answer the high priest in that way?"

23. Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken evil, testify of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?"

24. Then Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas, the high priest.

25. Now as Simon Peter was standing and warming himself, they said to him, "Are you not also *one* of His disciples?" He denied *it*, and said, "I am not."

26. One of the servants of the high priest, being a kinsman *of the one* whose ear Peter had cut off, said, "Didn't I see you in the garden with Him?"

27. Then Peter again denied *it*; and immediately a cock crowed.

28. Now then, they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the judgment hall, and it was early. But they did not go into the judgment hall, so that they would not be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover.

29. Therefore, Pilate came out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?"

30. They answered and said to him, "If He were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you."

31. Then Pilate said to them, "You take Him and judge Him according to

20 Mat. 26:55
Luke 4:15
John 7:14,
26, 28, 8:2
22 Jer. 20:2
Acts 23:2
24 Mat. 26:57
25 Mat. 26:69,
71
Mark 14:69
Luke 22:58
27 Mat. 26:74
Mark 14:72
Luke 22:60
John 13:38
28 Mat. 27:2, 27
Mark 15:1
Luke 23:1
Acts 3:13,
10:28, 11:3

32 Mat. 20:19
John 12:32,
33
33 Mat. 27:11
36 Dan. 2:44,
7:14
Luke 12:14
John 6:15,
8:15
1 Tim. 6:13
37 John 8:47
1 John 3:19,
4:6
38 Mat. 27:24
Luke 23:4
John 19:4, 6
39 Mat. 27:15
Mark 15:6
Luke 23:17
40 Luke 23:19
Acts 3:14

Chap. 19

1 Mat. 20:19,
27:26
Mark 15:15
Luke 18:33

your *own* law." But the Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death";

32. So that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He had spoken to signify by what death He was about to die.

33. Then Pilate returned to the judgment hall and called Jesus, and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?"

34. Jesus answered him, "Do you ask this of yourself, or did others say *it* to you concerning Me?"

35. Pilate answered Him, "Am I a Jew? The chief priests and your own nation have delivered You up to me. What have You done?"

36. Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, so that I might not be delivered up to the Jews. However, My kingdom is not of this world."

37. Pilate therefore answered Him, "Then You are a king?" Jesus answered, "As you say, I am a king. For this *purpose* I was born, and for this *reason* I came into the world, that I may bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

38. Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And after saying this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, "I do not find any fault in Him.

39. And it is a custom with you that I release one to you at the Passover. Do you then desire *that* I release the King of the Jews to you?"

40. But they all shouted again, saying, "Not this one, but Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a robber.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

1. Then Pilate therefore took Jesus and scourged *Him*.

2. And after plating a crown of thorns, the soldiers put *it* on His head;

and they threw a purple cloak over Him,

3. And *kept on* saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with the palms of their hands.

4. Then Pilate went out again and said to them, "Behold, I bring Him out to you, so that you may know that I do not find any fault in Him."

5. Then Jesus went out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak; and he said to them, "Behold the man!"

6. But when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried aloud, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify Him because I do not find any fault in Him."

7. The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law it is mandatory that He die, because He made Himself *the* Son of God."

8. Therefore, when Pilate heard this saying, he was even more afraid.

9. And he went into the judgment hall again, and said to Jesus, "Where have You come from?" But Jesus did not give him an answer.

10. Then Pilate said to Him, "Why don't You speak to me? Don't You know that I have authority to crucify You, and authority to release You?"

11. Jesus answered, "You would not have any authority against Me if it were not given to you from above. For this reason, the one who delivered Me to you has *the* greater sin."

12. Because of this *saying*, Pilate sought to release Him; but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you release this *man*, you are not a friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself a king speaks against Caesar."

13. Therefore, after hearing this saying, Pilate *had* Jesus led out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called *the* Pavement; but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.

4 John 18:33, 19:6

6 Acts 3:13

7 Lev. 24:16

Mat. 26:65

John 5:18,

10:33

9 Is. 53:7

Mat. 27:12,

14

11 Luke 22:53

John 7:30

12 Luke 23:2

Acts 17:7

14. (Now it was *the* preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour.) And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"

15. But they cried aloud, "Away, away *with Him*! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."

16. Therefore, he then delivered Him up to them so that He might be crucified. And they took Jesus and led *Him* away.

17. And He went out bearing His own cross to the place called *The Place* of a Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha.

18. There they crucified Him, and with Him two others, *one* on this side and *one* on the other side, and Jesus in the middle.

19. And Pilate also wrote a title and put *it* on the cross; and it was written, "Jesus the Nazarean, the King of the Jews."

20. As a result, many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Greek *and* in Latin.

21. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews'; but that He said, 'I am King of the Jews.'"

22. Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

23. Now the soldiers, after they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, a part for each soldier, and the coat *also*. But the coat was seamless, woven *in one piece* from the top all the way throughout.

24. For this reason, they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but let us cast lots for it *to determine* whose it shall be"; that the scripture might be fulfilled which says, "They divided My garments among them, and they cast lots for My vesture." The sol-

14 Mat. 27:62

15 Gen. 49:10

16 Mat. 27:26,

31

Mark 15:15

Luke 23:24

17 Num. 15:36

Mat. 27:31,

33

Mark 15:21,

22

Luke 23:26,

33

Heb. 13:12

19 Mat. 27:37

Mark 15:26

Luke 23:38

23 Mat. 27:35

Mark 15:24

Luke 23:34

24 Psa. 22:18

diers therefore did these things.

25. And Jesus' mother stood by the cross, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene.

26. When Jesus saw *His* mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son."

27. Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother." And from that time, the disciple took her into his own *home*.

28. After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had now been finished, so that the scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst."

29. Now a vessel full of vinegar was sitting *there*. And after filling a sponge with vinegar and putting *it* on a *stick of hysop*, they put it up to *His* mouth.

30. And so, when Jesus had received the vinegar, He said, "It is finished." And bowing His head, He yielded up *His* spirit.

31. The Jews therefore, so that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the Sabbath★, because it was a preparation *day* (for that Sabbath was a high day), requested of Pilate that their legs might be broken and *the bodies* be taken away.

32. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first *one*, and *the legs* of the other who was crucified with Him.

33. But when they came to Jesus *and* saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs;

34. But one of the soldiers had pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water had come out.

35. And he who saw *this* has testified, and his testimony is true; and he

25 Mat. 27:55
Mark 15:40
Luke 23:49,
24:18

26 John 2:4,
13:23, 20:2,
21:7, 20, 24

27 John 1:11,
16:32

28 Psa. 69:21

29 Mat. 27:48

30 John 17:4

31 Deut. 21:23

Mark 15:42

John 19:42

34 1 John 5:6, 8

★ This Sabbath was not the 7th day weekly Sabbath. This Sabbath was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—a holy day Sabbath and fell on a Thursday (See Appendix G, pp. 750-761 and Appendix R, p. 852).

36 Ex. 12:46
Num. 9:12

Psa. 34:20

37 Psa. 22:16,

17

Zech. 12:10

Rev. 1:7

38 Mat. 27:57

Mark 15:42

Luke 23:50

John 9:22,

12:42

39 John 3:1, 2,

7:50

40 Acts 5:6

42 Is. 53:9

John 19:31

Chap. 20

1 Mat. 28:1

Mark 16:1

Luke 24:1

2 John 13:23,

19:26, 21:7,

20, 24

knows that *what* he says *is* true, so that you may believe.

36. For these things took place so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "Not a bone of Him shall be broken."

37. And again another scripture says, "They shall look upon Him Whom they pierced."

38. Now after these things, Joseph (the one from Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but having concealed it for fear of the Jews) asked Pilate that he might take Jesus' body away; and Pilate gave *him* permission. Then he came and took away the body of Jesus.

39. And Nicodemus, who had come to Jesus by night at *the* first, also came, bearing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds.

40. Then they took Jesus' body and wound it in linen cloths with the aromatics, as is the custom among the Jews to prepare for burial.

41. Now there was a garden in the place where He was crucified, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid.

42. Because of the preparation of the Jews, they laid Jesus there; for the tomb was near.

CHAPTER TWENTY

1. Now on the first *day* of the weeks,* while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb; and she saw *that* the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

2. Then she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord from the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."

*This literal translation of the Greek words *μία σαββάτων* or *μία των σαββάτων* shows that the day which followed the weekly Sabbath was the first day of the seven-week count to Pentecost, thus identifying this day as the Wave Sheaf Day (Lev. 23:10-11, 15-16). The ascension of Jesus Christ on that day fulfilled the offering of the wave sheaf for all time.

3. As a result, Peter and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb.
 4. Now the two ran together, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and came to the tomb first;
 5. And he stooped down *and* saw the linen cloths lying *there*, but he did not enter.
 6. Then Simon Peter came following him, and he went into the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying,
 7. And the napkin that had been on His head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself.
 8. Then the other disciple, who had come to the tomb first, also went in and saw *these things*; and he believed.
 9. For they did not yet understand the scripture *which decreed* that He must rise from *the* dead.
 10. Then the disciples went away again to their *home*.
 11. But Mary stood outside the tomb weeping; and as she wept, she stooped down *and looked* into the tomb.
 12. And she saw two angels in white who were sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been laid.
 13. And they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him."
 14. And after saying these things, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but did not know that it was Jesus.
 15. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Thinking that He was the gardener, she said to Him, "Sir, if you have carried Him off, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away."
 16. Jesus said to her, "Mary." Turning around, she said to Him, "Rabboni"; that is to say, "Teacher."
 17. Jesus said to her, "Do not touch Me, because I have not yet ascended

3 Luke 24:12
 5 John 19:40
 7 John 11:44
 9 Psa. 16:10
 Acts 2:25,
 31, 13:34, 35
 11 Mark 16:5
 14 Mat. 28:9
 Mark 16:9
 Luke 24:16,
 31
 John 21:4
 17 Psa. 22:22
 Mat. 28:10
 John 16:28,
 Rom. 8:29
 Eph. 1:17
 Heb. 2:11

18 Mat. 28:10
 Luke 24:10
 19 Mark 16:14
 Luke 24:36
 1 Cor. 15:5
 20 John 16:22
 21 Mat. 28:18
 John 17:18,
 19
 2 Tim. 2:2
 Heb. 3:1
 23 Mat. 16:10,
 18:18
 24 John 11:16
 27 1 John 1:1

to My Father. But go to My brethren and tell them that I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God."

18. Mary Magdalene came to the disciples, bringing word that she had seen the Lord, and that He had said these things to her.

19. Afterwards, as evening was drawing near that day, the first *day* of the weeks, and the doors were shut where the disciples had assembled for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace *be* to you."

20. And after saying this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples rejoiced *because* they had seen the Lord.

21. Therefore, Jesus said to them again, "Peace *be* to you. As the Father sent Me, I am also sending you."

22. And after saying this, He breathed on *them* and said, "Receive *the* Holy Spirit.

23. Those whose sins you shall remit, they are remitted to them; *and* those whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

24. But Thomas, called Didymus, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

25. Then the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in His hands, and put my finger into the nail marks, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe at all."

26. Now after eight days, His disciples again were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus came after the doors were shut, and stood in the midst and said, "Peace *be* to you."

27. Then He said to Thomas, "Put forth your finger, and see My hands; and reach *out* your hand, and put *it* into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing."

28. And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and My God."
 29. Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, Thomas, you have believed; blessed are the ones who have not seen, but have believed."
 30. Now then, Jesus did many other miracles in *the* presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book.
 31. But these have been written, so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you may have life through His name.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

1. After these things, Jesus again revealed Himself to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. And this *is how* He revealed *Himself*:
 2. Simon Peter, and Thomas (called Didymus), and Nathanael from Cana of Galilee were there together, and the *sons* of Zebedee and two of His other disciples.
 3. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We also will come with you." They left immediately and got into the ship, but during that night they took nothing.
 4. And when morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore. However, none of the disciples realized that it was Jesus.
 5. Then Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any food?" They answered Him, "No."
 6. And He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the ship, and you shall find *some*." Then they cast *the net*, but they did not have the strength to draw *it in* because of the multitude of fish.
 7. Then that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." And after hearing that it was the Lord, Peter put on *his* outer garment, be-

29 1 Pet. 1:8
 2 Cor. 5:7
 31 Luke 1:4
 John 3:15,
 16, 5:24
 1 Pet. 1:8, 9
 Chap. 21
 2 Mat. 4:21
 John 1:45
 4 John 20:14
 5 Luke 24:41
 6 Luke 5:4, 6,
 7
 7 John 13:23,
 20:2

★ For explanation of verses 15-17, see the footnote on page 506.

12 Acts 10:41
 14 John 20:19,
 26
 16 Acts 20:28
 1 Pet. 2:25,
 5:2, 4
 Heb. 13:20
 17 John 2:24,
 25, 16:30
 18 John 13:36
 Acts 12:3, 4

cause he was naked, and threw himself into the sea.
 8. But the other disciples came in a small ship, dragging the net *full* of fish; for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits *away*.
 9. Now then, when they came up to the land, they saw a fire of coals spread, and fish lying on *it*, and bread.
 10. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught."
 11. Simon Peter went up *to the shore* and drew the net to the land, full of large fish, one hundred *and* fifty-three; and *although* there were so many, the net was not torn.
 12. Jesus said to them, "Come *and* dine." But none of the disciples dared to ask Him, "Who are You?" *For* they knew that it was the Lord.
 13. Then Jesus came and took the bread, and gave *it* to them, and likewise the fish.
 14. This *was* now the third time *that* Jesus revealed Himself to His disciples after being raised from *the* dead.
 15. Therefore, when they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me more than these?" *And* he said to Him, "Yes, Lord. You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs."★
 16. He said to him again a second time, "Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me?" *And* he said to Him, "Yes, Lord. You know that I love You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep."
 17. He said to him the third time, "Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" *And* he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things. You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep."
 18. Truly, truly I say to you, since you were young, you have dressed yourself and walked wherever you have

desired; but when you are old, you shall stretch out your hands, and another shall dress you and bring you where you do not desire to go."

19. Now He said this to signify by what death he would glorify God. And after saying this, He said to him, "Follow Me."

20. But when Peter turned, he saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had sat at the supper and *leaned* on His chest, and had said, "Lord, who is it that is betraying You?"

21. Seeing him, Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, what *shall happen* to this one?"

22. Jesus said to him, "If I desire that

19 2 Pet. 1:14
20 John 13:23,
25, 20:2
22 Mat. 16:27,
28, 25:31
1 Cor. 4:5,
11:26
Rev. 2:25,
3:11, 22:7,
20

24 John 19:35
3 John 12
25 Amos 7:10
John 20:30

he remain alive until I come, what *is it* to you? You follow Me."

23. Then this saying went out among the brethren, that that disciple would not die. However, Jesus did not say to him that he would not die; but, "If I desire that he remain alive until I come, what *is it* to you?"

24. This is the disciple who testifies concerning these things and *who* wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true.

25. But there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I do not suppose that even the world itself could contain the books that would be written. Amen.

*Explanation of John 21:15-17 and the Greek words φιλεω [phileo] and αγαπαω [agapao] meaning "to love": "These two words are not used indiscriminately. αγαπαω [agapao] never means to kiss; φιλεω [phileo], never means to acquiesce or cherish with reverence. φιλεω [phileo] denotes the sense or passion of love, but in αγαπαω [agapao] is the implied cause of φιλεω [phileo]. αγαπαω [agapao] is to make much of a thing, to admire for some good and sufficient reason, but φιλεω [phileo] denotes the love which springs naturally from the thing loved, even where no just cause to love exists. αγαπαω [agapao] is never used of improper love; φιλεω [phileo] is. Hence, in the N. T. φιλεω [phileo] is never used of man's love to God, but αγαπαω [agapao], always [is]. Both words are used of God's love to man, αγαπαω [agapao], when He said to 'Love the world' (John iii.16, etc) and when He wishes men good, and seeks their salvation; and φιλεω [phileo] is affirmed of His love to His people who please Him (John xvi. 27, etc.) Again φιλεω [phileo] is used of Jesus' love for Lazarus, (John xi. 3, 36); but in verse 5 the word is αγαπαω [agapao], because there the sisters are included, and therefore this word is more correct. Again, we are commanded to love our enemies, etc., but here αγαπαω [agapao] is used, never φιλεω [phileo]; love cannot be required in this case, though kindness and compassion are. Again, in John xxi.15-17, in the first question Jesus uses αγαπαω [agapao], but Peter uses the word φιλεω [phileo] in his reply; this repeated [the second time], and then Jesus uses Peter's word in the third question. Once more, to love (φιλεω) [phileo] life, from an excessive desire to preserve it, and so to lose sight of the real objective of living, is reproved by our Lord, (John xii. 25.) Whereas to love (αγαπαω) [agapao] life, is to consult its real interest [i.e., the purpose of life]" (A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament, E. W. Bullinger, p. 470).

The Acts of the Apostles

CHAPTER ONE

1. The first account I indeed have written, O Theophilus, concerning all things that Jesus began both to do and to teach,

2. Until the day in which He was taken up, after giving command by *the* Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen;

3. To whom also, by many infallible proofs, He presented Himself alive after He had suffered, being seen by them for forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God.

4. And while *they* were assembled with *Him*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to "await the promise of the Father, which," *He said*, "you have heard of Me.

5. For John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with *the* Holy Spirit after not many days."

6. So then, when they were assembled together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You restore the kingdom to Israel at this time?"

7. And He said to them, "It is not for you to know *the* times or *the* seasons, which the Father has placed in His own authority;

8. But you yourselves shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto *the* ends of the earth."

9. And after saying these things, *as* they were looking at *Him*, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

10. Now while they were gazing intently up into heaven as He was going up, two men in white apparel suddenly stood by them,

11. Who also said, "You men of Galilee, why do you stand *here* looking up

Chap. 1

1 Luke 1:3

2 Mat. 28:19

Mark 16:19

John 20:21

1 Tim. 3:16

3 Mark 16:14

4 Luke 24:43,

49

John 14:16

5 Joel 3:18

Mat. 3:11

6 Is. 1:26

Mat. 24:3

7 1 Thes. 5:1

8 Luke 24:48-

49

Acts 2:1, 4

9 Luke 24:51

Acts 1:2

10 Mat. 28:3

Mark 16:5

Luke 24:4

John 20:12

Acts 10:3,

30

11 Dan. 7:13

Mat. 24:30

Mark 13:26

Luke 21:27

John 14:3

Acts 2:7,

13:31

2 Thes. 1:10

Rev. 1:7

into heaven? This *same* Jesus, Who was taken up from you into heaven, shall come in exactly the same manner as you have seen Him go into heaven."

12. Then they returned to Jerusalem from *the* mountain called Mount of Olives, which is near Jerusalem, being *about* the distance of a Sabbath's journey.

13. And after entering *Jerusalem*, they went up into the upper chamber, where both Peter and James were staying; and John and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James, *the* son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot; and Jude, *the* brother of James.

14. All these were steadfastly continuing with one accord in prayer and supplications, *together* with *the* women, including Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

15. And in those days, Peter stood up in *the* midst of the disciples (now *the* number of names together was about a hundred and twenty) *and* said,

16. "Men *and* brethren, it was necessary for this scripture to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by *the* mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who took Jesus;

17. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained a part of this ministry.

18. (Now then, this *man* acquired a field with the reward of unrighteousness, and after falling headlong burst in *the* middle, and all his bowels gushed out.

19. And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem, so that this field is called in their own language Aceldama that is, '*The* field of blood.')

20. For it is written in *the* book of

Psalms, 'Let his habitation become desolate, and let there not be *anyone* dwelling in it'; and, 'Let another take his overseership.'

21. Therefore, it is obligatory *that* from those men who have accompanied us during all *the* time in which the Lord Jesus came in and went out among us,

22. Beginning from the baptism of John until the day in which He was taken up from us, one of these shall become a witness with us of His resurrection."

23. Then they put forth two: Joseph, called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus; and Matthias.

24. And they prayed, saying, "You, Lord, *the* Knower of the hearts of all, show which one of these two You have personally chosen

25. To receive the part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas *in* transgressing fell, to go to his own place."

26. Then they cast their lots; and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

CHAPTER TWO

1. And when the day of *Pentecost*, the fiftieth day, was being fulfilled, they were all with one accord in the same place.

2. And suddenly *there* came from heaven a sound like *the* rushing of a powerful wind, and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

3. And there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire, and sat upon each one of them.

4. And they were all filled with *the* Holy Spirit; and they began to speak with other languages, as the Spirit gave them *the words* to proclaim.

5. Now *there* were *many* Jews who were sojourning in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven.

6. And when word of this went out,

22 John 15:27
Acts 1:8, 9,
4:33

23 Acts 15:22

24 1 Sam. 16:7

1 Chr. 28:9

Jer. 11:20,

17:10

Acts 15:8

Rev. 2:23

25 Acts 1:17

Chap. 2

1 Lev. 23:15

Deut. 16:9

Acts 1:14,

20:16

2 Acts 4:31

4 Mark 16:17

Acts 1:5,

10:46, 19:6

1 Cor. 12:10,

28, 30, 13:1

the multitude came together and were confounded, because each one heard them speaking in his own language.

7. And they were all amazed, and marveled, saying to one another, "Behold, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?

8. Then how is it *that* we hear each one in our own language in which we were born?

9. Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and those who inhabit Mesopotamia, and Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

10. Both Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya which *are* near Cyrene, and the Romans who are sojourning *here*, both Jews and proselytes,

11. Cretes and Arabians; we hear them speaking in our own languages the great things of God."

12. And they were all amazed and greatly perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"

13. But others were mocking *and* saying, "They are full of new wine."

14. Then Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and spoke out to them: "Men, Jews, and all those of you who inhabit Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and pay attention to my words.

15. For these are not drunken as you suppose, for it is *only the* third hour of the day.

16. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17. ' "And it shall come to pass in the last days," says God, "*that* I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;

18. And even upon My servants and upon My handmaids will I pour out My Spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy;

19. And I will show wonders in the

7 Acts 1:11

15 1 Thes. 5:7

17 Is. 44:3

Ezek. 11:19

Joel 2:28

Zech. 12:10

John 7:38

Acts 10:45,

21:9

18 Acts 21:4, 9

1 Cor. 12:10,

14:1

19 Joel 2:30

heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and vapors of smoke.

20. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before *the* coming of the great and awesome day of *the* Lord.

21. And it shall come to pass *that* everyone who calls upon the name of *the* Lord shall be saved.” ’

22. Men, Israelites, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarean, a man sent forth to you by God, as demonstrated by works of power and wonders and signs, which God performed by Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know;

23. Him, having been delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you have seized by lawless hands *and* have crucified and killed.

24. *But* God has raised Him up, having loosed the throes of death, because it was not possible *for* Him to be held by it;

25. For David speaks concerning Him, ‘I foresaw the Lord before Me continually; for He is at My right hand, so that I may not be moved.

26. Therefore, My heart rejoiced and My tongue was glad; moreover, My flesh also shall rest in hope;

27. For You will not leave My soul in *the* grave, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

28. You did make Me to know *the* ways of life; You will fill Me with joy with Your countenance.’

29. Men *and* brethren, let *me* speak to you freely concerning the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

30. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn to him in an oath *that* from *the* fruit of his loins, as concerning *the* flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit upon his throne;

31. He foresaw *this* *and* spoke concerning the resurrection of Christ, that

20 Mat. 24:29
Mark 13:24
Luke 21:25

21 Rom. 10:13

22 John 3:2,
14:10, 11
Acts 10:38
Heb. 2:4

23 Mat. 26:24
Luke 22:22
Acts 3:18,
5:30

24 Rom. 8:11
1 Cor. 6:14
2 Cor. 4:14
Eph. 1:20
Col. 2:12
1 Thes. 1:10
Heb. 13:20

25 Psa. 16:8

29 Acts 13:36

30 2 Sam. 7:12
Psa. 132:11
Luke 1:32
Rom. 1:3
2 Tim. 2:8

31 Psa. 16:10

32 Acts 1:8,
2:24

33 John 14:26,
16:7, 13
Acts 10:45
Eph. 4:8
Phil. 2:9
Heb. 10:12

34 Psa. 110:1
Mat. 22:44
1 Cor. 15:25
Eph. 1:20
Heb. 1:13

37 Zech. 12:10
Luke 3:10
Acts 9:6

38 Luke 24:27
Acts 3:19

39 Joel 2:28
Acts 3:25,
11:15, 18
Eph. 2:13

42 Acts 1:14
Rom. 12:12
Eph. 6:18
Col. 4:2
Heb. 10:25

43 Mark 16:17
Acts 5:12

44 Acts 4:32,
34
Is. 58:7

His soul was not left in *the* grave, nor did His flesh see corruption.

32. This Jesus has God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33. Therefore, having been exalted by the right hand of God, and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this that you are now seeing and hearing.

34. For David has not ascended into the heavens, but he himself said, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand

35. Until I have made Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.” ’

36. Therefore, let all *the* house of Israel know with full assurance that God has made this *same* Jesus, Whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

37. Now after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart; and they said to Peter and the other apostles, “Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?”

38. Then Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for *the* remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

39. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all those who are afar off, as many as *the* Lord our God may call.”

40. And with many other words he earnestly testified and exhorted, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.”

41. Then those who joyfully received his message were baptized; and about three thousand souls were added that day.

42. And they steadfastly continued in the teachings of the apostles and in fellowship, and *in* the breaking of bread and *in* prayers.

43. And fear came upon every soul, and many signs and miracles were done by the apostles.

44. Now all those who believed were together and had all things in common;

45. And they sold *their* possessions

and goods, and divided them to all, according as anyone had need.

46. And every day, steadfastly continuing with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread in *their* houses, they partook of *the* food with gladness and sincerity of heart,

47. Praising God and having favor with all the people; and the Lord added to the church day by day those who were being saved.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *which was* the ninth hour;

2. And a certain man who was lame from his mother's womb was being carried, whom they placed daily at the temple door which is called Beautiful, to beg alms from those who were going into the temple.

3. When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms.

4. But Peter and John, intently observing him, said, "Look on us."

5. And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them.

6. But Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have; but what I do have, this I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarean, rise up and walk."

7. Then taking him by the right hand, he raised *him* up; and immediately his feet and ankle bones were strengthened.

8. And leaping up, he stood and walked; and he entered into the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.

9. Now all the people saw him walking and praising God.

10. And they recognized him, that he was the one who had been sitting at the temple gate *called* Beautiful, asking for alms; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which

46 Luke 24:53
Acts 1:14, 20:7,
47 Acts 4:33, 5:14
Rom. 14:18

Chap. 3

1 Psa. 55:17
Acts 2:46
2 John 9:8
Acts 14:8
6 Acts 4:10
8 Is. 35:6
9 Acts 4:16, 21
10 John 9:8

11 John 10:23
Acts 5:12
13 Mat. 27:2, 20

Mark 15:11
Luke 23:18
John 7:39, 11:16, 17:1, 18:40, 19:15
Acts 5:30, 13:28

14 Psa. 16:10
Mark 1:24
Luke 1:35
Acts 2:27, 4:27, 7:52, 22:14

15 Acts 2:24, 32
1 John 5:11
Heb. 2:10, 5:9

16 Mat. 9:22
Acts 4:10, 14:9

17 Luke 23:34
John 16:3
Acts 13:27
1 Cor. 2:8
1 Tim. 1:13

18 Psa. 22
Is. 50:6, 53:5
Dan. 9:26
Luke 24:44

Acts 26:22
1 Pet. 1:10

19 Acts 2:38
21 Mat. 17:11
Luke 1:70
Acts 1:11

had happened to him.

11. And as the lame *man* who had been healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch *that is* called Solomon's, *for* they were greatly amazed.

12. And when Peter saw *it*, he answered to the people, "Men, Israelites, why are you wondering at this? And why are you looking upon us so intently as if by *our* own power or godliness *we* have made him to walk?"

13. The God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His Son Jesus, Whom you delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate, after he had judged to release *Him*.

14. But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and requested that a man *who was* a murderer be granted to you;

15. And you killed the Author of life Whom God has raised from *the* dead, whereof we are witnesses.

16. And through faith in His name, this *man* whom you see and know was made strong in His name; and the faith that *is* through Him gave this complete soundness to him in the presence of you all.

17. And now, brethren, I realize that you acted in ignorance, as *did* your rulers also;

18. But what God had before announced by *the* mouth of all His prophets, *that* Christ should suffer, He has accordingly fulfilled.

19. Therefore, repent and be converted in order that your sins may be blotted out, so that *the* times of refreshing may come from *the* presence of the Lord;

20. And *that* He may send Him Who was before proclaimed to you, Jesus Christ,

21. Whom *the* heaven must indeed receive until *the* times of restoration of all things, of which God has spoken

by *the* mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.

22. For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'A Prophet shall *the* Lord your God raise up to you from among your brethren, like me; Him shall you hear in all things that He shall say to you.

23. And it shall be *that* every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people.'

24. Now indeed, all the prophets from Samuel and those who followed, as many as prophesied, also proclaimed these days.

25. You are *the* children of the prophets and of the covenant that God Himself appointed to our fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'

26. Unto you first has God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you in turning each *of you* from your wickedness."

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Now as they were speaking to the people, the priests and *the* captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them,

2. Being dismayed because they were teaching the people, and preaching through Jesus the resurrection from *the* dead.

3. And they arrested them and put *them* in *the* hold until the morning; for it was already evening.

4. But many of those who had heard the message believed, and the number of men was about five thousand.

5. Now it came to pass in the morning *that* their rulers and elders and scribes were assembled together in Jerusalem,

6. And Annas, the high priest, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and as many as were of *the* high priest's lineage.

7. And after placing them in the midst, they inquired, "By what power or in

22 Deut. 18:15, 18, 19
Acts 7:37

25 Gen. 12:3, 18:18, 22:18, 26:4, 28:14
Acts 2:39
Rom. 9:4, 8, 15:8

26 Gal. 3:8, 26
Mat. 1:21, 10:5, 15:24
Luke 24:47
Acts 3:22, 13:32, 33, 46

Chap. 4

1 Luke 22:4

6 Luke 3:2
John 11:49, 18:13

7 Ex. 2:14
Mat. 21:23
Acts 7:27

what name did you do this?"

8. Then Peter, filled with *the* Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel,

9. If we are examined this day as to a good work *done to the* infirm man, by what *power* he has been cured,

10. Be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarean, Whom you crucified, *but* Whom God has raised from *the* dead, by Him this *man* stands before you whole.

11. This is the Stone that was set at naught by you, the builders, which has become the Head of *the* corner.

12. And there is no salvation in any other, for neither is there another name under heaven which has been given among men, by which we must be saved."

13. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlettered and uninstructed men, they were amazed; and they took note of them, that they had been with Jesus.

14. Yet seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they said nothing to oppose *them*.

15. But after commanding them to go outside the Sanhedrin, they conferred with one another,

16. Saying, "What shall we do to these men? For a remarkable miracle has indeed come to pass through them *and is* manifest to all those living in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny *it*.

17. But that it may spread no further among the people, let us warn them with a *severe* threat not to speak any more to anyone in this name."

18. And after summoning them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

19. But Peter and John answered *and* said to them, "Whether it is right before God to listen to you rather than to God, you judge.

8 Luke 12:11, 12

10 Acts 2:24, 3:6, 16

11 Psa. 118:22
Is. 28:16
Mat. 21:42

12 Mat. 1:21
Acts 10:43
1 Tim. 2:5, 6

13 Mat. 11:25
1 Cor. 1:27

14 Acts 3:11

16 John 11:47

Acts 3:9, 10

18 Acts 5:40

19 Acts 5:29

20. For we cannot but speak what we have seen and heard."

21. And after further threatening them, they let them go, finding no means by which they might punish them, because of the people, for all were glorifying God on account of what had been done:

22. Because the man on whom this miraculous healing had been performed was over forty years *old*.

23. Now after being released, they came to their own *brethren* and reported to them all *that* the chief priests and elders had said.

24. And when they heard *this*, they lifted up *their* voices to God with one accord and said, "O Master, You *are* the God Who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that *are* in them,

25. Who by *the* mouth of Your servant David did say, 'Why did the nations insolently rage, and the people imagine vain things?

26. The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ.'

27. For of a truth they did gather together against Your holy Son, Jesus, Whom You did anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with *the* Gentiles and *the* people of Israel,

28. To do whatever Your hand and Your counsel had predetermined to take place.

29. And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings, and grant that Your servants may speak Your Word with all boldness,

30. By reaching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Son, Jesus."

31. And when they had prayed, the place in which they were assembled was shaken; and they were all filled with *the* Holy Spirit, and they spoke the Word of God with boldness.

20 Acts 1:8, 2:32, 22:15
1 John 1:1, 3

21 Mat. 21:26
Luke 20:6, 19, 22:2
Acts 3:7, 8, 5:26

23 Acts 12:12

24 2 Ki. 19:15

25 Psa. 2:1

27 Mat. 26:3

Luke 1:35,

4:18, 22:2,

23:1, 8

John 10:36

28 Acts 2:23,

3:18

29 Acts 4:13,

31, 9:27,

13:46, 14:3,

19:8, 26:26

Eph. 6:19

30 Acts 2:43,

3:6, 16,

4:27, 5:12

31 Acts 2:2, 4,

4:29, 16:26

32. And the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things common.

33. And with great power the apostles testified of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

34. For neither was anyone among them in want; for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold *them* and brought the amounts of those *things* that were sold,

35. And laid *the* money at the feet of the apostles; and distribution was made to each one according to his need.

36. And Joses, who was surnamed Barnabas by the apostles (which is, being interpreted, "son of consolation"), a Levite, born *in the country* of Cyprus,

37. Had land; *and* he sold *it*, *and* brought the money and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Now a certain man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a possession,

2. And kept back *part* of the price *for* himself, his wife also being aware of *it*; and he brought a certain portion *and* laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

3. But Peter said, "Ananias, why did Satan fill your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back *part* of the price of the estate?

4. Before it was sold, was it not yours? And after you sold it, was it *not* in your own authority? Why did you contrive this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men, but to God."

5. And when Ananias heard these words, he fell down and expired; and great fear came upon all those who heard these things.

6. Then the young men wound him up,

32 Acts 2:44,

5:12

1 Pet. 3:8

Rom. 15:5,

6

2 Cor. 13:11

Phil. 1:27,

2:2

33 Acts 1:8,

22, 2:45

34 Acts 2:45

35 Acts 2:45,

4:37, 5:2,

6:1

37 Acts 4:34,

35, 5:1, 2

Chap. 5

3 Num. 30:2

Deut. 23:21

Eccl. 5:4

Luke 22:3

Acts 5:9

5 Acts 5:10,

11

6 John 19:40

and carried *him* out *and* buried *him*.

7. Now it came to pass about three hours later *that* his wife also came in, not knowing what had taken place.

8. And Peter said to her, "Tell me if you sold the estate for so much?" And she said, "Yes, for so much."

9. Then Peter said to her, "Why *is it* that you agreed together to tempt the Spirit of *the* Lord? Behold, the feet of those who buried your husband *are* at the door, and they shall carry you out." 10. And she immediately fell down at his feet and expired. And the young men came in and found her dead; and they carried *her* out *and* buried *her* by her husband.

11. Then great fear came upon the whole church, and upon all who heard these things:

12. And many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch;

13. And none of the others dared to join them, but the people magnified them;

14. And believers were added all the more to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women.)

15. Insomuch *that the people were* bringing out the sick into the streets and putting *them* on beds and stretchers, so that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

16. And a multitude from the cities round about also came together to Jerusalem, bringing sick ones and those beset by unclean spirits; *and* they were all healed.

17. Then the high priest rose up, and all those with him, being of *the* sect of the Sadducees; *and* they were filled with anger.

18. And they laid their hands on the apostles and put them in *the* public hold.

19. But during the night an angel of *the* Lord *came and* opened the doors

9 Mat. 4:7

Acts 5:3

10 Acts 5:5

11 Acts 2:43,

5:5, 19:17

12 Acts 2:43,

3:11, 4:32,

14:3, 19:11

Rom. 15:19

2 Cor. 12:12

Heb. 2:4

13 John 9:22,

12:42, 19:38

Acts 2:47,

4:21

15 Mat. 9:21,

14:36

Acts 19:12

16 Mark 16:17,

18

John 14:12

17 Acts 4:1, 2,

6

18 Luke 21:12

19 Acts 12:7,

16:26

20 John 6:68,

17:3

1 John 5:11

21 Acts 4:5, 6

24 Luke 22:4

Acts 4:1

26 Mat. 21:26

28 Mat. 23:35,

27:25

Acts 2:23,

36, 3:15,

4:18, 7:52

29 Acts 4:19

30 Acts 3:13,

15, 10:39,

13:29, 22:14

1 Pet. 2:24

Gal. 3:13

of the prison; and after bringing them out, he said,

20. "Go and stand in the temple, *and* speak to the people all the words of this life."

21. And after hearing *that*, they entered into the temple at dawn and taught. Now when the high priest and those with him came, they called together the Sanhedrin and all the elderhood of the sons of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

22. But when the officers came, they did not find them in the prison; and when they returned, they reported,

23. Saying, "We indeed found the prison locked with all security, and the keepers standing outside in front of the doors; but after opening *them*, we did not find anyone inside."

24. And when they heard these words, both the *high* priest and the captain of the temple, and the chief priests also, were utterly perplexed as to what this could lead to.

25. But a certain one came *and* reported to them, saying, "Behold, the men whom you put in the prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people."

26. Then the captain went with the officers *and* brought them without violence, so that they might not be stoned; for they feared the people.

27. And they brought them in *and* set *them* before the Sanhedrin. And the high priest asked them,

28. Saying, "Did we not order you by a *direct* command not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, with *the* purpose of bringing this man's blood upon us."

29. But Peter and the apostles answered *and* said, "We are obligated to obey God rather than men.

30. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus Whom you killed *by* hanging *Him* on a tree.

31. Him has God exalted by His right hand *to be* a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel.

32. And we are His witnesses of these things, as *is* also the Holy Spirit, which God has given to those who obey Him."

33. Now when they heard *this*, they were cut *to the heart* and took counsel to put them to death.

34. But a certain man stood up, a Pharisee in the Sanhedrin, Gamaliel by name, a teacher of the law *who was* honored by all the people, *and* commanded *that* the apostles be put out for a short while.

35. And he said to them, "Men, Israelites, give careful thought to what you are about to do concerning these men.

36. For before these days *there* rose up Theudas, proclaiming that he himself was somebody, to whom a number of men were joined, about four hundred; *but* he was put to death, and all those who had been persuaded by him were dispersed and came to nothing.

37. After this one, in the days of the registration, Judas the Galilean rose up and drew away many people after him; but he perished, and all who had been persuaded by him were scattered.

38. And now I say to you, withdraw from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be from men, it will be overthrown;

39. But if it be from God, you do not have the power to overthrow it. *Take heed*, lest you be found to be fighting even against God."

40. And they were persuaded by him; and they called in the apostles *and*, after beating *them*, commanded *them* not to speak in the name of Jesus; and they released them.

41. Then they departed from *the* presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing *that* they were accounted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

31 Mat. 1:21
Luke 24:47
Acts 2:33,
36, 3:15, 26,
13:38

Eph. 1:7
Phil. 2:9
Col. 1:14
Heb. 2:10,
12:2

32 John 15:26,
27

Acts 2:4,
10:44

33 Acts 2:37,
7:54

34 Acts 22:3

38 Prov. 21:30

Is. 8:10

Mat. 15:13

Luke 21:15

Acts 7:51,
9:5, 23:9

1 Cor. 1:25

40 Mat. 10:17,
23:34

Mark 13:9

Acts 4:18

41 Mat. 5:12

Jas. 1:2

1 Pet. 4:13,
16

Rom. 5:3

2 Cor. 12:10

Phil. 1:29

Heb. 10:34

42 Acts 2:46,
4:20, 29

Chap. 6

1 Acts 2:41,
4:4, 35,

5:14, 6:7,

9:29, 11:20

2 Ex. 18:17

3 Deut. 1:13

Acts 1:21,
16:2

1 Tim. 3:7

4 Acts 2:42

5 Acts 8:5,
26, 11:24,
21:8

Rev. 2:6, 15

6 Acts 1:24,
8:17, 9:17,
13:3

1 Tim. 4:14,
5:22

2 Tim. 1:6

7 John 12:42

Acts 12:24,
19:20

Col. 1:6

42. And every day, in the temple and in the houses, they did not cease teaching and preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER SIX

1. Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a complaint by the Greeks against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.

2. And after calling the multitude of disciples to *them*, the twelve said, "It is not proper *for* us to leave the Word of God in order to wait on tables.

3. Therefore, brethren, search out from among yourselves seven men of good repute, full of *the* Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;

4. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word."

5. And this declaration was pleasing to all the multitude; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and *the* Holy Spirit; and Philip; and Prochorus; and Nicanor; and Timon; and Parmenas; and Nicolas, *who was* a proselyte of Antioch.

6. *And* they set them before the apostles; and after praying, they laid *their* hands on them.

7. And the Word of God spread, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem was multiplied exceedingly, and a great multitude of the priests were obedient to the faith.

8. And Stephen, full of faith and power, worked wonders and great signs among the people.

9. Then certain arose among those of the synagogue who were called Libertines, and of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia; *and* they were disputing with Stephen.

10. But they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke.

11. Then they suborned men, who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and *against* God."

12. And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes; and they came and seized him, and brought *him* into the Sanhedrin.

13. Then they set up false witnesses, who said, "This man does not cease to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law;

14. For we heard him saying that this Jesus, the Nazarean, will destroy this place, and will change the customs that Moses delivered to us."

15. And all those who sat in the Sanhedrin, looking intently at him, saw his face as *the* face of an angel.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. And the high priest said, "Now then, are these things so?"

2. And he said, "Men, brethren and fathers, listen. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,

3. And said to him, 'Leave your land and your kindred, and come into *the* land that I will show you.'

4. Then he went out from *the* land of *the* Chaldeans *and* dwelt in Charran; and from there, after his father died, He removed him to this country in which you now dwell.

5. Now He did not give him an inheritance in it, not even *as much as* a foot of ground; but He promised to give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when he did not yet have a child.

6. And God spoke after this manner: that his seed would be a sojourner in a strange land, and they would enslave

10 Ex. 4:12
Is. 54:17
Luke 21:15
Acts 5:39
11 1 Ki. 21:10,
13
Mat. 26:59,
60
14 Dan. 9:26
Acts 25:8

Chap. 7

2 Acts 22:1
3 Gen. 12:1
4 Gen. 11:31,
12:4, 5
5 Gen. 12:7,
13:15, 15:3,
18, 17:8,
26:3
6 Gen. 15:13,
16
Ex. 12:40
Gal. 3:17

7 Ex. 3:12
8 Gen. 17:9-
11, 21:2-4,
25:26, 29:31,
30:5, 35:18,
23
9 Gen. 37:4,
11, 28, 39:2,
21, 23
Psa. 105:17
10 Gen. 41:37,
42:6
11 Gen. 41:54
12 Gen. 42:1
13 Gen. 45:4,
16
14 Gen. 45:9,
27, 46:27
Deut. 10:22
15 Gen. 46:5,
49:33
Ex. 1:6
16 Gen. 23:16,
33:19
Ex. 13:19
Josh. 24:32
17 Gen. 15:13
Ex. 1:7-9
Psa. 105:24,
25
Acts 7:6
19 Ex. 1:22

them and treat *them* harshly for four hundred years;

7. 'Then will I judge the nation to which they shall be enslaved,' said God, 'and after these things they shall come forth and serve Me in this place.'

8. And He gave to him a covenant of circumcision. And so he begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac *begat* Jacob, and Jacob the twelve patriarchs.

9. And the patriarchs, who envied Joseph, sold *him* into Egypt. But God was with him,

10. And delivered him out of all his tribulations, and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he appointed him ruler over Egypt and his whole house.

11. Then a famine came upon the whole land of Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction; and our fathers could not find sustenance.

12. But when Jacob heard *that there* was grain in Egypt, he sent our fathers first;

13. And at the second time, Joseph was made known to his brethren, and the family of Joseph became known to Pharaoh.

14. Then Joseph sent *and* called for his father Jacob, and all his kindred, *being* seventy-five souls.

15. And Jacob went down into Egypt; and he and our fathers died,

16. And were carried over to Sychem, and were placed in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a sum of money from the sons of Emmor of Sychem.

17. But when the time drew near *for the fulfillment* of the promise that God had sworn to Abraham, the people increased and multiplied in Egypt,

18. Until another king arose who did not know Joseph.

19. He dealt subtly with our kindred *and* treated our fathers harshly, making *them* cast out their infants so that they might not live.

20. During this time Moses was born, who was beautiful to God, and was brought up three months in his father's house.
21. And after he was discovered, the daughter of Pharaoh took him up, and brought him up as her own son.
22. And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in words and in deeds.
23. But when a period of forty years was fulfilled for him, it came into his heart to look upon his brethren, the sons of Israel;
24. And when he saw a certain one suffering wrongly, he defended him, and avenged the one who was being oppressed, and killed the Egyptian.
25. For he thought that his brethren would understand that God would give them deliverance by his hand. But they did not understand.
26. And on the following day, he appeared to those who were contending and urged them to make peace, saying, 'Men, you are brethren. Why do you wrong one another?'
27. But the one who was doing wrong to his neighbor shoved him away, saying, 'Who appointed you a ruler and judge over us?'
28. Do you intend to kill me, just as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?'
29. And at this saying, Moses fled; and he became a sojourner in the land of Midian, where he begot two sons.
30. And when forty years were fulfilled, an Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire in a bush in the desert of Mount Sinai.
31. Now when Moses saw it, he was amazed at the vision; and as he drew near to consider it, the voice of the Lord came to him, saying,
32. 'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.' Then Moses began to tremble, and he dared not look upon it.
33. And the Lord said to him, 'Loose the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.'
34. I have been watching, and I have seen the harsh treatment of My people in Egypt; and I have heard their groaning, and I have come down to bring them out; and now come, I will send you to Egypt.'
35. This Moses, whom they refused, saying, 'Who appointed you as ruler and judge?' This one did God send to be ruler and deliverer by the hand of the Angel Who appeared to him in the bush.
36. This one led them out, after working wonders and signs in the land of Egypt and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness for forty years.
37. This is the Moses who said to the children of Israel, 'A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up for you from among your brethren, like me; Him shall you hear.'
38. This is he who was in the assembly in the wilderness with the Angel Who spoke to him in Mount Sinai, and with our fathers; who received the living oracles to give to us;
39. To whom our fathers would not be subject, but thrust him away, and turned their hearts back to Egypt,
40. Saying to Aaron, 'Make us gods who shall go before us; for this Moses who brought us out from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.'
41. And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their hands.
42. Then God turned and delivered them over to serve the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, 'Did you offer slain beasts and sacrifices to Me those forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?'
43. But you took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, even the images that you

20 Ex. 2:2
Heb. 11:23
21 Ex. 2:3-10
22 Luke 24:19
23 Ex. 2:11, 12
27 Luke 12:14
Acts 4:7
29 Ex. 2:15,
22, 4:20,
18:3, 4
30 Ex. 3:2
32 Mat. 22:32
Heb. 11:16
33 Ex. 3:5
Josh. 5:15
34 Ex. 3:7
35 Ex. 14:19
Num. 29:16
36 Ex. 7, 8, 9,
10, 12:41,
14:21, 16:1,
33:1
Psa. 105:27
37 Deut. 18:15
Mat. 17:5
38 Ex. 19:3,
21:1
Deut. 5:27
Is. 63:9
John 1:17
Rom. 3:2
Gal. 3:19
Heb. 2:2
40 Ex. 32:1
41 Deut. 9:16
Psa. 106:19
42 Deut. 4:19
2 Ki. 21:3
Psa. 81:12
Amos 5:25
2 Thes. 2:11

had made to worship them; and so I will remove you beyond Babylon.'

44. The tabernacle of the testimony was among our fathers in the wilderness, as He Who spoke to Moses had commanded, to make it according to the pattern which he had seen;

45. Which also our fathers, who received it by succession, brought in with Joshua, when they took possession of *the land from* the nations whom God drove out before *the face* our fathers, until the days of David;

46. Who found grace before God, and sought to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob;

47. But Solomon built Him a house.

48. However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made by hands, as the prophet says:

49. 'The heaven *is* My throne, and the earth *is* a footstool for My feet. What house will you build for Me, says *the* Lord, or what *is the* place of My rest?

50. Have not My hands made all these things?

51. O stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did*, so also *do* you.

52. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, of Whom you have become the betrayers and murderers;

53. Who received the law by *the* disposition of angels, but have not kept *it*."

54. And when they heard these things, they were cut to their hearts, and they gnashed their teeth at him.

55. But he, being filled with *the* Holy Spirit, looked intently into heaven *and* saw *the* glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

56. And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right *hand* of God."

57. Then they cried out with a loud voice, *and* stopped their ears, and

44 Ex. 25:40

Heb. 8:5

45 Josh. 3:14

Neh. 9:24

Psa. 44:2

46 2 Sam. 7:1

1 Chr. 22:7

Psa. 89:19

47 1 Ki. 8:20

48 1 Ki. 8:27

2 Chr. 2:6

49 Is. 66:1

Mat. 5:34

51 Ex. 32:9

Lev. 26:41

Deut. 10:16

Jer. 4:4

52 2 Chr. 36:16

Mat. 21:35

Acts 3:14

1 Thes. 2:15

53 Ex. 20:1

Gal. 3:19

54 Acts 5:33

55 Acts 6:5

56 Dan. 7:13

Mat. 3:16

58 Lev. 24:16

Deut. 13:9

Luke 4:29

Heb. 13:12

59 Psa. 31:5

Luke 23:46

Acts 9:14

60 Mat. 5:44

Luke 6:28

Acts 9:40

Chap. 8

1 Acts 7:58,

11:19

2 Gen. 23:2,

50:10

2 Sam. 3:31

3 Acts 7:58

1 Cor. 15:9

Gal. 1:13

Phil. 3:6

1 Tim. 1:13

4 Mat. 10:23

5 Acts 6:5

7 Mark 16:17

9 Acts 5:36,

13:6

rushed upon him with one accord,

58. And cast *him* out of the city *and* stoned *him*. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man called Saul.

59. And they stoned Stephen, who called upon *God*, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

60. And he fell to his knees *and* cried with a loud voice, "Lord, do not lay this sin to their charge." And after he had said this, he died.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Now Saul had consented to killing him. And that day a great persecution arose against the church that *was* in Jerusalem; and all *the believers* were scattered throughout the countries of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

2. And devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him.

3. But Saul was ravaging the church, *going* from house to house, entering in and dragging *out* men and women, *and* delivering *them* up to prison.

4. Therefore, those who were scattered passed through *everywhere*, preaching the word *of* the gospel.

5. Then Philip went down to a city of Samaria *and* proclaimed Christ to them;

6. And the multitudes listened intently with one accord to the things spoken by Philip when they heard and saw the signs that he did,

7. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many of those who had *them*; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.

8. And there was great joy in that city.

9. But *there was* a certain man named Simon, who had from earlier times been practicing sorcery in the city and astounding the nation of Samaria, proclaiming himself to be some great one.

10. To him they had all given heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God."

11. Now they were giving heed to him because *he* had for a long time bewitched them with sorceries.
 12. But when they believed Philip, who was preaching the gospel—the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ—they were baptized, both men and women.
 13. Then Simon himself also believed; and after being baptized, he steadfastly continued with Philip; and as he beheld *the* signs and great works of power *that* were being done, he was amazed.
 14. Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent Peter and John to them;
 15. Who, after coming down to *Samaria*, prayed for them, that they might receive *the* Holy Spirit;
 16. For as yet it had not fallen upon any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.
 17. Then they laid *their* hands on them, and they received *the* Holy Spirit.
 18. Now when Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of the hands of the apostles, he offered them money,
 19. Saying, “Give this authority to me also, so that on whomever I lay hands, he may receive *the* Holy Spirit.”
 20. But Peter said to him, “May your money be destroyed with you because you thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money.
 21. You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God.
 22. Repent, therefore, of this your wickedness, and beseech God, if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you;
 23. For I perceive *that* you are in *the* gall of bitterness and *the* bondage of unrighteousness.”
 24. But Simon answered *and* said, “You beseech the Lord on my behalf,

12 Acts 1:3
 15 Acts 2:38
 16 Mat. 28:19
 Acts 2:38,
 10:48, 19:2,
 5
 17 Acts 6:6,
 19:6
 Heb. 6:2
 20 2 Ki. 5:16
 Mat. 10:8
 Acts 2:38,
 10:45, 11:17
 22 Dan. 4:27
 2 Tim. 2:25
 23 Heb. 12:15
 24 Gen. 20:7,
 17
 Ex. 8:8
 Num. 21:7
 1 Ki. 13:6
 Job 42:8
 Jas. 5:16

27 Zeph. 3:10
 John 12:20
 32 Is. 53:7, 8
 35 Luke 24:27
 Acts 18:28
 36 Acts 10:47

so that none of *those* things which you have spoken may come upon me.”
 25. So then, after they had earnestly testified and preached the Word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem; *and* they preached the gospel *in* many villages of the Samaritans *as they went*.
 26. Now an angel of *the* Lord spoke to Philip, saying, “Arise and go toward *the* south, on the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza, which is *in the* desert.”
 27. And he arose *and* went. And behold, an Ethiopian man, a eunuch, one in power under Candace, the queen of *the* Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure, had come to worship in Jerusalem,
 28. And was returning; and he sat in his chariot, reading *the book of* the prophet Isaiah.
 29. Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go near and join yourself to this chariot.”
 30. And when Philip ran up, he heard him reading *the words of* the prophet Isaiah, and said, “Do you understand what you are now reading?”
 31. And he said, “But how am I able *to understand*, without someone to guide me?” And he besought Philip to come up and sit with him.
 32. Now the passage of Scripture that he was reading was this, “He was led as a sheep to slaughter; and as a lamb *is* dumb before the one who is shearing it, so He did not open His mouth.
 33. In His humiliation, His judgment was taken away; and who shall declare His genealogy? For His life is taken from the earth.”
 34. And the eunuch answered *and* said to Philip, “I pray you, about whom does the prophet say this? About himself, or about another?”
 35. Then Philip opened his mouth and, beginning from this scripture, preached to him the gospel of Jesus.
 36. And as they were going down the road, they came upon a certain *pool of*

water; and the eunuch said, "Look, *there is* water! What is preventing me from being baptized?"

37. And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, it is permitted." Then he answered *and* said, "I believe *that* Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

38. And he commanded the *one driving the* chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.

39. But when they came up out of the water, *the* Spirit of *the* Lord caught Philip away; and the eunuch saw him no longer, but he went his way rejoicing.

40. Then Philip was found at Azotus; and as he passed through, he preached the gospel *to* all the cities, until he came to Caesarea.

CHAPTER NINE

1. Now Saul, still breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest,

2. Asking him *for* letters *to take* to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who were of that way, he might bring *them* bound, both men and women, to Jerusalem.

3. But it came to pass while he was journeying, as he drew near to Damascus, that suddenly a light from heaven shined round about him.

4. And after falling to the ground, he heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?"

5. And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And the Lord said, "I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting. *It is* hard for you to kick against *the* pricks."

6. Then, trembling and astonished, he said, "Lord, what will You have me to do?" And the Lord *said* to him, "Get up and go into the city, and you shall be told what you must do."

7. Now the men who were traveling with him stood speechless; *for* they

37 Mat. 16:16, 28:19
Mark 16:16
John 6:69, 9:35, 38, 11:27
Acts 9:20
1 John 4:15, 5:5, 13
39 1 Ki. 18:12
2 Ki. 2:16
Ezek. 3:12, 14

Chap. 9

1 Acts 8:3
Gal. 1:13
1 Tim. 1:13
2 Acts 19:23
3 Acts 22:6, 26:12
1 Cor. 15:8
4 Mat. 25:40
6 Luke 3:10
Acts 2:37, 16:30
7 Dan. 10:7
Acts 22:9, 26:13

10 Acts 22:12
11 Acts 21:39, 22:3
13 Acts 9:1
14 Acts 7:59, 9:21
1 Cor. 1:2
2 Tim. 2:22
15 Acts 13:2, 22:21, 25:22, 23, 26:1
Rom. 1:1, 5, 11:13
1 Cor. 15:10
Gal. 1:15, 2:7, 8
Eph. 3:7, 8
1 Tim. 2:7
2 Tim. 1:11
16 Acts 20:23, 21:11
2 Cor. 11:23
17 Acts 2:4, 4:31, 8:17, 13:52, 22:12, 13
19 Acts 26:20

indeed heard the voice, but they saw no one.

8. Then Saul arose from the ground; but when he opened his eyes, he saw no one. And they led him by the hand and brought *him* to Damascus.

9. But *for* three days he was not *able* to see, and he did not eat or drink.

10. Now there was in Damascus a certain disciple named Ananias. And the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Behold, I *am here*, Lord."

11. And the Lord *said* to him, "Arise *and* go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in *the* house of Judas for *one* named Saul from Tarsus; for behold, he is praying,

12. And he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming and putting *his* hands on him, so that he may receive sight."

13. Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many *people* about this man, how many evil things he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem.

14. And *even* in this place he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name."

15. But the Lord said to him, "Go, for this *man* is a chosen vessel to Me, to bear My name before *the* Gentiles, and kings, and *the* children of Israel;

16. For I will show him what great things he must suffer for My name."

17. Then Ananias went away and came into the house; and after laying *his* hands on him, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord has sent me, *even* Jesus, Who appeared to you on the road in which you came, so that you might receive sight and be filled with *the* Holy Spirit."

18. And it was as *if* scales immediately fell from his eyes, and he instantly received sight; and he arose *and* was baptized.

19. And after eating food, he was strengthened. Then Saul was with the

- disciples in Damascus *for* a number of days.
20. And in the synagogues he immediately began to proclaim Christ, that He is the Son of God.
21. And all who heard *him* were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and who came here for this *purpose*, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?"
22. But Saul increased *even* more in power, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this is the Christ.
23. Now when many days were fulfilled, the Jews consulted together to kill him.
24. But their plot was made known to Saul. -And they were watching the gates both day and night, in order that they might kill him.
25. Then the disciples took him by night *and* let *him* down by the wall, lowering *him* in a basket.
26. And when Saul came to Jerusalem, he attempted to join himself to the disciples; but all were afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.
27. Then Barnabas took him *and* brought *him* to the apostles, and related to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus.
28. And he was with them, coming in and going out in Jerusalem, and speaking boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus.
29. Then he spoke and disputed with the Greeks, but they attempted to kill him.
30. And when the brethren learned of *it*, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.
31. Then the churches throughout the whole of Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace indeed. *And* they increased, being edified and walking
- 32 Acts 8:3, 9:1
Gal. 1:13, 23
- 22 Acts 18:28
- 23 Acts 23:12
- 2 Cor. 11:26
- 24 2 Cor. 11:32
- 25 Josh. 2:15
- 1 Sam. 19:12
- 26 Acts 22:17
- Gal. 1:17, 18
- 27 Acts 4:36, 9:20, 22, 13:2
- 28 Gal. 1:18
- 29 Acts 6:1, 9:23, 11:20
- 2 Cor. 11:26
- 31 Acts 8:1
- in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.
32. Now it came to pass *that*, as Peter was passing through all *the quarters*, he also went down to the saints who lived in Lydda.
33. And he found there a certain man named Aeneas, who was paralyzed *and* had for eight years been lying on a couch.
34. And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Arise and fold up your *bed*." Then he immediately arose.
35. And all those dwelling in Lydda and Saron saw him *and* turned to the Lord.
36. Now *there* was in Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha; which, being interpreted, is called Dorcas. She was full of good works and of alms that she did.
37. And it came to pass in those days *that* she became sick and died; and after washing her, they put *her* in an upper room.
38. And since Lydda was near Joppa, when the disciples heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, beseeching *him* not to delay to come to them.
39. Then Peter arose *and* went with them; *and* when he arrived, they brought him into the upper room; and all the widows stood around him, weeping and showing *him the* tunics and garments that Dorcas had made while she was with them.
40. But after putting everyone out, Peter fell to his knees and prayed. Then, turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes; and when she saw Peter, she sat up.
41. And he gave her *his* hand *and* helped her stand up; and after calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive.
42. And this became known throughout the whole *city* of Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.
- 32 Acts 8:14
- 34 Acts 3:6, 16, 4:10
- 35 1 Chr. 5:16
- Acts 11:21
- 36 1 Tim. 2:10
- Tit. 3:8
- 37 Acts 1:13
- 40 Mat. 9:25
- Mark 5:41, 42
- John 11:43
- Acts 7:60
- 42 John 11:45

43. And it came to pass *that* he remained in Joppa *for* many days, *lodging* with a certain Simon, a tanner.

CHAPTER TEN

1. Now *there* was in Caesarea a certain man named Cornelius, a centurion of a band that is called *the* Italian band,

2. A devout man who also feared God with all his house, both in giving many alms to the people and *in* beseeching God continually *in* prayer.

3. He clearly saw in a vision, about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming to him and saying to him, "Cornelius."

4. But as he fixed his eyes on him, he became afraid *and* said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have gone up for a memorial before God.

5. And now send men to Joppa, and call for Simon who is surnamed Peter.

6. He is lodging with a certain Simon, a tanner, whose house is by *the* sea. He shall tell you what you must do."

7. And when the angel who had spoken to him departed, Cornelius called two of his servants and a devout soldier from among those who continually waited on him;

8. And after relating everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

9. And on the next day, about the sixth hour, as these were journeying and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray.

10. And he became very hungry and desired to eat. But while they were preparing *the* meal, a trance fell upon him;

11. And he saw the heaven opened; and a certain vessel descended upon him, like a great sheet, bound by *the* four corners and let down upon the earth;

12. In which were all the four-footed

43 Acts 10:6

Chap. 10

2 Acts 8:2,
10:22, 35,
22:12
3 Acts 9:43,
10:30,
11:13, 14
9 Acts 11:5
11 Acts 7:56
Rev. 19:11

14 Lev. 11:4,
20:25
Deut. 14:3,
7
Ezek. 4:14

15 Mat. 15:11
Acts 10:28
Rom. 14:14,
17, 20
1 Cor. 10:25
1 Tim. 4:4
Tit. 1:15

19 Acts 11:12
20 Acts 15:7
22 Acts 22:12
23 Acts 11:12

beasts of the earth, including the wild beasts, and the creeping things and the birds of heaven.

13. Then a voice came to him, *saying*, "Arise, Peter, kill and eat."

14. But Peter said, "In no way, Lord; for I have never eaten anything *that* is common or unclean."

15. And a voice *came* again the second time to him, *saying*, "What God has cleansed, you are not to call common."

16. Now this took place three times, and the vessel was taken up again into heaven.

17. And as Peter was questioning within himself what the vision that he saw might mean, the men who were sent from Cornelius, having inquired for the house of Simon, immediately stood at the porch;

18. And they called out, asking if Simon who *was* surnamed Peter was lodging there.

19. Then, as Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are seeking you;

20. Now arise *and* go down, and go forth with them, doubting nothing, because I have sent them."

21. And Peter went down to the men who had been sent to him from Cornelius *and* said, "Look, I am the one you are seeking. For what purpose have you come?"

22. And they said, "Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous man and one who fears God, and who has a good report by the whole nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to send for you *to* come to his house, and to listen to words from you."

23. Then he called them in to lodge *there*. And on the next day Peter went with them, and some of the brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

24. And on the next day, they came to Caesarea. Now Cornelius was expecting them *and* had called together his

kinsmen and *his* intimate friends.

25. And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him *and* fell at *his* feet, worshipping *him*.

26. But Peter raised him up, saying, "Stand up, for I myself am also a man."

27. And as he was talking with him, he went in and found many gathered together.

28. And he said to them, "You know that it is unlawful for a man who is a Jew to associate with or come near to anyone of another race. But God has shown me *that* no man should be called common or unclean.

29. For this reason, I also came without objection when I was sent for. I ask therefore, for what purpose did you send for me?"

30. And Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour, and *at* the ninth hour I was praying in my house; and suddenly a man stood before me in bright apparel,

31. And said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God.

32. Now then, send to Joppa and call for Simon who is surnamed Peter; he is lodging by *the* sea in *the* house of Simon, a tanner. When he comes, he will speak to you.'

33. Therefore, I sent for you at once; and you did well to come. So then, we are all present before God to hear all things that have been commanded you by God."

34. Then Peter opened *his* mouth *and* said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons,

35. But in every nation the one who fears Him and works righteousness is acceptable to Him.

36. The word that He sent to the children of Israel, preaching the gospel of peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all),

37. You have knowledge of; which

26 Acts 14:14
28 John 4:9,
18:28
Acts 11:3,
15:8, 9
Gal. 2:12
Eph. 3:6
30 Mat. 28:3
Mark 16:5
Luke 24:4
Acts 1:10
31 Dan. 10:12
Heb. 6:10
34 Deut. 10:17
2 Chr. 19:7
Job 34:19
1 Pet. 1:17
Rom. 2:11
Gal. 2:6
Eph. 6:9
Col. 3:25
35 Acts 15:9
Rom. 2:13,
3:22, 10:12,
13
1 Cor. 12,
13
Gal. 3:28
Eph. 2:13
36 Is. 57:19
Mat. 28:18
1 Pet. 3:22
Rom. 10:12
1 Cor. 15:27
Eph. 1:20,
2:14
Col. 1:20
Rev. 17:14
37 Luke 4:14

38 Luke 4:18
John 3:2
Heb. 1:9
39 Acts 2:32,
5:30
40 Acts 2:24
41 Luke 24:30
John 14:17,
22, 21:13
Acts 13:31
42 Mat. 28:19
John 5:22
Acts 1:8,
17:31
1 Pet. 4:5
Rom. 14:9
2 Cor. 5:10
2 Tim. 4:1
43 Is. 53:11
Jer. 31:34
Dan. 9:24
Mic. 7:18
Zech. 13:1
Mal. 4:2
Acts 26:18
Rom. 10:11
Gal. 3:22
44 Acts 4:31
45 Acts 10:23,
11:18
Gal. 3:14
47 Acts 11:17
48 1 Cor. 1:17
Acts 2:38,
8:16

declaration came throughout the whole of Judea, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism that John proclaimed,

38. *Concerning* Jesus, Who was from Nazareth: how God anointed Him with *the* Holy Spirit and with power, *and* He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, because God was with Him.

39. And we are witnesses of all *the* things that He did, both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed Him by hanging *Him* on a tree.

40. *But* God raised Him up the third day, and showed Him openly,

41. Not to all the people, but to witnesses who had been chosen before by God, to *those of* us who did eat and drink with Him after He had risen from *the* dead.

42. And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to fully testify that it is He Who has been appointed by God *to be* Judge of *the* living and *the* dead.

43. To Him all the prophets bear witness, *that* everyone who believes in Him receives remission of sins through His name."

44. While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came upon all those who were listening to the message.

45. And the believers from the circumcision were astonished, as many as had come with Peter, that upon the Gentiles also the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out;

46. For they heard them speak in *other* languages and magnify God. Then Peter responded *by saying*,

47. "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have also received the Holy Spirit as *we did*?"

48. And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they besought him to remain *for* a number of days.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. Now the apostles and the brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the Word of God;

2. And when Peter went up to Jerusalem, those of *the* circumcision disputed with him,

3. Saying, "You went in to men who were uncircumcised and did eat with them."

4. But Peter related *the event* from the beginning and expounded *everything* in order to them, saying,

5. "I was in *the* city of Joppa praying, and I saw in a trance a vision, a certain vessel descending from heaven like a great sheet let down by four corners, and it came all the way to me.

6. *Then* I looked closely at it, considering *it*, and saw the four-footed beasts of the earth, including the wild beasts, and the creeping things and the birds of heaven.

7. And I heard a voice say to me, 'Arise, Peter, kill and eat.'

8. But I said, 'In no way, Lord, for nothing common or unclean has ever entered into my mouth.'

9. Then a voice from heaven answered me the second time, *saying*, 'What God has cleansed, you are not to call common.'

10. And this happened three times; then everything was drawn up again into heaven.

11. And behold, three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea immediately stood at the house in which I was.

12. And the Spirit said to me, 'Go with them, doubting nothing.' And these six brethren also went with me; and we entered into the house of the man,

13. And he related to us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying to him, 'Send men to

Chap. 11

2 Acts 10:45
3 Acts 10:28
Gal. 2:12
4 Luke 1:3
5 Acts 10:9
12 John 16:13
Acts 10:19,
23, 15:7
13 Acts 10:30

15 Acts 2:4
16 Is. 44:3
Joel 2:28,
3:18
Mat. 3:11
John 1:26,
33
Acts 1:5,
19:4
17 Acts 10:47,
15:8, 9
18 Rom. 10:12,
13, 15:9, 16
19 Acts 8:1
20 Acts 6:1,
9:29
21 Luke 1:66
Acts 2:47,
9:35
22 Acts 9:27
23 Acts 13:43,
14:22
24 Acts 5:14,
6:5, 11:21
25 Acts 9:30

Joppa, and call for Simon who is surnamed Peter,

14. Who shall speak words to you whereby you and all your house shall be saved.'

15. And when I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came upon them, even as *it* also came upon us in *the* beginning.

16. Then I remembered the word of *the* Lord, how He had said, 'John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with *the* Holy Spirit.'

17. Therefore, if God also gave them the same gift that *was* given to us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I *to dissent*? Do I have the power to forbid God?"

18. And after hearing these things, they were silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also has God indeed granted repentance unto life."

19. Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that arose concerning Stephen went through Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews only.

20. But certain men among them who were Cypriots and Cyrenians came to Antioch *and* spoke to the Greeks, preaching the gospel *of* the Lord Jesus.

21. And *the* hand of *the* Lord was with them, and a great number believed *and* turned to the Lord.

22. Now the report concerning them was heard in the ears of the church that *was* in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch.

23. When he arrived and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced; and he exhorted *them* all to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart,

24. For he was a good man, and was filled with *the* Holy Spirit and with faith. And a large multitude was added to the Lord.

25. Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to seek Saul;

26. And after finding him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came to pass *that for* a whole year they assembled together with the church and taught a great multitude. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.

27. Now in those days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch;

28. And one from among them, named Agabus, stood up *and* signified by the Spirit *that* there would be a great famine throughout the whole world, which also came to pass under Claudius Caesar.

29. And each of the disciples, every-one according as he had prospered, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea;

30. Which they also did, sending *it* to the elders by *the* hand of Barnabas and Saul.

CHAPTER TWELVE

1. Now about that time, Herod the king stretched forth *his* hands to persecute some of those of the church;

2. And he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword.

3. And when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to take Peter also. (Now those were *the* days of unleavened bread.)

4. And after arresting him, he put *him* in prison, delivering *him* to four sets of four soldiers to guard him with the intent of bringing him out to the people after the Passover *season*.

5. As a result, Peter was securely held in the prison, but fervent prayer was made to God by the church for him.

6. Now when Herod was about to bring him out, during that night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and guards *standing* before the door were keeping the prison.

7. But suddenly an angel of *the* Lord

27 Acts 2:17,
13:1, 15:32,
21:9
1 Cor. 12:28
Eph. 4:11
28 Acts 21:10
29 Rom. 15:26
1 Cor. 16:1
2 Cor. 9:1
30 Acts 12:25

Chap. 12

2 Mat. 4:21,
20:23
3 Ex. 12:14,
15, 23:15
4 John 21:18
5 2 Cor. 1:11
Eph. 6:18
1 Thes. 5:17
7 Acts 5:19

stood by *him*, and a light shined in the building. And after striking Peter on the side, he roused him, saying, "Get up! Hurry!" And the chains fell off *his* hands.

8. And the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and fasten your sandals." And he did so. And he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around *you* and follow me."

9. And he followed him, going forth, but did not realize that this was really happening by *the* hand of the angel; rather, he thought he was seeing a vision.

10. Now after going past a first guard and a second, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened to them by itself; and after going out, they went on through one street, and *then* the angel suddenly departed from him.

11. And when Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I truly understand that *the* Lord sent His angel, and has delivered me from *the* hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews."

12. And *as* he was pondering *this*, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was surnamed Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

13. Now when Peter knocked *at* the door of the porch, a damsel named Rhoda came to listen;

14. And when she recognized Peter's voice, she was so excited *that* she did not open *the door to* the porch, but ran in *and* reported *that* Peter was standing in front of the porch.

15. But they said to her, "You are out of your mind." Yet she strongly affirmed *that* it was so. And they said, "It is his angel."

16. But Peter continued knocking; and when they opened *the door* and saw him, they were amazed.

17. Then, motioning to them with his

9 Psa. 126:1
Acts 10:3,
17, 11:5
10 Acts 16:26
11 Job 5:19
Psa. 33:18,
19, 34:7, 22,
41:2, 97:10
Dan. 3:28,
6:22
2 Pet. 2:9
2 Cor. 1:10
Heb. 1:14
12 Acts 4:23,
12:5, 15:37
15 Gen. 48:16
Mat. 18:10
17 Acts 13:16,
19:33, 21:40

hands to be silent, he related to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Report these things to James and the brethren." Then he departed and went to another place.

18. And when daylight came, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers *over* what had become *of* Peter.

19. Now when Herod sent for him and *he* was not found, he questioned the guards *and* commanded *that they* be led away *to death*. And afterwards he went down from Judea to Caesarea, *and* stayed *there*.

20. Now *there* was bitter hostility between Herod and the people of Tyre and Sidon; but with one accord they came to him and, having gained Blastus, who *was* over the king's bedchamber, *as a friend*, they sought peace because their country was nourished by the king's.

21. And on a set day, Herod, who had put on royal apparel, sat down on the tribunal and made an oration to them.

22. And the people cried out, "*It is the* voice of a god, and not of a man!"

23. And immediately an angel of *the* Lord smote him because he did not give the glory to God; and he was eaten of worms, *and* died.

24. But the Word of God spread and produced much fruit.

25. And Barnabas and Saul, who had taken with *them* John who was surnamed Mark, returned from Jerusalem, having fulfilled their ministration *to the brethren in Judea*.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1. Now there were certain prophets and teachers in the church that was at Antioch, including Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius the Cyrenian, and Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch), and Saul.

20 1 Ki. 5:9, 11
Ezek. 27:17
23 1 Sam. 25:38
2 Sam. 24:17
Psa. 115:1
24 Is. 55:11
Acts 6:7,
19:20
Col. 1:6
25 Acts 11:29,
30, 10:12,
13:5, 13,
15:37

Chap. 13

1 Acts 11:22,
14:26
Rom. 16:21

2 Num. 8:14
Mat. 9:38
Acts 9:15,
14:26, 22:21
Rom. 1:1,
10:15
Gal. 1:15,
2:9
Eph. 3:7, 8
1 Tim. 2:7
2 Tim. 1:11
Heb. 5:4
3 Acts 6:6
4 Acts 4:36
5 Acts 12:25,
13:46, 15:37
6 Acts 8:9
8 Ex. 7:11
2 Tim. 3:8
9 Acts 4:8
10 Mat. 13:38
1 John 3:8
11 1 Sam. 5:6
13 Acts 15:38

2. And as they were ministering and fasting to the Lord, the Holy Spirit said, "Separate both Barnabas and Saul to Me for the work to which I have called them."

3. And when they had fasted and prayed, they laid hands on them *and* sent *them* out.

4. So then, after being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed away to Cyprus.

5. And when they came to Salamis, they preached the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they also had John *as* an assistant.

6. And when they had gone through the island as far as Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name *was* Bar-jesus.

7. He was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man, who called Barnabas and Saul to *him*, desiring to hear the Word of God.

8. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so was his name interpreted) withstood them, seeking to turn away the proconsul from the faith.

9. But Saul, who *was* also *called* Paul, being filled with *the* Holy Spirit, fixed his eyes on him,

10. *And* said, "O full of all guile and all craftiness, *you* son of the devil *and* enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to pervert the straight ways of *the* Lord?"

11. And now behold, *the* hand of the Lord *is* upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a season." And immediately a mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking someone to lead *him* by the hand.

12. And after seeing what had happened, the proconsul believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

13. Then Paul and his company sailed away from Paphos *and* came to Perga of Pamphylia; but John departed from

them *and* returned to Jerusalem.

14. Now after passing through from Perga, they came to Antioch of Pisidia; and they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day *and* sat down.

15. And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue said to them, "Men, brethren, if you have a word of exhortation for the people, speak."

16. Then Paul stood up and, after beckoning with his hand, said, "Men, Israelites, and those who fear God, listen *to me*.

17. The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they were sojourning in *the* land of Egypt, and with a high arm brought them out of it.

18. And *for* a period *of* about forty years, He put up with their manners in the desert.

19. And after destroying seven nations in *the* land of Canaan, He gave their land to them by lot.

20. And after these things, He gave *them* judges *for* about four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet.

21. And then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul, son of Cis, a man of *the* tribe of Benjamin, *for* forty years.

22. And after removing him, He raised up David to be their king; to whom He also gave testimony, saying, 'I have found David, the *son* of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will perform all My will.'

23. Of this man's seed has God according to *His* promise raised up to Israel a Savior, Jesus,

24. After John had first preached, before His coming, *the* baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

25. And as John was fulfilling *his* course, he said, "Whom do you suppose *that* I am? I am not *He*; but behold, *there is* one Who comes after

14 Acts 16:13
15 Luke 4:16
Heb. 13:22
16 Acts 10:35
17 Deut. 7:6, 7
Acts 7:17
18 Ex. 16:35
Deut. 1:31
19 Josh. 14:1
20 Judg. 2:16
1 Sam. 3:20
21 1 Sam. 8:5
22 1 Sam. 13:14,
15:23, 16:13
Psa. 89:20
23 Psa. 132:11
Is. 11:1
Mat. 1:21
24 Mat. 3:1
Luke 3:3
25 Mark 1:7

26 Mat. 10:6
27 Luke 23:34
28 Mat. 27:22
29 Mat. 27:59
Luke 18:31
30 Mat. 28:6
31 Mat. 28:16
32 Gen. 3:15
33 Heb. 1:5
34 Is. 55:3
35 Psa. 16:10
36 Acts 2:29,
13:22
38 Jer. 31:34

me, of Whom I am not worthy to loose the sandals of His feet."

26. Men, brethren, sons of *the* race of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the message of this salvation was sent;

27. For those who were dwelling in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor the voices of the prophets who are read every Sabbath, have themselves fulfilled *them* in condemning *Him*.

28. And though no one found any cause *worthy* of death, they begged Pilate to execute Him.

29. And when they had carried out all things that were written concerning Him, they took *Him* down from the tree *and* put *Him* in a tomb;

30. But God raised Him from *the* dead.

31. *And* He appeared for many days to those who had come up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people.

32. And we are announcing the gospel to you—the promise made to the fathers—that God has fulfilled this to us, their children, having raised up Jesus;

33. As it is also written in the second Psalm, 'You are My Son; today have I begotten you.'

34. And *to confirm* that He raised Him from *the* dead, no more to return to corruption, He spoke in this manner: 'I will give You the faithful mercies of David.'

35. Accordingly, he also says in another *place*, 'You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.'

36. For David, after ministering to his own generation by the counsel of God, died, and was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption.

37. But the one Whom God raised up did not see corruption.

38. Therefore, be it known to you, men *and* brethren, that through this

man *the* remission of sins is preached to you.

39. And in Him everyone who believes is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.

40. Take heed, therefore, lest that which is spoken in the Prophets come upon you:

41. 'Behold, you despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work that you will in no way believe, *even* if one declares it to you.' "

42. And when the Jews had gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles entreated *him* that these words might be spoken to them on the next Sabbath.

43. Now after the synagogue had been dismissed, many of the Jews and the proselytes who worshiped *there* followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

44. And on the coming Sabbath, almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the Word of God.

45. But when they saw the multitude, the Jews were filled with envy; and they spoke against the things proclaimed by Paul, *and* were contradicting and blaspheming.

46. But Paul and Barnabas spoke boldly, saying, "It was necessary for the Word of God to be spoken to you first; but since you reject it and do not judge yourselves worthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles;

47. For so the Lord has enjoined *upon* us: 'I have set You for a light of *the* Gentiles that You should be for salvation unto *the* uttermost parts of the earth.' "

48. And when the Gentiles heard *this*, they rejoiced; and they glorified the Word of the Lord, and believed, as many as were appointed to eternal life.

39 Is. 53:11
40 Hab. 1:5
43 Acts 11:23,
14:22
1 Pet. 5:12
Tit. 2:11
Heb. 12:15
45 Acts 18:6
1 Pet. 4:4
Jude 10
46 Ex. 32:10
Deut. 32:21
Is. 55:5
Mat. 10:6,
21:43
Acts 3:26,
18:6, 28:28
Rom. 1:16,
10:19
47 Is. 42:6,
49:6
Luke 2:32
48 Acts 2:47

49. And the Word of the Lord was carried throughout the entire country.

50. But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the principal men of the city, and raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their borders.

51. And after shaking the dust off their feet against them, they came to Iconium.

52. Then the disciples were filled with joy and *with the* Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

1. Now it came to pass in Iconium *that* they went together into the synagogue of the Jews and spoke so *powerfully* that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed.

2. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren.

3. For this reason, they stayed a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, Who bore witness to the message of His grace, granting that signs and wonders be done through their hands.

4. But the multitude of the city was divided; and some were with the Jews, and some *were* with the apostles.

5. And when an assault was *about to* be made by both the Gentiles and *the* Jews with their rulers to insult and stone them,

6. They became aware of it; so they fled to Lyconia, into the cities of Lystra and Derbe and the surrounding region.

7. And there they preached the gospel.

8. Now in Lystra, a certain man was sitting who had never walked; he was impotent in the feet, having been crippled from his mother's womb.

9. This *man* heard Paul speaking; who, after looking intently at him, and seeing that he had faith to be healed,

10. Said with a loud voice, "Stand up-

50 2 Tim. 3:11
51 Mat. 10:14
Mark 6:11
Luke 9:5
Acts 18:6
52 Mat. 5:12
John 16:22
Acts 2:46
Chap. 14
3 Mark 16:20
Heb. 2:4
4 Acts 13:2, 3
5 2 Tim. 3:11
6 Mat. 10:23
8 Acts 3:2
10 Is. 35:6

right on your feet." And he leaped up and walked.

11. And when the multitude saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices in Lyconian, saying, "The gods have become like men *and* have come down to us."

12. And Barnabas they called Zeus; and Paul, Hermes, because he was the principal speaker.

13. Then the priest of Zeus, who *officiated* before their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, desiring to sacrifice with the multitudes.

14. But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard *this*, they ripped their *own* garments in *disbelief*, and rushed into the multitude, shouting out

15. And saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, with the same nature as you, and we have been preaching the gospel to you, *so that* you will turn from these vanities to the living God, Who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all the things in them;

16. Who in the past generations allowed all peoples to go in their *own* ways;

17. Though, indeed, He did not leave Himself without witness, in doing good to us from heaven *by* giving rain and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

18. And *even* by saying these things, they could hardly keep the multitudes from sacrificing to them.

19. Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and after persuading the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged *him* outside the city, supposing *that* he was dead.

20. But while the disciples were standing around him, he arose; and he went into the city *with them*. And the next day, he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

21. And after preaching the gospel to that city, and making many disciples,

11 Acts 8:10, 28:6
13 Dan. 2:46
14 Mat. 26:65
15 Gen. 1:1
1 Sam. 12:21
1 Ki. 16:13
Psa. 33:6, 146:6
Jer. 14:22
Amos 2:4
Acts 10:26
Jas. 5:17
1 Cor. 8:4
1 Thes. 1:9
Rev. 14:7, 19:10
16 Psa. 81:12
Acts 17:30
1 Pet. 4:3
17 Lev. 26:4
Deut. 11:14, 28:12
Job 5:10
Psa. 65:10, 68:9, 147:8
Jer. 11:22
Mat. 5:45
Acts 17:27
Rom. 1:20
19 Acts 13:45
2 Cor. 11:25
2 Tim. 3:11
21 Mat. 28:19

22 Mat. 10:38, 16:24
Luke 22:28
Acts 11:23, 13:43
Rom. 8:17
2 Tim. 2:12, 3:12
23 Tit. 1:5
26 Acts 13:1, 3, 15:40
27 Acts 15:4, 12, 21:19
1 Cor. 16:9
2 Cor. 2:12
Col. 4:3
Rev. 3:8

Chap. 15

1 Gen. 17:10
Lev. 12:3
John 7:22
Acts 15:5
Gal. 2:12, 5:2
Phil. 3:2
Col. 2:8, 11, 16
2 Gal. 2:1
3 Acts 14:27
Rom. 15:24
1 Cor. 16:6, 11

they returned to Lystra and Iconium and Antioch,

22. *Where* they established the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and *declaring* that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

23. And when they had chosen for themselves elders in every church, *and* had prayed with fasting, they committed them to the Lord, on Whom they had believed.

24. And they passed through Pisidia *and* came to Pamphylia.

25. And when they had spoken the word in Perga, they came down to Attalia;

26. And from there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled.

27. And when they arrived, they gathered the church together and declared all that God had done with them, and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

28. And they stayed there with the disciples *for* a long time.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

1. Now certain men who had come down from Judea were teaching the brethren, *saying*, "Unless you are circumcised after the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."

2. Therefore, after a great deal of strife and arguing with them by Paul and Barnabas, the *brethren* appointed Paul and Barnabas, and certain others from among them, to go up to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem about this question.

3. So then, after being sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, *where* they reported the conversion of the Gentiles. And they caused great joy to all the brethren.

4. And when they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all the things that God had done with them.

5. But there stood up certain of those who believed, who were of the sect of the Pharisees, saying, "It is obligatory to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses." *

6. Then the apostles and the elders gathered together to see about this matter.

7. And after much discussion had taken place, Peter stood up and said to them, "Men, brethren, you know that from *the* early days, God made *the* choice among us *that* by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

8. And God, Who knows the heart, bore witness to them *by* giving them the Holy Spirit, even as *He did* to us,

9. And made no difference between us and them, *and* has purified their hearts through the faith.

10. Now therefore, why do you tempt God by putting a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

11. But by the grace of *the* Lord Jesus Christ we believe we shall be saved in the same manner as they also."

12. Then all the multitude kept silence and heard Barnabas and Paul relate what signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them.

13. And after they were silent, James answered *and* said, "Men, brethren, listen to me.

14. Simeon has related how God first visited *the* Gentiles to take out a people for His name.

4 Acts 14:27, 15:12
5 Acts 15:1
7 Acts 10:20, 11:12
8 1 Chr. 28:9
Acts 1:24, 10:44
9 Acts 10:15, 28
1 Pet. 1:22
Rom. 10:12
1 Cor. 1:2
10 Mat. 23:4
Gal. 5:1
11 Rom. 3:24
Eph. 2:8
Tit. 2:11, 3:4, 5
12 Acts 14:27
13 Acts 12:17
14 Acts 15:7

16 Amos 9:11
19 Acts 15:28
1 Thes. 1:9
20 Gen. 9:4, 35:2
Ex. 20:3, 23
Lev. 3:17
Deut. 12:16
Ezek. 20:30
1 Pet. 4:3
1 Cor. 6:9, 8:1, 10:20, 28
Gal. 2:14, 5:19
Eph. 5:3
Col. 3:5
1 Thes. 4:3
Rev. 2:14
21 Acts 13:15, 27
22 Acts 1:23
24 Acts 15:1
Gal. 2:4, 5:12
Tit. 1:10, 11

15. And with this the words of the prophets agree, as it is written,

16. 'After these things, I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David which has fallen; and its ruins I will build again, and will set it up;

17. So that the residue of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom My name is called, says *the* Lord, Who does all these things.'

18. Known to God are all His works from the beginning of the world.

19. Therefore, my judgment is *that* we do not trouble those of the Gentiles who have turned to God;

20. But *that* we write to them to abstain from pollutions of idols, and *from* sexual immorality, and *from* what has been strangled and *from* blood.

21. For from *the* generations of old, Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him in the synagogues, being read every Sabbath day."

22. Then it pleased the apostles and the elders, together with the whole church, to send chosen men from among them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; *and they chose* leading men from among the brethren: Judas, *who was* surnamed Barsabas, and Silas.

23. *And they wrote letters* by their hand, as follows: "The apostles and the elders and the brethren, to those brethren *who are of the* Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: Greetings!

24. Inasmuch as we have heard that certain *ones* among us who went *to you* have troubled your souls with words, saying, '*You are obligated* to be circumcised and to keep the law' (to whom we gave no such command);

*The believers who were Pharisees were demanding that the Gentile disciples be compelled to be circumcised as a requirement for salvation. In addition, they were demanding that the disciples keep the law of Moses according to the Pharisaic traditions. As recorded in Mark 7, Jesus Christ rebuked the Pharisees because their traditions rejected the commandments of God, which were delivered to Moses as recorded in the book of the law. The decision by the apostles and elders was not a rejection of the laws that God delivered to Moses, but a rejection of the Pharisees' traditional interpretation of these laws.

25. It seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send to you chosen men with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26. Men who have dedicated their lives to *proclaim* the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27. Therefore, we have sent Judas and Silas, who shall themselves also tell *you* by word of *mouth* the same things *that we have written*.

28. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us, to lay no further burden upon you than these necessary things:

29. To abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality; if you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell."

30. Therefore, after being dispatched, they went to Antioch; and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle.

31. And after reading *it*, they rejoiced at the consolation.

32. Then Judas and Silas, who were themselves also prophets, exhorted the brethren with many words, and established *them*.

33. And after they had been *there* for a time, they were let go in peace from the brethren to the apostles;

34. But it seemed good to Silas to remain there.

35. Now Paul and Barnabas were staying in Antioch with many others, teaching and preaching the gospel—the Word of the Lord.

36. And after certain days, Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back to see how our brethren are doing in every city where we have preached the Word of the Lord."

37. And Barnabas was determined to take with *them* John *who was* called Mark;

38. But Paul did not think *it* good to

26 Acts 13:50
29 Lev. 17:14
Acts 15:20,
21:25
Rev. 2:14,
20
32 Acts 14:22,
18:23
33 1 Cor. 16:11
Heb. 11:31
35 Acts 13:1
36 Acts 13:4,
13, 14, 51,
14:1, 6, 24,
25
37 Acts 12:12,
25, 13:5
Col. 4:10
2 Tim. 4:11
Philem. 24
38 Acts 13:13

take him *because* he had departed from them at Pamphylia, and did not go with them to the work.

39. As a result, *such* a sharp contention arose between them that they parted from one another. And Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus;

40. But Paul chose Silas and departed, after being committed to the grace of God by the brethren.

41. And he passed through Syria and Cilicia, establishing the churches.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

1. He then arrived at Derbe and Lystra; and behold, there was a certain disciple named Timothy, son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but *his father was* a Greek.

2. He was recommended to *Paul* by the brethren in Lystra and Iconium,

3. *And* Paul desired to take him with him; but because of the Jews in those places, he took him and circumcised him, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

4. And as they passed through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, the ones that had been decided upon by the apostles and the elders in Jerusalem.

5. Then the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number every day.

6. And after passing through Phrygia and the region of Galatia (*for* they had been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia),

7. They came down to Mysia *and* attempted to go to Bithynia; but the Spirit did not permit them *to go there*.

8. Now when they had passed by Mysia, they came to Troas;

9. And a vision appeared to Paul during the night. A certain man of Macedonia was standing, beseeching him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia *and* help us."

40 Acts 14:26
41 Acts 16:5

Chap. 16
1 Acts 14:6,
19:22
Rom. 16:21
1 Cor. 4:17
Phil. 2:19
1 Thes. 3:2
1 Tim. 1:2
2 Tim. 1:2, 5
2 Acts 6:3
3 1 Cor. 9:20
Gal. 2:3, 5:2
4 Acts 15:28
5 Acts 15:41
8 2 Cor. 2:12
2 Tim. 4:13
9 Acts 10:30

10. And after he had seen the vision, we immediately sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.

11. Therefore, after sailing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and on the next day to Neapolis;

12. And from there *we went* to Philippi, which is *the* primary city in *that* part of Macedonia, *and* a colony. And we stayed in this city *for* a number of days.

13. Then on the day of the weeks* we went outside the city by a river, where *it* was customary *for* prayer to be *made*; and after sitting down, we spoke to the women who were gathered together *there*.

14. And a certain woman who worshiped God was listening; *she* was named Lydia *and* was a seller of purple from *the* city of Thyatira; whose heart the Lord opened to receive the things spoken by Paul.

15. And after she and her household were baptized, she besought *us*, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house *and* lodge *there*." And she constrained us.

16. Now it came to pass that as we were going to prayer, a certain damsel who had a spirit of Python met us; *and* she brought her masters much gain by divining.

17. She followed Paul and us *and* cried out, saying, "These men are servants of the Most High God, and are preaching to us *the* way of salvation."

18. Now she did this for many days. Then Paul, being grieved, turned to the spirit and said, "I command you in

10 2 Cor. 2:13
12 Phil. 1:1
14 Luke 24:45
15 Gen. 19:3,
33:11
Judg. 19:21
Luke 24:29
Heb. 13:2
16 1 Sam. 28:7
Acts 19:24
18 Mark 1:25,
34, 16:17

the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out the same hour.

19. And when her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone, they laid hold of Paul and Silas *and* dragged *them* into the marketplace before the magistrates.

20. And they brought them to the captains, saying, "These men, who are Jews, are greatly troubling our city,

21. And are preaching customs that are not lawful for us, as Romans, to receive or to practice."

22. Then a multitude rose up against them, and the captains tore off their garments, *and* commanded *that they* be beaten with rods.

23. And after laying many stripes on them, they cast *them* into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them safely.

24. After receiving this command, he threw them into the inner prison and secured their feet with stocks.

25. But about midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing praises to God, and the prisoners were listening to them;

26. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so *great* that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors opened, and the bonds of all were loosed.

27. When the jailer awoke from his sleep and saw the doors of the prison open, he drew a sword and was about to kill himself, supposing *that* the prisoners had escaped,

28. But Paul called out with a loud voice, saying, "Do not harm yourself; for we are all here."

29. And after asking for lights, he

19 Mat. 10:18
Acts 19:25,
26
20 1 Ki. 18:17
Acts 17:6
22 2 Cor. 6:5,
11:23, 25
1 Thes. 2:2
26 Acts 4:31,
5:19, 12:7,
10

*The phrase "on the day of the weeks" is a literal translation of the Greek phrase *τη τε ημερα των σαββατων*. Nearly every other version translates this phrase "on the sabbath day." However, the phrase *των σαββατων* is not singular but plural, and is correctly translated "the Sabbaths" or "the weeks," indicating that this phrase is referring to the day of Pentecost. The day of Pentecost is an annual Sabbath which is observed after counting seven full weeks from the Wave Sheaf Day, the first day of the week during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

rushed in and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.

30. And when he had brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do, that I may be saved?"

31. Then they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, you and your household."

32. And they spoke the Word of the Lord to him, and to all those in his house.

33. And he took them in that hour of the night, and washed *their* wounds; and he and all his *household* were immediately baptized.

34. Then he brought them into his house *and* laid out a table *for them*; and he rejoiced with all *his* household, who had believed in God.

35. Now when day came, the captains sent the sergeants, saying, "Let those men go."

36. And the jailer reported these words to Paul, *saying*, "The captains have sent *word* to let you go. Now then, *you may* go out and depart in peace."

37. But Paul said to them, "After publicly beating us, who are Romans, without condemnation, and casting *us* into prison, do they *think* now to secretly thrust us out? No, indeed, but let them come in person *and* bring us out."

38. Then the sergeants reported these words to the captains. And when they heard *that* they were Romans, they were afraid.

39. And they came *and* entreated them; and after bringing *them* out, they asked *them* to depart from the city.

40. Now after leaving the prison, they came to Lydia; and when they had seen the brethren, and had exhorted them, they departed.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

1. And after journeying through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to

30 Luke 3:10
Acts 2:37,
9:6
31 John 3:16,
36, 6:47
1 John 5:10
34 Luke 5:29,
19:6
37 Acts 22:25
39 Mat. 8:34
40 Acts 16:14

Chap. 17

2 Luke 4:16
Acts 9:20,
13:5, 14,
14:1, 16:13,
19:8
3 Luke 24:26,
46
Acts 18:28
Gal. 3:1
4 Acts 15:22,
27, 32, 40,
28:24
Rom. 16:21
6 Acts 16:20
7 Luke 23:2
John 19:12
1 Pet. 2:13
10 Acts 9:25,
17:14
11 Is. 34:16
Luke 16:29
John 5:39

Thessalonica, where *there* was a synagogue of the Jews.

2. And as was the custom with Paul, he went in to them and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures,

3. Expounding and demonstrating that it was necessary for Christ to suffer and to rise from *the* dead, and *testifying*, "This Jesus, Whom I am proclaiming to you, is the Christ."

4. Now some of them were convinced, and joined themselves to Paul and Silas, including a great multitude of devout Greeks, and of the chief women not a few.

5. But the unbelieving Jews became envious and took to *them* certain evil men of the baser sort; and when they had gathered a huge crowd, they set the city in an uproar; and they assaulted the house of Jason, looking for *Paul and Silas*, to bring them out to the people.

6. And when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and certain brethren before the city magistrates, crying out, "Those who have set the whole world in confusion have come here also,

7. Whom Jason has received; and these all do *what is* contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying *that* there is another king, Jesus."

8. And they caused *great* agitation among the people and the city magistrates, who heard these things.

9. But after taking security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

10. Then the brethren immediately sent away by night to Berea both Paul and Silas, who, when they arrived, went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11. Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, *for* they received the Word with all readiness of mind *and* examined the Scriptures daily *to see* if these things were so.

12. As a result, a great number of

them believed, including not a few of the honorable Greek women and men.

13. But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the Word of God in Berea also, they came there to stir up the multitude.

14. Then the brethren immediately sent Paul away, as *if* he were going to the sea; but both Silas and Timothy remained there.

15. Now those who were conducting Paul brought him to Athens; and after receiving *Paul's* command to Silas and Timothy to come to him as quickly as possible, they departed.

16. But while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he saw *that* the city *was* wholly given to idolatry, *and* his spirit was sorely moved within him.

17. Because of this, he reasoned earnestly in the synagogue with the Jews and those who worshiped *there*, and daily in the marketplace with those who met with *him*.

18. Then some philosophers of the Epicureans and the Stoics encountered him. And some of *them* said, "What will this babbler have to say?" And some *said*, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign gods," because he was preaching to them the gospel of Jesus and the resurrection.

19. And they took him and brought *him* to Mars' hill, saying, "May we know what this new teaching *is* that is spoken by you?"

20. For you are bringing certain strange things to our ears. So then, we desire to know what these things mean."

21. (Now all *the* Athenians and the strangers sojourning *among them* spent their leisure in nothing other than to tell and to hear something new.)

22. Then Paul stood in *the* center of Mars' hill *and* said, "Men, Athenians, I perceive *that* in all things you are very reverent to deities;

14 Mat. 10:23
15 Acts 18:5
16 2 Pet. 2:8

23 2 Thes. 2:4
24 Mat. 11:25
Acts 7:48,
14:15
25 Gen. 2:7
Num. 16:22
Job 12:10,
27:3, 33:4,
Psa. 50:8
Is. 42:5,
57:16
Zech. 12:1
26 Deut. 32:8
27 Acts 14:17
Rom. 1:20
28 Col. 1:17
Tit. 1:12
Heb. 1:3
29 Is. 40:18
30 Luke 24:47
Acts 14:16
1 Pet. 1:14,
4:3
Rom. 3:25
Tit. 2:11, 12
31 Acts 2:24,
10:42
Rom. 2:16,
14:10

23. For *as* I was passing through and observing the objects of your veneration, I also found an altar on which was inscribed, 'To an unknown God.' So then, He Whom you worship in ignorance *is* the one *that* I proclaim to you.

24. He *is* the God Who made the world and all things that *are* in it. Being *the* Lord of heaven and earth, He does not dwell in temples made by hands;

25. Nor is He served by the hands of men, as *though* He needs anything, *for* He gives to all life and breath and all things.

26. And He made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth, having determined beforehand *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their dwelling;

27. In order that they might seek the Lord, if perhaps they might feel after Him and might find Him; though truly, He is not far from each one of us,

28. For in Him we live and move and have our being; as some of the poets among you also have said, 'For we are His offspring.'

29. Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we should not think that the Godhead *is* like that which *is* made of gold, or silver, or stone—a graven thing of art *devised by the* imagination of man;

30. For *although* God has indeed overlooked the times of this ignorance, He now commands all men everywhere to repent,

31. Because He has set a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by a man Whom He has appointed, having given proof to all *by* raising Him from *the* dead."

32. And after hearing *about the* resurrection of *the* dead, some mocked; but some said, "We will hear you again concerning this *matter*."

33. And so Paul went out from among them.

34. But certain ones *who* believed joined themselves to him, among whom also *were* Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

1. Now after these things, Paul departed from Athens *and* came to Corinth;

2. And *there* he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with Priscilla his wife (because Claudius had ordered all the Jews out of Rome). *And* he came to their house. -

3. And because he was of the same trade, he dwelt with them and worked; for they were tent makers by trade.

4. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded *both* Jews and Greeks.

5. Now when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was stirred in his spirit *and* was earnestly testifying to the Jews *that* Jesus *was* the Christ.

6. But when they set themselves in opposition and were blaspheming, Paul shook *his* garments *and* said to them, "Your blood *be* upon your own heads. I am pure *of it*. From this time forward I will go to the Gentiles."

7. And after departing from there, he went into *the* house of a certain one named Justus, who worshiped God, whose house adjoined the synagogue.

8. But Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with his whole house; and many of the Corinthians who heard believed and were baptized.

9. And the Lord said to Paul in a vision in *the* night, "Do not be afraid;

Chap. 18

2 Rom. 16:3
1 Cor. 16:19
2 Tim. 4:19
3 Acts 20:34
1 Cor. 4:12
1 Thes. 2:9
4 Acts 17:2
5 Job 32:18
Acts 17:3,
14, 15,
18:28
6 Lev. 20:9,
11, 12
2 Sam. 1:16
Neh. 5:13
Ezek. 3:18,
19, 18:13,
33:4, 9
Mat. 10:14
Acts 13:45,
46, 51,
20:26, 28:28
8 1 Cor. 1:14
9 Acts 23:11

but speak, and do not be silent,

10. For I am with you; and no one shall set upon you to mistreat you because I have many people in this city."

11. And he remained *there* for a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them.

12. Now when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews rose up against Paul with one accord and led him to the judgment seat,

13. Saying, "This *man* is persuading men to worship God contrary to the law."

14. And when Paul was about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "Now then, if it were a matter of some injustice, or wicked criminality, O Jews, according to reason, I should put up with you;

15. But on the other hand, if it be a question about a message and names and a law of your own, you see *to it* yourselves; for I have no desire to be a judge of these things."

16. And he drove them from the judgment seat.

17. Then all the Greeks laid hold on Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, *and* beat *him* before the judgment seat. But none of these things mattered to Gallio.

18. And after Paul had remained *there* many days, he took leave of the brethren *and* sailed away to Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. *Now* Paul had shorn *his* head in Cenchrea because he had *made* a vow.

19. And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself went into the synagogue *and* reasoned with the Jews.

20. And when they asked *him* to remain with them for a longer time, he did not consent,

21. But took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means keep the feast that is coming at Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing." And

10 Jer. 1:18, 19
14 Acts 23:29,
25:11, 19
17 1 Cor. 1:1
18 Num. 6:18
Acts 21:24
Rom. 16:1
21 Acts 19:21,
20:16
Jas. 4:15
1 Cor. 4:19
Heb. 6:3

he sailed from Ephesus.

22. And after landing at Caesarea, he went up to *Jerusalem* and visited the church; *then* he went down to Antioch.

23. And when he had stayed *there* some time, he left *and* went through the country of the Galatians and the Phrygians in order, establishing all the disciples.

24. Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man who was skilled in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus.

25. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

26. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. And after hearing him, Aquila and Priscilla took him and expounded the way of God to him more perfectly.

27. And when he was determined to travel to Achaia, the brethren wrote to the disciples, exhorting *them* to welcome him; *and* after arriving, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace,

28. For he powerfully refuted the Jews publicly, showing by the Scriptures *that* Jesus was the Christ.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

1. Now it came to pass *that* while Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the upper parts *and* came to Ephesus; and when he found certain disciples,

2. He said to them, "Did you receive *the* Holy Spirit after you believed?" And they said to him, "We have not even heard that *there* is a Holy Spirit."

3. Then he said to them, "Unto what, then, were you baptized?" And they said, "Unto the baptism of John."

4. And Paul said, "John truly baptized

23 Acts 14:22,
15:32, 41
Gal. 1:2,
4:14

24 1 Cor. 1:12,
3:5, 6, 4:6
Tit. 3:13

25 Acts 19:3
Rom. 12:11

27 1 Cor. 3:6
28 Acts 9:22,
17:3, 18:5

Chap. 19

1 1 Cor. 1:12,
3:5, 6

2 1 Sam. 3:7
Acts 8:16

3 Acts 18:25
4 Mat. 3:11

John 1:15,
27, 30

Acts 1:5,
11:16,
13:24, 25

with a baptism unto repentance, saying to the people that they should believe in Him Who was coming after him—that is, in Jesus, the Christ."

5. And after hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

6. Now when Paul laid *his* hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with *other* languages and prophesied.

7. And all the men were about twelve.

8. Then he entered into the synagogue *and* spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

9. But when some were hardened and refused to believe, speaking evil of the way before the multitude, he departed from them *and* separated the disciples; *and* he disputed *these things* daily in the school of a certain Tyrannus.

10. And this took place for two years, so that all those who inhabited Asia heard the message of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

11. And God worked special works of power by the hands of Paul,

12. So that even when handkerchiefs or cloths were brought from his body to those who were sick, the diseases departed from them and the wicked spirits went out from them.

13. Then certain vagabond Jews, exorcists, took it upon themselves to pronounce over those who had wicked spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "We adjure you *by* Jesus, whom Paul proclaims."

14. Now there were certain *men*, seven sons of a Jew *named* Sceva, a high priest, who were doing this.

15. But the wicked spirit answered *and* said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I have knowledge of; but you, who are you?"

16. And the man in whom was the wicked spirit attacked them, overpowered them and prevailed against them,

5 Acts 8:16
6 Acts 2:4,
6:6, 8:17,
10:46

8 Acts 1:3,
17:2, 18:4,
28:23

9 Acts 9:2,
19:23, 22:4,
24:14

2 Pet. 2:2
Jude 10

2 Tim. 1:15
10 Acts 20:31

11 Mark 16:20
Acts 14:3

12 2 Ki. 4:29
Acts 5:15

13 Mat. 12:27
Mark 9:38
Luke 9:49

so that they escaped out of that house naked and wounded.

17. Now this became known to everyone inhabiting Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks; and fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

18. Then many of those who believed came *forward* to confess and declare their deeds.

19. And many of those who practiced the occult arts brought their books *and* burned *them* before all; and they calculated the cost of them and found *it to be* fifty thousand pieces of silver.

20. And so the Word of the Lord spread and prevailed mightily.

21. Now when all these things had taken place, Paul determined in *his* spirit *that* when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, he must go to Jerusalem, saying, "After going there, I must also see Rome."

22. And when he had sent to Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, he remained in Asia *for* a time.

23. And at that time it came to pass *that there was* no small tumult about the way.

24. For *there was* a certain *man* named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver temples for Diana, *which* brought the artificers no small gain.

25. After gathering together the workmen *who worked* in such things, he said, "Men, you know that from this *craft* we gain our wealth;

26. And you see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but almost all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded a great multitude to turn away, saying that they are not gods which are made by hands.

27. Now not only is our business in danger of coming into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana, whom all Asia and the world worship, is in danger of being regarded as nothing, and her majesty

17 Luke 1:65,
7:16
Acts 2:43,
5:5, 11
18 Mat. 3:6
20 Acts 6:7,
12:24
21 Acts 18:21,
20:22, 23:11
Rom. 15:24-
28
Gal. 2:1
22 Rom. 16:23
2 Tim. 4:20
23 Acts 9:2
2 Cor. 1:8
24 Acts 16:16,
19
26 Psa. 115:4
Is. 44:10-20
Jer. 10:3

also is about to be destroyed."

28. And after hearing *this*, they were filled with rage; *and* they cried out, saying, "Great is Diana of *the* Ephesians!"

29. And the whole city was filled with confusion; and they seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians *and* fellow travelers of Paul, *and* rushed with one accord to the theater.

30. Now Paul was determined to go in to the people, *but* the disciples prevented him.

31. And some of the chiefs of Asia, who also were his friends, sent to him, urging *him* not to venture into the theater.

32. Now some were crying out one thing and some another; for the assembly was confused, and the majority *of them* did not know for what reason they had come together.

33. Then they selected Alexander from among the multitude, the Jews pushing him forward; and Alexander made a sign with his hand, wishing to make a defense to the people.

34. But when they recognized that he was a Jew, there was a unified shout from all for about *the space of* two hours *as* they cried out, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

35. Now after the recorder had calmed the multitude, he said, "Men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the inhabitants of the city of Ephesus are keepers of the temple of the great goddess Diana, and of the *image* that fell down from Jupiter?"

36. Since these things are undeniable, it is imperative that you be calm and do nothing recklessly.

37. For you brought these men *forcibly*, *who are* neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of your goddess.

38. On the one hand, if Demetrius and the artificers with him have a matter against anyone, *the* courts are open, and there are proconsuls: let them accuse one another.

29 Acts 20:4,
27:2
Rom. 16:23
1 Cor. 1:14
Col. 4:10
Philem. 24
33 Acts 12:17
1 Tim. 1:20
2 Tim. 4:14

39. But on the other hand, if you have questions about any other matter, it shall be resolved in a lawful assembly.
40. And moreover, we are in danger of being accused of insurrection because of this day since there is not one reason that we can give to justify this gathering."
41. And after saying these things, he dismissed the assembly.

CHAPTER TWENTY

1. When the tumult was over, Paul called the disciples to *him* and embraced *them*; *then* he left to go into Macedonia.
2. And after passing through those parts and exhorting them with much speaking, *hē* came to Greece.
3. Now after he had been *there* for three months, he was going to sail to Syria. But when *he learned that* the Jews were lying in wait for him, he decided to return through Macedonia.
4. And *these* accompanied him as far as Asia: Sopater, a Berean; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and of Derbe, Gaius and Timothy; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.
5. These went on ahead *and* waited for us in Troas.
6. But we sailed away from Philippi after the Days of Unleavened Bread; and in five days we came to them at Troas, where we stayed *for* seven days.
7. Now on the first *day* of the weeks,* when the disciples had assembled to break bread, Paul preached to them; and *because* he was going to leave in the morning, he continued speaking until midnight.
8. And *there* were many lamps in the

Chap. 20

1 1 Cor. 16:5
1 Tim. 1:3
3 Acts 9:23,
23:12, 25:3
2 Cor. 11:26
4 Acts 16:1,
19:29,
21:29, 27:2
Eph. 6:21
Col. 4:7, 10
2 Tim. 4:12,
20
Tit. 3:12
6 Ex. 12:14,
15, 23:15
Acts 16:8
2 Cor. 2:12
2 Tim. 4:13
7 Acts 2:42,
46
1 Cor. 10:16,
11:20, 16:2
Rev. 1:10
8 Acts 1:13

upper room where they were assembled.

9. And there sat in the window a certain youth named Eutychus, who was overpowered by deep sleep after Paul had been speaking for a long time; *and* he fell down from the third story, and was taken up dead.

10. But Paul went down *and* laid himself on him, and embraced *him*, *and* said, "Do not be anxious, for his life is in him."

11. And after he got up again, and had broken bread and eaten, and talked for a long time, *even* until daybreak, *and* thus, he departed.

12. And they brought in the boy alive, and were greatly comforted.

13. Then we went on ahead to the ship *and* sailed to Assos, there intending to take in Paul; for he had so appointed, since he himself was going on foot.

14. And after he met with us at Assos *and* we took him in, we came to Mitylene;

15. And from there we sailed away, *and* on the following *day* we arrived opposite Chios; and the next *day* we arrived at Samos; and after staying at Trogyllium, the next *day* we came to Miletus;

16. For Paul had decided to sail by Ephesus, because he did not want to spend time in Asia; for he hastened in order to be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, if possible.

17. Now from Miletus, he sent to Ephesus *and* called for the elders of the church.

18. And when they had come to him, he said to them, "You know how, from the first day I came to Asia, *and* all the time I was with you,

19. I served the Lord with all humility *and* *with* many tears and temptations,

10 1 Ki. 17:21
2 Ki. 4:34
Mat. 9:24
16 Acts 2:1,
18:21,
19:21, 21:4,
12, 24:17
1 Cor. 16:8
18 Acts 18:19,
19:1, 10
19 Acts 20:3

*This literal translation of the Greek words *μία σαββάτων* or *μία των σαββάτων* shows that the day which followed the weekly Sabbath was the first day of the seven-week count to Pentecost, thus identifying this day as the Wave Sheaf Day (Lev. 23:10-11, 15-16). The ascension of Jesus Christ on that day fulfilled the offering of the wave sheaf for all time.

which came upon me through the plots of the Jews;
 20. And how I did not keep back anything that was profitable, *but* preached to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house,
 21. Earnestly testifying, both to *the* Jews and *the* Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.
 22. And now behold, I am bound in the spirit, *and* am going to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall happen to me there;
 23. Except that the Holy Spirit fully testifies in every city, saying that bonds and tribulations await me.
 24. But I myself do not take any of *these* things into account, nor do I hold my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify the gospel of the grace of God.
 25. And now behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom of God, will see my face no more;
 26. Wherefore I testify to you on this day that I am pure from the blood of all,
 27. For I have not held back from preaching to you all the counsel of God.
 28. Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood.
 29. For I know this: that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock;
 30. And from among your own selves men will rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves.
 31. Watch, therefore, remembering that for three years I ceased not to admonish each one night and day with tears.

20 Acts 20:27
 21 Mark 1:15
 Luke 24:47
 Acts 2:38, 18:5
 22 Acts 19:21
 23 Acts 21:4, 11
 1 Thes. 3:3
 24 Acts 1:17, 21:13
 Rom. 8:35
 2 Cor. 4:1, 16
 Gal. 1:1
 2 Tim. 4:7
 Tit. 1:3
 25 Acts 20:38
 Rom. 15:23
 26 Acts 18:6
 2 Cor. 7:2
 27 Luke 7:30
 John 15:15
 Acts 20:20
 Eph. 1:11
 28 1 Pet. 1:19, 5:2
 1 Cor. 12:28
 Eph. 1:7, 14
 Col. 1:14
 1 Tim. 4:16
 Heb. 9:12, 14
 Rev. 5:9
 29 Mat. 7:15
 2 Pet. 2:1
 30 1 John 2:19
 1 Tim. 1:20
 31 Acts 19:10
 32 Acts 9:31, 26:18
 1 Pet. 1:4
 Eph. 1:18
 Col. 1:12, 3:24
 Heb. 9:15, 13:9
 33 1 Sam. 12:3
 1 Cor. 9:12
 2 Cor. 7:2, 11:9, 12:17
 34 Acts 18:3
 1 Cor. 4:12
 1 Thes. 2:9
 2 Thes. 3:8
 35 Rom. 15:1
 1 Cor. 9:12
 2 Cor. 11:9, 12, 12:13
 Eph. 4:28
 1 Thes. 4:11, 5:14
 2 Thes. 3:8
 36 Acts 7:60, 21:5
 37 Gen. 45:14, 46:29
 38 Acts 20:25
 Chap. 21
 4 Acts 20:23, 21:12
 5 Acts 20:36

32. And now I commit you, brethren, to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.
 33. I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing.
 34. Rather, you yourselves know that these hands did minister to my needs and to those who were with me.
 35. *In* all things, I have showed you that you are obligated to so labor to support those who are weak, remembering the words that the Lord Jesus Himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "
 36. And after saying these things, he knelt with them all *and* prayed.
 37. Then there was much weeping by everyone; and they embraced Paul *and* fervently kissed him,
 38. Being distressed most of all by his saying that they would not see his face any more. Then they accompanied him to the ship.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

1. And it came to pass *that* after leaving them, we sailed *away*; *and* taking a direct course, we came to Coos, and on the next *day* to Rhodes, and from there to Patara.
 2. And when we found a ship sailing over to Phoenicia, we got aboard *and* sailed;
 3. And after sighting Cyprus, we passed it on the left. *Then* we sailed to Syria and made port at Tyre, for the ship was unloading cargo there.
 4. Now after finding the disciples, we remained there *for* seven days; *and* they said to Paul by the Spirit *that* he should not go up to Jerusalem.
 5. But it came to pass *that* after completing the days, we set out *on* our journey; *and* everyone accompanied us, with *their* wives and children, until we were outside the city. Then we

knelt on the shore *and* prayed.

6. And after bidding farewell to one another, we went aboard the ship, and they returned to their own *homes*.

7. Then we completed our voyage from Tyre *and* arrived at Ptolemais. And after greeting the brethren, we remained one day with them.

8. On the next day, Paul and those of *us* who had accompanied him departed *and* came to Caesarea; and we went into the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, *and* stayed with him.

9. And this *man* had four virgin daughters who prophesied.

10. Now after we had been *there* for many days, a certain man from Judea came down, a prophet named Agabus;

11. And he came to us and, taking Paul's belt, bound himself hand and foot, *and* said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit: 'The Jews in Jerusalem shall bind the man whose belt this is in the same manner, and shall deliver him into *the* hands of *the* Gentiles.' "

12. And when we heard these things, both we and those of *that* place besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.

13. Then Paul answered, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

14. And when he was not persuaded, we held our peace, saying, "*May* the Lord's will be done."

15. And after these days, we packed the baggage *and* went up to Jerusalem.

16. And *some* of the disciples from Caesarea also went with us, *and* brought a certain Mnason, a Cypriot, an old disciple with whom we might lodge.

17. Now when we arrived in Jerusalem, the brethren gladly received us.

18. And on the following *day*, Paul went with us to *see* James; and all the

6 John 1:11

8 Acts 6:5,
8:26, 40

Eph. 4:11

2 Tim. 4:5

9 Joel 2:28

Acts 2:17

10 Acts 11:28

11 Acts 20:23,
21:33

13 Acts 20:24

14 Mat. 6:10,
26:42

Luke 11:2,
22:42

17 Acts 15:4

18 Acts 15:13

Gal. 1:19,
2:9

elders *were* assembled.

19. And after greeting them, he reported one by one the things that God had worked among the Gentiles through his ministry.

20. And when they heard *this*, they glorified the Lord. Then they said to him, "Brother, you see how many thousands of Jews there are who believe, and they are all zealous of the law *of rituals*."

21. But they have been informed that you are teaching all *the* Jews who are among the Gentiles to apostatize from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children, nor to walk in the customs.

22. What then is going to happen? A multitude is going to assemble, for they will hear that you have come.

23. Therefore, do this that we tell you: there are four men with us who have a vow on themselves;

24. Take these and be purified with them, and pay their expenses, so that they may shave *their* heads; and everyone will know that what they have been informed about you is nothing, and that you yourself also are walking orderly *and* keeping the law *of rituals*.

25. But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we wrote *to them* after deciding *that* they do not have to observe any such thing, except to keep themselves from things that are offered to idols, and *from* blood, and *from* what is strangled, and *from* sexual immorality."

26. Then Paul took the men, *and* on the next day he was purified with them *and* went into the temple, signifying the fulfillment of the days of purification, until each of them had offered *his* offering.

27. But when the seven days were about to be completed, the Jews from Asia, who had seen him in the temple, stirred up all the multitude; and they laid *their* hands on him,

28. Crying out, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man who is teaching everyone everywhere against the people and the law and this place; and furthermore, he has also brought Greeks into the temple, and has defiled this holy place."

29. For they had previously seen Trophimus, the Ephesian, in the city with him, *and* they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple.

30. And the whole city was stirred up, and the people ran together; and they took hold of Paul *and* drew him outside the temple, and the doors were immediately shut.

31. But as they were attempting to kill him, a report came to the chief captain of the band that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.

32. *And* he immediately took soldiers and centurions with *him and* ran down to them. And when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

33. Then the chief captain came up *and* laid hold of him, and commanded that he be bound with two chains; and he inquired who he might be, and what he had been doing.

34. But some in the multitude were crying one thing, and some another. When he was not able to determine the facts because of the uproar, he commanded him to be brought into the fortress.

35. Now when he came upon the stairs, it happened *that* he was being carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the multitude,

36. For the multitude of people followed, shouting, "Away with him!"

37. And when he was about to be brought into the fortress, Paul said to the chief captain, "Is it permissible for me to say something to you?" And he said, "Do you know Greek?"

38. Are not you the Egyptian who previously caused confusion and led into

28 Acts 24:5, 6
29 Acts 20:4
30 Acts 26:21
32 Acts 23:27,
24:7
33 Acts 20:23,
21:11
36 Luke 23:18
John 19:15
Acts 22:22
38 Acts 5:36

the desert four thousand men who were murderers?"

39. But Paul said, "I am a man *who is* indeed a Jew, a citizen of Cilicia from Tarsus, which is no insignificant city. I beseech you, allow me to speak to the people."

40. And after receiving permission from him, Paul stood on the stairs *and* motioned with his hand to the people; and when there was great silence, he spoke to *them* in the Hebrew language, saying,

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

1. "Men, brethren and fathers, hear now my defense to you."

2. And when they heard him speak to them in the Hebrew language, they kept the more silent; and he said,

3. "I am a man *who is* indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, having been instructed according to *the* exactness of the law of our fathers, being a zealot for God, even as you all are this day;

4. *And* I persecuted this way unto death, binding and delivering up to prisons both men and women,

5. As also the high priest and all the elderhood bear witness to me; from whom I received letters to the brethren, *and* went to Damascus to bring bound to Jerusalem those who were there also, in order that they might be punished.

6. Now it happened *that* while I was journeying, as I was drawing near to Damascus about midday, a great light from heaven suddenly shined around me.

7. And I fell to the ground; and I heard a voice say to me, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?'

8. And I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarean, Whom you are persecuting.'

39 Acts 9:11,
22:3
40 Acts 12:17

Chap. 22

1 Acts 7:2
3 Deut. 33:3
Acts 5:34,
21:20, 39,
26:5
Rom. 10:2
2 Cor. 11:22
Gal. 1:14
Phil. 3:5
4 Acts 8:3,
26:9-11
Phil. 3:6
1 Tim. 1:13
5 Luke 22:66
Acts 4:5, 9:2,
26:10, 12
6 Acts 9:3,
26:12, 13

9. Now those who were with me indeed saw the light, and were alarmed; but they did not hear the voice of the one Who spoke to me.

10. Then I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Stand up *and* go into Damascus, and there all the things that have been appointed for you to do shall be told to you.'

11. And since I could not see because of the brilliance of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me, *and* I came to Damascus.

12. And a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, who had a good report by all the Jews dwelling *there*,

13. Came to me; and he stood *and* said to me, 'Brother Saul, look up.' And I looked up at him at that time.

14. And he said, 'The God of our fathers has personally chosen you to know His will, and to see the Just One, and to hear *the* voice of His mouth;

15. For you shall be a witness for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard.

16. And now why do you delay? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'

17. And it came to pass *that* when I returned to Jerusalem, and I was praying in the temple, I entered into a trance;

18. And I saw Him saying to me, 'Hurry, and get out of Jerusalem with *all* speed, because they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.'

19. And I said, 'Lord, they themselves are aware that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue those who believe in You.

20. And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was being poured out, I myself was also standing by and con-

9 Dan. 10:7,
Acts 9:7

12 Acts 9:17,
10:22

1 Tim. 3:7

14 Acts 3:13,
14, 5:30,

7:52, 9:15,
26:16

1 Cor. 9:1,
11:23, 15:8

Gal. 1:12

15 Acts 4:20,
23:11, 26:16

16 Acts 2:38,
9:14,

Rom. 10:13
Heb. 10:22

17 Acts 9:26,
2 Cor. 12:2

18 Mat. 10:14
Acts 22:14

19 Mat. 10:17,
8:3, 22:4

20 Luke 11:48
Acts 7:58,
8:1

Rom. 1:32

senting to putting him to death, and was holding the garments of those who killed him.'

21. But He said to me, 'Go, for I am sending you afar off to the Gentiles.' "

22. And they listened until they *heard* him say this; then they lifted up their voices, saying, "Away with such a one from the *face* of the earth, for he is not fit to live!"

23. And as they were shouting and casting off *their* garments and throwing dust into the air,

24. The chief captain commanded that he be brought into the fortress and ordered that he be examined by scourging, so that he might know for what cause they were crying out against him in this way.

25. But as he was being tied with the thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman and uncondemned?"

26. Now when the centurion heard *this*, he went and reported *it* to the chief captain, saying, "Do you realize what you are about to do? For this man is a Roman."

27. And when the chief captain came up, he said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" And he said, "Yes."

28. And the chief captain answered, "With a great sum *of* money I bought this citizenship." And Paul said, "But indeed, I was born *free*."

29. Then those who were about to examine him immediately left *the* room; and the chief captain also was afraid, after ascertaining that he was a Roman, because he had bound him.

30. And on the next day, desiring to know for certain why he was accused by the Jews, he loosed him from *his* bonds and commanded the chief priests and their whole Sanhedrin to come; and after bringing Paul down, he set *him* before them.

21 Acts 9:15,
13:2, 46, 47,

18:6, 26:17

Rom. 1:5,
11:13, 15:16

Gal. 1:15,
16, 2:7, 8

Eph. 3:7, 8

1 Tim. 2:7
2 Tim. 1:11

22 Acts 21:36,
25:24

25 Acts 16:37

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

1. And after gazing intently upon the Sanhedrin, Paul said, "Men *and* brethren, I have conducted myself in all good conscience toward God unto this day."

2. Then the high priest Ananias ordered those standing by him to strike him on the mouth.

3. And Paul said to him, "God is about to strike you, you whited wall. Do you yourselves now judge me according to the law, while you command me to be struck contrary to the law?"

4. But those who were standing by *him* said, "Do you rail against the high priest of God?"

5. And Paul said, "Brethren, I did not know that he is a high priest; for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.' "

6. Now when Paul learned that one part were Sadducees and the other *part were* Pharisees, he cried out in the Sanhedrin, "Men *and* brethren, I am a Pharisee, *and* a son of a Pharisee: I am being called into question concerning *the* hope and *the* resurrection of *the* dead."

7. And after he said this, there was dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the multitude was divided;

8. For the Sadducees say *that* there is no resurrection, nor angel or *other* spirit; but the Pharisees confess both.

9. Then there was a great clamor; and the scribes who were part of the Pharisees stood up *and* contended, saying, "We find nothing evil in this man; and if a spirit spoke to him, or an angel, let us not fight against God."

10. And when a great argument arose, the chief captain was afraid that Paul might be torn apart by them; *and* he commanded the troop to go down and take him out of their midst by force,

Chap. 23

1 Acts 24:16
1 Cor. 4:4
2 Cor. 1:12, 4:2
2 Tim. 1:3
Heb. 13:18
2 1 Ki. 22:24
Jer. 20:2
John 18:22
3 Lev. 19:35
Deut. 25:1,2
John 7:51
5 Ex. 22:28
Eccl. 10:20
Acts 24:17
2 Pet. 2:10
Jude 8
6 Acts 24:15, 21, 26:5, 6, 28:20,
Phil. 3:5
8 Mat. 22:23
Mark 12:18
Luke 20:27
9 Acts 5:39, 22:7, 17, 18, 25:25, 26:31
11 Acts 18:9, 27:23, 24
12 Acts 23:21, 30, 25:3
20 Acts 23:12

and to bring *him* into the fortress.

11. Now *on* the following night, the Lord stood beside him *and* said, "Be of good courage, Paul; for as you have fully testified the things concerning Me at Jerusalem, so you must bear witness in Rome."

12. And when it was day, some of the Jews banded together *and* put themselves under a curse, declaring that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul.

13. And there were more than forty who had made this conspiracy.

14. They came to the chief priests and the elders *and* said, "We have placed ourselves under a curse, that *we will* taste nothing until we have killed Paul.

15. Now therefore, you *must go* with the Sanhedrin to the chief captain *and* say *that* you want to examine him in more detail, so that he will bring him down to you tomorrow, and we will be ready to kill him before he even comes near."

16. But the son of Paul's sister heard of *their plan* to lie in wait; *and* he came and entered inside the fortress *and* reported *it* to Paul.

17. And Paul called one of the centurions *and* said, "Take this young man to the chief captain, for he has something to report to him."

18. Then he took him and brought *him* to the chief captain, and said, "The prisoner Paul called me aside and requested that I bring this young man to you, *for* he has something to say to you."

19. And the chief captain took hold of his hand, and they went to a private place; *and* he inquired, "What is it that you have to report to me?"

20. And he said, "The Jews have agreed to request that you bring Paul down to the Sanhedrin tomorrow, as if they desire to question him more thoroughly.

21. But you then, do not be persuaded by them; for *some* of them will lie in wait for him, more than forty *men* who have put themselves under a curse to neither eat nor drink until they have killed him; and they are now ready, waiting for a promise from you *to bring him*."

22. Then the chief captain dismissed the young man, having charged *him* to tell no one those things that he had reported to him.

23. And he called two certain centurions *and* said, "Prepare two hundred soldiers, and seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen for the third hour of the night, that they may go as far as Caesarea.

24. And have beasts *of burden* ready, that they may set Paul on *them*, *and* may carry *him* safely through to Felix the governor."

25. *Then* he wrote a letter after this manner:

26. "Claudius Lysias to the most excellent governor, Felix: Greetings!

27. This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be put to death by them when I came up with a troop *and* rescued him, after learning that he is a Roman.

28. And desiring to know the cause for which they accused him, I brought him down to their Sanhedrin.

29. I found that he was accused of questions concerning their law, but had done nothing worthy of death or bonds.

30. But when I was informed that a plot against this man *was* about to be *carried out* by the Jews, I sent *him* to you at once, *and* have also commanded the accusers to say the things against him before your *judgment seat*. Farewell."

31. Then the soldiers, according to the orders given to them, took Paul and brought *him* by night to Antipatris;

32. And on the next day they returned

27 Acts 21:33,
Acts 24:7
28 Acts 22:30
29 Acts 18:15,
25:19, 26:31
30 Acts 23:20,
24:8, 25:6

34 Acts 21:39
35 Mat. 27:27
Acts 24:1,
10, 25:16

Chap. 24

1 Acts 21:27,
23:2, 30, 35,
25:2
5 Luke 23:2,
Acts 6:13,
16:20, 17:6,
21:28
1 Pet. 2:12,
15
6 John 18:31,
Acts 21:28
7 Acts 21:33
8 Acts 23:30

to the fortress, leaving the horsemen to go on with him;

33. Who, when they came into Caesarea, gave the letter to the governor and also presented Paul to him.

34. And after reading *the letter*, the governor asked from what province he was. And when he learned that *he* was from Cilicia,

35. He said, "I will give you a full hearing when your accusers also have arrived." And he commanded him to be kept in the Praetorium of Herod.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

1. Then after five days, the high priest Ananias came down with the elders and a certain orator *named* Tertullus, who made a presentation to the governor against Paul.

2. And when he was called, Tertullus began to accuse *him*, saying *to the governor*, "Since we have obtained great peace through you, and excellent things have been done for this nation through your forethought,

3. Both in every way and everywhere, we gladly accept *it*, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness.

4. But that I may not further trouble you, I beseech you to hear us briefly with your *customary* graciousness.

5. For we have found this man *to be* a pest, and a mover of insurrection among the Jews in the whole world, and a leader of the sect of the Nazareans;

6. Who also attempted to profane the temple, and whom also we seized, desiring to judge him according to our laws;

7. But Lysias, the chief captain, came *and* took *him* with great force from our hands.

8. *And* he has commanded his accusers to come to you, from whom you yourself will be able, after examining

him, to know all those things of which we accuse him.”

9. Then the Jews also concurred, saying that these things were so.

10. And when the governor motioned for him to speak, Paul answered, “Knowing that you have been a judge to this nation for many years, I do more cheerfully make defense for myself concerning these things.

11. So that you may understand, it was not more than twelve days ago that I went up to worship in Jerusalem;

12. And neither did anyone find me disputing with anyone in the temple, nor inciting a tumult among the people—neither in the synagogues, nor in the city;

13. Neither can they prove *the things* of which they now accuse me.

14. But I confess to you that according to the way which they call heresy, so I serve the God of my fathers, believing all things that are written in the Law and the Prophets;

15. Having hope in God, which they themselves also acknowledge, *that there* will be a resurrection of *the dead*—both *the just* and *the unjust*.

16. And in this *hope*, I exercise myself to have a conscience without offense toward God and men continually.

17. Now after many years, I arrived bringing to my nation *my* alms and offerings.

18. But *there were* certain Jews from Asia who found me purified in the temple—not with a multitude, nor with tumult.

19. If they have anything against me, it is obligatory *for them* to appear *in person* before you to accuse *me*.

20. Or let these *who are here* themselves speak, if they found any unrighteousness in me when I stood before the Sanhedrin,

21. *Other* than this one saying that I cried out *while* standing among them:

11 Acts 21:26, 24:17

12 Acts 25:8, 28:17

14 Amos 8:14

Acts 9:2, 26:22, 28:23

15 Dan. 12:2

John 5:28, 29

Acts 23:6, 26:6, 7, 28:20

16 Acts 23:1

17 Acts 11:29, 30, 20:16

Rom. 15:25

2 Cor. 8:4

Gal. 2:10

18 Acts 21:26, 27, 26:21

19 Acts 23:30, 25:16

21 Acts 23:6, 28:20

‘Concerning *the* resurrection of *the dead* I am being judged by you this day.’ ”

22. And after hearing these things, Felix, having a more perfect knowledge of the things concerning the way, put them off, saying, “When Lysias, the chief captain, has come down, I will examine the things concerning you.”

23. *And* he ordered the centurion to keep Paul, to *let him* have liberty, and not to forbid *those* of his own to come to him or to minister *to him*.

24. Now after certain days, Felix appeared with his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess; *and* he sent for Paul and listened to him *speak* about the faith in Christ.

25. And as he reasoned concerning righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix became fearful *and* answered, “You may go now, and when I find an opportunity, I will call for you.”

26. Moreover, he was also hoping that money would be given *to him* by Paul, so that he might release him; for this reason, he sent for him and conversed with him more often.

27. But at the end of two years, Felix was succeeded *as governor* by Porcius Festus; and, desiring to gain favor for himself with the Jews, Felix left Paul bound.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

1. Now three days after Festus arrived in the province, he went to Jerusalem from Caesarea.

2. Then the high priest and the chief Jews presented before him the charges against Paul; and they besought him,

3. Asking a favor against *Paul*, that he would have him sent to Jerusalem, *because* they were preparing an ambush to kill him on the way.

22 Acts 24:7

23 Acts 27:3, 28:16

26 Ex. 23:8

27 Ex. 23:2

Acts 12:3, 25:9, 14

Chap 25

2 Acts 24:1, 25:15

3 Acts 23:12, 15

4. Then Festus replied *that* Paul would be kept in Caesarea, and *that he* himself was about to depart shortly.

5. He said, "Therefore, let those who are in power among you go down also; *and* if anything wicked is in this man, let them accuse him *there*."

6. Now after spending more than ten days among them, he went down to Caesarea; *and* the next day he sat on the judgment seat *and* commanded that Paul be brought.

7. And when he came in, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood *all* around, presenting numerous and weighty charges against Paul, which they were not able to prove.

8. *Then* he answered in his own defense, "Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar did I transgress *in* anything."

9. But Festus, desiring to obtain favor with the Jews, asked Paul *and* said, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem to be judged before me there concerning these things?"

10. But Paul said, "I stand before the judgment seat of Caesar, where I have the right to be judged. I did nothing wrong to the Jews as you very well know.

11. For on the one hand, if I am a wrongdoer and have done anything worthy of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is no *truth* in their accusations against me, no one can deliver me over to them. I appeal to Caesar."

12. And after conferring with the council, Festus answered, "You have appealed to Caesar; to Caesar you shall go."

13. Now when certain days had passed, King Agrippa and Bernice came down to Caesarea to greet Festus.

14. And after they had been there many days, Festus set before the king

5 Acts 18:14, 25:18
7 Mark 15:3
Luke 23:2, 10
Acts 24:5, 13
8 Acts 6:13, 24:12, 28:17
9 Acts 24:27, 25:20
11 Acts 18:14, 23:29, 25:25, 26:31, 32, 28:19
14 Acts 24:27

the things relating to Paul, saying, "There is a certain man, left here by Felix *as* a prisoner,

15. Against whom, when I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews presented allegations, seeking judgment against him;

16. To whom I answered that it is not *the* custom of *the* Romans to give up any man to die before he has been accused, *but* to have the opportunity to *meet* his accusers face to face, and to defend himself concerning the accusation.

17. Then they came together; *and* without delay, the next *day* I sat on the judgment seat *and* commanded the man to be brought.

18. When the accusers stood up to *accuse*, they did not bring any accusation of *the kind* that I supposed *they would bring against* him.

19. But they had certain questions against him concerning their own religious system, and concerning a certain Jesus, Who is dead, *but* Whom Paul affirmed to be alive;

20. And being in doubt about the investigation of this *matter*, I asked *Paul* if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem to be judged there concerning these things.

21. But when Paul himself appealed that he be reserved for a hearing before Augustus, I commanded him to be kept until I could send him to Caesar."

22. And Agrippa said to Festus, "I also have been desiring to hear the man myself." And he said, "Tomorrow you shall hear him."

23. So then, Agrippa and Bernice came in the next day with great pomp, and entered into the hall of audience with the chief captains and *the* eminent men of the city; and when Festus gave the command, Paul was brought *in*.

24. And Festus said, "King Agrippa,

15 Acts 25:2, 3
16 Acts 25:4, 5
17 Acts 25:6
19 Acts 18:15, 23:29
22 Acts 9:15
24 Acts 25:2, 3, 7, 22:22

and all the men who are present with us, this is the one concerning whom the entire multitude of Jews pleaded with me, both in Jerusalem and here, crying out *that* he ought not to live any longer.

25. But when I perceived *that* he had done nothing worthy of death, and *that* he himself had also appealed to Augustus, I determined to send him.

26. *However*, I do not have anything certain to write to *my* lord concerning him. I have therefore, brought him before you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after the examination has been completed, I may have something to write;

27. For it seems irrational to me to send a prisoner, and not to declare the charges against him."

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

1. And Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself." Then Paul stretched out *his* hand *and* made *his* defense:

2. "Concerning all the things of which I am accused by *the* Jews, King Agrippa, I consider myself blessed in being *able* to make *my* defense before you today,

3. Especially since you are acquainted with all the customs and questions among the Jews; therefore, I beseech you to hear me patiently.

4. The manner of my life from childhood, which from *the* beginning was among my nation in Jerusalem, all the Jews know;

5. Who knew me from the first, if they are willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion, I formerly lived *as* a Pharisee.

6. And I now stand in judgment for *the* hope of the promise made by God to the fathers;

7. Unto which *promise* our twelve

25 Acts 23:9,
29, 25:11,
12, 26:31

Chap 26

5 Acts 22:3,
23:6, 24:15,
21

Phil. 3:5
6 Gen. 3:15,
22:18, 26:4,
49:10

Deut. 18:15
2 Sam. 7:12
Psa. 132:11

Is. 4:2, 7:14,
9:6, 40:10,
Jer. 23:5,
33:14-16

Ezek. 34:23,
37:24
Dan. 9:24

Acts 23:6,
13:22
Rom. 15:8

Tit. 2:13
7 Luke 2:37
Jas. 1:1

Phil. 3:11
1 Thes. 3:10
1 Tim. 5:5

tribes, earnestly serving *God* night and day, hope to come. Concerning this hope I am accused, O King Agrippa, by the Jews.

8. Why do you find it incredible that God would raise *the* dead?

9. For this *very* reason, I truly thought in myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus the Nazarean,

10. Which I also did in Jerusalem; and many of the saints I shut up in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave *my full* consent against *them*.

11. And *by* punishing them often in all the synagogues, I compelled *them* to blaspheme. And being exceedingly furious against them, I persecuted *them* even as far as to foreign cities.

12. During this *time*, I was journeying to Damascus with authorization and a commission from the chief priests,

13. When I saw on the road at midday, O king, a light from heaven, surpassing the brightness of the sun, shine around me and those who were traveling with me.

14. Then all of us fell to the ground; and I heard a voice speak to me, saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? *It is hard* for you to kick against the pricks.'

15. And I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting.

16. Now arise, and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you *as* a minister and a witness both of what you have seen and what I shall reveal to you.

17. I am personally selecting you from among the people and the Gentiles, to whom I now send you,

18. To open their eyes, that *they* may turn from darkness to light, and *from* the authority of Satan to God, so that

9 John 16:2
1 Tim. 1:13

10 Acts 8:3,
9:14, 21,
22:5

Gal. 1:13
11 Acts 22:19
12 Acts 9:3,
22:6

16 Acts 22:15
17 Acts 22:21
18 Is. 35:5,

42:7
Luke 1:77,
79

John 8:12
Acts 20:32
1 Pet. 2:9

2 Cor. 4:4,
6:14
Eph. 1:11,
18, 4:18,

5:8
Col. 1:12-13
1 Thes. 5:5

they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified through faith in Me.'

19. Upon *hearing* this, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision;

20. For *I preached* to those in Damascus first, and *then* to Jerusalem, and to all the region of Judea, and to the Gentiles, declaring that *they* should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance.

21. On account of these things, the Jews seized me in the temple *and* attempted to kill *me*.

22. So then, having obtained help from God unto this day, I have stood, bearing witness both to *the* small and *the* great, saying nothing else than what both the prophets and Moses said would happen:

23. That Christ would suffer, *and* that *He* would be the first to be raised from *the* dead, and to proclaim light to the people and to the Gentiles."

24. And while he was uttering these things in his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "You are out of your mind, Paul; much learning has turned you to madness."

25. But he said, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but I utter true and rational words.

26. For the king, to whom I speak with boldness, is informed of these things. For I am convinced that none of these things *are* hidden from him; for this has not been done in a corner.

27. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe."

28. Then Agrippa said to Paul, "Will you persuade me to become a Christian in *such* a little *time*?"

29. And Paul said, "I wish to God *that* in both a little *time* and in much, not only you, but also all those who are listening to me this day, would be-

20 Mat. 3:8
Acts 9:20,
22, 11:26,
21 Acts 21:30
22 Luke 24:27
John 5:46
Acts 24:14,
28:23
Rom. 3:21
23 Luke 2:32,
24:26
1 Cor. 15:20
Col. 1:18
Rev. 1:5
24 2 Ki. 9:11
John 10:20
1 Cor. 1:23,
2:13, 14,
4:10
29 1 Cor. 7:7

come such as I am, except *for* these bonds."

30. And after he said these things, the king rose up, and the governor, *and* Bernice also, and those who sat with them.

31. And when they had withdrawn, they spoke to one another, saying, "This man has done nothing worthy of death or of bonds."

32. Then Agrippa said to Festus, "This man might have been released if he had not appealed to Caesar."

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

1. Now when it was decided that we should sail to Italy, they delivered up Paul and certain other prisoners to a centurion named Julius, *who was* of the band of Augustus.

2. And after boarding a ship of Adramyttium that was about to pass by the coasts of Asia, we set sail; *and* Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, was with us.

3. And the next *day* we landed at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul kindly, allowing *him* to go to *his* friends to refresh himself.

4. Now after setting sail from there, we sailed below Cyprus because the winds were contrary.

5. And after sailing across the sea by Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to *the city of* Myra in Lycia.

6. And when the centurion found there a ship of Alexandria sailing to Italy, he put us on board.

7. And after many days of slow sailing, and having great difficulty passing by Cnidus, *for* the wind hindered us, we sailed below Crete near to Salmone;

8. And after sailing along its coast with difficulty, we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, near which was a city of Lasea.

9. And after much time had passed,

31 Acts 23:9,
29, 25:25
32 Acts 25:11
Chap. 27
1 Acts 25:12,
25
2 Acts 19:29
3 Acts 24:23,
28:16
9 Lev. 23:27,
29

and the voyage was now dangerous because the *annual* fast day had already passed, Paul warned *the soldiers*,

10. Saying to them, "Men, I perceive that the voyage will be a disaster and *will cause* much loss, not only of the cargo and of the ship, but also of our lives."

11. But the centurion was persuaded by the captain and the owner of the ship, rather than by the things spoken by Paul.

12. And since the port was ill adapted to winter in, the majority also advised to set sail from there, if by any means they might be able to reach Phoenice to winter *in this* port of Crete, which lies toward *the* southwest and toward *the* northwest.

13. And when a south wind was gently blowing, they thought they had obtained *their* purpose; and after weighing *anchor*, they sailed close to Crete.

14. But not long after, there came a tempestuous wind called Euroclydon.

15. And when the ship was caught *in the storm*, and we were not able to bring *her* head into the wind, we let *her* go and were driven along.

16. Now when we passed below a certain small island called Claudia, we were hardly able to gain control of the ship;

17. And taking up helps, they used *them* to undergird the ship; then, fearing that we would fall into quicksand, they lowered the sails, *and* so were driven.

18. But we were violently tossed by the tempest, *and* the next day they cast out *the cargo* to lighten the ship.

19. And on the third day, we threw the ship's equipment overboard with *our* own hands.

20. But when neither *the* sun nor *the* stars appeared for many days, and no

19 Jonah 1:5

small tempest was lying on *us*, all hope of our being saved was taken away.

21. Then, after a long period of silence, Paul stood up in their midst *and* said, "O men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete, and you would have been spared this disaster and loss;

22. But I exhort you now to be of good cheer, because there shall not be any loss of life among you, only of the ship.

23. For *there* stood by me this night an angel of God, Whose I am and Whom I serve,

24. Saying, 'Have no fear, Paul. You must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has given to you all those sailing with you.'

25. So then, be of good cheer, men; for I believe God, that it will be exactly as it was told to me.

26. But we must be cast upon a certain island."

27. And when the fourteenth night had come, we were being driven about in the Adriatic; *but* toward the middle of the night, some of the sailors thought that they were nearing some country.

28. And when they sounded, they found *it* twenty fathoms; then they went a little farther and sounded again, *and* found *it* fifteen fathoms;

29. And fearing that we would come upon rocky places, they cast four anchors out of *the* stern *and* wished for day to come.

30. But when the sailors sought to escape from the ship and let the boat down into the sea, pretending that they were going to cast the anchors from *the bow of the ship*,

31. Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Unless these remain in the ship, you cannot be saved."

32. Then the soldiers cut away the ropes from the boat and let it fall.

23 Dan. 6:16

Acts 23:11

Rom. 1:9

2 Tim. 1:3

25 Luke 1:45

Rom. 4:20,

21

2 Tim. 1:12

26 Acts 28:1

33. Now as day was coming on, Paul urged *them* all to partake of food, saying, "Today *is* the fourteenth day *that* you have continued to watch *while* fasting, *and* have taken nothing.

34. Now then, I advise you to take food because it is for your well being; for not a hair shall fall from the head of anyone among you."

35. And after saying these things, he took a loaf *and* gave thanks to God before everyone; and afterwards he broke *it and* began to eat.

36. Then they were all of good cheer, and also took bread *for* themselves.

37. Now all that were in the ship were two hundred *and* seventy-six souls.

38. And after they were satisfied with food, they lightened the ship *by* casting out the wheat into the sea.

39. And when it was day, they did not recognize the land; but they noticed a certain bay that had a shore, into which they proposed to drive the ship if they were able.

40. Then they cut away the anchors *and* left *them* in the sea; at the same time, they loosened the bands of the rudders and, hoisting the foresail into the wind, made for the shore.

41. But coming upon a place where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground; and the bow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was broken by the violence of the waves.

42. Then the soldiers decided to kill the prisoners, lest anyone should swim away and escape.

43. But the centurion, desiring to save Paul, stopped them from *carrying out* their purpose; and he commanded those who could swim to cast *themselves* off first and go on to the land.

44. As for the rest, some *came* from the ship on boards, and others on some *of the* things from the ship; and so it came to pass *that* everyone was brought safely to the land.

34 1 Ki. 1:52
Mat. 10:30
Luke 12:7,
21:18
35 1 Sam. 9:13
Mat. 15:36
Mark 8:6
John 6:11
1 Tim. 4:3, 4
37 Acts 2:41,
7:41
1 Pet. 3:20
Rom. 13:1
41 2 Cor. 11:25
44 Acts 27:22

Chap. 28

1 Acts 27:26
2 Rom. 1:14
1 Cor. 14:11
Col. 3:11
5 Mark 16:18
Luke 10:19
6 Acts 14:11
8 Mark 6:5,
7:32, 16:18
Luke 4:40
Acts 19:11,
12
Jas. 5:14, 15
1 Cor. 12:9,
28
10 Mat. 15:6
1 Tim. 5:17

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

1. Now when they were safe, they learned that the island was called Melita.

2. And the barbarians showed us uncommon kindness; for they kindled a fire because of the rain that was falling and because of the cold and received all of us.

3. But when Paul gathered a bundle of sticks and laid *them* on the fire, a viper came out *because* of the heat *and* wound *itself* around his hand.

4. And when the barbarians saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "No doubt, this man is a murderer; *although* he has been saved from the sea, justice does not permit him to live."

5. But he shook the snake off into the fire *and* suffered no injury.

6. Now they were expecting him to become swollen, or suddenly fall down dead. But when they watched for a long time and saw *that* no harm came to him, they changed their opinion *and* said *that* he was a god.

7. Now in the *areas* around that place were lands that belonged to the chief of the island, named Publius, who received us in a brotherly way and lodged *us* for three days.

8. Now it happened *that* Publius' father lay afflicted with fevers and dysentery; *but* Paul came to him and prayed for him, *and* laid *his* hands on him *and* healed him.

9. So then, after this took place, the others on the island who had infirmities came and were healed.

10. And they honored us with many honors; and when we set sail, they gave *us* the things that *we* needed.

11. Then after three months, we sailed in a ship that had wintered at the island; *it was* an Alexandrian *ship* with *the* sign Dioscuri.

12. Now after landing at Syracuse, we

remained *for* three days.

13. After setting a course from there, we arrived at Rhegium; and after one day the south wind blew, *and* on the second day we came to Puteoli.

14. There we found brethren, who entreated us to remain with them *for* seven days. And so, *after that* we came to Rome.

15. Now the brethren there had heard the things concerning us, *and* they came out to meet us as far as *the* marketplace of Appius and *the* Three Taverns. When Paul saw them, he gave thanks to God *and* took courage.

16. And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the commander of the camp; but Paul was allowed to remain by himself with the soldier who kept him.

17. Now it came to pass *that* after three days, Paul called together those who were chief among the Jews. And when they had come together, he said to them, "Men *and* brethren, although I have done nothing against the people or the customs of our fathers, I was delivered into the hands of the Romans *as* a prisoner from Jerusalem.

18. After examining me, they desired to let *me* go because there was not one cause of death in me.

19. But when the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar—not as though I had anything to charge against my nation.

20. For this cause then, I have called for you, in order that I might see you and speak to *you*; because *it is* for the hope of Israel that I have this chain around *me*."

21. Then they said to him, "We have neither received letters concerning you from Judea, nor have any of the brethren who have arrived reported anything or spoken evil of you.

16 Acts 24:25, 27:3

17 Acts 21:33, 24:12, 13

18 Acts 22:24, 24:10, 25:8

19 Acts 25:11

20 Acts 26:6, 7, 29

Eph. 3:1, 4:1, 6:20

2 Tim. 1:16

Philem. 10, 13

22. But we would like to hear from you *and to know* what you think, because we are indeed very aware that this sect is everywhere spoken against."

23. And when they appointed a day *for him to speak*, many came into his lodging to *hear* him; *and* he expounded to them from morning until evening, fully testifying *of* the kingdom of God and persuading them *of* the things concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and *from* the prophets.

24. And some were truly convinced of the things that were spoken, but some did not believe.

25. And they departed in disagreement with one another after Paul had spoken *these* words: "Well did the Holy Spirit speak by Isaiah the prophet to our fathers,

26. Saying, 'Go to this people and say, "In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, but in no way perceive.

27. For the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing, and they have closed their eyes; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them.' "

28. Be it known to you, that the salvation of God has, therefore, been sent to the Gentiles; and they will hear."

29. And after he said these things, the Jews went away with much debate among themselves.

30. And Paul remained two whole years in his own hired house, welcoming all who came to him,

31. Proclaiming the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, no man forbidding *him*.

22 Luke 2:34

Acts 24:5, 14

1 Pet. 2:12, 4:14

23 Luke 24:27

Acts 17:3, 19:8, 26:6, 22

24 Acts 14:4, 19:9

26 Is. 6:9

Jer. 5:21

Ezek. 12:2

Mat. 13:14

Mark 4:12

Luke 8:10

John 12:40

Rom. 11:8

28 Mat. 21:41

Acts 13:46, 18:6, 26:17, 18

Rom. 11:11

31 Acts 4:31

Eph. 6:19

The Seven General Epistles

**James
I Peter
II Peter
I John
II John
III John
Jude**

The Original Placement of the General Epistles in the New Testament

In nearly every version or translation of the New Testament, the General Epistles are found after the book of Hebrews and before the book of Revelation. But that was not the original placement of the seven General Epistles.

Few people who read the New Testament realize that in its original canonization by the apostles of Jesus Christ—Paul, Peter and John—the General Epistles were placed immediately after the book of Acts and before the Epistle to the Romans. That is the proper order of the books in the New Testament, as “inspired” by God the Father and Jesus Christ. To this day, the Byzantine Text of the New Testament retains the correct order of the books.

The original arrangement of the books of the New Testament is well-known by scholars and textual critics. As one scholarly work states, “Whether copies contain the whole or a part of the sacred volume, the general order of the books is the following: Gospels, Acts, Catholic Epistles [the title that scholars have given to the General Epistles—*not* epistles written by the Fathers of the Catholic Church], Pauline Epistles, Apocalypse [the book of Revelation]” (Scrivener, *Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, 4th ed., vol. 1, p. 72).

In his dictionary of the Bible, Hastings shows that even scholars who were involved in higher criticism acknowledge the original placement of the General Epistles. He states, “This is the position [the General Epistles before Paul’s] assigned them in the critical editions of Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort” (*Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v. “Catholic Epistles,” vol. 1, p. 360).

Scholars attribute the original placement of the General Epistles to the high repute in which their authors were held by the early New Testament church. Concerning the placement of the General Epistles, we read, “In our English New Testament, the General Epistles are placed near the end of the volume, just before the Book of Revelation. The Greek manuscripts put them, as a rule, immediately after the Gospels and Acts, and before the writings of Paul. This was no doubt in recognition of the fact that they bore the names of the Apostles who were directly associated with Jesus, and whose authority, therefore, might be considered superior to that of Paul. In keeping with this principle, the first place of all was accorded to the Epistle of James. Its author was assumed to be no[ne] other than James, the Lord’s own brother” (*The Literature of the New Testament*, pp. 209-210).

While acknowledging the role that the apostles’ high standing played in the placement of the General Epistles, we must be careful not to view their original placement as a matter of human opinion. It is not human judgment but divine “inspiration” that guided the original placement of these epistles among the books of the New Testament.

The Divine Purpose in the Original Placement of the General Epistles

The General Epistles, which were originally located after the book of Acts and before the Epistle to the Romans, clearly teach that obedience to the laws and commandments of God is required of all Christians and is essential for salvation. The General Epistles lay a firm scriptural foundation for understanding Paul’s words concerning law

and grace, not only in the Epistle to the Romans but in his other epistles as well. If the original order of the apostolic epistles had been retained by the translators of the New Testament, perhaps the scriptural teachings concerning grace and law-keeping would not have been so universally misconstrued.

While the General Epistles are relatively short, they contain clear and easy-to-understand instructions for Christian living. In the first epistle, written by the apostle James, we read, “Then be doers of *the* Word, and not only hearers, deceiving your own selves; because if anyone is a hearer of *the* Word and not a doer, this one is like a man considering his natural face in a mirror who, after looking at himself, went away and immediately forgot what he was like. But the one **who has looked into *the* perfect law of freedom, and has continued in it**, this one himself has not become a forgetful hearer, but is a doer of *the* work. **This one shall be blessed in his actions**” (Jas. 1:22-25).

James shows that Christians who truly understand the law of freedom and want to receive God’s blessings will be keeping all the commandments of God. James makes it explicitly clear that to break even one of these commandments is sin. He writes, “If you are truly keeping *the* Royal Law according to the scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing well. But if you have respect of persons, you are practicing sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors; **for if anyone keeps the whole law, but sins in one aspect, he becomes guilty of all**. For He Who said, ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ also said, ‘You shall not commit murder.’ Now if you do not commit adultery, but you commit murder, you have become a transgressor of *the* law. **In this manner speak and in this manner behave: as those who are about to be judged by *the* law of freedom**” (Jas. 2:8-12).

After James’ powerful words, we find the epistles of Peter, which confirm that obedience to God is required of all believers. Peter admonishes, “As obedient children, do not conform yourselves to your former lusts, *as you did in your* ignorance. But according as He Who has called you *is* holy, you yourselves also be holy in all *your* conduct; for it is written, ‘You be holy, because I am holy.’ And if you call upon the Father, Who judges according to each man’s work without respect of persons, pass the time of your *life’s* journey in *the* fear of God” (I Pet. 1:14-17).

Following Peter’s writings are the inspired words of John, which make it absolutely clear that commandment-keeping is required for salvation. John declares, “And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments. **Anyone who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar**, and the truth is not in him. On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected [*made complete*]. By this *means* we know that we are in Him. Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked” (I John 2:3-6).

John shows that it is a grievous error to claim that Christians do not need to keep God’s commandments. He makes it clear that those who teach this false view are actually promoting sin! John proclaims, “Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for **sin is lawlessness** [KJV, “sin is the transgression of the law”]” (I John 3:4).

After James’, Peter’s and John’s exhortations comes an urgent warning from the apostle Jude to be on guard against those who promote lawlessness. Jude writes, “Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting *you* to fervently fight for the faith, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints. For certain men have stealthily crept in; those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this

Placement of The General Epistles

judgment. *They are* ungodly men, who are **perverting the grace of our God, turning it into licentiousness**, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ” (Jude 3-4).

These selected quotes from the General Epistles, which clearly reveal that commandment-keeping is required of all Christians, should give the reader a better understanding of why God inspired the apostles who compiled the New Testament to place these seven epistles before the apostle Paul’s Epistle to the Romans. The Epistle to the Romans contains some very difficult to understand teachings about law and grace. Peter wrote, “And bear in mind that the long-suffering of our Lord *is* salvation, exactly as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has also written to you; as *he has* also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are some things *that are* difficult to understand, which the ignorant and unstable are twisting *and distorting*, as *they also twist and distort* the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction” (II Pet. 3:15-16).

Shortly before the close of the apostolic era, false apostles and false teachers from within the churches of God were distorting the words of the true apostles of Jesus Christ and were changing the truth of God into a lie! As Jude warned, they were turning the grace of God into lasciviousness—license to sin—by teaching that the laws of God were no longer in effect. The apostle John identified this growing apostasy, led by “many antichrists” as “the spirit of error” or “the spirit of deception.”

The early Christians were being confused by seductive teachings and false doctrines promulgated by this spirit of error and deception. Many antichrists were teaching that Jesus Christ did not come in the flesh, that humans do not have sinful natures, and that commandment-keeping is not required for salvation. Through these and other false doctrines, a new pseudo-grace was being substituted for the grace of God toward righteous living through Jesus Christ.

To combat these satanic doctrines, the apostle John was inspired to write the truth of God in simple yet powerful language. He clearly taught obedience to the commandments of God, the forgiveness of sins, the fullness of God’s love, the true meaning of brotherly love, and the eternal calling to be the children of God. John’s words make it absolutely clear that the destiny of the children of God is to become as God is, through God’s profound and magnificent love!

The Order of the Seven General Epistles

The General Epistles begin with the Epistle of James, a leading apostle and brother of Jesus Christ. His epistle is followed by the epistles of Peter and John, whose teachings also carried great weight in the early New Testament Church. In describing his early contacts with these leading apostles at Jerusalem, the apostle Paul shows the high repute in which they were held. We find this account in the Epistle to the Galatians, where Paul describes his personal calling by Christ—separate from the other apostles—and tells how he became acquainted with James, Peter and John.

After writing about his calling, Paul relates his first contact with Peter and James: “I went away into Arabia [where he was personally taught in visions by Jesus Christ] and returned again to Damascus. Then after three years [from the time he went into Arabia], I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Peter, and I remained with him fifteen days. But I did not see *any* of the other apostles, except James the brother of the Lord” (Gal. 1:17-19).

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It was not until fourteen years later, when there was a dispute over circumcision, that Paul again visited the apostles at Jerusalem. He writes, “Then after fourteen years I again went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus with *me* also. And I went up according to revelation, and laid before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run in vain. (But indeed, Titus, who *was* with me, being a Greek, was not compelled to be circumcised.)

“Now *this meeting* was *private* because of false brethren brought in secretly, who came in by stealth to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, in order that they might bring us into bondage; to whom we did not yield in subjection, *not* even for one hour, so that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. But *the gospel that I preach did not come* from those reputed to be something. (Whatever they were does not make any difference to me; God does not accept *the* person of a man.) For those who are of repute conferred no *authority* upon me.

“But on the contrary, after seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, exactly as Peter *had been entrusted with the gospel* of the circumcision; (for He Who wrought in Peter for *the* apostleship of the circumcision wrought in me also towards the Gentiles;) and after recognizing the grace that was given to me, **James** and **Cephas** [Peter] and **John**—those reputed to be pillars—gave to me and Barnabas *the* right hands of fellowship, *affirming* that we *should go* to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision” (Gal. 2:1-9).

Notice the order in which the apostle Paul lists these leading apostles: James, the brother of the Lord, and then Peter and John. The order in Paul’s account gives us an indication of the standing of these three apostles, who were considered pillars in the early days of the church at Jerusalem. It is no coincidence that the order of the seven General Epistles follows the same sequence: **James, I and II Peter and I, II and III John**.

The General Epistles also include the Epistle of the apostle Jude, who was another brother of Jesus Christ. Jude’s epistle is placed after John’s epistles. While neither the New Testament nor early Church history reveals when Jude was made an apostle, it was—as in Paul’s case—after Peter and John. Peter and John were among the original twelve chosen by Jesus Christ and were recognized as leading apostles, along with James. Accordingly, in the sequence of the General Epistles, we find Jude’s epistle placed after James’, Peter’s and John’s.

The order of these epistles also follows a sequence of topics that conforms to Scriptural revelation through Paul. In his First Epistle to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul lists the three most important aspects of true Christian belief and practice: “And now, these three remain [they are living spiritual qualities]; **faith, hope and love**; but the greatest of these *is love*” (I Cor. 13:13).

We find that God also inspired the topics of the General Epistles to follow the same order. The theme of the first of the General Epistles, written by the apostle James, is **faith**. The theme of the next two epistles, written by the apostle Peter, is **hope**. The three epistles that follow Peter’s were written by the apostle John. It is no coincidence that the theme of all three of his epistles is **love**.

The order of these three themes is additional evidence of God’s powerful inspiration in the writing of the General Epistles. These themes reflect the ongoing process of a Christian’s spiritual growth toward maturity in Christ Jesus.

Placement of The General Epistles

James' Theme: Faith

The believer must begin his or her Christian walk by faith. This faith is founded upon a personal belief in God the Father and Jesus Christ. Each believer must personally accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins by grace through faith.

This first step in spiritual growth was taught not only by James but by all the apostles. Paul explained it very clearly when he wrote, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this *faith has not come* from your own selves; *it is* the gift of God. Not from works [your own human works], so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works [based on the Word of God and faith], that God ordained beforehand [to live by every word of God], in order that we might walk in them (Eph. 2:8-10).

True faith in Jesus Christ will lead each believer to follow in His footsteps, walking in obedience to the Father's commandments, as Jesus did, and doing the same good works. The apostle James shows that a faith that does not produce obedience and good works is of no value in God's eyes. James wrote this concerning faith: "My brethren, what good *does* it do, if anyone says *that he* has faith, and does not have works? Is faith able to save him? Now then, if there be a brother or sister who is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; be warmed and be filled,' and does not give to them the things necessary for the body, what good is it?

"In the same way also, faith, if it does not have works, is dead, by itself. But someone is going to say, 'You have faith, and I have works.' *My answer is:* You prove your faith to me through your works, and I will prove my faith to you through my works. Do you believe that God is one? You do well *to believe this*. Even the demons believe—and tremble *in fear*. But are you willing to understand, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac, his own son, upon the altar?

"Do you not see that faith was working together with his works, and by works *his* faith was perfected? And the scripture was fulfilled which says, 'Now Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness'; and he was called a friend of God. You see, then, that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only" (James 2:14-24).

James' epistle gives the truly converted Christian clear instructions on how to grow from a beginning belief in God to a mature, active, living faith like that of Abraham, the father of the faithful.

Peter's Theme: Hope

The Scriptures show that **hope is built on the foundation of faith**. Peter describes this hope as "a living hope" because it is manifested in the way that a Christian lives his or her life. Paul touches on this same theme in his Epistle to the Romans, where he shows that Abraham lived not only by faith—the true spiritual faith that pleases God—but also by hope.

"For this reason *it is* of faith, in order that *it might be* by grace, to the end that the promise might be certain to all the seed—not to the one who is of the law only, but also to the one who *is* of *the* faith of Abraham, who is *the* father of us all; (exactly as it is written, 'I have made you a father of many nations.') before God in Whom he believed, Who gives life to the dead, and calls the things that are not as though they are;

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“And who **against hope believed in hope**, in order that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, ‘So shall your seed be.’ And he, not being weak in the faith, considered not his own body, already having become dead, being about one hundred years old, nor *did he consider* the deadness of Sarah’s womb; and he did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief; rather, **he was strengthened in the faith**, giving glory to God; for **he was fully persuaded** that what He has promised, He is also able to do” (Rom. 4:16-21).

Hope is rooted in faith, but faith comes first. Likewise, God inspired the themes of the General Epistles to follow the same order: faith first, then hope. In his epistles, the apostle Peter shows that this hope is based on the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Peter begins his first epistle:

“Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, **has begotten us again unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**; unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us, who *are* being safeguarded by *the* power of God through faith, for salvation *that is* ready to be revealed in *the* last time” (I Pet. 1:3-5).

Peter’s words show how our faith in Jesus Christ leads to faith and hope in God the Father. Peter declares that we were redeemed “... by *the* precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; Who truly was foreknown before *the* foundation of *the* world, but was manifested in *these* last times for your sakes, *even for you* who through Him do believe in God, Who raised Him from *the* dead and gave Him glory, so that **your faith and hope might be in God**” (Verses 19-21).

Peter goes on to show that we should always have hope in God the Father and Jesus Christ, regardless of the circumstances that beset us. He exhorts, “But sanctify the Lord God in your own hearts, and always *be* prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks you the reason for **the hope that is** in you, with meekness and reverence” (I Pet. 3:15).

Peter closes his first epistle with some of the most comforting words of hope in Scripture for those who have been suffering. “Now may the God of all grace, Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after *you* have suffered a little while, Himself perfect you, establish, strengthen, *and* settle you” (I Pet. 5:10).

John’s Theme: Love

As James focuses on faith, and Peter on hope, so John focuses on the theme of **love**. The order of these three themes is fitting because it is **faith** and **hope** that lead each Christian into the love of God. Love is the greatest spiritual gift, freely imparted by God the Father to every true believer through faith and hope in Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul expresses this profound spiritual truth as follows:

“Therefore, having been **justified by faith**, we have peace with God **through our Lord Jesus Christ**. Through Whom we also have **access by faith into this grace** in which we stand, and we ourselves boast in **the hope of the glory of God**. And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations, realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance, and endurance *brings forth* character, and character *brings forth* **hope**. And the hope *of God* never makes us ashamed **because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts** through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us” (Rom. 5:1-5).

What a wonderful progression of **faith**, **hope** and **love** that God gives us by His grace through the Holy Spirit!

It is no coincidence that the apostle John, whom Jesus loved, wrote more about love in his Gospel and Epistles than the other apostles. John's words reveal the profound love of God in a very personal way and show why His love is the greatest gift of all. The most memorized and most often quoted verse in the entire Bible was written by the apostle John: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16, KJV).

John 3:16 is so universally publicized that even at televised sporting events, one will nearly always see a sign or placard with this verse written on it. While this common use of the verse may seem to trivialize the Scriptures, we should not allow it to detract from the profound meaning of these words that God inspired John to write in his Gospel.

Although much shorter and not as well known as his Gospel, John's epistles contain many passages and even whole chapters which expound on the love of God. In describing the immeasurable richness and fullness of His love, John shows that the love of God is the foundation of the believer's hope:

"Behold! **What glorious love** the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is. And **everyone who has this hope** in him purifies himself, even as He is pure" (I John 3:1-3).

John goes on to show that the love of God is His most all-encompassing attribute and the very essence of His nature. John's words make it clear that those who truly have the love of God dwelling in them will manifest that love by loving one another. He declares, "Beloved, we should love one another because **love is from God**; and everyone who loves has been begotten by God, and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God **because GOD IS LOVE**" (I John 4:7-8).

John emphasizes that the love of God, which is freely given to us, not only enables us but *obligates* us to love one another. He declares, "In this *way* **the love of God** was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this *act* is **THE LOVE**—not that we loved God; rather, that **He loved us** and sent His Son *to be the* propitiation for our sins. Beloved, **if God so loved us, we also are duty-bound to love one another**" (I John 4:9-11).

The highest pinnacle of spiritual growth is to dwell in love and to have the love of God perfected in us. John shows that this spiritual perfection is accomplished through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit:

"No one has seen God at any time. **Yet if we love one another, God dwells in us, and His own love is perfected [made complete] in us.** By this *standard* we know that we are dwelling in Him, and He *is dwelling* in us: **because of His own Spirit which He has given to us.**

"And we have seen *for ourselves* and bear witness that the Father sent the Son *as the* Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him, and he in God. And **we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us. GOD IS LOVE, and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him.** By this *spiritual indwelling*, the love of God is perfected [made complete] within us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment because even as He is, so also are we in this world" (I John 4:12-17).

John's words encompass all three themes of the General Epistles by showing how faith and hope lead to true spiritual love. As John reveals, the process of being perfected

in the love of God brings each believer into a close personal relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ so that he or she can overcome fear and hatred and even human frailty. John writes, “There is no fear in the love *of God*; rather, perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment. And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love *of God*.”

“We love Him because He loved us first. If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar. For if he does not love his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love God, Whom he has not seen? And this *is* the commandment *that* we have from Him: that the one who loves God should also love his brother” (I John 4:18-21).

John brings the love of God into sharp focus when he writes that those who love God and have the love of God dwelling in them will be keeping His commandments. “By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when **we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments**; and His commandments are not burdensome” (I John 5:2-3).

The teachings of the apostle John and all the writers of the General Epistles are clearly based on the personal teachings of Jesus Christ concerning the love of God and the commandments of God, as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew: “And Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is *the* first [primary] and great commandment; and *the* second *one is* like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ **On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets**” (Mat. 22:37-40).

To help us fully understand the teachings of Jesus Christ, God inspired the General Epistles to be written and preserved for us in His Word. Even the sequence of their themes shows divine planning and confirms the inspired arrangement of these seven epistles.

Jude’s Warning

The Epistle of Jude is the seventh and last of the General Epistles. Jude’s epistle is a stern warning against false teachers and prophets who seek to destroy true faith, hope and love as taught by the apostles of Jesus Christ. Jude’s closing admonition includes an earnest appeal to true believers to remain in the faith and love of God while continuing in the hope of eternal life:

“But you, beloved, remember the words that were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; because they said to you that in *the* last time there would be mockers, who would be selfishly walking according to their own ungodly lusts ... But you, beloved, ***be building up yourselves on your most holy faith***, praying in *the* Holy Spirit, *so that* you **keep yourselves in *the* love of God while you are personally awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life**” (Jude 17-18, 20-21).

Jude’s warning to true Christians is a fitting conclusion to the General Epistles and further confirms the inspired arrangement of these epistles, which are so vital to our understanding of true faith, hope and love.

James

CHAPTER ONE

1. James, a servant of God and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes, which *are* in the dispersion: Greetings!
 2. Consider *it* all joy, my brethren, when you are beset by various trials,
 3. Knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.
 4. But let endurance have *its* perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete, not lacking in anything.
 5. However, if anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, Who gives to everyone freely and does not reproach *the one who asks*; and it shall be given to him.
 6. But let him ask in faith, not doubting at all because the one who doubts is like a wave of *the* sea that is driven by the wind and tossed *to and fro*.
 7. Do not let that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord.
 8. *He is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.
 9. But let the brother who is in humble circumstances rejoice in his elevation,
 10. And *let* the one who is rich *rejoice* in his humble condition because, as *the* flower of *the* field, he himself will pass away;
 11. For the sun rises with *its* burning heat and dries up the grass, and its flower falls off, and its beautiful appearance perishes. In the same way also shall the rich man wither in his pursuits.
 12. Blessed *is the* man who endures trials because, after he has been proved, he shall receive a crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.
 13. Do not let anyone who is tempted say, "I am being tempted by God" because God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself tempts no one *with evil*.
 14. But each one is tempted when he

Chap. 1

1 Deut. 32:26
 John 7:35
 Acts 2:5,
 12:17, 26:7
 1 Pet. 1:1
 Tit. 1:1
 2 Acts 5:41
 1 Pet. 1:6
 3 Rom. 5:3
 5 1 Ki. 3:9
 Prov. 2:3
 Jer. 29:12
 Mat. 7:7
 Luke 11:9
 John 14:13
 1 John 5:14
 6 Mark 11:24
 1 Tim. 2:8
 8 Jas. 4:8
 10 Job 14:2
 Psa. 37:2
 1 Cor. 7:31
 12 Job 5:17
 Prov. 3:11
 Mat. 10:22
 1 Cor. 9:25
 2 Tim. 4:8
 15 Job 15:35
 Psa. 7:14
 Rom. 6:21
 17 Num. 23:19
 John 3:27
 18 John 1:13
 1 Cor. 4:15
 Eph. 1:12
 Rev. 14:4
 19 Prov. 10:19,
 14:17
 Eccl. 5:1, 2
 21 Acts 13:26
 1 Pet. 2:1
 Rom. 1:16
 Eph. 1:13
 Col. 3:8
 Tit. 2:11
 22 Mat. 7:21
 1 John 3:7
 Rom. 2:13
 23 Luke 6:47
 25 John 13:17
 Jas. 2:12
 2 Cor. 3:18
 26 Psa. 34:13
 1 Pet. 3:10

is drawn away and is enticed by his own lust.
 15. And after lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is completely finished, brings forth death.
 16. Do not deceive yourselves, my beloved brethren.
 17. Every good act of giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with Whom there is no variation, nor shadow of turning.
 18. According to His own will, He begat us by *the* Word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all His created beings.
 19. For this reason, my beloved brethren, let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger
 20. Because man's wrath does not work out God's righteousness.
 21. Therefore, having rid yourselves of all filthiness and all *the* abounding of wickedness around you, then in meekness accept for yourselves the implanted Word, which *is* able to save your lives.
 22. Then be doers of *the* Word, and not only hearers, deceiving your own selves
 23. Because if anyone is a hearer of *the* Word and not a doer, this one is like a man considering his natural face in a mirror
 24. Who, after looking at himself, went away and immediately forgot what he was like.
 25. But the one who has looked into *the* perfect law of freedom, and has continued in *it*, this one himself has not become a forgetful hearer, but is a doer of *the* work. This one shall be blessed in his actions.
 26. If anyone among you considers

himself to be religious, and does not control his tongue, but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* vain.

27. Pure and undefiled religion before God and *the* Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their afflictions, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

CHAPTER TWO

1. My brethren, do not have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect of persons.

2. Now then, if a man comes into your synagogue wearing gold rings *and dressed* in splendid apparel, and *there* comes in also a poor man in lowly apparel,

3. And you give preference to the one who is wearing the splendid apparel, and say to him, "Seat yourself here in the best place"; and you say to the poor man, "Stand over there," or, "Sit here under my footstool";

4. Then have you not passed judgment among yourselves, and have made yourselves judges *with* evil opinions?

5. My beloved brethren, listen. Did not God Himself choose the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which He has promised to those who love Him?

6. But you have dishonored the poor *man*. Do not the rich oppress you, and do they *not* drag you into *the* courts?

7. Do they not blaspheme the worthy name by which you are called?

8. If you are truly keeping *the* Royal Law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well.

9. But if you have respect of persons, you are practicing sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors;

10. For *if* anyone keeps the whole law, but sins in one *aspect*, he becomes guilty of all.

11. For He Who said, "You shall not

27 Is. 1:16
Mat. 25:36
1 John 5:18
Rom. 12:2

Chap. 2

1 Lev. 19:15
Deut. 1:17
Mat. 22:16
Jude 16
1 Cor. 2:8
5 Ex. 20:6
Prov. 8:17
Luke 12:21
John 7:48
6 Acts 13:50
1 Cor. 11:22
8 Lev. 19:18
Mat. 22:39
9 Jas. 2:1
10 Deut. 27:26
Mat. 5:19
Gal. 3:10
11 Ex. 20:13

12 Jas. 1:25
13 Job 22:6
1 John 4:17
14 Mat. 7:26,
15:11
15 Luke 3:11
16 1 John 3:18
18 Jas. 3:13
21 Gen. 22:9
22 Heb. 11:17
23 Gen. 15:6
2 Chr. 20:7
Is. 41:8
Rom. 4:3
Gal. 3:6

commit adultery," also said, "You shall not commit murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you commit murder, you have become a transgressor of *the* law.

12. In this manner speak and in this manner behave: as those who are about to be judged by *the* law of freedom.

13. For the one who has dealt without mercy *will be* judged without mercy. But mercy triumphs over judgment.

14. My brethren, what good *does* it do, if anyone says *that he* has faith, and does not have works? Is faith able to save him?

15. Now then, if there be a brother or sister who is naked and destitute of daily food,

16. And one of you says to them, "Go in peace; be warmed and be filled," and does not give to them the things necessary for the body, what good is it?

17. In the same way also, faith, if it does not have works, is dead, by itself.

18. But someone is going to say, "You have faith, and I have works." *My answer is:* You prove your faith to me through your works, and I will prove my faith to you through my works.

19. Do you believe that God is one? You do well *to believe this*. Even the demons believe—and tremble *in fear*.

20. But are you willing to understand, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?

21. Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac, his own son, upon the altar?

22. Do you not see that faith was working together with his works, and by works *his* faith was perfected?

23. And the scripture was fulfilled which says, "Now Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness"; and he was called a friend of God.

24. You see, then, that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

25. Now, in the same manner also, was not Rahab the harlot justified by works when, after receiving the messengers, she sent *them* out a different way?

26. For as the body without *the* spirit is dead, in the same way also, faith without works is dead.

CHAPTER THREE

1. My brethren, do not many of you become teachers, knowing that we will receive more severe judgment;

2. Because we frequently offend, every one of us. If anyone does not offend in what he says, this one *is* a perfect man *and is* able also to hold in check the whole body.

3. Remember, we put bits into horses' mouths in order that they may obey us, and we direct their entire bodies.

4. Consider also *that* ships, being so large, and being driven by strong winds, are turned about by a very small rudder, wherever the will of the one who is steering may decide.

5. In the same way also, the tongue is a little member, but it boasts great things. See how large a forest is set ablaze by a little fire;

6. And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of unrighteousness. So has the tongue been set among our members—*the one member that* defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of life, and is set on fire by Gehenna.

7. Now then, every species of animals and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind.

8. But the tongue no human being is able to tame; *it is* an unrestrainable evil, full of death-dealing poison.

9. With it we bless God *the* Father, and with it we ourselves curse people who are made in *the* likeness of God.

25 Heb. 11:31

Chap. 3

- 1 Mat. 23:8
- Luke 6:37
- 2 1 Ki. 8:46
- 2 Chr. 6:36
- Psa. 34:13
- Prov. 20:9
- Mat. 12:37
- 1 Pet. 3:10
- 3 Psa. 32:9
- 5 Psa. 12:3
- Prov. 12:18
- 6 Mat. 15:11
- 8 Psa. 140:3
- 9 Gen. 1:26

10. From the same mouth comes out blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so!

11. Does a fountain pour out of the same opening sweet *water* and bitter *water*?

12. My brethren, can a fig tree produce olives, or a vine *produce* figs? In the same way, no fountain *can* produce salt water and fresh *water*.

13. Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him demonstrate his works through good conduct in *the* meekness of wisdom.

14. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not boast and lie against the Truth.

15. This wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, sensual *and* demonic;

16. Because where bitter envying and selfish ambition *are*, there *is* dissension and every evil thing.

17. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceful, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and without hypocrisy.

18. Now *the* fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. *What is* the cause of quarrels and fightings among you? *Is it* not mainly from your own lusts *that are* warring within your members?

2. You lust, and have not; you kill, and are jealous, and are not able to obtain; you fight and quarrel, but still you do not have, because you do not ask.

3. *Then* you ask, and you do not receive, because you ask with evil motives, that you may consume *it* on your own lusts.

4. *You* adulterers and adulteresses, don't you know that the friendship of the world is enmity *with* God? There-

13 Jas. 1:21,
2:18

Gal. 6:4

14 Rom. 2:17,
13:13

15 Phil. 3:19

16 1 Cor. 3:3
Gal. 5:20

17 1 Pet. 1:22
Rom. 12:9

1 Cor. 2:6
18 Prov. 11:18

Chap. 4

1 Rom. 7:23

Gal. 5:17

3 Job 27:9

Psa. 18:41,

66:18

4 Psa. 73:27

John 15:19

1 John 2:15

Gal. 1:10

fore, whoever desires to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

5. Or do you think that the scripture says in vain, "The spirit that dwells in us lusts with envy"?

6. But He gives greater grace. This is the reason it says, "God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble."

7. Therefore, submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, you sinners, and purify *your* hearts, you double-minded!

9. Be grieved and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into grieving, and *your* joy into mourning.

10. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you.

11. Brethren, do not talk against one another. The one who talks against a brother, and judges his brother, is speaking against *the* law, and is judging the law. But if you judge *the* law, you are not a doer of *the* law; rather, *you are* a judge.

12. *But* there is *only* one Lawgiver, Who has power to save and to destroy. Who are you that you presume to judge another?

13. Now listen, those of you who say, "Today and tomorrow we will go into such a city, and we will spend a year, and we will conduct business and make a profit."

14. You do not even know what *will* happen tomorrow! For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little while, and then disappears.

15. Instead, you *ought* to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live, and we will do this or that."

16. But now you boast in your own arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

17. Therefore, *if* anyone knows to do good and does not do *it*, to him it is sin.

5 Gen. 6:5
Num. 11:29
6 Job 22:29
Psa. 138:6
Prov. 3:34
Mat. 22:12
7 1 Pet. 5:9
Eph. 4:27
8 2 Chr. 15:2
Is. 1:16
Jas. 1:8
1 Pet. 1:22
1 John 3:3
9 Mat. 5:4
10 Job 22:29
11 Mat. 7:1
1 Pet. 2:1
12 Mat. 10:28
Rom. 14:4
13 Prov. 27:1
14 Job 7:7
15 Acts 18:21
16 1 Cor. 5:6
17 Luke 12:47
John 9:41

Chap. 5

1 Prov. 11:28
Luke 6:24
2 Job 13:28
Mat. 6:20
3 Rom. 2:5
4 Lev. 19:13
Deut. 24:15
5 Job 21:13
Amos 6:1
6 Jas. 2:6
7 Deut. 11:14
Hos. 6:3
8 1 Pet. 4:7
Phil. 4:5
9 Mat. 24:33
Jas. 4:11
10 Mat. 5:12
11 Num. 14:18
Job 2:10,
42:10
Psa. 94:12
12 Mat. 5:34

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Come now, *you* rich men, weep! Howl over the miseries that *are* coming upon *you*!

2. Your riches have rotted, and your garments have become moth-eaten.

3. Your gold and *your* silver have been eaten away, and their corrosion will be a testimony against you, and will consume your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth for *the* last days.

4. Listen! The wages of the workmen who harvested your fields, which have been withheld by you, are crying out; and the cries of those who reaped have entered into the ears of *the* Lord of hosts.

5. You have lived in luxury upon the earth, and *you* have lived in self-gratification; you have nourished your hearts as in *the* day of slaughter.

6. You have condemned *and* you have killed the righteous, *and* he does not resist you.

7. Therefore, brethren, be patient until the coming of the Lord. Consider the husbandman *who* waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient for it, until it has received *the* former and latter rains.

8. You also be patient. Strengthen your hearts because the coming of the Lord has drawn near.

9. Do not complain against one another, brethren, so that you may not be condemned. Behold, *the* Judge stands at the door.

10. My brethren, take the prophets who spoke in the name of *the* Lord as an example of endurance *in* afflictions and of steadfastness.

11. Remember, we call those blessed who endure. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the end result of *serving the* Lord: that the Lord is very compassionate and full of tender mercies.

12. But above all things, my brethren,

do not swear, neither *by* heaven, nor *by* the earth, nor *by* any other oath; but let your yes be yes, and *let* your no be no, so that you do not fall into hypocrisy.

13. Is anyone suffering hardship among you? Let him pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing praise.

14. Is anyone sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him after anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

15. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick one, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

16. Confess *your* faults to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. *The* supplication of a

13 Eph. 5:19
14 Mark 6:13
15 Is. 33:24
16 Num. 11:2
John 9:31

17 1 Ki. 17:1
Luke 4:25
Acts 14:15
18 1 Ki. 18:42,
45
19 Mat. 18:15
20 1 Pet. 4:8
Rom. 11:14

righteous man prevails much, being effective.

17. Elijah was a man of emotions like ours, and he prayed earnestly *that* it would not rain, and it did not rain upon the earth *for* three years and six months.

18. And again he prayed, and the heaven gave rain, and caused the earth to sprout its fruit.

19. Brethren, if anyone among you strays from the Truth, and someone brings him back,

20. Let him know that he who brings back a sinner from *the* error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins.

Epistle of James

The First General Epistle of Peter

CHAPTER ONE

1. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to *the* elect strangers scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia;

2. *Who have been chosen* according to *the* predetermined knowledge of God *the* Father, by sanctification through *the* Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of *the* blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you.

3. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us again unto a living hope through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ from *the* dead;

4. Unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us,

5. *Who are* being safeguarded by *the* power of God through faith, for salva-

Chap. 1

1 John 7:35
Acts 2:5, 9
Jas. 1:1
2 Rom. 1:7,
8:29
Eph. 1:4
2 Thes. 2:13
Heb. 12:24
3 John 3:3, 5
Jas. 1:18
1 Cor. 15:20
Eph. 1:3
Tit. 3:5
4 Col. 1:5
5 John 10:28

6 Mat. 5:12
Jas. 1:2
2 Cor. 4:17
7 Job 23:10
Prov. 17:3
Jas. 1:3
Rom. 2:7
8 John 20:29
1 John 4:20
9 Rom. 6:22
10 Gen. 49:10

tion *that is* ready to be revealed in *the* last time.

6. In this you yourselves greatly rejoice; though for the present, if it is necessary, you are in distress for a little while by various trials;

7. In order that the proving of your faith, which is much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is being tested by fire, may be found unto praise and honor and glory at *the* revelation of Jesus Christ;

8. Whom, not having seen, you love; in Whom, *though* at the present time you do not see Him, you believe, *and* rejoice with unspeakable joy, and filled with glory;

9. *And are* receiving the end of your faith—even *the* salvation of *your* souls;

10. Concerning which salvation the

prophets who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you have diligently searched out and intently inquired,

11. Searching into what *way* and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ *which was* in them was indicating, testifying beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and these glories that would follow;

12. To whom it was revealed that, not for themselves, but to us they were ministering these things, which now have been announced to you by those who have preached the gospel to you by *the* Holy Spirit, sent from heaven—into which things the angels desire to look.

13. For this reason, be prepared in your minds, be self-controlled, *and* be fully hoping in the grace that will be brought to you at *the* revelation of Jesus Christ.

14. As obedient children, do not conform yourselves to the former lusts, *as you did* in your ignorance.

15. But according as He Who has called you *is* holy, you yourselves also be holy in all *your* conduct;

16. For it is written, "You be holy because I am holy."

17. And if you call upon the Father, Who judges according to each man's work without respect of persons, pass the time of your *life's* journey in *the* fear of God;

18. Knowing that you were not redeemed by corruptible things, by silver or gold, from your futile way of living, inherited *by* tradition from *your* forefathers;

19. But by *the* precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot;

20. Who truly was foreknown before *the* foundation of *the* world, but was manifested in *these* last times for your sakes;

21. *Even for you* who through Him do

11 2 Pet. 1:21
12 Dan. 8:13, 9:24
Acts 2:4
Heb. 11:13
13 Luke 21:34
Rom. 13:13
1 Cor. 1:7
Eph. 6:14
14 Acts 17:30
Rom. 12:2
15 2 Cor. 7:1
16 Lev. 11:44
17 Deut. 10:17
Heb. 11:13, 12:28
18 Ezek. 20:18
1 Cor. 6:20
19 Ex. 12:5
Acts 20:28
20 Rom. 3:25
Gal. 4:4
21 Acts 2:24, 33

22 Acts 15:9
Heb. 13:1
23 John 1:13
Jas. 1:18
24 Is. 40:6
25 Is. 40:8
John 1:1

Chap. 2

1 Heb. 12:1
2 Mat. 18:3
1 Cor. 3:2
3 Heb. 6:5
4 Psa. 118:22
Acts 4:11
5 Is. 61:6
Hos. 14:2
Mal. 1:11
Eph. 2:21
Phil. 4:18
Heb. 3:6
6 Is. 28:16
7 Psa. 118:22

believe in God, Who raised Him from *the* dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope might be in God.

22. Having purified your lives by obedience to the Truth unto unfeigned brotherly love through *the* Spirit, love one another fervently with a pure heart.

23. *For* you have been begotten again, not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible *seed*, by *the* living Word of God, *which* remains forever.

24. For all flesh *is* like grass, and all *the* glory of man *is* like *the* flower of *the* field; the grass has withered, and its flower has fallen away.

25. But the Word of *the* Lord remains forever; and this is the message that was preached to you through the gospel.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Therefore, having put away all wickedness, and all deceit, and hypocrisies and jealousies, and all slanders,
2. As newborn babes, yearn after the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow,

3. If you yourselves have indeed tasted that the Lord *is* gracious.

4. To Whom coming, *as to* a living Stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God, *and* precious,

5. You also, as living stones, are being built up *as* a spiritual house—a holy priesthood—to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

6. For this reason it says in the scripture, "Behold, I place in Zion *the* Cornerstone, chosen *and* precious; and the one who believes in Him shall never be put to shame."

7. The preciousness *is* to you, therefore, who believe; but to those who disobey, *the* Stone that the builders rejected has become *the* Head of *the* corner,

8. And a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense; *especially* to those who stumble at the Word, being disobedient, unto which *unbelief* they also were appointed.

9. But you *are* a chosen stock, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for a possession *of God*, that you might proclaim His *excellent* virtues, Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

10. Who once *were* not a people, but now *are the* people of God; who had not received mercy, but now have received mercy.

11. Beloved, I exhort *you*, as strangers and sojourners, to restrain yourselves from fleshly lusts which war against the soul;

12. Having your way of life honest among the Gentiles so that although they speak against you as evil doers, through having witnessed *your* good works, they may glorify God in *the* day of visitation.

13. Therefore, submit yourselves to every human institution for the Lord's sake; whether to *the* king, as supreme,

14. Or to governors, as sent by him to execute vengeance *against* evil doers, and to praise those who do well.

15. For so is the will of God, that *by* doing well yourselves, you may put to silence the ignorance of senseless men;

16. As free, and not using *your* freedom as a cover for evil, but as bond-slaves of God.

17. Show honor to everyone. Love the brotherhood, revere God *and* honor the king.

18. Servants, submit yourselves to *your* masters with all fear—not only to the good and gentle ones, but also to the harsh *and unjust* ones;

19. Because this *is* acceptable: if, for *the* sake of conscience toward God, anyone endures sorrows, suffering unjustly.

8 Is. 8:14
Rom. 9:22
1 Cor. 1:23
9 Deut. 4:20,
10:15
Is. 62:12
Acts 26:18
Rev. 5:10
10 Hos. 1:9
11 Psa. 39:12
Jas. 4:1
Gal. 5:16
12 Mat. 5:16
Phil. 2:15
13 Rom. 13:1
14 Rom. 13:3-4
15 Tit. 2:8
16 1 Cor. 7:22
Gal. 5:1
17 Rom. 12:10,
13:7
Heb. 13:1
18 Eph. 6:5
19 Mat. 5:10

20. For what commendation *is there* if, disobeying and being beaten, you endure it? But if *while* doing good you endure suffering, this *is* acceptable with God;

21. For to this you were called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow in His footsteps

22. Who committed no sin; neither was guile found in His mouth;

23. Who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; *when* suffering, He threatened not, but committed *Himself* to Him Who judges righteously;

24. Who Himself bore our sins within His own body on the tree, so that we, being dead to sins, may live unto righteousness; by Whose stripes you were healed.

25. For you were as sheep going astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Likewise, *you* wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, even if any are not obedient to the Word, through *the* behavior of the wives they may be gained without a word,

2. Having witnessed your chaste behavior *carried out* with reverence;

3. Whose adorning, let it not be the external *adornment* of braiding *the* hair, or wearing gold *jewelry*, or dressing in *costly* clothing;

4. But *let your adornment be* the inward person of the heart, *manifested* in the incorruptible *jewel* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is of great value in God's sight.

5. For in this way also the holy women of the past who hoped in God adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands;

21 Mat. 16:24
1 John 2:6
22 Is. 53:9
23 Is. 53:7
Luke 23:46
24 Is. 53:5
Rom. 7:6
Heb. 9:28
25 Is. 53:6
Ezek. 34:23
Heb. 13:20

Chap. 3
1 Mat. 18:15
1 Cor. 7:16,
14:34
2 1 Pet. 2:12
3 1 Tim. 2:9
4 Rom. 2:29

6. Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord; *and* you are her children, *if* you are doing what is right, and are not frightened *by* any intimidation.

7. Likewise, *you* husbands, dwell with *your wives* according to knowledge, as with a weaker vessel, giving them honor *as* women, and as joint heirs of *the* grace of life so that your prayers may not be cut off.

8. Now the goal *is* that all of you *be* of one mind, sympathizing, loving the brethren, compassionate *and* friendly;

9. Not rendering evil for evil, or abuse for abuse, but instead a blessing, knowing that you were called to this: that you should inherit a blessing.

10. For the one who desires to love life, and to see good days, let him restrain his own tongue from evil, and not allow his lips to speak deceit.

11. Let him avoid evil, and let him *continually* practice good. Let him seek peace, and let him *earnestly* pursue it

12. Because the eyes of *the* Lord *are* on *the* righteous, and His ears *are* open to their supplications. But *the* face of *the* Lord *is* against those who practice evil.

13. And *is* *there* anyone who will harm you if you be followers of that which *is* good?

14. Now on the other hand, if you do undergo suffering for the sake of righteousness, *you are* blessed. But you should not be afraid of their terror, *and* you should not let yourselves be intimidated;

15. But sanctify the Lord God in your own hearts, and always *be* prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks you the reason for the hope *that is* in you, with meekness and reverence;

16. Having a good conscience, that, whereas they may speak against you as evil doers, those who are reviling your good way of life in Christ may be ashamed.

6 Gen. 18:12

7 Job 42:8

Mat. 18:19

1 Cor. 7:3,

12:23

8 Rom. 12:10,

16

Eph. 4:32

Heb. 13:1

9 Prov. 17:13

Mat. 25:34

10 Psa. 34:12

Jas. 1:26

Rev. 14:5

11 Psa. 37:27

3 John 11

Rom. 12:18

Heb. 12:14

12 John 9:31

Jas. 5:16

13 Prov. 16:7

14 Is. 8:12, 13

Jas. 1:12

1 Pet. 2:19

15 Psa. 119:46

Col. 4:6

2 Tim. 2:25

16 Tit. 2:8

Heb. 13:18

18 Rom. 1:4,

5:6

2 Cor. 13:4

Col. 1:21

19 Is. 42:7

1 Pet. 1:12

II Pet. 2:4

20 Gen. 6:3, 5,

7:7

Heb. 11:7

21 I Pet. 1:3

Rom. 10:10

Eph. 5:26

Tit. 3:5

22 Psa. 110:1

Rom. 8:34,

38

1 Cor. 3:13

Chap. 4

1 I Pet. 3:18

Gal. 5:24

2 John 1:13

Rom. 14:7

Gal. 2:20

3 Ezek. 44:6

Eph. 2:2

1 Thes. 4:5

Tit. 3:3

4 Acts 13:45

17. For *it is* better, if *it is* the will of God, *for* you to suffer while doing good than *to suffer for* doing evil

18. Because Christ indeed once suffered for sins, *the* Just for *the* unjust, so that He might bring us to God; on the one hand, He was put to death in *the* flesh; but on the other hand, He was made alive by the Spirit

19. By which He also went and preached to the spirits in prison,

20. *Which* disobeyed in a past time, when once the long-suffering of God was waiting in *the* days of Noah, *while* *the* ark was being prepared, in which a few—that is, eight souls—were saved through water;

21. *Of* which *a* like fulfillment *is* baptism, and is now saving us—not *the* removal of *the* filth of the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ,

22. Who has gone into heaven *and* is at *the* right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been put in subjection to Him.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Consequently, since Christ has suffered for us in *the* flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind because the one who has suffered in *the* flesh has finished *living* in sin

2. *To this end: that* he no longer live *his* remaining time in *the* flesh to *the* lusts of men, but to the will of God.

3. For the past time of our lives *is* sufficient to have worked out the will of the Gentiles, when we ourselves walked in licentiousness *and* lusts, *and* were debauched with wine, carousing, drinking and wanton idolatries.

4. In *seeing* this *difference* in *your behavior*, they are astonished *that* you do not rush with *them* into the same overflowing debauchery, *and* they revile *you*.

5. *But* they shall render an account to Him Who is ready to judge *the* living and *the* dead.

6. And for this purpose the gospel was preached to those who have died so that, *although in the* flesh they may in fact have been judged according to men's *standards*, on the other hand, they might live according to God's *will in the* Spirit.

7. Now the end of all things has drawn near. Therefore, be serious-minded and be watchful in prayers;

8. But above all, have fervent love among yourselves because love will cover a multitude of sins.

9. *Be* hospitable to one another without complaining.

10. *Let* each one, according as he has received a gift *from God*, *be using* it to serve the others as good stewards of *the* grace of God *which* manifests *itself* in various ways.

11. If anyone speaks, *let it be* as the words of God; if anyone serves, *let it be* as from *the* strength which God supplies; so that in everything, God may be glorified through Jesus Christ to Whom is the glory and the power into the ages of eternity. Amen.

12. Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial among you *which is* taking place to test you, as if some strange thing *were* happening to you.

13. But to the degree that you have a share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice; so that, at the revelation of His glory, you also may rejoice exceedingly.

14. If you are reviled for *the* name of Christ, *you are* blessed because the *Spirit* of glory and the Spirit of God is resting upon you; on their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.

15. Assuredly, let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil doer, or as an overlording busybody in other people's lives.

16. Yet if anyone *is suffering* as a

5 Acts. 10:42
Rom. 14:10
2 Tim. 4:1
6 1 Pet. 3:19
7 Mat. 26:41
Luke 21:34
Rom. 13:12
8 Prov. 10:12
1 Cor. 13:7
Col. 3:14
Heb. 13:1
9 2 Cor. 9:7
Heb. 13:2
10 Mat. 24:45
Rom. 12:6
1 Cor. 12:4
Eph. 4:11
Tit. 1:7
11 Jer. 23:22
1 Cor. 3:10
Eph. 5:20
1 Tim. 6:16
12 1 Cor. 3:13
13 Rom. 8:17
Acts 5:41
14 Jas. 1:12
2 Cor. 12:10
15 1 Pet. 2:20
1 Thes. 4:11
16 Acts 5:41

17 Is. 10:12
Luke 10:12,
23:31
18 Luke 23:31
19 2 Tim. 1:12

Chap. 5

1 Luke 24:48
Acts 1:8
Philem. 9
Rev. 1:9
2 Acts 20:28
1 Cor. 9:17
1 Tim. 3:3
3 Psa. 33:12
Ezek. 34:4
Phil. 3:17
4 2 Tim. 4:8
Heb. 13:20
5 Is. 57:15
Jas. 4:6
Rom. 12:10
6 Jas. 4:10
7 Psa. 37:5
Heb. 13:5
8 Job 1:7
Luke 21:34

Christian, he should not be ashamed; but let him glorify God because of this,

17. For the time *has come* for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it first *begins* with us, what *will be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

18. And if the righteous are saved with much difficulty, what will become of the ungodly and *the* sinner?

19. For this reason also, let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls *to Him* in well doing, as to a faithful Creator.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. *The* elders who *are* among you I exhort, even as a fellow elder, and an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory that is about to be revealed:

2. Feed the flock of God *that is* among you, exercising oversight not by compulsion, but willingly; not in fondness of dishonest gain, but *with an* eager *attitude*;

3. Not as exercising lordship over *your* possessions; but *by* being examples to the flock *of God*.

4. And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you shall receive an unfading, *eternal* crown of glory.

5. In the same manner, *you* younger men be subject to *the* older men; and all *of you* be subject to one another, being clothed with humility because God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble.

6. Be humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you in *due* time;

7. Casting all your cares upon Him, because He cares for you.

8. Be sober! Be vigilant! For your adversary *the* devil is prowling about as a roaring lion, seeking anyone he may devour.

9. Whom resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing *that* the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are* in the world.

10. Now may the God of all grace, Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after *you* have suffered a little while, Himself perfect you, establish, strengthen, *and* settle *you*.

11. To Him *be* the glory and the power into the ages of eternity. Amen.

9 Acts 14:22
Eph. 6:11
10 1 Cor. 1:9
2 Cor. 4:17
2 Thes. 2:17
Heb. 13:21
11 Rev. 1:6

12 Acts 20:24
2 Cor. 1:19
Heb. 13:22
13 Acts 12:12
14 Rom. 16:16
Eph. 6:23

12. By Silvanus, a faithful brother to you, as I reckon, I have written *to you* briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is *the* true grace of God in which you stand.

13. The *church* in Babylon, chosen together with *you*, greets you, *as does* Mark, my son.

14. Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace *be* with all of you who *are* in Christ Jesus. Amen.

First General Epistle of Peter

The Second General Epistle of Peter

CHAPTER ONE

1. Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained *the* same precious faith as ours by *the* righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:

2. Grace and peace be multiplied to you in *the* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,

3. According as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue;

4. Through which He has given to us the greatest and *most* precious promises, that through these you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust.

5. And for this very reason also, having applied all diligence besides, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge;

6. And to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, godliness;

Chap. 1

1 Acts 15:14
Eph. 4:5
2 Dan. 4:1
3 1 Thes. 2:12
4 2 Cor. 3:18,
7:1
Heb. 12:10
5 1 Pet. 3:7
2 Pet. 3:18

7 Gal. 6:10
1 Thes. 3:12
8 John 15:2
Tit. 3:14
9 1 John 2:9
Eph. 5:26
Heb. 9:14
10 1 John 3:19
12 1 Pet. 5:12
1 John 2:21
Phil. 3:1
13 2 Cor. 5:1

7. And to godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, the love *of God*.

8. For *if* these things exist and abound in you, they *will* cause *you to be* neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9. But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind—so short-sighted *that* he has forgotten that he was purified from his old sins.

10. For this reason, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure; because *if* you are doing these things, you will never fall at any time.

11. For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

12. Therefore, I will not neglect to make you always mindful of these things, although you *already* know them and have been established in the present truth.

13. For I consider it my duty, as long

as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by causing *you* to remember *these things*;

14. Knowing that shortly the putting off of my tabernacle *will come*, even as our Lord Jesus Christ has signified to me.

15. But I will make every effort *that*, after my departure, you may always have a *written* remembrance of these things *in order* to practice *them* for yourselves,

16. For we did not follow cleverly concocted myths *as our authority*, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His magnificent glory;

17. Because He received glory and honor from God *the Father* when *the* voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory, "This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I am well pleased."

18. And this *is the* voice from heaven that we heard when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

19. We also possess the confirmed prophetic Word to which you do well to pay attention, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and *the* morning star arises in your hearts;

20. Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture originated as anyone's own *private* interpretation;

21. Because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the holy men of God spoke as they were moved by *the* Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER TWO

1. But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies, personally denying *the* Lord who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

14 John 21:18, 19
2 Tim. 4:6
16 Mark 9:2
1 John 1:1
1 Cor. 1:17
17 Mat. 3:17
Luke 9:35
18 Mat. 17:6
19 Psa. 119:105
John 5:35
Rev. 22:16
20 Rom. 12:6
21 2 Sam. 23:2
Acts 1:16
1 Pet. 1:11
2 Tim. 3:16

Chap. 2

1 Deut. 13:1
Mat. 24:11
1 John 4:1
Jude 4
1 Cor. 6:20
Phil. 3:19
Heb. 10:29
Rev. 5:9

3 Deut. 32:35
Jude 4, 15
Rom. 16:18
2 Cor. 2:17
Tit. 1:11
4 ★ a place of restraint or imprisonment
1 Pet. 3:19
Job 4:18
Luke 8:31
John 8:44
Jude 6
Rev. 20:2
Gen. 7:1
1 Pet. 3:19-20
2 Pet. 3:6
Heb. 11:7
6 Gen. 19:24
Num. 26:10
Deut. 29:23
7 Gen. 19:16
8 Psa. 119:139
Ezek. 9:4
9 Psa. 34:17
1 Cor. 10:13
10 Jude 4, 7, 8
11 Jude 9
12 Jude 10
13 Jude 12

2. And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of them, the way of the truth will be blasphemed.

3. Also, through insatiable greed they will with enticing messages exploit you for gain; for whom the judgment of old is in *full* force, and their destruction is *ever* watching.

4. For if God did not spare *the* angels who sinned, but, having cast *them* into Tartarus, ★ delivered *them* into chains of darkness to be kept for *the* judgment;

5. And *if* God did not spare *the* ancient world, but saved Noah, *the* eighth, a preacher of righteousness, when He brought *the* Flood upon the world of *the* ungodly;

6. And having reduced *the* cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes, condemned *them* with a catastrophic *destruction*, making *them* an example for *those* who would be ungodly in the future;

7. And *if* He personally rescued righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the lawless ones *living* in licentious conduct;

8. (For that righteous man, dwelling among them, through seeing and hearing *their* lawless activities, *was* tormented day by day *in his* righteous soul;)

9. *The* Lord knows *how* to rescue *the* godly out of temptation, and to reserve *the* unrighteous to *the* day of judgment to be punished;

10. But particularly those who walk after *the* flesh in corrupting lust, and hold in utter contempt *the* lordship of *God*. *They* are audacious and self-willed. They are not afraid to blaspheme *the* divine powers

11. Whereas angels, who are greater in strength and power, do not bring a railing condemnation against them before *the* Lord.

12. But these—as irrational brute

beasts, born to be caught and destroyed—blaspheme those things of which they are ignorant, *and* shall be utterly destroyed in their own corruption.

13. They are bringing upon themselves *the* reward of unrighteousness, while finding pleasure in satisfying *their lustful* desires day by day. *They are* stains and blemishes, reveling in their own deceptions, while feasting together with you.

14. Having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, *they are engaged in* seducing unstable souls, having a heart trained in *lustful* cravings—cursed children

15. Who have abandoned the straight way. They have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, *the son of Beor*, who loved *the* reward of wickedness.

16. But he received a rebuke for his own transgression; *the* dumb ass, speaking in a man's voice, restrained the madness of the prophet.

17. These *false prophets* are fountains without water, clouds driven by a storm, for whom is reserved the blackest of darkness forever.

18. For they speak bombastic *words* of vanity, enticing *others* through *the* lusts of *the* flesh by granting indulgences to sin, *and ensnaring* those who had indeed escaped from those who live in deception.

19. While promising them freedom, they themselves are actually slaves of corruption because by whatever anyone is overcome, he is also held in bondage.

20. For if, after escaping the moral defilements of the world through *the* knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again become entangled in them, and are overcome, the final end is worse than the beginning.

21. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of

Rom. 13:13
1 Cor. 11:20
Phil. 3:19
14 Jude 11
15 Num. 22:5
Jude 11
17 Jude 12, 13
18 Acts 2:40
Jude 16
19 John 8:34
Rom. 6:16
Gal. 5:13
20 Mat. 12:45
Luke 11:26
2 Pet. 1:2,
2:18
Heb. 6:4
21 Luke 12:47

22 Prov. 26:11

Chap. 3

1 2 Pet. 1:13
2 Jude 17
3 2 Pet. 2:10
4 Is. 5:19
Jer. 17:15
Ezek. 12:22
Mat. 24:48
Luke 12:45
5 Gen. 1:6, 9
Psa. 24:2,
33:6
Col. 1:17
Heb. 11:3
6 Gen. 7:11
7 Mat. 25:41
2 Pet. 3:10
2 Thes. 1:8
8 Psa. 90:4
9 Is. 30:18
Ezek. 33:11
Hab. 2:3
1 Pet. 3:20
Rom. 2:4
1 Tim. 2:4
Heb. 10:37
10 Psa. 102:26

righteousness than, after knowing *it*, to turn back from the holy commandment *that was* delivered to them.

22. But the *pronouncement found* in the true proverb has happened to them: *The* dog has returned to *eat* his own vomit; and *the* sow *that was* washed *has returned* to *her* wallowing place in *the filthy* mire.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Now, beloved, I am writing this second epistle to you; in *both*, I am stirring up your pure minds by causing *you* to remember

2. *In order* for you to be mindful of the words that were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of the Lord and Savior, *spoken* by us, the apostles;

3. Knowing this first, that in the last days *there* will come mockers, walking according to their own personal lusts,

4. And asking, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the forefathers died, everything has remained the same as from *the* beginning of creation."

5. But this *fact* is hidden from them—they themselves choosing *to ignore it*—that by the Word of God *the* heavens existed of old, and *the* earth came forth out of water and amid water,

6. By which the world at that time, having been deluged with water, had itself been destroyed.

7. But the present heavens and earth are being held in store by His Word, *and* are being reserved for fire in *the* day of judgment and destruction of *the* ungodly.

8. Now, beloved, do not let this one fact be hidden from you: that with *the* Lord, one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9. The Lord is not delaying the promise *of His coming*, as some in their

own minds reckon delay; rather, He is long-suffering toward us, not desiring that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

10. However, the day of *the* Lord shall come as a thief in *the* night in which the heaven itself shall disappear with a mighty roar, and *the* elements shall pass away, burning with intense heat, and *the* earth and the works in it shall be burned up.

11. Since all these things are going to be destroyed, what kind of *persons* ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

12. Looking forward to and striving for the coming of the day of God, during which *the* heavens, being on fire, shall be destroyed, and *the* elements, burning with intense heat, shall melt?

13. But according to His promise, we look forward to a new heaven and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

14. For this reason, beloved, since you are anticipating these things, be dili-

Is. 51:6
Mat. 24:35,
43
Luke 12:39
Rom. 8:12
1 Thes. 5:2
11 1 Pet. 1:15
12 Psa. 50:3
Is. 34:4
Mic. 1:4
1 Cor. 1:7
Tit. 2:13
13 Is. 65:17,
66:22
Rev. 21:1
14 1 Cor. 1:8,
15:58
Phil. 1:10
1 Thes. 3:13

15 1 Pet. 3:20
Rom. 2:4
16 Rom. 8:19
1 Cor. 15:24
1 Thes. 4:15
17 Mark 13:23
Eph. 4:14
18 1 Pet. 2:2
Eph. 4:15
2 Tim. 4:18
Rev. 1:6

gent, so that you may be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless.

15. And bear in mind that the long-suffering of our Lord *is* salvation, exactly as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has also written to you;

16. As *he* has also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are some things *that* are difficult to understand, which the ignorant and unstable are twisting *and* *distorting*, as *they* also *twist and distort* the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

17. Therefore, beloved, since you know this in advance, be on guard against *such practices*, lest you be led astray with the error of the lawless ones, *and* you fall from your own steadfastness;

18. Rather, be growing in *the* grace and *the* knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* glory both now and into *the* day of eternity. Amen.

The First General Epistle of John

CHAPTER ONE

1. That which was from *the* beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves and our own hands handled, concerning the Word of life;

2. (And the life was manifested, and we have seen, and are bearing witness, and are reporting to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us;)

3. That which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship

Chap. 1
1 Luke 24:39
John 1:1,
14, 20:27
2 Pet. 1:16
2 John 1:1, 4,
14:16, 21:24
Rom. 16:26
1 Tim. 3:16
1 John 5:20
3 John 17:21
1 Cor. 1:9

4 John 16:24
5 John 1:9
1 John 3:11
6 2 Cor. 6:14

with us; for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—*is* with the Father and with His own Son, Jesus Christ.

4. These things we are also writing to you, so that your joy may be completely full.

5. And this is the message that we have heard from Him and are declaring to you: that God is light, and there is no darkness at all in Him.

6. If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth.

7. However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin.

8. If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9. If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us.

CHAPTER TWO

1. My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And *yet*, if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous;

2. And He is *the* propitiation* for our sins; and not for our sins only, but also for *the* sins of the whole world.

3. And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments.

4. The one who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5. On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected. By this *means* we know that we are in Him.

6. Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked.

7. Brethren, I am not writing a new commandment to you but an old commandment, which you had from *the* beginning; the old commandment is the message that you have heard from *the* beginning.

8. Again, I am writing a new com-

7 1 Pet. 1:19
1 Cor. 6:11
Eph. 1:7
Heb. 9:14
Rev. 1:5
8 Job 9:2
Eccl. 7:20
Jas. 3:2
1 John 2:4
9 Psa. 32:5,
51:2

Chap. 2

1 Heb. 7:25
2 John 1:29
Rom. 3:25
2 Cor. 5:18
4 1 John 1:6,
8
5 John 14:21,
23
1 John 4:12,
13
6 Mat. 11:29
John 15:4
1 Pet. 2:21
7 2 John 5
8 John 1:9,
13:34
Rom. 13:12

9 2 Pet. 1:9
1 Cor. 13:2
10 2 Pet. 1:10
1 John 3:14
12 Luke 24:47
13 1 John 1:1
14 Eph. 6:10
15 Mat. 6:24
Rom. 12:2
16 Eccl. 5:11
17 1 Pet. 1:24
1 Cor. 7:31
18 Mat. 24:5
John 21:5
2 John 7
2 Thes. 2:3
1 Tim. 4:1
2 Tim. 3:1
Heb. 1:2

mandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.

9. Anyone who claims *that* he is in the light, but hates his brother, is in the darkness until now.

10. The one who loves his brother is dwelling in the light, and there is no cause of offense in him.

11. But the one who hates his brother is in darkness, and is walking in darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

12. I am writing to you, little children, because *your* sins have been forgiven you through His name.

13. I am writing to you, fathers, because you have known Him Who *is* from *the* beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked *one*. I am writing to you, little children, because you have known the Father.

14. I wrote to you, fathers, because you have known Him Who *is* from *the* beginning. I wrote to you, young men, because you are strong, and the Word of God is dwelling in you, and you have overcome the wicked *one*.

15. Do not love the world, nor the things *that are* in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him

16. Because everything that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life—is not from the Father, but is from the world.

17. And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God abides forever.

18. Little children, it is *the* last time; and just as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many

*"Propitiation" is translated from the Greek *ἱλασμος*, which denotes a propitiation or expiation of sin by an atoning sacrifice. "Propitiation" is the best translation because it means a continuous atonement. God the Father is continually propitiating the true believer's sins according to His grace and mercy through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, as John shows in the previous chapter.

antichrists have risen up, by which we know that it is *the* last time.

19. They went out from among us, but they were not of us because if they were of us, they would have remained with us; nevertheless, *they left* that they might be exposed *to show* that *they* all were not of us.

20. But you have *the* anointing from the Holy One, and you have knowledge of all things *pertaining to salvation*.

21. I did not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and *you understand* that not one lie comes from the truth.

22. Who is the liar if it is not the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is the antichrist—the one who denies the Father and the Son.

23. Anyone who denies the Son does not have the Father either.

24. Therefore, let what you have heard from *the* beginning dwell in you; if what you have heard from *the* beginning is dwelling in you, then you will be dwelling in the Son and in the Father.

25. And this is the promise that He has promised us: eternal life.

26. These things I have written to you concerning those who are leading you astray.

27. But you yourselves have dwelling in you the anointing that you received from Him; and you do not have need of anyone to indoctrinate you; for the same anointing instructs you in all *spiritual* things, and is true, and is not a lie; and *if you do* exactly as it *has* taught you, you will be dwelling in Him.

28. And now, little children, dwell in Him, so that when He is manifested we may have boldness, and not be put to shame before Him at His coming.

29. If you know that He is righteous, you *also* know that everyone who practices righteousness has been begotten by Him.

19 Deut. 13:13
Mat. 24:24
John 6:37
1 Cor. 11:19
20 John 16:13
Acts 3:14
2 Cor. 1:21
Heb. 1:9
22 2 John 7
23 John 15:23
1 John 4:15
2 John 9
24 John 14:23
2 John 6
25 John 17:3
26 2 John 7
27 Jer. 31:33
John 14:26
1 John 2:20
28 1 John 3:2,
4:17
29 Acts. 22:14
1 John 3:7,
10

Chap. 3

1 John 1:12,
16:3
2 Ps. 16:11
Is. 56:5
Mat. 5:8
2 Pet. 1:4
Rom 8:15,
18, 29
2 Cor. 4:17
3 1 John 4:17
4 Rom. 4:15
5 Is. 53:5, 6
1 Pet. 2:22
1 John 1:2
Rom 4:15
2 Cor. 5:21
Heb. 4:15
6 1 John 2:4
7 1 John 2:26
Rom. 2:13
8 Mat. 13:38
Luke 10:18
John 8:44,
16:11
9 1 Pet. 1:23
1 John 5:18
10 1 John 2:29,
4:8
11 John 13:34
1 John 1:5
2 John 5

CHAPTER THREE

1. Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him.

2. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is.

3. And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure.

4. Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness.*

5. And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin.

6. Everyone who dwells in Him does not *practice* sin; anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him.

7. Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous.

8. The one who practices sin is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the* beginning. For this purpose the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil.

9. Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin because His seed *of begettal* is dwelling within him, and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God.

10. By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, and neither is the one who does not love his brother.

11. For this is the message that you heard from *the* beginning—that we

*The King James Version of this verse reads, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

should love one another;

12. Not as Cain, *who* was of the wicked *one*, and murdered his own brother. And what was the reason that he murdered him? Because his own works were wicked, but his brother's works were righteous.

13. My brethren, do not be amazed if the world hates you.

14. We know that we have passed from death into life because we love the brethren. The one who does not love *his* brother is dwelling in death.

15. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life dwelling within him.

16. By this *very act* we have known the love *of God* because He laid down His life for us: and we ourselves are to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.

17. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his feelings of compassion from him, how can the love of God be dwelling in him?

18. My little children, we should not love in word, nor with *our* tongues; rather, *we should love* in deed and in truth.

19. And in this *way* we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him,

20. That if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knows all things.

21. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, *then* we have confidence toward God.

22. And whatever we may ask we receive from Him because we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight.

23. And this is His commandment: that we believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and that we love one another, exactly as He gave commandment to us.

24. And the one who keeps His commandments is dwelling in Him, and

12 Gen. 4:4, 8
Heb. 11:4
13 John 17:14
14 1 John 2:9-11
15 Mat. 5:21
Gal. 5:21
16 John 3:16
17 Deut. 15:7
Luke 3:11
1 John 4:20
18 Ezek. 33:31
Rom. 12:9
Eph. 4:15
19 John 18:37
20 1 Cor. 4:4
21 Job 22:26
Heb. 10:22
22 Psa. 34:15
Prov. 15:29
Jer. 29:12
Mat. 7:8
John 8:29
23 Mat. 22:39
John 6:29, 13:34
1 John 2:8, 10
Eph. 5:2
24 John 14:23, 17:21
Rom. 8:9

Chap. 4

1 Jer. 29:8
Mat. 24:4, 5
Acts 20:30
2 Pet. 2:1
1 Cor. 14:29
1 Thes. 5:21
1 Tim. 4:1
Rev. 2:2
2 1 Cor. 12:3
3 2 Thes. 2:7
2 John 7
4 John 12:31
1 John 5:4
Eph. 2:2
5 John 3:31, 15:19
6 Is. 8:20
John 8:47
7 1 John 3:10, 11
8 1 John 2:4, 4:16
9 John 3:16
1 John 5:10
10 John 15:16
Rom. 5:8
1 John 2:2
Tit. 3:4
11 Mat. 18:33
1 John 3:16
12 John 1:18
1 John 2:5
1 Tim. 6:16

He in him; and by this we know that He is dwelling in us: by the Spirit which He has given to us.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

2. By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the* flesh is from God.

3. And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the *spirit* of antichrist, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world.

4. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them because greater is He *Who is* in you than the one who *is* in the world.

5. They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them.

6. We are of God; the one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not of God does not listen to us. By this *means* we know the Spirit of the truth and the spirit of the deception.

7. Beloved, we should love one another because love is from God; and everyone who loves has been begotten by God, and knows God.

8. The one who does not love does not know God because God is love.

9. In this *way* the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him.

10. In this *act* is the love—not that we loved God; rather, that He loved us and sent His Son *to be the* propitiation for our sins.

11. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also are duty-bound to love one another.

12. No one has seen God at any time.

Yet, if we love one another, God dwells in us, and His own love is perfected in us.

13. By this *standard* we know that we are dwelling in Him, and He is *dwelling* in us: because of His own Spirit, *which* He has given to us.

14. And we have seen *for* ourselves and bear witness that the Father sent the Son *as the* Savior of the world.

15. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him, and he in God.

16. And we have known and have believed the love that God has toward us. God is love, and the one who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him.

17. By this *spiritual indwelling*, the love *of God* is perfected within us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment because even as He is, so also are we in this world.

18. There is no fear in the love *of God*; rather, perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment. And the one who fears has not been made perfect in the love *of God*.

19. We love Him because He loved us first.

20. If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar. For if he does not love his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love God Whom he has not seen?

21. And this *is* the commandment *that* we have from Him: that the one who loves God should also love his brother.

13 John 14:20
14 John 1:14,
3:17
15 Rom. 10:9
16 1 John 3:24,
4:8
17 Jas. 2:13
1 John 3:3
18 1 John 4:12
20 1 John 2:4,
4:12
21 Mat. 22:37
John 13:34

Chap. 5

1 John 1:12,
13, 15:23
1 John 2:22,
23
3 Mic. 6:8
John 14:15
2 John 6
4 John 16:33
5 1 Cor. 15:57
6 John 14:17,
19:34
1 Tim. 3:16
7 John 1:1,
10:30
Rev. 19:13
9 Mat. 3:16
John 8:17
10 John 3:33
Rom. 8:16

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten by God; and everyone who loves Him Who begat also loves him who has been begotten by Him.

2. By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments.

3. For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

4. Now then, everyone who is begotten by God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that overcomes the world—our faith.

5. Who is the one who overcomes the world? Even the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

6. This is He Who came by water and blood—Jesus the Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood.

7. And it is the Spirit that bears witness because the Spirit is the truth.*

8. For there are three that bear witness on the earth: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three *witness* unto the one *truth*.

9. If we accept the witness of men, the witness of God is superior. For this is the witness of God, which He has witnessed concerning His Son.

10. The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar because he has not believed in the witness that God has witnessed concerning His Son.

*The King James Version contains an additional verse between this verse and the following verse in John's epistle. This added verse in the KJV was not present in the original Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, as the following commentary explains: "Between vv 7 and 8...six Greek MSS [MSS is an abbreviation for manuscripts]...introduce a gloss [an addition to the text not found in other manuscripts] which the AV [KJV] translates as, 'in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.'"

"The earliest of these Greek witnesses, all of which depend on an earlier Latin tradition, can be dated to the twelfth century. The OL [Old Latin] is the only ancient version to include the words, and then with variations between the MSS; but, although the evidence is not entirely clear, the passage seems to be unknown in these texts before the eighth century. It does not appear in Jerome's definitive edition of the Vg [the Latin Vulgate] (circa A.D. 404), even if some other MSS of the Vg contain the addition. The earliest extrabiblical writer to show knowledge of the section is the Spanish heretic Priscillian (who died circa A.D. 385), when quoting from this part of John in his Latin 'Book of Apology' (Liber Apologeticus). None of the Greek Fathers quote the words. Despite this slight MSS attestation the inclusion remained in the Vg. and also survived in the AV [KJV]. In most modern translations the words have disappeared from the text altogether. (Footnote continued on next page)

II John 1

11. And this is the witness: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

12. The one who has the Son has *eternal* life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have *eternal* life.

13. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God in order that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may *continue to* believe in the name of the Son of God.

14. And this is the confidence that we have toward Him: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

15. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we may ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him.

16. If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death, he shall ask, and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto death. There is a sin unto death; concerning

11 1 John 2:25,
4:9
12 John 3:36
13 John 20:31
1 John 1:1,
2
14 1 John 3:22
16 Job 42:8
Jer. 7:16
Mat. 12:31
Mark 3:29
John 17:9
Jas. 5:14
Heb. 6:4, 6
17 1 John 3:4
18 Jas. 1:27
1 Pet. 1:23

19 Gal. 1:4
20 Is. 9:6
Luke 24:45
John 17:3
Acts. 20:28
1 John 5:11,
12
Tit. 2:13
21 1 Cor. 10:14

that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any* supplication to God.

17. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death.

18. We know that anyone who is begotten by God does not *practice* sin; for the one who has been begotten by God keeps himself *by the power of God*, and the wicked one does not touch him.

19. We know that we are of God, and *that* the whole world lies in *the power of* the wicked one.

20. And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding, so that we may know Him Who *is* true; and we are in Him Who *is* true, *and* in His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God, and the eternal life.

21. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

First General Epistle of John

(Footnote continued from previous page) "*The section, which in any case interrupts the thought of the passage, is clearly an interpolation [an addition to the original text]. Presumably it represents an attempt on the part of those who, in the third and fourth centuries, were preoccupied with understanding the doctrine of the Trinity, to explain this text in a trinitarian manner. What may have begun...as a marginal gloss [a notation in the margin of the text] in a Latin MSS then became incorporated in the text, and was eventually translated back into the Greek in some Greek MSS*" (Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 51, p. 273, Word Book Publishers, Waco, Texas, 1984).

The Second General Epistle of John

1. The elder to *the* chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not I alone, but also all those who have known the truth;

2. For *the* sake of the truth that is dwelling in us, and shall be with us forever:

3. Grace, mercy, *and* peace shall be with us from God *the* Father, and from *the* Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

4. I rejoiced exceedingly that I have found among your children those who

1 3 John 1
Col. 1:5
3 1 Tim. 1:2
4 3 John 3

5 John 13:34
1 John 3:11
6 1 John 2:5,
24

are walking in truth, exactly as we received commandment from the Father.

5. And now I beseech you, lady, not as though I am writing a new commandment to you, but that which we have *observed* from *the* beginning, that we love one another.

6. And this is the love *of God*: that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, exactly as you heard from *the* beginning, that you might walk in it

7. Because many deceivers have entered into the world—those who do not confess *that* Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. This is *the spirit of* the deceiver and the antichrist.

8. Watch out for yourselves in order that we may not lose the things we have accomplished, but *that* we may receive a full reward.

9. Anyone who transgresses and does not continue in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. *But* the one who continues in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.

10. If anyone comes to you and does

7 1 John 2:22,
4:1, 2
8 Mark 13:9
Gal. 3:4
9 1 John 2:23
10 Rom. 16:17

not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into *your* house, and do not say to him, “Welcome!”

11. For anyone who says, “Welcome!” to him is partaking in his evil works.

12. I have many things to write, but I do not wish to *convey these things to you* with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face in order that our joy may be *completely* full.

13. The children of your chosen sister salute you. Amen.

12 John 17:13
3 John 13
13 1 Pet. 5:13

Second Epistle of John

The Third General Epistle of

John

1. The elder to Gaius the beloved, whom I love in truth:

2. Beloved, I personally am praying for you, that in all respects you may prosper and be in health, even as your soul is prospering.

3. For I rejoiced exceedingly at the coming of *the* brethren *who* testified of you in the truth, even how you are walking in truth.

4. I do not have any greater joy than these *testimonies* that I am hearing—that my children are walking in truth.

5. Beloved, you are faithfully practicing whatever you have been doing for the brethren and for strangers,

6. Who have testified of your love before *the* church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God;

7. Because for the *sake of His* name they went forth *preaching*, taking nothing from the Gentiles.

8. For this cause, we are personally obligated to receive *those who do* such *service*, in order that we may be fellow workers in the truth.

9. I wrote to the church, but Diotrophes, the one who loves to be chief

1 2 John 1
3 2 John 4
4 1 Cor. 4:15
Philem. 10
7 1 Cor. 9:12,
15

among them, does not accept us.

10. Because of this very thing, if I come, I will call him to account for the actions that he is practicing with evil words—maliciously berating us; and he is not satisfied with these things, *for* he himself neither receives the brethren, *nor does he permit* those who wish *to receive the brethren*, but he forbids *them* and casts *them* out of the church.

11. Beloved, do not imitate that which *is* evil; rather, *imitate* that which *is* good. The one who practices good *is* of God; but the one who practices evil has not seen God.

12. We have received testimony from everyone on behalf of Demetrius, and from the truth itself; and we also bear witness, and you know that our witness is true.

13. I had many things to write, but *now* I will not write *them* with ink and pen;

14. For I hope to see you shortly, and I will speak with you face to face.

15. Peace *be* to you. *Our* friends salute you. Salute the friends by name.

11 Psa. 37:27
Is. 1:16, 17
1 Pet. 3:11
1 John 2:29,
3:6, 9
12 John 21:24
1 Tim. 3:7
13 2 John 12

Third General Epistle of John

The General Epistle of

Jude

1. Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to the called *saints*, sanctified by God *the* Father and kept in Jesus Christ:

2. Mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.

3. Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting *you* to fervently fight for the faith, which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints.

4. For certain men have stealthily crept in, those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment. *They are* ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

5. But I myself want to remind you, though you once understood this, that the Lord, after saving a people out of *the* land of Egypt, the second time destroyed those who did not believe.

6. And the angels who did not keep their own original domain, but deserted their habitation, He is holding in eternal bonds under darkness unto the judgment of *the* great day.

7. Just as Sodom and Gomorrha—and the cities surrounding them, in the same manner as them—having given themselves over to sexual debaucheries, and having gone after different flesh, are themselves exhibited as a *perpetual* example of undergoing *the* punishment of eternal fire,

8. In the same way also, these dreamers of *filthy dreams* are defiling *the* flesh, and are declaring as invalid *the* lordship of God, and are blaspheming *the* divine powers.

9. But Michael the archangel, when he was personally taking issue with the devil, disputing about the body of

1 John 17:11
Acts 1:13
1 Pet. 1:5
Rom. 1:7
2 1 Pet. 1:2
2 Pet. 1:2
3 Phil. 1:27
2 Tim. 1:13
Tit. 1:4
4 2 Pet. 2:1,
10
Rom. 9:22
Gal. 2:4
Tit. 1:16,
2:11
5 Num. 14:29
Psa. 106:26
1 Cor. 10:9
6 John 8:44
2 Pet. 2:4
Rev. 20:10
7 Gen. 19:24
2 Pet. 2:6
8 Ex. 22:28
2 Pet. 2:10
9 Dan. 10:13
Zech. 3:2
2 Pet. 2:11

10 2 Pet. 2:12
11 Num. 16:1
2 Pet. 2:15
1 John 3:12
12 Prov. 25:14
Mat. 15:13
2 Pet. 2:13,
17
1 Cor. 11:21
Eph. 4:14
13 Is. 57:20
2 Pet. 2:17
Phil. 3:19
14 Gen. 5:18
Deut. 33:2
15 1 Sam. 2:3
Psa. 31:18
16 Prov. 28:21
2 Pet. 2:18
17 2 Pet. 3:2

Moses, did not presume to pronounce a reviling judgment against *him*, but said, "*The* Lord Himself rebuke you!"

10. As for these, whatever things they do not understand, they blaspheme; but whatever things they understand by instinct, as irrational brute beasts, they are corrupting themselves in these things.

11. Woe to them! For they have walked in the way of Cain; and for gain, they have wholly given themselves up to Balaam's delusion, and have perished in the rebellion of Korah.

12. These are subversive stains in your love feasts, feasting in person together *with you*; fearlessly they are feeding themselves. *They are* clouds without water, being driven by the winds; trees of late autumn, without *any* fruit, uprooted, twice dead;

13. Raging waves of *the* sea, casting up like foam their own *ignominious* shame; wandering stars, for whom has been reserved the blackest darkness forever!

14. And Enoch, *the* seventh from Adam, also prophesied of these, proclaiming, "Behold, *the* Lord comes with ten thousands of His holy saints

15. To execute judgment against all, and to convict all who are ungodly of all their works of *evil* ungodliness that they have impiously committed, and of all the hard *things* that ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

16. These are complainers *and* critics, who are walking after their own personal lusts, *while* their mouths are speaking great swelling *words*, flattering persons for the sake of advantage.

17. But you, beloved, remember the words that were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

18. Because they said to you that in *the* last time there would be mockers, who would be selfishly walking according to their own ungodly lusts.
 19. These are the ones who cause division; *they are* psychic,* not having *the* Spirit of God.
 20. But you, beloved, *be* building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in *the* Holy Spirit,
 21. *So that* you keep yourselves in *the* love of God *while* you are personally awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.
 22. Now on the one hand, show mercy

18 2 Pet. 2:1
 1 Tim. 4:1
 19 Prov. 18:1
 Jas. 3:15
 20 Rom. 8:26
 Col. 2:7
 21 2 Pet. 3:12
 Tit. 2:13

23 Amos 4:11
 Zech. 3:2-5
 Rom. 11:14
 24 Eph. 3:20
 Col. 1:22
 25 Rom. 16:27

to those individuals who are doubting;
 23. But on the other hand, save others with fear, snatching *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment *that has been* defiled by the flesh.

24. Now to Him Who is able to keep them from falling, and to bring *them* into the presence of His own glory, blameless in exceeding joy,
 25. To *the* only wise God our Savior, *be the* glory and greatness, *the* might and authority, even now, and into all the ages of eternity. Amen.

General Epistle of Jude

*The Greek word ψυχικός means those who are "worldly," or literally, "psychic." They are influenced by demonic powers, not by the Spirit of God.

The Epistles of the Apostle Paul

Romans	I Thessalonians
I Corinthians	II Thessalonians
II Corinthians	Hebrews
Galatians	I Timothy
Ephesians	II Timothy
Philippians	Titus
Colossians	Philemon

Romans

CHAPTER ONE

1. Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, a called apostle, set apart to preach the gospel of God,
 2. Which He had promised before through His prophets in *the* Holy Scriptures
 3. Concerning His Son; Who came from *the* seed of David according to *the* flesh,
 4. Who was declared *the* Son of God with power, according to *the* spirit of holiness, by *the* resurrection from the dead—Jesus Christ our Lord;
 5. Through Whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all the nations, in behalf of His name;
 6. In Whom you also are called of Jesus Christ:
 7. To all those who are in Rome, beloved by God, *the* called saints: Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *our* Lord Jesus Christ.
 8. First, I truly thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, for your faith is spoken of in the whole world;
 9. For God is my witness, Whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you in my prayers,
 10. Always beseeching, if by any means I shall now be prospered by the will of God to come to you at last.
 11. For I am longing to see you, so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift in order that you may be established;
 12. *And* that I may be comforted together with you through the faith in each one of us, both yours and mine.
 13. On the other hand, I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, that many times I proposed to come to you (but I was hindered until the present), in order that I might also have some

Chap. 1

1 Acts 9:15
 1 Tim. 1:11
 2 Acts 26:6
 Gal. 3:8
 3 Gal. 4:4
 4 Acts 13:33
 Heb. 9:14
 5 Acts 6:7,
 9:15
 Eph. 3:8
 7 1 Cor. 1:2, 3
 8 Rom. 16:19
 1 Cor. 1:4
 9 Acts 27:23
 Rom. 9:1
 1 Thes. 3:10
 11 Rom. 15:29
 12 Tit. 1:4
 13 Phil. 4:17
 1 Thes. 2:18
 16 Psa. 40:9, 10
 Mark 8:38
 Luke 2:30
 Acts 13:26
 1 Cor. 1:18
 17 Hab. 2:4
 John 3:36
 Rom. 3:21
 Gal. 3:11
 18 Acts 17:30
 Eph. 5:6
 19 John 1:9
 Acts 14:17
 20 Psa. 19:1
 Acts 14:17
 21 2 Ki. 17:15
 Jer. 2:5
 Eph. 4:17
 22 Jer. 10:14
 23 Deut. 4:16
 Psa. 106:20
 Is. 40:18
 24 Lev. 18:22
 Psa. 81:12
 Acts 7:42
 1 Cor. 6:18
 Eph. 4:18
 1 Thes. 4:4

fruit among you, even as I have among the other Gentiles.
 14. I am a debtor to both Greeks and barbarians, to both *the* wise and *the* unlearned;
 15. So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who *are* in Rome also.
 16. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ because it is *the* power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes—both to *the* Jew first, and to *the* Greek.
 17. For therein *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith unto faith, according as it is written: "The just shall live by faith."
 18. Indeed, *the* wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness;
 19. Because that which may be known of God is manifest among them, for God has manifested *it* to them;
 20. For the invisible things of Him are perceived from *the* creation of *the* world, being understood by the things that were made—both His eternal power and Godhead—so that they are without excuse;
 21. Because when they knew God, they glorified *Him* not as God, neither were thankful; but they became vain in their own reasonings, and their foolish hearts were darkened.
 22. While professing themselves to be *the* wise ones, they became fools
 23. And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into *the* likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed creatures, and creeping things.
 24. For this cause, God also abandoned them to uncleanness through the lusts of their hearts, to disgrace

their own bodies between themselves,
25. Who exchanged the truth of God for the lie; and they worshiped and served the created thing more than the one Who is Creator, Who is blessed into the ages. Amen.

26. For this cause, God abandoned them to disgraceful passions; for even their women changed the natural use of *sex* into that which is contrary to nature;

27. And in the same manner also the men, having left the natural use of *sex* with the woman, were inflamed in their lustful passions toward one another—men with men shamelessly committing lewd *acts*, and receiving back within themselves a fitting penalty for their error.

28. And in exact proportion as they did not consent to have God in *their* knowledge, God abandoned them to a reprobate mind, to practice *those* things that are immoral;

29. Being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, malice; full of envy, murder, strife, guile, evil dispositions; whisperers,

30. Slanderers, God-haters, insolent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things *and practices*; disobedient to parents,

31. Void of understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable *and* unmerciful;

32. Who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who commit such things are worthy of death, not only practice these things themselves, but also approve of those who commit *them*.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Therefore you are without excuse, O man, everyone who judges *another*; for in that in which you judge the other, you are condemning your own

25 Is. 44:20
Jer. 10:14
1 John 5:20
1 Thes. 1:9
26 Lev. 18:22
Eph. 5:12
28 Eph. 5:4
32 Psa. 50:18
Rom. 2:2,
6:21

Chap. 2

1 2 Sam. 12:5
Mat. 7:1, 2
John 8:9
Rom. 1:20

4 Ex. 34:6
Is. 30:18
2 Pet. 3:9
Rom. 3:25
Eph. 1:7
5 Deut. 32:34
Jas. 5:3
6 Job 34:11
Psa. 62:12
Prov. 24:12
Jer. 17:10
2 Cor. 5:10
8 Job 24:13
2 Thes. 1:8
9 Amos 3:2
Luke 12:47
1 Pet. 4:17
10 1 Pet. 1:7
11 Deut. 10:17
Job 34:19
Acts 10:34
Eph. 6:9
13 Jas. 1:22
1 John 3:7

self; for you who judge *another* are doing the same things.

2. But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth upon those who commit such things.

3. Now do you think yourself, O man, whoever is judging those who commit such things, and you are practicing them *yourself*, that you shall escape the judgment of God?

4. Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the graciousness of God leads you to repentance?

5. But you, according to your own hardness and unrepentant heart, are storing up wrath for yourself against *the* day of wrath and revelation of God's righteous judgment,

6. Who will render to each one according to his own works:

7. On the one hand, to those who with patient endurance in good works are seeking glory and honor and immortality—eternal life;

8. On the other hand, to those who are contentious and who disobey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath,

9. Tribulation and anguish—upon every soul of man who works out evil, both of *the* Jew first, and of *the* Greek;

10. But glory and honor and peace to everyone who works good, both to *the* Jew first, and to *the* Greek,

11. Because there is no respect of persons with God.

12. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned within *the* law shall be judged by *the* law,

13. (Because the hearers of the law *are* not just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

14. For when *the* Gentiles, which do not have *the* law, practice by nature the things contained in the law, these

who do not have *the* law are a law unto themselves;

15. Who show the work of the law written in their own hearts, their consciences bearing witness, and their reasonings also, as they accuse or defend one another;)

16. In a day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

17. Behold, you are called a Jew, and you yourself rest in the law, and boast in God,

18. And know *His* will, and approve of the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law;

19. And are persuaded *that* you yourself are a guide of *the* blind, a light for those in darkness,

20. An instructor of *the* foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of the knowledge and of the truth *contained* in the law.

21. You, then, who are teaching another, do you not teach yourself also? You who preach, "Do not steal," are you stealing?

22. You who say, "Do not commit adultery," are you committing adultery? You who abhor idols, are you committing sacrilege?

23. You who boast in law, are you dishonoring God through your transgression of the law?

24. For through you the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, exactly as it is written.

25. For on the one hand, circumcision profits if you are observing *the* law; on the other hand, if you are a transgressor of *the* law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.

26. Therefore, if the uncircumcised is keeping the requirements of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision?

27. And shall not the uncircumcised, who by nature is fulfilling the law, judge you, who, with *the* letter and

16 Eccl. 12:14
Mat. 25:31
John 5:22
Acts 10:42
1 Tim. 1:11
Rev. 20:12
17 Is. 48:2
Mic. 3:11
Mat. 3:9
John 8:33
18 Deut. 4:8
Phil. 1:10
19 Mat. 15:14
John 9:34
20 2 Tim. 3:5
21 Psa. 50:16
Mat. 23:3
22 Mal. 3:8
23 Rom. 2:17
24 2 Sam. 12:14
Is. 52:5
Ezek. 36:20
25 Gal. 5:3
26 Acts 10:34
27 Mat. 12:41

28 Mat. 3:9
John 8:39
Gal. 6:15
29 1 Pet. 3:4
Rom. 7:6
1 Cor. 4:5
2 Cor. 10:18
Phil. 3:3
1 Thes. 2:4

Chap. 3

2 Deut. 4:7
Psa. 147:19
3 Num. 23:19
2 Tim. 2:13
Heb. 4:2
4 Job 40:8
Psa. 51:4,
62:9
John 3:33
5 Gal. 3:15
6 Gen. 18:25
8 Rom. 5:20
9 Gal. 3:22

circumcision, *are* a transgressor of *the* law?

28. For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, neither *is* that circumcision which *is* external in *the* flesh;

29. Rather, he *is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly, and circumcision *is* of *the* heart, in *the* spirit *and* not in *the* letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God.

CHAPTER THREE

1. What then *is* the advantage of the Jew, or what *is* the profit of circumcision?

2. Much in every way. Primarily, in that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.

3. For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God?

4. MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, let God be true but every man a liar, exactly as it is written: "That You might be justified in Your words, and might overcome when You are judged *by men.*"

5. But if our unrighteousness brings to reality God's righteousness, what shall we say? *Is* God unrighteous to inflict His wrath? (I am speaking according to man's view.)

6. MAY IT NEVER BE! Otherwise, how shall God judge the world?

7. For if, by my falsehood, the truth of God has shown itself *to be* supremely great, to His glory, why am I still being judged as a sinner?

8. But not, according as we are being blasphemously charged, and according as some are affirming *that* we say, "Let us practice evil things in order that good things may come." Their condemnation is deserved.

9. What then? Are we of ourselves better? Not at all! For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—ALL—with being under sin,

10. Exactly as it is written: "For there is not a righteous one—not even one!"
 11. There is not one who understands; there is not one who seeks after God.
 12. They have all gone out of the way; together they have *all* become depraved. There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness. No, there is not so much as one!
 13. Their throats *are* like an open grave; with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps *is* under their lips,
 14. Whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness;
 15. Their feet *are* swift to shed blood;
 16. Destruction and misery *are* in their ways;
 17. And *the* way of peace they have not known. -
 18. There is no fear of God before their eyes."
 19. Now then, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.
 20. Therefore, by works of law* there shall no flesh be justified before Him; for through *the* law *is* the knowledge of sin.
 21. But now, *the* righteousness** of God *that is* separate from law has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets;
 22. Even *the* righteousness of God *that is* through *the* faith of Jesus Christ, toward all and upon all those who believe; for there is no difference.
 23. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
 24. *But* are being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus;
 25. Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood, in order to demonstrate His righteousness, in respect to the remis-

10 Psa. 14:1-3
 13 Psa. 5:9, 140:3
 Jer. 5:16
 14 Psa. 10:7
 15 Prov. 1:16
 Is. 59:7, 8
 18 Psa. 36:1
 19 Job 5:16
 Psa. 107:42
 John 10:34
 Rom. 2:2
 20 Psa. 143:2
 Acts 13:39
 Rom. 7:7
 Gal. 2:16
 21 John 5:46
 Acts 15:11
 1 Pet. 1:10
 Rom. 1:17
 22 Rom. 3:4, 10:12
 Gal. 3:28
 Col. 3:11
 23 Rom. 11:32
 Gal. 3:22
 24 Mat. 20:28
 1 Pet. 1:18
 Rom. 4:16
 Eph. 1:7, 2:8
 Col. 1:14
 1 Tim. 2:6
 Tit. 3:5, 7
 Heb. 9:12
 25 Lev. 16:15
 Acts 17:30
 1 John 2:2, 4:10
 Col. 1:20
 Heb. 9:15
 27 Rom. 2:17, 23
 1 Cor. 1:29
 Eph. 2:9
 28 Rom. 3:20-22
 Gal. 2:16
 30 Rom. 10:12
 Gal. 3:8, 20
 Chap. 4
 1 Is. 51:2
 Mat. 3:9
 John 8:33
 2 Cor. 11:22
 2 Rom. 3:20, 27
 3 Gen. 15:6
 Jas. 2:23
 Gal. 3:6
 4 Rom. 11:6
 5 Josh. 24:2

sion of sins that are past,
 26. Through the forbearance of God; yes, to publicly declare His righteousness in the present time, that He might be just, and the one Who justifies the one who *is* of *the* faith of Jesus.
 27. Therefore, where *is* boasting? It is excluded. Through what law? *The* law of works? By no means! Rather, *it is* through a law of faith.
 28. Consequently, we reckon that a man is justified by faith, separate from works of law.
 29. *Is He* the God of the Jews only? *Is He* not also *the* God of *the* Gentiles? YES! *He is* also God of *the* Gentiles,
 30. Since *it is* indeed one God Who will justify *the* circumcision by faith, and *the* uncircumcision through faith.
 31. Are we, then, abolishing law through faith? MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, we are establishing law.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. What then shall we say *that* our father Abraham has found with respect *to the* flesh?
 2. For if Abraham was justified by works, he has a basis for boasting, but not before God.
 3. For what does the Scripture say? "And Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness."
 4. Now to the one who works, the reward is not reckoned according to grace; rather, *it is reckoned* as a debt.
 5. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him Who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness;
 6. Even as David also declares the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness separate from works:
 7. "Blessed are *those* whose transgres-

*See Appendix N, "What Is Meant by the Works of the Law?" p. 831.

**See Appendix J, section on the Righteousness of Faith, p. 780.

sions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

8. Blessed *is the* man to whom *the* Lord will not impute *any* sin."

9. Now then, *does* this blessedness *come* upon the circumcision *only*, or also upon the uncircumcision? For we are saying that faith was imputed to Abraham for righteousness.

10. In what condition therefore was it imputed? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

11. And *afterwards* he received *the* sign of circumcision, *as* a seal of the righteousness of the faith that *he had* in the *condition* of uncircumcision, that he might become *the* father of all those who believe, though they have not been circumcised, in order that the righteousness *of faith* might also be imputed to them;

12. And *that he* might become *the* father of *the* circumcision—not to those who are of the circumcision only, but also to those who walk in the footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham, which he had during *his* uncircumcision.

13. For the promise to Abraham, or to his seed, that he should be heir of the world, *was not given* through law; rather, *it was* through *the* righteousness of faith;

14. Because if those of *the* law *be the* heirs, *then* faith is made void, and the promise *is* made of no effect.

15. For the law works out wrath; because where no law is, *there is* no transgression.

16. For this reason *it is* of faith, in order that *it might be* by grace, to the end that the promise might be certain to all the seed—not to the one who is of the law only, but also to the one who is of *the* faith of Abraham, who is *the* father of us all,

17. (Exactly as it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations.")

7 Psa. 32:1, 2
11 Gen. 17:10
Luke 19:9
Rom. 4:12, 16
Gal. 3:7
13 Gen. 17:4
Gal. 3:29
14 Gal. 3:18
15 1 John 3:4
Rom. 3:20, 7:8, 10, 11
1 Cor. 15:56
2 Cor. 3:7, 9
Gal. 3:10
16 Is. 51:2
Rom. 3:24, 9:8
Gal. 3:22
17 Gen. 17:5
1 Pet. 2:10
Rom. 8:11, 9:26
1 Cor. 1:28
Eph. 2:1, 5

18 Gen. 15:5
19 Gen. 17:17, 18:11
Heb. 11:11
21 Psa. 115:3
Luke 1:37
Heb. 11:19
23 Rom. 15:4
1 Cor. 10:6
24 Acts 2:24
25 Is. 53:5, 6
1 Pet. 1:21
Rom. 3:25
1 Cor. 15:17
Gal. 1:4
Heb. 9:28

Chap. 5

1 Is. 32:17
John 16:33
Eph. 2:14
2 John 10:9
1 Cor. 15:1
Eph. 2:18
Heb. 3:6
3 Mat. 5:11
Acts 5:41
Jas. 1:2, 3
2 Cor. 12:10
Phil. 2:7
4 Jas. 1:12
5 2 Cor. 1:22
Eph. 1:13
Phil. 1:20

before God in Whom he believed, Who gives life to the dead, and calls the things that are not as though they are;

18. *And* who against hope believed in hope, in order that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, "So shall your seed be."

19. And he, not being weak in the faith, considered not his own body, already having become dead, being about one hundred years old, nor *did he consider* the deadness of Sarah's womb;

20. And he did not doubt the promise of God through unbelief; rather, he was strengthened in the faith, giving glory to God;

21. For he was fully persuaded that what He has promised, He is also able to do.

22. As a result, it was also imputed to him for righteousness.

23. But it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

24. Rather, *it was* also *written* for our sakes, to whom it shall be imputed—to those who believe in Him Who raised Jesus our Lord from *the* dead;

25. Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Through Whom we also have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God.

3. And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations, realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance,

4. And endurance *brings forth* character, and character *brings forth* hope.

5. And the hope *of God* never makes us ashamed because the love of God

has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us.

6. For even when we were without strength, at the appointed time Christ died for *the* ungodly.

7. For rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, although perhaps someone might have the courage even to die for a good man.

8. But God commends His own love to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

9. Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

10. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His own Son, much more *then*, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

11. And not only *this*, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the reconciliation.

12. Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and by means of sin *came* death; and in this way, death passed into all mankind; *and it is* for this reason that all have sinned.

13. (For before *the* law, sin was in *the* world. However, sin is not imputed when law does not exist;

14. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until Moses, even upon those who had not sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the *one* Who was to come.

15. But *should* not the free gift be even as the offense *was*? For if by the transgression of the one man many died, how much more did the grace of God, and the gift of grace, which *is* by the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto many?

16. And *should* not the free gift *be* like that which came by *the* one who had sinned? For on the one hand, judgment *was* by one unto condemna-

6 Rom. 4:25
7 John 15:13
9 1 John 1:7
Eph. 2:13
1 Thes. 1:10
10 John 14:19
Rom. 8:32
2 Cor. 5:18
Eph. 2:16
11 Gal. 4:9
12 Gen. 2:17,
3:6
1 Cor. 15:21
13 1 John 3:4
14 1 Cor. 15:21
15 Is. 53:11

tion; but on the other hand, the free gift *is by one* to *the* justification of many offenses.

17. For if by the offense of the one man death reigned by the one, how much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life by the one, Jesus Christ.)

18. So then, even as by the one transgression condemnation *came* unto all men, in the same way also, by the one act of righteousness *shall* justification of life *come* unto all men.

19. For even as by the disobedience of the one man many were made sinners, in the same way also, by the obedience of the one *Man* shall many be made righteous.

20. Moreover, the law entered, so that transgression might abound; but where sin abounded, the grace of *God* did superabound;

21. So that even as sin has reigned unto death, so also might the grace of *God* reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER SIX

1. What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound?

2. MAY IT NEVER BE! We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?

3. Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death?

4. Therefore, we were buried with Him by baptism into death; so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life.

5. For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be *in the likeness* of His resurrection.

18 John 12:32
Heb. 2:9
20 Luke 7:47
John 15:22
Gal. 3:19

Chap. 6

1 Rom. 3:8
2 Gal. 2:19
Col. 3:3
3 1 Cor. 15:29
Gal. 3:27
4 John 2:11
Rom. 8:11
1 Cor. 6:14
Gal. 6:15
Col. 2:12
5 Phil. 3:10

6. Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order that the body of sin might be destroyed, so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin;

7. Because the one who has died *to sin* has been justified from sin.

8. Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

9. Knowing that Christ, having been raised from *the* dead, dies no more; death no longer has any dominion over Him.

10. For when He died, He died unto sin once for all; but in that He lives, He lives unto God.

11. In the same way also, you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord.

12. Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof.

13. Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from *the* dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God.

14. For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace.

15. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? MAY IT NEVER BE!

16. Don't you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17. But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but you have obeyed from *the* heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you;

18. And having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness.

6 Gal. 2:20
Col. 2:11
7 1 Pet. 4:1
8 2 Tim. 2:11
9 Rev. 1:18
10 Luke 20:38
Heb. 9:27
11 Rom. 6:2
Gal. 2:19
12 Psa. 19:13
13 Jas. 4:1
1 Pet. 2:24, 4:2
Rom. 7:5, 12:1
Col. 3:5
14 Rom. 7:4, 6, 8:2
Gal. 5:18
15 1 Cor. 9:21
16 Mat. 6:24
John 8:34
2 Pet. 2:19
17 2 Tim. 1:13
18 John 8:32
1 Pet. 2:16
1 Cor. 7:22
Gal. 5:1

20 John 8:34
21 Rom. 1:32, 7:5
22 John 8:32
23 Gen. 2:17
Jas. 1:15
1 Pet. 1:4
Rom. 2:7, 5:12

Chap. 7

2 1 Cor. 7:39
3 Mat. 5:32
4 Gal. 2:19, 5:18, 22
Col. 2:14

19. I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh; for just as you *once* yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now yield your members in bondage to righteousness unto sanctification.

20. For when you were *the* servants of sin, you were free from righteousness.

21. Therefore, what fruit did you have then in the *things* of which you are now ashamed? For the end result of those things *is* death.

22. But now *that* you have been delivered from sin and have become servants of God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end result *is* eternal life.

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

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law), that the law rules over a man for as long a time as he may live?

2. For the woman who is married is bound by law to the husband as long as he is living; but if the husband should die, she is released from the law *that bound her* to the husband.

3. So then, if she should marry another man as long as the husband is living, she shall be called an adulteress; but if the husband should die, she is free from the law *that bound her to the husband*, so that she is no longer an adulteress if she is married to another man.

4. In the same way, my brethren, you also were made dead to the *marriage* law of *the Old Covenant* by the body of Christ in order for you to be married to another, Who was raised from *the* dead, that we should bring forth fruit to God.

5. For as long as we were in the flesh, the passions of sins, which *were* through the law, were working within our own members to bring forth fruit unto death.

6. But now we have been released from the law* because we have died *to that* in which we were held so that we might serve in newness of *the* spirit, and not in *the* oldness of *the* letter.

7. What then shall we say? *Is* the law sin? MAY IT NEVER BE! But I had not known sin, except through the law. Furthermore, I would not have been conscious of lust, except *that* the law said, "You shall not covet."

8. But sin, having grasped an opportunity by the commandment, worked out within me *every kind of* lust because apart from law, sin *was* dead.

9. For I was once alive without law; but after the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.★

10. And the commandment, which *was meant to result in* life, was found *to be* unto death for me;

11. Because sin, having taken opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me*.

12. Therefore, the law *is* indeed holy, and the commandment holy and righteous and good.

13. Now then, did that which *is* good become death to me? MAY IT NEVER BE! But sin, in order that it might truly be exposed as sin in me by that which *is* good, was working out death; so that, by means of the commandment, sin might become exceedingly sinful.

14. For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, having been sold

5 Jas. 1:15
Rom. 6:13, 21

6 Rom. 2:29, 6:2, 7:4

2 Cor. 3:6

7 Ex. 20:17

Deut. 5:21

Acts 20:33

Rom. 3:20

8 Rom. 4:15

1 Cor. 15:56

9 ★Paul died through the symbolic death of baptism.

Rom. 6:3

10 Lev 18:5

Ezek. 20:11, 13, 21

2 Cor. 3:7

12 Psa. 19:8, 119:38

1 Tim. 1:8

14 2 Ki. 17:17

15 Psa. 1:6

Gal. 5:17

18 Gen. 6:5, 8:21

22 Psa. 1:2

2 Cor. 4:16

Eph. 3:16

Col. 3:9, 10

23 Rom. 6:13, 19

Gal. 5:17

25 1 Cor. 15:57

as a slave under sin;

15. Because what I am working out myself, I do not know. For what I do not desire to do, this I do; moreover, what I hate, this *is what* I do.

16. But if I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good.

17. So then, I am no longer working it out myself; rather, it is sin *that is* dwelling within me;

18. Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good. For the desire to do good is present within me; but how to work out that which is good, I do not find.

19. For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing.

20. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is* dwelling within me.

21. Consequently, I find this law *in my members*, that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me.

22. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man;

23. But I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members.

24. O *what a* wretched man I am! Who shall save me from the body of this death?

25. I thank God *for His salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of this, on the one hand, I myself serve the law of God with *my* mind; but on the other hand, with the flesh, *I serve* the law of sin.

*The phrase, "released from the law" means that through the death of Jesus Christ and the symbolic death by water baptism into the death of Jesus Christ, that Jews and Israelites have been released from the covenant marriage law that bound them to the Old Covenant. It does not mean that New Covenant Christians are released from the obligation to keep the commandments and laws of God (Matt. 5:17-20). Rather, they are now to obey the commandments and laws of God in the newness of spirit of the law and not just the letter of the law (Rom. 7:6)

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit;
2. Because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death.
3. For what *was* impossible for the law to do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;
4. In order that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit:
5. For those who walk according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but those who walk according to *the* Spirit mind the things of the Spirit.
6. For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace
7. Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can it *be*.
8. But those who are in *the* flesh cannot please God.
9. However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you. But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.
10. But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.
11. Now if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you.
12. So then, brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to *the* flesh;
13. Because if you are living accord-

Chap. 8

- 1 Gal. 5:16
- 2 Rom. 6:18, 22, 7:24, 25
- 1 Cor. 15:45
- 3 Acts 13:39
- 2 Cor. 5:21
- Gal. 3:13
- Heb. 7:18
- 4 Rom. 8:1
- 5 John 3:6
- Gal. 5:22
- 6 Gal. 6:8
- 7 Jas. 4:4
- 1 Cor. 2:14
- 9 John 3:34
- Gal. 4:6
- 11 Acts 2:24
- 1 Cor. 6:14
- 2 Cor. 4:14
- 12 Rom. 6:7, 14
- 13 Gal. 6:8
- Eph. 4:22
- 14 Gal. 5:18
- 15 Is. 56:5
- Mark 14:36
- 1 John 4:18
- 1 Cor. 2:12
- 2 Tim. 1:7
- Heb. 2:15
- 16 Eph. 1:13
- 17 Acts 26:18
- Phil. 1:29
- 18 1 Pet. 1:6
- 2 Cor. 4:17
- 19 2 Pet. 3:13
- 20 Gen. 3:19
- 22 Jer. 12:11
- 23 Luke 20:36, 21:28
- 2 Cor. 5:2, 5
- Eph. 1:14, 4:30
- 24 2 Cor. 5:7
- Heb. 11:1

ing to *the* flesh, you shall die; but if by *the* Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live.

14. For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God.

15. Now you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, "Abba, Father."

16. The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God.

17. Now if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him.

18. For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory that shall be revealed in us.

19. For the earnest expectation of the creation itself is awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God;

20. Because the creation was subjected to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who subjected *it* in hope,

21. In order that the creation itself might be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

22. For we know that all the creation is groaning together and travailing together until now.

23. And not only *that*, but even we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, also groan within ourselves, awaiting the sonship—the redemption of our bodies.

24. For by hope we were saved; but hope that is seen is not hope; for why would anyone still be hoping for what he sees?

25. But if we hope for what we do not see, we ourselves wait for it with patience.

26. Now in the same way also, the Spirit is conjointly helping our weaknesses because we do not fully understand what we should pray for, according as it is necessary, but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be expressed *by us*.

27. And the one Who searches the hearts comprehends what the strivings of the Spirit *are* because it makes intercession for *the* saints according to *the will of God*.

28. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose

29. Because those whom He did foreknow, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His own Son, that He might be *the* firstborn among many brethren.

30. Now whom He predestinated, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

31. What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us?

32. He Who did not spare even His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how shall He not also grant us all things together with Him?

33. Who shall bring an accusation against *the* elect of God? God *is the one* Who justifies.

34. Who *is* the one that condemns? *It is* Christ Who died, but rather, Who is raised again, Who is even *now* at the right hand of God, *and* Who is also making intercession for us.

35. What shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

36. Accordingly, it is written, "For Your sake we are killed all the day long; we are reckoned as sheep for *the* slaughter."

26 Mat. 20:22
Jas. 4:3
Eph. 6:18
27 1 Chr. 28:9
Acts 1:24
1 John 5:14
28 2 Tim. 1:9
29 1 John 3:2
2 Cor. 3:18
Eph. 1:5
Col. 1:15
2 Tim. 2:19
Heb. 1:6
30 John 17:22
1 Pet. 2:9
1 Cor. 6:11
Eph. 2:6
31 Num. 14:9
Psa. 118:6
32 Rom. 4:25,
5:6, 10
33 Is. 50:8, 9
Rev. 12:10
34 Job 34:29
Mark 16:19
1 John 2:1
Col. 3:1
Heb. 1:3,
7:25, 9:24
36 Psa. 44:22
2 Cor. 4:11

37 1 John 4:4
1 Cor. 15:57
38 Eph. 1:21

Chap. 9

1 2 Cor. 1:23
Gal. 1:20
1 Tim. 2:7
2 Rom. 10:1
3 Ex. 32:32
4 Ex. 4:22
Deut. 14:1
1 Sam. 4:21
1 Ki. 8:11
Psa. 147:19
Acts 3:25,
13:32
Eph. 2:12
Heb. 9:1
5 Deut. 10:15
Jer. 23:6
Luke 3:23
Heb. 1:8
6 Num. 23:19
John 8:39
Gal. 6:16
7 Gen. 21:12
Gal. 4:23
8 Gal. 4:28
9 Gen. 18:10
10 Gen. 25:21

37. But in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him Who loved us.

38. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39. Nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which *is* in Christ Jesus our Lord.

CHAPTER NINE

1. I am telling you the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my own conscience in *the* Holy Spirit bears witness with me

2. That it is a great grief to me and an unceasing sorrow in my heart,

3. Causing me *even* to wish myself to be accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to *the* flesh;

4. Who are Israelites, to whom *is* the sonship and the glory, and the covenants and the giving of the law, and the service and the promises;

5. Who are of *the* fathers, and from whom *came* the Christ according to *the* flesh, Who is over all—God blessed into the ages. Amen.

6. However, this does not mean that the word of God has failed because not all of those who *descend* from Israel *are* Israel,

7. Nor because they are Abraham's seed does it mean that they *are* all children of *the promise*. But, "In Isaac shall your seed be called."

8. That is, those who are the children of the flesh *are* not the children of God; rather, the children of the promise are reckoned as *the* seed

9. Because this *is the* word of promise: "According to this set time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son."

10. And not only *that*, but Rebecca also having conceived by one, Isaac our father,

11. But before *the children* had been born, or had done anything good or evil (in order that the purpose of God according to His own selection might stand—not of works, but of Him Who calls),

12. It was said to her, “The elder shall serve the younger.”

13. Accordingly, it is written, “Jacob I loved, and Esau I hated.”

14. What then shall we say? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? **MAY IT NEVER BE!**

15. For He said to Moses, “I will show mercy to whomever I show mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I have compassion.”

16. So then, *it is* not of the one who wills, nor of the one who runs; rather, *it is* of God, Who shows mercy.

17. For the Scripture said to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I raised you up in order that I might show in you My power, so that My name may be declared in all the earth.”

18. So then, He shows mercy to whom He will, and He hardens whom He will.

19. Will you then reply to me, “Why does He yet find fault? For who has opposed His purpose?”

20. Yes, indeed, O man, who are you to answer against God? Shall the thing that is formed say to the one who formed *it*, “Why did you make me this way?”

21. Or doesn’t the potter have authority over the clay to make from the same lump of clay one vessel unto honor, and another vessel unto dishonor?

22. And *who dares to question His purpose* if God, willing to show *His* wrath and to make known His power, chose in much long-suffering to put up with *the* vessels of wrath which were created for destruction;

23. In order that He might make known the riches of His glory unto *the*

11 Rom. 4:17

12 Gen. 25:23

13 Mal. 1:2, 3

Mat. 10:37

14 Deut. 32:4

Job 8:3

15 Ex. 33:19

17 Ex. 9:16

Gal. 3:8

19 2 Chr. 20:6

Dan. 4:35

20 Is. 29:16

21 Prov. 16:4

2 Tim. 2:20

22 1 Pet. 2:8

1 Thes. 5:9

23 Rom. 8:28-30

Col. 1:27

vessels of mercy, which He prepared before for glory,

24. Those of us whom He also called, not from among *the* Jews only, but also from among *the* Gentiles?

25. Accordingly, He also said in Hosea, “I will call those who *are* not My people, ‘My people,’ and those who *were* not beloved, ‘Beloved.’

26. And it shall be, in the place where it was said to them, ‘You *are* not My people,’ there they shall be called *the* sons of *the* living God.”

27. But Isaiah cried out concerning Israel, “Although the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.

28. For *He is* accomplishing and limiting *the* matter in righteousness; because *the* Lord will limit *the* matter *He is doing* upon the earth.”

29. Accordingly, Isaiah also said before, “Unless *the* Lord of hosts had left us a seed, we would have become as Sodom, and we would have been made like Gomorrah.”

30. What then shall we say? That *the* Gentiles, who did not follow after righteousness, have attained righteousness, even *the* righteousness that *is* by faith.

31. But Israel, although they followed after a law of righteousness, did not attain to a law of righteousness.

32. Why? Because *they did* not *seek it* by faith, but by works of law*; for they stumbled at the Stone of stumbling,

33. Exactly as it is written: “Behold, I place in Sion a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense, but everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed.”

CHAPTER TEN

1. Brethren, the earnest desire of my heart and my supplication to God for Israel is for salvation.

24 Rom. 3:29

25 Hos. 2:23

26 Hos. 1:10

27 Is. 10:22

Rom. 11:5

28 Is. 28:22

29 Is. 1:9,

13:19

Jer. 50:40

Lam. 3:22

30 Rom. 1:17,

4:11

31 Rom. 10:2

Gal. 5:4

32 Luke 2:34

1 Cor. 1:23

33 Psa. 118:22

Is. 8:14,

28:16

Mat. 21:42

1 Pet. 2:6-8

Rom. 10:11

*See Appendix N, “What Is Meant by the Works of the Law?” p. 831.

2. For I testify of them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.
 3. For they, being ignorant of the righteousness *that* comes from God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.
 4. For Christ *is the end of works* of law* for righteousness to everyone who believes.
 5. For Moses wrote *concerning* the righteousness that *comes through* the law, "The man who has practiced those things shall live by them."
 6. But the righteousness *that comes* through faith speaks after this manner: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who shall ascend up to heaven?' "(that is, to bring Christ-down)
 7. "Or, 'Who shall descend into the abyss?' "(that is, to bring Christ up from among *the* dead.)
 8. But what does it say? "The word is near to you, in your mouth and in your heart." This is the word of faith that we are proclaiming:
 9. That if you confess with your mouth *the* Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from *the* dead, you shall be saved.
 10. For with *the* heart one believes unto righteousness, and with *the* mouth one confesses unto salvation
 11. Because the scripture says, "Everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed."
 12. For there is no difference between Jew and Greek, because the same Lord of all *is* rich toward all who call upon Him.
 13. For everyone who calls on the name of *the* Lord shall be saved.
 14. How then shall they call on *Him* in Whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in *Him* of Whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without preaching?
 15. And how shall they preach, unless

Chap. 10

2 Acts 21:20,
22:3
Rom. 9:31
Gal. 1:14
3 Rom. 1:17
Phil. 3:9
4 Mat. 5:17
Gal. 3:24
5 Lev. 18:5
Neh. 9:29
Ezek. 20:11
Gal. 3:12
6 Deut. 30:12
8 Deut. 30:14
9 Mat. 10:32
Luke 12:8
Acts 8:37
11 Is. 28:16,
49:23
Jer. 17:7
12 Acts 10:36,
15:9
Rom. 3:22
Eph. 1:7,
2:4, 7
1 Tim. 2:5
13 Joel 2:32
Acts 2:21,
9:14
14 Tit. 1:3
15 Is. 52:7
Nah. 1:15

Chap. 11

1 1 Sam. 12:22
Jer. 31:37
2 Cor. 11:22
Phil. 3:5
2 Rom. 8:29
3 1 Ki. 19:10
4 1 Ki. 19:18

they be sent? Accordingly, it is written, "How beautiful *are* the feet of those who announce the gospel of peace, and those who announce the good news of good things!"

16. But all have not obeyed the gospel because as Isaiah said, "Lord, who has believed our report?"

17. So then, faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing through *the* Word of God.

18. But I say, did they not hear? Yes, indeed, *for it is written*, "Their voices went out into all the earth; their words went out even to the ends of the habitable world."

19. Nevertheless, I say, did not Israel know? First, Moses said, "I will provoke you to jealousy through *those who are* not a people. I will anger you through a people without understanding."

20. Then Isaiah was very bold and said, "I was found by those who were not seeking Me, *and* I was revealed to those who were not inquiring after Me."

21. However, to Israel he said, "All day long I have stretched out My hands to a people who are disobeying and contradicting."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. Now then I say, did God Himself repudiate His people? MAY IT NEVER BE! For I also am an Israelite, of *the* seed of Abraham, of *the* tribe of Benjamin.

2. God did not repudiate His people whom He foreknew. Don't you know what the scripture says in *the account of* Elijah? How he was pleading with God against Israel, saying,

3. "Lord, they have killed your prophets, and they have torn down your altars; and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life."

4. But what did the answer from God say to him? "I have reserved for My-

*See Appendix N, "What Is Meant by the Works of the Law?" p. 831.

self seven thousand men who have not bowed a knee to Baal."

5. Now then, in the same way, at the present time also there is a remnant according to *the* election of grace.

6. But if *the election is* by grace, *it is* no longer by works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. But if *it is* of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.

7. What then? What Israel was seeking *through works*, this it did not obtain. But the election obtained *it through grace*, and the rest were hardened,

8. (According as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of slumber, eyes that are not able to see, and ears that are not able to hear,") unto this day.

9. David also says, "Let their table be for a snare and for a trap, and for a stumbling block, and for a recompense to them;

10. Let their eyes be darkened so that they are not able to see, and bow down their backs continually."

11. Therefore I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? MAY IT NEVER BE! But by their transgression, salvation *has come* to the Gentiles for the purpose of provoking them to jealousy.

12. Now if their transgression *be the* riches of *the* world, and their failure *be the* wealth of *the* Gentiles, how much more *will* their fullness *be*?

13. I am speaking to you, *the* Gentiles, inasmuch as I am an apostle of *the* Gentiles—I magnify my service,

14. If by any means I might provoke to jealousy *those of* my flesh, and might save some among them.

15. For if their casting away *be the* reconciliation of *the* world, what *shall* the receiving of *them be*, except life from *the* dead?

16. Now if the firstfruit *is* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*; and if the root *is* holy, the branches *are* also *holy*.

5 Rom. 9:27

6 Deut. 9:4, 5

Rom. 4:4, 5

Gal. 5:4

7 Rom. 9:31

8 Deut. 29:4

Is. 6:9,

29:10

Jer. 5:21

Ezek. 12:2

Mat. 13:14

John 12:40

Acts 28:26

9 Psa. 69:22

10 Psa. 69:23

11 Acts 13:46,

18:6

Rom. 10:19

13 Acts 9:15

Gal. 1:16

Eph. 3:8

1 Tim. 2:7

14 Jas. 5:20

1 Cor. 9:22

1 Tim. 4:16

16 Lev. 23:10

Jas. 1:18

17. But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and you became a fellow partaker of the root and of the fatness of the olive tree,

18. Do not boast against the branches; but if you are boasting against *them*, remember that you do not bear the root; rather, the root bears you.

19. Will you then say, "The branches were broken off in order that I might be grafted in"?

20. *That is* true! Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be high-minded, but fear;

21. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He not spare you either.

22. Therefore, behold *the* graciousness and *the* severity of God: upon those who fell, severity; and upon you, graciousness, if you continue in *His* graciousness; otherwise you also will be cut off.

23. And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, shall be grafted in because God is able to graft them in again.

24. For if you were cut off from an olive tree which by nature is wild, and contrary to nature were grafted into a good olive tree, how much more shall those who according to nature *were* from *the good olive tree* be grafted back into their own olive tree?

25. For I do not wish you to be ignorant of this mystery, brethren, in order that you may not be wise in your own conceits: that a partial hardening of *the heart* has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in;

26. And so all Israel shall be saved, according as it is written: "Out of Sion shall come the Deliverer, and He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

27. For this *is* My covenant, which I

will make with them when I have taken away their sins."

28. On the one hand, concerning the gospel, *they are* enemies for your sakes; but on the other hand, concerning the election, *they are* beloved for the fathers' sakes;

29. Because the gifts and the calling of God *are* never revoked.

30. For just as you once did not believe God, but have now been shown mercy through their unbelief,

31. In the same way also, they have not believed at this time in order that through the mercy shown to you, they also may have mercy shown *to them*.

32. For God has given them all over to unbelief in order that He might show mercy to all.

33. O *the* depth of *the* riches of both *the* wisdom and *the* knowledge of God! How unfathomable *are* His judgments and unsearchable *are* His ways!

34. For who did know *the* mind of *the* Lord, or who became His counselor?

35. Or who first gave to Him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?

36. For from Him, and through Him, and unto Him *are* all things; to Him *be* the glory into the ages of eternity. Amen.

CHAPTER TWELVE

1. I exhort you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy *and* well pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service.

2. Do not conform yourselves to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind in order that you may prove what *is* well pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God.

3. For I say through the grace that was given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think;

28 Deut. 7:8

29 Num. 23:19

30 Eph. 2:2

Col. 3:7

32 Rom. 3:9

33 Job 11:7

Psa. 36:6,

92:5

34 Job 15:8,

36:22

Is. 40:13

Jer. 23:18

35 Job 35:7

36 Col. 1:16

Heb. 13:21

Rev. 1:6

Chap. 12

1 1 Pet. 2:5

Rom. 12:6

2 Cor. 10:1

Heb. 10:20

2 1 John 2:15

Eph. 4:23

Col. 3:10

1 Thes. 4:3

3 Prov. 25:27

Gal. 2:9

Eph. 4:7

4 1 Cor. 12:12

Eph. 4:16

5 1 Cor. 10:17

Eph. 1:23

6 Acts 11:27

Rom. 12:3

1 Cor. 12:4

7 Eph. 4:11

8 Mat. 6:1-3

Acts 15:32,

20:28

2 Cor. 9:7

9 Psa. 34:14

1 Tim. 1:5

10 Phil. 2:3

Heb. 13:1

12 Luke 10:20,

18:1, 21:19

13 1 Cor. 16:1

1 Tim. 3:2

14 Mat. 5:44

15 1 Cor. 12:26

16 Prov. 3:7

Jer. 45:5

Phil. 2:2

17 Mat. 5:39

2 Cor. 8:21

but to think with sound-mindedness, as God has divided to each one a measure of faith.

4. For even as we have many members in one body, but all members do not have the same function;

5. Likewise, we, being many, are one body in Christ, and each one members of one another.

6. But each one has different gifts according to the grace that is given to us—whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the measure of faith;

7. Or service, *let us tend* to service; or the one who is teaching, *let him tend* to teaching;

8. Or the one who is encouraging, *let him tend* to encouragement; the one who is giving, *let it be* with generosity; the one who is taking the lead, *let it be* with diligence; the one who is showing mercy, *let it be* with cheerfulness.

9. *Let* love *be* without hypocrisy, abhorring that which is evil *and* cleaving to that which is good.

10. *Be* kindly affectioned toward one another in brotherly love. *Let* each esteem the other more highly than himself.

11. *Be* not slack in business. *Be* fervent in spirit. *Be* timely in serving.

12. *Be* rejoicing in hope. *Be* patient in tribulation. *Be* steadfastly continuing in prayer.

13. Contribute to the needs of the saints, *and* strive to be hospitable.

14. Bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse.

15. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep;

16. *Be* of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high ambitions; rather, be accommodating with those of low estate. Do not be wise in your own eyes.

17. Do not render to anyone evil for evil, *but* be prepared to do what is right in the sight of all men.

18. If possible, as much as is your part, be at peace with all men.

19. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves; rather, leave *this* to *God's* wrath; for it is written, " 'Vengeance is Mine! I will recompense,' says *the* Lord."

20. Therefore, if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for in doing this you will be heaping coals of fire on his head.

21. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1. Let everyone be subject to the higher authorities because there is no authority except from God; and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God;

2. So then, the one who sets himself against the authority is resisting the ordinance of God; and those who resist shall receive judgment to themselves.

3. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil *works*. Do you desire not to be afraid of the authority? *Then* practice good, and you will have praise from it;

4. For he is a servant of God to you for good. But if you are practicing evil, have fear! For he does not wear the sword in vain because he is a servant of God, an avenger for wrath to the one who is practicing evil.

5. Consequently, *it is* necessary to be subject to *authority*, not only because of wrath, but also because of conscience.

6. For this cause, you are also obligated to pay tribute; for they are servants of God, continually engaged in this very thing.

7. Therefore, render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

18 Heb. 12:14
19 Lev. 19:18
Deut. 32:35
20 Mat. 5:44

Chap. 13

1 Dan. 2:21
Rom. 13:3
2 Tit. 3:1
3 1 Pet. 2:14
5 Eccl. 8:2
1 Pet. 2:19
7 Mat. 22:21
Luke 20:25

8. Do not be indebted to anyone for anything, unless *it is* to love one another. For the one who loves another has fulfilled *the* law

9. Because *it says*, "You shall not commit adultery. You shall not commit murder. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness. You shall not lust." And if *there be* any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, *even* by this *standard*: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

10. Love does not do any wrong to *its* neighbor; therefore, love *is* the full expression of *God's* law.

11. Now *consider* this, knowing the time, that *it is* already *the* hour *that* we should be roused out of sleep; because our salvation *is* nearer now than when we first believed.

12. The night is almost over, and the day is drawing near; therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

13. Let us walk decently, as in *the* day: not in reveling and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and emulation.

14. But *let us* put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and not make any allowance for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

1. Receive the one who is weak in the faith, but not for divisive arguments.

2. Now on the one hand, one believes he may eat all things *that are lawful*; but on the other hand, another one, who is weak, eats only vegetables.

3. The one who eats *meat* should not despise the one who does not eat *it*. And the one who does not eat *meat* should not condemn the one who eats *it*, for God has received him.*

4. Who are you to be judging another man's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he shall be made

8 Gal. 5:14
1 Tim. 1:5
9 Ex. 20:13
Lev. 19:18
Mat. 19:18
Mark 12:31
Jas. 2:8
10 Mat. 22:40
11 1 Cor. 15:34
Eph. 5:14
12 Eph. 5:11,
6:13
13 Prov. 23:20
Jas. 3:14
1 Cor. 6:9
Phil. 4:8
14 Gal. 3:27,
5:16
Eph. 4:24

Chap. 14

1 1 Cor. 8:9
2 1 Cor. 10:25
Tit. 1:15
3 Col. 2:16
4 Jas. 4:12

*In the KJV, verse 5 reads: "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth ever day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." From this incorrect translation, many falsely assume that Paul is giving license to reject the seventh day Sabbath and permission to observe any day that a person may desire. However, verse 17 shows that the subject of Chapter 14 is "eating and drinking," not whether to keep holy the (continued on next page)

to stand because God is able to make him stand.

5. Again, on the one hand, someone may prefer one day above another day *for eating meat*; but on the other hand, another may hold every day *to be alike*. Let each one be fully convinced in his own mind.*

6. The one who regards the day *in his eating* is regarding *it to the Lord*; and the one who does not regard the day is not regarding *it to the Lord*. The one who eats *meat* is eating *to the Lord* because he gives thanks to God; and the one who does not eat *meat* is abstaining *to the Lord*, and is giving thanks to God.

7. For no one among us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.

8. For if we live, we should live unto the Lord; and if we die, we should die unto the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.

9. *It is* for this very purpose *that* Christ both died and rose and is living again, so that He might be Lord over both *the dead and the living*.

10. Now then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you despise your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ

11. Because it is written, " 'For *as I live*,' says *the Lord*, 'every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.' "

12. So then, each one of us shall give account of himself to God.

13. Therefore, we should no longer judge one another, but judge this instead: Do not put an occasion of stumbling or a cause of offense before your brother.

14. I understand and am persuaded by *the Lord Jesus* that nothing *is* common of itself, except to the one who regards anything to be common—to that one *it is* common.

15. But if, because of meat, your

5 Gal. 4:10
6 1 Cor. 10:31
Gal. 4:10
1 Tim. 4:3
7 1 Pet. 4:2
1 Cor. 6:19
Gal. 2:20
1 Thes. 5:10
9 Acts 10:36
2 Cor. 5:15
10 Mat. 25:31
2 Cor. 5:10
11 Is. 45:23
12 Mat. 12:36
1 Pet. 4:5
Gal. 6:5
13 1 Cor. 8:9
14 1 Cor. 10:25
15 1 Cor. 8:11

16 Rom. 12:17
17 1 Cor. 8:8
18 2 Cor. 8:21
19 Rom. 12:18
1 Cor. 14:12
1 Thes. 5:11
20 Mat. 15:11
Rom. 14:15
1 Cor. 8:9
21 1 Cor. 8:13
22 1 John 3:21
23 Tit. 1:15

Chap. 15

1 Rom. 14:1
Gal. 6:1
2 Rom. 14:19
1 Cor. 10:33
3 Psa. 69:9
Mat. 26:39
4 1 Cor. 10:11

brother is offended, you are no longer walking according to love. With your meat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died.

16. Therefore, do not let your good be evil spoken of.

17. For the kingdom of God is not *a matter of eating and drinking*; rather, *it is* righteousness and peace and joy *in the Holy Spirit*

18. Because the one who serves Christ in these things *is* well pleasing to God and acceptable among men.

19. So then, we should pursue the things of peace and the things that edify one another.

20. Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of meat. All things *that are lawful are* indeed pure; but *it is* an evil thing for someone to cause an occasion of stumbling through his eating.

21. *It is* better not to eat meat, or drink wine, or *anything else* by which your brother stumbles, or is offended, or is made weak.

22. Do you have faith? Have *it* to yourself before God. Blessed *is* the one who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

23. But the one who doubts is condemned if he eats because *his eating* is not of faith; for everything that is not of faith is sin.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

1. Now we who *are* strong *in the faith* are obligated to support the ones who are weak, and not to please ourselves.

2. Accordingly, let each one of us please *his* neighbor for good, unto edification;

3. For even Christ did not please Himself; rather, as it is written, "The reproaches of those who are reproaching You have fallen upon Me."

4. For all the things that were written before were written for our instruc-

*(continued) seventh day Sabbath, or the first day of the week, or any other day. The original dispute was between vegetarians and those who ate meat, verses 1-3. Likewise, in verse 6 the dispute over "regarding one day" over "another day" was about on which day one preferred to eat meat—not which day to keep holy. At no time did God the Father, Jesus Christ or the Apostle Paul ever give license to anyone to change the Fourth Commandment concerning the Holy Sabbath.

tion, so that through patient endurance and encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

5. Now may the God of patience and encouragement grant you to be like-minded toward one another according to Christ Jesus,

6. So that with one accord and one mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7. Therefore, receive one another, according as Christ has also received us, to *the* glory of God.

8. Now I tell *you that* Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for *the* truth of God, so that He might confirm the promises *given* to the fathers;

9. And *that* the Gentiles might glorify God for *His* mercy, exactly as it is written: "For this cause I will confess You among *the* Gentiles, and I will praise Your name."

10. And again it says, "Rejoice, *all* you Gentiles, with His people";

11. And again, "Praise the Lord, *all* you Gentiles; and praise Him, all you peoples."

12. And again, Isaiah says, "There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that arises shall rule *the* Gentiles: in Him shall *all the* Gentiles hope."

13. May the God of hope fill you now with all joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope *and* in *the* power of *the* Holy Spirit.

14. But I myself am also persuaded concerning you, my brethren, that you are full of goodness, and are being filled with all knowledge, and are able to admonish one another.

15. So then, I have more boldly written to you, brethren, in part *as a way of* reminding you, because of the grace that was given to me by God,

16. In order that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles to perform the holy service of teaching the gospel of God; so that the offering

5 1 Cor. 1:10

6 Acts 4:24

7 Rom. 5:2,

14:1, 3

8 Mat. 15:24

John 1:11

Acts 3:25

2 Cor. 1:20

9 Psa. 18:49

John 10:16

10 Deut. 32:43

11 Psa. 117:1

12 Is. 11:1

Rev. 5:5

13 Rom. 12:12

14 2 Pet. 1:12

1 John 2:21

1 Cor. 8:1

15 Rom. 1:5,

12:3

Gal. 1:15

16 Is. 66:20

Rom. 11:13

Gal. 2:7-9

Phil. 2:17

1 Tim. 2:7

2 Tim. 1:11

up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by *the* Holy Spirit.

17. Therefore, I have *cause for* boasting in Christ Jesus *as to* the things pertaining to God.

18. For I will not presume to speak about anything that Christ has not worked out by me for *the* obedience of *the* Gentiles, through word and work,

19. Through *the* power of signs and wonders, in *the* power of *the* Spirit of God; so that in a circuit from Jerusalem to Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ;

20. And indeed, I have aspired to preach the gospel of Christ where the name of Christ was not known, so that I might not build on another's foundation;

21. But even as it is written: "Those to whom He had not been proclaimed shall see; and those who had not heard shall understand";

22. For this reason also, I have been hindered many times from coming to you.

23. But now, there being no place in these regions *that has not heard the gospel*, and having a great desire to come to you for many years,

24. Whenever I may go to Spain, I will come to you because I hope to see you while passing through *Rome*, and from there to be sent forward by you after I have enjoyed your company for a while.

25. But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints

26. Because *those in* Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a certain contribution for the poor saints who *are* in Jerusalem.

27. Now, they took pleasure *in doing this*, and their debtors they are because if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they ought *in turn* to minister to them even in physical things.

28. Therefore, when I have finished

this *task*, and have safely delivered into their hands the fruit that was collected, I will set off toward Spain *and* will come to you.

29. I know that, when I do come to you, I shall come in *the* fullness of the blessing of *the* gospel of Christ.

30. Now I exhort you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in prayers to God on my behalf

31. In order that I may be delivered from those in Judea who are unbelievers, and that my service in *bringing this fruit* to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints;

32. So that I may come to you in joy by *the* will of God, and *that* I may be refreshed with you.

33. Now the God of peace *be* with you all. Amen.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

1. Now I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea,

2. *Charging* you to receive her in *the* Lord, in a manner worthy of saints, and to assist her in whatever she may need from you because she also has been of great assistance to many, including myself.

3. Salute Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,

4. (Who have laid down their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;)

5. And salute the church at their house. Salute Epenetus, my beloved, who is *the* first fruit of Achaia for Christ.

6. Salute Mary, who labored much for us.

7. Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

8. Salute Amplias, my beloved in *the* Lord.

29 Rom. 1:11
30 2 Cor. 1:11
Phil. 2:1
Col. 4:12

31 2 Cor. 8:4

32 Acts 18:21

Jas. 4:15

Rom. 1:10

1 Cor. 4:19,

16:18

2 Cor. 7:13

2 Tim. 1:16

Philem. 7,

20

33 Rom. 16:20

1 Cor. 14:33

2 Cor. 13:11

Phil. 4:9

1 Thes. 5:23

2 Thes. 3:16

Heb. 13:20

Chap. 16

1 Acts 18:18

2 Phil. 2:29

3 John 5:6

3 Acts 18:2,

18, 26

5 1 Cor.

16:15, 19

Col. 4:15

Philem. 2

7 Gal. 1:22

9. Salute Urbane, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys.

10. Salute Apelles, who *is* approved in Christ. Salute those of the *household* of Aristobulus.

11. Salute Herodion, my kinsman. Salute those of the *household* of Narcissus who are in *the* Lord.

12. Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labor in *the* Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, who labored much in *the* Lord.

13. Salute Rufus, who *is* chosen in *the* Lord, and his mother and mine.

14. Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren with them.

15. Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints with them.

16. Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

17. Now I exhort you, brethren, to take note of those who are causing divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and shun them;

18. Because these are the sort who are not serving our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, and are deceiving the hearts of the innocent by smooth talking and flattery.

19. For *the report* of your obedience has reached to all. Therefore, I rejoice over you. However, I desire that you be wise indeed concerning good, but innocent concerning evil.

20. But the God of peace will bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

21. Timothy, my fellow worker, and Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.

22. I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in *the* Lord.

23. Gaius, my host, and *that* of the whole church, salutes you. Erastus, the steward of the city, and Quartus, a brother, salute you.

To the Romans, written from Corinth;
delivered by Phoebe, a deaconess of
the church in Cenchrea

The First Epistle to the Corinthians

CHAPTER ONE

17. For Christ did not send me to bap-

tize, but to preach the gospel—not with *the* wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ be made void.

18. For to those who are perishing, the preaching of the cross is foolishness; but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God.

19. For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will nullify the understanding of those who understand.”

20. Where *is the* wise? Where *is the* scribe? Where *is the* disputer of this age? Did not God make foolish the wisdom of this world?

21. For since in the wisdom of God the world through *its own* wisdom did not know God, it pleased God to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching.

22. For *the* Jews require a sign, and *the* Greeks seek after wisdom;

23. But we proclaim Christ crucified. To *the* Jews *it is* a cause of offense, and to the Greeks *it is* foolishness;

24. But to those who are called—both Jews and Greeks—Christ *is* God’s power and God’s wisdom

25. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26. For you see your calling, brethren, that *there are* not many who are wise according to the flesh, not many who are powerful, not many who are high-born *among you*.

27. Rather, God has chosen the foolish things of the world, so that He might put to shame those who are wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world so that He might put to shame the strong things.

28. And the low-born of the world, and the despised has God chosen—even the things that are counted as nothing—in order that He might bring to nothing the things that are;

29. So that no flesh might boast in His presence.

18 Acts 17:18
Rom. 1:16
1 Cor. 15:2
2 Cor. 2:15
19 Is. 29:14
20 Job 12:17
Is. 33:18,
44:25
Rom. 1:22
21 Mat. 11:25
Luke 10:21
Rom. 1:20
22 Mat. 12:38
Mark 8:11
John 4:48
23 Is. 8:14
Luke 2:34
John 6:60
1 Cor. 2:14
Gal. 5:11
24 Rom. 1:4
Col. 2:3
26 John 7:48
27 Mat. 11:25
28 Rom. 4:17
1 Cor. 2:6
29 Rom. 3:27
Eph. 2:9

30 Jer. 23:5
John 17:19
Rom. 4:25
1 Cor. 1:24
2 Cor. 5:21
Eph. 1:7
31 Jer. 9:23

Chap. 2

1 1 Cor. 1:6,
17
2 Gal. 6:14
Phil. 3:8
3 Acts 18:1
2 Cor. 4:7
4 2 Pet. 1:16
Rom. 15:19
5 2 Cor. 4:7
6 1 Cor. 1:28,
14:20
2 Cor. 1:12
Heb. 5:14
7 Eph. 3:5
Col. 1:26
8 Mat. 11:25
Luke 23:34
9 Is. 64:4
10 Mat. 13:11
11 Prov. 20:27
Jer. 17:9
Rom. 11:33

30. But you are of Him in Christ Jesus, Who was made to us wisdom from God—even righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption;

31. So that, as it is written, “The one who boasts, let him boast in *the* Lord.”

CHAPTER TWO

1. And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with superiority of speech or wisdom, in proclaiming the testimony of God to you.

2. For I decided not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

3. And I was in weakness and in fear and in much trembling *when* I was with you;

4. And my message and my preaching *was* not in persuasive words of human wisdom; rather, *it was* in demonstration of *the* Spirit and of power;

5. So that your faith might not be in *the* wisdom of men, but in *the* power of God.

6. Now we speak wisdom among the *spiritually* mature; however, *it is* not *the* wisdom of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nothing.

7. Rather, we speak *the* wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom* that God foreordained before the ages unto our glory

8. Which not one of the rulers of this world has known (for if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory);

9. But according as it is written, “*The* eye has not seen, nor *the* ear heard, neither have entered into *the* heart of man, *the* things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”

10. But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God.

11. For who among men understands

the things of man except *by* the spirit of man which *is* in him? In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except *by* the Spirit of God.

12. Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that *is* of God, so that we might know the things graciously given to us by God;

13. Which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in *words* taught by *the* Holy Spirit *in order to* communicate spiritual things by spiritual *means*.

14. But *the* natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand *them* because they are spiritually discerned.

15. However, the one who is spiritual discerns all things, but he himself is discerned by no one.

16. For who has known *the* mind of *the* Lord? Who shall instruct Him? But we have *the* mind of Christ.

CHAPTER THREE

1. And, I, brethren, was not able to speak to you as to those who are spiritual, but as to those who are carnal—*even* as to babes in Christ.

2. I gave you milk to drink, and not meat; for you were not yet able *to receive spiritual meat*; and neither are you able now,

3. For you are still carnal. For since envy and contention and divisions *are* among you, are you not carnal? And *are you not* walking according to human *ways*?

4. When someone says, "I am of Paul," and another one *says*, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal?

5. Who then is Paul? And who *is* Apollos? *They are* but ministers through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave to each one.

6. I planted *and* Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.

12 Rom. 8:15
14 Mat. 16:23
Jude 19
1 Cor. 1:18, 23
15 1 John 4:1
16 Job 15:8
John 15:15

Chap. 3

1 1 Cor. 2:14, 15
Heb. 5:13
2 John 16:12
1 Pet. 2:2
Heb. 5:12
3 Jas. 3:16
Gal. 5:20
5 1 Pet. 4:11
Rom. 12:3
2 Cor. 3:3
6 Acts 18:4, 24, 19:1
2 Cor. 3:5, 10:14

7. Therefore, neither is he who plants anything, nor he who waters; for *it is* God Who gives the increase.

8. Now he who plants and he who waters are one, but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.

9. For we are God's fellow workers; *and* you are God's husbandry, *even* God's building.

10. As a wise architect, according to the grace of God that was given to me, I have laid *the* foundation, and another is building upon *it*. But let each one take heed how he builds upon *it*.

11. For no one is able to lay any other foundation besides that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12. Now if anyone builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay *or* stubble,

13. The work of each one shall be manifested; for the day *of trial* will declare *it*, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall prove what kind of work each one's is.

14. If the work that anyone has built endures, he shall receive a reward.

15. If the work of anyone is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but *he* himself shall be saved, yet as through fire.

16. Don't you understand that you are God's temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you?

17. If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy him because the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

18. Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks *himself* to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, so that he may be wise *in God's sight*.

19. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God for it is written, "He entraps the wise in their own craftiness."

20. And again, "*The* Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain."

21. Therefore, do not let anyone boast

7 2 Cor. 12:11
Gal. 6:3
8 Psa. 62:12
Rom. 2:6
Gal. 6:4, 5
9 Acts 15:4
2 Cor. 6:1
Eph. 2:20
Col. 2:7
Heb. 3:3, 4
10 Rom. 1:5, 12:3
1 Cor. 4:5
11 Is. 28:16
Mat. 16:18
2 Cor. 11:4
Eph. 2:20
13 Luke 2:35
1 Pet. 1:7
16 2 Cor. 6:16
18 Prov. 3:7
19 Job 5:13
20 Psa. 94:11
21 2 Cor. 4:5

I Corinthians 3 - 5

in men; for all things are yours,
22. Whether Paul, or Apollos, or
Cephas, or *the* world, or life, or death,
or things present, or things to come—

23 Rom. 14:8
2 Cor. 10:7
Gal. 3:29
Chap. 4
1 Mat. 24:45

death; for we have become a spectacle
to the world, both to angels and to
men.

10. We *are* fools for the sake of
Christ, but you are wise in Christ; we

2. You are puffed up and did not grieve instead, so that he who did this deed might be taken out of your midst.
3. For I indeed, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged *concerning* him who has so *shamelessly* committed this *evil deed* as if I were present:
4. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, and my spirit, together with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ
5. To deliver such a one to Satan for *the* destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.
6. Your glorying *is* not good. Don't you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?
7. Therefore, purge out the old leaven, so that you may become a new lump, *even* as you are unleavened. For Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us.
8. For this reason, let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with *the* leaven of malice and wickedness, but with *the* unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.
9. I wrote to you in an epistle not to associate with the sexually immoral;
10. And *yet*, *you can* not altogether *avoid contact* with the sexually immoral of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since you would then have to go out of the world.
11. But now, I have written to you not to associate with anyone who is called a brother, if *he be* either sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a person *you are* not even to eat.
12. For what *responsibility* do I have to judge those who are outside *the church*? Are not you yourselves to judge those who are within?
13. But God judges those who are out-

2 1 Cor. 4:18
2 Cor. 7:7
3 Col. 2:5
4 Mat. 16:19
John 20:23
2 Cor. 2:10
5 Psa. 109:6
Acts 26:18
1 Tim. 1:20
6 1 Cor. 3:21
Gal. 5:9
2 Tim. 2:17
7 Is. 53:7
John 19:14
1 Pet. 1:19
8 Ex. 12:15
Deut. 16:3
Mat. 16:6
Mark 8:15
Luke 12:1
9 2 Cor. 6:14
Eph. 5:11
10 John 17:15
1 John 5:19
1 Cor. 1:20,
10:27
11 Mat. 18:17
2 John 10
Rom. 16:17
Gal. 2:12
12 Mark 4:11
1 Cor. 6:1-4
Col. 4:5
1 Thes. 4:12
13 Deut. 13:5

Chap. 6

2 Psa. 49:14
Dan. 7:22
Mat. 19:28
3 2 Pet. 2:4
4 1 Cor. 5:12
7 Prov. 20:22
Mat. 5:39
Luke 6:29
8 1 Thes. 4:6
9 Gal. 5:21
Eph. 5:5
1 Tim. 1:9
11 1 Cor. 12:2
Heb. 10:22

side. So then, put the wicked person out from among yourselves.

CHAPTER SIX

1. Does anyone among you who has a matter against another dare to go to *a court of law* before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?
2. Don't you know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you unworthy of the most trivial of judgments?
3. Don't you know that we shall judge angels? *How* much more then *the* things of this life?
4. So then, if you have judgments *concerning the* things of this life, *why* do you appoint *as judges* those who have no standing in the church?
5. Now I say *this* to your shame. *Is it* because there is not a wise *man* among you, not even one, who is able to decide between his brothers?
6. Instead, brother goes to *a court of law* with brother, and this before unbelievers.
7. Now therefore, there is altogether an utter fault among you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?
8. Instead, you are doing wrong and defrauding, and you are doing these things *to your* brethren.
9. Don't you know that the unrighteous shall not inherit *the* kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor abusers of themselves as women, nor homosexuals,
10. Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit *the* kingdom of God.
11. And such were some of you; but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

12. All things *that* are lawful *are permitted* to me, but all things *that are lawful* are not beneficial; all things *that* are lawful *are permitted* to me, but I will not be mastered by anything.

13. Foods *are* for the belly, and the belly *is* for foods; but God will destroy both it and those. Now the body *is* not for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

14. And God has also raised the Lord *from the dead*, and will raise us by His *own* power.

15. Don't you know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make *them* members of a harlot? MAY IT NEVER BE!

16. WHAT! Don't you know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body? For He says, "The two shall be one flesh."

17. But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

18. Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man may commit is outside the body, but the one who commits sexual immorality is sinning against his own body.

19. WHAT! Don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which you have *within you* from God, and you are not your own?

20. For you were bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Now concerning the things that you wrote to me, *saying*, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman," I say *this*:

2. Rather, to avoid sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

3. Let the husband render *his* conjugal dues to *his* wife, and in the same way also the wife to *her* husband.

12 1 Cor. 10:23
13 Mat. 15:17
Rom. 14:17
Eph. 5:23
Col. 2:22
1 Thes. 4:3
14 Rom. 6:5, 8
2 Cor. 4:14
Eph. 1:19
15 Rom. 12:5
Eph. 4:12,
5:30
16 Gen. 2:24
Mat. 19:5
Eph. 5:31
17 John 17:21
Eph. 4:4
18 Rom. 1:24,
6:12
1 Thes. 4:4
Heb. 13:4
19 Rom. 14:7
2 Cor. 6:16
20 Acts 20:28
1 Pet. 1:18
2 Pet. 2:1
Gal. 3:13
Heb. 9:12
Rev. 5:9

Chap. 7

1 1 Cor. 7:8,
26
3 Ex. 21:10
1 Pet. 3:7

5 Ex. 19:15
1 Sam. 21:4
Joel 2:16
Zech. 7:3
1 Thes. 3:5
6 2 Cor. 8:8,
11:17
7 Acts 26:29
1 Cor. 9:5,
12:11
8 1 Cor. 7:1,
26
9 1 Tim. 5:14
10 Mal. 2:14
Mat. 5:32,
19:6, 9
Mark 10:11
Luke 16:18
14 Mal. 2:15
15 Rom. 12:18,
14:19
1 Cor. 14:33

4. The wife does not have power over her own body, but the husband; and in the same way also, the husband does not have power over his own body, but the wife.

5. Do not deprive one another of *conjugal dues*, except it be by consent for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to fasting and prayer; and *then* come together again as one, so that Satan will not tempt you through your lack of self-control.

6. Now I say this by permission, and not by command.

7. For I wish *that* all men might be even as myself. But each one has his own gift from God; one *is* this way, and another *is* that way.

8. Now I say to the unmarried and to the widows *that* it is good for them if they can remain even as I *am*.

9. But if they do not have self-control, let them marry; because it is better to marry than to burn *with sexual desire*.

10. And to those who are married I *give this* charge, yet not I, but the Lord: Do not let *the* wife be separated from *her* husband.

11. (But if she does separate, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to *her* husband.) And *the* husband is not to divorce *his* wife.

12. Now to the rest, I, not the Lord, say *this*: If any brother has an unbelieving wife, and she consents to dwell with him, let him not divorce her.

13. And *if* a woman has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to dwell with her, let her not divorce him.

14. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the husband; otherwise, your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.

15. But if the unbelieving *husband or wife* separates, let him *or her* separate. The *believing* brother or sister is not bound in such *cases*; for God has called us to peace.

16. But how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?

17. Let each one walk only as God has apportioned to him, according as the Lord has called him; and this is what I command in all the churches.

18. Was anyone called being circumcised? Do not let him be uncircumcised. Was anyone called in uncircumcision? Do not let him be circumcised.

19. *For* circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; rather, the keeping of God's commandments is *essential*.

20. Let each one abide in the calling in which he was called.

21. Were you called *as* a slave? Don't let yourself fret. But if you are able to become free, by all means do so.

22. For he who has been called in *the* Lord, *though he be* a slave, is a free man in *the* Lord. In the same way also, he who has been called as a free man is a slave of Christ;

23. *For* you were bought with a price. Do not become slaves of man.

24. Brethren, in whatever *state* each one was called, let him remain in that with God.

25. Now concerning virgins, I do not have a command from *the* Lord; but I give *my* judgment, as one who has received mercy from *the* Lord to be faithful.

26. Therefore, I think this *judgment* is good because of the present distress: that *it is* good for a man to remain as he is.

27. Have you been bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Have you been loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife.

28. However, if you have married, you have not sinned; and if a virgin has married, she has not sinned. Yet those *who marry* shall have distress in

16 1 Pet. 3:1
17 1 Cor. 4:17
18 Acts 15:1
Gal. 5:2
19 John 15:14
1 John 2:3,
3:24
Gal. 5:6
22 John 8:36
1 Pet. 2:16
Rom. 6:18
1 Cor. 9:21
Gal. 5:13
Eph. 6:6
Philem. 16
23 Lev. 25:42
1 Pet. 1:18
25 2 Cor. 8:8
1 Tim. 1:12,
16
26 1 Cor. 7:1, 8

29 1 Pet. 4:7
2 Pet. 3:8, 9
Rom. 13:11
31 Psa. 39:6
Jas. 1:10,
4:14
1 Pet. 1:24,
4:7
1 John 2:17
1 Cor. 9:18
32 1 Tim. 5:5
34 Luke 10:40
38 Heb. 13:4
39 Rom. 7:2
2 Cor. 6:14

the flesh, but I *wish* to spare you.

29. Now this I say, brethren: the time *is* drawing close. For the *time that* remains, *let* those who have wives be as if they did not have wives;

30. And those who weep, as if they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as if they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as if they did not possess;

31. And those who use this world, as if they did not use *it* as their own; for this world in its present form is passing away.

32. Now I desire you to be without anxiety. The man who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord.

33. But he who is married has concerns about the things of this world—how he may please *his* wife.

34. There is *also* a difference in *attitude* between a wife and a virgin. An unmarried woman is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and *in* spirit. But she who is married has concerns about the things of this world—how she may please *her* husband.

35. Now I am telling you this for your own benefit; not to place a snare in your *way*, but to *show you* what is suitable, *so that you may be* devoted to the Lord without distraction.

36. But if anyone thinks *that his* behavior toward his virgin is not right, and if she is in *the* prime of *life*, and so *thinks* he ought to *marry*, let him do as he desires; he is not sinning. Let them marry.

37. However, he does well who remains steadfast in *his* heart, not having the need *to marry*, but has control over his own desire, and has determined in his *own* heart to keep himself chaste.

38. So then, the one who marries does well, but the one who does not marry does better.

39. A wife is bound by law for as long

a time as her husband may live. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whomever she desires, (*but only in the Lord*).

40. However, she is happier if she continues to abide by my judgment; and I think *that* I also have God's Spirit *in this*.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.

2. But if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet to the degree that he ought to know.

3. But if anyone loves God, he is known by Him.

4. So then, concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we understand that an idol in *the world* is nothing, and that *there is* no other God except one.

5. For indeed, even if there are *those* which are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as there are many gods and many lords,

6. Still, to us *there is* one God the Father, from Whom *are* all things, and we *are* in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom *are* all things, and we *are* by Him.

7. However, not all *have* this knowledge. But some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat *it* as a thing sacrificed to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.

8. But meat does not commend us to God; for we do not have any *spiritual* advantage if we eat, nor do we come short *spiritually* if we do not eat.

9. But beware, lest this freedom of yours becomes a stumblingblock to those who are weak.

10. For if anyone sees you, who have knowledge, sitting to eat in an idol-temple, will not his weak conscience

40 1 Cor. 7:25
1 Thes. 4:8

Chap. 8

1 Acts 10:19,
15:20
Rom. 14:3,
14

2 1 Cor. 13:8,
9

Gal. 6:3
1 Tim. 6:4

3 Ex. 33:12
Mat. 7:23
Gal. 4:9

4 Deut. 4:39
Is. 41:24
Mark 12:29

1 Tim. 2:5
5 John 10:34

6 Mal. 2:10
John 1:3,
13:13

Acts 2:36,
17:28

Rom. 11:36
Eph. 4:6
Phil. 2:11

Col. 1:16
Heb. 1:2

7 Rom. 14:14
1 Cor. 10:28

8 Rom. 14:17
9 Rom. 14:13

Gal. 5:13
10 1 Cor. 10:28

11 Rom. 14:15
12 Mat. 25:40

13 Rom. 14:21
2 Cor. 11:29

Chap. 9

1 Acts 9:3, 15
1 Cor. 3:6,
15:8

2 Cor. 12:12
Gal. 2:7, 8

1 Tim. 2:7,
17, 18:9

2 2 Cor. 12:12
4 1 Thes. 2:6

5 Mat. 8:14,
13:55,

Gal. 1:19
6 2 Thes. 3:8

7 Deut. 20:6
John 21:15

1 Pet. 5:2
2 Cor. 10:4

9 Deut. 25:4
10 2 Tim. 2:6

be emboldened so as to *cause him* to eat things sacrificed to idols?

11. And will the weak brother, for whom Christ died, perish on *account of your knowledge*?

12. Now when you sin against the brethren and wound their weak consciences in this way, you are sinning against Christ.

13. Therefore, if meat causes my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh—not ever—so that I may not cause my brother to stumble.

CHAPTER NINE

1. Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in *the Lord*?

2. If I am not an apostle to others, without a doubt I am to you. For you are the certification of my apostleship in *the Lord*.

3. My defense to those who are examining me is this:

4. Do we not have a right to eat and to drink?

5. Do we not have a right to take with us a sister, a wife, as also the other apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?

6. Or I only and Barnabas, do we not have a right to refrain from working?

7. Does anyone at any time serve as a soldier at his own expense? Does anyone plant a vineyard and not eat the fruit of it? Or does anyone shepherd a flock and not eat *the meat* and milk from the flock?

8. Am I saying these things *merely* from a human point of view? Or does not the law say the same things?

9. For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle the ox that is treading out corn." Is it because God is concerned for oxen?

10. Or does He not certainly say *this* for our sakes? For our sakes it was

written, so that the one who plows might plow in hope, and the one who threshes the corn in hope might be partaker of his hope.

11. If we have sown to you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your physical things?

12. If others participate in this authority over you, much more surely *should* not we? Nevertheless, we have not used this authority; but we have endured all things, so that we might not hinder the gospel of Christ.

13. Don't you know that those who are laboring *in* the sacred things of the temple live *of the things* of the temple, *and* those who are ministering at the altar are partakers with the altar?

14. In the same way also, the Lord did command that those who preach the gospel are to live of the gospel.

15. But I have not used any of these things. And I have not written these things in order that this might *now* be done to me. For *it would be* better for me to die rather than to have anyone make my boasting void.

16. For though I preach the gospel, there is no *reason* for me to boast because an obligation has been laid upon me. And woe to me, if I do not preach the gospel!

17. For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if *I do this* against my will, I have been entrusted with a ministry.

18. What then is my reward? That in preaching the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without expense, so that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel.

19. For although I am not under bondage to anyone, I have made myself a servant to all, so that I might gain the more.

20. Now to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain *the* Jews; to those who are under law, as under law, that I might gain those who are under law;

11 Rom. 15:27
Gal. 6:6
12 Acts 20:33
2 Cor. 11:12
1 Thes. 2:6
13 Lev. 6:16
14 Mat. 10:10
Luke 10:7
Gal. 6:6
15 Acts 18:3
2 Cor. 11:10
16 Rom. 1:14
17 1 Cor. 3:8,
14
Gal. 2:7
Col. 1:25
18 1 Cor. 7:31,
10:33
19 Mat. 18:15
1 Pet. 3:1
1 Cor. 9:1
Gal. 5:13
20 Acts 16:3,
18:18

21 Rom. 2:12
1 Cor. 7:22
Gal. 3:2
22 Rom. 11:14,
15:1
1 Cor. 10:33
2 Cor. 11:29
24 Gal. 2:2
2 Tim. 4:7
25 Jas. 1:12
Rev. 2:10
26 2 Tim. 2:5
27 Jer. 6:30
Rom. 6:18,
8:13
2 Cor. 13:5
Col. 3:5

Chap. 10

1 Ex. 13:21,
14:22,
Psa. 78:13
3 Ex. 16:15,
Psa. 78:24
4 Ex. 17:6
Psa. 78:15
5 Num. 14:29
Psa. 106:26
6 Num. 11:4

21. To those who are without law, as without law (not being without law to God, but within law to Christ), that I might gain those who are without law.

22. To the weak, I became as weak, that I might gain those who are weak. To all these, I have become all things, so that I might by all means save some.

23. Now I do this for the sake of the gospel, that I might be a fellow partaker with you.

24. Don't you know that those who run a race all run, but *only* one receives the prize? That is the way you *are to* run in order that you may obtain *the prize*.

25. For everyone who is striving *for mastery* controls himself in all things. Of course, they *do this* so that they may receive a corruptible crown; but we *are striving for* an incorruptible crown.

26. I therefore so run, not as one who is uncertain; so *also* I fight, not as beating *the air*.

27. But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, after preaching to others, I myself might be rejected.

CHAPTER TEN

1. Now I do not wish you to be ignorant *of this*, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea.

2. And all were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

3. And *they* all ate the same spiritual meat.

4. And *they* all drank *of* the same spiritual drink; for they drank from *the* spiritual Rock that followed *them*. And that Rock was Christ.

5. But with many of them God was not pleased, for their dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness.

6. Now these things became examples for us, so that we might not lust after

evil things, as they also lusted.

7. Neither be idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play."

8. Neither should we commit sexual immorality, as some of them committed, and twenty-three thousand were destroyed in one day.

9. Neither should we tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted *Him*, and were killed by serpents.

10. Neither *should* we complain against *God*, as some of them also complained, and were killed by the destroyer.

11. Now all these things happened to them *as* examples, and were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages *are* coming.

12. Therefore, let the one who thinks he stands take heed, lest he fall.

13. No temptation has come upon you except what is common to mankind. For *God*, Who *is* faithful, will not permit you to be tempted beyond what you are able *to bear*; but with the temptation, He will make a way of escape, so that you may be able to bear *it*.

14. Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

15. I speak as to those who are wise; you judge what I say.

16. The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not *the* fellowship of the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not *the* fellowship of the body of Christ?

17. For we, being many, are one body *and* one bread, because we are all partakers of the bread.

18. Consider Israel according to *the* flesh. Are not those who eat the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

19. What then am I saying? That an idol is anything, or that which is sacrificed to an idol is anything?

20. But that which the Gentiles sacri-

7 1 Cor. 7:22, 10:14

8 Psa. 106:29

Rev. 2:14

9 Ex. 17:2, 7

Num. 21:6

10 Ex. 12:23, 16:2

Num. 14:37

11 Rom. 15:4

Phil. 4:5

Heb. 10:25

12 Rom. 11:20

13 Psa. 125:3

2 Pet. 2:9

1 Cor. 1:9

14 2 Cor. 6:17

15 1 Cor. 8:1

16 Mat. 26:26

Acts 2:42

17 1 Cor. 12:27

18 Lev. 3:3

Rom. 4:1, 12

2 Cor. 11:18

19 1 Cor. 8:4

20 Lev. 17:7

Deut. 32:17

Psa. 106:37

fice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not wish you to have fellowship with demons.

21. You cannot drink *the* cup of *the* Lord, and *the* cup of demons. You cannot partake of *the* table of *the* Lord, and *the* table of demons.

22. Now do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?

23. All things *that* are lawful *are permitted* to me, but not all things *that are permitted* are profitable. All things *that* are lawful *are permitted* to me, but all things *that are permitted* do not edify.

24. Let no one seek that which *benefits* himself; but let each seek that which *benefits* the other.

25. Every *lawful* thing that is sold in *the* market you *may* eat, without asking questions for the sake of conscience,

26. For the earth, and *all* its fullness, *is* the Lord's.

27. Now if an unbelieving person invites you *for a meal*, and you desire to go, eat all *lawful things* that are set before you, without asking questions for the sake of conscience.

28. But if anyone says to you, "This has been offered to an idol," do not eat *it*, for the sake and the conscience of the one who showed *it to you*, for the earth, and *all* its fullness, *is* the Lord's.

29. But conscience, I say, not your own, but that of the other *person*. For why is my freedom judged by another *person's* conscience?

30. And if I partake with thankfulness *to God*, why am I spoken evil of for *eating that* for which I give thanks?

31. Therefore, whether you eat, or you drink, or you do anything, do all things to the glory of God.

32. Be without offense to both Jews and Greeks, and to the church of God;

33. According as I also *seek to* please everyone in all things, not seeking my

own profit, but the *profit* of many, in order that they may be saved.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. Be imitators of me, exactly as I also *am* of Christ.
2. Now I praise you, brethren, because you have remembered me in all things, and you are keeping the ordinances in the way that I delivered *them* to you.
3. But I want you to understand that the Head of every man is Christ, and *the* head of *the* woman *is* the man, and *the* Head of Christ *is* God.
4. Every man who has *a* covering on *his* head when he is praying or prophesying puts his Head to shame.
5. But every woman who has *her* head uncovered when she is praying or prophesying puts her head to shame, for it is the same as being shaved.
6. For if a woman is not covered, let her be shorn. But if *it be* shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered.
7. For, on the one hand, a man ought not to cover *his* head, since he is *the* image and glory of God; but, on the other hand, *the* woman is *the* glory of man.
8. For *the* man is not of *the* woman, but *the* woman *is* of *the* man.
9. And also, *the* man was not created for the sake of the woman, but *the* woman for the sake of the man.
10. For this reason, it is necessary for the woman to have *a sign of being under* authority on *her* head because of the angels.
11. Nevertheless, neither *is the* man separate from *the* woman, nor *the* woman separate from *the* man in *the* Lord.
12. For as the woman *is* of the man, so also the man *is* by the woman; but all things *are* of God.
13. You judge for yourselves. Is it be-

Chap. 11

- 1 Eph. 5:1
- Phil. 3:17
- 2 1 Cor. 4:17, 7:17
- 3 Gen. 3:16
- John 14:28
- Eph. 5:23
- Phil. 2:7-9
- 1 Tim. 2:11
- 4 1 Cor. 12:10
- 5 Deut. 21:12
- Acts 21:9
- 6 Num. 5:18
- 7 Gen. 1:26
- 8 Gen. 2:21
- 9 Gen. 2:18
- 10 Gen. 24:65
- Eccl. 5:6
- 11 Gal. 3:28

coming for a woman to pray to God uncovered?

14. Or does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a shame to him?

15. But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; because the long hair has been given to her instead of a *veil* to cover *her* head.

16. But if anyone is contentious *over this issue*, we have no such custom, neither *do* the churches of God.

17. Now *in this that* I am commanding *you*, I do not praise you, because when you assemble together, it is not for the better but for the worse.

18. For first of all, I hear that there are divisions among you when you are assembled together in the church, and I partly believe *it*.

19. For it is necessary that heresies be among you, so that the ones who are approved may become manifest among you.

20. Therefore, when you assemble together in one place, it is not to eat *the* Lord's supper.

21. For in eating, everyone takes his own supper first; now on the one hand, someone goes hungry; but on the other hand, another becomes drunken.

22. WHAT! Don't you have houses for eating and drinking? Or do you despise the church of God, and put to shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise *you*!

23. For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread;

24. And after giving thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body, which *is* being broken for you. This do in the remembrance of Me."

25. In like manner, *He* also *took* the cup after He had supped, saying, "This is *the* cup of the New Covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you

- 16 1 Cor. 7:17
- 1 Tim. 6:4
- 18 1 Cor. 1:10, 11
- 19 Mat. 18:7
- Luke 17:1, 2:35
- 1 Tim. 4:1
- 1 John 2:19
- 21 2 Pet. 2:13
- Jude 12
- 22 Jas. 2:6
- 1 Cor. 10:32
- 23 Mat. 26:26
- Luke 22:19
- 1 Cor. 15:3

drink *it*, in the remembrance of Me.”

26. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you *solemnly* proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes.

27. For this reason, *if* anyone shall eat this bread or shall drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, he shall be guilty of the body and *the* blood of the Lord.

28. But let a man examine himself, and let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup accordingly

29. Because the one who eats and drinks unworthily is eating and drinking judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord.

30. For this *very* reason, many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many have fallen asleep.

31. Now if we would examine ourselves, we would not be judged.

32. But when we are judged, we are chastened by *the* Lord, so that we will not be condemned with the world.

33. So then, my brethren, when you assemble together to eat *the bread and drink the cup*, wait for one another.

34. But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that *there will be* no *cause* for judgment *when* you assemble together. And the other matters I will set in order when I come.

CHAPTER TWELVE

1. Now brethren, I do not wish you to be ignorant concerning the spiritual *gifts*.

2. You know that you were Gentiles, *and* were carried away with dumb idols, as you yourselves were led away again and again.

3. Therefore, I am letting you know that no one speaking by *the* Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed; and no one can say *that* Jesus *is* Lord, except by *the* Holy Spirit.

4. Now there are differences of gifts,

26 John 14:3
Acts 1:11
27 John 6:51
28 2 Cor. 13:5
31 Psa. 32:5
1 John 1:9
32 Psa. 94:12
34 1 Cor. 4:19
Tit. 1:5

Chap. 12

1 1 Cor. 14:1, 37
2 Psa. 115:5
1 Pet. 4:3
Eph. 2:11
1 Thes. 1:9
3 Mat. 16:17
Mark 9:39
John 15:26
1 John 4:2
4 1 Pet. 4:10
Rom. 12:4
Eph. 4:4

5 Rom. 12:6
Eph. 4:11
6 Eph. 1:23
7 Rom. 12:6
Eph. 4:7
8 1 Cor. 2:6, 7
2 Cor. 8:7
9 Mat. 17:19
Mark 16:18
Jas. 5:14
2 Cor. 4:13
10 Mark 16:17
Acts 2:4
1 John 4:1
Rom. 12:6
Gal. 3:5
Rom. 12:6
11 John 3:8
Rom. 12:6
2 Cor. 10:13
12 Rom. 12:4, 5
Gal. 3:16
Eph. 4:4
13 John 6:63
Rom. 6:5
Gal. 3:28
Col. 3:11
18 1 Cor. 12:28
Rom. 12:3

but the same Spirit;

5. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

6. And there are differences of operations, but it is the same God Who is working all things in all.

7. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for *the* benefit of *all*.

8. For to one, a word of wisdom is given by the Spirit; and to another, a word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;

9. And to a different one, faith by the same Spirit; and to another, gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

10. And to another, *the* working of miracles; and to another, prophecy; and to another, discerning of spirits; and to a different one, various languages; and to another, *the* interpretation of languages.

11. But the one and the same Spirit is operating in all these things, dividing separately to each one as *God* Himself desires.

12. For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the one body, though many, are one body; so also *is* Christ.

13. For indeed, by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether bondmen or free—and we were all made to drink into one Spirit.

14. For the body *of* Christ is not one member, but many.

15. If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,” would this then cause it not to be *part* of the body?

16. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,” would this then cause it not to be *part* of the body?

17. If the whole body *were* an eye, where *would* the hearing *be*? If *the* whole *were* hearing, where *would* the smelling *be*?

18. But now has God Himself placed

each one of the *members* in the body according to His own will.

19. For if all were one member, where *would* the body *be*?

20. But now *are there* many members, yet *they are* one body.

21. And *the* eye is not able to say to the hand, "I have no need of you." Or again, the head *is not able to say* to the feet, "I have no need of you."

22. But much to the contrary, the members of the body that appear to be weaker are necessary;

23. And those *members* that we regard as less honorable to the body, upon these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable *parts* are treated with greater modesty.

24. But our more presentable *parts* do not have *this* need. Rather, God has tempered the body together, giving more abundant honor to those *members* that are deficient,

25. So that there might not be any division in the body, but *that* the members might have the same concern for one another.

26. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with *him*; and if one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with *him*.

27. Now you are *the* body of Christ, and *you are all* individual members.

28. And God Himself has placed certain *ones* in the church: first, apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers; then miracles; then gifts of healings; helps; governments; various languages.

29. *Are* all apostles? *Are* all prophets? *Are* all teachers? *Do* all *perform* miracles?

30. Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in *different* languages? Do all interpret?

31. But earnestly desire the more *edifying* gifts; and yet I show you a way far surpassing *all these*.

27 Rom. 12:5
Eph. 1:23,
4:12, 5:23,
30
Col. 1:24
28 Num. 11:17
Acts 13:1
Rom. 12:6,
8
1 Cor. 12:9,
10
Eph. 2:20,
3:5, 4:11
1 Tim. 5:17
Heb. 13:17,
24
31 1 Cor. 14:1,
39

Chap. 13

2 1 Cor. 12:8-
10, 28, 14:1
Mat. 7:22,
17:20
Mark 11:23
Luke 17:6
3 Mat. 6:1, 2
4 Prov. 10:12
1 Pet. 4:8
5 1 Cor. 10:24
Phil. 2:4
6 Psal. 10:3
2 John 4
Rom. 1:32
7 Rom. 15:1
Gal. 6:2
2 Tim. 2:24
9 1 Cor. 8:2
12 Mat. 18:10
1 John 3:2
2 Cor. 3:18,
5:7
Phil. 3:12

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1. If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

2. If I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

3. And if I give away all my goods, and if I deliver up my body that I may be burned, but do not have love, I have gained nothing.

4. Love is patient *and* is kind; love envies not, does not brag about itself, is not puffed up.

5. *Love* does not behave disgracefully, does not seek its own things, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil,

6. Does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth.

7. *Love* bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8. Love never fails. But whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* languages, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

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

10. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be set aside.

11. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I reasoned as a child; but when I became a man, I set aside the things of a child.

12. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then *we shall see* face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know exactly as I have been known.

13. And now, these three remain: faith, hope *and* love; but the greatest of these *is* love.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Chap. 14

1. Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual *gifts*, but especially that you may prophesy.

2. For the one who speaks in an *unknown* language is not speaking to men, but to God; for no one understands *him*. And indeed, *what* he speaks in *his* spirit *is* a mystery.

3. On the other hand, the one who prophesies is speaking to men *for* edification and encouragement and comfort.

4. The one who speaks in an *unknown* language is edifying *only* himself; but the one who prophesies is edifying *the* church.

5. Now I would have all of you speak in *foreign* languages; but even more, *I would have* you prophesy; because greater *is* the one who prophesies than the one who speaks in languages, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edification.

6. And now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in *foreign* languages, of what *benefit* will it be to you, unless I speak to you either in revelation, or in knowledge, or in prophecy, or in teaching?

7. *It is* the same with *the* inanimate things that make sounds, whether a flute or harp; if they do not give distinction to the sounds, how will it be known what is being piped or harped?

8. For if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself for war?

9. In the same way also, unless you give intelligible speech, how will it be known what is being spoken? For you will be speaking *gibberish* into *the* air.

10. There are so many kinds of voices in *the* world, and none of them *is* without *definite* sounds.

11. Therefore, if I do not know the meaning of the sounds, I shall be a barbarian to the one who is speaking,

and the one who is speaking *will be* a barbarian to me.

12. In the same way, since you are desirous of spiritual gifts, seek *them* that you may abound for the edification of the church.

13. For this reason, let the one who speaks in an *unknown* language pray that he may interpret.

14. For if I pray in an *unknown* language, my spirit is praying, but my understanding is unfruitful.

15. What then is *the sum* of it? I will pray with the spirit, but I will also pray with the understanding. I will praise with the spirit, but I will also praise with the understanding.

16. Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how shall the one who sits in the room of the unlearned be able to say "Amen" when you give thanks, since he does not understand what you are saying?

17. For you may indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified.

18. I thank my God *that* I speak in languages more than all of you.

19. But in *the* church, I desire to speak five words with my understanding *rather* than ten thousand words in an *unknown* language, so that I may also instruct others.

20. Brethren, do not be children in *your* minds; however, in *regard* to malice be babes, but in *your* minds be fully mature.

21. It is written in the law, "Therefore, in other languages and by other lips will I speak to this people; but even then, they will not hear Me, says *the* Lord."

22. Consequently, *gifts* of languages are a sign—not for those who believe, but for those who do not believe. But prophecy *is* not for the unbelievers, but for those who believe.

23. Therefore, if the whole church is assembled together in one place, and all are speaking in *unknown* lan-

1 Num. 11:25,
29
1 Cor. 12:31
2 Acts 2:4,
10:46, 22:9
6 1 Cor. 14:26

15 Psa. 47:7
Eph. 5:19
Col. 3:16
16 1 Cor. 11:24
20 Psa. 131:2
Mat. 11:25,
18:3, 19:14
1 Pet. 2:2
Rom. 16:19
1 Cor. 2:6,
3:1
Eph. 4:14
Heb. 5:12, 13
21 Is. 28:11, 12
John 10:34
23 Acts 2:13

guages, and unlearned persons or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you have lost your minds?

24. But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or unlearned person comes in, he is convicted by all, *and* he is discerned by all.

25. And in this way the secrets of his heart are exposed; and so, bowing down on *his* face, he will worship God, declaring that God is indeed among you.

26. What is it then, brethren? When you assemble together, each of you has a psalm, has a doctrine, has a language, has a revelation, *or* has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

27. If anyone speaks in a *foreign* language, *let it be* by two, or three at the most, and *let that be* in succession; and let one interpret.

28. But if there is no interpreter, let him be silent in *the* church, and let him speak within himself and to God.

29. And let the prophets speak, two or three *in succession*; and let the others discern.

30. But if anything be revealed to another *who is* sitting by, let the first one be silent.

31. For your *prophets* can all prophesy one by one, so that everyone may learn and may be encouraged.

32. And *the* spirits of *the* prophets are subject to *the* prophets.

33. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

34. Let your women be silent in the churches, for they are not allowed to speak; but they are to be in subjection, exactly as the law says.

35. And if they wish to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home. For it is a shame for a woman to speak in church.

36. WHAT? Did the Word of God

25 Is. 45:14
Zech. 8:23
26 1 Cor. 14:6,
12:7-10
2 Cor. 12:19
Eph. 4:12
29 1 Cor. 12:10
30 1 Thes. 5:19,
20
32 1 John 4:1
33 1 Cor. 11:16
34 Gen. 3:16
1 Tim. 2:11,
12

37 1 John 4:6
2 Cor. 10:7
39 1 Cor. 12:31
1 Thes. 5:20
40 1 Cor. 14:33

Chap. 15

1 Rom. 5:2
Gal. 1:11
2 Rom. 1:16
1 Cor. 1:21
Gal. 3:4
3 Psa. 22:15
Dan. 9:26
Zech. 13:7
Acts 3:18
1 Pet. 1:11
1 Cor. 11:2,
23
Gal. 1:12
4 Psa. 16:10
Is. 53:10
Hos. 6:2
Luke 24:26
Acts 2:25
1 Pet. 1:11
5 Mat. 28:17
Mark 16:14
Luke 24:34,
36
John 20:19
7 Luke 24:50
Acts 1:3, 4,
8 Acts 9:4,
22:14, 18
9 Acts 8:3
Eph. 3:8
Phil. 3:6
10 Mat. 10:20
Rom. 15:18
2 Cor. 3:5,
11:23, 12:11
Gal. 2:8
Eph. 3:7, 8
Phil. 2:13

originate with you? Or did it come only to you *and no one else*?

37. If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write to you are commandments of the Lord.

38. But if anyone *chooses to* be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

39. So then, brethren, desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in *foreign* languages.

40. Let all things be done decently and in order.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

1. Now I am declaring to you, brethren, the *same* gospel that I proclaimed to you, which you also received, *and* in which you are now standing;

2. By which you are also being saved, if you are holding fast *the* words that I proclaimed to you; otherwise you have believed in vain.

3. For in the first place, I delivered to you what I also had received: that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures;

4. And that He was buried; and that He was raised the third day, according to the Scriptures;

5. And that He appeared to Cephas, *and* then to the twelve.

6. Then He appeared to over five hundred brethren at one time, of whom the greater part are alive until now, but some have fallen sleep.

7. Next He appeared to James; then to all the apostles;

8. And last of all He appeared to me also, as one who was born of a miscarriage.

9. For I am the least of the apostles, *and* am not fit *even* to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

10. But by *the* grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me has not been in vain; rather, I have labored

more abundantly than all of them; however, *it was* not I, but the grace of God with me.

11. Now then, whether I or they, so we preach, and so you have believed.

12. But if Christ is being preached, that He rose from *the* dead, how *is it that* some among you are saying that there is no resurrection of *the* dead?

13. For if there is no resurrection from *the* dead, neither has Christ been raised.

14. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching *is* in vain, and your faith *is* also in vain.

15. And we are also found *to be* false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised Christ, Whom He did not raise, if indeed *the* dead are not raised.

16. For if *the* dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised.

17. But if Christ has not been raised, your faith *is* vain; you are still in your sins,

18. And those who have fallen asleep in Christ have then perished.

19. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most miserable.

20. But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead; He has become the firstfruit of those who have fallen asleep.

21. For since by man *came* death, by man also *came the* resurrection of *the* dead.

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

23. But each in his own order: Christ *the* firstfruit; then, those who are Christ's at His coming.

24. Afterwards the end *comes*, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to Him Who *is* God and Father, when He shall have put an end to all rule and all authority and power.

25. For it is ordained that He reign until He has put all enemies under His feet.

13 1 Thes. 4:14
15 Acts 2:24, 4:10, 33
17 Rom. 4:25
19 2 Tim. 3:12
20 Acts 26:23
1 Pet. 1:3
Rev. 1:5
21 John 11:25
Rom. 5:12, 6:23
23 1 Thes. 4:15
24 Dan. 7:14
25 Psa. 110:1
Acts 2:34
Eph. 1:22

26 2 Tim. 1:10
Rev. 20:14
27 Psa. 8:6
28 1 Cor. 3:23, 11:3
Phil. 3:21
30 2 Cor. 11:26
Gal. 5:11
31 Rom. 8:36
2 Cor. 4:10
1 Thes. 2:19
32 Eccl. 2:24
Is. 22:13
Luke 12:19
2 Cor. 1:8
33 1 Cor. 5:6
34 Rom. 13:11
1 Cor. 6:5
Eph. 5:14
1 Thes. 4:5
35 Ezek. 37:3
36 John 12:24

26. *The* last enemy *to be* destroyed *is* death.

27. For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when it is said that all things have been put in subjection, *it is* clearly evident that *it does* not include Him Who put all things in subjection under Him.

28. But when He has put all things in subjection to Him, then shall the Son Himself also be subject to Him Who put all things in subjection to Him, so that God may be all in all.

29. Otherwise, what shall they do who have been baptized for the *resurrection* of the dead, if *the* dead are not raised at all? Why then are they baptized for the *resurrection* of the dead?

30. Why are we also in danger every hour?

31. I die daily by our boasting which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord.

32. If I fought as a man with beasts in Ephesus, what *did it* profit me, if *the* dead are not raised? Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.

33. Do not be deceived; evil companionship corrupts good behavior.

34. Awake to righteousness, and do not sin, for some *of you* do not have the knowledge of God. I say *this* to your shame.

35. Nevertheless, someone will say, "How are the dead raised? And with what body do they come?"

36. Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.

37. And what you sow *is* not the body that shall be; rather, *it is* bare grain—it may be of wheat, or one of the other *grains*;

38. And God gives it a body according to His will, and to each of the seeds its own body.

39. *Likewise*, not all flesh *is* the same flesh. Rather, *there is* one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another of fish, and another of birds.

40. And *there are* heavenly bodies,

and earthly bodies; but the glory of the heavenly *is* different, and the *glory* of the earthly *is* different.

41. *There is* one glory of *the* sun, and another glory of *the* moon, and another glory of *the* stars; for *one* star differs from *another* star in glory.

42. So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption.

43. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.

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

45. Accordingly, it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul; the last Adam *became* an ever-living Spirit."

46. However, the spiritual *was* not first, but the natural—then the spiritual.

47. The first man *is* of the earth—made of dust. The second man *is* the Lord from heaven.

48. As *is* the one made of dust, so also *are all* those who are made of dust; and as *is* the heavenly *one*, so also *are all* those who are heavenly.

49. And as we have borne the image of the *one* made of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *one*.

50. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption.

51. Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed,

52. In an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53. For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54. Now when this corruptible shall have put on incorruptibility, and this

42 Dan. 12:3

Mat. 13:43

43 Phil. 3:21

45 Gen. 2:7

John 5:21

Rom. 5:14

Phil. 3:21

Col. 3:4

47 Gen. 3:19

John 3:13, 31

48 Phil. 3:20

49 Gen. 5:3

1 John 3:2

Rom. 8:29

2 Cor. 3:18

Phil. 3:21

50 Mat. 16:17

John 3:3, 5

51 Phil. 3:21

1 Thes. 4:15

52 Zech. 9:14

Mat. 24:31

John 5:25

53 2 Cor. 5:4

54 Is. 25:8

Rev. 20:14

mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

55. O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?

56. Now the sting of death *is* sin, and the power of sin *is* the law.

57. But thanks *be* to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58. So then, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in *the* Lord.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

1. Now concerning the collection that *is being made* for the saints: as I directed the churches in Galatia, so you also are to do.

2. Every first *day* of the week, each one is to put aside *food* at home, storing up whatever he may be prospered in, so that there need not be any collections when I come.

3. And when I come, whomever you approve in *your* letters, these are the ones I will send to carry your bounty to Jerusalem.

4. Now if it be suitable for me to go also, they shall go with me.

5. But I will come to you after I pass through Macedonia, for I am going through Macedonia.

6. It may be *that* I shall stay with you, or *that* I may even winter *there*, so that you may send me forth *on my journey* wherever I may go.

7. For *at this time* I will not *stop* to see you, but I hope at some *future* time to stay with you, if the Lord permits.

8. But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost.

9. For a great and effective door has been opened to me, and there *are* many adversaries.

55 Hos. 13:14

56 Rom. 4:15

57 1 John 5:4

Rom. 7:25

58 2 Pet. 3:14

1 Cor. 3:8

Chap. 16

1 Acts 11:29

Gal. 2:10

2 Acts 20:7

3 2 Cor. 8:19

5 Acts 19:21

2 Cor. 1:16

6 Acts 15:3

Rom. 15:24

7 Acts 18:21

Jas. 4:15

9 Acts 14:27,

19:9

2 Cor. 2:12

Col. 4:3

I Corinthians 16

10. Now if Timothy comes, see to it that he may be with you without fear; for he labors in the work of <i>the</i> Lord, even as I <i>do</i> .	10 Acts 19:22 Phil. 2:20 1 Thes. 3:2	17. Now I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus because they have made up for your deficiency.
11. Therefore, do not let anyone despise him; but send him forth <i>on his journey</i> in peace, so that he may come to me; for I am waiting for him with the brethren.	11 Acts 15:33 1 Tim. 4:12	18. For they refreshed my spirit and yours; therefore, recognize those <i>who are serving</i> .
12. Now concerning Apollos, <i>our</i> brother, I strongly urged him to go to you with the brethren. However, it was not at all <i>his</i> desire to come to <i>you</i> at this time; but he will come when he has an opportunity.	12 1 Cor. 1:12 13 Mat. 24:42 1 Pet. 5:8 Eph. 6:10 Phil. 1:27 Col. 1:11 1 Thes. 3:8, 5:6 2 Thes. 2:15	19. The churches in Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in <i>the</i> Lord, together with the church in their home.
13. Be watchful; stand fast in the faith; conduct yourselves with courage. Be strong <i>in the Lord</i> .	14 1 Pet. 4:8 15 Rom. 16:5 1 Cor. 1:16 2 Cor. 8:4 Heb. 6:10	20. All the brethren salute you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.
14. Let everything you do be done in love.	16 Heb. 6:10, 13:17	21. The salutation of Paul by my <i>own</i> hand.
15. Now I exhort you, brethren, (You know the household of Stephanas, that it is the first fruit of Achaia, and <i>that</i> they have dedicated themselves to the service of the saints.)		22. If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. Our Lord shall come!
16. To submit yourselves to such <i>as these</i> , and to everyone who is working and laboring with <i>us</i> .	17 2 Cor. 11:9 Phil. 2:30 18 Phil. 2:29 Col. 4:8 19 Rom. 16:5 20 Rom. 16:16 21 Col. 4:18 22 Jude 14, 15 Gal. 1:8, 9 Eph. 6:24 23 Rom. 16:20	23. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ <i>be</i> with you.
		24. My love <i>be</i> with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.
		 <i>The first epistle to the Corinthians, written from Philippi by Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus and Timothy*</i>

*The notation at the end of I Corinthians indicating that Paul wrote this epistle from Philippi conflicts with the internal evidence. Paul's words in I Corinthians 16:7-8 show that he was in Ephesus when he wrote this epistle: "For at this time I will not stop to see you, but I hope at some future time to stay with you, if the Lord permits. But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost." Furthermore, Paul wrote, "The churches in Asia salute you," confirming that he wrote this epistle from Asia and not from Philippi. Therefore, the notation at the end of the epistle, which was a later addition to the Greek text, is apparently incorrect.

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians

CHAPTER ONE

1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God that is in Corinth, with all the saints who are in the entire region of Achaia:

2. Grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;

4. Who comforts us in all our tribulation, in order that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trial, through the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

5. For to the degree that the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.

6. And if we are in distress, it is for your comfort and salvation, which is being worked out by your enduring the same sufferings that we also suffer; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort and salvation (and our hope is steadfast for you);

7. Knowing that as you are partners in the sufferings, you are also partners in the comfort.

8. For we do not want you to be ignorant of our tribulations, brethren, even the trials that befell us in Asia; we were exceedingly burdened beyond our own strength, so much so that we even despaired of living.

9. For we had the sentence of death within ourselves, so that we would not trust in ourselves but in God, Who raises the dead;

10. Who delivered us from so great a death, and continues to deliver; in Whom we have hope that He will even yet deliver;

Chap. 1

1 1 Cor. 1:1
Eph. 1:1
Phil. 1:1
Col. 1:1, 2
1 Tim. 1:1
2 Tim. 1:1
2 Rom. 1:7
1 Cor. 1:3
Gal. 1:3
Phil. 1:2
Col. 1:2
1 Thes. 1:1
2 Thes. 1:2
3 1 Pet. 1:3
Eph. 1:3
5 Acts 9:4
2 Cor. 4:10
6 2 Cor. 4:15
7 Rom. 8:17
2 Tim. 2:12
8 Acts 19:23
1 Cor. 15:32, 16:9
9 Jer. 17:5, 7
10 2 Pet. 2:9

11 Rom. 15:30
2 Cor. 4:15
Phil. 1:19
Philem. 22
12 1 Cor. 2:4
2 Cor. 2:17
14 2 Cor. 5:12
Phil. 2:16
1 Thes. 2:19
15 Rom. 1:11
1 Cor. 4:19
16 1 Cor. 16:5, 6
17 2 Cor. 10:2
19 Mark 1:1
Luke 1:35
Acts 9:20
Heb. 13:8
20 Rom. 15:8

11. While you also are laboring together for us by supplication to God, that the gift to us from many persons might be the cause of thanksgiving by many for us.

12. For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience, that in the simplicity and sincerity of God (not in carnal wisdom, but in the grace of God), we had our conduct in the world, but more abundantly toward you.

13. For we do not write any other things to you but what you have read and already acknowledge; and I hope that you will acknowledge them even to the end;

14. According as you did also acknowledge us in part, that we are your boasting, even as you are also our boasting in the day of the Lord Jesus.

15. And with this confidence, I had previously planned to come to you, so that you might have a second benefit;

16. And after coming by you, I intended to travel through to Macedonia, and to come again from Macedonia to you, and then be accompanied by you to Judea.

17. Now then, in planning this journey, was I light-minded? Or are the things that I resolve to do motivated by the flesh, that there should be with me wavering between yes and no?

18. But God is faithful, so that our word to you was not yes and no.

19. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Who was preached by us among you (by me and Silvanus and Timothy), was not first yes and then no, but in Him has always been yes.

20. For whatever promises of God there are, in Him is the yes, and in Him the Amen, with glory to God by us.

21. But He Who establishes us with you in Christ, and Who has anointed us, *is* God,

22. Who has also sealed us and has given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

23. But I call upon God to bear witness of my intentions, that in order to spare you I did not yet come to Corinth—

24. Not that we exercise lordship over your faith, but because we are working with you *to increase* your joy. For you stand by faith.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Now I am resolved within myself not to come to you again in sorrow.

2. For if I make you sorrowful, who is it that makes me glad, if it is not the one who has been made sorrowful by me?

3. And I wrote this same *thing* to you, lest when I come, I might have sorrow from *those* in whom I ought to rejoice; *for* I have confidence in all of you, that my joy is *the joy* of you all.

4. For out of much distress and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears—not that you might be sorrowful, but that you might know the overflowing love which I have for you.

5. But if anyone has caused sorrow, he has not grieved me, but you all, *at least* in part (in order that I may not overcharge *him*).

6. To such a one this punishment, which *was inflicted* by the majority of *you*, *is* sufficient;

7. So that on the contrary, you should rather forgive and encourage *him*, lest such a one be swallowed up with overwhelming sorrow.

8. For this reason, I exhort you to confirm *your* love toward him.

9. Now for this *cause* I wrote *to you*, that I might know by testing you

21 1 John 2:20
22 2 Cor. 5:5
Eph. 1:14,
4:30
2 Tim. 2:19
Rev. 2:17
23 Rom. 1:9
1 Cor. 4:21
2 Cor. 2:3,
11:31, 12:20,
13:2, 10
Gal. 1:20
Phil. 1:8
24 1 Pet. 5:3
Rom. 11:20
1 Cor. 3:5,
15:1

Chap. 2

1 2 Cor. 1:23
3 2 Cor. 8:22,
12:21
Gal. 5:10
4 2 Cor. 7:8, 9
5 1 Cor. 5:1
Gal. 4:12
6 1 Cor. 5:4, 5
1 Tim. 5:20
7 Gal. 6:1
9 2 Cor. 10:6

12 Acts 16:8
1 Cor. 16:9
13 2 Cor. 7:5, 6
14 S. of S. 1:3
15 1 Cor. 1:18
2 Cor. 4:3
16 Luke 2:34
John 9:39
1 Pet. 2:7
1 Cor. 15:10
17 2 Pet. 2:3
2 Cor. 1:12

Chap. 3

1 Acts 18:27
2 Cor. 5:12
2 1 Cor. 9:2
3 Ex. 24:12
Psa. 40:8
1 Cor. 3:5
Heb. 8:10

whether you are obedient in everything.

10. But to whom you forgive anything, I also *forgive*; and if I also have forgiven anything, to whomever I have forgiven *it*, for your sakes *I forgave it* in the person of Christ;

11. So that we may not be outwitted by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

12. Now when I came to Troas *to preach* the gospel of Christ, and a door was opened to me by *the* Lord,

13. I had no rest in my spirit because I *was not able* to find Titus, my brother; then I left them *and* went into Macedonia.

14. But thanks *be* to God, Who always leads us triumphant in Christ, and manifests the fragrance of His knowledge through us in every place.

15. For we are Christ's sweet perfume to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing;

16. To those *who are perishing*, we are a stench of death unto death; but to those *who are being saved*, we are a fragrance of life unto life. And who *is* qualified for such things?

17. For we are not like the many, who for *their own* profit are corrupting the Word of God; but we speak with sincerity, as from God, *and* before God, *and* in Christ.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Do we again begin to commend ourselves? Or do we, as some, need epistles of commendation to you, or *epistles* of commendation from you?

2. You are our epistle, and are inscribed in our hearts, being known and read by all men;

3. *For* it is manifest that you are Christ's epistle, ministered by us; you were not inscribed with *pen and ink*, but with *the* Spirit of *the* living God;

not on tablets of stone, but on fleshly tablets of *the* heart.

4. Now we have this confidence through Christ toward God;

5. Not that we are competent of ourselves, *or* credit anything to our own *abilities*; rather, our competency is from God;

6. Who also made us competent as ministers of *the* New Covenant; not of *the* letter, but of *the* Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

7. Now if the ministry of death, which was engraved in stones, came into being with glory, so that the children of Israel were not able to gaze upon Moses' face because of the glory of his face, which *glory* is being set aside;

8. Shall not the ministry of the Spirit be far more glorious?

9. For if *there was* glory in the ministry of condemnation, to a much greater degree the ministry of righteousness overflows with glory.

10. And even *the ministry of condemnation*, which had glory, was not glorious in this respect, because of the surpassing glory *of the ministry of life*.

11. For if that which is being set aside *came into being* through glory, to a much greater degree that which remains *is* glorious.

12. Now then, because we have such hope, we use great plainness *of speech*;

13. For *we are* not like Moses, who put a veil over his face, so that the children of Israel could not gaze to the end upon *the glory* that is *now* being set aside.

14. But their minds were blinded; for to the present hour the same veil *has* not *been* removed, *but* remains at the reading of the Old Covenant; which *veil* is removed in Christ.

15. For to this day, when Moses is read, *the* veil lies upon their hearts.

16. But when *their hearts* turn to *the* Lord, the veil is taken away.

5 John 15:5

1 Cor. 15:10

6 Jer. 31:31

Mat. 26:28

John 6:63

Rom. 2:27,

3:20, 8:2

1 Cor. 3:5

Gal. 3:10

Eph. 3:7

7 Ex. 34:1,

34:29

Deut. 10:1

Rom. 7:10

8 Gal. 3:5

9 Rom. 1:17

12 2 Cor. 7:4

Eph. 6:19

13 Ex. 34:33

Rom. 10:4

Gal. 3:23

14 Is. 6:10

Acts 28:26

16 Ex. 34:34

Is. 25:7

Rom. 11:23

17 1 Cor. 15:45

18 Rom. 8:29

1 Cor. 13:12

2 Cor. 4:4, 6

Chap. 4

1 1 Cor. 7:25

2 Cor. 3:6

2 2 Cor. 2:17,

5:11, 6:4, 7

3 1 Cor. 1:18

4 John 1:18,

12:40

2 Cor. 3:8, 9

Eph. 6:12

Heb. 1:3

5 1 Cor. 1:13,

9:19

6 Gen. 1:3

1 Pet. 2:9

2 Pet. 1:19

7 1 Cor. 2:5

2 Cor. 5:1

8 2 Cor. 7:5

9 Psa. 37:24

10 Rom. 8:17

Phil. 3:10

17. Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of *the* Lord *is*, there is freedom.

18. But we all, with uncovered faces beholding the glory of *the* Lord as in a mirror, are being transformed *into* the same image from glory to glory, even as by *the* Spirit of *the* Lord.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Therefore, having this ministry, according as we have received mercy, we are not fainthearted.

2. For we have personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain, not walking in *cunning* craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth, we are commending ourselves to every man's conscience before God.

3. But if our gospel is hidden, it is hidden to those who are perishing;

4. In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of those who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is *the* image of God, should shine unto them.

5. For we do not preach our own selves, but Christ Jesus *the* Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake

6. Because *it is* God Who commanded *the* light to shine out of darkness, Who shined into our hearts *the* light of the knowledge of the glory of God in *the* face of Jesus Christ.

7. Now we have this treasure in earthen vessels in order that the supremacy of the power may be of God, and not from us.

8. On every *side we are* hard pressed, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing;

9. Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

10. Always carrying about in *our* bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.

11. For those of us who are living are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our mortal flesh.

12. So then, on the one hand, death is working in us; and on the other hand, life *is working* in you.

13. And having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, "I believed, therefore I have spoken," we also believe; therefore we also speak,

14. Knowing that He Who raised the Lord Jesus *from the dead* shall also raise us through Jesus, and shall present *us* with you.

15. For all things *are* for your sakes, so that the abounding grace may cause the thanksgiving of many to overflow unto the glory of God.

16. For this reason, we do not lose heart; but if our outward man is being brought to decay, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day.

17. For the momentary lightness of our tribulation is working out for us an immeasurably greater *and* everlasting fullness of glory;

18. While we consider not the things *that are* seen, but the things *that are* not seen. For the things *that are* seen *are* temporary; but the things *that are* not seen *are* eternal.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with *human* hands, eternal in the heavens.

2. For in this we truly are groaning, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven;

3. If indeed *that* being clothed, we may not be found naked.

4. For we who are in *this* tabernacle truly do groan, being burdened; not that we wish to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon so that the mortal *flesh*

11 Rom. 8:36
12 2 Cor. 13:9
13 Psa. 116:10
2 Pet. 1:1
14 Rom. 8:11
1 Cor. 6:14
15 2 Cor. 1:11
Col. 1:24
2 Tim. 2:10
16 Rom. 7:22
Col. 3:10
17 Mat. 5:12
1 Pet. 1:6
Rom. 8:18
18 Rom. 8:24
Heb. 11:1

Chap. 5

1 Job 4:19
2 Rom. 8:23
3 Rev. 3:18
4 1 Cor. 15:53

5 Is. 29:23
Rom. 8:23
Eph. 1:14,
2:10
7 Rom. 8:24
Heb. 11:1
8 Phil. 1:23
10 Rom. 14:10
Gal. 6:7
Eph. 6:8
Rev. 22:12
11 Jude 23
2 Cor. 4:2
Heb. 10:31
12 2 Cor. 1:14,
3:1
13 2 Cor. 11:1,
16
14 Rom. 5:15
15 Rom. 6:11
1 Cor. 6:19
Gal. 2:20
16 Mat. 12:50
John 6:63
2 Cor. 10:4
Eph. 6:11
Col. 3:11
17 Is. 65:17
Rom. 8:9
Gal. 5:6
Eph. 2:15

may be swallowed up by life.

5. Now He Who is working out this very thing for us *is* God, Who has also given us the earnest of the Spirit.

6. Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in *this* body, we are away from *our eternal* home, *which is coming* from the Lord.

7. (For we walk by faith, not by sight.)

8. We are confident, and we are willing to be *away* from *this* home (*that is*, out of *this* body) and instead to be at home with the Lord.

9. Because of this, we are also laboring *so that*, whether present or absent, *we* may be well pleasing to Him.

10. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ so that each one may receive according to the things *done* in *his* body—what he has practiced, whether good or evil.

11. So then, *because* we know the fear of the Lord, we are persuading men; but we are fully known to God, and I hope are also fully known in your consciences.

12. For we are not commending ourselves again to you, but are giving you an occasion to boast on our behalf, so that you may have *something to answer to* those who themselves are boasting in *physical* appearance, and not in *the* heart.

13. But if we are jubilant, *it is* to God; or if we are sober-minded, *it is* for you;

14. For the love of Christ compels us, *because* we have thus concluded that if one died for all, then all died.

15. And He died for all so that those who live should no longer live to themselves, but to Him Who died for them and was raised again.

16. So then, from this time *forward* we know no man according to *the* flesh; but even if we have known Christ in *the* flesh, yet now we no longer know *Him accordingly*.

17. Therefore, if anyone *be* in Christ,

he is a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

18. And all things *are* from God, Who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

19. Which *is*, that God was in Christ, reconciling *the* world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them; and He has entrusted to us *this* message of reconciliation.

20. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ; *and* God, as it were, is exhorting *you* through us. We beseech *you* on behalf of Christ, "Be reconciled to God."

21. For He made Him Who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, so that we might become *the* righteousness of God in Him.

CHAPTER SIX

1. We then, working together *with Him*, are also exhorting you not to receive the grace of God in vain.

2. (For He says, "In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now *is* an acceptable time. Behold, now *is* a day of salvation.)

3. We do not give offense to anyone in anything, so that the ministry may not be blamed;

4. But in everything we are confirming ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in tribulation, in necessities, in distresses,

5. In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings,

6. In pureness, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in kindness, in *the* Holy Spirit, in love unfeigned,

7. In *the* Word of truth, in *the* power of God; through the armor of righteousness on the right hand and *on the* left,

8. Through glory and dishonor,

18 Rom. 3:24,
5:10
Eph. 2:16
Col. 1:20
20 Job 33:23
2 Cor. 6:1
Eph. 6:20
21 Is. 53:6, 9
1 John 3:5
Rom. 1:17,
10:3
Gal. 3:13

Chap. 6

1 1 Cor. 3:9
2 Cor. 5:20
2 Is. 49:8
3 Rom. 14:13
1 Cor. 9:12,
10:32
4 1 Cor. 4:1
2 Cor. 4:2
5 2 Cor. 11:23
7 1 Cor. 2:4
2 Cor. 7:14,
10:4
Eph. 6:11

9 Psa. 118:18
1 Cor. 4:9
2 Cor. 1:9,
4:2, 5:11
11 2 Cor. 7:3
12 2 Cor. 12:15
13 1 Cor. 4:14
14 Deut. 7:2, 3
1 Sam. 5:2, 3
1 Ki. 18:21
1 Cor. 5:9
Eph. 5:7, 11
16 Ex. 29:45
Lev. 26:12
Jer. 31:33
1 Cor. 3:16
Eph. 2:21
Heb. 3:6
17 Is. 52:11
Jer. 31:1, 9
Rev. 18:4,
21:7

Chap. 7

1 1 John 3:3
2 Acts 20:33

through evil report and good report, as deceivers and true,

9. As unknown and well known; as dying, but behold, we are alive; as chastened, but not put to death;

10. As sorrowful, but always rejoicing; as poor, but enriching many; as having nothing, yet possessing all things.

11. O *you* Corinthians! Our mouths have been opened to you, and our hearts have been enlarged *toward you*.

12. You are not suppressed by us, but you are restricted in your own hearts;

13. Now in return *for our ministry to you* (I am speaking to you as to children), you should also enlarge *your hearts toward us*.

14. Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and lawlessness *have* in common? And what fellowship *does* light *have* with darkness?

15. And what union *does* Christ *have* with Belial? Or what part *does* a believer *have* with an unbeliever?

16. And what agreement *is there between* a temple of God and idols? For you are a temple of *the* living God, exactly as God said: "I will dwell in them and walk in *them*"; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

17. Therefore, come out from the midst of them and be separate," says *the* Lord, "and touch not *the* unclean, and I will receive you;

18. And I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters," says *the* Lord Almighty.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Now then, beloved, since we have these promises, we should purge ourselves from every defilement of *the* flesh and *the* spirit, perfecting holiness in *the* fear of God.

2. Receive us; we have wronged no

one, we have corrupted no one, we have defrauded no one.

3. I do not say *this* to condemn you because I have said before that you are in our hearts—to die together and to live together.

4. Great *is* my boldness toward you, and great *is* my boasting in regard to you. I have been filled with encouragement. I am overflowing with joy at all our tribulations.

5. For indeed, after we came into Macedonia, our flesh did not have any rest, but we were oppressed in every way—without *were* contentions, and within *were* fears.

6. But God, Who encourages those who are heavy-hearted, encouraged us by the coming of Titus;

7. And not *only* by his coming *to us*, but also by the encouragement with which he was comforted concerning you, relating to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; therefore I rejoiced all the more.

8. For if I caused you to sorrow by the epistle, I do not repent, even if I did regret *it at first*, because I see that that epistle caused you to sorrow for only a short time.

9. And *so* I rejoice—not because you were caused to sorrow, but because you sorrowed unto repentance; for you sorrowed in a godly manner, so that you were not injured by us in any way.

10. For sorrow unto repentance before God works out salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world works out death.

11. For see how this very thing—your personal sorrow before God—brought about such earnestness in you! And, *what* a defense, and *what* indignation, and fear, and vehement desire, and zeal, and vengeance! In every way you have proved yourselves to be pure in the matter.

12. Now when I wrote to you, *it was*

3 2 Cor. 6:11, 12
4 1 Cor. 1:4
2 Cor. 3:12
Phil. 2:17
Col. 1:24
5 Deut. 32:25
2 Cor. 2:13, 4:8
6 2 Cor. 1:4, 2:13
8 2 Cor. 2:4
10 2 Sam. 12:13
Prov. 17:22
Mat. 26:75
12 2 Cor. 2:4

not for the sake of the one who did wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered *the* wrong, but in order that your earnestness toward us might be manifested for your sakes before God.

13. Therefore, we were comforted by your encouragement, and we rejoiced all the more abundantly at Titus' joy, because his spirit had been renewed by all of you.

14. For if I have boasted anything to him about you, I was not ashamed. But as we spoke all things in truth to you, so also our boasting *of you* to Titus became truth;

15. And his deep affection for you is even greater, as he recalls the obedience of all of you, how with fear and trembling you received him.

16. I rejoice that I have confidence in you in everything.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Now, brethren, we *wish to* make known to you the grace of God that has been given to the churches in Macedonia,

2. That in a great trial of affliction, their abundant joy and their deep poverty has overflowed unto the wealth of their liberality.

3. For I testify *that* according to *their* ability, and *even* beyond *their* ability, *they were* willing to give of themselves,

4. Earnestly entreating us to accept the gift, and *their* participation in the service for the saints.

5. And not *only* as we had hoped, but they gave themselves first to the Lord, and to us by *the* will of God.

6. So then, we exhorted Titus that as he had begun *this service*, so he might also with you *make* this gift complete.

7. Now even as you are abounding in every way—in faith, and word, and knowledge, and *in* all diligence, and in

13 Rom. 15:32
15 2 Cor. 2:9, 6:12
Phil. 2:12
16 2 Thes. 3:4
Philem. 8, 21
Chap. 8
2 Mark 12:44
2 Cor. 9:11
4 Acts 11:29, 24:17
Rom. 15:25, 26
1 Cor. 16:1, 3, 4
2 Cor. 9:1
6 2 Cor. 8:4, 17, 19, 12:18
7 1 Cor. 1:5, 12:13
2 Cor. 9:8

the love *that* you have for us—so you should also abound in this gift.

8. I am not saying *this* as a command, but *I am exhorting you* through the diligence of others in order to prove the genuineness of your love.

9. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: that although He was rich, He became poor for your sakes, so that by His poverty you might become rich.

10. Now I give *my* judgment in this because it is fitting for you, who began a year ago not only to perform *this service*, but also showed *your* willingness.

11. But now complete the service, so that just as *there was* a willing readiness, so also *there may be* a completion out of what *you* have.

12. For if there is a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.

13. For *I do* not *desire* that others may be released and you be burdened, but *that there may be* equality—your present abundance *making up* for their deficiency.

14. Likewise, their *future* abundance may also be for your deficiency, so that there may be equality

15. Exactly as it is written: "He that *gathered* much had nothing *left over*; and he that *gathered* little did not lack."

16. But thanks *be* to God, Who put the same earnest care for you in Titus' heart.

17. For he truly accepted the exhortation; and being *even* more diligent, on his own initiative he went to you.

18. But we sent with him the brother, whose praise *is* known in the gospel throughout all the churches;

19. And that is not the only *reason*, for he had also been selected by the churches to accompany us with this gift, which *is being* ministered by us to the glory of the Lord Himself and

8 1 Cor. 7:6

9 Mat. 8:20

Luke 9:58

Phil. 2:6, 7

10 Prov. 19:17

Mat. 10:42

1 Cor. 7:25

2 Cor. 9:2

1 Tim. 6:18,

19

Heb. 13:16

12 Mark 12:43,

44

Luke 21:3

15 Ex. 16:18

17 2 Cor. 8:6

18 2 Cor. 12:18

19 1 Cor. 16:3,

4

2 Cor. 4:15,

8:4, 6, 7,

9:8

as a witness of your willingness.

20. *He is accompanying us* to prevent anyone from accusing us concerning this abundance that *is being* ministered by us;

21. Providing honest things not only in the sight of *the* Lord, but also in the sight of men.

22. And we sent with them our brother, whom we have often proved in many things to be diligent, and now much more diligent in the great confidence that *he has* toward you.

23. If *anyone inquires* about Titus, *he is* my partner and fellow worker for you; and *if anyone inquires about* our brethren, *they are* messengers of the churches *and* the glory of Christ.

24. Therefore, show the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf, to them and before the churches.

CHAPTER NINE

1. It is not necessary for me to write to you concerning the ministry that *is* for the saints;

2. Because I know your willingness, for which I have boasted of you to *the* Macedonians—that Achaia was prepared a year ago; and your zeal has stirred up a greater number *to participate*.

3. But I sent the brethren *ahead*, so that our boasting about you might not be made void in this respect, *and* that, according as I had said, you may be ready;

4. Lest perhaps, if *some of the* Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (in order that we may not say "you") might be put to shame by this confident boasting.

5. Therefore, I thought *it* necessary to exhort the brethren to go ahead *of us* to you, and to complete the *preparations* of this your bounty beforehand, since you had already proclaimed a *willingness*; so that it might be *received* as a blessing, and not as *it were* of covetousness.

21 1 Pet. 2:12

Rom. 12:17

Phil. 4:8

23 Phil. 2:25

24 2 Cor. 7:14,

9:2

Chap. 9

1 Acts 11:29

Rom. 15:26

1 Cor. 16:1

2 Cor. 8:4

Gal. 2:10

2 2 Cor. 8:10,

19, 24

3 2 Cor. 8:6,

17

5 Gen. 33:11

1 Sam. 25:27

2 Ki. 5:15

6. But this *I say*: the one who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and the one who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully.

7. Each one as he purposes in his heart, *so let him give*, but not grudgingly or by compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver.

8. For God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you so that in every way you may always have sufficiency in all *things*, *and* may abound unto every good work,

9. According as it is written: "He has scattered abroad, *and* he has given to the poor; his righteousness remains forever."

10. Now may He Who supplies seed to the sower, and bread to eat, supply *your seed* and multiply your sowing; and may He increase the fruits of your righteousness,

11. *So that you may* in every way be enriched unto all bountifulness, which causes thanksgiving to God through us.

12. For the administration of this service is not only filling to overflowing the deficiencies of the saints, but *is* also abounding by the giving of many thanks to God.

13. Through the performance of this service, *they* are glorifying God for your professed subjection to the gospel of Christ, and *for the* liberality of the distribution toward them and toward all *the saints*;

14. And in their supplications for you, *there is* a longing on your behalf, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you.

15. Now thanks *be* to God for His indescribable free gift.

CHAPTER TEN

1. Now I Paul am personally exhorting you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ. On the one hand, when

6 Prov. 11:24
7 Ex. 35:5
Deut. 15:7
Prov. 11:25
Rom. 12:8
2 Cor. 8:12
8 Prov. 11:24
Phil. 4:19
9 Psa. 112:9
10 Is. 55:10
Hos. 10:12
Mat. 6:1
11 2 Cor. 1:11
12 2 Cor. 8:14
13 Mat. 5:16
Heb. 13:16
14 2 Cor. 8:1
15 Jas. 1:17

Chap. 10

1 Rom. 12:1
2 Cor. 12:5

2 1 Cor. 4:21
2 Cor. 13:2,
10
4 Jer. 1:10
Acts 7:22
1 Cor. 2:5
Eph. 6:13
1 Thes. 5:8
1 Tim. 1:18
2 Tim. 2:3
5 1 Cor. 1:19
6 2 Cor. 7:15,
13:2, 10
7 John 7:24
1 John 4:6
1 Cor. 3:23,
14:37
2 Cor. 11:23
8 2 Cor. 7:14,
13:10
10 1 Cor. 1:17,
2:3, 4
Gal. 4:13
12 2 Cor. 5:12

present with you I *am* base; but on the other hand, when absent I am bold toward you.

2. But I am beseeching *you* so that, when I am present, I may not have to be bold with the confidence with which I intend to show boldness toward some, who think that we are walking according to *the* flesh.

3. For although we walk in *the* flesh, we do not war according to *the* flesh.

4. For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds,

5. Casting down *vain* imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ;

6. And having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience has been fulfilled.

7. Are you looking at things according to their appearance? If anyone is persuaded in his *own* mind that he is Christ's, let him reconsider this concerning himself; for exactly as he *is* Christ's, so also *are* we Christ's.

8. For even if I should boast somewhat more concerning our authority, which the Lord has given to us for *your* edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be put to shame

9. In order that I may not seem as though I am frightening you by means of epistles.

10. "For on the one hand," they say, "*his* epistles *are* weighty and strong; but on the other hand, *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech *is* contemptible."

11. Let such a one think about this: that exactly as we are in word by epistles when we are absent, so *we will be* in action when we are present.

12. But we dare not join ranks with or compare ourselves with those who are commending themselves; for those who measure themselves by them-

selves, and compare themselves with themselves, have no understanding.

13. Now we will not boast of things beyond *our* measure, but according to the measure of the rule that God has distributed to us, *which* extends even to you.

14. For we are not stretching beyond our *measure*, as if we did not extend to you (for we also came to you with the gospel of Christ).

15. We are not boasting in things beyond *our* measure, *such as* other men's labors; but we have hope *that when* your faith is increased, *we will* be abundantly enriched by you according to our rule *of faith*,

16. In order to preach the gospel to the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to boast in things *made* ready in another man's territory.

17. But the one who is boasting, let him boast in *the* Lord.

18. For the *one who is* approved is not the one who commends himself, but the one whom the Lord commends.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. I would *that* you might bear with me in a little nonsense; but indeed, do bear with me.

2. For I am jealous over you with *the* jealousy of God because I have espoused you to one husband, so that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ.

3. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds might be corrupted from *the* simplicity that *is* in Christ.

4. For indeed, if someone comes preaching another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or you receive a different spirit, which you did not receive, or a different gospel, which you did not accept, you put up with it as *something* good.

5. But I consider myself in no way

13 2 Cor. 10:15
14 1 Cor. 3:5
15 Rom. 15:20
17 Is. 65:16
Jer. 9:24
1 Cor. 1:31
18 Prov. 27:2
Rom. 2:29
1 Cor. 4:5

Chap. 11

1 2 Cor. 5:13,
11:16
2 Lev. 21:13
Hos. 2:19
1 Cor. 4:15
Gal. 4:17
Col. 1:28
3 Gen. 3:4
John 8:44
Eph. 6:24
Col. 2:4, 8
1 Tim. 1:3
4 Gal. 1:7, 8
5 1 Cor. 15:10

inferior to those highly exalted *so-called* apostles.

6. For although *I may be* unpolished in speech, yet *I am* not in knowledge; for in all things I have demonstrated this to you.

7. Now did I commit sin by humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you freely?

8. I robbed other churches, receiving wages *from them* for ministering to you.

9. And when I was present with you and in need, I was not a burden to anyone (for the brethren who came from Macedonia fully supplied my needs); for I kept myself, and will *continue to* keep myself, from being burdensome to you in anything.

10. *As the* truth of Christ is in me, no one shall stop me from this boasting in the regions of Achaia.

11. Why? Because I don't love you? God knows *I do*.

12. But what I am doing, I will do, so that I may cut off *any* occasion from those who are desiring an occasion; so that in the things they boast of, they also may be found even as *we are*.

13. For such *are* false apostles—deceitful workers who are transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.

14. And *it is* no marvel, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.

15. Therefore, *it is* no great thing if his servants also transform themselves as ministers of righteousness—whose end shall be according to their works.

16. Again I say, no one should consider me a fool; but if otherwise, receive me even as a fool, that I also may boast a little.

17. What I am *now* saying, I do not speak according to *the* Lord, but as in foolishness, in this confidence of boasting.

6 1 Cor. 1:17
2 Cor. 12:12
Eph. 3:4
9 Acts 20:33
2 Cor. 12:14
Phil. 4:10
1 Thes. 2:9
10 Rom. 9:1
1 Cor. 9:15
11 2 Cor. 6:11
12 1 Cor. 9:12
13 Acts 15:24
2 Pet. 2:1
Rom. 16:18
Gal. 1:7
Phil. 1:15,
3:2
Tit. 1:10
Rev. 2:2
14 Gal. 1:8
15 Phil. 3:19
17 1 Cor. 7:6

18. Since many boast according to *the* flesh, I also will boast.
 19. For since you are *so* intelligent, you gladly bear with fools.
 20. For you bear *it* if anyone brings you into bondage, if anyone devours *you*, if anyone takes *from you*, if anyone exalts himself, if anyone beats you on the face.
 21. I speak as though we were under reproach for being weak; but in whatever way anyone else is bold (I speak in foolishness), I also am bold.
 22. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I.
 23. Are they servants of Christ? (I am speaking as if I were out of my mind.) So am I, above *and beyond measure*—in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in imprisonments more frequent, in deaths often.
 24. Five times from *the* Jews I received forty *stripes* less one.
 25. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I spent in the deep.
 26. *I have been* in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from *my own* race, in perils from *the* Gentiles, in perils in *the* city, in perils in *the* desert, in perils on *the* sea, in perils among false brethren;
 27. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.
 28. Besides *all* these things from the *world* outside, pressing on me daily is the care of all the churches.
 29. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I do not burn?
 30. If it is necessary for me to boast, I will boast *in* the things concerning my weakness.
 31. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is blessed into the ages of *eternity*, knows that I do not lie.

19 1 Cor. 4:10
 20 Gal. 2:4
 21 2 Cor. 10:10
 Phil. 3:4
 22 Acts 22:3
 Rom. 11:1
 Phil. 3:5
 23 Acts 9:16
 1 Cor. 15:10, 30
 24 Deut. 25:3
 25 Acts 14:19, 16:22, 27:41
 26 Acts 9:23, 14:5
 27 Acts 20:31
 1 Cor. 4:11
 28 Acts 20:18
 Rom. 1:14
 29 1 Cor. 8:13
 30 2 Cor. 12:5
 31 Rom. 1:9, 9:5
 Gal. 1:20
 1 Thes. 2:5
 32 Acts 9:24
 Chap. 12
 2 Acts 22:17
 Rom. 16:7
 Gal. 1:22
 4 Luke 23:43
 2 Cor. 11:30
 6 2 Cor. 11:16
 7 Job 2:7
 Ezek. 28:24
 Luke 13:16
 Gal. 4:13
 8 Deut. 3:23
 Mat. 26:44
 9 1 Pet. 4:14
 2 Cor. 11:30
 10 Rom. 5:3
 2 Cor. 7:4, 13:4

32. In Damascus, the governor under Aretus the king was guarding the city of the Damascenes *because* he desired to arrest me.

33. But I was let down in a basket through a window by the wall, and escaped *from* his hands.

CHAPTER TWELVE

1. Indeed, it is not expedient for me to boast. But I will come to visions and revelations of *the* Lord.

2. I know a man in Christ *who*, fourteen years ago, was caught up to *the* third heaven. (Whether *this man* was in *the* body, I do not know; or out of the body, I do not know—God knows.)

3. Now I know such a man (whether *taken up* in *the* body, or out of the body, I do not know—God knows),

4. *And* that he was caught up to Paradise, and heard unutterable sayings, which a man is not permitted to speak.

5. I will boast of such a one as this; but of myself I personally will not boast, except concerning my weaknesses.

6. But even if I choose to boast, I shall not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. However, I will forbear, lest anyone think of me above what he sees me *to be*, or what he hears from me.

7. But in order that I might not be exalted by the abundance of the revelations, *there* was given to me a thorn in the flesh, an angel of Satan to buffet me, so that I might not be exalted.

8. I besought the Lord three times for this, that it might depart from me;

9. But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you; for My power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, most gladly will I boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

10. For this reason, I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for

Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

11. I have become a fool *in this* boasting. You have forced me *to do so*, when I ought to have been commended by you. For in no way was I inferior to those highly exalted *so-called* apostles—even if I am nothing.

12. Indeed, the signs of an apostle were demonstrated *by me* in all patience, in signs and wonders and miracles among you.

13. For in what *way* was it that you were inferior to the other churches, except that I myself did not burden you? Forgive me this wrong.

14. Behold, a third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not burden you; for I do not seek what is yours, but you; for the children are not obligated to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

15. Now I will most happily spend, and am willing to be totally spent, for your souls; although the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.

16. Yet even so, I did not burden you; but being crafty, I caught you with guile.

17. Did I make a gain of you by any of those whom I sent to you?

18. I urged Titus *to go to you* and sent with *him our* brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit *and* in the same steps?

19. Again, do you think that we are making an excuse to you? We speak before God in Christ; and everything *we do*, beloved, *is* for your edification.

20. But I fear that when I come, perhaps I may find you *in a state* such as I do not wish, and I may be found by you such as you do not wish; that *there may be* strifes, jealousies, indignations, contentions, evil speakings, whisperings, puffings up, commotions;

21. *And* that when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I

11 1 Cor. 3:7
2 Cor. 11:1, 5, 16
Gal. 2:6-8
Eph. 3:8
12 Rom. 15:18
1 Cor. 9:2
2 Cor. 4:2
13 1 Cor. 1:7, 9; 12
2 Cor. 11:7, 9
14 Acts 20:33
1 Cor. 4:14, 10; 33
2 Cor. 13:1
15 John 10:11
2 Cor. 1:6, 6; 12, 13
Col. 1:24
2 Tim. 2:10
16 2 Cor. 11:9
17 2 Cor. 7:2
18 2 Cor. 8:6, 16, 8; 18
19 Rom. 9:1
1 Cor. 10:33
2 Cor. 5:12, 11; 31
20 1 Cor. 4:21
2 Cor. 13:2, 10
21 1 Cor. 5:1
2 Cor. 2:1, 4, 13; 2

Chap. 13

1 Num. 35:30
Deut. 17:6
Mat. 18:16
John 8:17
2 Cor. 12:14
Heb. 10:28
2 2 Cor. 1:23, 10; 2, 12; 21
3 Mat. 10:20
1 Cor. 5:4, 9; 2
4 1 Pet. 3:18
Rom. 6:4
2 Cor. 10:3, 4
Phil. 2:7, 8
5 Rom. 8:10
1 Cor. 9:27
Gal. 4:19
7 2 Cor. 6:9
9 1 Cor. 4:10
2 Cor. 11:30
1 Thes. 3:10
10 1 Cor. 4:21
2 Cor. 12:20

shall grieve over many of those who have already sinned, and have not repented of the uncleanness and sexual immorality and licentiousness that they have practiced.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1. This *is the* third time *that* I am coming to you. In *the* mouth of two or three witnesses every matter shall be established.

2. I have previously told *you*, and I am telling you in advance the second time, as though I were present; but since I am absent now, I am writing to those who have continued to sin until now—and to all the rest—that if I come again, I will not spare.

3. Since you seek a proof of Christ speaking through me (Who is not weak toward you, but is powerful in you;

4. For although He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by God's power; and we are indeed weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by God's power toward you),

5. Examine yourselves *to see* whether you are in the faith; prove your own selves. Don't you *of* your own selves know that Jesus Christ is in you? Otherwise, you are reprobates.

6. But I hope that you will recognize that we are not reprobates.

7. Now I am praying to God *that* you do no evil; not that we may appear *to be* approved, but that you may do what *is* right, even if we are *regarded* as reprobates.

8. For we do not have any power against the truth, but *only* for the truth.

9. And we rejoice when we are weak and you are strong; for we are also praying for this—even your perfection.

10. For this cause, I am writing these things to you while I am absent, in order that when I am present I may not treat *you* with severity, according to the authority which the Lord has

given me for edification and not for destruction.
 11. In conclusion, brethren, rejoice! Be perfected; be encouraged; be of the same mind; be at peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.
 12. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints send salutations to you.

11 Rom. 12:16,
 18, 15:33
 12 1 Pet. 5:14
 Rom. 16:16
 1 Cor. 16:20
 1 Thes. 5:26

13. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit *be* with you all. Amen.

*The second epistle to the Corinthians,
 written from Philippi of Macedonia
 by Titus and Luke*

The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians

CHAPTER ONE

1. Paul, *an* apostle, not *sent* from men nor *made* by man, but by Jesus Christ and God *the* Father, Who raised Him from *the* dead;
 2. And all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia:
 3. Grace and peace *be* to you from God *the* Father and our Lord Jesus Christ,
 4. Who gave Himself for our sins, in order that He might deliver us from the present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father;
 5. To Whom *be* the glory into the ages of eternity. Amen.
 6. I am astonished that you are so quickly being turned away from Him Who called you into *the* grace of Christ, to a different gospel,
 7. Which *in reality* is not another *gospel*; but there are some who are troubling you and are desiring to pervert the gospel of Christ.
 8. But if we, or even an angel from heaven, should preach a gospel to you *that* is contrary to what we have preached, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!
 9. As we have said before, I also now say again. If anyone is preaching a gospel contrary to what you have re-

Chap. 1
 1 Acts 2:24,
 9:6
 Tit. 1:3
 2 1 Cor. 16:1
 Phil. 2:22
 3 1 Thes. 1:1
 4 Mat. 20:28
 1 John 5:19
 Rom. 4:25
 Tit. 2:14
 Heb. 2:5
 6 Gal. 5:8
 7 Acts 15:1
 2 Cor. 2:17,
 11:4
 8 1 Cor. 16:22
 9 Deut. 4:2
 Prov. 30:6
 Rev. 22:18
 10 1 Sam. 24:7
 Mat. 28:14
 Jas. 4:4
 1 Thes. 2:4
 11 1 Cor. 15:1
 12 1 Cor. 15:1
 Eph. 3:3
 13 Acts 8:3,
 9:1
 1 Tim. 1:13
 14 Jer. 9:14
 Mat. 15:2
 Mark 7:5
 Acts 26:9
 Phil. 3:6
 15 Is. 49:1, 5
 16 Mat. 16:17
 Acts 9:15
 2 Cor. 4:6
 Eph. 3:8,
 6:12

ceived, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!
 10. Now then, am I striving to please men, or God? Or am I motivated to please men? For if I am yet pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ.
 11. But I certify to you, brethren, that the gospel that was preached by me is not according to man;
 12. Because neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught *it by man*; rather, *it was* by *the* revelation of Jesus Christ.
 13. For you heard of my former conduct when I was in Judaism, how I was excessively persecuting the church of God and was destroying it;
 14. And I was advancing in Judaism *far* beyond many *of my* contemporaries in my *own* nation, being more abundantly zealous for *the* traditions of my fathers.
 15. But when it pleased God, Who selected me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by His grace,
 16. To reveal His own Son in me, in order that I might preach Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood,

17. Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those *who were* apostles before me; but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

18. Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Peter, and I remained with him fifteen days.

19. But I did not see *any* of the other apostles, except James the brother of the Lord.

20. (Now the things that I am writing to you, behold, before God, I am not lying.)

21. Then I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

22. But I was unknown by face to the churches in Judea which *are* in Christ;

23. They only heard, "The one who once persecuted us is now preaching the gospel—the faith which he once destroyed."

24. And they glorified God in me.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Then after fourteen years I again went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus with *me* also.

2. And I went up according to revelation, and laid before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run in vain.

3. (But indeed, Titus, who *was* with me, being a Greek, was not compelled to be circumcised.)

4. Now *this meeting* was *private* because of false brethren brought in secretly, who came in by stealth to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, in order that they might bring us into bondage;

5. To whom we did not yield in subjection, *not* even for one hour, so that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

18 Acts 9:26
19 Mat. 13:55
1 Cor. 9:5
20 Rom. 9:1
21 Acts 9:30
22 Rom. 16:7
1 Thes. 2:14

Chap. 2

1 Acts 15:2
2 Acts 15:12
Phil. 2:16
1 Thes. 3:5
4 Acts 15:1
2 Cor. 11:26
Gal. 3:25,
4:3, 9
5 Gal. 2:14

6. But *the gospel that I preach* did not come from those reputed to be something. (Whatever they were does not make any difference to me; God does not accept *the* person of a man.) For those who are of repute conferred nothing upon me.

7. But on the contrary, after seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, exactly as Peter *had been entrusted with the gospel* of the circumcision;

8. (For He Who wrought in Peter for *the* apostleship of the circumcision wrought in me also toward the Gentiles;)

9. And after recognizing the grace that was given to me, James and Cephas and John—those reputed to be pillars—gave to me and Barnabas *the* right hands of fellowship, *affirming* that we *should go* to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision.

10. *Their only request* was that we remember the poor, which very thing I was also diligent to do.

11. But when Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to *his* face because he was to be condemned;

12. For before certain *ones* came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles. However, when they came, he drew back and separated himself *from the Gentiles*, being afraid of those of *the* circumcision party.

13. And the rest of *the* Jews joined him in *this* hypocritical act, insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.

14. But when I saw that they did not walk uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in the presence of them all, "If you, being a Jew, are living like the Gentiles, and not according to Judaism, why do you compel the Gentiles to judaize?*

15. We who are Jews by nature—and not sinners of *the* Gentiles—

16. Knowing that a man is not justi-

6 Acts 10:34
Rom. 2:11
2 Cor. 12:11
Gal. 6:3
7 Acts 13:46
Rom. 11:13
1 Thes. 2:4
2 Tim. 1:11
8 Acts 9:15
1 Cor. 15:10
Gal. 3:5
9 Mat. 16:18
Rom. 1:5
1 Cor. 15:10
Eph. 3:8
Rev. 21:14
10 Acts 11:30
Rom. 15:25
11 Acts 15:35
12 Acts 10:28
14 Acts 10:28
Gal. 2:5
1 Tim. 5:20
15 Mat. 9:11
Acts 15:10
Eph. 2:3
16 Psa. 143:2
Acts 13:38
Rom. 1:17,
3:20
Gal. 3:24

*In order to understand that the traditional laws of Judaism are not the commands of God given to Moses in the Pentateuch, one needs to read: Code of Jewish Law—Ganzfried and Golden, Hebrew Publishing Company, 1993—ISBN 0-88442-779-8.

fied by works of law*, but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ, we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified by *the* faith of Christ, and not by works of law; because by works of law shall no flesh be justified.

17. Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ, *and* we ourselves are found to be sinners, *is* Christ then *the* minister of sin? MAY IT NEVER BE!

18. For if I build again those things that I destroyed, I am making myself a transgressor.

19. For I through law died to law, in order that I may live to God.

20. I have been crucified with Christ, yet I live. *Indeed*, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me. For *the* life that I am now living in *the* flesh, I live by faith—that *very* faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me.

21. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness *is* through *works* of law*, then Christ died in vain.”

CHAPTER THREE

1. O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you *into* not obeying the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ, crucified, was set forth in a written public proclamation?

2. This only I desire to learn from you: did you receive the Spirit of God by works of law*, or by *the* hearing of faith?

3. Are you so foolish? Having begun in *the* Spirit, are you now being perfected in *the* flesh?

4. Have you suffered so many things in vain, if indeed it *has been* in vain?

5. Therefore *consider this*: He Who is supplying the Spirit to you, and Who is working deeds of power among you, *is He doing it* by works of law or by *the* hearing of faith?

17 1 John 3:8
19 Rom. 6:11,
14, 8:2
2 Cor. 5:15
Heb. 9:14
20 1 Pet. 4:2
Rom. 6:6
2 Cor. 5:15
Eph. 5:2
Tit. 2:14
21 Rom. 11:6
Heb. 7:11

Chap. 3

1 Gal. 2:14,
5:7
2 Acts 2:38
Rom. 10:16
Eph. 1:13
Heb. 6:4
3 Gal. 4:9
Heb. 7:16
4 2 John 8
Heb. 10:35

6 Gen. 15:6
Jas. 2:23
Rom. 4:3, 9
7 John 8:39
8 Gen. 12:3
Acts 3:25
Rom. 9:17
10 Deut. 27:26
Jer. 11:3
11 Hab. 2:4
Rom. 1:17
Gal. 2:16
Heb. 10:38
12 Lev. 18:5
Rom. 4:4, 5,
10:5
13 Deut. 21:23
Rom. 8:3
2 Cor. 5:21
14 Is. 32:15
Ezek. 11:19
Acts 2:33
Rom. 4:9
15 Heb. 9:17
16 Gen. 12:3
1 Cor. 12:12
17 Ex. 12:40
Rom. 4:13

6. *It is* exactly as *it is* written: “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness.”

7. Because of this, *you should* understand that those who *are* of faith are the *true* sons of Abraham.

8. Now *in* the Scriptures, God, seeing in advance that He would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying*, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.”

9. *It is* for this reason that those who are of faith are being blessed with the believing Abraham.

10. For as many as are *relying* on works of law* are under a curse, because it is written, “Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things that have been written in the book of the law to do them.”

11. Therefore, *it is* evident that no one is being justified before God by *means* of law; because *it is* written, “The just shall live by faith.”

12. Now then, the law is not based on faith; but, “The man who practices these things shall live in them.”

13. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree”)

14. In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles by Christ Jesus, *and* that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

15. Brethren (I am speaking from a human perspective), even when a man’s covenant has been ratified, no one nullifies *it*, or adds a codicil to it.

16. Now to Abraham and to his Seed were the promises spoken. He does not say, “and to *your* seeds,” as of many; but as of one, “and to your Seed,” which is Christ.

17. Now this I say, *that the* covenant ratified beforehand by God to Christ cannot be annulled by the law, which

*See Appendix N, “What Is Meant by the Works of the Law?” p. 831.

was *given* four hundred and thirty years later, so as to make the promise of no effect.

18. For if the inheritance *is* by law, *it is* no longer by promise. But God granted *it* to Abraham by promise.

19. Why then the law? It was placed alongside *the promises* for the purpose of *defining* transgressions, until the Seed should come to whom *the* promise was made, having been ordained through angels in the hand of a mediator.

20. Now then, a mediator does not *act on behalf* of one; but God is one.*

21. *Is* the law then contrary to the promises of God? MAY IT NEVER BE! For if a law had been given that had the power to give life, *then* righteousness would indeed have been by law.

22. But the Scriptures have shut up all things under sin, so that by *the* faith of Jesus Christ the promise might be given to those who believe.

23. Now before faith came, we were guarded under law, having been shut up unto the faith that was yet to be revealed.

24. In this way, the law was our tutor *to lead us* to Christ that we might be justified by faith.

25. But since faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor

26. Because you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

27. For as many *of you* as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.

28. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

29. And if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to *the* promise.

18 Rom. 4:14, 8:17
19 Ex. 20:19
John 1:17, 15:22
Acts 7:53
Rom. 4:15
20 Rom. 3:29
22 Rom. 4:11, 11:32
24 Rom. 10:4
Acts 13:39
26 John 1:12
Rom. 8:14
27 Rom. 6:3, 10:12, 13:14
28 John 10:16
Eph. 2:14
29 Gen. 21:10
Rom. 8:17
Heb. 11:18

Chap. 4

3 Col. 2:8
Heb. 9:10
4 Gen. 3:15, 49:10
Is. 7:14
Mat. 1:23, 5:17
Mark 1:15
Luke 2:27
John 1:14
Heb. 2:14
5 Mat. 20:28
John 1:12
Eph. 1:5
Heb. 9:12
6 Rom. 5:5
7 Rom. 8:16
8 Rom. 1:25
1 Cor. 12:2
Eph. 2:12
1 Thes. 1:9, 4:5
9 1 Cor. 8:3
Col. 2:20
Heb. 7:18
10 Rom. 14:5
11 1 Thes. 3:5
12 2 Cor. 2:5
13 1 Cor. 2:3
14 Mal. 2:7
Luke 10:16

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Now then, I say, for as long a time as the heir is a child, he is no different from a servant, *although* he be lord of all;

2. But he is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed beforehand by the father.

3. In the same way, when we were children, we were held in bondage under the elements of the world.

4. But when the time for the fulfillment came, God sent forth His own Son, born of a woman, born under law,

5. In order that He might redeem those who are under law, so that we might receive the *gift of sonship from God*.

6. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, "Abba, Father."

7. So then, you are no longer a servant, but a son. And if a son, *you are* also an heir of God through Christ.

8. Now on the one hand, when you did not know God, you were in bondage to those who are not gods by nature.

9. But on the other hand, after having known God—rather, after having been known by God—how *is it that* you are turning again to the weak and impotent elements, to which you again desire to be in bondage?

10. You are *of* your own selves observing days, and months, and times and years.

11. I am afraid for you, lest somehow I have labored among you in vain.

12. Brethren, I beseech you, be as I *am*, for I also *am* as you *are*: you have not wronged me in anything.

13. Now you know that at first I preached the gospel to you in *the* weakness of the flesh;

14. And the temptation—namely, my

*The full meaning of Verse 20 is as follows: "Now then, a mediator does not *act on behalf* of one [that is, a mediator negotiates terms between two parties]; but [in respect to the promise of grace] God is one [that is, God acted unilaterally when He made His covenant with Abraham]." In contrast, the covenant of law that He established with Israel was ordained through angels in the hand of a mediator, Moses.

trial in my flesh—you despised not, nor rejected with contempt; rather, you received me as a messenger of God, *even* as Christ Jesus Himself.

15. What then was your blessedness? For I bear you witness that, if *it were* possible, you would have plucked out your eyes *and given them* to me.

16. Now then, in speaking the truth to you, have I become your enemy?

17. They are zealous after you, *but* not for good; rather, they desire to exclude you, in order that you may be zealous after them.

18. Now *it is* right to be zealous in a right *thing* at all times, and not only when I am present with you.

19. My little children, for whom I am again laboring in pain until Christ has been formed in you,

20. I desire to be with you now, and to change my voice, because I am at a loss concerning you.

21. Tell me, you who desire to be under law, do you not hear the law?

22. For it is written that Abraham had two sons: one by the maidservant, and one by the free *woman*.

23. Now on the one hand, he who came from the maidservant was born according to the flesh; but on the other hand, he who came from the free *woman* was *born* according to the promise;

24. Which things are allegorical, because these are the two covenants. *The* one from Mount Sinai, which is Hagar, is engendering bondage;

25. Because Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem; and she is in bondage with her children.

26. But the Jerusalem above is free, which is *the* mother of us all;

27. For it is written, "Rejoice, O barren who did not bear! Break forth and cry, *you* who were not travailing, because many more *are* the children of the desolate than of her who has the husband."

17 Rom. 10:2
19 1 Cor. 4:15
22 Gen. 16:15,
21:2
23 Rom. 9:7, 8
Heb. 11:11
24 Deut. 33:2
26 Is. 2:2
27 Is. 54:1

28 Acts 3:25
29 Gen. 21:9
Gal. 5:11
30 Gen. 21:10
John 8:35
Gal. 3:8, 22
31 John 8:36

Chap. 5

1 Acts 15:10
Rom. 6:18
2 Acts 15:1
3 Gal. 3:10
4 Rom. 9:31
Heb. 12:15
5 Rom. 8:24
6 Col. 3:11
1 Thes. 1:3
7 1 Cor. 9:24
Gal. 3:1
8 Gal. 1:6
9 1 Cor. 5:6
10 2 Cor. 2:3,
10:6
Gal. 1:7
11 1 Cor. 1:23,
15:30
Gal. 6:12

28. Now we, brethren, like Isaac, are *the* children of promise.

29. But as *it was* then, so also *it is* now: he who was born according to *the* flesh persecuted him *who was born* according to *the* Spirit.

30. Nevertheless, what does the scripture say? "Cast out the maidservant and her son; for in no way shall the son of the maidservant inherit *the promise* with the son of the free *woman*."

31. So then, brethren, we are not children of *the* maidservant, but of the free *woman*.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Therefore, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and do not be held again in a yoke of bondage.

2. Behold, I, Paul, tell you that if you become circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing!

3. Again, I am personally testifying to every man who is being circumcised that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

4. You who are attempting to be justified by *works of law**, you are being deprived of any *spiritual* effect from Christ. You have fallen from grace!

5. For we through *the* Spirit are waiting for *the* hope of righteousness by faith;

6. Because in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision of any force, nor uncircumcision; rather, *it is the* inner working of faith through love.

7. You were running well. Who hindered you, *persuading you* not to obey the truth?

8. This persuasion *is* not *coming* from Him who calls you.

9. A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

10. I am persuaded concerning you in *the* Lord that you will be otherwise minded; and he who troubles you shall bear the judgment, whoever he may be.

11. But I, brethren, if I still proclaim

*See Appendix N, "What Is Meant by the Works of the Law?" p. 831.

circumcision, why am I yet being persecuted? Then the offense of the cross has been taken away.

12. I would *that* they would even make themselves eunuchs—those who are throwing you into confusion.

13. For you have been called unto freedom, brethren; only do not *use* this freedom for an occasion to the flesh; rather, serve one another with love.

14. For the whole law is fulfilled in this *commandment*: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

15. But if you bite and devour one another, watch out *lest* you be consumed by one another.

16. Now *this* I say, walk by *the* Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

17. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these things are opposed to each other, so that you cannot do those things you wish to do.

18. But if you are led by *the* Spirit, you are not under law.

19. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness,

20. Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, strifes, jealousies, indignations, contentions, divisions, sects,

21. Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such things as these; concerning which I am telling you beforehand, even as I have also said in the past, that those who do such things shall not inherit *the* kingdom of God.

22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith,

23. Meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

24. But those who *are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts.

25. If we live by *the* Spirit, we should

12 Josh. 7:25
Acts 15:1, 2
13 1 Pet. 2:16
1 Cor. 8:9,
9:19
14 Mat. 7:12,
22:39
Jas. 2:8
16 1 Pet. 2:11
Rom. 6:12
17 Rom. 7:15,
23
18 Rom. 6:14
19 Eph. 5:3
21 1 Cor. 6:9
22 John 15:2
Rom. 15:14
1 Cor. 13:7
Eph. 5:9
Col. 3:12
23 1 Tim. 1:9
24 1 Pet. 2:11
Rom. 6:6
25 Rom. 8:4, 5

26 Phil. 2:3

Chap. 6

1 Rom. 14:1
1 Cor. 2:15,
4:21, 7:5
2 Jas. 2:8
Rom. 15:1
1 Thes. 5:14
3 Rom. 12:3
1 Cor. 8:2
2 Cor. 3:5
4 Luke 18:11
1 Cor. 11:28
5 Rom. 2:6
1 Cor. 3:8
6 1 Cor. 9:11
7 Job 13:9
Rom. 2:6
1 Cor. 6:9
2 Cor. 9:6
8 Job 4:8
9 Mat. 24:13
1 Cor. 15:58
Rev. 2:10
10 John 9:4
Eph. 2:19
Tit. 3:8
12 Gal. 2:3, 14,
5:11
Phil. 3:18

also be walking by *the* Spirit.

26. We should not become vain-glorious, provoking one another *and* envying one another.

CHAPTER SIX

1. Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in some offense, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of meekness, considering yourself, lest you also be tempted.

2. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

3. For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he is deceiving himself.

4. But let each one prove his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another;

5. For each one shall bear his own burden.

6. Let the one who is being taught in the Word share all *his* good things with the one who is teaching *him*.

7. Do not be deceived. God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap.

8. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall reap corruption from the flesh. But the one who sows to the Spirit shall reap eternal life from the Spirit.

9. Now we should not lose heart *in* doing well because we who do not faint will reap in due time.

10. So then, as we have opportunity, we should do good to all, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

11. See with what large letters I have written to you with my *own* hand.

12. As many as desire to make a good impression in *the* flesh, these are the ones who compel you to be circumcised, *and* only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ;

13. For those who are circumcised, nei-

ther do they keep *the* law themselves, but they want you to be circumcised in order that they may boast in your flesh.

14. But as for me, MAY IT NEVER BE that I boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom *the* world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

15. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any *spiritual* force; rather, *it is* a new crea-

14 Rom. 6:6
Phil. 3:3, 7
15 1 Cor. 7:19
2 Cor. 5:17

16 Psa. 125:5
Rom. 2:29
Phil. 3:16
17 2 Cor. 1:5
18 2 Tim. 4:22

tion *that* avails.

16. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

17. From this time forth, let no one trouble me, for I bear the brands of the Lord Jesus in my own body.

18. Brethren, *may* the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

To *the* Galatians, written from Rome*

* The notation at the end of Galatians indicating that Paul wrote this epistle from Rome conflicts with the chronological evidence as found in Appendix Q, pages 846 through 849. Therefore, the notation at the end of this epistle designating Rome as the city of origin, which was a later addition to the Greek text, is apparently incorrect. All the evidence points to the fact that Paul wrote Galatians from the city of Antioch in 53 AD.

The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians

CHAPTER ONE

1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and to *the* faithful in Christ Jesus:

2. Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ;

4. According as He has personally chosen us for Himself before *the* foundation of *the* world in order that we might be holy and blameless before Him in love;

5. Having predestinated us for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will,

6. To *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace, wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved Son;

7. In Whom we have redemption

Chap. 1

1 Rom. 1:7
1 Cor. 4:17
2 Cor. 1:1
2 Gal. 1:3
3 2 Cor. 1:3
4 Luke 1:75
1 Pet. 1:2
Rom. 8:28
5 John 1:12
Rom. 8:29
1 Cor. 1:21
6 Mat. 3:17
Rom. 3:24
7 Rom. 3:24
Heb. 9:12

9 Rom. 16:25
2 Tim. 1:9
10 1 Cor. 3:22
Gal. 4:4
Col. 1:20
11 Is. 46:10
Rom. 8:17
Eph. 1:5
12 Jas. 1:18
2 Thes. 2:13

through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace,

8. Which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence;

9. Having made known to us the mystery of His own will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself;

10. That in *the* divine plan for the fulfilling of *the* times, He might bring all things together in Christ, both the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth;

11. Yes, in Him, in Whom we also have obtained an inheritance, having been predestinated according to His purpose, Who is working out all things according to the counsel of His own will;

12. That we might be to *the* praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ;

13. In Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

14. Which is *the* earnest of our inheritance until *the* redemption of the purchased possession, to *the* praise of His glory.

15. For this cause, I also, after hearing of the faith in the Lord Jesus that is among you, and the love toward all the saints,

16. Do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

17. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you *the* spirit of wisdom and revelation in *the* knowledge of Him.

18. *And* may the eyes of your mind be enlightened in order that you may comprehend what is the hope of His calling, and what *is* the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

19. And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the inner working of His mighty power,

20. Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from *the* dead, and set *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*,

21. Far above every principality and authority and power and lordship, and every name that is named—not only in this age, but also in the *age* to come;

22. For He has subordinated all things under His feet, and has given Him *to be* head over all things to the church,

23. Which is His body—the fullness of Him Who fills all things in all.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Now you were dead in trespasses and sins,

2. In which you walked in times past

13 John 1:17
2 Cor. 1:22
14 Acts 20:28
1 Pet. 2:9
Rom. 8:23
2 Cor. 5:5
15 Col. 1:4
16 Rom. 1:9
17 John 20:17
Col. 1:9
18 Acts 26:18
Eph. 2:12
19 Col. 2:12
20 Psa. 110:1
Acts 2:24
21 Rom. 8:38
Phil. 2:9, 10
22 Mat. 28:18
Heb. 2:7
23 Rom. 12:5
1 Cor. 12:6
Col. 2:9

Chap. 2

1 Eph. 4:18
Col. 2:13
2 Eph. 6:12
Col. 1:21,
3:6

3 Psa. 51:5
1 Pet. 4:3
Gal. 5:16
4 Rom. 10:12
5 Rom. 5:6, 8,
6:4, 5
6 Eph. 1:20
7 Tit. 3:4
8 Mat. 16:17
Rom. 4:16
2 Tim. 1:9
10 Is. 19:25
11 Col. 2:11
12 Ezek. 13:9
Gal. 4:8
Rom. 9:4, 8
Col. 1:21
1 Thes. 4:13
13 Acts 2:39
Gal. 3:28

according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience;

3. Among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind, and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest *of the world*.

4. But God, Who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

5. Even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ. (*For* you have been saved by grace.)

6. And He has raised *us* up together and has caused *us* to sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,

7. So that in the ages that *are* coming He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

8. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God,

9. Not of works, so that no one may boast.

10. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them.

11. Therefore, remember that you were once Gentiles in *the* flesh, who are called uncircumcision by those who are called circumcision in *the* flesh made by hands;

12. *And* that you were without Christ at that time, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.

13. But now in Christ Jesus, you who were once far off are made near by the blood of Christ.

14. For He is our peace, Who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition,
 15. Having annulled in His flesh the enmity, the law of commandments contained in *the decrees of men*, so that in Himself He might create both into one new man, making peace;
 16. And *that* He might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.
 17. Now when He came, He preached the gospel—peace to you who *were* far off and to those who *were* near.
 18. For through Him we both have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father.
 19. So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God.
 20. You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the* chief Cornerstone
 21. In Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together, is increasing into a holy temple in *the* Lord;
 22. In Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit.

CHAPTER THREE

1. For this cause I, Paul, *am* the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles,
 2. If indeed you have heard of the ministry of the grace of God that was given to me for you;
 3. How He made known to me by revelation the mystery (even as I wrote briefly before,
 4. So that when you read *this*, you will be able to comprehend my understanding in the mystery of Christ),
 5. Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets by *the* Spirit;

14 Mic. 5:5
 John 10:16
 15 Gal. 6:15
 Col. 1:22, 2:14
 16 Rom. 6:6
 Col. 1:20-22
 17 Psa. 148:14
 Is. 57:19
 18 John 10:9
 1 Cor. 12:13
 19 Gal. 6:10
 Phil. 3:20
 20 Psa. 118:22
 Mat. 16:18
 1 Pet. 2:4
 1 Cor. 12:28
 21 1 Cor. 3:17
 22 1 Pet. 2:5

Chap. 3

1 Acts 21:33
 Col. 1:24
 2 Acts 9:15
 Rom. 1:5
 3 Acts 22:17
 Rom. 16:25
 5 Rom. 16:25

6 Gal. 3:28
 7 Rom. 1:5, 15:16, 18
 8 1 Cor. 15:9
 Col. 1:27
 9 Psa. 33:6
 Rom. 16:25
 10 1 Pet. 1:12
 Col. 1:16
 1 Tim. 3:16
 12 Heb. 4:16
 13 2 Cor. 1:6
 Phil. 1:14
 15 Eph. 1:10
 16 Rom. 7:22
 Phil. 4:19
 Col. 1:11
 17 John 14:23
 Col. 1:23
 18 Rom. 10:3
 Eph. 1:18
 19 Eph. 1:23

6. That the Gentiles might be joint heirs, and a joint body, and joint partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,
 7. Of which I became a servant according to the gift of the grace of God, *which* was given to me through the inner working of His power.
 8. To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, was this grace given, that I might preach the gospel among the Gentiles—even the unsearchable riches of Christ;
 9. And that I might enlighten all *as to* what *is* the fellowship of the mystery that has been hidden from the ages in God, Who created all things by Jesus Christ;
 10. So that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly *places*,
 11. According to *His* eternal purpose, which He has wrought in Christ Jesus our Lord,
 12. In Whom we have boldness and *direct* access with confidence through His *very* own faith.
 13. So then, I beseech *you* not to faint at my tribulations for you, which are *working for* your glory.
 14. For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 15. Of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,
 16. That He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man;
 17. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;
 18. *And* that being rooted and grounded in love, you may be fully able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the breadth and length and depth and height,
 19. And to know the love of Christ, which surpasses *human* knowledge; so

that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

20. Now to Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that is working in us,

21. To Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all generations, *even* into the ages of eternity. Amen.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Therefore, I, the prisoner of *the* Lord, am exhorting you to walk worthily of the calling to which you were called

2. With all humility and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love;

3. Being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4. *There is* one body and one Spirit, even as you were also called in one hope of your calling;

5. One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

6. One God and Father of all, Who *is* over all, and through all, and in you all.

7. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

8. For this *very* reason, He says *that* after ascending on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.

9. Now He Who ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10. He Who descended is the same one Who also ascended above all the heavens so that He might fulfill all things.

11. And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers

12. For the perfecting of the saints, for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the body of Christ;

13. Until we all come into the unity of

20 Rom. 16:25

1 Cor. 2:9

Col. 1:29

21 Rom. 11:36

Chap. 4

1 Phil. 1:27

Philem. 1, 9

2 Acts 20:19

3 Col. 3:14

4 Rom. 12:5

5 Jude 3

1 Cor. 1:13

Heb. 6:6

6 Mal. 2:10

Rom. 11:36

7 1 Cor. 12:11

8 Judg. 5:12

Psa. 68:18

9 John 3:13

10 Acts 1:9,

2:33

11 Acts 20:28,

21:8

Rom. 12:7

1 Cor. 12:28

12 1 Cor. 12:7,

14:26

Col. 1:24

13 Mat. 5:48

1 Cor. 14:20

Col. 2:2,

3:15

14 Is. 28:9

Mat. 11:7

Rom. 16:18

Heb. 13:9

15 2 Cor. 4:2

Eph. 1:22

Col. 1:18

16 Col. 2:19

17 Rom. 1:21

Col. 3:7

18 Acts 26:18

Rom. 1:21

1 Thes. 4:5

19 1 Pet. 4:3

1 Tim. 4:2

22 Col. 2:11,

3:7

23 Col. 3:10

24 Rom. 6:4

25 Zech. 8:16

Rom. 12:5

the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ;

14. So that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error;

15. But holding the truth in love, may in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, *even* Christ

16. From Whom all the body, fitly framed and compacted together by *that which* every joint supplies, according to *its* inner working in *the* measure of each individual part, is making the increase of the body unto *the* edifying of itself in love.

17. So then, I declare and testify this in *the* Lord that you are no longer to walk even as the rest of *the* Gentiles are walking, in *the* vanity of their minds,

18. Having *their* understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their hearts.

19. They have cast off all feelings, *and* have given themselves up to licentiousness, to work every uncleanness with insatiable desire.

20. But you have not so learned Christ;

21. If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, according to *the* truth in Jesus:

22. That concerning your former conduct, you put off the old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts;

23. And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24. And that you put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

25. Therefore, let each one put away lies *and* speak the truth with his

neighbor because we are members of one another.

26. *When* you become angry, do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your anger;

27. Neither give place to the devil.

28. Let the one who stole, steal no more; rather, let him labor with *his* hands, working *at* what *is* good, so that he may impart *something* to the one who has need.

29. Do not let any corrupt communication come out of your mouth, but that which is good and needful for edification that it may give grace to those who hear.

30. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God by which you have been sealed for *the* day of redemption.

31. Let all bitterness, and indignation, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking be removed from you, together with all malice;

32. And be kind *and* tenderhearted toward one another, forgiving one another, even as God has also in Christ forgiven you.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children;

2. And walk in love, even as Christ also loved us, and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.

3. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, do not permit it even to be named among you, as is fitting for saints;

4. Nor filthiness, nor foolish talking or jesting, which are not becoming; but instead, thanksgiving.

5. For this you know, that no fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous *person*, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6. Do not let anyone deceive you with

26 Psa. 37:8
27 1 Pet. 5:9
28 Luke 3:11
Acts 20:35
29 Col. 3:8, 16
1 Thes. 5:11
30 Is. 7:13
Luke 21:28
31 Jas. 4:11
Col. 3:8, 19
Tit. 3:3
32 Mark 11:25
2 Cor. 2:10

Chap. 5

1 Luke 6:36
2 2 Cor. 2:15
Gal. 1:4
1 Thes. 4:9
3 Rom. 6:13
1 Cor. 5:1
4 Mat. 12:35
Rom. 1:28
5 1 Cor. 6:9
Col. 3:5
Rev. 22:15
6 Jer. 29:8
Rom. 1:18

8 Is. 9:2
Luke 16:8
2 Cor. 3:18
9 Gal. 5:22
10 Rom. 12:2
11 Rom. 6:21
1 Tim. 5:20
12 Rom. 1:24
13 John 3:20
14 Is. 60:1
John 5:25
15 Col. 4:5
16 Eccl. 11:2
Col. 4:5
17 Rom. 12:2
Col. 4:5
1 Thes. 4:3
18 Prov. 20:1
19 Acts 16:25
20 Psa. 34:1
1 Pet. 2:5
21 Phil. 2:3
22 Gen. 3:16
Eph. 6:5
23 1 Cor. 11:3
Eph. 1:23
Col. 1:18
Tit. 2:9

vain words; for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.

7. Therefore, do not be joint partakers with them.

8. For you were once darkness; but now *you are* light in *the* Lord. Walk as children of light,

9. (Because the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

10. Proving what is well pleasing to the Lord;

11. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*;

12. For it is shameful even to mention the things being done by them in secret.

13. But all of these things being exposed by the light are openly revealed.

14. Therefore He says, "*You* who are sleeping—wake up, and arise from the dead! And Christ shall shine upon you."

15. So then, take heed that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as those who are wise,

16. Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17. For this reason, do not be foolish, but understanding what the will of the Lord *is*.

18. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is debauchery, but be filled with *the* Spirit:

19. Speaking to each other in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and offering praise to the Lord with your hearts;

20. Giving thanks at all times for all things to God and the Father in *the* name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

21. Submit yourselves to one another in *the* fear of God.

22. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord;

23. For the husband is *the* head of the wife, even as Christ *is the* Head of the church; and He is *the* Savior of the body.

24. For even as the church is subject to Christ, in the same way also *let*

wives be *subject* to their own husbands in everything.

25. Husbands, love your own wives, in the same way that Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it;

26. So that He might sanctify it, having cleansed *it* with the washing of water by *the* Word;

27. That He might present it to Himself as the glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be holy and without blame.

28. In the same way, husbands are duty-bound to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself;

29. For no man has ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord *does* the church.

30. For we are members of His body—of His flesh and of His bones.

31. For this reason shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife; and the two shall be one flesh.

32. This is a great mystery; but I am speaking in respect to Christ and the church.

33. Nevertheless, let each one of you love his wife even as himself; and *let each* wife see that she reverence *her* husband.

CHAPTER SIX

1. Children, obey your parents in *the* Lord, for this is right.

2. Honor your father and *your* mother, which is the first commandment with a promise,

3. That it may be well with you, and *that* you may live long on the earth.

4. And fathers, do not provoke your children; but bring them up in *the* nurture and admonition of *the* Lord.

5. Servants, obey *your* masters according to *the* flesh with reverence and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ;

25 Acts 20:28
Col. 3:19
26 John 3:5
27 S. of S. 4:7
Col. 1:22
30 Gen. 2:23
31 Mat. 19:5
1 Cor. 6:16
33 1 Pet. 3:6
Col. 3:19

Chap. 6

1 Col. 3:20
2 Ex. 20:12
4 Gen. 18:19
Col. 3:21
5 1 Chr. 29:17
2 Cor. 7:15
Phil. 2:12
Col. 3:22
1 Tim. 6:1

6. Not *merely* with eye service, as *do* pleasers of men; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from *the* heart.

7. Do service with goodwill, *as* to the Lord, and not to men;

8. Knowing that whatever good each one has done, this shall he receive from the Lord, whether bond or free.

9. And masters, do the same things toward them, forbearing threatening; knowing also that your own Master is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with Him.

10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in *the* Lord, and in the might of His strength.

11. Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil

12. Because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities *and* against powers, against the world rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual *power* of wickedness in high *places*.

13. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having worked out all things, to stand.

14. Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with truth, and wearing the breastplate of righteousness,

15. And having your feet shod with *the* preparation of the gospel of peace.

16. Besides all *these*, take up the shield of the faith, with which you will have the power to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one;

17. And put on the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God;

18. Praying at all times with all prayer and supplication in *the* Spirit, and in this very thing being watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints;

19. And for me, that boldness of

6 Col. 3:22
8 Rom. 2:6
Gal. 3:28
Col. 3:24
9 Rom. 2:11
Col. 4:1
11 2 Cor. 6:7
12 Luke 22:53
Rom. 8:38
13 2 Cor. 10:4
Eph. 5:16
14 Is. 11:5,
59:17
1 Pet. 1:13
15 Is. 52:7
16 1 John 5:4
17 1 Thes. 5:8
Heb. 4:12
18 Mat. 26:41
Luke 18:1
Phil. 1:4
19 Acts 4:29
2 Cor. 3:12

Philippians 1

speech may be given to me so that I may open my mouth to make known the mystery of the gospel,
20. For which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may speak with boldness, as it behooves me to speak.
21. Now that you may also know the things concerning me *and* what I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful servant in *the* Lord, will make everything known to you.
22. I have sent him to you for this

20 2 Cor. 5:20
Phil. 1:20
21 Acts 20:4
22 Col. 4:8

very thing, so that you might know the things concerning us, and *that* he might encourage your hearts.

23. Peace *be* to the brethren, and love with faith from God *the* Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ.

24. Grace *be* with all those whose love *for* our Lord Jesus Christ is uncorrupted. Amen.

To *the* Ephesians, written from Rome,
delivered by Tychicus

The Epistle to the Philippians

CHAPTER ONE

1. Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, together with *the* overseers and deacons:

2. Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ.

3. I thank my God on every remembrance of you,

4. Always making supplication with joy in my every prayer for you all,

5. For your fellowship in the gospel from *the* first day until now;

6. Being confident of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you will complete *it* until *the* day of Jesus Christ.

7. It is indeed right for me to think this of you all because you have me in *your* hearts, both in my bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, *and* you are all fellow partakers of my grace.

8. For God is my witness, how I long after you all with *the* deep affections of Jesus Christ.

Chap. 1

1 1 Cor. 1:2
2 1 Pet. 1:2
3 1 Cor. 1:4
5 Rom. 12:13
6 John 6:29
8 Rom. 1:9
Gal. 1:20

9. And this I pray: that your love may abound yet more and more in all knowledge and understanding

10. In order that you may approve the things that are excellent, so that you may be pure and without offense unto *the* day of Christ,

11. Being filled with *the* fruits of righteousness, which *are* by Jesus Christ, unto *the* praise and glory of God.

12. Brethren, I want you to know that the things befalling me have turned out rather unto *the* advancement of the gospel;

13. So that my bonds in Christ have become manifest in the whole palace, and to all others;

14. And most of the brethren, trusting in *the* Lord, have been emboldened by my bonds to speak the Word more abundantly without fear.

15. Indeed, some are proclaiming Christ out of envy and strife, but some with good intentions.

16. On the one hand, those who are preaching out of a contentious *spirit*,

10 Acts 24:16
Rom. 12:2
1 Cor. 1:8
11 John 15:8
Eph. 2:10
Col. 1:6
13 Phil. 4:22
15 Phil. 2:3

and not purely, are thinking to add grief to my bonds.

17. But on the other hand, those *who are preaching* out of love know that I am set for *the* defense of the gospel.

18. What then *shall I say*? Nevertheless, in every way, whether in pretext or in truth, Christ is being proclaimed; and I rejoice in this, yes, and will also *continue to* rejoice.

19. For I know that this shall turn out for my salvation through your supplication and *the* supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ;

20. According to my earnest expectation and hope, that in no way shall I be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, Christ shall also be magnified now in my body, whether by life or by death.

21. For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain.

22. Now if I live in *the* flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labor. But I do not know what I should choose.

23. For I am hard pressed to choose between the two. I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, *which is* far better;

24. But to remain in the flesh *is* more necessary for your sakes.

25. And being persuaded of this, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your advancement and joy in the faith;

26. So that through my presence with you again, your rejoicing for me may abound in Christ Jesus.

27. Only conduct yourselves worthily of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you, or am absent, I may hear the reports about you; that you are standing fast in one spirit, striving together with one soul for the faith of the gospel,

28. And not being intimidated in any way by those who oppose *the* gospel; which to them is a demonstration of destruction, but to you of salvation, and this from God;

19 2 Cor. 1:11
20 Rom. 5:5,
8:19
Eph. 6:19
23 2 Cor. 5:8
2 Tim. 4:6
25 Phil. 2:24
26 2 Cor. 1:14
27 1 Cor. 1:10
Eph. 4:1
1 Thes. 2:12
28 Rom. 8:17
2 Thes. 1:5

29 Rom. 5:3
Eph. 2:8
30 Acts 16:19
Col. 2:1
1 Thes. 2:2
Chap. 2

1 2 Cor. 13:14
Col. 3:12
2 John 3:29
Rom. 12:16
1 Cor. 1:10
3 Jas. 3:14
1 Pet. 5:5
Rom. 12:10
Gal. 5:26
4 1 Cor. 13:5
5 Mat. 11:29
1 Pet. 2:21
6 2 Cor. 4:4
Col. 1:15
7 Psa. 22:6
Is. 42:1,
53:3
Ezek. 34:23
Dan. 9:26
Zech. 3:8
Mat. 20:28
Mark 9:12
Luke 22:27
John 1:14
Rom. 1:3
Gal. 4:4
8 Mat. 26:39
Heb. 5:8
9 Acts 2:33
Heb. 1:4,
2:9
10 Is. 45:23
Mat. 28:18
11 John 13:13
Acts 2:36
Eph. 6:5
Phil. 1:5

29. Because it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His name's sake;

30. Experiencing the same conflict that you saw in me, and now hear of concerning me.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of *the* Spirit, if any *deep* inner affections and compassions,

2. Fulfill my joy, that you be of the same mind, having the same love, being joined together in soul, minding the one thing.

3. *Let* nothing *be* done through contention or vainglory, but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself.

4. Let each one look not *only* after his own things, but *let* each one also *consider* the things of others.

5. Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus;

6. Who, although He existed in *the* form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,

7. But emptied Himself, *and* was made in *the* likeness of men, *and* took the form of a servant;

8. And being found in *the* manner of man, He humbled Himself, *and* became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross.

9. Therefore, God has also highly exalted Him and bestowed upon Him a name which *is* above every name;

10. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *beings* in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

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

12. So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in

my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

13. For it is God Who works in you both to will and to do according to *His* good pleasure.

14. Do all things without complaints and disputes;

15. So that you may be blameless and without offense, innocent children of God in *the* midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as lights in *the* world,

16. Holding forth the Word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, nor labored in vain.

17. But if I am also poured out on the sacrifice and ministration of your faith, I am glad and rejoice together with you all.

18. And you in the same way also are glad and rejoice together with me.

19. Now I trust in *the* Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon that I may also be encouraged when I know your state of affairs;

20. For I have no one who is like-minded, who has genuine concern for you.

21. For all are seeking their own things, not the things of Christ Jesus.

22. But you know the proof of him, that as a child with a father, he served with me in the gospel.

23. Therefore, I hope to send him to you as soon as I see how my situation *turns out*.

24. Now I have confidence in *the* Lord that I myself also shall come soon;

25. But I felt *it* necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and soldier, but your messenger and minister for my need,

26. Since he was longing after all of you, and *was* deeply depressed because you had heard that he was sick.

27. For indeed he was sick, *and* close to death; but God had mercy on him; and not on him alone, but also on me,

13 2 Cor. 3:5

14 1 Pet. 4:9

Rom. 14:1

15 Deut. 32:5

Mat. 5:45

1 Pet. 2:12

Eph. 5:1, 8

16 2 Cor. 1:14

Gal. 2:2

1 Thes. 2:19

17 Rom. 15:16

2 Cor. 7:4

Col. 1:24

2 Tim. 4:6

19 Rom. 16:21

20 Psa. 55:13

21 1 Cor.

10:24, 13:5

2 Tim. 4:10

22 1 Cor. 4:17

1 Tim. 1:2

24 Phil. 1:25

25 2 Cor. 8:23,

11:9

Phil. 4:18

Philem. 2

26 Phil. 1:8

so that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow.

28. Therefore, I have sent him with great care so that you might rejoice when you see him again, and I might be less sorrowful.

29. So then, receive him in *the* Lord with all joy, and hold such in honor;

30. Because for the sake of the work of Christ he came near to death, having disregarded *his own* life, so that he might fill up the deficiency of your service toward me.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Finally, my brethren, rejoice in *the* Lord. Indeed, for me to write the same things to you *is* not troublesome, but for you *it is* safe.

2. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.

3. For we are the circumcision, who serve God in *the* spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and do not trust in *the* flesh;

4. Though I might also have *reason* to trust in *the* flesh. If any other thinks he has *cause* to trust in *the* flesh, I *have* much more:

5. Circumcised on *the* eighth day; of *the* race of Israel, from *the* tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; with respect to law, a Pharisee;

6. With respect to zeal, persecuting the church; with respect to righteousness that *is* in law, blameless.

7. Yet the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted *as* loss for the sake of Christ.

8. But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count *them* as dung; that I may gain Christ

9. And may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law, but that *righteous-*

ness which is by *the* faith of Christ—the righteousness of God *that* is based on faith;

10. That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

11. If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead;

12. Not as though I have already received, or have already been perfected; but I am striving, so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

13. Brethren, I do not count myself as having attained; but *this* one thing I *do*—forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to the things that are ahead,

14. I press toward *the* goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

15. So then, let as many as *be* perfect be of this mind. And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this to you.

16. Nevertheless, *in regard* to that which we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.

17. Brethren, be imitators together of me, and bear in mind those who walk in this way, as you have us *for* an example.

18. (For many walk *contrary*; I have often told you *of* them, and I tell you now *with* weeping, *they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ;

19. Whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is* *their* belly, and whose glory *is* in their shame; *for* they mind earthly things.)

20. But for us, the commonwealth of God exists in *the* heavens, from where also we are waiting for *the* Savior, *the* Lord Jesus Christ;

21. Who will transform our vile bodies, that they may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the inner working of His own power, *whereby*

10 Rom. 6:3-5, 8:17
11 Acts 26:7
12 1 Tim. 2:12
Heb. 12:23
13 Luke 9:62
Heb. 6:1
14 2 Tim. 4:7
Heb. 3:1
15 1 Cor. 2:6
Gal. 5:10
16 Rom. 12:16, 15:5
Gal. 6:16
17 1 Pet. 5:3
1 Cor. 11:1
1 Thes. 1:6
18 Gal. 1:7, 2:21
19 Hos. 4:7
Rom. 8:5
2 Cor. 11:15
Gal. 6:13
1 Tim. 6:5
Tit. 1:11
20 Acts 1:11
1 Cor. 1:7
Eph. 2:6
Col. 3:1, 3
1 Thes. 1:10
21 1 Cor. 15:26, 43
Eph. 1:19
Col. 3:4

Chap. 4

1 2 Cor. 1:14
Phil. 1:8, 27, 2:16
2 Phil. 3:16
3 Ex. 32:32
Psa. 69:28
Dan. 12:1
Rom. 16:3
4 1 Pet. 4:13
Rom. 12:12
1 Thes. 5:16
5 1 Pet. 4:7
Heb. 10:25
6 Psa. 55:22
Prov. 16:3
Mat. 6:25
7 John 14:27
Rom. 5:1
Col. 3:15
8 1 Thes. 5:22
9 Rom. 15:33
Phil. 3:17
10 2 Cor. 11:9
11 1 Tim. 6:6

He is able to subdue all things to Himself.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Therefore, my brethren, beloved and longed for, my joy and *my* crown, stand fast in *the* Lord, beloved.

2. I exhort Euodia, and I exhort Syntyche, to be of the same mind in *the* Lord.

3. And I ask you, *my* true yokefellow, to assist these *women*, who labored with me in the gospel, and with Clement, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names *are* in *the* book of life.

4. Rejoice in *the* Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

5. Let your moderation be known to all men; the Lord *is* near.

6. Do not be anxious about anything; but by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God in everything;

7. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

8. Finally, brethren, whatever *things* are true, whatever *things* are honorable, whatever *things* are just, whatever *things* are pure, whatever *things* are lovely, whatever *things* are of good report; if *there be* any virtue and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

9. Whatever things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, you do also; and the God of peace shall be with you.

10. But I rejoiced greatly in *the* Lord, that at last *your* care for me has revived—although you were already thinking *of me*, but you lacked an opportunity *to provide*.

11. I am not saying *this* in respect to being destitute; for I have learned *that* in whatever *circumstances* I am, to be content.

12. For I have experienced being brought low, and I have experienced abounding. In everything and in all things I have been taught both to be full and to hunger, both to abound and to be without.
 13. I can do all things through Christ, Who empowers me.
 14. But you did well to communicate with me in my distress.
 15. For you Philippians also know that in *the* beginning of the gospel, when I came from Macedonia, not one church communicated with me in regard to giving and receiving, except you alone.
 16. And *when I was* in Thessalonica, you sent *to supply* my need both once and twice.
 17. *I do not say this* because I am seeking a gift, but *because* I am seeking

12 1 Cor. 4:11
 13 John 15:5
 14 Phil. 1:7
 15 2 Cor. 11:8
 17 Tit. 3:14

18 Phil. 2:25
 2 Cor. 9:12
 Heb. 13:16
 19 Psa. 23:1
 20 Rom. 16:27
 21 Gal. 1:2
 22 Phil. 1:13
 23 Rom. 16:24

fruit that may abound to your credit.
 18. But I have all things and abound. I am full after receiving from Epaphroditus the things you sent, a sweet-smelling savor, a sacrifice acceptable *and* well pleasing to God.
 19. But my God will supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.
 20. Now to our God and Father *be* glory into the ages of eternity. Amen.
 21. Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren with me salute you.
 22. All the saints salute you, and especially those of the household of Caesar.
 23. *May* the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

To the Philippians, written from Rome, *delivered* by Epaphroditus

The Epistle of Paul to the Colossians

CHAPTER ONE

1. Paul, an apostle by the will of God, and Timothy *our* brother,
 2. To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ *who are* in Colosse: Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ.
 3. We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying for you continually
 4. Since hearing of your faith in Christ Jesus, and the love that *you have* toward all the saints;
 5. Because of the hope that *is* laid up for you in heaven, which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;
 6. Which has come to you, even as *it*

Chap. 1
 1 Eph. 1:1
 2 1 Cor. 4:17
 Gal. 1:3
 3 1 Cor. 1:4
 Eph. 1:16
 Phil. 1:3
 4 Eph. 1:15
 Heb. 6:10
 5 1 Pet. 1:4
 6 Mat. 24:14
 Eph. 3:2
 Tit. 2:11
 7 2 Cor. 11:23
 1 Tim. 4:6
 Philem. 23
 8 Rom. 15:30
 9 Rom. 12:2
 1 Cor. 1:5
 Eph. 1:8, 15
 10 Phil. 1:27
 1 Thes. 4:1
 Heb. 13:21

also *has* in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, just as *it is* among you, from the day that you heard and knew the grace of God in truth;
 7. Even as you also learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ for you;
 8. Who has also informed us of your love in *the* Spirit.
 9. For this cause we also, from the day that we heard *of it*, do not cease to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;
 10. That you may walk worthily of the

Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God;

11. Being strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy;

12. Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light;

13. Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness and has transferred *us* unto the kingdom of the Son of His love;

14. In Whom we have redemption through His own blood, *even* the remission of sins;

15. Who is *the* image of the invisible God, *the* firstborn of all creation;

16. Because by Him were all things created, the things in heaven and the things on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him.

17. And He is before all, and by Him all things subsist.

18. And He is the Head of the body, the church; Who is *the* beginning, *the* firstborn from among the dead, so that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence.

19. For it pleased *the Father* that in Him all the fullness should dwell;

20. And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself; by Him, whether the things on the earth, or the things in heaven.

21. For you *were* once alienated and enemies in *your* minds by wicked works; but now He has reconciled *you*

22. In the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unimpeachable before Him;

11 Acts 5:41
Eph. 3:16,
4:2
12 Eph. 1:11,
5:20
13 Eph. 6:12
2 Pet. 1:11
14 Eph. 1:7
15 2 Cor. 4:4
Rev. 3:14
16 Eph. 1:21
Heb. 1:2,
2:10
17 John 17:5
18 1 Cor. 11:3
Rev. 1:5
19 John 1:16
20 2 Cor. 5:18
Eph. 1:10,
2:14
21 Eph. 2:1
Tit. 1:15
22 Eph. 2:15,
5:27

23 John 15:6
Acts 1:17
Rom. 10:18
Eph. 3:17
24 2 Cor. 1:5,
7:4
Eph. 1:23,
3:1, 13
25 Gal. 2:7
26 1 Cor. 2:7
2 Tim. 1:10
27 Rom. 9:23
2 Cor. 2:14
1 Tim. 1:1
28 Acts 20:20
Eph. 5:27
29 1 Cor. 15:10
Eph. 1:19
Col. 2:1

Chap. 2

1 Phil. 1:30
2 2 Cor. 1:6
Phil. 3:8
Col. 3:14
3 1 Cor. 1:24
4 Rom. 16:18

23. If indeed you continue in the faith grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you have heard, *and* which was proclaimed in all the creation that *is* under heaven; of which I, Paul, became a servant.

24. Now, I am rejoicing in my sufferings for you, and I am filling up in my flesh that which is behind of the tribulations of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church;

25. Of which I became a servant, according to the administration of God that *was* given *to me* for you *in order* to complete the Word of God;

26. *Even* the mystery that has been hidden from ages and from generations, but has now been revealed to His saints;

27. To whom God did will to make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory;

28. Whom we preach, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, so that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

29. For this cause I also labor, striving according to His inner working, which works in me with power.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Now I want you to understand what great concern I have for you, and *for* those in Laodicea, and as many as have not seen my face in *the* flesh;

2. That their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto *the* knowledge of the mystery of God, and of *the* Father, and of Christ;

3. In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

4. Now this I say so that no one may deceive you by persuasive speech.

5. For though I am indeed absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

6. Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, be walking in Him;

7. Being rooted and built up in Him, and being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.

8. Be on guard so that no one takes you captive through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ.

9. For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

10. And you are complete in Him, Who is the Head of all principality and power

11. In Whom you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;

12. Having been buried with Him in baptism, by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead.

13. For you, who were *once* dead in *your* sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has *now* made alive

5 1 Pet. 5:9
1 Cor. 14:40
1 Thes. 2:17
6 1 Thes. 4:1
7 Eph. 2:21
8 Gal. 1:14,
4:3, 9
9 John 1:14
10 1 Pet. 3:22
Col. 1:16
11 Deut. 10:16
Rom. 6:6
12 Acts 2:24
Eph. 1:19

14 Eph. 2:15
15 Is. 53:12
Eph. 6:12
16 Rom. 14:2,
3, 5
17 Heb. 8:5
19 Eph. 4:15
20 Rom. 6:3, 5
Gal. 4:3, 9
21 1 Tim. 4:3
22 Tit. 1:14

with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses.

14. He has blotted out the note of debt against us *with* the decrees of *our* sins, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross.*

15. After stripping the principalities and the powers, He made a public spectacle of them, *and* has triumphed over them in it.**

16. Therefore, do not allow anyone to judge you in eating or in drinking, or with regard to a festival, or new moon, or *the* Sabbaths,

17. Which are a foreshadow of the things that are coming, but the body of Christ.

18. Do not allow anyone to defraud you of the prize *by* doing *his* will in self-abasement and *the* worship of angels, intruding into things that he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his own carnal mind***

19. And not holding fast to the Head, from Whom all the body, being supplied and knit together by the joints and bands, is increasing *with* the increase of God.

20. Therefore, if you have died together *with Christ* from the elements of the world, why are you subjecting yourselves to *the* decrees of *men* as if you were living in *the* world?

21. *They* say, "You may not handle! You may not taste! You may not touch!"

**Verse 14 does not in any way mean that the commandments of God were nailed to the cross. The phrase "note of debt against us with the decrees of our sins" means the note of debt, or the listing of our sins against God. Our sins and the debt of our sins were nailed to the cross when Jesus Christ was crucified and died. Upon true repentance of sins to God the Father, Jesus Christ blots out the note of debt through the remission of our sins. Jesus Christ, Who knew no sin, was made sin for us. He was nailed to the cross as a sin offering for the sins of the whole world. The note of debt of our sins was symbolically nailed to the cross, not the commandments of God which stand forever.*

***It" in the phrase, "has triumphed over them in it," means that through His crucifixion, death and resurrection Jesus Christ triumphed over all the powers of evil, Satan the Devil and the demonic fallen angels.*

****Verses 16-18 do not abolish the dietary laws of clean and unclean meats, the festivals or the weekly Sabbath of God. Rather, Paul is clearly affirming that the Gentiles in Colosse were to continue to observe these commandments as they had been taught. Paul was instructing the Colossians to disregard the criticisms and harsh judgments of those outside the church, because the observance of these days are a continuing foreshadow of the things that are yet to come in God's plan. By being faithful and keeping these commandments of God, they would always be worshipping the true God, be built up in Jesus Christ and never loose the understanding of God's plan. By true obedience to God the Father and Jesus Christ, they would not be deceived by vain philosophies of men, nor would they be seduced into the worship of fallen angels—Satan and his demons.*

22. The use of all such things leads to corruption, according to the commandments and doctrines of men,

23. Which indeed have an outward appearance of wisdom in voluntary worship *of angels*, and self-abasement, and unsparing treatment of *the body*, not in any respect to the satisfying *of the needs* of the flesh.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at *the right hand* of God.

2. Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth.

3. For you have died, and your life has been hid together with Christ in God.

4. When Christ, *Who is* our life, is manifested, then you also shall be manifested with Him in glory.

5. Therefore, put to death your members which *are* on earth—sexual immorality, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil desires, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

6. Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,

7. Among whom you also once walked, when you were living in these things.

8. But now, you should also put off all *these things*: wrath, indignation, malice, blasphemy, *and* foul language from your mouth.

9. Do not lie to one another, *seeing that* you have put off the old man together with his deeds,

10. And have put on the new man, who *is* being renewed in knowledge according to *the* image of Him Who created him;

11. Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision,

23 1 Tim. 4:8

Chap. 3

1 Eph. 1:20

3 Rom. 6:2

2 Cor. 5:7

4 John 14:6

1 John 3:2

1 Cor. 15:43

5 Rom. 6:13,

8:13

Eph. 5:3, 5

6 Eph. 2:2

Rev. 22:15

7 1 Cor. 6:11

8 Eph. 4:22,

27

9 Eph. 4:22,

25

10 Rom. 12:2

Eph. 2:10,

4:23

11 Gal. 3:28

Eph. 1:23

12 1 Pet. 1:2

Gal. 5:22

13 Mark 11:25

14 1 Pet. 4:8

1 Cor. 13

Eph. 4:3

15 1 Cor. 7:15

Eph. 4:4

Phil. 4:7

16 Eph. 5:19

17 1 Cor. 10:31

18 1 Pet. 3:1

Eph. 5:3

19 Eph. 4:31,

5:25

20 Eph. 5:24,

6:1

21 Eph. 6:4

22 1 Pet. 2:18

Eph. 6:5

Col. 3:20

1 Tim. 6:1

Tit. 2:9

Philem. 16

23 Eph. 6:6, 7

24 1 Cor. 7:22

Eph. 6:8

25 Deut. 10:17

1 Pet. 1:17

Rom. 2:11

Eph. 6:9

barbarian *nor* Scythian, slave *nor* free; but Christ *is* all things, and in all.

12. Put on then, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness *and* long-suffering;

13. Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so also you *should forgive*.

14. And above all these things *put on* love, which is *the* bond of perfection.

15. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you were called into one body, and be thankful.

16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17. And *in* everything—whatever you do in word or in deed—*do* all in the name of *the* Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and *the* Father by Him.

18. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as *it* is fitting in *the* Lord.

19. Husbands, love *your* wives, and do not be bitter against them.

20. Children, obey *your* parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

21. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they be discouraged.

22. Servants, obey your fleshly masters in all things—not with eye service as pleasing men; but with singleness of heart, fearing God.

23. And whatever you do, do heartily, as to the Lord and not to men;

24. Knowing that you shall receive from *the* Lord the recompense of the inheritance, for you are serving Christ the Lord.

25. But the one who does wrong shall receive *for* the wrong he has done, and there is no respect of persons.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Masters, give that which *is* just and equal to your servants, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.
2. Continue steadfastly in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving,
3. *And* praying for us also, so that God may open to us a door to proclaim the message of the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned,
4. That I may make it manifest, as it is necessary for me to speak.
5. Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside *the church*, redeeming the time.
6. *Let* your speech *be* always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how to answer each one.
7. Tychicus, a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow servant in *the* Lord, will make known to you everything concerning me.
8. I sent him to you for this very reason, that he might know your circumstances and might encourage your hearts;
9. Together with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you. They will make known to you all the things *that have taken place* here.
10. Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, salutes you and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, concerning whom you re-

Chap. 4

- 1 Eph. 6:9
- 2 Luke 18:1
Rom. 12:12
Col. 2:7
- 3 1 Cor. 16:9
2 Cor. 2:12
Eph. 6:19-20
Phil. 1:7
- 5 Eph. 5:15-16
- 6 Eccl. 10:12
Mark 9:50
1 Pet. 3:15
- 8 Eph. 6:22
- 9 Philem. 10
- 10 Acts 15:37, 19:29
2 Tim. 4:11
- 12 Mat. 5:48
Rom. 15:30
1 Cor. 2:6
Philem. 23
- 14 2 Tim. 4:10-11
- 15 Rom. 16:5
1 Cor. 16:19
- 16 1 Thes. 5:27
- 17 1 Tim. 4:6
Philem. 2
- 18 1 Cor. 16:21
2 Thes. 3:17
Heb. 13:3, 25

ceived instructions (if he comes to you, receive him);

11. And Jesus *who is* called Justus; who are *all of the* circumcision. They *are my* only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who have been a consolation to me.

12. Epaphras, a servant of Christ who *is* from among you, salutes you. He is always striving for you in *his* prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

13. For I bear witness to him that he has much zeal for you, and *for* those in Laodicea, and *for* those in Hierapolis.

14. Luke, the beloved physician, salutes you, and Demas *does also*.

15. Salute the brethren in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church in his house.

16. After you have read the epistle, see that it also is read in the church of *the* Laodiceans, and that you also read the one from Laodicea.

17. And say *this* to Archippus: Devote yourself to the ministry that you have received in *the* Lord, to fulfill it.

18. The salutation of Paul by my *own* hand. Remember my bonds. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

To *the* Colossians, written from Rome, *delivered* by Tychicus and Onesimus

The First Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians

CHAPTER ONE

1. Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of *the* Thessalonians, *which is* in God *the* Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ.

2. We give thanks to God always concerning all of you, making mention of you in our prayers.

3. Without fail, we remember your work of faith, and *your* labor of love, and *your* endurance in *the* hope of our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

4. Knowing your election, brethren, *as you are*-beloved by God.

5. For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in *the* Holy Spirit, and with great conviction; even as you know what sort of men we were among you for your sake.

6. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, having accepted the Word in much persecution with *the* joy of *the* Holy Spirit,

7. So that you became examples to all those in Macedonia and Achaia who are believers.

8. For the Word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every *other* place also your faith toward God has spread abroad, so that there is no need for us to say anything;

9. Because they themselves are relating how readily you received us when we *first* visited you, and how you turned from idols to God, to serve *the* living and true God,

10. And to await His Son from the heavens, Whom He raised from *the* dead—Jesus, Who is delivering us from the coming wrath.

Chap. 1

1 1 Pet. 5:12
Eph. 1:2
2 Rom. 1:8
3 John 6:29
Rom. 16:6
1 Thes. 2:13
4 Col. 3:12
5 Mark 16:20
2 Cor. 6:6
Heb. 2:3
6 Acts 5:41
1 Cor. 4:16
Phil. 3:17
Heb. 10:34
8 Rom. 1:8,
10:18
2 Thes. 1:4
9 1 Cor. 12:2
Gal. 4:8
1 Thes. 2:1
10 Acts 1:11,
2:24
2 Pet. 3:12
Rom. 2:7,
5:9

Chap. 2

1 1 Thes. 1:5,
9
2 Acts 16:22
Phil. 1:30
1 Thes. 1:5
3 2 Cor. 7:2
4 Prov. 17:3
1 Cor. 7:25
Gal. 1:10
Tit. 1:3
5 Rom. 1:9
2 Cor. 2:17
6 1 Cor. 9:1, 4
2 Cor. 11:9
1 Tim. 5:17
7 1 Cor. 2:3
8 Rom. 1:11,
15:29
2 Cor. 12:15
9 Acts 20:34
2 Cor. 12:13
2 Thes. 3:8
10 2 Cor. 7:2
1 Thes. 1:5

CHAPTER TWO

1. For you yourselves, brethren, know that the visit *we had* with you was not without effect.

2. But before *we came*, we had suffered and had been insulted at Philippi, even as you know; *but* we were bold in our God to speak the gospel to you, *even* in much conflict.

3. For our exhortation *was* not out of error, nor from uncleanness, nor with guile;

4. But even as we were approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, we speak in this manner: as *those* who please not men, but God, Who proves our hearts.

5. For neither at any time did we use flattering words *with you*, even as you know, nor a cover for covetousness—God *is our* witness;

6. Nor were we seeking glory from men, neither from you nor from others, *though* as Christ's apostles we had *the* power to be burdensome;

7. But we were gentle among you, as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.

8. Yearning over you in the same way, we were willing to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you were beloved to us.

9. For you remember, brethren, our labor and *our* toil; for we were working night and day so as not to be a burden to anyone among you, *while* we proclaimed the gospel of God.

10. You *are* witnesses, and *also* God, how holily and righteously and blamelessly we conducted ourselves with you who believe;

11. Even as you know how we were exhorting and consoling each one of

you, as a father *does* his own children,

12. And *earnestly* testifying, that you may walk worthily of God, Who is calling you to His own kingdom and glory.

13. Because of this, we give thanks to God without ceasing: that when you received *the* Word of God, which you heard from us, you did not accept it as the word of men, but even as it is in truth—*the* Word of God, which is also working in you who believe.

14. For, brethren, you became imitators of the churches of God in Judea which are in Christ Jesus; because you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they also *suffered* from the Jews;

15. Who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and drove you out, and do not please God, and *are* contrary to all men,

16. Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles so that they might be saved in order to fill up their sins always. But the wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

17. Now we, brethren, having been separated from you for a short time, but not in heart, are making every effort to see you *again*, with much desire.

18. For this reason we sought to come to you, even I, Paul, both once and twice; but Satan hindered us.

19. For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Is it* not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?

20. For you are our glory and *our* joy.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Accordingly, when we could not bear to wait any longer, we thought *it* best *for us* to be left in Athens alone;

2. And we sent our brother Timothy, a servant of God and our fellow worker

12 1 Cor. 1:9
Col. 1:10
2 Thes. 2:14
13 Gal. 4:14
1 Thes. 1:3
14 Acts 17:5
Gal. 1:22
15 Esth. 3:8
Mat. 5:12
Acts 2:23
16 Gen. 15:16
Mat. 23:32,
24:6
Luke 11:52
Acts 13:50
17 1 Cor. 5:3
Col. 2:5
1 Thes. 3:10
18 Rom. 1:13
19 Prov. 16:31
1 Cor. 15:23
2 Cor. 1:14

Chap. 3

1 Acts 17:15
1 Thes. 3:5
2 Rom. 16:21
1 Cor. 16:10

3 Acts 9:16
1 Cor. 4:9
Eph. 3:13
2 Tim. 3:12
4 Acts 20:24
5 1 Cor. 7:5
2 Cor. 11:3
Gal. 2:2
1 Thes. 3:1
6 Acts 18:1
Phil. 1:8
7 2 Cor. 1:4
8 Phil. 4:1
9 1 Thes. 1:2
10 Acts 26:7
Rom. 15:32
Col. 4:12
1 Thes. 2:17
11 Mark 1:3
12 1 Thes. 4:10
13 Zech. 14:5
1 Cor. 1:8
Phil. 1:10

in the gospel of Christ, in order to establish you and to encourage you concerning your faith,

3. So that no one might be unduly shaken by these persecutions. (For you yourselves know that we are appointed to this very thing;

4. And also, when we were with you, we told you beforehand *that* we would suffer persecutions, exactly as it also came to pass; and you are aware of *this*.)

5. For this reason, when I could not wait any longer, I sent *Timothy*, in order to know your faith, lest perhaps the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain.

6. But now, after Timothy came to us from you and told us the good news of *your* faith and your love, and that you always keep us in mind, *and* are longing to see us, even as we also *long* to see you;

7. Through this *report* about you we were encouraged, brethren, in all our persecution and trouble—because of your faith;

8. For now we live, if you stand firm in *the* Lord.

9. For what thanksgiving are we able to offer to God concerning you, for all the joy with which we rejoice before God because of you,

10. Praying day and night fervently that we might see you *again*, and might perfect the things *that are* lacking in your faith?

11. But may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you.

12. Now may the Lord make you to exceed and to abound in love toward one another and toward all, even as we also *abound in love* toward you,

13. That your hearts may be established blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Now then, as for the rest, brethren, we are beseeching and exhorting you in *the* Lord Jesus, even as you received from us how you are duty-bound to walk and to please God, that you would abound *still* more.

2. For you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus;

3. Because this is the will of God—even your sanctification—that you abstain from fornication,

4. And that each of you understand *how* to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,

5. (Not in *the* passion of lust, even as the Gentiles who do not know God)

6. And not to trespass and defraud his brother in this matter because the Lord *is the* avenger in all these matters, exactly as we also told you and fully testified before.

7. For God has not called us to uncleanness, but to sanctification.

8. Accordingly, the one who rejects *these commands* is not rejecting man, but God, Who also gave His Holy Spirit to us.

9. Now concerning brotherly love, you have no need *for me* to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another.

10. And you also practice this toward all the brethren who *are* in all of Macedonia; but we exhort you, brethren, to abound *even more in love*;

11. And to aspire to live *a quiet life*, and to tend to your own business, and to work with your own hands, exactly as we have instructed you;

12. So that you may walk honestly toward those *who are* without, and may not need *anything* from anyone.

13. But I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, that you be not grieved, even as others, who have no hope.

Chap. 4

1 Phil. 1:27
Col. 1:10
1 Thes. 2:12
3 Rom. 12:2
Eph. 5:27
Col. 3:5
4 Rom. 6:19
5 1 Cor. 15:34
Eph. 4:17
Col. 3:5
6 2 Thes. 1:8
7 Lev. 11:44
8 Luke 10:16
1 Cor. 2:10
9 Jer. 31:34
Mat. 22:39
1 Thes. 5:1
10 1 Thes. 1:7,
3:12
11 Acts 20:35
Eph. 4:28
2 Thes. 3:11
12 Rom. 13:13
13 Lev. 19:28
2 Sam.
12:20
Eph. 2:12

14. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in exactly the same way also, those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.

15. For this we say to you by *the* Word of *the* Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede those who have fallen asleep

16. Because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with *a* shout of command, with *the* voice of an archangel and with *the* trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first;

17. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in *the* clouds for *the* meeting with the Lord in *the* air; and so shall we always be with *the* Lord.

18. Therefore, encourage one another with these words.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Now then, concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, there is no need that I write to you;

2. For you yourselves understand perfectly that the day of *the* Lord will come exactly as a thief *comes* by night.

3. For when they say, "Peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as travail *comes* upon a woman who is with child; and they shall by no means escape.

4. But you, brethren, are not in darkness that the day of *the* Lord should overtake you as a thief.

5. For you are all children of *the* light and children of *the* day; we are not of *the* night, nor of *the* darkness.

6. So then, we should not sleep, as others *do*; but we should watch, and we should be sober.

7. For those who are sleeping sleep in *the* night, and those who are drunken get drunk in *the* night.

Chap. 5

1 Mat. 24:3
1 Thes. 4:9
2 2 Pet. 3:10
3 Is. 13:6-9
Hos. 13:13
4 Rom. 13:12
5 Eph. 5:8
6 Mat. 25:5
1 Pet. 5:8
7 Luke 21:34
Acts 2:15

I Thessalonians 5

8. But we who are of *the* day should be sober, having put on *the* breastplate of faith and love, and *for* a helmet *the* hope of salvation,
 9. Because God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,
 10. Who died for us, so that whether we *remain* alive *until He comes* or we *fall* asleep *before that day*, together we may live *forever* with Him.
 11. Therefore, encourage one another, and edify one another, even as you are already doing.
 12. Now we beseech you, brethren, to acknowledge those who are laboring among you, and are overseeing you, and are instructing you in *the* Lord,
 13. And to greatly respect them in love for the sake of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.
 14. Now we encourage you, brethren, to admonish those who are irresponsible, console the fainthearted, support the weak, be patient toward everyone.
 15. See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone; but always be pursuing what is good, both toward one another and toward all *men*.

8 Eph. 6:14
 9 Rom. 9:22
 2 Thes. 2:13
 10 2 Cor. 5:15
 11 1 Thes. 4:18
 12 1 Cor. 16:18
 13 Mark 9:50
 14 Rom. 14:1
 Gal. 5:22
 2 Thes. 3:11
 Heb. 12:12
 15 Lev. 19:18
 Gal. 6:10
 16 2 Cor. 6:10
 17 Eph. 6:18
 19 Eph. 4:30
 20 1 Cor. 14:1
 21 1 John 4:1
 Phil. 4:8
 22 1 Thes. 4:12
 23 1 Cor. 1:8
 Phil. 4:9
 1 Thes. 3:13
 24 1 Cor. 1:9
 25 Col. 4:3
 26 Rom. 16:16
 27 Col. 4:16
 28 Rom. 16:20

16. Rejoice always!
 17. Pray unceasingly.
 18. Give thanks in everything, for this *is the* will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.
 19. Quench not the Spirit.
 20. Despise not prophecies.
 21. Prove all things. Hold fast *to that which* is good.
 22. Abstain from every form of wickedness.
 23. Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your entire spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 24. Faithful *is He* Who calls you, Who will also perform *it*.
 25. Brethren, pray for us.
 26. Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.
 27. I adjure you *by the Lord that* this epistle be read to all the holy brethren.
 28. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

*The first epistle to the Thessalonians,
 written from Athens**

*The notation at the end of I Thessalonians indicating that Paul wrote this epistle from Athens, which was a later addition to the Greek text, is contradicted by the internal evidence. Paul was alone during the entire time he was in Athens. Silas and Timothy did not join him until Paul was in Corinth: "Now when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia..." (Acts 18:5). In writing to the Thessalonians, Paul begins his epistle with this opening; "Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thes. 1:1). Since Silas and Timothy joined Paul at Corinth, the internal evidence indicates that this epistle was written from Corinth, rather than from Athens.

The Second Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians

CHAPTER ONE

1. Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of *the* Thessalonians, *which is* in God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ:

2. Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ.

3. We are duty-bound to thank God always for you, brethren, even as it is fitting, because your faith is increasing abundantly, and the love of each one of you is abounding toward one another;

4. So that we ourselves are boasting about you in the churches of God because of your endurance and faith in all your persecutions, and in the tribulations that you are bearing.

5. *Your faith and endurance are* a visible testimony of the righteous judgment of God, so that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering.

6. Since *it is* righteous with God to recompense tribulation to those who are persecuting you;

7. And to you, who are persecuted, rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with His mighty angels,

8. Dealing out vengeance with flaming fire upon those who do not know God, and those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ;

9. Who will suffer *the* penalty of eternal destruction from *the* presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His strength,

10. When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in that day in all those who believe (because our testimony was believed by you);

11. For which cause also we are praying continually for you, that our God may count you worthy of *your* calling,

Chap. 1

1 2 Cor. 1:19
1 Thes. 1:1
2 1 Cor. 1:3
3 1 Thes. 1:2
2 Thes. 2:13
4 2 Cor. 7:14
1 Thes. 1:3,
2:14, 19,
5 Phil. 1:28
1 Thes. 2:14
6 Rev. 6:10
7 Jude 14
1 Thes. 4:16
Rev. 14:13
8 2 Pet. 3:7
Rom. 2:8
Heb. 12:29
Rev. 21:8
9 Deut. 33:2
Is. 2:19
2 Pet. 3:7
Phil. 3:19
10 Psa. 68:35,
89:7
11 1 Thes. 1:3
2 Thes. 1:5

Chap. 2

12 1 Pet. 1:7
1 Mat. 24:31
Mark 13:27
1 Thes. 4:16
2 Mat. 24:4
Eph. 5:6
3 Dan. 7:25
Mat. 24:4
John 17:12
Eph. 5:6
1 Tim. 4:1
Rev. 13:11
4 Is. 14:13
1 Cor. 8:5
Rev. 13:6
7 1 John 2:18
8 Is. 11:4
Dan. 7:10
Heb. 10:27

and may fulfill *in you* all the good pleasure of *His* goodness, and *the* work of faith with power;

12. So that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Now we beseech you, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him,

2. That you not be quickly shaken in mind, nor be troubled—neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as if from us, *saying* that the day of Christ is present.

3. Do not let anyone deceive you by any means because *that day will not* come unless the apostasy shall come first, and the man of sin shall be revealed—the son of perdition,

4. The one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is an object of worship; so that he comes into the temple of God and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God.

5. Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I told you these things?

6. And now you understand what is holding *him* back in order for him to be revealed in his own set time.

7. For the mystery of lawlessness is already working; only *there is* one Who is restraining at the present *time* until it arises out of *the* midst.

8. And then the lawless one will be revealed (whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of His coming);

9. *Even* the one whose coming is according to *the* inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders,
 10. And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are perishing because they did not receive the love of the truth, so that they might be saved.
 11. And for this cause, God will send upon them a powerful deception that will cause them to believe *the* lie,
 12. So that all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but who took pleasure in unrighteousness.
 13. Now we are duty-bound to give thanks to God always concerning you, brethren, who are beloved by *the* Lord, because God from *the* beginning has called you unto salvation through sanctification of *the* Spirit and belief of *the* truth
 14. Unto which He called you by our gospel to *the* obtaining of *the* glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 15. So then, brethren, stand firm, and hold fast the traditions that you were taught, whether by word or by our epistle.
 16. Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God—even our Father, Who loved us and gave *us* eternal encouragement and good hope through grace—
 17. Encourage your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.

CHAPTER THREE

1. As for the rest, brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may spread rapidly and may be glorified, in the same way that *it has been* with you;
 2. And that we may be delivered from perverse and wicked men, for all *are* not of the faith.
 3. But the Lord is faithful, Who will establish you and keep *you* from the evil one.

9 Deut. 13:1
 John 8:41
 Rev. 18:23,
 19:20
 10 2 Cor. 2:15
 11 Rom. 1:24
 1 Tim. 4:1
 12 Rom. 1:32
 13 1 Pet. 1:2
 Eph. 1:4
 1 Thes. 1:4
 2 Thes. 1:3
 14 1 Pet. 5:10
 15 1 Cor. 11:2,
 16:13
 16 1 Pet. 1:3
 2 Thes. 1:1,
 2
 Rev. 1:5
 17 1 Cor. 1:8

Chap. 3

1 Eph. 6:19
 2 Acts 28:24
 Rom. 10:16,
 15:31
 3 John 17:15
 2 Pet. 2:9
 1 Cor. 1:9

4 2 Cor. 7:16
 5 1 Chr. 29:18
 6 Rom. 16:17
 1 Cor. 5:11
 1 Thes. 4:11
 2 Thes. 2:15
 7 1 Cor. 4:16
 1 Thes. 2:10
 8 Acts 18:3
 2 Cor. 11:9
 9 1 Cor. 9:6
 2 Thes. 3:7
 10 1 Thes. 4:11
 11 2 Thes. 3:6
 1 Tim. 5:13
 12 Eph. 4:28
 1 Thes. 4:11
 13 Gal. 6:9
 14 Mat. 18:17
 15 Lev. 19:17
 Tit. 3:10
 16 Rom. 15:33

4. Now concerning you, we trust in *the* Lord that you both practice and will be practicing the things that we command you.
 5. And may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into *the* endurance of Christ.
 6. Now we command you, brethren, in *the* name of our Lord Jesus Christ, *that* you withdraw from every brother who is walking irresponsibly and not according to the tradition that he received from us.
 7. For you yourselves understand that *you* should do exactly as we have done because we have not behaved irresponsibly among you,
 8. Nor did we eat food at someone else's expense, but *we were* working day and night with labor and toil so that we would not be burdensome to anyone among you.
 9. *We were* not *obligated to work* because we did not have authority *to receive from you*; rather, *we chose to work* in order that we might personally give you a pattern to imitate.
 10. For indeed, when we were with you, this is what we commanded you: that if anyone is not willing to work, he should not be allowed to eat.
 11. For we hear that some among you are walking irresponsibly, not working at all, but are behaving as busybodies.
 12. As for such individuals, we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ that with quietness they work in order that they may eat their own food.
 13. But you, brethren, do not lose heart *in* well doing.
 14. Now if anyone does not obey our word by this epistle, take notice of that man and do not associate with him so that he may be ashamed.
 15. But do not count *him* as an enemy; rather, admonish *him* as a brother.
 16. Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord *be* with you all.

17. The salutation of Paul by my <i>own</i> hand, which is <i>the</i> sign in every epistle—so I write.	17 1 Cor. 16:21 18 Rom. 16:24	<i>be</i> with you all. Amen.
18. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ		<i>The second epistle to the</i> Thessalonians, written from Athens*

* *The notation at the end of II Thessalonians indicating that Paul wrote this epistle from Athens, which was a later addition to the Greek text, is contradicted by the internal evidence. Paul was alone during the entire time he was in Athens. Silas and Timothy did not join him until Paul was in Corinth: "Now when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia..." (Acts 18:5). In writing to the Thessalonians, Paul begins his epistle with this opening; "Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thes. 1:1). Since Silas and Timothy joined Paul at Corinth, the internal evidence indicates that this epistle was written from Corinth, rather than from Athens.*

The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews

CHAPTER ONE

1. God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by <i>His</i> Son,	<u>Chap. 1</u> 1 Num. 12:6 2 Psa. 2:8 John 1:3, 17 Eph. 1:10 3 Psa. 110:1 John 1:4, 14 Heb. 7:27 Rev. 4:11 4 Phil. 2:9, 10 5 2 Sam. 7:14 Psa. 2:7 Acts 13:33 6 Deut. 32:43 Rom. 8:29 7 Psa. 104:4	8. But on the other hand, of the Son <i>He</i> says, "Your throne, O God, <i>is</i> into the ages of eternity; a scepter of righteousness <i>is</i> the scepter of Your kingdom.
2. Whom He has appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds;		9. You loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; because of this, God, <i>even</i> Your God, has anointed You with <i>the</i> oil of gladness above Your companions."
3. Who, being <i>the</i> brightness of <i>His</i> glory and <i>the</i> exact image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at <i>the</i> right hand of the Majesty on high;		10. And, "You, Lord, in the beginning did lay the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are <i>the</i> works of Your hands.
4. Having been made so much greater than <i>any</i> of the angels, inasmuch as He has inherited a name exceedingly superior to them.		11. They will perish, but You remain <i>forever</i> ; and <i>they</i> will all grow old like a garment,
5. For to which of the angels did He ever say, "You are My Son; this day I have begotten You"? And again, "I will be a Father to Him, and He will be a Son to Me"?		12. And You will roll them up like a covering, and they shall be changed; but You are the same, and Your years will not end."
6. And again, when He brought the Firstborn into the world, He said, "Let all <i>the</i> angels of God worship Him."	8 Psa. 45:6, 7 9 Is. 61:1 10 Psa. 102:25 11 Is. 34:4 13 Psa. 110:1 Luke 20:42 14 Psa. 103:20 Mat. 18:10 Rom. 8:17	13. But unto which of the angels did He ever say, "Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet"?
7. Now on the one hand, of the angels He says, "Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire."		14. Are they not all ministering spirits, being sent forth to minister to those who are about to inherit salvation?

CHAPTER TWO

1. For this reason, it is imperative that we give much greater attention to the things *which* we have heard, lest at any time we should slip away.
2. For if the word spoken by angels was *enforced* without fail, and every transgression and disobedience received just recompense,
3. How shall we escape, *if* we have neglected so great a salvation; which was first received when it was spoken by the Lord, *and* was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*;
4. God also bearing witness with *them* by both signs and wonders, and various miracles and gifts of *the* Holy Spirit, according to His own will?
5. For *it* is not to *the* angels that He has placed in subjection the world that is to come, of which we are speaking.
6. But in a certain place one fully testified, saying, "What is man, that You are mindful of him, or *the* son of man, that You visit him?"
7. You did make him a little lower than *the* angels; You did crown him with glory and honor, and You did set him over the works of Your hands;
8. You did put all things in subjection under his feet." For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing *that* was not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.
9. But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering the death, in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone;
10. Because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were* created, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.
11. For both He Who is sanctifying

Chap. 2

- 2 Num. 15:30
- Deut. 33:2
- Acts 7:53
- 3 Mat. 4:17
- Luke 1:2
- Heb. 10:28
- 4 Mark 16:20
- Acts 2:22
- 1 Cor. 12:4, 7, 11
- Eph. 1:5, 9
- 5 2 Pet. 3:13
- 6 Job 7:17
- 8 Mat. 28:18
- 1 Cor. 15:25
- Eph. 1:22
- 9 John 3:16
- Acts 2:33
- 2 Cor. 5:15
- Phil. 2:7-9
- 10 Luke 13:32, 24:46
- Acts 5:31
- Rom. 11:36
- 11 Mat. 28:10
- John 20:17
- Acts 17:26
- Heb. 10:10

- 12 Psa. 22:22
- 13 Psa. 18:2
- Is. 8:18, 12:2
- John 10:29
- 14 John 1:14
- Phil. 2:7
- Col. 2:15
- 15 Luke 1:74
- 2 Tim. 1:7
- 17 Phil. 2:7
- Heb. 4:15
- 18 Heb. 4:15, 16

Chap. 3

- 1 Rom. 1:7, 15:8
- 1 Cor. 1:2
- 2 Num. 12:7
- 3 Zech. 6:12
- Mat. 16:18
- 4 Eph. 2:10
- Heb. 1:2

- and those who are sanctified *are* all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren,
12. Saying, "I will declare Your name to My brethren; in *the* midst of *the* church I will sing praise to You."
 13. And again, "I will be trusting in Him." And again, "Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me."
 14. Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil;
 15. And *that* He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death.
 16. For surely, He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels; but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham.
 17. For this reason, it was obligatory for *Him* to be made like *His* brethren in everything that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest *in* things pertaining to God, in order to make propitiation for the sins of the people.
 18. For because He Himself has suffered, having been tempted *in like manner*, He is able to help those who are being tempted.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Because of this, holy brethren, partakers of *the* heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of *the* *faith* we profess—Jesus Christ,
2. Who was faithful to Him Who appointed Him, even as Moses *was* in all His house.
3. For He has been counted worthy of greater glory than Moses, even as He Who built the house has so much more honor than the house *itself*.
4. For every house is built by someone, but He Who built all things *is* God.

5. Now on the one hand, Moses *was* faithful in all his house, as a ministering servant, for a testimony of those things which were going to be spoken afterwards.

6. But on the other hand, Christ *was faithful* as *the* Son over His own house; Whose house we are, if we are truly holding fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to *the* end.

7. For this reason, even as the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you will hear His voice,

8. Harden not your hearts, as in the rebellion, in the day of temptation in the wilderness,

9. Where your fathers tempted Me *and* tried Me, and saw My works forty years.

10. Because of this, I was indignant with that generation, and said, 'They are always going astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways.'

11. So I swore in My wrath, 'If they shall enter into My rest—'

12. Beware, brethren, lest perhaps there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in apostatizing from *the* living God.

13. Rather, be encouraging one another each day, while it is called "today," so that none of you become hardened by *the* deceitfulness of sin.

14. For we are companions of Christ, if we truly hold the confidence *that we had* at the beginning steadfast until the end.

15. As it is being said, "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion."

16. For some, after hearing, did rebel, but not all who came out of Egypt by Moses.

17. But with whom was He indignant *for* forty years? *Was it* not with those who had sinned, whose dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness?

18. And to whom did He swear *that* they would not enter into His rest, except to those who had disobeyed?

19. So we see that they were not able

5 Ex. 14:31
Deut. 3:24,
18:19
Heb. 3:2
6 Mat. 10:22
Rom. 5:2
1 Cor. 3:16
Col. 1:23
Heb. 1:2
7 Psa. 95:7
Acts 1:16
14 Heb. 3:6
15 Heb. 3:7
16 Num. 14:2
17 Num. 14:22
Psa. 106:26
18 Num. 14:30

Chap. 4

1 Heb. 12:15
3 Psa. 95:11
Heb. 3:14
4 Ex. 20:11
6 Heb. 3:19
7 Psa. 95:7
12 Psa. 147:15
Jer. 23:29
Is. 49:2
Eph. 6:17
1 Cor. 14:25
Rev. 1:16

to enter in because of unbelief.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Therefore, we should fear, lest perhaps, a promise being open to enter into His rest, any of you might seem to come short.

2. For truly, we have had the gospel preached *to us*, even as they also *did*; but the preaching of the word did not profit them because it was not mixed with faith in those who heard.

3. For we who have believed, we ourselves are entering into the rest, as He has said, "So I swore in My wrath, 'If they shall enter into My rest—' " although the works were finished from *the* foundation of *the* world.

4. For He spoke in a certain place about the seventh *day* in this manner: "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works";

5. And again concerning this: "If they shall enter into My rest—"

6. Consequently, since it remains *for* some to enter into it, and those who had previously heard the gospel did not enter in because of disobedience,

7. Again He marks out a certain day, "Today," saying in David after so long a time (exactly as it has been quoted *above*), "Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

8. For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken *long* afterwards of another day.

9. There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God.

10. For the one who has entered into His rest, he also has ceased from his works, just as God *did* from His own *works*.

11. We should be diligent therefore to enter into that rest, lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience.

12. For the Word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the di-

viding asunder of both soul and spirit, *and* of both *the* joints and *the* marrow, and *is* able to discern *the* thoughts and intents of *the* heart.

13. And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight; but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account.

14. Having therefore a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession of *our* faith.

15. For we do not have a high priest who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *one Who* was tempted in all things according to *the* likeness of *our own temptations*; yet *He* was without sin.

16. Therefore, we should come with boldness to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. For every high priest, being taken from among men to act in behalf of men, is appointed to serve in *the* things pertaining to God in order that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins;

2. *And* he is able to deal gently with those who sin in ignorance and those who have been led astray, since he himself is also encumbered with many weaknesses.

3. And because of these *weaknesses*, he is obligated also to offer *sacrifices* for his own sins, exactly as *he does* for the people.

4. Now no man takes the honor of *the high priesthood* upon himself, but *only* he who is called by God, in the same way as Aaron also was *called*.

5. In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but He Who said to Him, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You."

13 Psa. 90:8
Job 26:6
14 Heb. 7:26,
10:23
15 Is. 53:3
Luke 22:28
2 Cor. 5:21
16 Eph. 2:18

Chap. 5

1 Heb. 8:3
3 Lev. 4:3
4 Ex. 28:1
John 3:27
5 Psa. 2:7
John 8:54

6 Psa. 110:4
7 Psa. 22:1
Mat. 26:37,
39, 53,
27:46
Mark 14:33,
36
John 12:27,
17:1

8 Phil. 2:8
Heb. 3:6
11 Mat. 13:15
John 16:12
2 Pet. 3:16
12 1 Cor. 3:1
13 1 Pet. 2:2
Eph. 4:14
14 Is. 7:15
1 Cor. 2:6,
14

Chap. 6

1 Heb. 5:12,
9:14
2 Acts 8:14,
17:31,
19:4-6,
24:25
3 Acts 18:21

6. Even as He also says in another place, "You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec";

7. Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He* feared *God*.

8. Although He was a Son, yet He learned obedience from the things that He suffered;

9. And having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him,

10. After He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec;

11. Concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain, since you have become dull of in hearing.

12. For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers, *but instead* you need to have *someone* teach you again what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God, and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food.

13. For everyone who is partaking of milk *is* unskilled in *the* word of righteousness because he is an infant.

14. But solid food is for those who are fully grown, who through repeated practice have had their senses trained to discern between good and evil.

CHAPTER SIX

1. Therefore, advancing beyond the beginning principles of the doctrines of Christ, we should go on to perfection; not laying again *the* foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith in God,

2. Of *the* doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of *the* resurrection of *the* dead, and of eternal judgment.

3. And we will do this, if indeed God permits.

4. For *it is* impossible for those *who were* once enlightened, and who personally obtained the heavenly gift, and became partakers of *the* Holy Spirit,
 5. And who have tasted *the* good Word of God, and *the* powers of *the* world to come,
 6. If they have fallen away, to renew *them* again unto repentance; *seeing that* they are crucifying the Son of God for themselves, and are publicly holding *Him* in contempt.
 7. For the ground that soaks up rain coming often upon it, and also produces useful plants for those for whom it is tilled, receives a blessing from God.
 8. But *that* which brings forth thorns and thistles *is* rejected and near to being cursed, the end of which *is* for burning.
 9. But, although we speak these things, beloved, we are persuaded of better things concerning you, even *the fruits* that accompany salvation.
 10. For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work, and the labor of love by which you have showed *honor* to His name, *in that* you have served the saints and are *continuing* to serve *them*.
 11. But we earnestly desire that every one of you be demonstrating the same diligence, unto the full assurance of the hope until *the* end;
 12. So that you do not become lazy, but *that you be* imitators of those who through faith and steadfast endurance inherit the promises.
 13. For God, after promising Abraham, swore by Himself, since He could swear by none greater,
 14. Saying, "Surely in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you."
 15. Now after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.
 16. For indeed, men swear by the greater, and confirmation by an oath *puts*

4 Mat. 12:31
 John 4:10
 Eph. 2:8
 Gal. 3:2, 5
 Heb. 2:4,
 10:26, 32
 5 Heb. 2:5
 6 Heb. 10:29
 7 Psa. 65:10
 8 Is. 5:6
 10 Prov. 14:31
 Mat. 10:42,
 25:40
 John 13:20
 Rom. 3:4,
 15:25
 2 Cor. 8:4
 1 Thes. 1:3
 2 Thes 1:6,
 7
 2 Tim 1:18
 11 Col. 2:2
 Heb. 3:6, 14
 12 Heb. 10:36
 13 Gen. 22:16,
 17
 Psa. 105:9
 Luke 1:73
 16 Ex. 22:11

17 Rom. 11:29
 Heb. 11:9
 18 Heb. 12:1
 19 Lev. 16:15
 Heb. 9:7
 20 Heb. 3:1,
 4:14, 5:6,
 10, 7:17,
 8:1, 9:24
 Chap. 7
 1 Gen. 14:18
 5 Num 18:21,
 26
 6 Gen. 14:19
 Rom. 4:13

an end to all disputes between them.
 17. In this way God, desiring more abundantly to show the heirs of the promise the unchangeable nature of His own purpose, confirmed *it* by an oath;
 18. So that by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to lay hold on the hope *that has been* set before *us*;
 19. Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both secure and steadfast, and which enters into the *sanctuary* within the veil;
 20. Where Jesus has entered for us as a forerunner, having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. For this Melchisedec, King of Salem, Priest of the Most High God, Who met Abraham *as he was* returning from *his* slaughter of the kings, and blessed him,
 2. And to Whom Abraham gave a tenth part of all; on the one hand, being interpreted King of Righteousness; and on the other hand, King of Salem, which is King of Peace;
 3. Without father, without mother, without genealogy; having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but having been made like the Son of God, remains a Priest forever.
 4. But consider how great this one *was* to Whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils.
 5. For on the one hand, those from among the sons of Levi who receive the priesthood are commanded by the law to collect tithes from the people—that is, *from* their brethren—even though they are *all* descended from Abraham;
 6. But on the other hand, He Who was not descended from them received

tithes from Abraham, and blessed him who had the promises.

7. Now it is beyond all doubt *that* the inferior *one* is blessed by the superior *one*.

8. And in the first case, men who die receive tithes; but in the other case, *He received tithes of Whom it is witnessed that He lives forever.*

9. And in one sense, Levi, who receives tithes, also gave tithes through Abraham;

10. For he was still in his forefather's loins when Melchisedec met him.

11. Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood—for *the law that* the people had received was *based* on it—what further need *was there for* another priest to arise according to the order of Melchisedec, and not to be named after the order of Aaron?

12. For since the priesthood has changed, it is obligatory *that* a change of *the law* also take place;

13. Because the one of Whom these things are said belongs to another tribe, from which no one was appointed to serve at the altar.

14. For *it is* quite evident that our Lord has descended from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning *the* priesthood.

15. And it is even more evident because a different Priest arises according to the order of Melchisedec;

16. Who was not invested according to *the* law of a fleshly commandment, but by *the* power of indestructible life.

17. For He testifies, "You *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec."

18. For there is indeed an annulment of the earlier commandment *delivered to Aaron* because of its weakness and unprofitableness,

19. Because the law brought nothing to perfection; rather, *perfection* is brought about by a superior hope, through which we draw near to God.

8 Heb. 5:6,
6:20
11 Gal. 2:21
Heb. 7:18,
19, 8:7
14 Is. 11:11
Mat. 1:3
Luke 3:33
Rom. 1:3
Rev. 5:5
17 Psa. 110:4
Heb. 6:20
18 Rom. 8:3
Gal. 4:9
19 Acts 13:39
Rom. 3:20,
21, 28,
5:2
Gal. 3:24
Eph. 2:18
Heb. 4:16,
6:18

21 Psa. 110:4
22 Heb. 8:6,
9:16
25 1 John 2:1
Rom. 8:34
1 Tim. 2:5
26 Eph. 1:20,
4:10
Heb. 4:15
27 Lev. 9:7,
16:15
Rom. 6:10
28 Heb. 2:10,
5:1, 2, 9

Chap. 8

1 Eph. 1:20
Col. 3:1
Heb. 10:12

20. And according to this *superior* measure, *it was* not without *the* swearing of an oath *that He was made a Priest.* (For those *who descend from Aaron* are made priests without *the* swearing of an oath;

21. But He *was made a Priest* with *the* swearing of an oath by Him Who says concerning Him, "*The Lord swore and will not revoke His word, 'You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec.'*"")

22. By such a greater measure then, Jesus was made the Guarantor of a superior covenant.

23. Now in the one case, there were many priests because they were not able to continue *to serve* by reason of death;

24. But in the other case, because He is living forever, His priesthood never changes.

25. Therefore, He has the power throughout all time to save those who come to God through Him *because* He is ever living to intercede for them.

26. For it is fitting that we should have such a High Priest *Who is* holy, blameless, undefiled, set apart from sinners and made higher than the heavens;

27. Who has no need, as *do* the *other* high priests, to offer up sacrifices day by day, first for his own sins *and* then for the *sins* of the people; for this He did once for all time when He offered up Himself.

28. For the law makes high priests *of* men who have weaknesses; but *by* the word of the swearing of the oath, which supersedes the law, *the Son, Who has been perfected forever, has been made High Priest.*

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Now *here is* a summary of the things being discussed: We have such a High Priest Who sat down at *the*

right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

2. A minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord set up, and not man.

3. For every high priest is ordained to offer both gifts and sacrifices; therefore, *it is necessary for* this one also to have something that He can offer.

4. Now on the one hand, if He were on earth He would not even be a priest since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law;

5. Who serve as a representation and shadow of the heavenly *things*, exactly as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to construct the tabernacle: "For see," says He, "*that* you make all things according to the pattern—that was shown to you in the mountain."

6. But on the other hand, He has obtained a *supremely* more excellent ministry, as much greater as the superior covenant of which He is also Mediator, which was established upon superior promises.

7. For if the first *covenant* had been faultless, *then* no provision for a second *covenant* would have been made.

8. But since He found fault with them, He says, "Behold, *the* days are coming," says *the* Lord, 'when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah;

9. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in *the* day that I took hold of their hand to lead them out of *the* land of Egypt because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them,' says *the* Lord.

10. 'For this *is* the covenant that I will establish with the house of Israel after those days,' says *the* Lord: 'I will give My laws into their minds, and I will inscribe them upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.

11. And they will no longer teach every man his neighbor, and every

2 Heb. 9:8, 11, 12

3 Eph. 5:2

Heb. 5:1, 9:14

5 Ex. 25:40

Num. 8:4

Acts 7:44

Col. 2:17

Heb. 9:23

6 2 Cor. 3:6, 8

Heb. 7:22

7 Heb. 7:11, 18

8 Jer. 31:31

10 Zech. 8:8

Heb. 10:16

11 Is. 54:13

John 6:45

1 John 2:27

man his brother, saying, "Know the Lord" because all will know Me, from *the* least to *the* greatest of them;

12. For I will be merciful toward their unrighteousnesses, and their sins and their lawlessness I will not remember ever again.' "

13. In speaking of a new *covenant*, He has made the first *covenant* obsolete. Now that which has become old and obsolete *is* about to disappear.

CHAPTER NINE

1. Truly then, the first tabernacle also had ordinances of worship and an earthly sanctuary.

2. For the first tabernacle, which is called holy, was furnished; in which *were placed* both the lampstand and the table, and the loaves of show-bread.

3. But behind the second veil *was* a tabernacle which *is* called *the* holy of holies,

4. Containing a golden censor, and the ark of the covenant, which was overlaid on all sides with gold; in which *was the* golden jar containing the manna, and the rod of Aaron that had sprouted, and the tablets of the covenant;

5. And arching above it *were the* cherubim of glory spreading their wings over the mercy seat, concerning which now is not *the time* to expound in detail.

6. Now with these things prepared in this manner, the priests enter into the first tabernacle at all *customary* times *in order* to perform the services;

7. But the high priest *enters* alone into the second *tabernacle* once a year, not without blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins that the people committed in ignorance.

8. The Holy Spirit signifying this: *that* the way of the holiest has not yet been made manifest, while the first taberna-

12 Rom. 11:27

13 2 Cor. 5:17

Chap. 9

1 Ex. 25:8

2 Ex. 25:23, 31, 26:1, 35

3 Ex. 26:31

4 Ex. 16:33

25:10, 16

Num. 17:10

Deut. 10:2

5 Lev. 16:2

6 Num. 28:3

7 Ex. 30:10

Heb. 7:27

8 John 14:6

Heb. 10:19

cle is still standing;

9. Which is a symbol for the present time, in which both gifts and sacrifices are being offered *that* are not able to perfect the one performing the service, as pertaining to the conscience.

10. *These services consist* only of meat and drink offerings, and various washings and physical ordinances, imposed until *the* time of the new spiritual order.

11. But Christ Himself has become High Priest of the coming good things, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made by human hands (that is, not of this present physical creation).

12. Not by *the* blood of goats and calves, but by the means of His own blood, He entered once for all into the holiest, having by Himself secured everlasting redemption for us.

13. For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are defiled, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh,

14. To a far greater degree, the blood of Christ, Who through *the* eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, shall purify your conscience from dead works to serve *the* living God.

15. And for this reason He is *the* Mediator of the New Covenant: in order that through *His* death, *which* took place for the release of the transgressions *that were committed* under the

9 Gal. 3:21
10 Num. 19:7
Eph. 2:15
Col. 2:16
11 Heb. 3:1,
8:2, 10:1
12 Dan. 9:24
Zech. 3:9
Eph. 1:7
Col. 1:14
Heb. 10:4
13 Lev. 16:14
Num. 19:2
14 Luke 1:74
1 John 1:7
Rom. 1:4
Heb. 6:1,
10:22
15 Rom. 3:25
1 Tim. 2:5
Heb. 3:1,
7:22

17 Gal. 3:15
18 Ex. 24:6
19 Ex. 24:5, 6
Lev. 14:4
20 Ex. 24:8
Mat. 26:28
21 Ex. 29:12
Lev. 8:15
22 Lev. 17:11
23 Heb. 8:5

first covenant, those who have been called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

16. Now where *there is* a covenant, *it is* obligatory to bring forth a symbolic sacrifice to represent the death of the one who personally ratifies *the* covenant;

17. Because a covenant is ratified only over *the* dead sacrificial animals, since there is no way that it is legally in force until the living ratifier has symbolically represented his death.*

18. For this very reason, neither was the first covenant inaugurated without blood

19. Because after Moses had spoken every commandment of *the* law to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and he sprinkled both the book of *the* covenant itself and all the people,

20. Saying, "This is the blood of the covenant that God has ordained for you."

21. And in the same manner, he sprinkled with blood the tabernacle, too, and all the vessels of service.

22. Now almost all things are purified with blood according to the law, and without *the* shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.

23. Therefore, *it was* indeed obligatory for the patterns of the heavenly things to be purified with *the* blood of these animals, but *the* things in heaven themselves with superior sac-

*"In the OT, ratification of a covenant based on sacrifice frequently entailed a self-maledictory procedure. The ratifying party invoked a curse upon himself when he swore commitment to comply with the terms of the covenant. In the transaction the ratifying party was represented by animals designated for sacrifice. The bloody dismemberment of the representative animals signified the violent death of the ratifying party if he proved faithless to his oath (e.g., Gen. 15:9-21; Exod. 24:3-8; Psa 50:5; Jer. 34:17-20)....Until the oath of allegiance had been sworn and validated by the action of cutting the animals in two and walking between the pieces (cf. Gen. 15:10, 17; Jer. 34:18), the covenant remained merely tentative. It was legally confirmed (βεβαια) on the basis of the dismembered bodies of the sacrificial victims. In its context, the unusual formulation επι νεκροῖς, 'on the basis of dead bodies,' refers to the bodies of representative animals used in the self-maledictory rite of covenant ratification. It finds an exact parallel in Ps. 49[50]:5 LXX, where επι θυσιαῖς means 'on the basis of sacrificial animals.' The thought is amplified with the strong negative assertion that a covenant is never operative οτε ζη ο διαθεμενος, 'while the ratifier lives.' The formulation accurately reflects the legal situation that a covenant is never secured until the ratifier has bound himself to his oath by means of a representative death (Johnsson, 'Defilement,' 313)" (Lane, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 47B, pp. 242-243).

rifices than these.

24. For Christ has not entered into the holy places made by *human* hands, *which are mere* copies of the true; rather, *He has entered* into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;

25. Not that he should offer Himself many times, even as the high priest enters into the holy of holies year by year with *the* blood of others;

26. For then it would have been necessary for Him to suffer many times since *the* foundation of *the* world. But now, once and for all, in *the* consummation of the ages, He has been manifested for *the* purpose of removing sin through His sacrifice *of Himself*.

27. And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this, *the* judgment;

28. So Christ, having been offered once to bear *the* sins of many, will appear *the* second time without sin unto salvation to those who are eagerly awaiting Him.

CHAPTER TEN

1. For the law, having *only* a shadow of the good things that are coming, *and* not the image of those things, with the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, is never able to make perfect those who come *to worship*.

2. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered? For once those who worship had been purified, *they would* no longer be conscious of sin.

3. On the contrary, in *offering* these sacrifices year by year, *there is* a remembrance of sins

4. Because *it is* impossible *for the* blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

5. For this reason, when He comes into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me.

24 1 John 2:1
Rom. 8:34
Heb. 6:20,
8:2
25 Heb. 9:7
26 1 Cor. 10:11
Heb. 7:27
27 Gen. 3:19
Eccl. 3:20
2 Cor. 5:10
28 Mat. 26:28
1 John 3:5
Rom. 5:15,
6:10
Tit. 2:13
1 Pet. 2:24
3:18

Chap. 10

1 Col. 2:17
Heb. 9:9, 11,
10:14
3 Heb. 9:7
4 Mic. 6:6, 7
5 Psa. 40:6

10 John 17:19
Heb. 9:12
11 Num. 28:3
Heb. 10:4
12 Col. 3:1
13 Psa. 110:1
Acts 2:35
14 Heb. 10:1
16 Heb. 8:10, 12
19 Eph. 2:18
20 John 10:9
Heb. 9:3

6. You did not delight in burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin.

7. Then said I, 'Lo, I come (*as* it is written of Me in *the* scroll of *the* book) to do Your will, O God.' "

8. In the saying above, *He said*, "Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin (which are offered according to the law) You did not desire nor delight in";

9. Then He said, "Lo, I come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first *covenant* in order that He may establish the second *covenant*;

10. By Whose will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11. Now every high priest stands ministering day by day, offering the same sacrifices repeatedly, which are never able to remove sins;

12. But He, after offering one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down at *the* right hand of God.

13. Since that time, He is waiting until His enemies are placed *as* a footstool for His feet.

14. For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified.

15. And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said,

16. " 'This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,' says *the* Lord: 'I will give My laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds;

17. And their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again.' "

18. Now where remission of these *is*, *it is* no longer *necessary* to offer sacrifices for sin.

19. Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20. By a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh),

21. And *having* a great High Priest over the house of God,
 22. Let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water.
 23. Let us hold fast without wavering to the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful;
 24. And let us be concerned about one another, and *be* stirring up *one another* unto love and good works;
 25. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some *are* accustomed to do; but rather, encouraging *one another*, and all *the* more as you see the day drawing near.
 26. For if we willfully go on sinning after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins,
 27. But a terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment and of fierce fire, which will devour the adversaries of *God*.
 28. *Consider this*: anyone who rejects the law of Moses dies without mercy under *the testimony* of two or three witnesses.
 29. How much worse punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, *as* an unholy thing, and has scorned the Spirit of grace?
 30. For we know Him Who has said, "Vengeance *belongs* to Me. I will recompense!" says *the Lord*." And again, "*The Lord* will judge His people."
 31. *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of *the* living God.
 32. But remember the earlier days when, after you were enlightened, you endured much conflict in *your* sufferings.
 33. On the one part, you were made a

21 1 Tim. 3:15
 Heb. 4:14
 22 Ezek. 36:25
 Eph. 3:12
 Heb. 4:16,
 9:14
 23 1 Cor. 1:9
 2 Thes. 3:3
 Heb. 4:14
 25 Acts 2:42
 2 Pet. 3:9
 Rom. 13:11
 Phil. 4:5
 26 Num. 15:30
 2 Pet. 2:20
 27 Zeph. 1:18
 2 Thes. 1:8
 28 Mat. 18:16
 Heb. 2:2
 29 Mat. 12:31
 1 Cor. 11:29
 Eph. 4:30
 Heb. 2:3
 30 Deut. 32:35,
 36
 31 Luke 12:5
 32 Gal. 3:4
 Phil. 1:29
 Col. 2:1
 Heb. 6:4
 33 1 Cor. 4:9
 Phil. 1:7

34 Mat. 5:12,
 6:20
 2 Tim. 1:16
 35 Mat. 5:12
 36 Luke 21:19
 Col. 3:24
 37 Luke 18:8
 Hab. 2:3, 4
 38 Rom. 1:17
 Gal. 3:11
 39 Acts. 16:31
 2 Pet. 2:20
 1 Thes. 5:9
 2 Thes. 2:14

Chap. 11

1 Rom. 8:24
 2 Cor. 4:18
 2 Heb. 11:39
 3 Gen. 1:1
 Psa. 33:6
 John 1:3
 2 Pet. 3:5
 4 Gen. 4:4
 1 John 3:12
 5 Gen. 5:22

public spectacle by both insults and severe trials; and on the other part, you became companions of those who were enduring the same things.
 34. For you not only showed compassion to me in my bonds, but also gladly endured the plunder of your possessions, knowing within yourselves that you have a greater and more enduring possession in *the* heavens.
 35. For this *very* reason, do not cast away your confidence, which is bringing a great reward.
 36. For you need to have endurance, so that, after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.
 37. For *it is* but a short time *until* He Who is coming will come, and will not delay.
 38. Now *it is written*, "The just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul does not delight in him."
 39. But we are not of *those* who draw back unto destruction; rather, we are of faith unto *the* saving of the soul.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. Now faith is *the* substance of *things* hoped for, *and the* conviction of things not seen.
 2. For by this *kind of faith* the elders obtained a good report.
 3. By faith we understand that the worlds were created by *the* word of God, so that the things that are seen were made from *things* that are invisible.
 4. By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it, though he died, *he* is yet speaking.
 5. By faith Enoch was transported so that he would not look upon death, and was not found because God had

transported him; for before his departure it was testified of him that he pleased God.

6. Now without faith *it is impossible* to please *God*. For it is mandatory *for* the one who comes to God to believe that He exists, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

7. By faith Noah, after being divinely instructed by God about the things *he could* not yet see, was moved with fear *and* prepared an ark for *the* salvation of his house; through which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

8. By faith Abraham, being called *of God* to go out into the place which he would later receive for an inheritance, obeyed and went, not knowing where he was going.

9. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, like a foreigner, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the joint heirs of the same promise;

10. For he was waiting for the city with *the* foundations of which God is *the* Architect and Builder.

11. By faith also Sarah herself received power to conceive seed, and gave birth *when* she was *well* beyond the childbearing age because she esteemed Him faithful Who had personally promised *her* a son.

12. Because of this *faith*, there came into being from one *man*—and moreover, *one* who was *reproductively* dead—*descendants* as numerous as the stars in the heavens, and as countless as the sand on the sea shore.

13. All these died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them from afar, and having been persuaded of *them*, and having embraced *them*, and having confessed that they were strangers and sojourners on the earth.

14. For those who say such things make it manifest that they seek *their*

7 Gen. 6:13
1 Pet. 3:20
Rom. 3:22
Phil. 3:9
8 Gen. 12:1
Acts 7:2-4
9 Gen. 12:8
Heb. 6:17
10 Heb. 12:22
Rev. 21:10
11 Gen. 17:19,
18:11, 14
Luke 1:36
Rom. 4:21
12 Rom. 4:18,
19
13 Gen. 23:4
1 Chr. 29:15
Psa. 39:12
John 8:56
1 Pet. 1:17
Heb. 11:39
14 Heb. 13:14

16 Ex. 3:6, 15
Mat. 22:32
Acts 7:32
Heb. 13:14
17 Gen. 22:1
Jas. 2:21
18 Gen. 21:12
Rom. 9:7
19 Rom. 4:17
20 Gen. 27:27
21 Gen. 47:31,
48:5
22 Gen. 50:24
23 Ex. 1:16,
2:2
24 Ex. 2:10
25 Psa. 84:10
26 Heb. 10:35,
13:13
27 Ex. 10:28
Heb. 11:13

own country, *as promised by God*.

15. And if, on the one hand, they had let their minds dwell *fondly* on the place where they came from, they might have had opportunity to return.

16. But now, on the other hand, they are aspiring to a more excellent *country*—that is, a heavenly *one*. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God because He has prepared a city for them.

17. By faith Abraham, when he was being tried, offered up Isaac; and he who had received the promises offered up *his* only begotten *son*

18. Of whom it was said, "In Isaac shall your Seed be called";

19. *Because he* reckoned that God was able to raise him even from among *the* dead, from which he also received him in a figurative way.

20. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things that were to come.

21. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped *God*, *leaning* on the top of his staff.

22. By faith Joseph, when he was dying, spoke of the *coming* exodus of the children of Israel, and gave a command concerning his bones.

23. By faith Moses, after he was born, was hidden three months by his parents because they saw *that* he was a beautiful little child; and they did not fear the king's decree.

24. By faith Moses, after becoming a great *leader*, refused to be called *the* son of Pharaoh's daughter,

25. Choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy *the* temporary pleasure of sin;

26. For he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt because he was looking intently to the reward.

27. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he perse-

vered, as *if he were* seeing the one Who is invisible.

28. By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not slay them.

29. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as through a dry *land* in which the Egyptians, while making *the* attempt, were swallowed up *by the waters*.

30. By faith the walls of Jericho fell after being circled for seven days.

31. By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish with those who disobeyed *because* she had received the spies peaceably.

32. Now what more can I say? For time would fail me to relate *the accounts* of Gideon, Barak also, and Samson and Jephthah, David also, and Samuel, and the prophets;

33. Who by faith were victorious over kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, shut *the* mouths of lions,

34. Quenched *the* fury of fire, escaped *the* edge of *the* sword, were strengthened from weakness, became mighty in war, *and* turned back the armies of foreigners.

35. Women received their dead restored to life; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a superior resurrection;

36. And others endured *the* trial of *cruel* mockings and scourgings; yes, and moreover, of chains and imprisonment.

37. They were stoned to death, they were sawed in two, they were *brutally* interrogated, *and* slaughtered by *the* sword. They went about in sheepskins *and* in goatskins, being destitute, oppressed, *and* ill-treated;

38. Of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts and in mountains, *living* in caves and in

28 Ex. 12:21

29 Ex. 14:22

30 Josh. 6:20

31 Josh. 2:1,

6:23

32 Judg. 6:11,

12:7, 13:24

1 Sam. 1:20,

16:1

33 1 Sam. 17:34

2 Sam. 7:11

Judg. 14:5

34 1 Sam. 20:1

2 Ki. 20:7

Judg. 15:8

Dan. 3:25

35 1 Ki. 17:22

Acts 22:25

36 Gen. 39:20

Jer. 20:2

37 1 Ki. 21:13

2 Ki. 1:8

Zech. 13:4

Mat. 3:4

Acts 7:58

38 1 Ki. 18:4

39 Heb. 11:2, 13

40 Heb. 5:9

Chap. 12

1 1 Cor. 9:24

Rom. 12:12

Col. 3:8

2 Psa. 110:1

Luke 24:26

1 Pet. 3:22

Phil. 2:8

3 Mat. 10:24

John 15:20

Gal. 6:9

4 1 Cor. 10:13

5 Job 5:17

6 Psa. 94:12

Jas. 1:12

7 Deut. 8:5

8 1 Pet. 5:9

9 Job 12:10

holes in the earth.

39. But these all, *though* they had received a good report through faith, did not obtain the promise

40. *Because* God had determined in advance to provide something superior for us so that without us they would not be made perfect.

CHAPTER TWELVE

1. Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily entraps *us*; *and* let us run the race set before us with endurance,

2. Having *our minds* fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith; Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God.

3. Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds.

4. You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin.

5. And you have already forgotten the admonition that He addresses to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise *the* chastening of *the* Lord, nor grow weary of being reproved by Him;

6. For whom *the* Lord loves He chastens, and He severely disciplines every son whom He receives."

7. If you endure chastening, God is dealing with you as *a Father* with *His* sons. For who is the son whom *the* Father does not chasten?

8. But if you are without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then you are bastards and not sons.

9. Furthermore, we have had our fleshly fathers who chastened *us*, and we respected *them*; should we not all the more *willingly* be subject to the

Father of spirits, and live *forever*?

10. For in the first case, they chastened *us* for a few days in whatever way seemed good to them; but in the second case, He *chastens us* for *our own* benefit that we may be partakers of His holiness.

11. Now truly, no chastisement for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards it yields *the* peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who have been exercised by it.

12. Therefore, lift up the hands that are hanging down, and *revive* the weakened knees;

13. And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which *is* lame be turned aside; but let it rather be healed.

14. Pursue peace with everyone, and sanctification, without which no one will see the Lord;

15. Looking diligently, lest anyone fall from the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and through this many be defiled;

16. Lest *there* be any fornicator or godless person, as Esau, who for one meal sold his birthright;

17. Because you also know that afterwards, when he wished to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; *and* he found no room for repentance, although he sought it earnestly with tears.

18. For you have not come to *the* mount that could be touched and that burned with fire, nor to gloominess, and fearful darkness, and *the* whirlwind;

19. And to *the* sound of *the* trumpet, and to *the* voice of *the* words, which those who heard, *begged* that *the* word not be spoken *directly* to them.

20. (For they could not endure what was being commanded: "And if even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned, or shot through with an arrow";

10 Lev. 11:44
11 Jas. 3:18
12 Job 4:3, 4
13 Prov. 4:26
Gal. 6:1
14 Psa. 34:14
Mat. 5:8
2 Cor. 7:1
2 Tim. 2:22
15 Gal. 5:4
Heb. 3:12
16 Gen. 25:33
Eph. 5:3
17 Gen. 27:34
18 Deut. 4:11
19 Ex. 20:19
Deut. 5:5
20 Ex. 19:13

21 Ex. 19:16
22 Deut. 33:2
Psa. 68:17
Gal. 4:26
Phil. 3:20
Rev. 3:12
23 Psa. 94:2
Luke 10:20
Jas. 1:18
Phil. 3:12
24 Gen. 4:10
Ex. 24:8
Heb. 9:15
25 Heb. 2:2, 3
26 Ex. 19:18
Hag. 2:6
27 2 Pet. 3:10
29 Ex. 24:17
Deut. 4:24

Chap. 13.

1 1 Pet. 1:22
Rom. 12:10
2 Gen. 18:3
Mat. 25:35
1 Tim. 3:2

21. And so terrifying was the sight *that* Moses said, "I am greatly afraid and trembling".)

22. But you have come to Mount Sion, and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels;

23. *To the* joyous festival gathering; and to *the* church of *the* firstborn, registered in *the* book of life in heaven; and to God, *the* Judge of all; and to *the* spirits of the just who have been perfected;

24. And to Jesus, *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant; and to sprinkling of *the* blood of *ratification*, proclaiming superior things than *that* of Abel.

25. Beware that you do not refuse to *hear* Him Who is speaking! For if they did not escape *judgment*, who refused to *hear* the one Who was on the earth divinely instructing *them*, how much more *severely will we be judged*, if we ourselves apostatize from Him Who speaks from heaven;

26. Whose voice then shook the earth, but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but heaven also."

27. Now the *words* "once more" signify the removing of the *things* being shaken, as of things that were made, so that those *things* which cannot be shaken may remain.

28. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have grace, through which we may serve God in a pleasing *manner* with reverence and awe;

29. For our God *is* indeed a consuming fire.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1. Let brotherly love be present *among you* continually.

2. Do not forget to show hospitality; for by this some have unknowingly welcomed angels *as guests*.

3. Be mindful of prisoners, as if you were imprisoned with *them*; and *think* of those who are suffering afflictions, as if you yourselves were in *their* body.

4. Let marriage *be held* honorable by all, and the marital union *be* undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers.

5. Do not *allow* the love of money to influence your behavior, *but be* satisfied with what you have; for He has said, "In no way will I ever leave you; no—I will never forsake you in any way."

6. So then, let us boldly say, "*The* Lord *is* my helper, and I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"

7. Remember your leaders, who have spoken the Word of God to you, considering the outcome of *their* conduct; and imitate *their* faith.

8. Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, and today, and forever.

9. Do not be carried about by all kinds of strange doctrines. For *it is* good for the heart to be confirmed by grace and not by foods, which have brought no *spiritual* benefit to those who have been preoccupied *with them*.

10. We have an altar from which those who are serving the *present earthly* tabernacle do not have authority to eat;

11. For *pertaining to* those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest for a sin offering, the bodies of all these are burned outside the camp.

12. For this reason, Jesus, in order that He might sanctify the people by His own blood, also suffered outside the gate.

13. So then, let us go forward to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

14. For we do not have a continuing city here *on earth*; rather, we are seeking the one that is coming.

15. Accordingly, let us offer *the* sacri-

3 Mat. 25:36
4 1 Cor. 6:9
5 Gen. 28:15
Phil. 4:11
6 Psa. 27:1
7 Heb. 6:12,
13:17
8 John 8:58
9 Rom. 14:17
Eph. 4:14
Col. 2:4, 8
1 Tim. 4:3
10 1 Cor. 9:13
11 Ex. 29:14
12 Acts. 7:58
13 1 Pet. 4:14
14 Mic. 2:10
Phil. 3:20
15 Lev. 7:12
Hos. 14:2
Eph. 5:20

16 Rom. 12:13
2 Cor. 9:12
17 Ezek. 3:17
Phil. 2:29
1 Tim. 5:17
18 Acts 23:1
Eph. 6:19
20 Zech. 9:11
1 Pet. 2:25
Rom. 4:24,
15:33
Gal. 1:1
21 1 Pet. 5:10
Gal. 1:5
Phil. 2:13
22 1 Pet. 5:12
23 1 Thes. 3:2
1 Tim. 6:12
24 Heb. 13:7, 17
25 Tit. 3:15

fice of praise continually to God through Him; that is, *with the* fruit of *our* lips openly professing *our faith* in His name.

16. Now do not forget to do good and to fellowship, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

17. Follow your leaders, and be submissive, because they are looking out for your spiritual well-being, as *those who must be* ready to give an account *to God* in order that they may do this with joy, and not *with* groaning because that *would be* unprofitable for you.

18. Pray for us; for we are certain that we have a clear conscience, in all things desiring to conduct ourselves well.

19. Now I am earnestly exhorting *you* to do this more diligently that I may be sent back to you more quickly.

20. And *may* the God of peace, Who raised our Lord Jesus from among *the* dead—that great Shepherd of the sheep—through *the* blood of *the* everlasting covenant,

21. Perfect you in every good work in order that you may do His will; accomplishing in you that which *is* well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to Whom *be the* glory into the ages of eternity. Amen.

22. Now I admonish you, brethren, to patiently listen to this message of exhortation, for I have written to you in only a few words.

23. *I want* you to know that our brother Timothy has been released; with whom, if he comes soon enough, I will see you.

24. Greet all your leaders, and all the saints. Those from Italy send greetings to you.

25. *May God's* grace *be* with all of you. Amen.

To the Hebrews, written from Italy,
delivered by Timothy

The First Epistle to Timothy

CHAPTER ONE

1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ according to *the* commandment of God our Savior, and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ, *Who is* our hope,
 2. To Timothy, *my* true son in *the* faith: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.
 3. When I was going to Macedonia, I exhorted you to remain in Ephesus, in order that you might *solemnly* charge some not to teach other doctrines;
 4. Nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which lead to empty speculations rather than to edification from God, which *is* in faith.
 5. Now the purpose of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and genuine faith;
 6. From which some, having missed the mark, have turned aside unto vain jangling;
 7. Desiring to be teachers of *the* law, neither understanding what they are saying, nor what they are strongly affirming.
 8. Now we know that the law *is* good, if anyone uses it lawfully,
 9. Understanding this: that law is not enacted for a righteous man, but for *the* lawless and disobedient, for *the* ungodly and sinful, for *the* unholy and profane, for slayers of fathers and slayers of mothers, for murderers,
 10. For fornicators, for homosexuals, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and for any other thing *that* is opposed to sound doctrine;
 11. According to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, with which I was entrusted.
 12. And I thank Jesus Christ our Lord,

Chap. 1

1 Acts 9:15
 Col. 1:27
 Tit. 1:3
 2 Acts 16:1
 Gal. 1:3
 Tit. 1:4
 3 Acts 20:1
 Gal. 1:6, 7
 4 1 Tim. 6:4
 Tit. 1:14
 5 Rom. 13:8
 Gal. 5:14
 2 Tim. 2:22
 6 1 Tim. 6:4, 20
 7 1 Tim. 6:4
 8 Rom. 7:12
 9 Gal. 3:19
 10 2 Tim. 4:3
 Tit. 1:9
 11 1 Cor. 9:17
 Gal. 2:7
 Col. 1:25
 12 1 Cor. 7:25
 2 Cor. 3:5, 12:9

 13 John 4:21
 Acts 8:3
 14 Luke 7:47
 Rom. 5:20
 2 Tim. 1:13
 15 Mat. 9:13
 2 Tim. 2:11
 16 Acts 13:39
 2 Cor. 4:1
 17 1 Chr. 29:11
 Psa. 10:16
 Rom. 1:23, 16:27
 Heb. 11:27
 18 1 Tim. 4:14
 2 Tim. 2:2-3
 20 Acts 13:45
 1 Cor. 5:5
 2 Tim. 2:17, 4:14

Who has empowered me, that He counted me faithful, putting *me* into the ministry,

13. Who was previously a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent person; but I obtained mercy because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief.

14. But the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with *the* faith and love that *is* in Christ Jesus.

15. *This is* a faithful saying, and worthy of full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

16. But for this reason I was shown mercy in order that in me first Jesus Christ might demonstrate all long-suffering, for an example to those who would afterwards believe on Him unto eternal life.

17. Now to the King of eternity, *the* incorruptible, invisible, *and* only wise God, *be* honor and glory into the ages of eternity. Amen.

18. This charge I am personally committing to you, *my* son Timothy, in accordance with the prophecies that were made long ago concerning you; in order that by them you yourself might wage a good war,

19. Holding to *the* faith and a good conscience. For some, having cast aside *a good conscience*, have made shipwreck in regard to the faith;

20. Of whom are Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I turned over to Satan in order that they may learn not to blaspheme.

CHAPTER TWO

1. I exhort, therefore, first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men;

2. For kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and respectability.
3. For this *is* good and acceptable before God our Savior,
4. Who desires all men to be saved and to come to *the* knowledge of *the* truth.
5. For there *is* one God, and one Mediator between God and men—the man Christ Jesus,
6. Who gave Himself *as* a ransom for all, the testimony of *which is to be preached* in its appointed times.
7. For this purpose I was ordained a preacher and an apostle (I speak *the* truth in Christ—I do not lie), a teacher of *the* Gentiles in faith and truth.
8. Therefore, I desire that men everywhere pray, lifting up holy hands without anger and *evil* opinions.
9. In like manner also, *let* the women adorn themselves with clothing that shows modesty and discretion, not with *elaborate* braidings of *the* hair, or with gold, or pearls, or expensive apparel;
10. But *with that* which *is* fitting for women who profess *to have* reverence for God—with good works.
11. Let a woman learn in quietness *and be* submissive in every respect.
12. For I do not permit a woman to teach, nor to exercise authority over man, but to be in quietness.
13. For Adam was formed first, then Eve.
14. And Adam was not deceived;★ but the woman came to be in transgression by being deceived.
15. But she shall be saved through the childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with self-control.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Faithful *is* the saying, “If any man aspires to *be* an overseer, he desires a good work.”

Chap. 2

- 2 Ezra 6:10
- Rom. 13:1
- 3 Rom. 12:2
- 2 Tim. 1:9
- 4 Ezek. 18:23
- John 17:3
- 2 Tim. 2:25
- Tit. 2:11
- 5 Gal. 3:20
- Heb. 9:15
- 6 Mark 10:45
- Rom. 5:6
- 1 Cor. 1:6
- Eph. 1:9
- 2 Tim. 1:8
- 7 Rom. 9:1
- Gal. 1:16
- Eph. 3:7
- 8 Psa. 134:2
- Luke 23:34
- 9 1 Pet. 3:3
- 10 1 Pet. 3:4
- 12 1 Cor. 14:34
- 13 Gen. 1:27
- 1 Cor. 11:8
- 14 Gen. 3:6
- ★ Adam knowingly sinned
- Rom. 5:12-14
- 2 Cor. 11:3
- 15 Gen. 3:15
- Mat. 1:23
- Gal. 4:4
- Heb. 2:14
- Col. 2:20

Chap. 3

- 2 2 Tim. 2:24
- Tit. 1:6
- 3 1 Pet. 5:2
- 2 Tim. 2:24
- 4 Tit. 1:6
- 7 Acts 22:12
- 1 Cor. 5:12
- 2 Tim. 2:26
- 8 Ezek. 44:21
- Acts 6:3
- 9 1 Tim. 1:19
- 11 Tit. 2:3
- 13 Mat. 25:21
- 15 Eph. 2:21
- 2 Tim. 2:20

2. Now then, it is obligatory *that* the overseer be blameless, *the* husband of one wife, vigilant, serious-minded, respectable, hospitable, skillful in teaching;
3. Not given to much wine, not a bully, not greedy for selfish gain; but kind, not a quarreler, not a lover of money;
4. One who rules his own house well, having *his* children in subjection with all respect;
5. (For if a man does not know *how* to rule his own household, how will he take care of *the* church of God?)
6. Not a novice, lest he become conceited *and* fall into *the same* condemnation as the devil.
7. It is mandatory that he also have a good report from those *who are* outside *the church*, lest he fall into reproach and *the* snare of the devil.
8. In the same way also, the deacons who serve *must* be serious-minded, not hypocritical, not given to much wine, not greedy for selfish gain;
9. Holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.
10. And let those *who meet the qualifications* also be proved first; then let them *be appointed* to serve, *if they are found to be* blameless.
11. In the same way also, *their* wives *must* be serious-minded, not slanderers, sober *and* faithful in all things.
12. Let the deacons be husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own households well.
13. For those who have served well acquire for themselves a good standing and much confidence in *the* faith that *is* in Christ Jesus.
14. These things I am writing to you, hoping to come to you shortly;
15. But if I should delay, *you have these things in writing*, so that you may know how one is obligated to

conduct oneself in *the* house of God, which is *the* church of *the* living God, *the* pillar and foundation of the truth.

16. And undeniably, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in *the* flesh, was justified in *the* Spirit, was seen by angels, was proclaimed among *the* Gentiles, was believed on in *the* world, was received up in glory.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Now the Spirit tells *us* explicitly that in *the* latter times some shall apostatize from the faith, *and* shall follow deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons;

2. Speaking lies in hypocrisy, their consciences having been cauterized *with a hot iron*;

3. Forbidding to marry; *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by the faithful, even *by* those who know the truth.

4. For every creature of God *designated for human consumption* is good, and nothing to be refused, *if* it is received with thanksgiving,

5. Because it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer. ★

6. If you are teaching these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Jesus Christ, being nourished by the words of the faith and of the good doctrines that you have closely followed.

7. But refuse profane and old wives' fables; rather, exercise yourself unto godliness.

8. For physical exercise is profitable for a short time; but godliness is profitable for everything, having *the* promise of life—of the *life* that now *is*, and of the *life* that *is* coming.

9. This saying *is* faithful and worthy of full acceptance.

16 Mat. 3:16,
28:2
Mark 16:5
Luke 24:51
John 1:14
Acts 10:34
1 John 1:2
Rom. 1:4,
10:18
Col. 1:6, 23

Chap. 4

1 Dan. 11:35
John 16:13
1 Pet. 1:20
2 Thes. 2:3
2 Tim. 3:1,
13
Rev. 9:20,
16:14
2 Mat. 7:15
Eph. 4:19
3 Gen. 1:29
Rom. 14:3,
6
1 Cor. 7:28
5 Lev. 11:1-49
Deut. 14:1-
20
6 2 Tim. 3:14
7 2 Tim. 2:16
Tit. 1:14
Heb. 5:14
8 Psa. 37:4
1 Cor. 8:8
1 Tim. 6:6
★ Lev. 11:1-31
Deut. 14:1-20

10 Psa. 36:6
1 Cor. 4:11
12 Tit. 2:7
14 Acts 16:6
1 Tim. 1:18
2 Tim. 1:6
16 Ezek. 33:9
Acts 20:28

Chap. 5

1 Lev. 19:32
4 Gen. 45:10
Mat. 15:4
Eph. 6:1, 2
5 Luke 26:7
Acts 26:7
1 Cor. 7:32

10. Now it is for this *reason that* we are laboring, and we are personally suffering reproach because we have hope in *the* living God, Who is *the* Savior of all men, especially of those who are believers.

11. These things command and teach.

12. Do not allow anyone to despise your youth; but be an example to the believers—in word, in conduct, in love, in Spirit, in faith *and* in purity.

13. Until I come, devote *yourself* to reading, to encouragement, *and* to doctrine.

14. Do not neglect the *spiritual* gift *that is* in you, which was given to you by prophecy with *the* laying on of the hands of the elderhood.

15. Meditate on these things; give yourself wholly to them so that your growth *in the faith* may be apparent to all.

16. Be diligent with yourself and with the doctrines; continue in them. For in doing this, you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but exhort *him* as a father, *and* younger *men* as brothers.

2. *Exhort* older women as mothers, *and* younger women as sisters, with all purity.

3. *Show* honor to widows who *are* indeed widows *by providing for their needs*;

4. But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to fulfill *their* obligation to their own household, and to render recompense to *their* parents. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God.

5. Now she who *is* a widow indeed, and who is alone *in the world*, has *her* hope in God, and continues in supplications and prayers night and day.

6. But the one who is living for self-gratification is dead *while* she lives.

7. Now these things command that they may be blameless.

8. But if anyone does not provide for his own *needy* relatives—and especially *members of his* household—he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

9. Let a widow be put on the list *for assistance* if she is not less than sixty years *of age*, if *she has* been the wife of one husband,

10. *If* she has a good report for *her* good works, if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has given relief to those who were afflicted, if she has devoted *herself* to every good work.

11. But refuse *to put* the younger widows *on the list*, for when sensuous impulses draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry,

12. Bringing judgment *upon themselves* because they have set aside *their* first faith.

13. And besides this, they also learn *to be* idle, wandering about from house to house; and *they* not only *become* idle, but *they* also *become* talebearers and busybodies, speaking things *that* ought not *be spoken*.

14. Therefore, I wish the younger women to marry, to bear children, to manage the household, *and* to give no occasion to the adversary to bring a reproach;

15. For some have already turned aside to follow Satan.

16. If any believer, man or woman, has *relatives who are* widows, let him *or her* impart relief to them, and do not let the church bear the burden in order that it may impart relief to those widows who are truly *alone in the world*.

17. Let the *ordained* elders who are leading well be counted worthy of

6 Jas. 5:5

8 Is. 58:7

Mat. 18:17

Gal. 6:10

2 Tim. 3:5

Tit. 1:16

10 Gen. 19:2

Acts 16:15

1 Pet. 4:9

Heb. 13:2

13 2 Thes. 3:11

14 1 Cor. 7:9

Tit. 2:8

16 1 Tim. 5:3,

5

17 Acs 28:10

Phil. 2:29

Chap. 6

1 Is. 52:5

1 Pet. 2:18

Rom. 2:24

Eph. 6:5

Col. 3:22

Tit. 2:5, 8, 9

2 Col. 4:1

3 2 Tim. 1:13

Tit. 1:1, 9

double honor, especially those who are laboring in *the* Word and doctrine.

18. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox treading out *the* corn," and, "The workman *is* worthy of his hire."

19. Do not receive an accusation against an elder, except on *the testimony* of two or three witnesses.

20. Those *elders* who sin *should be* corrected in the presence of all in order that the others also may fear.

21. I charge you before God and *the* Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels, that you observe these things without prejudice, *and let* nothing be done by partiality.

22. Do not be quick to lay hands on any man; neither take part in *the* sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

23. No longer drink *only* water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities.

24. Some men's sins are open to public view, going before to judgment; and some men's *sins* follow after.

25. In a similar manner also, the good works *of some* are openly seen; and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden.

CHAPTER SIX

1. Let as many slaves as are under the yoke *of servitude* esteem their own masters worthy of all respect, so that the name of God and *His* doctrine be not blasphemed.

2. Do not let those who have believing masters despise *them* because they are brethren; rather, let them serve *them even better*, because they are believing and beloved who are being helped by the good service. These things teach and exhort.

3. If anyone teaches any different doctrine, and does not adhere to sound words, *even those* of our Lord Jesus

Christ, and the doctrine *that is* accord-
ing to godliness,

4. He is proud and knows nothing.
Rather, he has a morbid attraction to
questions and disputes over words,
from which come envy, arguments,
blasphemy, wicked suspicions,

5. Vain reasonings of men who have
been corrupted in *their* minds and *are*
destitute of the truth—*men* who be-
lieve that gain is godliness. From
such withdraw *yourself*.

6. But godliness with contentment is
great gain.

7. For we brought nothing into the
world, *and it is* evident that neither do
we have the power to carry anything
out of *the world*.

8. But having food and clothing, we
should be satisfied with these,

9. For those who desire to become
rich fall into temptation and a snare,
and many foolish and hurtful lusts,
which cause men to sink into destruc-
tion and perdition.

10. For the love of money is a root of
all evils; *by* which some, *while* striv-
ing after *riches*, were seduced from
the faith, and have impaled them-
selves with many sorrows.

11. But you, O man of God, flee these
things, and pursue righteousness, god-
liness, faith, love, endurance *and*
meekness.

12. Fight the good fight of the faith!
Take hold of eternal life to which you
were also called, and did profess a
good profession in the presence of
many witnesses.

13. I charge you in the sight of God,
Who gives life to every *living* thing,
and Jesus Christ, Who *in* testifying

4 1 Cor. 8:2
5 2 Pet. 2:3
Rom. 16:17
1 Cor. 11:16
6 Psa. 37:16
Heb. 13:5
7 Job 1:21
8 Gen. 28:20
Heb. 13:5
9 Prov. 15:27
1 Tim. 1:19
10 Deut. 16:19
11 Deut. 33:1
2 Tim. 2:22
12 Phil. 3:12
1 Tim. 1:18
Heb. 13:23
13 1 Sam. 2:6
John 18:37
1 Tim. 5:21

14 Phil. 1:6
15 1 Tim. 1:11,
17
16 John 6:46
Eph. 3:21
17 Prov. 23:5
Luke 12:21
Acts 14:17
1 Thes. 1:9
18 Mat. 6:20
Jas. 2:5
Rom. 12:13
Gal. 6:6
20 2 Tim. 1:14
Tit. 1:14
21 2 Tim. 2:18

before Pontius Pilate gave the exem-
plary profession *of faith*,

14. That you keep this commandment
without fault *and* without rebuke until
the appearing of our Lord Jesus
Christ;

15. Which in His own times the
blessed and only Sovereign will make
known, the King of kings and Lord of
lords;

16. Who alone has immortality, dwell-
ing in light which no man can ap-
proach; Whom no man has seen, nor
has *the* ability to see; to Whom *belong*
eternal honor and power. Amen.

17. Charge those who are rich in this
present age not to be high minded, nor
to put *their* hope in *the* uncertainty of
riches; but *to put their hope* in the liv-
ing God, Who abundantly gives us all
things for *our* enjoyment;

18. To do good, to be rich in good
works, to be generous in giving, to be
ready to share;

19. Treasuring up for themselves a
good foundation for the future, so that
they may lay hold on eternal life.

20. O Timothy, guard the *doctrine*
which has been entrusted *to you*,
avoiding profane, empty babblings,
and contradictions of false knowledge
that is called science;

21. *Through* which some, who are
personally professing *these false*
views, have missed the mark concern-
ing the faith. Grace *be* with you.
Amen.

*The first epistle to Timothy,
written from Laodicea,
which is the chief city of Phrygia,
the Pacatiana**

*The notation at the end of I Timothy indicating that Paul wrote this epistle from Laodicea conflicts with the internal evidence. Paul never traveled to Laodicea to preach the gospel. As in the case of the Colossians, Paul had learned of the Laodiceans' faith from Epaphras, who had preached the gospel in Colosse, Laodicea and Hierapolis (Col. 1:4-8; 4:13, 16). Paul's words to the Colossians clearly show that he had not visited Colosse or Laodicea at any time: "Now I want you to understand what great concern I have for you, and for those in Laodicea, and as many as have not seen my face in the flesh" (Col. 2:1). Rather than writing from Laodicea, it is probable that Paul wrote his first epistle to Timothy after being released from his first imprisonment in Rome in 63 A.D.

The Second Epistle to

Timothy

CHAPTER ONE

1. Paul, *an* apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God, according to *the* promise of life which *is* in Christ Jesus,

2. To Timothy, *my* beloved son: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God *the* Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3. I am grateful to God—Whom I have been serving from *the days of my* forefathers with a pure conscience—because I never fail to remember you in my supplications night and day.

4. As I recall your tears, *I am* longing to see you, so that I may be filled with joy;

5. When I remember the unfeigned faith *that is* in you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice—and I am convinced that *it dwells* in you also.

6. For this reason, I admonish you to stir up the gift of God that is in you by the laying on of my hands.

7. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness.

8. Therefore, you should not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner; but jointly suffer with *me for the sake of* the gospel, according to *the* power of God,

9. Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling—not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which *was* given us in Christ Jesus before the ages of time;

10. But has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, Who has annulled death, and has brought to light *eternal* life and incorruptibility through the gospel

11. Unto which I was ordained a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of *the* Gentiles;

Chap. 1

- 1 Cor. 1:1
- Eph. 3:6
- Heb. 9:15
- 2 1 Tim. 1:2
- 3 Rom. 1:8, 9
- Acts 22:3
- Eph. 1:16
- 1 Thes. 1:2
- 4 2 Tim. 4:9, 21
- 5 Acts 16:1
- 1 Tim. 1:5
- 6 1 Tim. 4:14
- 7 Acts 1:8
- Rom. 8:15
- 8 Rom. 1:16
- Eph. 3:1
- Col. 1:24
- 1 Tim. 2:6
- 9 Rom. 3:20, 8:28, 16:25
- 1 Tim. 1:1
- Heb. 3:1
- 10 Eph. 1:9
- 1 Cor. 15:54
- 11 Acts 9:15
- 1 Tim. 2:7

12. For which cause I am also suffering these things; nevertheless, I am not ashamed. For I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He has the power to keep what I have committed *to Him* for that day.

13. Hold *as the* standard for *doctrine* the sound words that you heard from me, in *the* faith and love that *are* in Christ Jesus.

14. Guard the good thing that was committed *to you* by *the* Holy Spirit that is dwelling in us.

15. You know this, that all those who *are* in Asia have rejected me, of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

16. May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus because he frequently refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains.

17. For when he was in Rome, he searched for me very diligently and found *me*.

18. May the Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from *the* Lord in that day and how much he served *me* in Ephesus, you know very well.

CHAPTER TWO

1. Therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that *is* in Christ Jesus.

2. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, these *things* commit to faithful men, such as will be competent to teach others also.

3. You, therefore, endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4. No one who is serving as a soldier becomes involved in civilian pursuits, so that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

5. Also, if anyone strives *to win* in the athletic games, he is not crowned unless he has competed lawfully.

Chap. 2

- 1 Eph. 6:10
- 1 Tim. 1:2
- 3 1 Tim. 1:18
- 4 1 Cor. 9:25
- 5 1 Cor. 9:25

6. *Moreover*, it is necessary for the husbandman to labor before partaking of the fruits.

7. Give careful consideration to the things *that* I am telling you, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.

8. Remember *that* Jesus Christ, of *the* seed of David, *was* raised from among *the* dead according to my gospel;

9. For which I am suffering hardship, *even* to the point of being imprisoned like a criminal; but the Word of God has not been chained.

10. Because of this, I endure all things for the sake of the elect in order that they may obtain *the* salvation that *is* in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

11. This is a faithful saying: If we have died together with *Him*, we shall also live together with *Him*;

12. If we endure, we shall also reign together with *Him*; if we deny *Him*, He will also deny us;

13. If we are unfaithful, He remains faithful—He cannot deny Himself.

14. See that *they* remain mindful of these things, earnestly charging *them* in the sight of the Lord not to argue over words that are not profitable in any way, *but which lead to the* subverting of those who hear.

15. Diligently *study* to show yourself approved unto God, a workman who does not *need to be* ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of the truth;

16. But avoid profane and vain babblings because they will *only* give rise to more ungodliness,

17. And their words will eat away at the body like gangrene; of whom are Hymeneus and Philetus,

18. Who have gone astray from the truth, claiming that the resurrection has already taken place, and are destroying the faith of some.

19. Nevertheless, the foundation of God stands firm, having this seal: "*The Lord knows those who are His,*"

8 Rom. 1:3, 4, 2:16
1 Cor. 15:1
9 Acts 3:1, 9:16, 28:31
Eph. 3:1, 6:9
10 2 Cor. 1:6
Eph. 3:13
11 Rom. 6:5, 8
12 Mat. 10:33
Mark 8:38
1 Pet. 4:13
Rom. 8:17
13 Num. 23:19
Rom. 3:3
14 1 Tim. 5:21
16 1 Tim. 4:7
18 1 Cor. 15:12
19 Nah. 1:7
Mat. 24:24
John 10:14

20 Rom. 9:21
21 Is. 52:11
2 Tim. 3:17
22 Acts 9:14
1 Cor. 1:2
1 Tim. 1:5
23 1 Tim. 1:4
24 Tit. 1:9, 3:2
25 Acts 8:22
Gal. 6:1
1 Tim. 2:4, 6:11
26 1 Tim. 3:7

Chap. 3

1 1 Tim. 4:1
2 2 Pet. 2:3
Jude 16
Rom. 1:30
Phil. 2:21
1 Tim. 1:20, 6:4
3 2 Pet. 3:3
Rom. 1:31
4 2 Pet. 2:10
Phil. 3:19

and, "Let everyone who calls upon the name of Christ depart from unrighteousness."

20. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; and some *are* for honor; and some *are* for dishonor.

21. Therefore, if anyone has purged himself from these, he will be a vessel for honor, having been sanctified and *made* serviceable to the Master, *and* having been prepared for every good work.

22. But flee youthful lusts; and pursue righteousness, faith, love *and* peace with those who are calling on the Lord out of a pure heart.

23. But foolish and ignorant speculations reject, knowing that they engender arguments.

24. Now it is obligatory *that* a servant of *the* Lord not be argumentative, but gentle toward all, competent to teach, forbearing,

25. In meekness correcting those who set themselves in opposition; if perhaps God may grant them repentance unto acknowledging of *the* truth,

26. And *that* they may wake up *and* escape from the devil's snare, who have been taken captive by him to *do* his will.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Know this also, that in *the* last days perilous times shall come;

2. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, braggarts, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3. Without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, despisers of those who are good,

4. Betrayers, reckless, egotistical, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God;

5. Having an outward appearance of godliness, but denying the power of *true* godliness. But *as for you*, turn away from *all* these.

6. For from *men such as* these come those who are worming their way into houses, and are gaining control over empty-headed women given over to *various* sins, *being* driven by all kinds of lust.

7. *They are* always learning but *are* never able to come to *the* knowledge of *the* truth.

8. Now just as Jannes and Jambres stood against Moses, in the same manner also these are *brazenly* standing against the truth; *they are* men of depraved minds, reprobate in respect to the faith.

9. But they will proceed no further, because their folly will become clearly evident to everyone, just as theirs also was.

10. But you have closely followed my doctrine, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance,

11. Persecutions *and* sufferings—such as happened to me in Antioch, in Iconium, *and* in Lystra. *You know* what sort of persecutions I endured; and the Lord delivered me out of them all.

12. And indeed, everyone who desires to live godly in Christ Jesus shall be persecuted.

13. But wicked men and imposters shall become worse and worse, deceiving *others* and being deceived *themselves*.

14. But *as for you*, continue in the things that you did learn and were assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*;

15. And that from a child you have known the holy writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus.

16. All Scripture *is* God-breathed and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction,

5 1 Tim. 5:8, 6:5
6 Mat. 23:14
Tit. 1:11
7 1 Tim. 2:4
8 Ex. 7:11
Rom. 1:28
1 Tim. 6:5
9 Ex. 7:12
10 1 Tim. 4:6
11 Psa. 34:19
Acts 13:45, 14:2, 19
12 Psa. 34:19
13 2 Thes. 2:11
14 2 Tim. 1:13
15 John 5:39
16 2 Pet. 1:20
Rom. 15:4

17 2 Tim. 2:21

Chap. 4

1 Acts 10:42
1 Tim. 5:21
2 1 Tim. 4:13, 5:20
Tit. 1:13
3 1 Tim. 1:10
2 Tim. 3:1, 6
4 1 Tim. 1:4
5 Rom. 15:19
Acts 21:8
2 Tim. 1:8
6 2 Pet. 1:14
Phil. 1:23, 2:17
7 Phil. 3:14
8 Jas. 1:12
2 Tim. 1:12
10 1 John 2:15
Col. 4:14
11 Acts 12:25
Col. 4:14
2 Tim. 1:15

tion, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;

17. So that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. I charge you, therefore, in the sight of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is ready to judge *the* living and *the* dead at His appearing and His kingdom:

2. Preach the Word! Be urgent in season and out of season; convict, rebuke, encourage, with all patience and doctrine.

3. For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine; but according to their own lusts they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of* teachers, having ears itching *to hear what satisfies their cravings*;

4. And they shall turn away their own ears from the truth; and they shall be turned aside unto myths.

5. But *as for you*, be vigilant in all things, endure hardships, do *the* work of an evangelist; fully carry out your ministry.

6. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

7. I have fought a good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith.

8. From this time forward, a crown of righteousness is laid up for me, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day—and not to me only, but also to all who love His appearing.

9. Be diligent to come to me quickly;

10. For Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present age, and has gone to Thessalonica; Crescens, to Galatia; Titus, to Dalmatia.

11. Only Luke is with me. Get Mark

II Timothy 4

and bring him with you, because he is profitable to me for *the* ministry of *the* Word.

12. But I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus.

13. When you come, bring the chest that I left in Troas with Carpus, and the books—especially the parchments.

14. Alexander the coppersmith did many evil things against me. May the Lord reward him according to his works.

15. You also be on guard against him because he vehemently opposed our words.

16. During my first defense, no one stood with me; instead, everyone deserted me. (*I pray that God will not lay it to their charge.*)

17. But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the proclamation might be fully made, and all the Gentiles might hear *the* gospel; and I was delivered out of *the*

12 Acts 20:4
Eph. 6:21
14 2 Sam. 3:39
Psa. 28:4
Acts 19:33
16 Acts 7:60
17 Psa. 22:21
Acts 9:15,
23:11

18 Psa. 121:7
Rom. 11:36
Gal. 1:5
Heb. 13:21
19 Acts 18:2
Rom. 16:3
20 Acts 19:22,
20:4
Rom. 16:23
21 2 Tim. 4:9
22 Gal. 6:18
Philem. 25

lion's mouth.

18. And the Lord will deliver me from every wicked deed and will preserve *me* for His heavenly kingdom; to Whom *be* the glory into the ages of eternity. Amen.

19. Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

20. Erastus remained in Corinth, but Trophimus I left in Miletus *because* he was sick.

21. Make every effort to come before winter. Eubulus salutes you, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia; and all the brethren *salute* you.

22. The Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

The second epistle to Timothy, who was chosen first overseer of the church of the Ephesians, written from Rome when Paul was brought a second time before Caesar Nero

The Epistle of Paul to

Titus

CHAPTER ONE

1. Paul, *a* servant of God and *an* apostle of Jesus Christ, according to *the* faith of God's elect and *the* knowledge of *the* truth that *is* according to godliness;

2. In *the* hope of eternal life, which God Who cannot lie promised before the ages of time,

3. But revealed in its own set time in *the* proclamation of His Word, with which I was entrusted according to *the* commandment of God our Savior;

4. To Titus, a true son according to *our* common faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God *the* Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.

5. For this cause I left you in Crete, so that you might set in order the things that needed to be done, and might ordain elders in every city, as I commanded you:

6. If any man be blameless, *the* husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of debauchery or rebellion.

7. For it is obligatory that as God's steward an overseer be blameless, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not a bully, not greedy for material gain;

8. But hospitable, a lover of good, sound-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,

9. Holding steadfastly to the faithful word, according to the teachings of *Jesus Christ*, so that he may be able both to encourage with sound doctrine and to convict those who are gainsayers.

10. For there are many rebellious and vain talkers and deceivers, especially those from *the* circumcision party,

11. Whose mouths must be stopped;

Chap. 1

1 1 Tim. 3:16
2 Tim. 2:25
2 Rom. 16:25
2 Tim. 1:1,
2:13
3 1 Thes. 2:4
2 Tim. 1:10
4 2 Cor. 2:13
Eph. 1:2
5 1 Cor. 11:34
6 1 Tim. 3:2,
4
7 Lev. 10:9
Mat. 24:45
8 1 Tim. 3:2
9 1 Tim. 1:10
10 Acts 15:1
1 Tim. 1:6
11 1 Tim. 6:5
2 Tim. 3:6

who are subverting whole households, teaching things which *they* ought not, for the sake of selfish gain.

12. One from among them, *even one* of their own prophets, said, "*Cretans are always liars, and evil, wild beasts, and lazy gluttons.*"

13. This testimony is true. For this reason you *must* rebuke them severely, that they may be sound in the faith;

14. Not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men, which turn away from the truth.

15. To the pure, all things *are* pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing *is* pure; rather, both their minds and consciences are defiled.

16. They personally profess to know God, but in *their* works they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and reprobate unto every good work.

CHAPTER TWO

1. But *as for* you, speak the things that befit sound doctrine.

2. *Teach the* older men to be temperate, serious-minded, respectable, sound in the faith, in love, *and* in patience;

3. In like manner, *teach the* older women to be in *their* behavior as it is fitting for godly women, not slanderers, *and* not enslaved to much wine, *but* teachers of that which is right;

4. That they may teach the young women to love *their* husbands *and* to love *their* children;

5. *To be* modest, chaste, keepers of *the* home; to be good *and* to submit themselves to their own husbands, so

12 Acts 17:28
13 2 Cor. 13:10
Tit. 2:2
14 Is. 29:13
1 Tim. 1:4
15 1 Cor. 6:12
16 Rom. 1:28
2 Tim. 3:5

Chap. 2

1 1 Tim. 1:10
5 Rom. 2:24
1 Cor. 14:34

that the Word of God may not be blasphemed.

6. In the same way, exhort the younger men *to be* sober-minded.

7. In all things you yourself set an example of good works; in doctrine uncorrupted, serious-minded, *and* sincere;

8. *Use* sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that the one who opposes *you* may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say about you.

9. *Admonish* slaves to submit themselves to their own masters, *to be* well pleasing in everything, not answering back;

10. Not misappropriating *anything*, but showing all good faithfulness; so that they may do credit to the doctrine of our Savior God in everything.

11. For the grace of God, which brings salvation for all men, has appeared;

12. Teaching us that, having denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live moderately and righteously and godly in this present world,

13. Looking for the blessed hope and *the* appearing of the glory of our Savior and great God, Jesus Christ;

14. Who gave Himself for us, so that He might redeem us from all lawlessness, and might purify for Himself a unique people, zealous of good works.

15. Speak these things, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Remind them to be subject to rulers, and to obey authorities, *and* to be ready for every good work;

7 Eph. 6:24
1 Tim. 4:12
8 Neh. 5:9
1 Tim. 6:3
9 Eph. 5:24, 6:5
10 Mat. 5:16
11 Luke 3:6
Rom. 5:15
12 Luke 1:75
1 Pet. 4:2
13 Acts 24:15
1 Cor. 1:7
Col. 3:4
14 Ex. 15:16
Gal. 1:4
Eph. 2:10
Heb. 9:14
15 2 Tim. 4:2

Chap. 3

1 1 Pet. 2:13
Col. 1:10
Heb. 13:21

2 Eph. 4:2, 31
Phil. 4:5
Col. 3:12
2 Tim. 2:24
3 1 Pet. 4:3
1 Cor. 6:11
4 1 Tim. 2:3
Tit. 2:11
5 1 Pet. 3:21
Rom. 3:20
Eph. 5:26
2 Tim. 1:9
6 Ezek. 36:25
Joel 2:28
7 Rom. 3:24, 8:23
Tit. 1:2
8 1 Tim. 1:15
Tit. 2:14
9 1 Tim. 1:4
2 Tim. 2:14
10 Mat. 18:17
2 Cor. 13:2
12 Acts 20:4
13 Acts 18:24
14 Rom. 15:28
Phil. 1:11
Tit. 3:8

2. Not to speak evil of anyone, not to be contentious, *but* gentle, showing all meekness toward all men.

3. For we also were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving all kinds of lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful *and* hating one another.

4. But when the graciousness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared,

5. Not by works of righteousness which we practiced, but according to His mercy He saved us, through *the* washing of regeneration and *the* renewing of *the* Holy Spirit,

6. Which He richly poured out upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior;

7. So that, having been justified by His grace, we would become heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life.

8. This *is* a faithful saying, and I desire you to strongly affirm *all* these things, so that those who have believed God may apply themselves to doing good works. These things are good and profitable for men.

9. But avoid foolish questions and genealogies, and debates and quarrels about law, for they are unprofitable and vain.

10. After the first and second admonition, reject a man who is teaching heresy,

11. Knowing that such a person has been subverted and is sinning, being condemned by his own words.

12. When I send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, make haste to come to me at Nicopolis; for I have decided to *spend the* winter there.

13. Be diligent to equip Zenas the lawyer and Apollos *for their journey*, so that they may lack nothing.

14. And let our *brethren* also learn to

devote themselves to good works for services that are needed, so that they may not be unfruitful.
15. All of those with me salute you. Salute those who love us in *the* faith.

Grace *be* with all of you. Amen.

To Titus, chosen *to be* first overseer of the Cretan church, written from Nicopolis of Macedonia

The Epistle of Paul to Philemon

1. Paul, *the* prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy, a brother, to Philemon, *our* beloved and fellow worker,
2. And to Apphia, *our* beloved, and to Archippus, our fellow soldier, and to the church *that meets* in your house:
3. Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ.
4. I thank my God, always making mention of you in my prayers,
5. Having heard of your love and the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints,
6. So that the fellowship of your faith may become effective in *the* acknowledgment of every good *thing* that is in you toward Christ Jesus.
7. For we have great joy and encouragement on account of your love, because by you, brother, the saints have been refreshed unto the innermost parts of their beings.
8. Therefore, I have much boldness in Christ to require of you that which is fitting,
9. *Yet* for the sake of love I am encouraging you *to do it* instead, being such a one as Paul *the* aged, and now also *the* prisoner of Jesus Christ.
10. I beseech you for my son, One-

1 Eph. 3:1, 4:1
Phil. 2:25
2 Tim. 1:8
Philem. 9
2 Rom. 16:5
1 Cor. 16:19
Phil. 2:25
Col. 4:17
3 Eph. 1:2
4 Eph. 1:16
1 Thes. 1:2
2 Thes. 1:3
5 Eph. 1:15
Col. 1:4
6 Phil. 1:9
7 2 Cor. 7:13
2 Tim. 1:16
Philem. 20
8 1 Thes. 2:6
9 Philem. 1
10 1 Cor. 4:15
Gal. 4:19
Col. 4:9

13 1 Cor. 16:17
Phil. 2:30
14 2 Cor. 9:7
15 Gen. 45:5, 8
16 Mat. 23:8
Col. 3:22
1 Tim. 6:2
17 2 Cor. 8:23

simus, whom I begot in my bonds;
11. Who was once of no service to you, but now *he* is profitable *both* to you and to me; whom I am sending back *to you*.
12. But you (*as if* from the innermost part of my being) receive him,
13. Whom I was desiring to retain with me, so that in your stead he might serve me *while I am* in prison for the gospel's sake.
14. But without your consent I would do nothing, so that your good deed might not be of constraint, but of willingness.
15. For perhaps on account of this he was separated *from you* for a time in order that you might receive him for eternity;
16. No longer as a slave, but above a slave—as a beloved brother, especially to me, and how much more to you, both in *the* flesh and in *the* Lord?
17. If therefore you count me as a partner, receive him as *if he were* me;
18. But if in anything he has wronged you or owes you, charge it to my account.
19. I, Paul, wrote *this* with my *own* hand; I will repay. *I say this although* (*as I could say to you, but have not*)

you yourself are likewise indebted to me.

20. Yes, brother, *so that* I may have *this* benefit from you in *the* Lord, refresh me in *the* Lord, *even* to the innermost part of my being.

21. I wrote to you *because* I am fully persuaded of your *willing* compliance, knowing that you will do above and beyond what I have asked.

22. But in addition, also prepare lodging for me; for I hope that through

20 Philem. 7
21 2 Cor. 7:16
22 2 Cor. 1:11
Phil. 1:25,
2:24

23 Col. 1:7,
4:12
24 Acts 12:12,
25, 19:29,
27:2
Col. 4:10,
14
2 Tim. 4:11
25 2 Tim. 4:22

your prayers I will be granted *release* to you.

23. Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, salutes you;

24. *As do also* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas *and* Luke, my fellow workers.

25. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

To Philemon, written from Rome,
delivered by Onesimus, a servant

**The Revelation
of
Jesus Christ
to
the Apostle John**

The Revelation

of Jesus Christ

CHAPTER ONE

1. *The* revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him, to show to His servants the things that *are* ordained to come to pass shortly; and He made *it* known, having sent *it* by His angel to His servant John;
 2. Who gave witness *to* the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, and all the things he saw.
 3. Blessed *is* the one who reads, and those who hear the words of this prophecy and who keep the things *that are* written therein; for the time *is* at hand.
 4. John to the seven churches that *are* in Asia: Grace and peace *be* to you from Him Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come; and from the seven spirits that are before His throne;
 5. And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him Who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,
 6. And has made us kings and priests to God and His Father; to Him *be* the glory and the sovereignty into the ages of eternity. Amen.
 7. Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen.
 8. "I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* Ending," says the Lord, "Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come—the Almighty."
 9. I, John, who *am* also your brother and joint partaker in the tribulation and in the kingdom and endurance of Jesus Christ, was on the island that *is* called Patmos because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.
 10. I was in *the* Spirit on the day of

Chap. 1

1 John 3:32
 Rev. 22:16
 2 1 John 1:1
 1 Cor. 1:6
 3 Luke 11:28
 Jas. 5:8
 4 Ex. 3:14
 Zech. 3:9
 John 1:1
 5 John 8:14,
 13:34
 1 John 1:7
 Gal. 2:20
 Col. 1:18
 1 Tim. 6:13
 Heb. 9:14
 Rev. 17:14
 6 1 Pet. 2:5
 1 Tim. 6:16
 7 Dan. 7:13
 Zech. 12:10
 8 Is. 41:4
 Rev. 4:8
 9 Rom. 8:17
 Phil. 1:7
 2 Tim. 2:12
 Rev. 6:9
 10 John 20:26
 Acts 10:10
 2 Cor. 12:2
 Rev. 4:1
 11 Rev. 1:8, 17
 12 Ex. 25:37
 Zech. 4:2
 13 Ezek. 1:26
 Dan. 7:13,
 10:5, 16
 Rev. 2:1,
 15:6
 14 Dan. 7:9,
 10:6
 15 Ezek. 1:7,
 43:2
 Dan. 10:6
 Rev. 14:2
 16 Is. 49:2
 Acts 26:13
 Eph. 6:17
 Heb. 4:12
 Rev. 2:1
 17 Is. 41:4,
 44:6, 48:12
 Ezek. 1:28
 Dan. 8:18,
 10:10
 Rev. 22:13
 18 Psa. 68:20
 Rom. 6:9
 Rev. 4:9,
 20:1
 19 Rev. 2:1,
 4:1
 20 Zech. 4:2
 Mal. 2:7
 Mat. 5:15
 Phil. 2:15
 Rev. 2:1

the Lord; and I heard a loud voice like a trumpet behind me,
 11. Saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last"; and, "What you see, write in a book, and send *it* to the churches that *are* in Asia: to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamos, and to Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."
 12. And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands;
 13. And in *the* midst of the seven lampstands *one* like *the* Son of man, clothed in *a garment* reaching to the feet, and girded about the chest with a golden breastplate.
 14. And His head and hair *were* like white wool, white as snow; and His eyes *were* like a flame of fire;
 15. And His feet *were* like fine brass, as if *they* glowed in a furnace; and His voice *was* like *the* sound of many waters.
 16. And in His right hand He had seven stars, and a sharp two-edged sword went out of His mouth, and His countenance *was* as the sun shining in its *full* power.
 17. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as if dead; but He laid His right hand upon me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last,
 18. Even the one Who is living; for I was dead, and behold, I am alive into the ages of eternity. Amen. And I have the keys of *the* grave and of death.
 19. Write the things that you saw, and the things that are, and the things that shall take place hereafter.
 20. The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, *is this*: the

seven stars are *the* angels of the seven churches; and the seven lampstands that you saw are *the* seven churches."

CHAPTER TWO

1. "To the angel of the Ephesian church, write: These things says He Who holds the seven stars in His right hand, Who walks in *the* midst of the seven golden lampstands.

2. I know your works, and your labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil; and *that* you did test those who proclaim *themselves* to be apostles, but are not, and did find them liars;

3. And *that* you have borne *much* and have endured, and for My name's sake have labored and have not grown weary;

4. Nevertheless, I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love.

5. Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works; for if *you do* not, I will come to you quickly; and I will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent.

6. But this you have: that you hate the works of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.

7. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes I will give *the right* to eat of the tree of life that is in *the* midst of the paradise of God.

8. And to the angel of the church of *the* Smyrneans write: These things says the First and the Last, Who was dead but is alive.

9. I know your works and tribulation and poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy of those who declare themselves to be Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan.

10. Do not fear any of the things that you are about to suffer. Behold, the

Chap. 2

1 Rev. 1:13, 16
2 Psa. 1:6
2 Pet. 2:1
1 John 4:1
2 Cor. 11:13
Rev. 3:1, 8
3 Gal. 6:9
Heb. 12:3, 5
5 Mat. 21:41
7 Gen. 2:9
Mat. 11:15, 13:9, 43
Rev. 3:6, 13, 22:2, 14
8 Rev. 1:8, 17
9 Luke 12:21
Jas. 2:5
Rom. 2:17
1 Tim. 6:18
Rev. 3:9
10 Mat. 10:22, 24:13
Jas. 1:12
Rev. 3:11

11 Rev. 13:9, 20:14, 21:8
12 Rev. 1:16
14 Num. 24:14, 25:1, 31:16
Acts 15:29
2 Pet. 2:15
Jude 11
1 Cor. 6:13, 8:9, 10:19, 20
16 Is. 11:4
2 Thes. 2:8
Rev. 1:16
17 Rev. 3:12, 19:12
18 Rev. 1:14, 15
19 Rev. 2:2

devil is about to cast *some* of you into prison, that you may be tried; and you shall have tribulation ten days. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life.

11. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death.

12. And to the angel of the church in Pergamos, write: These things says He Who has the sharp two-edged sword.

13. I know your works and where you dwell, where the throne of Satan *is*; but you are holding fast My name, and did not deny My faith, even in the days in which Antipas *was* My faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

14. But I have a few things against you because you have there *those* who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication.

15. Moreover, you also have *those* who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.

16. Repent! For if *you do* not *repent*, I will come to you quickly, and will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.

17. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes I will give *the right* to eat of the hidden manna; and I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, which no one knows except the one who receives *it*.

18. And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These things says the Son of God, He Who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet *are* like fine brass.

19. I know your works, and love, and service, and faith, and your endurance,

and your works; and the last *are* more than the first.

20. But I have a few things against you, because you allow the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants into committing fornication and eating things sacrificed to idols.

21. And I gave her time to repent of her fornication, but she did not repent.

22. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their works.

23. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am He Who searches *the* reins and hearts; and I will give to each of you according to your works.

24. But to you I say, and to *the* rest who *are* in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, and who have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will not cast upon you any other burden,

25. But hold fast what you have until I come.

26. And to the one who overcomes, and keeps My works unto *the* end, I will give authority over the nations;

27. And he shall shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces; as I have also received from My Father;

28. And I will give him the morning star.

29. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

CHAPTER THREE

1. "And to the angel of the church in Sardis, write: These things says He Who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your works, *and* that you have a name as if you are alive, but are dead.

2. Be watchful, and strengthen the

20 Ex. 34:15
1 Ki. 16:31,
21:25
2 Ki. 9:7
Acts 15:20
21 Rev. 9:20
23 1 Sam. 16:7
Psa. 62:12
Jer. 11:20
John 2:24
Acts 1:24
Rom. 8:27
2 Cor. 5:10
24 Acts 15:28
25 Rev. 3:11
26 Mat. 19:28
Luke 22:29
John 6:29
1 John 3:23
1 Cor. 6:3
27 Psa. 2:8, 9
Dan. 7:22
28 2 Pet. 1:19
29 Rev. 2:7

Chap. 3

1 Eph. 2:1, 5
Rev. 1:4,
16, 2:2

3 Mat. 24:42
Mark 13:33
Luke 12:39
2 Pet. 3:10
1 Thes. 5:2,
6
1 Tim. 6:20
2 Tim. 1:13
Rev. 3:19
4 Acts 1:15
Jude 23
Rev. 4:4,
6:11
5 Ex. 32:32
Luke 12:8
Phil. 4:3
Rev. 19:8
6 Rev. 2:7
7 Is. 22:22
Job 12:14
Mat. 16:19
Luke 1:32
Acts 3:14
1 John 5:20
8 1 Cor. 16:9
Rev. 3:1
9 Is. 49:23
Rev. 2:9
10 Is. 24:17
Luke 2:1
2 Pet. 2:9
11 Phil. 4:5
Rev. 2:10,
25

things that remain, which are about to die. For I have not found your works complete before God.

3. Therefore, remember what you have received and heard, and hold on *to this*, and repent. Now then, if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you shall by no means know what hour I will come upon you.

4. You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with Me in white because they are worthy.

5. The one who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments; and I will not blot out his name from the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

6. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

7. And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia, write: These things says the Holy One, the one Who *is* true; the one Who has the key of David, Who opens and no one shuts, and Who shuts and no one opens.

8. I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one has the power to shut it because you have a little strength, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

9. Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who proclaim themselves to be Jews and are not, but do lie—behold, I will cause them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

10. Because you have kept the word of My patience, I also will keep you from the time of temptation which *is* about to come upon the whole world to try those who dwell on the earth.

11. Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have so that no

one may take away your crown.

12. The one who overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out any more; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which will come down out of heaven from My God; and *I will write upon him* My new name.

13. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

14. And to the angel of the church of *the* Laodiceans, write: These things says the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginner of the creation of God.

15. I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would *that* you be *either* cold or hot.

16. So then, because you are lukewarm, and *are* neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth.

17. For you say, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'; and you do not understand that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

18. I counsel you to buy from Me gold purified by fire so that you may be rich; and white garments so that you may be clothed, and the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and to anoint your eyes with eye salve, so that you may see.

19. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent.

20. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.

21. To the one who overcomes will I give *authority* to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in His throne.

12 1 Ki. 7:21
Gal. 2:9
Heb. 12:22
Rev. 14:1, 22:4

13 Rev. 2:7
14 Is. 65:16
Col. 1:15
Rev. 19:11

15 Rev. 3:1
17 Hos. 12:8
1 Cor. 4:8

18 Is. 55:1
Mat. 13:44
2 Cor. 5:3
Rev. 7:18

19 Job 5:17
Prov. 3:11
Heb. 12:5, 6

20 S. of S. 5:2
Luke 12:37
John 14:23

21 Mat. 19:28
Luke 22:30
2 Tim. 2:12

22. The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

CHAPTER FOUR

1. After these things I looked, and behold, a door opened in heaven; and the first voice that I heard *was* as if a trumpet were speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you *the* things that must take place after these things."

2. And immediately I was in *the* Spirit; and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and *one* was sitting on the throne.

3. And He Who *was* sitting was in appearance like a jasper stone and a sardius stone; and a rainbow *was* around the throne, like an emerald in its appearance.

4. And around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones; and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments; and they had on their heads golden crowns.

5. And proceeding from the throne were lightnings and thunders and voices; and seven lamps of fire, which are the seven Spirits of God, *were* burning before the throne.

6. And before the throne *was* a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne and over the throne *were* four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind;

7. And the first living creature *was* like a lion, and the second living creature *was* like a calf, and the third living creature had the face of a man, and the fourth living creature *was* like a flying eagle.

8. And each of *the* four living creatures had six wings respectively; and around and within *they were* full of eyes; and day and night they cease not saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God

22 Rev. 2:7

Chap. 4

1 Rev. 1:10, 19, 11:12
2 Is. 6:1

Ezek. 1:26
Dan. 7:9
Rev. 1:10

3 Ezek. 1:28
4 Rev. 3:4, 5, 11:16

5 Ex. 37:23
2 Chr. 4:20
Ezek. 1:13
Zech. 4:2
Rev. 1:4, 8:5

6 Ex. 38:8
Ezek. 1:5
Rev. 15:2

7 Num. 2:2
Ezek. 1:10
8 Is. 6:2, 3
Rev. 1:4, 8

Almighty, Who was, and Who is, and Who *is* to come."

9. And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanksgiving to Him Who sits on the throne, Who lives into the ages of eternity,

10. The twenty-four elders fall down before Him Who sits on the throne; and they worship Him Who lives into the ages of eternity, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

11. "Worthy are You, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power because You did create all things, and for Your will they were created and exist."

CHAPTER FIVE

1. And in the right hand of Him Who sits on the throne I saw a book, written within and on *the* back, which had been sealed with seven seals.

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

3. But no one in heaven, or on the earth, or under the earth was able to open the book, or to look inside it.

4. And I was weeping greatly because no one was found worthy to open and to read the book, or to look into it.

5. Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion Who is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome to open the book, and to loose its seven seals."

6. Then I saw, and behold, before the throne and the four living creatures, and before the elders, *was* standing a Lamb as having been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God that are sent into all the earth;

7. And He came and took the book out

9 Rev. 1:18
10 Rev. 5:8, 14
11 Gen. 1:1
Acts 17:24
Eph. 3:9
Rev. 5:12

Chap. 5

1 Is. 29:11
Ezek. 2:9
Dan. 12:4
5 Gen. 49:9
Is. 11:1, 10
Heb. 7:14
Rev. 6:1, 22:16
6 Is. 53:7
Zech. 3:9
John 1:29
1 Pet. 1:19
Rev. 4:5
7 Rev. 4:2

of the right hand of Him Who sits on the throne.

8. And when He took the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having harps and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

9. And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book, and to open its seals because You were slain, and did redeem us to God by Your own blood, out of every tribe and language and people and nation,

10. And did make us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth."

11. And I saw and I heard *the* voices of many angels around the throne, and *the voices* of the living creatures and the elders, and thousands of thousands,

12. Saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing."

13. And every creature that is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and those that are on the sea, and all the things in them, I heard saying, "To Him Who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, *be* blessing, and honor, and glory, and sovereignty into the ages of eternity."

14. And the four living creatures said, "Amen." And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped *Him Who* lives into the ages of eternity.

CHAPTER SIX

1. And I looked when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures say, like the sound of thunder, "Come and see."

2. And I looked, and behold, *there*

8 Psa. 141:2
Rev. 4:8,
10, 14:2
9 Psa. 40:3
Dan. 4:1
Acts 20:28
1 Pet. 1:18
2 Pet. 2:1
1 John 1:7
Rom. 3:24
1 Cor. 6:20
Eph. 1:7
Col. 1:14
Heb. 9:12
10 Ex. 19:6
1 Pet. 2:5
11 Psa. 68:17
Dan. 7:10
Heb. 12:22
12 Rev. 4:11
13 1 Chr. 29:11
1 Pet. 4:11,
5:11
Rom. 9:5,
16:27
Phil. 2:10
1 Tim. 6:16
Rev. 4:11,
6:16
14 Rev. 4:9,
10, 19:4

Chap. 6

1 Rev. 4:7,
5:5-7
2 Psa. 45:4, 5
Zech. 6:3, 11
Rev. 14:14

was a white horse; and the one who was sitting on it had a bow, and a crown was given to him; and he went out conquering, and to conquer.

3. And when He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come and see."

4. And another horse went out *that* was red; and *power* was given to the one sitting on it to take peace from the earth, and *to cause* them to kill one another; and a great sword was given to him.

5. And when He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see." And I looked, and behold, *there was* a black horse; and the one sitting on it had a balance in his hand.

6. And I heard a voice in *the* midst of the four living creatures say, "A measure of wheat for a silver coin, and three measures of barley for a silver coin: and *see that* you do not damage the oil and the wine."

7. And when He opened the fourth seal, I heard *the* voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come and see."

8. And I looked, and behold, *there was* a pale horse; and the name of the one sitting on it *was* Death, and the grave followed him; and authority was given to them over *one* fourth of the earth, to kill with *the* sword and with famine and with death, and by the beasts of the earth.

9. And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony that they held;

10. And they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, do You not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

11. And white robes were given to each of them; and they were told that they should rest a short time yet, until

3 Rev. 4:7
4 Zech. 6:2
5 Zech. 6:2
6 Rev. 9:4
7 Rev. 4:7
8 Lev. 26:22
Ezek. 14:21
Zech. 6:3
9 2 Tim. 1:8
Rev. 1:9,
8:3, 14:18,
19:10, 20:4
10 Zech. 1:12
Rev. 3:7,
11:18
11 Heb. 11:40
Rev. 3:4, 5

12 Joel 2:10,
3:15
Mat. 24:29
Acts 2:20
Rev. 16:18
13 Rev. 8:10,
9:1
14 Psa. 102:26
Is. 34:4
Jer. 3:23,
4:24
Heb. 1:12
Rev. 16:20
15 Is. 2:19
16 Hos. 10:8
Luke 23:30
17 Psa. 76:7
Is. 13:6
Zeph. 1:14
Rev. 16:14

Chap. 7

1 Dan. 7:2
Rev. 9:4
3 Rev. 6:6,
22:4

it be fulfilled *that* both their fellow servants and their brethren also would be killed, just as they had been.

12. And when He opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as *the* hair of sackcloth, and the moon became as blood;

13. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its untimely figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.

14. Then *the* heaven departed like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

15. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the powerful men, and every bondman, and every free *man* hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains;

16. And they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from *the* face of Him Who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb

17. Because the great day of His wrath has come, and who has the power to stand?"

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that the wind might not blow on the earth, or on the sea, or on any tree.

2. Then I saw another angel ascending from *the* rising of *the* sun, having *the* seal of *the* living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to damage the earth and the sea,

3. Saying, "Do not damage the earth, or the sea, or the trees until we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

4. And I heard the number of those who were sealed: one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of *the* children of Israel.

5. From *the* tribe of Judah, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Reuben, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Gad, twelve thousand *were* sealed;

6. From *the* tribe of Asher, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Naphtali, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Manasseh, twelve thousand *were* sealed;

7. From *the* tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Levi, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Issachar, twelve thousand *were* sealed;

8. From *the* tribe of Zebulon, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand *were* sealed; from *the* tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand *were* sealed.

9. After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no one was able to number, out of every nation and tribe and people and language, was standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and *holding* palms in their hands;

10. And they were calling out with a loud voice to Him Who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, saying, "The salvation of our God *has come*."

11. Then all the angels stood around the throne, and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12. Saying, "Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power and strength *be* to our God into the ages of eternity. Amen."

13. And one of the elders answered *and* said to me, "These who are clothed with white robes, who are they, and where did they come from?"

4 Rev. 9:16, 14:1
9 Rom. 11:25
Rev. 3:5, 18, 4:4, 5:9, 6:11, 7:14
10 Psa. 3:8
Is. 43:11
Jer. 3:23
Hos. 13:4
Rev. 5:13, 19:1
11 Rev. 4:6
12 Rev. 5:13, 14
13 Rev. 7:9
14 Is. 1:18
Zech. 3:3-5
Rev. 6:9, 17:6

15 Is. 4:5, 6
Rev. 21:3
16 Psa. 121:6
Is. 49:10
Rev. 21:4
17 Psa. 23:1, 36:8
Is. 25:8
John 10:11, 14
Rev. 21:4

Chap. 8

1 Rev. 6:1
2 2 Chr. 29:25-28
Mat. 18:10
Luke 1:19
3 Ex. 30:1
Rev. 5:8, 8:9
4 Psa. 141:2
Luke 1:10
5 2 Sam. 22:8
1 Ki. 19:11
Acts 4:31
Rev. 16:18
7 Is. 2:13
Ezek. 38:22
Rev. 9:4, 16:2

14. Then I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "They are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation; and they have washed their robes, and have made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb.

15. For this reason, they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple; and the one Who sits on the throne shall dwell among them.

16. They shall not hunger any more, nor shall they thirst any more; neither shall the sun nor the heat fall upon them,

17. Because the Lamb Who *is* in *the* midst of the throne will shepherd them, and will lead them to fountains of living waters; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. Now when He opened the seventh seal, *there* was silence in heaven *for* about a half hour.

2. Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

3. And another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar; and much incense was given to him, so that he might offer *it* with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar that *was* before the throne.

4. And the smoke of the incense went up before God from *the* hand of the angel, ascending with the prayers of the saints.

5. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire from the altar, and cast *it* into the earth; and there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

6. Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound *their* trumpets.

7. And the first angel sounded *his* trumpet; and there was hail and fire mingled with blood, and it was cast upon the earth; and a third of the trees were burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

8. Then the second angel sounded *his* trumpet; and *there* was cast into the sea as *it were* a great mountain burning with fire, and a third of the sea became blood;

9. And a third of the living creatures that *were* in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

10. And the third angel sounded *his* trumpet; and *there* fell out of heaven a great star, burning like a lamp; and it fell on a third of the rivers, and on the fountains of waters.

11. Now the name of the star is Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood; and many men died from *drinking* the waters because they were made bitter.

12. Then the fourth angel sounded *his* trumpet; and a third of the sun was smitten, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars; so that a third of them were darkened; and a third part of the day did not shine, and likewise *a third part of the night*.

13. And I looked; and I heard an angel flying in the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to those who are dwelling on the earth, because of the voices of the remaining trumpets of the three angels who *are* about to sound *their* trumpets."

CHAPTER NINE

1. And the fifth angel sounded *his* trumpet; and I saw a star *that* had fallen from heaven to the earth, and there was given to him the key to the bottomless abyss.

2. And he opened the bottomless abyss; and there went up smoke from

8 Jer. 51:25
Ezek. 14:19
Amos 7:4
Rev. 16:3
9 Rev. 16:3
10 Is. 14:12
Rev. 9:1,
16:4
11 Ex. 15:23
Ruth 1:20
12 Is. 13:10
Amos 8:9
13 Rev. 9:12,
11:14, 14:6,
19:17

Chap. 9

1 Luke 8:31,
10:18
Rev. 8:10,
9:2, 11
17:8, 20:1

3 Ex. 10:4
Judg. 7:12
Rev. 9:10
4 Ex. 12:23
Ezek. 9:4
Rev. 6:6,
7:3, 8:7
5 Rev. 9:10,
11:7
6 Job 3:21
Is. 2:19
Jer. 8:3
Rev. 6:16
7 Dan. 7:8
Joel 2:4
Nah. 3:17
8 Joel 1:6
9 Joel 2:5-7
10 Rev. 9:5
11 Eph. 2:2
Rev. 9:1
12 Rev. 8:13
14 Rev. 16:12

the pit, like *the* smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke from the pit.

3. Then locusts came onto the earth from the smoke; and power was given to them, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

4. And it was said to them that they should not damage the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only the men who did not have the seal of God in their foreheads.

5. And it was given to them that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months; and their torment *was* like *the* torment of a scorpion when it stings a man.

6. And in those days men will seek death but will not find it; and they will desire to die, but death will flee from them.

7. And the appearance of the locusts *was* like horses prepared for war; and on their heads *were* crowns like *those* of gold; and their faces *were* like *the* faces of men;

8. And they had hair like women's hair; and their teeth were like *those* of lions.

9. And they had breastplates like iron breastplates; and the sound of their wings *was* like *the* sound of chariots *drawn* by many horses running to war;
10. And they had tails like scorpions, and stingers; and they were *given* power to injure men with their tails *for* five months.

11. And they have over them a king, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew *is* Abaddon, but *the* name he has in Greek *is* Apollyon.

12. The first woe is past. Behold, after these things two more woes are still to come.

13. And the sixth angel sounded *his* trumpet; and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar that *is* before God;

14. *And* it said to the sixth angel, who

had the trumpet, "Loose the four angels who are bound in the great river Euphrates."

15. Then the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were loosed, so that they might kill a third of men;

16. And the number of *the* armies of the horsemen *was* two hundred thousand thousand; and I heard the number of them.

17. And so I saw the horses in the vision, and those sitting on them, who had fiery breastplates, even like jacinth and brimstone. And the heads of the horses *were* like heads of lions, and fire and smoke and brimstone shoot out of their mouths.

18. By these three, a third of men were killed: by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone that shoot out of their mouths.

19. For their power is in their mouths; for their tails *are* like serpents, *and* have heads, and with them they inflict wounds.

20. But the rest of the men who were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the works of their hands, that they might not worship demons, and idols of gold and silver and brass and stone and wood, which do not have the power to see, nor to hear, nor to walk.

21. And they did not repent of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornications, nor of their thievery.

CHAPTER TEN

1. Then I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud, and *with* a rainbow on his head; and his face *was* like the sun, and his feet *were* like pillars of fire;

2. And he had in his hand a little book *that was* open. And he placed his right foot on the sea, and *his* left *foot* on the earth,

16 Psa. 68:17
Ezek. 38:4
Dan. 7:10
Rev. 7:4

17 1 Chr. 12:8
Is. 5:28, 29

19 Is. 9:15

20 Lev. 17:7
Deut. 31:29,
32:17
Psa. 106:37,
115:4,
135:15

Dan. 5:23
1 Cor. 10:20
21 Rev. 22:15

Chap. 10

1 Ezek. 1:28
Mat. 17:2
Rev. 1:15,
16
2 Mat. 28:18

3 Rev. 8:5
4 Dan. 8:26,
12:4, 9

5 Ex. 6:8
Dan. 12:7

6 Neh. 9:6
Dan. 12:7
Rev. 4:11,
14:7, 16:17

7 Rev. 11:15

8 Rev. 10:4

9 Jer. 15:16

Ezek. 2:8

10 Ezek. 2:10,
3:3

Chap. 11

1 Num. 23:18
Ezek. 40:3
Rev. 21:15

3. And cried with a loud voice, as a lion roars. And when he cried, the seven thunders uttered their voices.

4. And when the seven thunders spoke *with* their voices, I was about to write. But I heard a voice from heaven say to me, "Seal what the seven thunders spoke, and do not write them."

5. Then the angel whom I had seen standing on the sea and on the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

6. And swore by Him Who lives into the ages of eternity, Who created the heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, "*There shall be no more delay.*"

7. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound *the* trumpet, the mystery of God shall also be completed, according to the gospel *that* He declared to His servants the prophets.

8. Then the voice that I heard from heaven spoke to me again, and said, "Go, take the little book that is open in the hand of *the* angel who is standing on the sea and on the earth."

9. And I went to the angel, *and* said to him, "Give me the little book." And he said to me, "Take *it* and eat it; and it shall make your belly bitter, but in your mouth it shall be sweet as honey."

10. Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it; and it was sweet as honey in my mouth; but after I ate it, my belly was bitter.

11. And he said to me, "You must again prophesy against many people, and nations, and languages and kings."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. Then *the angel* gave me a measuring rod like a staff, saying, "Arise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it.

2. But leave out the court that *is* within the temple *area*, and do not measure it because it has been given *up* to the Gentiles; and they shall trample upon the holy city *for* forty-two months.

3. And I will give *power* to My two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.

4. These are the two olive trees, and *the* two lampstands that stand before the God of the earth.

5. And if anyone attempts to harm them, fire will go out of their mouths and devour their enemies. For if anyone attempts to harm them, he must be killed in this manner.

6. These have authority to shut heaven so that no rain may fall in *the* days of their prophecy; and they have authority over the waters, to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they will.

7. And when they have completed their testimony, the beast who ascends out of the abyss will make war against them, and will overcome them, and will kill them.

8. And their bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

9. Then those of the peoples and tribes and languages and nations shall see their bodies three and a half days, for they will not allow their bodies to be put into tombs.

10. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, and will make merry, and will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets had tormented those who dwell on the earth."

11. Then after the three and a half days, *the* spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them.

2 Psa. 79:1
Ezek. 40:17
Dan. 8:10
Luke 21:24
Rev. 13:5
3 Rev. 12:6,
19:10, 20:4
4 Psa. 52:8
Jer. 11:16
Zech. 4:3
5 Num. 16:29
2 Ki. 1:10
Jer. 1:10
Ezek. 43:3
Hos. 6:5
6 1 Ki. 17:1
Jas. 5:16
7 Dan. 7:21
Zech. 14:2
Luke 13:32
Rev. 9:2,
13:1, 11
8 Heb. 13:12
Rev. 14:8
9 Psa. 79:2, 3
Rev. 17:15
10 Esth. 9:19
Rev. 12:12,
16:10
11 Ezek. 37:5
Rev. 11:9

12 2 Ki. 2:1
Is. 14:13,
60:8
Acts 1:9
13 Josh. 7:19
Rev. 6:12,
16:19
14 Rev. 8:13
15 Is. 27:13
Dan. 2:44
Rev. 10:7,
12:10
16 Rev. 4:4
17 Rev. 16:5,
19:6
18 Dan. 7:9
Rev. 11:2,
9, 13:10,
19:5
19 Rev. 8:5,
15:5, 8,
16:21

12. And they heard a great voice from heaven, say, "Come up here!" And they ascended into heaven in a cloud; and their enemies saw them *rise*.

13. And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; and seven thousand men were killed in the earthquake. And the rest were filled with fear, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14. The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming immediately.

15. Then the seventh angel sounded *his* trumpet; and *there* were great voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign into the ages of eternity."

16. And the twenty-four elders, who sit before God on their thrones, fell on their faces and worshiped God,

17. Saying, "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come; for You have taken *to Yourself* Your great power, and have reigned.

18. For the nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time for the dead to be judged, and to give reward to Your servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to *all* those who fear Your name, the small and the great; and to destroy those who destroy the earth."

19. And the temple of God in heaven was opened, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple; and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake and great hail.

CHAPTER TWELVE

1. Then there appeared a great wonder in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and *having* the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.

2. And being with child, she cried in travail, and was in pain to deliver.
 3. And another sign was seen in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns on his heads;
 4. And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to deliver, so that he might devour her child when she gave birth.
 5. And she gave birth to a man child, Who was to shepherd all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and His throne.
 6. And the woman escaped into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there *for* a thousand two hundred *and* sixty days.
 7. And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels warred against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels warred.
 8. But they did not prevail, neither was their place found any more in heaven.
 9. And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, who is deceiving the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.
 10. And I heard a great voice in heaven say, "Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ because the accuser of our brethren has been cast down, who accuses them day and night before our God.
 11. But they overcame him through the blood of the Lamb, and through the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death.
 12. Therefore, rejoice you heavens and those who dwell in them. Woe to

Chap. 12

2 Is. 66:7
 Gal. 4:19
 3 Rev. 13:1, 17:3, 9, 10
 4 Ex. 1:16
 Dan. 8:10
 Rev. 9:10, 19, 12:2, 17:18
 5 Psa. 2:9
 Rev. 19:15
 6 Rev. 11:3, 12:4
 7 Dan. 10:13
 Rev. 20:2
 9 Gen. 3:1, 4
 Luke 10:18
 John 12:31
 Rev. 9:1, 20:2, 3
 10 Job 1:9
 Zech. 3:1
 Rev. 11:15
 11 Luke 14:26
 Rom. 16:20
 12 Psa. 96:11
 Is. 49:13
 Rev. 8:13, 10:6, 18:20

13 Rev. 12:5
 14 Ex. 19:4
 Dan. 7:25
 Rev. 12:6, 17:3
 15 Is. 59:19
 17 Gen. 3:15
 1 John 5:10
 1 Cor. 2:1
 Rev. 11:7, 14:12

Chap. 13

1 Dan. 7:2, 7
 Rev. 12:3, 17:3
 2 Dan. 7:4-6
 Rev. 12:4, 9
 3 Rev. 13:12, 14, 17:8
 4 Rev. 18:18

those who inhabit the earth and the sea! For the Devil has come down to you, having great wrath *because* he knows that he has *only* a short time."

13. And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who had brought forth the man *child*.

14. And two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly to her place in the wilderness, where she is nourished *for* a time, and times, and half a time, from *the* face of the serpent.

15. And the serpent cast water out of his mouth as a river, so that he might cause her *to be* carried away by the flood.

16. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed up the river that the dragon had cast out of his mouth.

17. Then the dragon was furious with the woman and went to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1. And I stood on the sand of the sea; and I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads *the* name of blasphemy.

2. And the beast that I saw was like a leopard, and his feet like *the* feet of a bear, and his mouth like *the* mouth of a lion; and the dragon gave him his power, and his throne and great authority.

3. And I saw one of his heads as *if it* were slain to death, but his deadly wound was healed; and the whole earth was amazed *and* followed the beast.

4. And they worshiped the dragon, who gave *his* authority to the beast. And they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who *is* like the beast? Who has the

power to make war against him?"

5. And a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies was given to him; and authority was given to him to continue *for* forty-two months.

6. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

7. And he was given *power* to make war against the saints, and to overcome them; and he was given authority over every tribe and language and nation.

8. And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from *the* foundation of *the* world.

9. If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

10. If anyone gathers *into* captivity, he shall go into captivity. If anyone kills with *the* sword, he must be killed with *the* sword. Here is the endurance and the faith of the saints.

11. And I saw another beast rising out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, but spoke like a dragon;

12. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast before him; and he causes the earth and those who dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13. And he performs great wonders, so that he even causes fire to come down to the earth from heaven in the sight of men.

14. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by means of the wonders that were given to him to perform in the sight of the beast, saying to those who dwell on the earth that they should make an image for the beast, which had the wound by the sword, yet was alive.

15. And he was given *power* to give life to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast also could speak; and he causes everyone who

5 Dan. 7:8
Rev. 11:2
6 John 1:14
Col. 2:9
7 Dan. 7:21
Rev. 11:7, 18
8 Ex. 32:32
Dan. 12:1
Phil. 4:3
Rev. 3:5, 17:8
9 Rev. 2:7
10 Gen. 9:6
Is. 33:1
Mat. 26:52
Rev. 14:12
11 Rev. 11:7
12 Rev. 13:3
13 Deut. 13:1
1 Ki. 18:38
2 Ki. 1:10
Mat. 24:24
2 Thes. 2:9
Rev. 16:14
14 2 Ki. 20:7
2 Thes. 2:9
Rev. 12:9
15 Rev. 16:2

16 Rev. 14:9
17 Rev. 14:11, 15:2
18 Rev. 15:2, 17:9, 21:17

Chap. 14

1 Rev. 5:6, 7:4, 13:16
2 Rev. 1:15, 5:8
3 Rev. 5:9, 14:1
4 Jas. 1:18
2 Cor. 11:2
Rev. 3:4, 5:9
5 Psa. 32:2
Zeph. 3:13
Jude 24
Eph. 5:27
6 Eph. 3:9
Tit. 1:2
Rev. 8:13, 13:7

will not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

16. And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, to receive a mark in their right hands, or in their foreheads;

17. So that no one may have the ability to buy and sell unless he has the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

18. Here is wisdom. Let the one who has understanding count the number of the beast; for it is a man's number, and his number *is* 666.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

1. And I looked, and I beheld *the* Lamb standing on Mount Sion, and with Him one hundred *and* forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.

2. Then I heard a voice from heaven, like *the* sound of many waters, and like *the* sound of great thunder; and I heard *the* sound of harpers playing their harps.

3. And they were singing a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders. And no one was able to learn the song except the hundred *and* forty-four thousand, who were redeemed from the earth.

4. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins; they are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They were purchased from among men *as* first fruits to God and to the Lamb;

5. And no guile was found in their mouths; for they are blameless before the throne of God.

6. And I saw another angel flying in *the* midst of heaven, having *the* everlasting gospel to proclaim *to* those who dwell on the earth, and *to* every nation and tribe and language and people;

7. Saying with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give glory to Him, because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him Who made the heaven, and the earth, and *the* sea, and *the* fountains of waters."

8. Then another angel followed, saying, "The great city Babylon is fallen, is fallen, because of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, *which* she has given all nations to drink."

9. And a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *the* mark in his forehead or in his hand,

10. He shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed undiluted in the cup of His wrath; and he shall be tormented in fire and brimstone in the sight of the holy angels, and of the Lamb.

11. And the smoke of their torment ascends into the ages of eternity; and those who worship the beast and his image, and all who receive the mark of his name, have no rest day and night."

12. Here is *the* patience of the saints; here *are* the ones who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

13. And I heard a voice from heaven say to me, "Write: Blessed *are* the dead who die in *the* Lord from this time forward. Yes, says the Spirit, so that they may rest from their labors; and their works follow them."

14. And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and *one* like *the* Son of man sitting on the cloud, having a golden crown on His head; and in His hand *was* a sharp sickle.

15. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him Who was sitting on the cloud, "Thrust in your sickle and reap, because the time has come for You to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe."

7 Neh. 9:6
Psa. 33:6,
124:8,
146:5, 6
Acts 14:15,
17:24
Rev. 11:18
8 Is. 21:9
Jer. 51:7
Rev. 16:19,
17:2, 5,
18:2, 3, 10
9 Rev. 13:14
10 Psa. 75:8
Is. 51:17
Jer. 25:15
Rev. 16:19,
18:6, 19:20,
20:10
11 Is. 34:10
12 Rev. 12:17,
13:10
13 Eccl. 4:1, 2
1 Cor. 15:18
1 Thes. 4:16
2 Thes. 1:7
Heb. 4:9, 10
14 Ezek. 1:26
Dan. 7:13
Rev. 6:2
15 Jer. 51:33
Joel 3:13
Mat. 13:39
Rev. 13:12,
16:17

18 Joel 3:13
Rev. 16:8
19 Rev. 19:15
20 Is. 63:3
Lam. 1:15
Heb. 13:12
Rev. 19:14

Chap. 15

1 Rev. 12:1,
3, 14:10,
21:9
2 Mat. 3:11
Rev. 4:6,
5:8, 13:15
3 Ex. 15:1
Deut. 32:4
Psa. 11:2,
145:17
Hos. 14:9
4 Ex. 15:14
Is. 66:23
Jer. 10:7
5 Num. 1:50
6 Ex. 28:6
Ezek. 44:17
Rev. 15:1

16. And He Who was sitting on the cloud thrust forth His sickle upon the earth, and the earth was reaped.

17. Then another angel, who also had a sharp sickle, came out of the temple that *is* in heaven.

18. And out from the altar came another angel, who had authority over fire; and he called with a loud cry to the one who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Thrust in your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the earth, because her grapes are fully ripe."

19. And the angel thrust his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast *its* fruit into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

20. And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood spewed out from the winepress as high as the horses' bridles, to the distance of a thousand six hundred furlongs.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

1. Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and awesome: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is filled up.

2. And I saw a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having *the* harps of God.

3. And they were singing the song of Moses, *the* servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and awesome *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty; righteous and true *are* Your ways, King of the saints.

4. Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For *You* only *are* holy; and all the nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been revealed."

5. And after these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened.

6. And the seven angels who had the seven *last* plagues came out of the temple; they were clothed in linen, pure and bright, and girded about the chest with golden breastplates.

7. And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden vials, full of the wrath of God, Who lives into the ages of eternity.

8. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from His power; and no one was able to enter inside the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

1. Then I heard a loud voice from the temple say to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the vials of the wrath of God onto the earth."

2. And the first *angel* went and poured out his vial onto the earth; and an evil and grievous sore fell upon the men who had the mark of the beast, and upon those who were worshipping his image.

3. And the second angel *went and* poured out his vial into the sea; and it became blood, like *that* of a dead *man*; and every living soul in the sea died.

4. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers, and into the fountains of waters; and they became blood.

5. Then I heard the angel of the waters say, "You are righteous, O Lord, Who are, and Who was, even the Holy One, in that You have executed this judgment.

6. For they have poured out *the* blood of saints and of prophets, and You have given them blood to drink; for they are worthy."

7. And I heard another *voice* from the altar say, "Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous *are* Your judgments."

7 1 Thes. 1:9
Rev. 4:6
8 Ex. 40:34
2 Chr. 5:14
2 Thes. 1:9

Chap. 16

1 Rev. 14:10,
15:1
2 Ex. 9:9-11
Rev. 8:7,
13:14, 16
3 Ex. 7:17
Rev. 8:8, 9
4 Ex. 7:20
Rev. 8:10
5 Rev. 1:4, 8,
15:3
6 Is. 49:26
Mat. 23:34
Rev. 11:18,
13:15
7 Rev. 13:10,
15:3

8 Rev. 8:12,
9:17, 18
9 Dan. 5:22
Rev. 11:13,
16:11, 21
10 Rev. 9:2,
11:10, 13:2
11 Rev. 16:2,
9, 21
12 Is. 41:2, 25
Jer. 50:38
Rev. 9:14
13 1 John 4:1
Rev. 12:3, 9,
19:20
14 Luke 2:1
Jas. 3:15
2 Thes. 2:9
1 Tim. 4:1
Rev. 17:14
15 Mat. 24:43
2 Cor. 5:3
16 Rev. 19:19
17 Rev. 21:6
18 Dan. 12:1
Rev. 4:5,
11:13

8. And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and *power* was given to it to scorch men with fire.

9. Then men were scorched with great heat; and they blasphemed the name of God, Who has authority over these plagues, and did not repent to give Him glory.

10. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the throne of the beast; and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain,

11. And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; yet they did not repent of their works.

12. And the sixth angel poured out his vial into the great river Euphrates; and its waters were dried up, so that the way of the kings from the rising of *the* sun might be prepared.

13. Then I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet;

14. For they are spirits of demons working miracles, going forth to the kings of the earth, even of the whole world, to gather them together to *the* battle of that great day of the Almighty God.

15. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed *is* the one who is watching and is keeping his garments, so that he may not walk naked and they *may not* see his shame.

16. And he gathered them together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

17. Then the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "IT IS FINISHED."

18. And there were voices and thunders and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not

since men were on the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and* so great.

19. And the great city was divided into three parts; and the cities of the nations fell; and Babylon the Great was remembered before God to give her the cup of the wine of the fury of His wrath.

20. And every island disappeared, and no mountains were found;

21. And great hail, *each stone* the weight of a talent, fell down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, for the plague was exceedingly great.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

1. And one of the seven angels who had the seven vials came and spoke with me, saying to me, "Come here; I will show you the judgment of the great whore who sits upon many waters;

2. With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

3. Then he carried me away in *the* spirit to a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet beast that had seven heads and ten horns, full of names of blasphemy.

4. And the woman *was* clothed in purple and scarlet, and *was* adorned with gold and pearls and precious stones; *and* she had a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominations and *the* filthiness of her fornication;

5. And across her forehead a name *was* written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

6. And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And

19 Is. 51:17
Rev. 14:8,
10, 17:18,
18:5
20 Rev. 6:14
21 Ex. 9:23
Rev. 11:19,
16:9, 11

Chap. 17

1 Jer. 51:13
Nah. 3:4
Rev. 16:19,
19:2, 21:9
2 Jer. 51:7
Rev. 18:3
3 Rev. 12:3,
6, 14, 13:1,
17:9, 12
4 Jer. 51:7
Dan. 11:38
Rev. 14:8,
18:6, 12
5 2 Thes. 2:7
6 Rev. 6:9
10, 13:15,
18:24

after seeing her, I wondered with great amazement.

7. Then the angel said to me, "Why are you amazed? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.

8. *The* beast that you saw was, and is not, but is about to come up out of the abyss and to go into perdition. And those who dwell on the earth, whose names are not written in the book of life from *the* foundation of *the* world, shall be astonished when they see the beast that was, but is not, and yet is.

9. Here *is* the mind that has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.

10. And there are seven kings; five are fallen, and one is, *and* the other has not yet come; and when he has come, it is ordained that he remain a little while.

11. And the beast that was, and is not, he is also the eighth, and is from the seven, and goes into perdition.

12. And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings, who have not yet received a kingdom, but shall receive authority as kings *for* one hour with the beast.

13. These *all* have one mind, and shall give up their power and authority to the beast.

14. These will make war with the Lamb, but the Lamb shall overcome them; for He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who *are* with Him *are* called, and chosen, and faithful."

15. Then he said to me, "The waters that you saw, where the whore sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages.

16. But the ten horns that you saw on the beast shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall burn her with fire;

17. For God has put into their hearts to do His will, and to act with one ac-

8 Rev. 11:7,
13:3, 8, 10
9 Rev. 13:1,
18
11 Rev. 17:8
12 Dan. 7:20
Zech. 1:18
Rev. 13:1
14 Deut. 10:17
Jer. 50:44
1 Tim. 6:15
Rev. 14:4,
16:14, 19:16
15 Is. 8:7
Rev. 13:7
16 Jer. 50:41
Ezek. 16:37
Rev. 16:12,
18:8, 16
17 2 Thes. 2:11
Rev. 10:7
18 Rev. 12:4,
16:19

cord, and to give their kingdom to the beast until the words of God have been fulfilled.

18. And the woman whom you saw is the great city that has royal power over the kings of the earth."

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

1. And after these things I saw an angel descending from heaven, having great authority; and the earth was illuminated with his glory.

2. And he cried out mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons, and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hated bird;

3. Because all nations have drunk of the wine of the fury of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the power of her luxury."

4. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, My people, so that you do not take part in her sins, and that you do not receive of her plagues,

5. For her sins have reached as far as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

6. Render to her as she has rendered to you; and give to her double, even according to her works. In the cup that she mixed, give her back double.

7. To the degree that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, give to her as much torment and sorrow. For she says in her heart, 'I sit a queen enthroned, and am not a widow; and in no way shall I experience sorrow.'

8. For this very reason, her plagues shall come in one day—death and sorrow and famine; and she shall be burned with fire; for *the* Lord God, Who executes judgment upon her, *is* powerful.

Chap. 18

1 Ezek. 43:2
Rev. 17:1
2 Is. 13:19,
21, 14:23
Jer. 50:39,
51:8
Mark 5:2
3 Is. 47:15
Rev. 14:8
4 Is. 48:20
Jer. 50:8
2 Cor. 6:17
5 Gen. 18:20
Jer. 51:9
Jonah 1:2
Rev. 16:19
6 Psa. 137:8
Jer. 50:15
Rev. 14:10,
16:19
7 Is. 47:7, 8
Ezek. 28:2
Zeph. 2:15
8 Is. 47:9
Jer. 50:34
Rev. 11:17,
17:16, 18:10

9 Jer. 50:46
Ezek. 26:16
Rev. 19:3
10 Is. 21:9
Rev. 14:8,
18:17, 19
11 Ezek. 27:27
12 Rev. 17:4
13 Ezek. 27:13
15 Rev. 18:3,
11
16 Rev. 17:4
17 Is. 23:14
Ezek. 27:29
Rev. 18:10
18 Ezek. 27:30
Rev. 13:4

9. Then the kings of the earth who have committed fornication with her and have lived luxuriously, will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning.

10. They will stand far off for fear of her torment, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city Babylon, the mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.'

11. And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, because no one will buy their merchandise any more:

12. *The* merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and every article of ivory, and every article of rare wood, and brass, and iron, and marble,

13. And cinnamon, and incense, and ointment, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and cattle, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and *the* souls of men.

14. For the ripe fruits that your soul desires will depart from you, and all the rich things and the bright things will depart from you, and you will not find them any more.

15. The merchants of these things, who were made rich by her, will stand far off because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning,

16. And saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, which *was* clothed with fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls!

17. For in one hour such great wealth has been destroyed.' And every shipmaster, and all traveling in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, will stand far off.

18. And they will cry out as they watch the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What *city* is like this great city?'

19. And they will throw dust on their heads, and cry out, weeping and mourning, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, by which all who had ships in the sea were made wealthy through *the* abundance of her costly things! For in one hour she has been destroyed.'

20. Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets; for God has executed judgment upon her for your sakes."

21. Then one strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast *it* into the sea, saying, "In this same way shall the great city Babylon be thrown down with violence, and shall never again be found;

22. And never again shall *the* sound of harpers and musicians and flute players and trumpeters be heard in you; and never again shall any craftsman of any craft be found in you; and never again shall *the* sound of a millstone be heard in you;

23. And never again shall *the* light of a lamp shine in you; and never again shall *the* voices of bridegroom and bride be heard in you; for your merchants were the great ones of the earth, and by your sorcery all nations were deceived.

24. And in her *the* blood of prophets and saints was found, and *the* blood of all those who were slain on the earth."

CHAPTER NINETEEN

1. And after these things I heard *the* loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! The salvation and the glory and the honor and the power *belong* to the Lord our God.

2. For true and righteous *are* His judgments; for He has judged the great whore, who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and He has avenged the blood of His servants at her hand."

3. And they said a second time,

19 Josh. 7:6
1 Sam. 4:12
Job 2:12
Ezek. 27:30
Rev. 18:8

20 Is. 44:23,
49:13
Jer. 51:48
Luke 11:49
Rev. 19:2

21 Jer. 51:64
Rev. 12:8,
16:20

22 Jer. 7:34,
16:9, 25:10
Ezek. 26:13

23 2 Ki. 9:22
Is. 23:8
Jer. 7:34,
16:9, 25:10,
33:11

Rev. 17:2, 5
24 Jer. 51:49
Rev. 17:6

Chap. 19

1 Rev. 4:11,
7:10, 12,
11:15

2 Deut. 32:43
Rev. 15:3

3 Is. 34:10
Rev. 14:11

4 1 Cor. 16:36
Neh. 5:13,
8:6

Rev. 4:4, 6,
5:14

5 Psa. 134:1
Rev. 11:18,
20:12

6 Ezek. 1:24
Rev. 11:15,
14:2

7 Mat. 22:2,
25:10
2 Cor. 11:2

Eph. 5:32
Rev. 21:2, 9

8 Psa. 45:13,
132:9
Ezek. 16:10
Rev. 3:18

9 Mat. 22:2
Luke 14:15
Rev. 22:6

10 Acts 10:26
1 John 5:10
Rev. 12:17,
22:8, 9

11 Is. 11:4
Rev. 3:14,
6:2, 11:4,
15:5

12 Rev. 1:14,
2:17, 6:2

13 Is. 63:2, 3
John 1:1
1 John 5:7

14 Mat. 28:3
Rev. 4:4,
14:20

"Hallelujah! And her smoke shall ascend upward into the ages of eternity."

4. And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, Who sits on the throne, saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!"

5. And a voice came forth from the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all His servants, and all who fear Him, both small and great."

6. And I heard a voice like that of a great multitude, and like *the* sound of many waters, and *the* sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Hallelujah! For *the* Lord God Almighty has reigned.

7. Let us be glad and shout with joy; and let us give glory to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."

8. And it was granted to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.

9. And he said to me, "Write: Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."

10. Then I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said to me, "*See that you do not do this!* I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brethren, who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

11. And I saw heaven open; and behold, a white horse; and He Who sat on it *is* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He does judge and make war.

12. And His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns; *and* He had a name written that no one knows except Him.

13. And *He* was clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is The Word of God.

14. And the armies in heaven were

following Him on white horses; *and* they were clothed in fine linen, white and pure.

15. And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He shall shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury and the wrath of the Almighty God.

16. And on *His* garment and on His thigh He has a name written: King of kings and Lord of lords.

17. Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in *the* midst of heaven, "Come and gather yourselves together to the supper of the great God

18. So that you may eat *the* flesh of kings, and *the* flesh of chief captains, and *the* flesh of mighty *men*, and *the* flesh of horses, and of those who sit on them, and *the* flesh of all, free and bond, and small and great."

19. And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered together to make war with Him Who sits on the horse, and with His army.

20. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet who worked miracles in his presence, by which he had deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. Those two were cast alive into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone;

21. And the rest were killed by the sword of Him Who sits on the horse, *even the sword* that goes out of His mouth; and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

CHAPTER TWENTY

1. Then I saw an angel descending from heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand.

2. And he took hold of the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is *the* Devil and

15 Psa. 2:9
Is. 11:4,
63:3
2 Thes. 2:8
Rev. 1:16,
2:27, 14:19
16 Dan. 2:47
1 Tim. 6:15
Rev. 17:14,
19:12
17 Ezek. 39:17
Rev. 19:21
18 Ezek. 39:18
19 Rev. 16:16
20 Dan. 7:11
Rev. 13:12,
14:10,
16:13, 20:10
21 Rev. 17:16,
19:15, 17,
18

Chap. 20

1 Rev. 1:18
2 2 Pet. 2:4
Jude 6
Rev. 12:9

3 Dan. 6:17
Rev. 12:9
4 Dan. 7:9
Mat. 19:28
Luke 22:30
Rom. 8:17
1 Cor. 6:2, 3
2 Tim. 2:12
Rev. 5:10,
6:9, 13:12,
15
6 Is. 61:6
1 Pet. 2:9
Rev. 1:6,
2:11, 20:4
7 Rev. 20:2
8 Ezek. 38:2,
39:1
Rev. 16:14,
20:3, 10
9 Is. 8:8
Ezek. 38:9
10 Mat. 25:41
Rev. 14:10,
19:20, 20:8

Satan, and bound him *for* a thousand years.

3. Then he cast him into the abyss, and locked him *up*, and sealed *the* abyss over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer until the thousand years were fulfilled; and after that it is ordained that he be loosed *for* a short time.

4. And I saw thrones; and they that sat upon them, and judgment was given to them; and *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and those who did not worship the beast, or his image, and did not receive the mark in their foreheads or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

5. (But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were completed.) This *is* the first resurrection.

6. Blessed and holy is the one who has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power. But they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

7. Now when the thousand years have been completed, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison;

8. And he shall go out to deceive the nations that *are* in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, of whom the number *is* as the sand of the sea, to gather them together for war.

9. Then *I saw* them go up upon the breadth of the earth and encircle the camp of the saints, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven and consumed them;

10. And the Devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *had been cast*; and they, *Satan and the demons*, shall be tormented day and night into the ages of eternity.

11. Then I saw a great white throne and the one Who was sitting on it, from Whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and no place was found for them.

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

13. And the sea gave up the dead *that were* in it, and death and *the* grave gave up the dead *that were* in them; and they were judged individually, according to their works.

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

15. And if anyone was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

1. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea.

2. And I, John, saw the holy city, *the* new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3. And I heard a great voice from heaven say, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men; and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people; and God Himself shall be with them *and be* their God.

4. And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and *there* shall not be any more death, or sorrow, or crying; neither shall *there* be any more pain, because the former things have passed away."

5. And He Who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." Then He said to me, "Write, for these

11 Dan. 2:35
2 Pet. 3:7
Rev. 21:1
12 Psa. 69:28
Jer. 17:10,
32:19
Dan. 7:10,
12:1
Mat. 16:27
Rom. 2:6
Phil. 4:3
Rev. 2:23,
3:5, 19:5
13 Rev. 6:8,
20:12
14 1 Cor. 15:26
Rev. 21:8
15 Rev. 19:20

Chap. 21

1 Is. 65:17
2 Pet. 3:13
Rev. 20:11
2 Is. 52:1,
54:5
2 Cor. 11:2
Gal. 4:26
Heb. 11:10,
12:22
Rev. 3:12
3 Lev. 26:11
Ezek. 43:7
2 Cor. 6:16
4 Is. 25:8,
35:10, 61:3,
65:19
1 Cor. 15:26
Rev. 20:14
5 Is. 43:19
2 Cor. 5:17
Rev. 4:2, 9,
19:9, 20:11

6 Is. 12:3
John 4:10,
7:37
Rev. 1:8,
16:17
7 Zech. 8:8
Heb. 8:10
8 1 Cor. 6:9
Gal. 5:19
Eph. 5:5
1 Tim. 1:9
Heb. 12:14
Rev. 20:14
9 Rev. 15:1,
19:7
10 Ezek. 48
Rev. 1:10
11 Rev. 22:5
12 Ezek.
48:31-34
13 Ezek.
48:31-34
14 Mat. 16:18
Gal. 2:9
Eph. 2:20
15 Ezek. 40:3
Zech. 2:1

words are true and faithful."

6. And He said to me, "It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the one who thirsts, I will give freely of the fountain of the water of life.

7. The one who overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son.

8. But *the* cowardly, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone; which is *the* second death."

9. And one of the seven angels that had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, *and* I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife."

10. And he carried me away in *the* Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

11. Having the glory of God. And her radiance *was* like a most precious stone, as crystal-clear *as* jasper stone.

12. And *the* city also had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and inscribed on *the* gates were *the* names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.

13. On *the* east *were* three gates; on *the* north *were* three gates; on *the* south *were* three gates; on *the* west *were* three gates.

14. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and written on them *were* *the* names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15. And the one who was speaking with me had a golden measuring rod, so that he might measure the city, and its gates and its wall.

16. And the city lies foursquare, for its length is as long as its breadth. And

he measured the city with the rod, twelve thousand furlongs; the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

17. And he measured its wall, one hundred *and* forty-four cubits; *the* angel's measure *was according to* a man's.

18. And the structure of its wall was jasper; and the city *was* pure gold, like pure glass.

19. And the foundations of the wall of the city *were* adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation *was* jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;

20. The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprasus; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.

21. And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; each of the gates respectively *was* a single pearl; and the street of the city *was* pure gold, as transparent as glass.

22. And I saw no temple in it; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

23. And the city has no need of the sun, or of the moon, that they should shine in it; because the glory of God enlightens it, and the light of it *is* the Lamb.

24. And the nations that are saved shall walk in its light; and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honor into it.

25. And its gates shall never be shut by day; for there shall be no night there.

26. And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.

27. And nothing that defiles shall ever enter into it, nor shall *anyone* who practices *an* abomination or *devises* a lie; but *only* those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

19 Is. 54:11
21 Rev. 22:2
22 John 4:23
23 Is. 24:23,
60:19, 20
24 Is. 60:3,
66:12
25 Is. 60:11, 20
Zech. 14:7
Rev. 22:5
26 Rev. 21:24
27 Is. 35:8,
52:1, 60:21
Joel 3:17
Phil. 4:3
Rev. 22:14

Chap. 22

1 Ezek. 47:1
Zech. 14:8
2 Gen. 2:9
Ezek. 47:12
Rev. 2:7,
21:21, 24
3 Ezek. 48:35
Zech. 14:11
4 Mat. 5:8
1 John 3:2
1 Cor. 13:12
Rev. 14:1
5 Psal. 36:9
Dan. 7:27
Rom. 5:17
2 Tim. 2:12
Rev. 21:23
6 Rev. 1:1,
19:9
7 Rev. 1:3,
3:11
8 Rev. 19:10
9 Rev. 19:10
10 Dan. 8:26
Rev. 1:3
11 Ezek. 3:27
Dan. 12:10
2 Tim. 3:13

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

1. Then he showed me a pure river of *the* water of life, clear as crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2. *And* in the middle of *the* street, and on this side and that side of the river, *was the* tree of life, producing twelve *manner of* fruits, each month yielding its fruit; and the leaves of the tree *are* for *the* healing of the nations.

3. And there shall be no more curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him,

4. And they shall see His face; and His name *is* in their foreheads.

5. And there shall be no night there; for they have no need of a lamp or *the* light of *the* sun, because *the* Lord God enlightens them; and they shall reign into the ages of eternity.

6. And he said to me, "These words *are* faithful and true; and *the* Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things that must shortly come to pass.

7. Behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed *is* the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

8. Now I, John, *was* the one who saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who *was* showing me these things.

9. But he said to me, "See *that you do not do this!* For I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

10. And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book because the time is near.

11. Let the one who is unrighteous be unrighteous still; and let the one who is filthy be filthy still; and let the one who *is* righteous be righteous still; and

let the one who *is* holy be holy still.
12. And behold, I am coming quickly;
and My reward is with Me, to render
to each one according as his work
shall be.

13. I am Alpha and Omega, *the* Be-
ginning and *the* End, the First and the
Last.

14. Blessed *are* those who keep His
commandments, that they may have
the right to *eat of* the tree of life, and
may enter by the gates into the city.

15. But excluded *are* dogs, and sorcer-
ers, and fornicators, and murderers,
and idolaters, and everyone who loves
and devises a lie.

16. I, Jesus, sent My angel to testify
these things to you in the churches. I
am the root and the offspring of
David, the bright and morning star."

17. And the Spirit and the bride say,

12 Is. 40:10
Rev. 20:12,
22:7

13 Is. 41:4

14 Dan. 12:12
1 John 3:24
Rev. 2:7,
21:27

15 1 Cor. 6:9
Gal. 5:19
Phil. 3:2
Col. 3:6

16 Num. 24:17
Zech. 6:12
2 Pet. 1:19
Rev. 1:1,
5:5

17 Is. 55:1
John 7:37
Rev. 21:2, 9

18 Deut. 4:2
Prov. 30:6

19 Ex. 32:33
Psa. 69:28
Rev. 21:2

20 John 21:25
2 Tim. 4:8
Rev. 22:12

21 Rom. 16:20

"Come." And let the one who hears
say, "Come." And let the one who
thirsts come; and let the one who de-
sires partake of the water of life
freely.

18. For I jointly testify to everyone
who hears the words of the prophecy
of this book, *that* if anyone adds to
these things, God shall add to him the
plagues that are written in this book.

19. And if anyone takes away from
the words of *the* book of this proph-
ecy, God shall take away his part from
the book of life, and from the holy
city, and from the things that are writ-
ten in this book.

20. He Who testifies these things says,
"Surely, I am coming quickly."
Amen*. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

21. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
be with you all. Amen.

*The statement "Surely, I am coming quickly" followed by "Amen" stresses the certainty of His coming instead of the immediacy of His coming at the time John wrote these words. Perhaps, it could also carry the meaning that in the end times when the Book of Revelation is understood by the people of God (Dan. 12:9-10), then His coming is at hand.

Part Four

Appendices

Appendix A

The Fourteen Rules for Bible Study Spiritual Keys to Understanding the Word Of God

There are spiritual keys to understanding the Scriptures. The primary key is that of being in a steadfast loving, faithful and obedient attitude and relationship toward God. Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments" (John 14:15). Likewise, in the Psalms we find that those who keep the commandments of God will be given understanding: "All His commandments *are* sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, *and are* done in truth and uprightness....The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *His commandments*: His praise endures for ever: (Psa. 111:7, 8, 10, KJV). This is the foundation of understanding the Word of God.

Another vital key is clearly taught in Isaiah 28: "Whom shall He teach knowledge? And whom shall He make to understand doctrine? *Them that are* weaned from the milk, *and* drawn from the breasts [that is, fully grounded in the Word of God]. For **precept must be upon precept**, precept upon precept; **line upon line**, line upon line; **here a little**, *and* there a little" (verses 9-10, KJV).

The Bible tells us that in order to understand doctrine, we must study it line upon line and precept upon precept. That is exactly how we need to study any Scriptural question. The New Testament confirms this approach to understanding the Word of God and establishing sound doctrine. Paul instructed Timothy in how to study and teach doctrine: "Diligently *study* to show yourself approved unto God, a workman [in the Word of God] who does not *need to be* ashamed, rightly dividing [precept upon precept, and line upon line] the Word of the truth" (II Tim. 2:15).

The Word of God is called the Word of truth. It is the Spirit of truth that teaches us all things. Jesus said, "But *when* the Comforter *comes*, *even* the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in My name, that one **shall teach you all things**, and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you" (John 14:26). This is the promise Jesus gave!

The Bible makes it clear that the Word of truth works together with the Spirit of truth to give understanding to those who love God and seek His will. It is self-evident that it is not possible for the carnal mind, which is deceitful above all things (Jer. 17:9), to come to the knowledge of the truth of God. In fact, the carnal, unconverted mind is enmity (that is, hostile) toward God and is not willing to be subject to God's laws (Rom. 8:7). Regardless of how brilliant or how great one's intellect may be, God's Word is not understood by human wisdom or reasoning. It is only through the Spirit of God that the Word of God is understood.

The Apostle Paul taught that spiritual truths can only be discerned and understood through the Spirit of God: "But according as it is written, '*The eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.*'

"But God has revealed *them* to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God. For who among men understands the things of man except *by* the spirit of man which *is* in him? In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except *by* the Spirit of God. Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that *is* of God, so that we might know the things graciously given to us by God; which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in *words* taught by *the* Holy Spirit *in order to* communicate spiritual things by spiritual *means*. But *the* natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand *them* because **they are spiritually discerned**' " (I Cor. 2:9-14).

The Fourteen Rules for Bible Study

Spiritual truth is revealed by the Spirit. Unfortunately, many people are caught up in the politics of religion, the organizational power structure of an ecclesiastical hierarchy, or the time-honored doctrines of various churches. These things prevent an unbiased study and obscure the spiritual truths in God's Word.

A biblically outlined method of study—"rightly dividing" the Word of God—is the proper way to study the Word of God. When one studies the Bible following the Fourteen Rules For Bible Study, he or she will find the truth of the Bible as revealed by the Holy Spirit of truth. These rules are not designed to bolster a previous doctrinal position, or justify a particular church doctrine. These things do not really matter; and even if they did, would God overlook such misuse of His Word?

Paul's words to Timothy show the danger in misusing the Scriptures: "See that *they* remain mindful of these things, earnestly charging *them* in the sight of the Lord not to argue over words that are not profitable in any way, *but which lead to the* subverting of those who hear" (II Tim. 2:14). Many Bible teachers have misused the Scriptures in this way. In order to justify doctrinal beliefs that are not taught in the Bible, they have twisted and distorted the Scriptures to fit their own private interpretations. Whole churches have been subverted by arguments and disputes over words that have undermined the faith of millions!

The apostle Peter warned the believers to be on guard against false teachers: "As *he* has also in all *his* [Paul's] epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are some things *that are* difficult to understand, **which the ignorant and unstable are twisting and distorting, as they also twist and distort the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.** Therefore, beloved, since you know this in advance, be on guard against *such practices*, lest you be led astray with the error of the lawless ones, *and* you fall from your own steadfastness" (II Pet. 3:16-17).

Peter understood that those who promote their own private interpretations are rejecting the Holy Spirit of God which inspired every word that is written in the Scriptures: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture originated as anyone's own *private* interpretation; because prophecy was not brought at any time by human will, but the holy men of God spoke as they were moved by *the* Holy Spirit" (II Pet. 1:20-21). Paul also made it clear that the words of the scriptures were not humanly devised but were "God-breathed." Notice: "And that from a child you have known the holy writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus. **All Scripture is God-breathed** and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work." (II Tim. 3:15-17).

False doctrines and misinterpretations are continually being propagated because ministers and teachers use the Word of God deceitfully. How diabolical it is to take the Word of God, which is the truth, and misapply it to create a lie! Such deceptive use of God's Word has existed from the time of the apostles. In writing to the believers at Corinth, the apostle Paul contrasted his ministry with the deceitful approach of false teachers in his day: "Therefore, having this ministry, according as we have received mercy, we are not faint-hearted. For **we have personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain, not walking in cunning craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth we are commending ourselves to every man's conscience before God**" (II Cor. 4:1-2).

When studying the Bible, one should apply the Fourteen Rules for Bible Study that follow. These rules show the systematic method and the mechanics of proper Bible study.

One should never establish doctrine based on the traditions of men, regardless of how knowledgeable or authoritative they are reputed to be. Nor should one base doctrine solely on the commentaries or other writings of men. Any student of the Bible should strictly follow the Word of God by examining the subject's history and referring to the original languages, Hebrew and Greek, in order to determine precise definitions and meanings of key, critically important words. Such an approach will lead to a clear and complete understanding of what the Word of God truly teaches.

Appendix A

Fourteen Rules for Bible Study

- 1) Begin with Scriptures that are easy to understand.
- 2) Let the Bible interpret and prove the Bible. Don't look for what you want to prove; look for what the Bible actually proves.
- 3) Understand the context—the verses before and after, the chapters before and after. Does your understanding of a particular verse harmonize with the rest of the Bible?
- 4) As much as possible, understand the original language, Hebrew or Greek. Never try to establish dogmatic doctrine or teachings by using *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. It can be helpful at times, but it is extremely limited.
- 5) Ask: what does the Scripture clearly say?
- 6) Ask: what does the Scripture not say?
- 7) Ask: who was the book written to?
- 8) Ask: who wrote it?
- 9) Ask: who said it?
- 10) Understand the time frame in history when the book was written.
- 11) Base your study on Scriptural knowledge that you already understand. What do you know up to this point in time?
- 12) Do not allow your own personal assumptions or preconceived notions to influence your understanding and conclusions.
- 13) Do not form conclusions based on partial facts, insufficient information, or the opinions and speculations of others.
- 14) Opinions, regardless of how strongly you feel about them, don't necessarily count. Scripture must be your standard and guide.

Appendix B

When Was Jesus Christ Born?

The date of Jesus Christ's birth has been a topic of controversy for centuries. Various theories place the year of His birth in a range from 6 BC to 1 AD. As to the season of the year, most believe that He was born in the winter. Some claim that He was born in the spring, while others feel that He was born in the fall. Still others are inclined to shrug their shoulders, declaring that they don't know and, it really doesn't matter. While some theologians claim that it is not possible to know when Jesus was born, they readily accept December 25 as the day to celebrate His birth. They reason that the date or season is not as important as remembering the event.

Although an abundance of scriptural and historical evidence proves Jesus was not born on December 25, the majority of professing Christians still observe this date as His birthday. Few realize that this observance is based on ancient pagan tradition that predates Jesus Christ's birth by thousands of years. Age-old customs of pagan origin entered the Christian churches many centuries ago and are now viewed as an essential part of Christian worship. Most churches today encourage their members to freely participate in the popular customs of the Christmas season.

While supposedly honoring the birth of Jesus Christ, the traditional observance of Christmas actually distorts the scriptural story of His birth and ignores the revealed purpose of His coming to earth in the flesh. His birth is, in fact, the chief cornerstone and foundation of true Christianity. The birth of Jesus Christ fulfilled a number of significant prophecies that are recorded in the Old Testament. A proper understanding of the true circumstances of His birth will provide deeper insight into the meaning of His life and the ultimate purpose of His coming.

The scriptural and historical facts concerning the birth of Jesus Christ are readily available to all who are willing to examine them. These records clearly reveal the year, season and the approximate day of Jesus Christ's birth.

Jesus Was Born During the Reign of Herod the Great

The Gospel of Matthew records that the birth of Jesus Christ occurred during the reign of Herod the Great. When Herod heard that the prophesied king of the Jews had been born, he feared that the Jews would begin to revolt against his rule. Matthew's account follows: "Now after Jesus had been born in Bethlehem of Judea, in *the* days of Herod the king, behold, Magi from *the* east arrived at Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east, and have come to worship Him.' But when Herod the king heard *this*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him" (Matt. 2:1-3).

Intending to slay the infant king, Herod summoned the scribes and chief priests to Jerusalem to inquire where the Messiah would be born, according to the prophecies in the Old Testament. Upon learning that Christ was prophesied to be born in Bethlehem, Herod instructed the Magi to return and inform him after they had found Him. But God intervened, through a dream to Joseph, to prevent Herod from harming the young Jesus:

"And after hearing the king, they departed; and behold, the star that they had seen in the east went in front of them, until it came and stood over *the house* where the little child

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was. And after seeing the star, they rejoiced *with* exceedingly great joy.

“And when they had come into the house, they found the little child with Mary His mother, and they bowed down and worshiped Him; then they opened their treasures *and* presented their gifts to Him—gold and frankincense and myrrh.

“But being divinely instructed in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another way. Now after they had departed, behold, an angel of *the* Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, ‘Arise and take the little child and His mother, and escape into Egypt, and remain there until I shall tell you; for Herod is about to seek the little child to destroy Him.’ And he arose by night and took the little child and His mother, and went into Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod ...” (Matt. 2:9-15).

Matthew’s account of these events indicates that Herod died not long after Jesus was taken to Egypt. After the death of Herod, Joseph brought Jesus and Mary back from Egypt to Nazareth, a city in the district of Galilee: “Now when Herod had died, behold, an angel of *the* Lord appeared to Joseph in Egypt in a dream, saying, ‘Arise and take the little child and His mother, and go into *the* land of Israel; for those who were seeking the life of the little child have died.’ And he arose *and* took the little child and His mother, and came into *the* land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of Herod his father, he was afraid to go there; and after being divinely instructed in a dream, he went into the parts of Galilee. And after arriving, he dwelt in a city called Nazareth ...” (Matt. 2:19-23).

This scriptural record offers conclusive evidence that the birth of Jesus Christ occurred a short time before the death of Herod the Great. Through the historical writings of the noted historian Josephus, we can determine precisely when Herod reigned and when he died. Josephus reveals the specific year that Herod was crowned king at Rome: “... And thus did this man receive the kingdom, having obtained it on the hundred and eighty-fourth olympiad, when Caius Domitius Calvinus was consul the second time and Caius Asinius Pollio [the first time]” (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 14:14:5).

An olympiad is four years in length and is reckoned from July to July. The 184th olympiad extended from July 1, 44 BC, to June 30, 40 BC. Records of this period show that Calvinus and Pollio were consuls in the year 714 AUC (years from the founding of Rome), which was 40 BC (Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, p. 96). Thus we know that Herod became king in 40 BC. While the olympiad was reckoned from July 1 to June 30, the calendar year for consuls was reckoned from January 1 to December 31. Since the 184th olympiad ended on June 30, 40 BC, and the consuls did not take office until January 1 of that year, we know that Herod was made king sometime during the six-month period from January through June of 40 BC.

Although Herod was crowned at Rome in 40 BC, three years passed before he conquered Jerusalem and began to reign in that city: “When the rigour of winter was over, Herod removed his army, and came near to Jerusalem and pitched his camp hard by the city. Now this was the third year since he had been made king at Rome ...” (Josephus, *Ant.*, 14:15:14).

While Herod launched his attack in the spring, it was not until the summer of that year that he was able to take the city of Jerusalem. Josephus reveals the specific date of this event: “... for it was summer time.... This destruction befell the city of Jerusalem when Marcus Agrippa and Canninius Gallus were consuls of Rome, on the hundred eighty and fifth olympiad, on the third month, on the solemnity of the fast ...” (Ibid., 14:16:2, 4).

The 185th olympiad extended from July 1, 40 BC, to June 30, 36 BC. Agrippa and Gallus became consuls in 717 AUC, which corresponds to 37 BC. The fast of the third month that Josephus refers to was the 23rd of Sivan, according to the Hebrew Calendar, which was June 22 on the Julian Calendar. Herod completed the conquest of the city of Jerusalem in the summer of 37 BC, and began to reign as king in Jerusalem at that time.

Josephus provides additional historical records concerning the reign of Herod that enable us to determine the time of his death: “... he [Herod] died ... having reigned since he

When Was Jesus Christ Born?

had procured Antigonus to be slain, thirty-four years; but since he had been declared king by the Romans, thirty-seven” (Ibid., 17:8:1). Josephus records elsewhere in the same book that Antigonus was killed shortly after Herod had conquered Jerusalem (Ibid., 14:16:4).

In linking Antigonus’s death with Herod’s conquest of Jerusalem in 37 BC, Josephus confirms that Herod did not reign in Jerusalem until three years after his coronation at Rome. Consequently, there are two methods of reckoning the reign of Herod the Great – the Jewish method, which counts thirty-four years from 37 BC, and the Roman method, which counts thirty-seven years from 40 BC. Since the first year of his reign is included in the count, both methods of reckoning arrive at 4 BC as the end of Herod’s reign. This date is conclusively established by the records of history as the year that Herod died.

Josephus’ detailed account of Herod’s death enables us to further pinpoint the time of the year. In his account, Josephus records that Herod died after an eclipse of the moon but before Passover. The lunar eclipses that occurred during this period of history have been calculated in the book *Solar and Lunar Eclipses of the Ancient Near East* by M. Kudler and E. Mickler (published by Neukirchen-Bluyn: Verlas Butson & Bercker Kevelaer, 1971). Here is a listing of the lunar eclipses:

- 7 BC - No eclipses
- 6 BC - No eclipses
- 5 BC - Total eclipse, March 23, 8:30 PM
- 5 BC - Total eclipse, September 15, 10:30 PM
- 4 BC - Partial eclipse, March 13, 2:20 AM
- 3 BC - No eclipses
- 2 BC - No eclipses

The first lunar eclipse to occur during this period was a total eclipse on March 23 in the year 5 BC. In this year the Passover, Nisan 14, was observed by the Jews on March 22. Because the Scriptural reckoning of days is from sunset to sunset, the Passover day extended from sunset March 21 to sunset March 22. Since the total eclipse that occurred at 8:30 PM on the night of March 23 was after Passover and not before, this was not the eclipse that Josephus refers to in conjunction with Herod’s death.

The second total eclipse of the moon during this period took place on September 15, 5 BC, which was a significant day by Scriptural reckoning. According to the Hebrew Calendar, September 15 was the 14th of Tishri (the seventh month). The moon was totally eclipsed at 10:30 PM that night, which was the beginning of the 15th of Tishri, the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles. The twin total eclipses of the moon in 5 BC are so rare that on these dates it only occurs once in 2717 years (*Canon of Lunar Eclipses 1500 B.C.—A. D.* by Bao-Lin and Alan D. Faila).

Josephus’ account of this period of Jewish history includes a number of events which point to this eclipse as the one that occurred shortly before the death of Herod. In recounting the final months of Herod’s reign, Josephus gives us an accurate time frame for establishing the date of Jesus Christ’s birth.

Historical Records of Herod’s Death Reveal the Year of Christ’s Birth

Josephus gives us detailed records of the events that took place before the death and burial of Herod. These events are listed chronologically in the synchronized Hebrew/Roman calendar on pages 720. Events that are not specifically dated by historical records have been given approximate dates based on the evidence that is available in history. This calendar accurately depicts the sequence of events that took place during that time period.

Josephus relates that shortly before his death, Herod sent ambassadors to Rome. As noted on the synchronized Hebrew/Roman calendar, this action is estimated to have occurred

during the week ending August 26, 5 BC. Sometime during the next week, a group of zealots stormed the temple and proceeded to chop down the golden idol that Herod had erected over one of its gates. Herod learned that Matthias, the high priest, had incited the zealots to undertake this action in the mistaken belief that Herod was dead. Herod punished Matthias by removing him from the office of high priest and burning him alive, as Josephus relates. In his writings, Josephus shows that these events took place in the fall of the year and were marked by an eclipse of the moon. Josephus' gives this detailed account: "He deprived Matthias of the high priesthood, as in part an occasion of this action, and made Joazar, who was Matthias' wife's brother, high priest in his stead. Now it happened, that during the time of the high priesthood of this Matthias, there was another person made high priest for a single day, that very day which the Jews observe as a fast day [the day of Atonement, the 10th day of Tishri, the seventh month] 'the great day of expiation.' The occasion was this: Matthias the high priest, on the night before the day when the fast was to be celebrated, seemed in a dream to have conversation [sexual relations] with his wife: and because he could not officiate himself on that account, Joseph, the son of Ellemus, his kinsman, assisted him in that sacred office. But Herod deprived this Matthias of the high priesthood, and [later] burnt the other Matthias [on Tishri 14], who had raised the sedition, with his companions, alive. And that very night there was an eclipse of the moon [Tishri 15]" (*Ant.*, 17:6:4).

This eclipse was obviously an autumnal eclipse, as it occurred in Tishri, the seventh month of the Hebrew Calendar, which corresponds to September/October on the Julian Calendar. As documented in the record of lunar eclipses by Kudler and Mickler, only one autumnal eclipse occurred during that period of history. This was the eclipse of September 15, 5 BC, on the evening beginning the Feast of Tabernacles – the 15th day of Tishri.

Josephus records the decline of Herod's health after this autumnal eclipse and the state of insanity that preceded his death. Shortly after the Feast of Tabernacles, Herod's "distemper" increased, and he sought the help of the warm mineral baths at Callirrhoe, which was located beyond the Jordan River. It has been estimated that he went there the week ending November 4. There is no record of the exact length of his stay; but since his funeral procession and burial took place after the winter, he must have stayed there approximately eight or nine weeks. He then went to Jericho, probably arriving by January 13. Josephus describes Herod's deplorable mental state at that time: "... and came again to Jericho, where he grew so choleric, that it brought him to do all things like a madman; and though he was near his death, he contrived the following wicked designs" (*Ibid.*, 17:6:5).

Herod commanded the principal men of his government to come to Jericho, intending to have them killed after his death. It is estimated that these men arrived at Jericho by January 20 to 27. A few days later, Herod received letters from Rome brought by the ambassadors he had sent. Although the news was good and seemed to revive him, he attempted suicide soon afterward. His attempt was not successful, as he was restrained by Achiabus. In his rage he ordered his son Antipater to be killed, and he himself died five days later. Josephus records, "When he had done these things, he died, the fifth day after he had caused Antipater to be slain; having reigned, since he had procured Antigonus to be slain, thirty-four years; but since he had been declared king by the Romans, thirty-seven" (*Ibid.*, 17:8:1).

Herod died thirty-seven years from the time of his coronation at Rome in the spring of 40 BC. Although his reign began near the end of the 184th olympiad (reckoned from July 1 to June 30), it is included as the first year in Josephus' count. Based on the records of Josephus and other historical evidence, Herod's death is estimated to have occurred during the week ending February 17, 4 BC.

After Herod's death, Archelaus succeeded Herod as king. He carried out Herod's wishes for an extended period of mourning and a long funeral before his burial. The time needed for these ceremonies was approximately twenty-five days, not counting Sabbaths. The chronology of these events is laid out step by step on the synchronized Hebrew/Roman calendar on page 720. As illustrated in this calendar, the funeral procession finished its journey with the arrival of Herod's body in Jerusalem during the week ending March 24, 4 BC,

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at which time Archelaus began his rule in Jerusalem.

The records of Josephus clearly contradict the commonly held theory that the eclipse of March 13, 4 BC, was the eclipse before Herod's death. If Herod had died after March 13, the extended mourning and funeral procession could not possibly have been completed by March 24. As Josephus shows, these extended ceremonies began many weeks before the Passover day and ended with Herod's burial in the middle of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which followed the Passover. To further substantiate the time of Herod's burial, Josephus records that at that time Archelaus slaughtered 3,000 people who had crowded into the temple area to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This slaughter occurred during the week which ended April 14, 4 BC, confirming that Herod's burial took place about two months after his death.

As recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea during the reign of Herod the Great. After His birth, Jesus was taken to Egypt and remained there for a period of time before Herod died. Matthew's record of these events indicates that the birth of Jesus occurred several months before the death of Herod. Since Herod's death occurred very early in 4 BC—approximately mid-February—it is evident that Jesus was born sometime during the preceding year. Thus Herod's death places Christ's birth in the year 5 BC. The Gospel of Luke provides additional evidence that enables us to know the specific season of the year in which Christ was born.

Scriptural Evidence of the Season of Jesus Christ's Birth

In his account of the birth of Jesus Christ, Luke records a major historical event of that time. Luke writes, "Now it happened in those days *that* a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. (This registration first occurred when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) Then all went to be registered, each to his own city" (Luke 2:1-3).

The taxation and census decree by Caesar Augustus was carried out according to the Jewish custom which required that such taxes be collected after the fall harvest (See *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, Chronology, New Testament, pp. 199-200). Luke's record of this taxation reveals that the birth of Jesus took place during the autumn. When we combine Luke's record with Matthew's account of Herod's death, it is evident that Jesus was born in the fall of 5 BC.

Luke gives us additional evidence that Jesus was born during the fall harvest season by recording that there were no guest rooms available at the inn when Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem. The scarcity of room was due not only to the taxation but also to the festival days that followed the fall harvest. Many thousands of people were already in the Jerusalem area to observe the fall festival season. Bethlehem was extremely crowded because of its proximity to Jerusalem. Since there was no room at the inn, Joseph and Mary were forced to lodge in a barn. Jesus was born there and was laid in a manger.

In addition, Luke makes it clear that Jesus was not born in the winter by recording that shepherds were tending their flocks in the fields that night (Luke 2:8). The shepherds in that region of Palestine always brought their flocks out of the fields before the onset of winter. The flocks were never left to graze in the pastures during the winter months because the cold weather prevented the grass from growing. There is much discussion in Bible commentaries for those who desire to study these points further.

Records of John's Ministry Confirm Jesus' Birth in the Fall of 5 BC

In his account of the beginning of John the Baptist's ministry, Luke gives another historical reference that helps to verify the date of Jesus Christ's birth: "Now in *the* fifteenth year of the government of Tiberius Caesar ... *the* word of God came unto John, the son of

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Zacharias, in the wilderness. And he went into all the country around the Jordan, proclaiming the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Luke 3:1-3).

Luke tells us that John the Baptist began his ministry in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar. A dispute has existed over which year of Tiberius' reign was reckoned by Luke as the fifteenth year because the first two years of Tiberius' reign were a co-rulership with Augustus. Consequently, there are conflicting opinions as to whether the Scriptural record includes Tiberius' co-reign or counts from the beginning of his sole reign.

The dispute is settled when Luke's record is linked with other scriptural and historical records of that time. The reign of Tiberius is firmly established by historical records dating the death of Augustus. Augustus died August 19 in the year that Sextus Apuleius and Sextus Sillus were consuls. The year of the consuls' rule was 767 AUC, which was 14 AD. This date is confirmed by the fact that Augustus died 44 years, lacking 13 days, after the Battle of Actium (*Dio's Roman History*, Loeb ed., Book LVI: 29-30, vol. 7, pp. 65, 69).

Josephus records that the Battle of Actium took place during the 187th olympiad in the seventh year of the reign of Herod (*Ant.*, 15:5:1-2; *Wars*, 1:20:3). The 187th olympiad was the four-year period from July 1, 32 BC, to June 30, 28 BC. The Battle of Actium took place during the second year of the olympiad, which was July 1, 31 BC to June 30, 30 BC. This was the seventh year of Herod's reign by Jewish reckoning, but the tenth year of his reign by Roman reckoning. Counting forward 44 years from the Battle of Actium, which ended in September, 31 BC, we arrive at 14 AD as the year of Augustus' death.

Records of the reign of Augustus reveal that during his final years, "... the consuls caused a law to be passed ... that he [Tiberius] should govern the provinces jointly with Augustus and hold the census with him" (*Seutonius*, Ed. J.C. Rolfe, LCL, vol. 1, p. 323).

Tiberius began his co-rulership with Augustus in 12 AD, two years before the death of Augustus. Counting from this date, we arrive at 26 AD as the fifteenth year of Tiberius and the beginning of John the Baptist's ministry. Other Scriptural and historical records confirm that John the Baptist began his ministry in the spring of 26 AD and that Jesus began His ministry six months later in the fall of 26 AD.

Major supporting evidence is found in the Gospel of John, which records the words of the Jews at the time of the first Passover of Christ's ministry. During this Passover season, the Jews stated that the temple had been forty-six years in building (John 2:20). We can determine the date of this Passover, and the first year of Christ's ministry, by counting from the year that the building of the temple began.

Josephus records that the building of the temple was begun during the eighteenth year of Herod's reign: "And now Herod, in the eighteenth year of his reign [that is, the eighteenth in Jerusalem, but the twenty-first year from his coronation in Rome] ... undertook a very great work, that is to build of himself the temple of God" (*Ant.*, 15:11:1).

The eighteenth year of Herod's reign in Jerusalem, which was the first year of building the temple, was from the summer of 20 BC to the summer of 19 BC. Counting forward, the forty-sixth year of building was from the summer of 26 AD to the summer of 27 AD. The only Passover that occurred during this period of time was the Passover of 27 AD. Thus, scriptural and historical records place the first Passover of Christ's ministry in the spring of 27 AD. Since His ministry began in the fall of the year, we can date its beginning to the autumn of 26 AD.

The Birth of John the Baptist a Key to the Day of Jesus Christ's Birth

In the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke, we find a detailed account of the circumstances and events that preceded the birth of Jesus Christ. In this account, Luke reveals that the conception of Jesus by the virgin Mary occurred six months after the conception of John by Mary's aunt, Elizabeth, the wife of Zacharias. Zacharias was a priest

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of God who served at the temple in Jerusalem.

At the beginning of his account, Luke records, "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest of *the* course of Abijah, Zacharias by name....And it came to pass *that* in fulfilling his priestly service before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priestly service, it fell to him by lot to burn incense when he entered into the temple of the Lord" (Luke 1:5, 8-9).

Zacharias was executing his priestly duties according to the order and course of Abijah. This information is most helpful in establishing the time frame of Luke's account. In ancient Israel, King David divided the duties of the priests into twenty-four working courses, or shifts (I Chron. 24:7-19). Each course or shift was assigned to work one full week, from noon Sabbath to noon Sabbath (Talmud, *Sukkah*). The Old Testament records the exact rotation and time order of the priestly courses, which continued down to New Testament times. Zacharias was of the course of Abijah, which was the eighth course or shift in the series of yearly assignments for the priesthood.

Josephus (noted Jewish historian) was a priest of the first course or shift. Josephus confirms that the priestly courses established by King David were still functioning in New Testament times. He records, "He [King David] divided them also into courses ... and he found [or established] of these priests, twenty-four courses ... and he ordained that one course should minister to God eight days, from sabbath to sabbath ... and this partition hath remained to this day" (*Ant.*, 7:14:7). This record confirms that the courses of priests remained in effect down to the time of Zacharias and the birth of Jesus Christ. These courses undoubtedly continued until the temple was destroyed in 70 AD.

The Talmud reveals that the first priestly course, or shift, began in the first full week of the first month of the Hebrew Calendar. The second course worked the second week. This rotation continued on a week-by-week basis through all twenty-four courses. Each priestly course served a one-week shift twice each year. In addition, all courses were required to work during the three weeks in the year that coincided with the three festival seasons: Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. Thus all the priests shared equally in the priestly responsibilities for the entire year.

We know that the angel Gabriel delivered the promise of John's birth while Zacharias was serving in his priestly course in the temple. The Gospel of Luke reveals that John was born six months before Jesus (Luke 1:35-36). Our examination of both the scriptural and historical records has established that Jesus was born in the fall of 5 BC. Accordingly, John the Baptist was born in the spring of 5 BC and was conceived nine months earlier in the summer of 6 BC. Knowing the year that John was conceived enables us to determine the exact period of time that Zacharias was serving in the temple.

In the year 6 BC, the first day of the first month (the month of Nisan according to the Hebrew Calendar) was a weekly Sabbath. According to calculations synchronizing the Hebrew Calendar and the Julian Calendar, this Sabbath was March 20. Projecting forward, the assignments course by course, or week by week, were: Course 1, the first week; Course 2, the second week; all courses for the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread, the third week; Course 3, the fourth week; Course 4, the fifth week; Course 5, the sixth week; Course 6, the seventh week; Course 7, the eighth week; Course 8, the ninth week; and all courses the tenth week, which was the week of Pentecost. (See the synchronized Hebrew/Roman calendar on page 717.)

Because Zacharias was of the course of Abijah, the eighth course, he was assigned the ninth and tenth weeks from the beginning of the year. These weeks of service were counted from noon Sabbath to noon Sabbath. The ninth week was from Iyar 27 through Sivan 5, which corresponds to May 15 through May 22 on the Julian Calendar. The tenth week, Sivan 5 through Sivan 12, or May 22 through May 29, was the week of Pentecost. Sometime during these two weeks, the angel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias in the temple and prophesied the birth of John.

Although the exact time of Gabriel's appearance is not recorded, it is reasonable to

conclude that Gabriel delivered this message from God on the day of Pentecost. The announcement that Zacharias's wife Elizabeth would bear a son came during the two weeks in which Zacharias served at the temple, and the day of Pentecost occurred on Sivan 6, in the middle of the two-week period. Since John the Baptist's birth was a major fulfillment of prophecy, it is appropriate that God would send Gabriel on a holy day to announce the promise of his conception to Zacharias. Luke records the angel Gabriel's message to Zacharias as he was in the temple offering incense: "According to the custom of the priestly service, it fell to him by lot to burn incense when he entered into the temple of the Lord. And all the multitude of the people outside were praying at the hour of the *burning of incense*. Then an angel of *the Lord* appeared to him, standing at *the right side* of the altar of incense. And when he saw *the angel*, Zacharias was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

"But the angel said to him, 'Fear not, Zacharias, because your supplication has been heard; and your wife Elizabeth shall bear a son to you, and you shall call his name John. And he shall be a joy and exultation to you; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great before the Lord. And he shall not drink wine and strong drink in any form, but he shall be filled with *the Holy Spirit* even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to *the Lord* their God. And he shall go before Him in *the spirit* and power of Elijah, to turn *the hearts* of the fathers to *the children*, and *the disobedient* to *the wisdom of the righteous*, to make ready a people prepared for *the Lord*' " (Luke 1:9-17).

Because Zacharias did not believe God's promise, Gabriel pronounced a sign from God. Zacharias would be unable to speak until the child was born and given the name John, which God had chosen (Luke 1:13, 19-20). After completing his service at the temple, Zacharias returned to his house, and John was conceived in the following days: "Now it came to pass *that* when the days of his service were fulfilled, he departed to his house. And after those days, Elizabeth his wife conceived, but hid herself *for* five months ..." (Luke 1:23-24).

The Gospel account indicates that Elizabeth became pregnant shortly after Zacharias returned home. Since he returned on May 29, it is reasonable to assume that she became pregnant between May 30 and June 12 (Sivan 13-26) in the year 6 BC. This estimated time allows a two-week conception period.

Luke was inspired to record that Elizabeth was in the sixth month of her pregnancy when the virgin Mary was miraculously impregnated through the power of the Holy Spirit and conceived Jesus: "Now behold, Elizabeth your kinswoman has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is *the sixth month* for her who *was called barren*" (Luke 1:36). Based on the estimated time of conception, the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy was November/December by Roman reckoning.

Luke gives additional details that indicate Mary became pregnant in the last two weeks of Elizabeth's sixth month. Mary was told by the angel Gabriel that Elizabeth was already in the sixth month of her pregnancy. Mary then visited Elizabeth and stayed with her almost three months (Luke 1:39-40, 56). Soon after Mary left, Elizabeth reached her full term of nine months, and John was born sometime between Adar 19 and Nisan 3, or February 27 and March 11, in 5 BC.

As illustrated by the synchronized Hebrew/Roman calendar on page 718, Mary's probable conception period coincides with the last two weeks of Elizabeth's sixth month. That two-week period was Keslev 17-30, or November 28-December 11. Projecting forward nine months from the estimated time of Mary's conception, we arrive at the two-week period during which Christ was probably born. This two-week time period was Elul 24-Tishri 8, or August 27-September 9. As the synchronized Hebrew/Roman calendar shows on page 719, the Feast of Trumpets was the middle day of this two-week period.

Many passages in the Bible show that the Feast of Trumpets pictures the second coming of Jesus Christ. The Day of the Lord and the angelic trumpets in the book of Revelation clearly project this symbolism and meaning. Is it not reasonable to conclude that God also chose the Feast of Trumpets as the day of Jesus Christ's birth? The apostle Paul

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reveals that the prophesied birth of Jesus was fulfilled at a set time. Paul wrote, “But when the time for the fulfillment came, God sent forth His own Son, born of a woman ...” (Gal. 4:4). While the Gospels do not reveal the specific day, the birth of Jesus Christ on the Feast of Trumpets would be in harmony with God’s great plan as portrayed through His annual holy days.

Although the Scriptures do not record the exact date of His birth, the biblical and historical evidence makes it abundantly clear that Jesus Christ was not born in the middle of winter, or any time during winter or spring. All the evidence clearly points to the two-week period around the Feast of Trumpets, in the fall of 5 BC, as the time of the birth of Jesus Christ. Professing Christians today need to open their eyes to this truth and forsake their misguided belief that Jesus was born on December 25. The observance of Christmas neither honors Jesus Christ nor commemorates His birth. In fact, the traditional festivities that are observed each year at Christmas time are a perpetuation of ancient pagan customs that no true Christian should practice (Deut. 12:29-32, Jer. 10:1-8). These traditions, like other religious traditions of this world, are neither pleasing nor acceptable to God (Mark 7:6-9), and those who practice them dishonor God the Father and Jesus Christ.

The Calculated Hebrew Calendar with the Julian Calendar

This synchronized calculated Hebrew/Julian calendar illustrates the time period from March 6 BC to April 4 BC. The sequence of scriptural, historical and astronomical events depicted in this calendar reveals the actual year, season, and the most likely day of Jesus Christ's birth. (*See Appendix C for "A Synchronized Chart of Historical and Scriptural Records That Establish the Year of Christ's Birth"*). **Note:** The columns read downward—left column first.

6 B.C.

NISAN

MARCH

S

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W

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SAB

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APRIL

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SAB

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29

1st Course begins - noon Sabbath.

1st Course works - 2nd Course begins noon Sabbath.

2nd Course works - All courses begin at Passover.

All work - 3rd Course begins noon Sabbath.

3rd Course works - 4th Course begins noon Sabbath.

*14th - Passover, 15th-21st - Feast of Unleavened Bread.

6 B.C.

SIVAN

MAY

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JUNE

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SAB

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8th Course works - All courses begin at noon Sabbath.

9th Course begins noon Sabbath. Zacharias leaves.

Elizabeth's probable two-week conception period ends.

*6th - Day of Pentecost (probably day that Gabriel appeared to Zacharias).

6 B.C.

IYAR

APRIL

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MAY

F

SAB

23

1

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3

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5

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11

12

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29

4th Course works - 5th Course begins noon Sabbath.

5th Course works - 6th Course begins noon Sabbath.

6th Course works - 7th Course begins noon Sabbath.

7th Course works - 8th Course begins noon Sabbath.

8th Course works.

6 B.C.

TAMMUZ

JUNE

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SAB

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22

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JULY

F

SAB

18

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End of 1st month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.

Appendix B

6 B.C.

 AB

JULY				AUGUST			
S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB	
					16	17	18
					1	2	3
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	

End of 2nd month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.

6 B.C.

KISLEV

NOVEMBER				DECEMBER			
S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB	
					12	13	
					1	2	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
28	29	30	1	2	3	4	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	

The angel Gabriel is sent to the virgin Mary. The power of the Holy Spirit overshadows her and she is impregnated. Then Mary visits Elizabeth.

End of 6th month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.

6 B.C.

ELUL

AUGUST				SEPTEMBER			
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	A
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
29	30	31	1	2	3	4	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	

End of 3rd month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.

6 B.C. / 5 B.C.

TEBETH

DECEMBER				JANUARY			
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	SAB
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
26	27	28	29	30	31	1	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	

End of 1st month of Mary's pregnancy.

End of 7th month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.

6 B.C.

TISHRI

SEPTEMBER				OCTOBER			
S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB	
	13	14	15	16	17	18	
		1	2	3	4	5	6
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
26	27	28	29	30	1	2	
14	*15	16	17	18	19	20	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
10	11	12					
28	29	30					

1st of Tishri - Feast of
Trumpets.

10th of Tishri - Day of
Atonement.

End of 4th month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.

*15th-21st - Feast of

Tabernacles.

22nd - Last Great Day.

5 B.C.

SHEBAT

JANUARY				FEBRUARY			
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	SAB
	10	11	12	13	14	15	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
30	31	1	2	3	4	5	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
6	7	8					
28	29	30					

End of 2nd month of Mary's pregnancy.

End of 8th month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.

6 B.C.

HESHVAN

OCTOBER			NOVEMBER			
S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB
			13	14	15	16
			1	2	3	4
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	7	8	9	10	11	
26	27	28	29	30		

End of 5th month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.

5 B.C.

ADAR

FEBRUARY				MARCH			
S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB	
			9	10	11	12	
			1	2	3	4	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
27	28	29	1	2	3	4	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
5	6	7	8				
26	27	28	29				

End of 3rd month of Mary's pregnancy.

End of 8th month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.

When Was Jesus Christ Born?

5 B.C.

NISAN

MARCH					APRIL		
S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB	
				9	10	11	
				1	2	3	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
11	12	13	*14	15	16	17	
26	27	28	29	30	31	1	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
2	3	4	5	6	7		
25	26	27	28	29	30		

②③ Total eclipse on March 23 at 8:30 PM.

End of 4th month of Mary's pregnancy.

End of 9th month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.

John the Baptist born.

*14th - Passover,
15th-21st - Feast of Unleavened Bread.

5 B.C.

AB

JULY				AUGUST			
S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB	
			5	6	7	8	
			1	2	3	4	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
30	31	1	2	3			
26	27	28	29	30			

End of 8th month of Mary's pregnancy.

5 B.C.

IYAR

APRIL					MAY		
S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB	
					8		
					1		
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
9	10	11	12	13	*14	15	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
30	1	2	3	4	5	6	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	

End of 5th month of Mary's pregnancy.

5 B.C.

ELUL

AUGUST				SEPTEMBER			
S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB	
					4	5	
					1	2	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
27	28	29	30	31	1		
24	25	26	27	28	29		

Probable two-week period for the birth of Jesus begins.

5 B.C.

SIVAN

MAY					JUNE		
S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
*8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
28	29	30	31	1	2	3	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
4	5						
29	30						

End of 6th month of Mary's pregnancy.

*Day of Pentecost.

5 B.C.

TISHRI

SEPTEMBER				OCTOBER			
S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB	
					2		
					*1		
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
2	3	4	5	6	7	**8	
10	11	12	13	14	⑮	16	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
1							
30							

⑮ Total eclipse on September 15, at 10:30 PM.

End of 9th month of Mary's pregnancy; The Feast of Trumpets (1st of Tishri) is the middle day of the probable two-week period for the birth of Jesus.

**Probable day of Jesus' circumcision.

*1st - Feast of Trumpets.

10th - Day of Atonement.

15th-21st - Feast of Tabernacles

22nd - Last Great Day.

5 B.C.

TAMMUZ

JUNE					JULY		
S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB	
		6	7	8	9	10	
		1	2	3	4	5	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
25	26	27	28	29	30	1	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
2	3	4					
27	28	29					

End of 7th month of Mary's pregnancy.

5 B.C.

HESHVAN

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB
	2	3	4	5	6	7
	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
29	30	31				
28	29	30				

Wise men arrive and meet with Herod.

Probable two-week period for the presentation and blessing of Jesus at the temple. Wise men find Jesus and present their gifts. Joseph, Mary and Jesus escape into Egypt.

Herod orders the slaughter of all male children two years and younger.

Appendix B

5 B.C.

KISLEV

NOVEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB
			1	2	3	4
			<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
19	20	21	22	23	24	25

Herod goes beyond Jordan.

4 B.C.

ADAR 1

JANUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB
29	30	31	1	2	3	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
21	22	23	24	25	26	27

Herod locks up principal men in
Hippodrome.

Letters come from Rome.
Herod attempts suicide.
Antipater is killed.

Herod dies. Principal men released from Hyppodrome.

Herod's funeral preparations
and 7 days of mourning in
Jericho.

Archelaus becomes king.

26 27 28 29 30

28 29 30

begins.

5 B.C.

TEBETH

DECEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB
					1	2
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	
24	25	26	27	28	29	

Herod still beyond Jordan.

4 B.C.

ADAR II

FEBRUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB
			28	1	2	3
			<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
25	26	27	28			
26	27	28	29			

Funeral procession slowly heads
from Jericho to Jerusalem.

Herod's body arrives at Herodium in Bethlehem via Jerusalem.

Archelaus begins reign in Jerusalem.

5 B.C. / 4 B.C.

SHEBAT

DECEMBER JANUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
28						
30						

Herod orders principal men to come to Jericho.

4 B.C.

NISAN

MARCH

S	M	T	W	T	F	SAB
				29	30	31
				1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	*14	15	16	17
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
22	23	24	25	26	27	
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Revolt by Jews over the lack of mourning for Mathias, the high priest who was burned to death by Herod on September 15, 5 BC.

Revolt grows as thousands of Jews arrive for Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Archelaus orders the slaughter of 3,000 in the middle of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Herod's burial takes place.

*14th - Passover,
15th-21st - Feast of Unleavened
Bread.

Appendix C

A Synchronized Chart of Historical and Scriptural Records That Establish the Year of Christ's Birth

The primary references that enable us to determine when Jesus Christ was born are those of Roman historians and of the Jewish historian Josephus, who lived from about 37 AD to 100 AD. These secular records can be used to establish the reign of Herod the Great, who attempted to kill the infant Jesus. Josephus records the names of the consuls who ruled in Rome at the time that Herod began his reign. Lists of all the consuls who ruled during the years from 509 BC to 337 AD have been preserved by Roman historians, giving us an exact time frame for dating the reign of Herod, which is essential to identifying the year of Christ's birth.

Josephus states that Herod received the kingdom in Rome in the 184th olympiad (*Antiquities*, -14:14:5). Each olympiad was four years in length, with the years being reckoned from July 1 through June 30. The 184th olympiad was from July 1, 44 BC, to June 30, 40 BC. Josephus also records that Herod began his reign when Calvinus and Pollio were consuls of Rome. Calvinus and Pollio were consuls from January 1, 40 BC, to December 31, 40 BC. Since the 184th olympiad ended on June 30, 40 BC, it is evident that the reign of Herod as king in Rome began sometime between January 1, 40 BC, and June 30, 40 BC.

According to Josephus, Herod reigned thirty-seven years from the time that he had been coronated in Rome (*Antiquities of the Jews*, 17:8:1; *Wars of the Jews*, 1:33:8). Consequently, the end of his reign occurred sometime between January 1, 4 BC, and June 30, 4 BC. Since Jesus was born during the final months of Herod's reign, all the historical facts limit the time of His birth to the period from June 30, 5 BC, to June 30, 4 BC. Because the Gospels place His birth during the fall festival season, the time is further limited to the year 5 BC. The historical and Scriptural records are presented in chart form on the following pages.

Appendix C

	Greek Olympiad	Year of Rome	Year BC - AD	Hasmonian Rule	Reign of Herod	
					Roman Count	Jewish Count
179	1	691	63*	100		
	2	692	62	101		
	3	693	61	102		
	4	694	60	103		
180	1	695	59	104		
	2	696	58	105		
	3	697	57	106		
	4	698	56	107		
181	1	699	55	108		
	2	700	54	109		
	3	701	53	110		
	4	702	52	111		
182	1	703	51	112		
	2	704	50	113		
	3	705	49	114		
	4	706	48	115		
183	1	707	47	116		
	2	708	46	117		
	3	709	45	118		
	4	710	44	119		
184	1	711	43	120		
	2	712	42	121		
	3	713	41	122		
	4	714	40•	123	1	
185	1	715	39	124	2	
	2	716	38	125	3	
	3	717	37†	126	4	1
	4	718	36		5	2
186	1	719	35		6	3
	2	720	34		7	4
	3	721	33		8	5
	4	722	32		9	6

- * 63 BC Jerusalem captured by Roman general Pompey during 179th olympiad. Antonius and Cicero are Roman consuls (Josephus, *Ant.*, 14:4:3).
- 40 BC Herod receives kingdom in Rome during 184th olympiad. Calvinus and Pollio are Roman consuls (Josephus, *Ant.*, 14:14:5).
- † 37 BC Hasmonians' 126-year rule of Jerusalem ends during 185th olympiad. Herod receives kingdom in Jerusalem. Agrippa and Gallus are Roman consuls (Josephus, *Ant.*, 14:16:4).

Synchronized Chart Establishing the Year of Christ's Birth

Greek Olympiad		Year of Rome	Year BC - AD	Life of Christ	Reign of Augustus	Reign of Herod		Temple Rebuilt
						Roman Count	Jewish Count	
187	1	723	31*		1	10	7	
	2	724	30		2	11	8	
	3	725	29		3	12	9	
	4	726	28		4	13	10	
188	1	727	27		5	14	11	
	2	728	26		6	15	12	
	3	729	25•		7	16	13	
	4	730	24		8	17	14	
189	1	731	23		9	18	15	
	2	732	22		10	19	16	
	3	733	21†		11	20	17	
	4	734	20§		12	21	18	1
190	1	735	19		13	22	19	2
	2	736	18		14	23	20	3
	3	737	17		15	24	21	4
	4	738	16		16	25	22	5
191	1	739	15		17	26	23	6
	2	740	14		18	27	24	7
	3	741	13		19	28	25	8
	4	742	12		20	29	26	9
192	1	743	11		21	30	27	10
	2	744	10		22	31	28	11
	3	745	9		23	32	29	12
	4	746	8		24	33	30	13
193	1	747	7		25	34	31	14
	2	748	6		26	35	32	15
Jesus Born	3	749	5★	0	27	36	33	16
	4	750	4Ω	1	28	37	34	17

* 31 BC Battle of Actium, seventh year of Herod's reign, 187th olympiad (Josephus, *Ant.*, 15:5:1; 15:5:2).

• 25 BC Two-year famine begins in Herod's thirteenth year (Josephus, *Ant.*, 15:9:1).

† 21 BC Augustus visits Syria during seventeenth year of Herod's reign; Apuleius and Silvius are Roman consuls (*Dio's Roman History*, LIV:7:4-6; Josephus, *Ant.*, 15:10:3).

§ 20 BC Construction of Herod's temple begins in Herod's eighteenth year (Josephus, *Ant.*, 15:11:1).

★ 5 BC Jesus born during fall festival season—most likely on the Feast of Trumpets.

Ω 4 BC Herod dies in thirty-seventh year of having received kingdom in Rome and thirty-fourth year of having received kingdom in Jerusalem (Josephus, *Ant.*, 17:8:1; *Wars*, 1:33:8).

Appendix C

Greek Olympiad		Year of Rome	Year BC - AD	Life of Christ	Reign of Augustus	Reign of Tiberius	Pilate Governs Judea	Temple Rebuilt	
194	1	751	3	2	29			18	
	2	752	2	3	30			19	
	3	753	1 BC	4	31			20	
There is no year zero		There is no year zero		There is no year zero		There is no year zero		There is no year zero	
	4	754	1 AD	5	32			21	
195	1	755	2	6	33			22	
	2	756	3	7	34			23	
	3	757	4	8	35			24	
	4	758	5	9	36			25	
196	1	759	6	10	37			26	
	2	760	7	11	38			27	
	3	761	8	12	39			28	
	4	762	9	13	40			29	
197	1	763	10	14	41			30	
	- 2	764	11	15	42			31	
	3	765	12	16	43	1		32	
	4	766	13	17	44	2		33	
198	1	767	14	18	45	3		344	
	2	768	15	19		4		35	
	3	769	16	20		5		36	
	4	770	17	21		6		37	
199	1	771	18	22		7		38	
	2	772	19	23		8		39	
	3	773	20	24		9		40	
	4	774	21	25		10		41	
200	1	775	22	26		11		42	
	2	776	23	27		12		43	
	3	777	24	28		13		44	
	4	778	25	29		14		45	
201	1	779	26*	30		15	1	46	
	2	780	27	31		16	2		
	3	781	28	32		17	3		
	4	782	29	33	Crucified Nisan 14	18	4		
202	1	783	30★	33½		19	5		
	2	784	31			20	6		
	3	785	32		21	7			
	4	786	33			22	8		

* 26 AD Pontius Pilate assumes governance of Judea (Luke 3:1). Jesus begins ministry at about age thirty (Lk. 3:23). Herod's temple 46 years in building (John 2:20).

★ 30 AD Jesus crucified, Wednesday, April 5, 30 AD – The Passover Day, Nisan 14.

Synchronized Chart Establishing the Year of Christ's Birth

Greek Olympiad		Year of Rome	Year AD	Reign of Tiberius	Pilate Governs Judea
203	1	787	34	23	9
	2	788	35	24	10
	3	789	36	25	
	4	790	37	26	
204	1	791	38		
	2	792	39		
	3	793	40		
	4	794	41		
205	1	795	42		
	2	796	43		
	3	797	44		
	4	798	45		
206	1	799	46*		
	2	800	47		
	3	801	48		
	4	802	49		
207	1	803	50		
	2	804	51		
	3	805	52		
	4	806	53		
208	1	807	54		
	2	808	55		
	3	809	56		
	4	810	57		
209	1	811	58		
	2	812	59		
	3	813	60		
	4	814	61		
210	1	815	62		
	2	816	63		
	3	817	64		
	4	818	65		
211	1	819	66*		
	2	820	67		
	3	821	68		
	4	822	69		
212	1	823	70†		

* 46 AD The apostle Paul begins his missionary journeys.

• 66 AD Jewish wars begin.

† 70 AD Destruction of temple occurs.

Appendix D

Jesus Christ Was Taught Directly by God the Father

JESUS DID NOT OBSERVE JEWISH TRADITION

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke record Jesus' physical genealogy and show that He was of the line of David, of the tribe of Judah. Although He was born of the virgin Mary and was human in every respect, nevertheless, He was the Savior of mankind, the Messiah of the world. Because He was divinely begotten by God the Father, Jesus was the Son of God. His education was different from that of other Jewish boys of the first century. We find no evidence in the Gospels that Jesus was educated by the rabbis in Jewish schools or synagogues, or that He was taught to observe the religion of Judaism and practice Jewish traditions. As the Son of God, there can be no doubt that His education was special.

In order to understand how and from whom Jesus received His education, one needs to examine His words and teachings, as well as what He did. First, Jesus Christ always kept the commandments of God. Second, He did not observe the commandments and traditions of Judaism, which are the commandments of men. Although Judaism claims that these traditional practices are based on the commandments of God, the truth is that they originated in the minds of men, not in the words of God. Third, **as the Lord God of the Old Testament, Jesus was the one Who had delivered the Ten Commandments.** He came to dwell on earth as the only begotten Son of God the Father, born of the virgin Mary. Since He was God in the flesh, Jesus kept the commands that came from God the Father. He did not keep the traditions that men had added to the commandments of God.

Some have assumed that Jesus was trained and brought up according to Jewish tradition. Those who have swallowed this false assumption believe that Jesus practiced the religion of Judaism and conformed to the traditions of the Jews. They claim that Jesus was thoroughly Jewish in habit, custom, tradition, religion and outlook. Some even claim that Jesus was a Pharisee, perhaps a Pharisaical rabbi, and therefore Jesus would certainly have kept the traditions of Judaism. **NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH!** Throughout the four Gospels, we find that Jesus strongly denounced the traditions of the Jews—**ALL OF THEM!** On many occasions, Jesus condemned the scribes and Pharisees for rejecting the commandments of God in order to keep their own traditions. He said, "... **Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?** ... 'This people draw near to Me with their mouths, and with their lips they honor Me; but their hearts are far away from Me.' But they worship Me in vain, teaching *for doctrine the* commandments of men" (Matt. 15:3, 8-9).

A closer look at these words reveals that Jesus emphatically declared to the leaders of Judaism that in keeping their own traditions, they were **transgressing the commandments of God.** In short, such behavior is SIN. Worship that is based on the traditions of men is vain, empty and useless—sanctimonious pretense. Yes, with their mouths and lips they professed to serve God, but their hearts were far from Him!

Think for a moment! Knowing that the traditions of Judaism transgress the commandments of God, would Jesus ever have observed those traditions? **ABSOLUTELY NOT!** What did Jesus do? The Scriptures tell us that He kept the Father's commandments: "If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as **I have kept My Father's commandments and live in His love**" (John 15:10). Jesus went far beyond keeping only the letter of the law. Rather, He always kept the full spiritual intent of the law and did those things that pleased the Father: "And He Who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not

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left Me alone **because I ALWAYS do the things that please Him**" (John 8:29).

If Jesus had observed the traditional laws and commandments of Judaism, He would have been placing the traditions of men above the commandments of God. Instead, Jesus taught that to accept the traditions of men as the rule of law in place of obedience to the commandments of God, was sin. During a confrontation with the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus challenged them, "And because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. **Which one of you can convict Me of sin?** But if I speak *the* truth, why don't you believe Me?" (John 8:45-46)

The Scriptures reveal that Jesus did not sin at any time. In II Corinthians 5:21, Paul expressly states, "**For He made Him Who knew no sin to be** sin for us, so that we might become *the* righteousness of God in Him." The apostle Peter also records that Jesus "**COMMITTED NO SIN**" (I Pet. 2:22).

Jesus' Education Was Not Pharisaic

Jesus was twelve years old when He observed the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread with His parents in Jerusalem, as recorded in Luke 2:41-42. When the Feast ended, Joseph and Mary departed to go back to Nazareth, but Jesus remained. Having discovered that He was missing, they returned to find Jesus "... in the temple, sitting in *the* midst of the teachers, both hearing them and questioning them. And all those who were listening to Him were amazed at *His* understanding and His answers" (Luke 2:46-47).

How-was it possible for Jesus to have such an extraordinary understanding of God's Word at such a young age? First, the Scriptures tell us that **Jesus had the Holy Spirit of God without measure**. John was inspired to say this about Jesus when he was questioned by the scribes and Pharisees: "**He Who comes from above is above all**. The one who is of the earth is earthy, and speaks of the earth. He Who comes from heaven is above all; and what He has seen and heard, this *is what* He testifies; but no one receives His testimony. The one who has received His testimony has set his seal that God is true; for He Whom God has sent [Jesus Christ] speaks the words of God; and **God gives not the Spirit by measure unto Him**. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand" (John 3:31-35).

Second, the Scriptures show that **Jesus was taught directly by God the Father**. **Jesus was not taught by men, nor did He ever follow the traditions of men**. Here is what the Scriptures reveal about Jesus' education: "But then, about the middle of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and was teaching. And the Jews were amazed, saying, 'How does this man know letters, **not having been schooled?**' " (John 7:14-15) The phrase "not having been schooled" means that **He was not taught in their schools**. He did not attend the rabbinical school of Hillel, as some have claimed. Jesus Himself tells us where He was educated: "Jesus answered them and said, '**My doctrine is not Mine, but His Who sent Me**' " (verse 16). Jesus' teachings were directly from God the Father, Who had personally taught Him. Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees, "I have many things to say and to judge concerning you; but He Who sent Me is true, and **what I have heard from Him, these things I speak to the world....I do nothing of Myself** [or of any man]. **But AS THE FATHER TAUGHT ME, these things I speak**" (John 8:26, 28).

Isaiah prophesied that Jesus would be educated directly by God the Father: "The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to *him that is* weary: **He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned**. The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back" (Isa. 50:4-5, *KJV*). As Isaiah foretold, Jesus was awakened early in the morning by His Father's voice and was personally taught by Him. With daily instruction directly from God the Father, Jesus did not need to be taught by men.

Jesus' education involved not only hearing the Father, but also seeing Him. So personal was His education from God the Father that Jesus actually saw the Father and what the Father did: "... Jesus answered and said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself [of His own will or the will of any man], but only what He

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sees the Father do. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son, and **shows Him everything that He Himself is doing.** And He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may be filled with wonder....I have no power to do anything of Myself; but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father, Who sent Me' " (John 5:19-20, 30). No one but Jesus could see the Father and what He was doing. This was a unique and special relationship between Jesus and God the Father.

Jesus' words in the Gospel of John confirm that He was not taught by rabbis or any other men who practiced the traditions of Judaism. Concerning their traditional education and schooling, the Jews distinctly said that He was unlettered—"not having been schooled," as recorded in John 7:15. As Jesus Himself testified, He was personally taught by God the Father.

Jesus had direct, instant communication with God the Father at all times. The Gospels record that this special relationship with the Father existed when Jesus was twelve years old, and it had undoubtedly existed from His birth. This is affirmed by Jesus' answer to Joseph and Mary when they found Him teaching the religious leaders at the temple: "And He said to them, 'Why *is it* that you were looking for Me? Don't you realize that I must be about My Father's *business*?' But they did not understand the words that He spoke to them" (Luke 2:49-50).

As the Son of God, sent to be the Savior of mankind, Jesus had to have a perfect and complete understanding of the Father's will. If He had failed even once to do the will of the Father, this sin would have brought Him under the death penalty, and we would have no Savior. In order to know the Father's will in everything, Jesus had to be taught directly by God the Father. No man—no scribe, no Pharisee, no learned sage or rabbi—could have imparted this divine knowledge to Jesus. It is critical for us to understand this fact so that we will not be deceived into believing that Jesus was taught by men and kept the traditions of the Jews.

Appendix E

How Did Jesus Christ Fulfill the Law and the Prophets?

The Sermon on the Mount was delivered at the beginning of Jesus Christ's ministry. After choosing twelve of His disciples to be witnesses of all the words that He spoke, Jesus taught them the basic spiritual principles that are recorded in Matthew 5-7 and Luke 6. These teachings, now known as the Sermon on the Mount, were the beginning words of the New Covenant. Unlike the Old Covenant, which offered the physical blessings of health and prosperity, the New Covenant opened the way to the spiritual blessings of eternal life with everlasting power and glory.

Throughout the Bible, there is a contrast between the physical and the spiritual. The words of the apostle Paul show that the physical comes first, then the spiritual (I Cor. 15:45-47). Adam, the first man on earth, came from the earth and was physical. The second Adam, Jesus Christ, came from heaven and is spiritual. In like manner, the Old Covenant, which was physical, was established before the New Covenant, which is spiritual. On the day of Pentecost, God established the Old Covenant with the children of Israel by proclaiming the Ten Commandments from the top of Mount Sinai. The event was so terrifying to the people that they pleaded with Moses not to have God speak to them any longer: "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, 'Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die' " (Ex. 20:18-19, *KJV*).

Because the children of Israel were afraid to hear God speak, Moses stood between God and the people to bring them all the words of God. Moses went up to the top of Mount Sinai to meet with God. At that time, God gave him the statutes, judgments and other laws to deliver to the children of Israel. As the intermediary who delivered the law to the people, Moses was considered a lawgiver, although he did not originate any of the laws or commandments himself (Ex. 20-23).

When Moses came down from meeting with God, he read all the words of God to the people. With one voice, the people agreed to obey all that God had commanded. Then the covenant was ratified with a blood sacrifice: "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, 'All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.' And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD. And Moses took half of the blood, and put *it* in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, 'All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.' And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, '**Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words**' " (Ex. 24:3-8, *KJV*).

The covenant that God made with the children of Israel at Mount Sinai contained blessings and cursings. God promised to bless the children of Israel if they would obey His commands and laws; but if they disobeyed, they would reap curses in return for their sins and transgressions. In this manner, God established the Old Covenant with the twelve tribes of Israel: "**See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.**"

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“But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, *and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing*; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: that thou mayest love the LORD thy God, *and that thou mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them*” (Deut. 30:15-20, KJV).

Moses’ office as mediator and lawgiver was a physical type of the coming spiritual Lawgiver, Jesus Christ. When the children of Israel were about to enter the Promised Land, God gave Moses this prophecy of the coming Messiah: “And the LORD said unto me, ‘They have well spoken that which they have spoken [that they did not want God to speak to them, but Moses]. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which He shall speak in My name, I will require it of him’ ” (Deut. 18:17-19, KJV).

Jesus Christ the Spiritual Lawgiver

This prophecy of the coming Messiah reveals that every person who rejects the words of Jesus Christ will be held accountable by God on the day of judgment. During His ministry, Jesus confirmed that He was that Prophet and, His words are the standard by which all will be judged: “But if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. **The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him; the word which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak**” (John 12:47-49).

The spiritual office of Jesus Christ far overshadows the physical office of Moses. Jesus Christ was God manifested in the flesh. He was the Lord God of the Old Testament Who had established the Old Covenant with the children of Israel. He came to earth to deliver them from the curses that the covenant had imposed for their sins and to redeem all mankind from the death penalty for their transgressions of God’s holy and righteous laws (Rom. 7:14; 3:9-19). His death ended the Old Covenant with the administration of death and established the New Covenant, which offers the gift of eternal life.

Unlike the Old Covenant, which required obedience to the letter of the law, the New Covenant is based on obedience from the heart—fulfilling the laws of God not only in the letter, but also in their complete spiritual intent. For this reason, Jesus Christ came as the spiritual Lawgiver to amplify and magnify the commandments and laws of God, as prophesied by Isaiah: “The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake; He will magnify the law, and make *it* honourable [or glorious]” (Isa. 42:21, KJV).

As the spiritual Lawgiver, Jesus Christ revealed the full meaning of the laws of God. He received a commission from God the Father to preach the gospel, and proclaim the spiritual meaning of the commandments of God in order to bring the knowledge of salvation to the world. After John the Baptist was put in prison, Jesus Christ began His ministry. He commanded the people to repent of their sins and believe the gospel: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, *the Son of God....And saying, ‘The time has been fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is near at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel’* ” (Mark 1:1, 15).

Throughout His ministry, Jesus taught repentance from sin, which is clearly defined in the New Testament as the transgression of the laws of God (I John 3:4). God inspired the words of Jesus Christ to be recorded in the Gospels and “canonized” by the apostles with the other books of the New Testament. Through the ages, from Jesus’ time until now, God has

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divinely preserved these Scriptures for the world.

The four Gospel accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ reveal that God requires obedience to His commandments not only in the letter of the law, but in the spirit of the law. Yet, in spite of Jesus' teachings, which magnify the laws and commandments of God, most professing Christians have been taught that Jesus Christ came to abolish the laws of God. Jesus emphatically denounced this teaching in the Sermon on the Mount: **"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled"** (Matt. 5:17-18).

How Did Jesus Christ Fulfill the Law?

When Jesus Christ fulfilled the law, He did not abolish it. Jesus' own words in the Gospel of Matthew make this very clear. Then in what ways did He fulfill the law?

In order to recognize how He fulfilled the law, we must understand the meaning of the word "fulfill." The English word "fulfill" is translated from the Greek verb πληρωω *pleeroo*, which means: " 'to make full, to fill full, to fulfill.' " In Mt. 5:17, depending on how one prefers to interpret the context, πληρωω *pleeroo* is understood as either *fulfill* = do, carry out, *bring to full expression* = show forth in its true spiritual meaning, or *fill up* = complete" (Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*).

As the spiritual Lawgiver, Jesus Christ fulfilled the law of God by bringing it to its full expression, revealing its complete spiritual meaning and intent. He "filled the law to the full" by teaching obedience in the spirit of the law. To fulfill the Law of God by amplifying its meaning and application is the exact opposite of abolishing the law. If Jesus had come to abolish the laws of God, He would not have magnified and expanded their meaning, making them even more binding. If the laws of God were not binding today, there could be no sin, because "sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). And if there were no sinners, there would be no need of a Savior. But the Scriptures of both the Old Testament and the New Testament testify that Jesus Christ came to save mankind from sin. Instead of abolishing or "doing away with the law," Jesus came to take upon Himself the penalty for our sins and transgressions of the laws of God and to show us the way to eternal life through spiritual obedience from the heart. That is how He magnified the laws and commandments of God and made them honorable.

The Spiritual Meaning of the Commandments Revealed in the Sermon on the Mount

As the spiritual Lawgiver, Jesus Christ taught His disciples the spiritual meaning and application of every one of God's laws and commandments. He magnified the Sixth Commandment in the Sermon on the Mount as follows: "You have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, 'You shall not commit murder; but whoever commits murder shall be subject to judgment.' But I say to you, everyone who is angry with his brother without cause shall be subject to judgment. Now *you have heard it said*, 'Whoever shall say to his brother, "Raca," shall be subject to *the judgment of the council*.' But *I say to you*, whoever shall say, 'You fool,' shall be subject to the fire of Gehenna" (Matt. 5:21-22).

Jesus made it clear that murder begins in the heart and is rooted in hatred and anger. The spiritual amplification of the Sixth Commandment, as taught by Jesus Christ, extends far beyond the letter of the law, which judges only physical acts of violence. Under the New Covenant, obedience is no longer restricted to the letter of the law and the actual committing of murder. By the new spiritual standard for obedience, hatred in one's heart is judged as murder. This spiritual standard also applies to hatred for an enemy: **"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you [as**

the spiritual Lawgiver], **love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, so that you yourselves may be the children of your Father Who is in heaven;** for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *on the* good, and sends rain on *the* just and *on the* unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? And if you salute your brethren only, what have you done *that is* extraordinary? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect” (Matt. 5:43-48).

When Jesus was dying on the cross, He set the perfect example of loving His enemies and praying for those who spitefully used Him. Luke recorded Jesus’ prayer for them as He suffered agony and ignominy at their hands: “Then Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing’ ” (Luke 23:34).

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus also taught the spiritual meaning and application of the Seventh Commandment, “Thou shalt not commit adultery.” Jesus magnified this commandment when He taught: “You have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ **But I say to you [as the spiritual Lawgiver], everyone who looks upon a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart**” (Matt. 5:27-28).

Jesus made the Seventh Commandment far more binding than the letter of the law. From the time that Jesus Christ taught the spiritual meaning of this commandment, every individual has been held accountable for his or her thoughts of adultery, whether or not the physical act was committed. An examination of the following teachings in the Sermon on the Mount, as recorded in Matthew 5-7, will show that Jesus revealed the full spiritual meaning of all the laws and commandments of God.

Applying the Spirit of the Law Does Not Nullify the Letter

More than thirty years after Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount, the apostle James wrote an epistle in which he expounded on the spiritual meaning of the commandments of God. In his epistle, James shows that Jesus’ teachings concerning the spirit of the law did not eliminate the need to obey the letter of the law. James explains that Jesus’ command to “love your neighbor as yourself” requires us to live in obedience to the commandments of God. James specifically refers to the Sixth and Seventh Commandments and makes it very clear that to break any of God’s commandments is sin: “**If you are truly keeping the Royal Law according to the scripture**, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing well. But if you have respect of persons, **you are practicing sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors; for if anyone keeps the whole law, but sins in one aspect, he becomes guilty of all**. For He Who said, ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ also said, ‘You shall not commit murder.’ Now if you do not commit adultery, but you commit murder, you have become a transgressor of *the* law. In this manner speak and in this manner behave: as those who are about to be judged by *the* law of freedom” (James 2:8-12).

There is no question that the apostles in the New Testament taught the full, spiritual meaning of the laws and commandments of God exactly as Jesus did. Never at any time did they write or teach that Jesus Christ came to abolish the laws of God. James wrote, “... if anyone keeps the whole law, but sins in one *aspect*, he becomes guilty of all.” There is nothing in the apostle James’ statement that remotely hints that the laws of God were abolished when Jesus died on the cross. In writing these words many years after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, James confirms that Jesus did not “do away with” the laws of God. Instead, James makes it explicitly clear that Christians are obligated to keep the commandments of God.

The apostle John, who outlived all the other apostles, also taught obedience to the laws and commandments of God. In the last decade of the first century, John wrote his Gos-

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pel, three epistles and the book of Revelation. In his first epistle, he wrote most emphatically that obedience to the commandments of God is the standard that separates the true followers of Jesus Christ from those who merely profess His name: **“And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments. And the one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.** On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected [*made complete*]. By this *means* we know that we are in Him. Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked” (I John 2:3-6).

John makes it very clear that those who truly believe in Jesus Christ will be walking as Jesus walked. They will be keeping the commandments of God as Jesus did and taught others to do (John 15:10, Matt. 19:17-19). Anyone who professes to believe in Jesus Christ but does not keep the commandments of God is a liar, according to the New Testament scriptures. For a minister or teacher to claim that the laws and commandments of God have been abolished is a blatant denial of the true teachings of Jesus Christ and His apostles, which are preserved in the New Testament. True Christians need to be on guard against such “workers of lawlessness,” who preach against the laws of God and condemn commandment keeping.

As the apostle John shows, those who keep God’s commandments are not under condemnation but can approach God with confidence, knowing that He will hear and answer their prayers: “Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, *then* we have confidence toward God. And whatever we may ask we receive from Him **because we keep His commandments and practice those things that are pleasing in His sight**” (I John 3:21-22).

The New Testament does not support the widely accepted teaching that commandment keeping is contrary to faith. Rather, the words of John show that keeping the commandments of God is a sign of true faith and the love that God imparts through the indwelling of His Spirit: “And this is His commandment: that we **believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ**, and that we **love one another** [fulfilling the Royal Law by keeping God’s commandments], exactly as He gave commandment to us. And **the one who keeps His commandments is dwelling in Him, and He in him; and by this we know that He is dwelling in us: by the Spirit which He has given to us**” (verses 23-24).

Mainstream Christianity ignores these God-breathed New Testament scriptures and teaches that loving God and one another eliminates the need to keep God’s commandments. John exposes the error in this theology when he points out that obedience to God’s commandments is the very standard by which love for God and His children is measured: **“By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome**” (I John 5:2-3).

The scriptural truth is this: If we love Jesus Christ and God the Father, we will be motivated to keep the commandments of God. We will desire to keep His commandments in the spirit of the law as an outward manifestation of our love for Him. Those who profess to love God, but refuse to keep His commandments, do not understand the love of God. They are being led by their own human emotions and not by the love that God imparts to His children through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Feelings cannot be substituted for keeping the commandments of God. Those who claim to love God, but are practicing lawlessness, are deceiving themselves.

Jesus Christ specifically instructs those who love Him to keep His commandments: **“If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments....The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him....If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s, Who sent Me”** (John 14:15, 21-24).

Jesus Christ left no room for doubt or misinterpretation. If you love Him, you will

keep His commandments. If you do not keep His words, you do not love Him. Unless you are keeping His commandments, mere profession of faith and love toward Jesus Christ and God the Father is empty and vain.

Jesus Christ set the perfect example of true godly love by keeping all the commandments of God in the full spirit of the law. Before His death, He delivered a new command to His disciples—that they follow His example by practicing the same love that He had manifested during His life with them on earth: “A new commandment I give to you: that you love one another in the same way that I have loved you, that *is how* you are to love one another. By this shall everyone know that you are My disciples—if you love one another....**As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and live in His love.** These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you, and *that* your joy may be full. **This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you**” (John 13:34-35; 15:9-12).

Jesus Christ taught His followers to obey all the commandments of God in the full spirit of the law as He did. Jesus magnified the laws of God by revealing their full spiritual meaning. Jesus Christ as the spiritual Lawgiver made the laws and commandments of God far more binding by setting a higher, spiritual standard of obedience for Christians under the New Covenant.

Jesus Brought the Physical Rituals of the Law to Completion

The second meaning of the Greek word πληροω *pleeroo*, translated “to fulfill” in Matthew 5:17, is “to complete,” or “bring to completion.” Jesus Christ came to bring the animal sacrifices and other temple rituals and laws for the Aaronic priesthood to completion. Through His death, He ended the Old Covenant, which had imposed the physical requirements of these laws. In its place, He established the New Covenant, replacing the old requirements of the law with a higher spiritual application.

The laws concerning the animal sacrifices were brought to completion through the superior sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The sacrifice of Himself as the Lamb of God, “Who takes away the sin of the world,” superseded and replaced all the animal sacrifices and other physical rituals and ceremonies that were performed at the temple of God in Jerusalem. The apostle Paul confirms the completion of the animal sacrifices and the temple rituals through the one perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ: “For this reason, when He comes into the world, He says, ‘Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me. You did not delight in burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin. Then said I, “Lo, I come (*as it is written of Me in the scroll of the book*) to do Your will, O God.” ’ In the saying above, *He said*, ‘**Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin (which are offered according to the law) You did not desire nor delight in’; then He said, ‘Lo, I come to do Your will, O God.’** He takes away the first *covenant*, in order that He may establish the second *covenant*; by Whose will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. **Now every high priest [of the order of Aaron] stands ministering day by day, offering the same sacrifices repeatedly, which are never able to remove sins; but He, after offering one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down at *the* right hand of God**” (Heb. 10:5-12).

The spiritual priesthood of Jesus Christ was effective immediately after He ascended to heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. Although His death had completed the animal sacrifices and temple rituals that were required under the Old Covenant, the priesthood continued to carry out these functions until the temple was destroyed. With the destruction of the temple in 70 AD, the priesthood of Aaron and the Levites came to an end. There was no need for a physical priesthood on earth because Jesus Christ was serving as High Priest in heaven above, making intercession for sin before God the Father. The spiritual priesthood of Jesus Christ superseded the priesthood of Aaron. The New Covenant has a greater High

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Priest—the resurrected Jesus Christ—to make intercession for the people of God and to propitiate their sins before God the Father (Isa. 2:2-1).

In the same way, the spiritual temple in heaven has superseded the physical temple that was on earth. Under the New Covenant, true believers have direct access through prayer to the throne of God the Father above. Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of God the Father, where He carries out His spiritual work as High Priest: “**This is the covenant that I will establish with them after those days, says the Lord: I will give My laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds** [far from abolishing His laws]; and their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again.’ **Now where remission of these is, it is no longer necessary to offer sacrifices for sin.** Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water” (Heb. 10:16-22).

True worshipers of God need no priesthood to intercede for them in an earthly temple because they have direct access to the throne of God the Father in His heavenly temple, where Jesus Christ intercedes as High Priest. As the apostle Paul shows, God is now building a spiritual temple within fleshly human beings through the indwelling of His Spirit: “**Don’t you understand that you are God’s temple, and that the Spirit of God is dwelling in you?** If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy him because **the temple of God is holy, which temple you are**” (I Cor. 3:16-17).

Isaiah prophesied of the spiritual temple that God is building: “For thus saith the high and lofty One [God the Father] that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy *place* [the holy of holies in heaven], with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and revive the heart of the contrite ones” (Isa. 57:15, *KJV*).

In addition, each one who receives the Holy Spirit in his or her mind as a begettal from God the Father becomes part of the temple of God. This spiritual temple is composed of all true believers, both Jews and Gentiles: “For through Him we both have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father. So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners, but **you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of the household of God. You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone in Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together, is increasing into a holy temple in the Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit**” (Eph. 2:18-22).

The need for the earthly temple in Jerusalem was fulfilled and brought to completion by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which ended the Old Covenant and the need for a physical priesthood. Under the New Covenant, the spiritual temple of God in heaven, where Jesus Christ is High Priest, has superseded the physical temple of God on earth. Through the intercession of Jesus Christ, each believer becomes a temple for God’s Holy Spirit, and the collective body of believers is built up as a holy temple in the Lord.

Jesus Brought the Circumcision of the Flesh to Completion

When Jesus brought the Old Covenant to an end, the requirement for circumcision of the flesh was superseded by spiritual circumcision of the heart. The apostle Paul makes this very clear: “For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, neither *is* that circumcision which *is* external in the flesh; rather, he *is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly, and circumcision *is* of the heart, in the spirit *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God” (Rom. 2:28-29).

Under the New Covenant, God does not require physical circumcision. Rather, the spiritual circumcision of the heart has superseded the circumcision of the flesh. Spiritual

circumcision brings conversion of the mind and heart, which physical circumcision in the flesh could never accomplish. To be circumcised in the heart, a person must repent of his or her sins and be baptized by full immersion in water. The act of baptism is a type of circumcision because the sins of the flesh are removed. Then, through the laying on of hands, the believer receives the Holy Spirit, converting the heart and mind. The apostle Paul describes the spiritual circumcision that takes place at baptism: “For in Him [Jesus Christ] dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, Who is the Head of all principality and power in Whom **you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism**, by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead. For you, who were *once* dead in *your* sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has *now* made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses” (Col. 2:9-13).

Paul understood very clearly that the Gentile believers did not need to be circumcised in the flesh because they had received spiritual circumcision through faith in Jesus Christ. The spiritual circumcision of the heart had superseded the physical circumcision of the flesh. Likewise, all the animal sacrifices that were required for sin were superseded by Jesus Christ’s sacrifice once for all time. The physical priesthood of Aaron was replaced by the spiritual priesthood of Jesus Christ. The temple of God in heaven has superseded the physical temple on earth, which was only a copy of the heavenly one. When Jesus Christ brought the physical rituals of the Old Covenant to completion, He did not abolish the law. Rather, the physical foretypes of the Old Covenant were superseded by the spiritual fulfillment of the New Covenant.

Other Laws That Have Been Transferred to the New Covenant

Under the Old Covenant, God gave authority to the priests and Levites, who served at the altar, to collect tithes and offerings from the children of Israel. Under the New Covenant, there is no priesthood of men but only one High Priest, Jesus Christ, Who is “a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.” The apostle Paul explains that Melchisedec was Priest of God at Jerusalem in the days of Abraham, long before the Old Covenant was established. In describing how Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec, Paul reveals that He was the one Who later came to earth as Jesus Christ: “For on the one hand, those from among the sons of Levi who receive the priesthood are commanded by the law to collect tithes from the people—that is, *from* their brethren—even though they are *all* descended from Abraham; but on the other hand, He [Jesus Christ, Who was Melchisedec of the Old Testament] Who was not descended from them received tithes from Abraham, and blessed him who had the promises. Now it is beyond all doubt *that* the inferior *one* is blessed by the superior *one*.

“And in the first case, men who die receive tithes; but in the other case, *He received tithes of Whom it is* witnessed that He lives *forever*. And in one sense, Levi, who receives tithes, also gave tithes through Abraham; for he was still in his forefather’s loins when Melchisedec met him. Therefore, if perfection was indeed *possible* through the Levitical priesthood—for *the law that* the people had received *was based on it*—what further need *was there for* another priest to arise according to the order of Melchisedec, and not to be named after the order of Aaron? For since the priesthood has changed, it is obligatory *that* a change of *the law* [for the priesthood and the receiving of tithes and offerings] also take place; because the one of Whom these things are said belongs to another tribe, from which no one was appointed to serve at the altar” (Heb. 7:5-13).

As Paul shows, the entire Levitical priesthood has been superseded by one immortal High Priest, Jesus Christ, who is of the order of Melchisedec. There is no longer a priesthood on earth ministering at the altar in the temple of God at Jerusalem. However, there is still a need to teach the true worship of God and to preach and publish the Word of God as a

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witness to the world. Those who repent and believe the gospel must be taught the way of eternal life that Jesus Christ committed to His disciples. It is for this reason that Jesus Christ sent them forth as apostles to the world, and it is for this reason that He raised up His Church. Within the Church, He has provided a ministry that is able to teach the Word of God and to preach the gospel to the world. Moreover, He has provided a way to support the work of preaching the gospel and teaching the brethren of Jesus Christ. Instead of the priests and Levites at the temple collecting tithes and offerings, the authority to receive tithes and offerings has been transferred to the ministry of Jesus Christ by the command of the Lord. The apostle Paul makes this very clear: “Don’t you know that those who are laboring *in* the sacred things of the temple live *of the things* of the temple, *and* those who are ministering at the altar are partakers with the altar? **In the same way also, the Lord did command that those who preach the gospel are to live of the gospel**” (I Cor. 9:13-14).

The command of God under the Old Covenant concerning the tithes and offerings that the children of Israel were to give to the priests and Levites was brought to completion. Instead of abolishing the laws of tithes and offerings, Jesus Christ transferred the authority to receive tithes and offerings to the ministers of the gospel, who are under His authority as the High Priest and Mediator of the New Covenant.

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Jesus also said that He had come to fulfill the prophets. How did Jesus fulfill the prophets? During His life in the flesh, all the Old Testament prophecies concerning His first coming were fulfilled. These prophecies included His miraculous conception and birth from the virgin Mary, the flight to Egypt to escape Herod, the return to Galilee and dwelling in Nazareth, the announcing of His ministry by John the Baptist, the healings and mighty works during His ministry, the preaching of the gospel throughout the land of Judea and Galilee, the persecution and suffering that followed, His death by crucifixion, the place of His burial, and the time of the resurrection. Most of the prophecies that were fulfilled concern His suffering and death on the Passover day. (See the book, *A Harmony of the Gospels in Modern English: The Life of Jesus Christ* by Fred R. Coulter, and read the commentary section “Twenty-eight Prophecies Fulfilled on the Crucifixion Day.”)

Although nearly two thousand years have passed since these prophecies were completed, all the prophecies about His second coming have yet to be fulfilled. There are a great number of prophecies in both the Old Testament and the New Testament that are awaiting fulfillment. Every prophecy in the Word of God will be fulfilled in its set time as determined by God the Father (Acts 1:7). Jesus Christ did not abolish or set aside a single prophecy or even a single word of the Old Testament scriptures. Jesus said concerning the Scriptures: “For truly I say to you, **until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled**” (Matt. 5:18).

Jesus gave an absolute guarantee that all the prophecies of Scripture would be fulfilled in their time: “Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branches have already become tender, and it puts forth its leaves, you know that summer *is* near. In like manner also, when you see all these things [the events prophesied for the end time taking place], know that it [the second return of Jesus Christ] is near, even at *the* doors. **Truly I say to you, this [end time] generation shall in no wise pass away until all these things have taken place. The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but My words shall never pass away.** But concerning that day, and the hour, no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only” (Matt. 24:32-36).

According to the words of Jesus Christ, all the prophecies that are recorded in Scripture will be fulfilled at the time that God has ordained. Jesus did not come to abolish the words of the prophets, but to fulfill them. As He came in the flesh to fulfill the prophecies of a Savior, so He will return in glory to fulfill the prophecies of the coming King Who will bring the government of God to earth.

The Commandments of God Are to Be Taught and Practiced Under the New Covenant

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus made it absolutely clear that the commandments of God are in force under the New Covenant: **“Therefore, whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of [from] heaven; but whoever shall practice and teach *them*, this one shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven”** (Matt. 5:19).

Which commandments of God are rejected and considered the least by mainstream Christianity today? The two that are considered the least are the Fourth Commandment and the Second Commandment. As strange as it may seem, many of those who reject these commandments will profess to keep the other commandments and claim that they are doing the will of God. But as the apostle James shows, breaking even one of the commandments of God is sin and brings the same condemnation as breaking them all.

Let us examine the two commandments that are considered the least by mainstream Christianity, beginning with the Fourth Commandment: **“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day *is* the sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates: **for *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it**”** (Ex. 20:8-11, *KJV*).

Nowhere in the entire Bible do we find a single scripture that changes the day of rest and worship from the seventh day of the week to Sunday, the first day of the week. Several scriptures are often used by Sunday keepers to support their belief that Christians should worship on the first day of the week. However, when those scriptures are correctly understood and interpreted, it is clear that Jesus Christ did not change the Sabbath from the seventh day of the week to the first day of the week.

Jesus said, “The Sabbath was made **for man** ...” (Mark 2:27). Contrary to the teachings of mainstream theologians, God did not command Sabbath keeping for the Jews only. In the beginning, God created the Sabbath day, hallowing the seventh day as the weekly day of worship, when there was not a single Jew on earth. The only humans at that time were Adam and Eve, the progenitors of all mankind. It was for all humanity that God blessed and sanctified the seventh day, making it holy: “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on [by the beginning of] the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made” (Gen. 2:1-3, *KJV*).

The seventh day was sanctified at the creation of the world. God established that day as a time for rest and worship from the beginning. He sanctified it, and blessed it, and rested on it, setting the example for mankind. Down through the ages, the record of this act of God has been preserved in the book of Genesis, one of the books of the Law. Remember what Jesus Christ declared concerning the Law: “For truly I say to you, **until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled**” (Matt. 5:18).

Since God created time, and time is measured by the movement of the earth in relationship to the heavens, time will exist as long as the heavens and the earth exist. As long as the heavens and the earth exist, the seventh-day Sabbath will not pass from the Law. Consequently, the Fourth Commandment is still in force and remains binding on all mankind.

Contrary to what mainstream Christianity may teach or what people may practice, Sunday has never been and will never be the Lord’s day. The seventh day of the week, called Saturday today, is the Lord’s Sabbath day. Jesus Christ emphatically declared that He is Lord of the Sabbath day: “And He said to them, ‘The Sabbath was made for man, *and* not

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man for the Sabbath; therefore, the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath' ” (Mark 2:27-28). **Jesus Himself declared that He is Lord of the Sabbath—the seventh day of the week. Therefore, the Sabbath day is the Lord's day—not Sunday.**

Some have misconstrued Jesus' declaration that He is Lord of the Sabbath as signifying that He was abolishing the Sabbath by His authority. This interpretation of Jesus' words is completely unfounded. Among the scholars who understand the true meaning of these scriptures are the writers of *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Note what they have written about these critical verses: “At times Jesus is interpreted to have abrogated or suspended the sabbath commandment on the basis of the controversies brought about by sabbath healings and other acts. Careful analysis of the respective passages does not seem to give credence to this interpretation. The action of plucking the ears of grain on the sabbath by the disciples is particularly important in this matter. Jesus makes a foundational pronouncement at that time in a chiastically structured statement of antithetic parallelism: ‘The sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath’ (Mark 2:27). The disciples’ act of plucking the grain infringed against the rabbinic *halakhah* of minute causistry in which it was forbidden to reap, thresh, winnow, and grind on the sabbath (*Sabb.* 7.2). Here again rabbinic sabbath *halakhah* is rejected, as in other sabbath conflicts. Jesus reforms the sabbath and restores its rightful place as designed in creation, where sabbath is made for all mankind and not specifically for Israel, as claimed by normative Judaism (*cf. Jub.* 2:19-20, see D.3). The subsequent logion, ‘The Son of Man is Lord even of the sabbath’ (Mark 2:28; Matt. 12:8; Luke 6:5), indicates that man-made sabbath *halakhah* does not rule the sabbath, but that the Son of Man as Lord determines the true meaning of the sabbath. The sabbath activities of Jesus are neither hurtful provocations nor mere protests against rabbinic legal restrictions, but are part of Jesus’ essential proclamation of the inbreaking of the kingdom of God in which man is taught the original meaning of the sabbath as the recurring weekly proleptic ‘day of the Lord’ in which God manifests his healing and saving rulership over man” (vol. 5, pp. 854-55).

As these scholars show, the Gospel accounts do not support the widespread belief that Jesus abolished the Sabbath day. Rather, as the Lord of the Sabbath, He taught the true meaning of the Sabbath day and set the example for its proper observance. His apostles continued to keep the Sabbath and to teach the early believers to keep it, as Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews clearly demonstrates. The apostle Paul wrote this epistle between 62 and 65 AD, more than thirty years after the beginning of the New Testament church. In his epistle, Paul makes it absolutely clear that the seventh-day Sabbath had not been abolished. At that time, there were false ministers who were teaching that Sunday, the first day of the week, had replaced the Sabbath. To counter these false teachings, Paul gave the brethren a sober warning that to reject the Sabbath and neglect to rest and worship God was sin, just as it was for the children of Israel in the wilderness:

“For He spoke in a certain place about the seventh *day* in this manner: ‘**And God rested on the seventh day from all His works**’; and again concerning this: ‘If they shall enter into My rest—’ consequently, since it remains *for* some to enter into it, and those who had previously heard the gospel did not enter in because of disobedience, again He marks out a certain day, ‘Today,’ saying in David after so long a time (exactly as it has been quoted *above*), ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.’ For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken *long* afterwards of another day. **There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God**” (Heb. 4:4-9). Paul did not write, “There remains Sabbath keeping for the Jews.” He clearly declared, “There remains Sabbath keeping for the people of God.” The people of God include the Gentiles as well as the Jews (I Pet. 2:10 and Eph. 2:11-19).

Many ministers and theologians have applied the opposite meaning to Hebrews 4:9. They have completely misinterpreted the King James translation of this verse, which reads, “There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.” They teach that Christians are no longer required to observe the Sabbath because Jesus Christ has given them “rest” by “fulfilling the law” for them and thereby releasing them from commandment keeping.

Such reasoning is completely false. Jesus did not fulfill the commandments of God in order to release us from the obligation to keep them, but to set the example for us (I Pet. 2:21-22, I John 3:4).

When we understand the meaning of the Greek text, there is no question that the New Testament upholds the authority of the Fourth Commandment for Christians today. The Greek word that is used in Hebrews 4:9 is σαββατισμος *sabbatismos*, which means "Sabbath rest, Sabbath observance" (Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*). This definition of the Greek word *sabbatismos* is confirmed by other historical works: "The words 'sabbath rest' translate the GK noun *sabbatismos*, a unique word in the NT. This term appears also in Plutarch (*Superset. 3 [Moralia 166a]*) for sabbath observance, and in four post-canonical Christian writings which are not dependent on Heb. 4:9" (*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 5, p. 856).

The Greek word σαββατισμος *sabbatismos* is a noun. The verb form of the word is σαββατιζω *sabbatizo*, which means "to keep the Sabbath" (Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*). The meaning of *sabbatizo* is confirmed by its use in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament which dates from the third century BC. It is called the Septuagint, meaning "Seventy," because the first five books were translated by seventy scholars who were Greek-speaking Jews in Alexandria, Egypt. The Septuagint was used by the Jews in synagogues throughout the Roman Empire, and by the Greek-speaking Jewish and Gentile converts in the early New Testament churches.

The apostle Paul quotes exclusively from the Septuagint in his epistle to the Hebrews. When Paul used the Greek word σαββατισμος *sabbatismos* in Hebrews 4:9, he knew that the meaning of this word was well known to the Greek-speaking believers of that day. The verb form σαββατιζω *sabbatizo* was used in the Septuagint, which was as familiar to the believers of New Testament times as the King James Bible is to Christians today. The *Greek English Lexicon of the Septuagint* defines σαββατιζω *sabbatizo* as "to keep sabbath, to rest" (Lust, Eynikel, Hauspie). The use of the verb *sabbatizo* in Leviticus 23:32 in the Septuagint leaves no room to mistake its meaning. Here is the English translation of this verse in the Septuagint: "It [the Day of Atonement] shall be a holy sabbath [literally, "a Sabbath of Sabbaths"] to you; and ye shall humble your souls, from the ninth day of the month: from evening to evening **shall ye keep your sabbaths**" (*The Septuagint With the Apocrypha*, Brenton).

The clause "shall ye keep your sabbaths" is translated from the Greek words σαββατισατε τα σαββατα *sabbatiete ta sabbata*, which literally mean, "You shall **sabbathize** the Sabbaths." The Greek verb σαββατισατε *sabbatiete*, which means "ye shall keep," is the second person plural form of the verb σαββατιζω *sabbatizo*. Since the verb *sabbatizo* means "to keep the Sabbath," this verb applies not only to the weekly Sabbath and the annual Sabbaths of God, but also to God's command for the seventh-year rest from farming the land. Throughout the Septuagint, the verb σαββατιζω *sabbatizo* is used in relation to Sabbath keeping and Sabbath rest only.

In accord with this definition, the KJV translates σαββατισατε *sabbatiete* in Leviticus 23:32 as "shall ye celebrate your sabbath." There is no question that this form of the Greek verb *sabbatizo* is specifically referring to Sabbath observance. This meaning applies equally to the noun form σαββατισμος *sabbatismos* which we find in Paul's epistle to the Hebrews. The fact that Paul uses the Septuagint translation in this epistle confirms that the meaning of the word σαββατισμος *sabbatismos* in Hebrews 4:9 is in complete accord with the meaning of *sabbatiete* in Leviticus 23:32. Paul is clearly upholding the observance of the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week.

The use of the Greek word *sabbatismos* in Hebrews 4:9 contradicts the teaching that the Fourth Commandment has been abolished. As the context of this verse shows, the observance of the seventh day as a day of rest and worship is as binding for the people of God today as it was for Israel of old. In addition to the weekly Sabbath, the annual holy days that

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God commanded, which are also called Sabbaths, are included in the Fourth Commandment. In the same manner as true believers are commanded to keep the seventh-day Sabbath, they are also commanded to observe the annual holy days of God. The early New Testament churches kept the holy days of God, as determined by the calculated Hebrew Calendar. The apostle Paul kept the holy days and commanded Gentile converts to keep them (I Cor. 5:7-8). None of the apostles or the early converts to Christianity observed the pagan holidays that are now called Christmas and Easter. These holidays, which originated in sun worship, were later adopted into Christianity through the influence of the Roman church. They became false substitutes for the annual holy days that are commanded by God, just as Sunday has become a false substitute for the weekly Sabbath. (If the reader desires to know more about the Sabbath and the holy days of God, please write to the publisher at the address in the front of the book. Also, read Appendix K, "Rome's Challenge to the Protestants.")

As the Roman church succeeded in subverting the observance of the Fourth Commandment by Christians, so it succeeded in subverting the observance of the Second Commandment, which prohibits the use of idols and images in worship. There is no ambiguity in the wording of this command of God: **"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments"** (Ex. 20:4-6, *KJV*).

Because this commandment is so clear in its condemnation of idols and images, the Roman church has removed it from their listing of the Ten Commandments in all their catechisms. In order to make up for the missing commandment, they have split the Tenth Commandment into two commandments. Although they have officially removed the Second Commandment from their catechisms because they cannot justify their unlawful use of idols and images, the full text of the Second Commandment remains in their approved Bibles as a testimony against their idolatry.

The Second Commandment makes it absolutely clear that God abhors the use of idols and images of any kind by His people. Yet the churches of professing Christianity are filled with idols, images and pictures. No church can justify the use of idols and images in its worship when God has strictly forbidden this practice. God the Father and Jesus Christ cannot be worshiped through idols or images. Nor will God tolerate the use of images to worship and venerate other persons or beings. The worship of Mary and the veneration of the apostles and other saints has no place in true Christianity. All such worship is strictly forbidden by the Second Commandment. It is blatant idolatry to venerate any person or being in addition to or in place of God. The apostle Paul warned the believers of his day that those who took part in idolatry would suffer the judgment of God, as did the Israelites of old who committed this sin: **"Neither be idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, 'The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.' Neither should we commit sexual immorality, as some of them committed, and twenty-three thousand were destroyed in one day. Neither should we tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted Him, and were killed by serpents....Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry"** (I Cor. 10:7-9, 14).

Paul's warning to the Corinthians makes it clear that the Second Commandment is still in force. It is even more binding under the New Covenant than it was under the Old because Jesus has magnified it by His example and His teaching. The worship of God in spirit and in truth requires loving God with the whole heart and mind. The true worship of God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ leaves no room in the heart and mind to worship others. As the Scriptures show, idolatry begins in the mind and heart. In the book of Ezekiel it is written: "Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me. And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, **'Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart,** and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be inquired of

at all by them? Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, “Thus saith the Lord GOD; every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols; that I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols.”

“ ‘Therefore say unto the house of Israel, “Thus saith the Lord GOD; **repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations.** For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which **separateth himself from Me, and setteth up his idols in his heart,** and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to inquire of him concerning Me; I the LORD will answer him by Myself: and I will set My face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of My people; and ye shall know that *I am* the LORD” ’ ” (Ezek. 14:1-8, *KJV*).

Like Israel of old, the believers in the New Testament churches were drawn away from the true worship of God and led into idol worship. Images of pagan deities were introduced into the churches and palmed off as representations of Jesus’ mother and His apostles. More and more images were added, each said to represent a chosen saint of God. But the apostle Paul reveals the true origin of these idols: “What then am I saying? That an idol is anything, or that which is sacrificed to an idol is anything? But **that which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not wish you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and the table of demons**” (I Cor. 10:19-21).

The apostle John understood the pagan origin of the images that were brought into the early churches, drawing many believers into a false worship. Toward the close of the first century, John wrote three different epistles to admonish the believers to remain faithful to the true worship of God. At the end of his first epistle, he commanded, “Little children, **keep yourselves from idols**” (I John 5:21).

There is no question that, in the Old Testament and the New Testament, any worship of idols and images is condemned. Those who teach and practice the use of idols and images to worship God are in direct defiance of the Second Commandment and will be rejected by Him. God the Father and Jesus Christ will not share Their glory and honor with an idol. Any attempt to worship God through the use of an idol or physical object of any kind, including rosaries or prayer beads, is worshiping in vain. True worship requires loving God with the whole heart and mind, in spirit and in truth, leaving no room for reverence or devotion to images created by the imaginations and hands of men.

The Spirit and Intent of the Law and the Prophets

The purpose of the Law and the Prophets and all the writings of the Old Testament was to teach the people to love and worship God, and Him alone. Jesus Christ revealed the spirit and intent of the Law and the Prophets when He was asked which commandment was the greatest: “And one of them, a doctor of the law, questioned *Him*, tempting Him, and saying, ‘Master, which commandment *is the* great commandment in the Law?’ And Jesus said to him, ‘**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.**’ This is *the* first and greatest commandment; and *the* second one is like it: ‘**You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” (Matt. 22:35-40).

Under the New Covenant, true worship and love toward God is made possible through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which enables the believer to reverence God and obey Him from the heart. Through faith in Jesus Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the believer learns to obey every command of God in the full spirit and intent of the law, as magnified by Jesus Christ. This is the manner in which every true believer will keep

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the laws and commandments of God, because he or she loves God the Father and Jesus Christ with all the heart, mind, soul and strength. This righteousness, which is based on faith and love, far exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus said, "For I say to you, unless your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, there is no way *that* you shall enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20).

The righteousness that exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees is the righteousness of Jesus Christ, Who obeyed all of His Father's commandments in the full spirit and intent of the law. Through faith, His righteousness is imputed to each believer who loves God and keeps His commandments. This imputed righteousness is a gift that the believer receives through the abundance of the Father's grace. It is called "the righteousness of faith" because only through faith in Jesus Christ is it possible to partake of this righteousness.

The Righteousness of Faith of the True Believer

When a believer is justified from past sins through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and is baptized by full immersion in water, he or she receives the gift of the Holy Spirit as a begettal from God the Father. Then the Father imputes to the believer the very righteousness of Jesus Christ. The righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is imputed to the believer by God the Father, far exceeds the righteousness required by the letter of the law. His spiritual obedience was so perfect, pure and wholehearted that He always did the things that pleased God the Father. This perfect righteousness was accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit, which Jesus received without measure from the Father.

The Scriptures reveal that when the believer is begotten with the Holy Spirit of God the Father, he or she begins to receive the very mind of Christ. With Christ's mind, the believer is strengthened to live by every word of God in the full spirit of the law. The apostle Paul describes this spiritual transformation in the mind as "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). Each believer begins to have the laws and commandments of God written upon his or her mind: "But He, after offering one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down at *the* right hand of God. Since that time, He is waiting until His enemies are placed *as* a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said, '***This is the covenant that I will establish with them after those days, says the Lord: I will give My laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds; and their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again***' " (Heb. 10:12-17).

Under the New Covenant, the laws and commandments of God are inscribed in the mind of each believer through the gift of the Holy Spirit, which gives the believer the power to bring forth the fruits of righteousness unto eternal life.

Rejecting the Commandments of God Is Lawlessness

As previously stated, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus left no doubt that the commandments of God are to be taught and practiced not only in the letter of the law but in the spirit of the law. As He was completing the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warned of false prophets who would teach that obedience to the commandments and laws of God is no longer required: "But beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, for within *they* are ravening wolves....Therefore, you shall assuredly know them by their fruits. ***Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but the one who is doing the will of My Father, Who is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name? And did we not cast out demons through Your name? And did we not perform many works of power through Your name?' And then I will confess to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness'***" (Matt. 7:15, 20-23).

These prophets and teachers are not of God in spite of the fact that they use Jesus'

Appendix E

name, and call Him their Lord, and even do wonderful works in His name. They present themselves as His ministers and preachers of truth, but in reality they are serving the god of this world, Satan the devil, who rejected the commandments of God from the beginning. Everyone who teaches disobedience to the laws and commandments of God is following in the steps of Satan who was the first lawbreaker. That is why Jesus told the Pharisees that their father was the devil. While professing to teach and practice the laws and commandments of God, they were teaching and practicing their own religious laws and traditions in place of the commandments of God.

During His ministry, Jesus condemned the religious leaders of Judaism for their traditions, which they held in higher esteem than the laws and commandments of God. He made it clear that in observing their own human traditions, they were rejecting the commandments of God: "... The Pharisees and the scribes questioned Him, *saying*, 'Why don't Your disciples walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?' And He answered *and* said to them, 'Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you hypocrites, as it is written, **"This people honors Me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me."** But in vain do they worship Me, teaching *for* doctrine the commandments of men. For leaving the commandment of God, you hold fast the tradition of men, *such as* the washing of pots and cups; and you practice many other things like *this*.'

"Then He said to them, **'Full well do you reject the commandment of God, so that you may observe your own tradition.** For Moses said, "Honor your father and your mother"; and, "The one who speaks evil of father or mother, let him be put to death." But you say, "If a man shall say to *his* father or mother, 'Whatever benefit you might receive from me *is* corban' (that is, *set aside as* a gift to God), he is not obligated to help his parents." And you excuse him from doing anything for his father or his mother, nullifying the authority of the Word of God by your tradition which you have passed down; and you practice many *traditions* such as *this*.'" (Mark 7:5-13).

Most of the world's professing Christians have committed the same mistake as the Pharisaic Jews, teaching the commandments of men as doctrines and observing tradition in lieu of God's commandments. According to Jesus' teaching, they are workers of lawlessness.

In his first epistle, the apostle John clearly defines lawlessness: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4, *KJV*). Although this is a correct translation, it does not convey the literal meaning of the Greek text. Here is a more precise translation of John's words: **"Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness."**

To practice lawlessness is to live in a state of sin, committing sin as a habitual way of life. In other words, lawlessness is the habitual breaking of God's laws and commandments. Religious leaders who teach and practice lawlessness appear to be righteous because they use the names of God and Jesus Christ and often quote Scripture. However, they are not true servants of God because they reject His laws and commandments.

The apostle Jude, the brother of Jesus Christ, witnessed the rise of lawlessness among the churches of his day. Jude delivered an urgent plea to the believers to reject ungodly teachers of lawlessness, who were turning the grace of God into license to sin by preaching a false gospel of faith without obedience and replacing the commandments of God with traditions that originated in ancient paganism: "Beloved, when personally exerting all *my* diligence to write to you concerning the common salvation, I was compelled to write to you, exhorting *you* to **fervently fight for the faith which once for all *time* has been delivered to the saints.** For certain men have stealthily crept in, those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment. ***They are* ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into licentiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ"** (Jude 3-4).

The apostle Peter warned of false teachers who would reject the way of obedience to God's commandments as taught and practiced by Jesus Christ: "But there were also false

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prophets among the people, as indeed **there will be false teachers among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies, personally denying the Lord who bought them** [by rejecting His teachings], **and bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many people will follow as authoritative** [exalting church tradition] **their destructive ways; and because of them, the way of the truth will be blasphemed**" (II Pet. 2:1-2).

Those Who Reject the Commandments of God Are Judging the Law and the Lawgiver

Those who teach that the commandments of God have been abolished are presumptuously passing judgment on the laws of God. The following excerpt depicts one such teaching: "In fact, the whole law of Moses has been rendered inoperative. The New Testament message is clear for all who have 'ears to hear.' **The whole of the law of Moses has been rendered inoperative by the death of the Lord Jesus. The law, in its entirety, no longer has any immediate and forensic authority or jurisdiction whatsoever over anyone....**Christ is the complete end and fulfillment of all of the laws' 613 commandments, ending their jurisdiction over us completely" (Tardo, *Sunday Facts & Sabbath Fiction*, p. 26-27).

By nullifying the laws of God in this manner, the religious teachers of this world are usurping the authority of God as Lawgiver. The apostle James condemns this ungodly attitude, which presumes to judge the laws that God has established for all mankind: "Brethren, do not talk against one another. The one who talks against a brother, and judges his brother, **is speaking against the law, and is judging the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law; rather, you are a judge. But there is only one Lawgiver, Who has power to save and to destroy.** Who are you that you presume to judge another?" (James 4:11-12).

To judge the laws and commandments of God and to reject Him as Lawgiver is the epitome of lawlessness. This form of religion is rooted in human self-righteousness, not in the righteousness that Jesus Christ taught and practiced.

The book of Job holds a lasting lesson for all who exalt their own righteousness above the righteousness of God. The ancient patriarch Job viewed himself as righteous because he continually offered sacrifices to God. However, he began to exalt himself and trust in his own righteousness, rather than trusting in God. He bragged and boasted of his own righteousness so much that God brought a series of grievous trials upon him. After losing his children and all his possessions, he was smitten with boils from his head to his toes. When his trial was more than he could bear, three friends came to visit him, but they did not give him any comfort. His friends began to accuse him of evildoing and urged him to repent in order to escape further punishment from God. The more they condemned him, the more Job defended his own righteousness. He began to condemn God and accuse Him of being unjust and unrighteous in His acts. When he expressed a desire to plead his cause before God Himself, God responded by answering him in person: "Then answered the LORD unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said, 'Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto Me. **Wilt thou also disannul My judgment? Wilt thou condemn Me, that thou mayest be righteous?**' " (Job 40:6-8, KJV.)

As Job learned, God, and God alone, is Savior. He powerfully declared to Job that his own righteousness could never save him: "**Hast thou an arm like God? Or canst thou thunder with a voice like Him? Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty.** Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold everyone *that is* proud, and abase him. Look on every one *that is* proud, *and* bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together; *and* bind their faces in secret. **Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee**" (verses 9-14, KJV).

After hearing these words of God, Job abhorred himself for his sin of self-

righteousness and repented to God “in dust and ashes” (Job 42:6). That is what these professing Christians who practice lawlessness need to do. They need to forsake the self-righteous traditions of men that they have been practicing and submit to the righteousness of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

The leaders of Christianity today need to remember the words of warning that Jesus spoke to the scribes and Pharisees during His ministry. Like the self-righteous leaders of the Jews, the leaders of the Christian churches have adopted traditions and dogmas that conflict with the commandments of God. A close examination of the history of Christianity will show that the traditional doctrines and practices of the churches today are not the teachings of Jesus Christ. True Christianity, as originally taught by Jesus Christ and His apostles, was subverted from within by false teachers of lawlessness. The teachings of these “ungodly men” that Jude and Peter wrote about were passed down in the writings of the early Church Fathers and were accepted by the Roman church as authoritative traditions. Through the centuries the Roman church has grown in power, using its influence to stamp out every remaining vestige of the true teachings of Jesus Christ. After a power struggle between the bishop of Rome and the bishop of Constantinople, the church split into the Roman Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox churches.

As the influence of the Orthodox church dominated the East, so the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church molded the thinking of the entire Western world. The authority of Catholic doctrine and tradition was not seriously publicly challenged until the time of Martin Luther. When Martin Luther rejected the corruption and lawlessness of the Roman Catholic Church, he appeared to be seeking the truth of God. He labored diligently to translate the Scriptures into the German language so that the common people could read and learn from the Word of God. But the religion that developed as a result of Martin Luther’s teachings, known as Lutheranism, did not restore the true teachings of Jesus Christ. The reformation that Martin Luther initiated was never completed because he rejected the Second and Fourth Commandments. As a result, the new religion that he founded began to promote another form of lawlessness.

Luther taught that a person who had been saved through the grace of God could not lose salvation, regardless of the degree or intensity of the sins that might be committed. This perverse teaching is clearly expressed in a letter written by Luther: “Be a sinner, and let your sins be strong, but let your faith in Christ be stronger, and rejoice in Christ who is the victor over sin, death, and the world. We will commit sins while we are here, for this life is not a place where righteousness can exist....**No sin can separate us from Him, even if we were to kill or commit adultery a thousand times each day**” (Martin Luther, *Saemmtliche Schriften*, Letter 99, 1 August 1521, translated by Erika Flores in *The Wittenberg Project, The Wartburg Segment*, as published in *Grace and Knowledge*, Issue 8, September 2000, Article “Ecclesiasticus: The Wisdom of Ben-Sirach,” p. 27).

The words of Martin Luther reveal the depth of the teaching of lawlessness to which many religious leaders have descended. This teaching is the epitome of the perverted “grace” that Jude condemned, which rejects the commandments of God and grants license to commit sin with no limitations. Luther’s teaching concerning murder and adultery is diametrically opposed to the teachings of Jesus Christ, Who magnified and greatly expanded the application of the Sixth and Seventh Commandments.

The promoters of lawlessness have succeeded in deceiving the vast majority of professing Christians into accepting a false grace. As the New Testament shows, this distorted view of grace does not lead to salvation. At the Judgment Day, the teachers of lawlessness, who have been honored as religious leaders and have even done noteworthy deeds in the name of Jesus Christ, will be rejected: “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy through Your name? And *did we not* cast out demons through Your name? And *did we not* perform many works of power through Your name?’ And then I will confess to them, ‘I never knew you. **Depart from Me, you who work lawlessness**’ ” (Matt. 7:22-23).

The workers of lawlessness will depart into the lake of fire to suffer the judgment of

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eternal death from which there is no resurrection: “But *the* cowardly, and unbelieving, and abominable, and **murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone; which is *the* second death**” (Rev. 21:8).

During His ministry, Jesus declared that those who refused to hear His teachings would be judged by the words He had spoken: “Then Jesus called out and said, ‘The one who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him Who sent Me. And the one who sees Me sees Him Who sent Me. I have come *as* a light into the world so that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness. **But if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him; the word which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak.** And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I speak, I speak exactly as the Father has told Me” (John 12:44-50).

The teachings of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the Sermon on the Mount, carry the full authority of God the Father: “**Now it came to pass *that* when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were amazed at His teaching; for He taught them as one Who had authority, and not as the scribes**” (Matt. 7:28-29). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught the full spiritual intent and application of the laws and commandments of God, which is the spiritual standard for the New Covenant. This is the standard by which every true believer is now being judged, and by which all mankind will ultimately be judged.

Appendix F

A Comparison Between the Old and New Covenants

Old Covenant	New Covenant
1) A physical covenant based on physical promises. Ex. 19:5-6; Deut. 28; Lev. 26	1) A spiritual covenant based on spiritual promises and eternal life. John 3:16; Heb. 8:6; 9:15; Rom. 8; Luke 18:29-30
2) Had physical circumcision. Gen. 17:9; Ex. 12:48; John 7:22	2) Repentance and circumcision of the heart through baptism. Acts 2:38; 3:19; Rom. 2:25-29; Phil. 3:3; Jer. 4:4; Col. 2:11-13
3) People did not have the Holy Spirit. They were to obey in the letter of the law. Rom. 7:6; Heb. 8:7-9; Matt. 5:21-45	3) Converted believers have the gift of the Holy Spirit and are to obey in the spirit of the law. Rom. 7:6; Heb. 8:10-12; 10:16; Matt. 5:21-48; 6:1-34; Acts 2:38; Rom. 8:9-10; Gal. 2:20
4) If obeyed in the letter of the law, could live in the community, worship at the earthly tabernacle. Heb. 9:13; Gal. 3:12; Lev. 18:5; II Cor. 3:16	4) Believe in Christ and obey in the spirit of the law; have direct access to worship God the Father in heaven through Jesus Christ. John 4:23-24; 16:23-27; Heb. 6:20; 10:23; Rom. 8:9-39; Eph. 2:18-22; II Cor. 3:6
5) Had works of law, offerings and animal sacrifices, vows, washings, etc. Lev. 1-7	5) Have sacrifice of Jesus Christ, fruits of the Holy Spirit, prayer and good works. Heb. 9:10; Heb. 10:12; Gal. 5:22-24; Eph. 2:10; Rom. 12:1-2; Rev. 8:3-5; Heb. 13:15; Matt. 19:17; Mark 15:15-18
6) If transgressed the law, physical atonement for certain sins, death penalty for others. Heb. 9:7-10; II Cor. 3	6) If transgressed the law, forgiveness upon repentance; second death for unpardonable sin. Heb. 8:5; 9:1-5; 9:2-28; 10:16-31; Rev. 20:14-15; 21:8; II Cor. 3

A Comparison Between the Old and New Covenants

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| <p>7) Had physical ordinances of divine service and earthly sanctuary.
Heb. 9:1-5</p> | <p>7) Has actual divine service and a heavenly sanctuary.
Heb. 8:5; 9:1-5, 24-28; 10:16-31;
Rev. 8:3-4</p> |
| <p>8) At institution of Old Covenant and earthly tabernacle, blood of animals used for consecration.
Heb. 9:18-23;
Ex. 24:3-8; 40:1-38</p> | <p>8) At institution of New Covenant and heavenly tabernacle, consecrated with the blood of Jesus Christ.
Luke 22:19-22; I Cor. 11:23-32;
Heb. 9:14-28; 10:5-14</p> |
| <p>9) Sons of Aaron high priests of earthly tabernacle.
Heb. 8:3-5; Ex. 28:1</p> | <p>9) Christ is High Priest of heavenly tabernacle forever.
Heb. 4:14-16; 5:1-9; 7:17;
8:1-2; 9:11</p> |
| <p>10) Priests offered animal sacrifices for physical justification to earthly tabernacle and purifying of the flesh; high priest went into holy of holies once a year.
Heb. 5:1-3; 9:1-13</p> | <p>10) Christ offered Himself once as the sacrifice for the sins of the world and justification is now to God in the heavenly tabernacle for all who repent and are baptized.
Heb. 7:25-27; 9:23-28
Acts 11:18; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 3:24-25</p> |
| <p>11) No direct access to God the Father.

Heb. 9:6-8; 10:19</p> | <p>11) Direct access to the Father through Christ.
Matt. 27:51; Heb. 4:14-16; 7:25-27;
John 16; Gal. 4:6-7; Rom. 8:15;
Eph. 2:18</p> |
| <p>12) Could not make a person perfect as pertaining to conscience.

Heb. 9:9; 10:4, 11</p> | <p>12) Forgives sin spiritually and purges the conscience through the operation of the Holy Spirit unto perfection.
Heb. 10:14-17; II Cor. 3:9; Col. 1:27;
Phil. 2:5; 3:9-17; Matt. 5:48; Eph. 4</p> |
| <p>13) Sacrifices and oblations ceased to be effective at the time the new spiritual order was established by Jesus Christ.
Heb. 9:9-10; Dan. 9:27</p> | <p>13) Christ's one supreme sacrifice to apply to all men and women who accept it from time of Adam to the end of humanity.
Heb. 10:10-14</p> |
| <p>14) Ceased to be effective after the death of Jesus Christ.

Heb. 8:13; 10:9; Matt. 27:51</p> | <p>14) Established after Christ's death, resurrection and ascension to the throne of God.
Heb. 8:13; Matt. 27:51</p> |

Appendix G

Jesus' Three Days and Three Nights of Entombment and the Resurrection

The Exact Length of Time That Jesus Was in the Tomb

Many prophecies in the Old Testament foretold the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The prophet Daniel foresaw that His life would be taken (Dan. 9:26), and both David and Isaiah described the suffering and humiliation that He would endure before His death (Psa. 22, Isa. 53). Other prophecies pointed to His resurrection to immortality (Psa. 16:10-11, Dan. 7:13-14, Isa. 9:6-7). However, there is no scripture in the Old Testament that foretold the length of time that the Messiah would be in the tomb before He was resurrected from the dead. This prophecy is found only in the Gospel accounts, spoken by Jesus Himself: "Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, 'Master, we desire to see a sign from You.' And He answered *and* said to them, '**A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. For just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, in like manner the Son of man shall be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights**'" (Matt. 12:38-40).

Jesus spoke these words because the scribes and Pharisees did not believe in Him, nor did they believe that His works of healing were done by the power of God. When they challenged Him to perform a miraculous sign in their presence, Jesus did not do so. Instead, the only sign He gave them was the sign of Jonah the prophet. The fulfillment of this sign was a testimony not only to that generation but to all future generations that He was the Messiah.

The vast majority of Christians today believe that Jesus was crucified and laid in the tomb on a Friday, and, He was resurrected on Sunday morning. Thus, He was not in the tomb for three days and three nights, as He had prophesied, but for two nights and one full day. This traditional interpretation of Jesus' death and resurrection is completely contrary to the Gospel accounts.

Nearly all churches within Christendom have misinterpreted or rejected the scriptural record. In its place, they have adopted an ancient Babylonian religious tradition that predates the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ by thousands of years.* Various theories have been advanced in an attempt to reconcile this ancient religious tradition with the scriptural accounts, but the error is clearly exposed by examining the accounts that have been accurately recorded and faithfully preserved in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

The Gospel accounts do not support the traditional belief in a Good Friday crucifixion and an Easter Sunday resurrection. The facts that are recorded by the Gospel writers reveal a profoundly different time frame for the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Scriptural Definition of a Day

Some have claimed that Jesus was using an idiomatic expression when He declared that He would remain in the tomb for three days and three nights. They teach that His words do not express a definite and specific length of time but should be interpreted as referring to

* For historical evidence of the Babylonian practices, see *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop and *The Golden Bough* by Sir James George Frazer.

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parts of days rather than to whole days. But when the scriptural use of the term “day” is examined one finds that it is very specific. The Scriptures of the Old Testament show that a day consists of an evening and a morning (Gen. 1). An entire day has two portions: the night portion, which begins at evening, or sunset; and the day portion, which begins at sunrise, or morning. These two consecutive periods are identified as one complete day, reckoned from sunset to sunset, or evening to evening (Lev. 23:32, *KJV*).

According to Scripture, each day has an average of twelve hours in the night portion and twelve hours in the day portion, making a complete day of twenty-four hours. Jesus Himself verified that the day portion is about twelve hours long when He said, “Are there not twelve hours in the day?” (John 11:9.) Jesus also spoke of the three watches of the night, which extended from sunset to sunrise and were each four hours long, making a total of twelve hours (Luke 12:36-38). There is no question that Jesus included a full twelve hours of daylight and a full twelve hours of night in reckoning the length of each calendar day. This scriptural method of reckoning time had been used by the Hebrews for centuries. Moreover, it is clear that Jesus and His disciples observed the Passover and the holy days of God each year according to the determination of the Hebrew Calendar, as God had ordained. This is a key fact in understanding the exact length of time that Jesus was in the tomb.

When the four Gospel accounts are examined, it is clear that the Gospel writers used the scriptural method of reckoning each day from sunset to sunset, or evening to evening. Beginning six days before Jesus' last Passover until the day after His resurrection, the Gospel writers accurately recorded all the events day by day. They took careful note of the mornings and evenings, making it possible to determine the beginning and end of each day. The fact that they meticulously noted the mornings and evenings demonstrates that these days were whole days composed of twenty-four hours. Nowhere do the scriptural records leave room for an interpretation of partial days or partial nights.

An Analysis of the Phrase “Three Days and Three Nights” in the Book of Jonah

Jesus Christ's prophecy that He would be in the grave for three days and three nights is a direct reference to Jonah 1:17, which speaks of Jonah's symbolic entombment in the belly of a great fish: “Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. **And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights**” (*KJV*).

The word “days” in this verse is translated from the Hebrew *yom*, and the word “night” is translated from the Hebrew *lailah*. Both of these words are preceded by the cardinal number “three,” which is translated from the Hebrew *shalosh*. This cardinal number is used as an adjective before the nouns “days” and “nights” to express a specific period of time. Other scriptural references confirm the use of cardinal numbers to record the exact duration of a condition or event:

Gen. 7:4	“seven days”
Gen. 7:12	“forty days and forty nights”
Ex. 10:23	“three days”
Ex. 24:18	“forty days and forty nights”
Lev. 12:4	“three and thirty days”
I Sam. 30:12	“three days and three nights”
I Kings 19:8	“forty days and forty nights”

The use of a cardinal number with the terms “days” and “nights” shows that these terms are being used in a very specific sense. The presence of the Hebrew *waw* (the conjunction “and”) between “days” and “nights” makes the meaning of the text even more emphatic, limiting the duration of time to the exact number of days and nights that are specified. By the Scriptural method of reckoning time, it takes an “evening” and a “morning” to com-

plete one full day (Gen. 1:5). Just as “the evening and the morning” in Genesis 1 denote a whole day of twenty-four hours, so the term “a day and a night” denotes a full day of twenty-four hours. In the same way also, the expression “three days and three nights” denotes three whole days of twenty-four hours each.

The Hebrew text leaves no room to interpret the expression “three days and three nights” in Jonah 1:17 in a broad or general sense. The use of this same Hebrew expression in I Samuel 30:12 demonstrates that it is a literal period of three 24-hour days: “... for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk water, three days and three nights” (KJV). The following verse in I Samuel 30 uses the expression “three days ago” in reference to the period of three days and three nights. These were the words of an Egyptian who was accustomed to reckoning days from sunrise to sunrise. The use of the expression “three days ago” by the Egyptian confirms that he had completed a full three days and three nights of fasting from sunrise on the first day until sunrise on the fourth day. The literal meaning of “three days” in I Samuel 30:13 is confirmed by the use of the same Hebrew expression in II Samuel 24:13 to describe a specific duration of time: “three days’ pestilence.”

The construction of the Hebrew text does not allow the expression “three days and three nights” in Jonah 1:17 to be interpreted in any manner except the literal sense of three 24-hour days. The Hebrew terminology cannot be interpreted as an idiomatic expression that is describing incomplete units of time, such as part of a day and part of a night. To denote incomplete units of time, the Hebrew text uses a word that means “to divide.” This word is not found in the expression “three days and three nights,” either in Jonah 1:17 or in I Samuel 30:12. However, this word is found in reference to a duration of time in Daniel 12:7: “... a time, times, and half a time.” The word “half” is translated from the Hebrew word meaning “to divide.” Since this word is not used to describe the duration of time in Jonah 1:17 and I Samuel 30:12, it is evident that the Hebrew text is describing complete units of time—three 12-hour days and three 12-hour nights. By testifying that Jonah was in the belly of the fish “three days and three nights,” the Scriptures reveal that a full 72 hours had elapsed before Jonah was cast out on the shore.

The New Testament reveals that Jesus Christ was the Lord God of the Old Testament before He became a man. He was the one Who caused the great fish to swallow Jonah and descend to the bottom of the sea for a period of time before swimming to the shore and depositing Jonah on the land. As the Lord God, He knew exactly how long Jonah had remained in the belly of the fish, and He inspired Jonah to record this duration of time, which was a foretelling of His future burial. There is no question concerning the length of time that passed as Jonah lay in the belly of the fish, because this fact is preserved in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Since the Hebrew text cannot be interpreted in an idiomatic sense, but must be interpreted literally, it is clear that three whole days and three whole nights passed while Jonah lay in the fish’s belly. Jesus was fully aware of this fact of Scripture when He declared to the Jews, “... **in like manner the Son of man shall be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights**” (Matt. 12:40).

Jesus Said That He Would Rise Three Days after His Death

The Gospel writers record that Jesus made specific statements to His disciples concerning the length of time that He would be in the tomb and when He would be resurrected: “And He began to teach them that it was necessary for the Son of man to suffer many things, and to be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and **to be killed, but after three days to rise from the dead**” (Mark 8:31; see also Matt. 16:21 and Mark 9:31). Jesus proclaimed to His disciples that He would not rise from the dead until **three days after He had been killed**. Jesus’ statement that **He would rise three days after He had died** is most significant. According to Jewish law, to be declared legally dead, a person had to be dead for more than three full days. If someone who appeared to be dead revived and came back to life prior to three full days, he or she was not legally deemed to have been dead. Therefore,

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if Jesus had risen from the dead before 3 PM on the afternoon of Nisan 17, a weekly Sabbath, He would not have been considered legally dead. As a result, His return to life would not have been considered a true resurrection from the dead.

Knowing this fact, one can understand why Jesus delayed going to Lazarus in the account in John 11. Jesus knew that Lazarus was sick unto death, but He deliberately remained where He was for two more days (John 11:6). He knew that Lazarus would not be considered legally dead until he had been dead for four days. When Lazarus was legally dead, Jesus went to resurrect him from the grave: “Jesus said, **‘Take away the stone.’ Martha, the sister of him who had died, said to Him, ‘Lord, he already stinks, for it has been four days.’** Jesus said to her, ‘Did I not say to you that if you will believe, you shall see the glory of God?’ Then they removed the stone *from the tomb* where the dead man had been laid. And Jesus lifted *His* eyes upward and said, ‘Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You hear Me always; but because of the people who stand around I say *this*, so that they may believe that You did send Me.’ And after He had spoken these things, He cried with a loud voice, **‘Lazarus, come forth.’ And he who had been dead came forth, his feet and hands bound with grave clothes, and his face bound up with a napkin.** Jesus said to them, ‘Loose him and let *him* go’ ” (John 11:39-44).

Like Lazarus, Jesus had to remain dead for a minimum of three full days in order to be declared officially dead. If He had been crucified on a Friday and restored to life on Sunday morning at sunrise, His death would not have been “valid” since only two nights and one day would have passed between Friday sunset and Sunday morning. In order for His death to be publicly recognized and acknowledged, it was necessary for Jesus to remain in the grave for three nights and three days before He was raised from the dead. The Scriptures reveal that Jesus died at the ninth hour, or 3 PM, on the Passover day, Nisan 14, which fell on Wednesday, April 5, in 30 AD (Matt. 27:46 and Mark 15:34), and He was placed in the tomb just before sunset at approximately 6 PM. The Gospel of Matthew describes His burial by Joseph of Arimathea: “**And when evening was coming on**, a rich man of Arimathea came, named Joseph, who was himself a disciple of Jesus. After going to Pilate, he begged *to have* the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given over *to him*. And after taking the body, Joseph [with the help of Nicodemus (John 19:39)] wrapped it in clean linen cloth, and placed it in his new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and after rolling a great stone to the door of the tomb, he went away” (Matt. 27:57-60). Luke records that “a Sabbath was coming on” (Luke 23:54), which means that by the time they had closed the entrance of the tomb with a huge stone, the Sabbath was nearly upon them. Since all Sabbaths were reckoned from sunset to sunset, it is clear that the sun was about to set.

Both Matthew and Mark testify that Jesus died at the ninth hour, or 3 PM. Luke’s account shows that they closed the entrance to the tomb with a huge stone just before sunset. Because the Passover is in the spring of the year when the days are twelve hours in length, we know that the tomb was closed at about 6 PM. Since He died about 3 PM, Jesus was dead for approximately 75 hours before He was resurrected. The total length of time included three days (from sunrise to sunset) and three nights (from sunset to sunrise) plus approximately three hours. Because He had been dead for more than three days, His death was legally established. When He appeared to His disciples three days after He had been placed in the tomb, the reality of His resurrection from the dead was beyond question.

Additional Statements of Jesus Confirm That He Was in the Tomb for Three Days and Three Nights

While Matthew and Mark record that He would be raised “after three days,” Luke records that He would be raised “on the third day.” Luke stated: “For He shall be delivered up to the Gentiles, and shall be mocked and insulted and spit upon. And after scourging *Him*, they shall kill Him; **but on the third day, He shall rise again**” (Luke 18:32-33).

The apostle John records another statement by Jesus that He would be raised up “in

three days.” Jesus made this statement when the Jews confronted Him for casting the money exchangers out of the temple and driving out the animals they were selling: “... The Jews answered and said to Him, ‘What sign do You show to us, seeing that You do these things?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘**Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.**’ Then the Jews said, ‘This temple was forty-six years in building, and You will raise it up in three days?’ **But He spoke concerning the temple of His body.** Therefore, when He was raised from *the* dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scriptures, and the word that Jesus had spoken” (John 2:18-22).

The phrase “in three days” contains the Greek preposition *en*. This Greek preposition, which is translated “in” in John 2:19-20, can also mean “within.” At first glance, the statements “**in three days**” and “**on the third day**” appear to conflict with the statement that He would be raised “**after three days**.” How is it possible for all three of Jesus’ statements to be correct?

When we understand Jesus’ statements, we will find that instead of being contradictory, they reveal the exact time that He was raised from the dead. Jesus made it clear that He would be raised after He had been dead for three days. The other statements, “**in three days**” and “**on the third day**,” do not include the total time that He was dead but only the time that He was buried in the tomb. The Gospel accounts show that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus closed the tomb just before sunset, three hours after Jesus died on the cross. Although He was in the tomb for exactly three days and three nights, He was dead for a longer period than that. Thus He rose from the dead “**after three days**.” The difference between this statement and the statements “**in three days**” and “**on the third day**” is that these two statements refer to His burial “**in the heart of the earth three days and three nights**.”

When one compares all of Jesus’ statements, it is evident that they place specific limits on the time frame between His death and resurrection. Of itself, “**in three days**” could mean any time on the third day, even the first minute of the third day. “**On the third day**” could mean any time on the third day up to the last minute on the third day. But the statement that He would “**be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights**” shows that three whole days and three whole nights would pass while He lay in the tomb.

When all of Jesus’ statements are taken into consideration, there is only one moment of time to which all can apply. Here is the explanation: The end of the third day is still “on” and “in” the third day. At the end of the third day, precisely at sunset, Jesus was resurrected. This was the only moment of time that could fulfill all of Jesus’ prophecies concerning the time of His death, the length of time that He would be in the tomb, and the time of His resurrection.

The Gospels record that Jesus died on the Passover day, Nisan 14, which fell on a Wednesday in 30 AD. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus placed Jesus’ body in the tomb and closed the entrance with a huge stone when the sun was setting at approximately 6 PM, ending Nisan 14. Jesus was resurrected from the dead precisely three days and three nights later, when the sun was setting at the end of the weekly Sabbath, or Saturday, Nisan 17, 30 AD. As He had prophesied, He remained in the tomb for three full days and three full nights. **Jesus Christ was raised from the dead at sunset on the weekly Sabbath, the seventh day of the week. He had already been resurrected when the sun rose on Sunday, the first day of the week.** (Please see the chart on pages 760-761)

Scriptural Evidence of Two Sabbaths During the Three Days and Three Nights

According to religious tradition, Jesus was crucified on a Friday. This religious tradition appears to be supported by the statement in John 19:31 that the day of His death “was the preparation.” Most have assumed that this statement refers to the Jews’ preparation for the weekly Sabbath. They fail to realize that the Passover day, on which Jesus

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died, has always been a preparation day for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which immediately follows (Lev. 23:4-6). The first day of this feast, Nisan 15, is observed as an annual holy day, or "high day." Like the Passover day, it may fall on different days of the week. Regardless of which day of the week it falls on, it is always observed as an annual Sabbath, and the day portion of the Passover is always used as a day of preparation. It is erroneous to interpret "the preparation" in John 19:31 as evidence that the day of the crucifixion was a Friday.

The mistaken belief in a Friday crucifixion is based on the assumption that there was only one Sabbath during the crucifixion week. However, the Scriptures clearly reveal that during that week there were two Sabbaths. The first Sabbath was an annual holy day, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The second Sabbath was the weekly Sabbath, the seventh day of the week. Consequently, during the week of Jesus' crucifixion there were two preparation days. The day portion of Nisan 14, the Passover day, was the preparation day for the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the 15th, which was an annual Sabbath. The following day, the 16th, which was a Friday, was the preparation day for the weekly Sabbath.

When the Gospel of John is examined, it is evident that the Sabbath immediately following the day Jesus died was an annual Sabbath: "The Jews therefore, so that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, because it was **a preparation day (for that Sabbath was a high day)** ..." (John 19:31). The term "high day" was never used to refer to the weekly Sabbath, but only to annual Sabbaths. John's use of this term makes it clear that the Sabbath which was about to begin was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Nisan 15. Mark's account makes reference to the coming of sunset, which would bring the end of the preparation and the beginning of the annual Sabbath, or high day: "**Now evening was coming, and since it was a preparation, (that is, the day before a Sabbath)** ..." (Mark 15:42).

As the Gospel of Luke shows, this Sabbath was about to begin when Jesus was put into the tomb: "Now it was **a preparation day, and a Sabbath was coming on**. And *the* women also, who had come with Him from Galilee, followed *and* saw the tomb, and how His body was laid" (Luke 23:54-55).

The Gospels record the events that followed Jesus' burial. On Nisan 15, the day after the crucifixion, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate to request that guards be assigned to watch Jesus' tomb. Because they were afraid that the disciples would come and steal away His body, they did not hesitate to take care of their business on the holy day (Matt. 27:62-66). While the priests and Pharisees went to Pilate, the women who followed Jesus were observing the annual Sabbath, as commanded by God. They could not buy spices on that day because all the businesses were closed in observance of the command to rest (Lev. 23:6-7). After the end of that Sabbath, or high day, they bought spices and aromatic oils to anoint Jesus. Mark relates this event: "**Now when the Sabbath had passed**, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the *mother* of James, and Salome bought aromatic oils, so that they might come and anoint Him" (Mark 16:1).

It is quite evident that the women could not have purchased the spices until after the high day, or annual Sabbath, had ended. The high day began when the Passover day, Nisan 14, ended at sunset. The observance of the high day, Nisan 15, lasted until the following sunset, which began Nisan 16. The women bought the spices "**when the Sabbath had passed**" and prepared them on the same day. When they had finished, they observed **a second Sabbath**: "And they returned *to the city*, and prepared spices and ointments, and *then* rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment" (Luke 23:56). The Gospel records concerning the buying and preparation of the spices by the women clearly reveal the observance of two Sabbaths during the crucifixion week.

Appendix G

Two Women View the Tomb Late on the Weekly Sabbath

Before the weekly Sabbath came to an end, Matthew records that Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to observe the tomb: “Now late on the Sabbath, as *the first day* of the weeks was drawing near, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to observe the sepulcher” (Matt. 28:1). Because it was still the Sabbath day, the women did not come to anoint His body with the spices they had prepared. Perhaps they went to observe the tomb because they remembered Jesus’ words that after three days and three nights in the grave, He would rise from the dead.

After the two women viewed the tomb and saw that the stone covering the entrance was still in place with the soldiers standing guard, they returned home for the night. The next morning, as they were coming back to the tomb, they were wondering who might roll back the stone so that they could anoint Jesus’ body: “And very early on the first *day* of the weeks, at the rising of the sun, they were coming to the tomb; and they were asking themselves, ‘Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?’ ” (Mark 16:2-3) But when the women arrived, they found that the stone had already been removed and the tomb was empty. The three days and three nights had ended at sunset on the weekly Sabbath, and Jesus had risen from the dead!

“Today Is the Third Day Since These Things Took Place”

Those who believe in a Sunday resurrection point to a statement in Luke 24:21 as evidence that Jesus rose from the dead at sunrise on the first day of the week. This statement was made by two of Jesus’ disciples: “... today is the third day since these things were done.” Because this statement was made on the first day of the week, many have assumed that Jesus rose from the dead early that morning. Let us examine the context of the verse in question as translated in the King James Version: “And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

“And he said unto them, ‘What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?’ And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, ‘Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?’ And he said unto them, ‘What things?’

“And they said unto him, ‘Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and **beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done**’ ” (Luke 24:13-21 KJV).

An Exegesis of Luke 24:21 Reveals the True Meaning of the “Third Day”

The translation of Luke 24:21 that appears in the King James Version has been used to support the teaching that the resurrection took place at sunrise on the first day of the week. However, the Gospel accounts clearly show that Jesus had already risen from the dead before the women came to the tomb at sunrise. There is no question that Jesus was in the tomb for “three days and three nights,” beginning at sunset on Wednesday, Nisan 14, and ending at sunset on the weekly Sabbath, Nisan 17, in 30 AD. Jesus rose at the end of the three days and three nights, exactly as He had declared.

When one analyzes the phrasing that is used in the Greek text, one will see that the disciples were not talking about that day being the “third day” since Jesus was crucified. Let

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us examine this verse as translated in interlinear form by George Ricker Berry from the Stephens text of 1550, the same text that was used by the King James translators:

ημεις δε ηλπιζομεν οτι αυτος εστιν ο μελλω λυτρουσθαι τον Ισραηλ.
But we were hoping he it is who is about to redeem Israel.
αλλα συν πασιν τουτοις τριτην ταυτην ημεραν αγει ηνερον αφ ου
but then with all these things third this day brings today since
ταυτα εγενετο.
these things came to pass.

In order to correctly interpret the meaning of the Greek text, we must examine the two expressions that are underlined:

1) τριτην ταυτην ημεραν αγει (*triten tauten hemeran agei*)

A. T. Robertson informs us that this expression is an idiom: “[Now the third day] (τριτην ταυτην ημεραν αγει *triten tauten hemeran agei*). **A difficult idiom for the English**” (Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, s.v. Luke 24:21). *Vincent's Word Studies* concurs that this is a difficult idiom to render into English.

Because τριτην ταυτην ημεραν αγει *triten tauten hemeran agei* is an idiomatic expression, its true meaning cannot be understood by translating the Greek words literally, as the King James translators have done. The literal translation of this expression in the KJV (and many other translations) only serves to distort the true meaning of Luke's words in the Greek text. Edward Hobbs, a scholar who began teaching the Greek language over 50 years ago, recently wrote the following to another scholar regarding the translation of idioms: “But may I speak to the larger question of what are called ‘**IDIOMS**’ in language-teaching....What older books almost always meant by an ‘idiom’ was **something which, when translated word-for-word into English either didn't make sense or made the wrong sense** ... But the fact is, very little in other languages means the same thing when put word-for-word into English....**The semantic value of a word should always be evaluated contextually ... the good lexicons** [like Arndt and Gingrich] **already do this**, without singling such phrases for separate listing....**This principle applies equally to individual words and to strings of words which are semantically opaque (Idioms)**” (Bold emphasis added).

Hobbs concludes his remarks by stating, “One of the real reasons for studying ancient Greek is to learn how they thought about things, especially how they thought **DIFFERENTLY** about things, not simply what different thoughts they had about things....**We need to learn what translations cannot reveal: How the thinking itself was oriented differently**” (Edward Hobbs, EHOBBS@wellesley.edu, 12 Jul 1997, bold emphasis added).

Since the true meaning of Luke 24:21 depends on a proper understanding of the idiomatic expression that Luke used, we must examine the use of this expression by other writers of that era. When we examine their works, we find that τριτος *tritos* often appears in classical Greek literature as an expression of **completed time** (Liddell, Scott and Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. “Tritos”). Notice Josephus' use of the word in this manner: “When the rigour of winter was over, Herod removed his army, and came near to Jerusalem, and pitched his camp hard by the city. Now this was the third [*tritos*] year since he had been made king at Rome ...” (Josephus, *Ant.*, 14:15:14). As defined by classical Greek literature, Josephus' words indicate that Herod undertook the conquest of Jerusalem at the completion of his third regnal year; that is, after three full years—not at any time during the third year. As we will see, the additional use of αφ ου *aph hou* in conjunction with τριτος *tritos* makes the meaning of this idiom even more emphatic.

2) αφ ου *aph hou*

The function of this Greek expression is quite different from the idiomatic use of the first expression. *Αφ ου aph hou* is a linguistic formula and is very precise in meaning. It is used in classical Greek to delimit **a period of time that has been completed**. Arndt and Gingrich inform us that the translators of the Septuagint used *αφ ου aph hou* as a formula in Daniel 12:1, showing that this usage was common as early as the fourth century BC. *Αφ ου aph hou* was used in the same manner by the Levitical writers of the Maccabees nearly a century and a half later (see I Macc 9:29; 16:24; and 2 Macc 1:7 in the Septuagint). Arndt and Gingrich report that Josephus also used the expression in the same manner. The usage of this Greek formula by Josephus is of great value to our understanding, as he wrote within a short time after Luke wrote his Gospel. The English translation of Josephus' words is given below:

“(6)[78] Then it was that Miriam, the sister of Moses, came to her end, **having completed her fortieth year since [αφ ου aph' hou] she left Egypt**, on the first day of the lunar month Xanthicus.”

The use of *αφ ου aph hou* in Josephus' works and the works of classical Greek writers enables us to understand the true meaning of Luke 24:21. As a formula, *αφ ου aph hou* specifically refers to completed time and cannot be construed as referring to time that is in progress. Thus Luke's use of *αφ ου aph hou* with *τριτην triten* must be interpreted as evidence **that the third day had already been completed**.

Thus it is erroneous to interpret Luke 24:21 as evidence that the first day of the week was “the third day since these things were done.” The use of *αφ ου aph hou* with the idiomatic expression *τριτην ταυτην ημεραν αγει triten tauten hemeren agei* clearly conveys time that had already been completed and should be translated accordingly. When the disciples spoke of the “third day,” the three days and three nights of Jesus' entombment had already been completed, although they did not yet know that Jesus had already been raised from the dead.

In addition, the use of *τριτος tritos* in the Gospel of Matthew clearly confirms that this Greek idiom refers to the completion of the three days: “Now on the next day, which followed the preparation *day*, the chief priests and the Pharisees came together to Pilate, saying, ‘Sir, we remember that that deceiver said while *He was living*, “After three days I will rise.” Therefore, command *that* the sepulcher be secured until **the third day** [*της τριτης ημερας tes trites emeras*]; lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, “He is risen from the dead”; and the last deception shall be worse than the first’” (Matt. 27:62-64).

It is evident that the phrase “**the third day**” in Matthew 27:64 refers to the completion of the three-day period, as the chief priests and Pharisees were fully aware of Jesus' declaration that He would rise “**after three days**.” It would make no sense to request a guard for the first and second days only, since He had declared that He would not rise before the third day; and this was the most likely day for an attempt to be made by the disciples if they had desired to steal His body.

As “**the third day**” in Matthew 27:64 refers to the end of Jesus' three days and three nights in the tomb, so “**the third day**” in Luke 24:21 refers to the end of the three days and three nights. As in every other reference to “**the third day**” that we find in the Gospel accounts, the focus in Luke 24:21 is on **the completion of Jesus' three days and three nights in the tomb**. Thus “the third day” did not include any part of the first day of the week. It is a mistake to apply this expression to the first day of the week when the records of Jesus' crucifixion and burial clearly show that His three days and three nights in the tomb began at sunset on Wednesday, Nisan 14. He remained in “the heart of the earth” from the beginning of Nisan 15, which was an annual Sabbath or “high day,” until the end of Nisan 17, a weekly Sabbath. At the end of the weekly Sabbath, precisely as the sun was setting, He was resur-

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rected from the dead. When the first day of the week arrived, the three days and three nights had been brought to completion.

The following translations of Luke 24:21 convey the true meaning of the phrasing that is used in the Greek text:

“... three days have already passed....” (Berkeley)

“... three days ago....” (Moffatt)

Both of these translations convey the idiomatic usage of τριτος *tritos* and the use of ἀφ' ου *aph hou* as a formula to express a period of time that has been completed.

Based on this information, a precise translation of Luke 24:13-21, which conveys the true meaning of the Greek text, follows:

“And behold, on the same day, two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, which was about sixty furlongs from Jerusalem. And they were talking with one another about all the things that had taken place.

“And it came to pass, as they were talking and reasoning, that Jesus Himself drew near *and* went with them; but their eyes were restrained, *so that* they did not know Him. And He said to them, ‘What *are* these words that you are exchanging with one another as you walk, and *why* are you downcast in countenance?’ Then the one named Cleopas answered *and* said to Him, ‘Are You only traveling through Jerusalem, and have not known of the things that have happened in these days?’

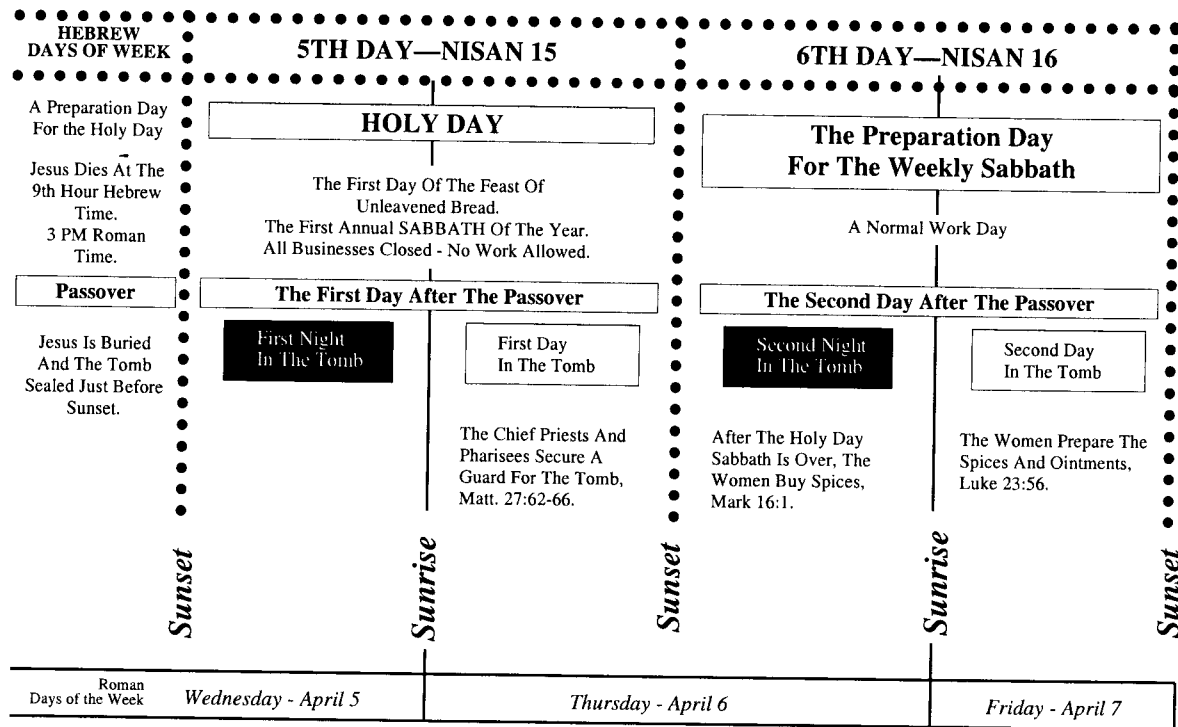
“And He said to them, ‘What things?’ And they said to Him, ‘The things concerning Jesus the Nazarean, a man Who was a prophet, Who was mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him up to *the* judgment of death, and crucified Him. And we were hoping that He was the one Who would redeem Israel. But besides all these things, **as of today, the third day has already passed since these things took place**’ ”(Luke 24:13-21).

When correctly translated, Luke 24:21 does not support the teaching that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead on the first day of the week at sunrise. Those who believe that He was resurrected at sunrise on Easter Sunday have been taught a falsehood! This religious myth rejects the sign of Jonah, which was the only sign that Jesus Christ gave as proof that He was the Messiah. Those who participate in the traditional observance of a Friday crucifixion and an Easter Sunday resurrection are observing traditions of men. Jesus said, “Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you hypocrites, as it is written, ‘This people honors Me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me.’ **But in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men....Full well do you reject the commandment of God, so that you may observe your own tradition**” (Mark 7:6-9).

The God of truth cannot be honored by practicing a lie. God the Father rejects that kind of vain worship. Rather, He is seeking those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth, as Jesus said: “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father is indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner. God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23-24).

In order to worship God the Father and Jesus Christ in spirit and in truth, one must repent of his or her sins, accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, be baptized by full immersion in water, receive the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands, and live from that time forward in the love and grace of God by keeping His commandments. These commandments include keeping the seventh-day Sabbath each week, and keeping the Christian Passover and the annual holy days of God at their appointed times each year. Only those who are under His grace, keeping all His commandments and living by His every word, are worshiping Him in spirit and in truth.

The Three Days and Three Nights In After Three Days



The Key To The Time Period From The Burial To The Resurrection:
 Jesus Said He Would Be In The Heart Of The Earth (The Tomb)
 Three Days And Three Nights; A Complete 72-Hour Period.

Matt. 12:38-40; 27:63

Mark 8:31; 9:31

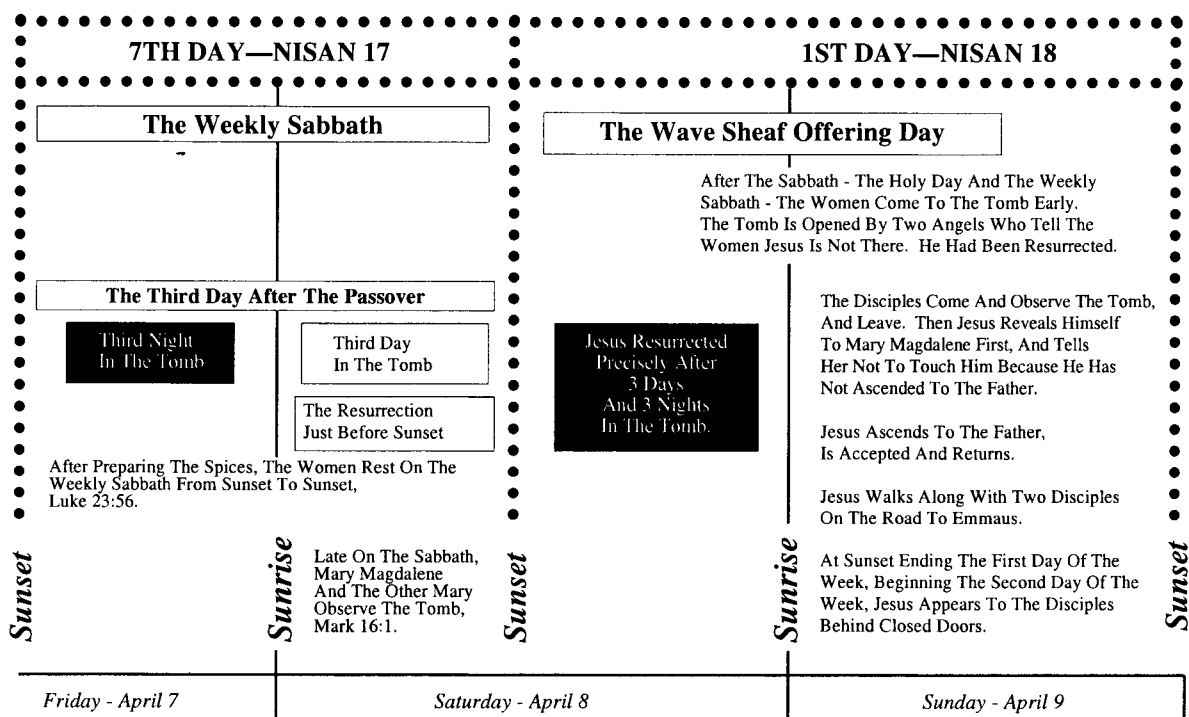
Luke 13:32; 18:33; 24:7, 46

John 2:18-22

Acts 10:40

1 Cor. 15:4

The Tomb and The Resurrection and Three Nights



Appendix H

Exegesis for the Translation of the Phrase “the Holy Spirit” as Antecedent in John 14, 15 and 16

In this translation, the true scriptural understanding of the Holy Spirit is presented. The Greek New Testament reveals that the Holy Spirit is not a person. Rather, it is the power of God, which is imparted as the gift of God to everyone who repents of sin and accepts the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin. Upon true repentance, baptism and the laying on of hands, God the Father puts the power of the Holy Spirit within each true Christian, thereby making him or her His begotten child. This process is called conversion. However, it is not until the resurrection, when Jesus Christ returns to the earth, that all those who have died in the faith, together with those truly converted Christians who are still alive, will be born again. They will be transformed from fleshly human beings to glorified children of God and will reign with Jesus Christ as kings and priests in the Kingdom of God.

In his account of the begetting and birth of Jesus Christ, Luke clearly describes the function of the Holy Spirit as the power of God. Note the angel Gabriel’s message to the virgin Mary: “ ‘And behold, you shall conceive in *your* womb and give birth to a son; and you shall call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called *the* Son of *the* Highest; and *the* Lord God shall give Him the throne of David, His forefather; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob into the ages, and of His kingdom there shall be no end.’ But Mary said to the angel, ‘How shall this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?’ And the angel answered *and* said to her, ‘**The Holy Spirit** [Greek πνευμα αγιον *pneuma agion*] **shall come upon you, and the power** [Greek δυναμις *dunamis*] **of the Highest shall overshadow you; and for this reason, the Holy One being begotten in you shall be called the Son of God**’ ” (Luke 1:31-35).

Just before Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, He told His disciples that they would receive power from the Father: “And while *they* were assembled with *Him*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to ‘await the promise of the Father, which,’ *He said*, ‘you have heard of Me. For John indeed baptized with water, but, you shall be baptized with *the* Holy Spirit [Greek πνευματι αγιω *pneumati agioo*] after not many days ... **But you yourselves shall receive power** [Greek δυναμις *dunamis*] **when the Holy Spirit** [Greek του αγιου πνευματος *tu hagiou pneumatos*, neuter gender] **has come upon you**, and you shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto *the* ends of the earth’ ” (Acts 1:4-5, 8).

In the New Testament, the Greek noun *pneuma*, which is translated “spirit,” is in the neuter gender. Likewise, the Greek noun phrases that are translated “the Spirit,” “the Holy Spirit,” and “the Holy Ghost” are always and only in the neuter gender. No masculine gender noun is used anywhere in the New Testament to designate the Holy Spirit, but only the Father and the Son. The use of the neuter gender in every scripture reveals that the Holy Spirit is not a person but the power that emanates from both the Father and the Son.

The forms of the noun *pneuma* that are found in the Greek text of the New Testament are as follows:

- 1) πνευμα *pneuma* spirit
- 2) το πνευμα *to pneuma* the spirit
- 3) το πνευματος *to pneumatos* the spirit
- 4) πνευμα αγιον *pneuma hagion* spirit holy
- 5) το αγιον πνευμα *to hagion pneuma* the holy spirit

Exegesis for the Translation of the Phrase “the Holy Spirit”

- 6) το αγιον πνευματος *to hagian pneumatatos* the holy spirit
- 7) το πνευμα το αγιον *to pneuma to hagian* the spirit the holy

Exegesis For the Translation of “The Holy Spirit”

The Greek noun *pneuma*, in all its various forms, is always and only neuter in gender. Likewise, all pronouns that refer to *pneuma* are always and only neuter in gender. If the Holy Spirit were a person, the nouns and pronouns in the Greek text would have to be written in the masculine gender, as are all the nouns and pronouns that refer to God the Father and Jesus Christ. However, nowhere in the Greek text of the New Testament is the Holy Spirit ever designated by a noun or pronoun in the masculine gender.

It is absolutely incorrect to translate any form or pronoun of πνευμα *pneuma* in the masculine gender. Unfortunately, because most translators believe in the doctrine of the trinity, they have mistakenly used the masculine gender when translating the neuter gender nouns and pronouns pertaining to the Holy Spirit. The following five key verses in the Gospel of John that have been incorrectly translated in the King James Version:

1) “**Even the Spirit of truth; whom** the world cannot receive, because it seeth **him** not, neither knoweth **him**: but ye know **him**; for **he** dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:17, KJV).

“**The Spirit of truth**” is translated from the Greek phrase το πνευμα της αληθειας *to pneuma tes aleetheias*—literally, “the Spirit of the truth.” This noun phrase is in the neuter gender. The pronoun “**whom**” is translated from the neuter relative pronoun ο, and should accordingly be translated “which.” If the Greek text were expressing the masculine gender, the masculine relative pronoun ος would have been used instead of the neuter relative pronoun ο.

The three personal pronouns translated “**him**” are incorrectly translated into the masculine gender from the Greek neuter personal pronoun αυτο *auto*, which is properly translated “it.” If “the Spirit” were a person rather than the power of God, the verse would read ο πνευματος, rather than the neuter το πνευμα. However, there is no such masculine noun anywhere in the Greek New Testament. If there were such a masculine gender noun, the masculine pronoun αυτος *autos* would be used instead of the neuter pronoun αυτο *auto*. Translators who know and understand the rules of Greek grammar do not mistake the neuter pronoun αυτο *auto* for the masculine pronoun αυτος. Thus the translation of the neuter pronoun αυτο in John 14:17 into the masculine personal pronoun “**him**” is completely incorrect. The neuter pronoun αυτο is used twice in this verse: “because it [the world] perceives **it** [αυτο *auto*] not, nor knows **it** [αυτο *auto*].”

The KJV translation of John 14:17 also violates another rule of Greek grammar. In the Greek text, a noun that serves as the subject of a verse often governs a number of verbs. In John 14:17, the noun phrase το πνευμα της αληθειας *to pneuma tes aleetheias*, meaning “the Spirit of the truth,” is the subject. Since the noun *pneuma* is neuter in gender, the subjects of all verbs that it governs should be translated in the neuter gender. In John 14:17, two third person verbs are governed by this noun. In the first instance, the translators have incorrectly translated the third person verb μενει *menei* as “**he dwelleth**,” rather than “**it dwelleth**.” In the second instance, the subject of the verb εσται *estai*, “[**it**] shall be,” was not translated, making it appear that “**he**” is the subject of both Greek verbs.

A correct translation of John 14:17 should read: “**Even** the Spirit of the truth, **which** [ο] the world cannot receive because it perceives **it** [αυτο *auto*] not, nor knows **it** [αυτο *auto*]; but you know **it** [αυτο *auto*] because **it dwells** [verb μενει *menei*] with you, and **shall be** [verb εσται *estai*] within you.”

2) “But when **the Comforter** is come, **whom** I will send unto you from the Father,

even **the Spirit of truth**, which proceedeth from the Father, **he** shall testify of me” (John 15:26, KJV).

The word “which,” referring to “**the Spirit of truth**,” is correctly translated from the neuter pronoun *ο*. In John 14:17, the translators of the KJV had incorrectly rendered this neuter pronoun as “whom.” However, in this verse, they have correctly rendered the pronoun *ο* as “which.”

The descriptive noun “**the Comforter**” is correctly translated from the masculine Greek noun *ο παρακλητος* *ho parakleetos*. While this masculine noun is used to describe a vital function of the Holy Spirit, it does not designate the Holy Spirit, or “**the Spirit of the truth**,” as a person. A descriptive noun never changes the gender of the principal noun. For example: Jesus said that He is “the true vine” (John 15:1). The Greek word translated “vine” is the feminine noun *η αμπιλος* *he ampilos*. The use of this feminine noun to describe Jesus Christ does not make His gender feminine. In exactly the same way, the use of the masculine noun *ο παρακλητος* *ho parakleetos* to describe a function of the Holy Spirit does not alter the fact that the Holy Spirit is neuter. Because the Holy Spirit is neuter in gender—not masculine—there is no basis in the Greek text for interpreting the Holy Spirit as a person.

Although the Holy Spirit is not a person, it is in accord with Greek grammar to translate the pronoun *ον* *on* as “**whom**” because its antecedent is the masculine descriptive noun *ο παρακλητος* *ho parakleetos*, “**the Comforter**.” However, it is misleading to translate the personal pronoun *ον* *on* as “whom” when the principal noun is *το πνευμα της αληθειας* *to pneuma tes aleetheias*, which is neuter in gender.

The last part of this verse has been translated: “... **he** shall testify of me.” The use of the personal pronoun “**he**” once again gives the impression that the Holy Spirit is a person. However, that is not the meaning of the Greek text. The word “**he**” is translated from the Greek word *εκεινος* *ekeinos*, which means “that” or “that one.” As with the pronoun *ον* *on*, the antecedent of *εκεινος* *ekeinos* is *ο παρακλητος* *ho parakleetos*, “the Comforter,” which is a descriptive noun. Although it is masculine in gender, the principal noun is *το πνευμα της αληθειας* *to pneuma tes aleetheias*, which is neuter. The gender of the principal noun always takes precedence over the gender of the descriptive noun. Therefore, *εκεινος* *ekeinos* has been translated “... **that one** shall bear witness of Me” in order to reflect the true meaning of the Greek text.

The translation of John 15:26 should read: “But when the Comforter has come, **which** I will send to you from the Father, **even the Spirit of the truth**, which proceeds from the Father, **that one** shall bear witness of Me.”

3) “But the Comforter, *which* is the Holy Ghost, **whom** the Father will send in my name, **he** shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26, KJV).

As in John 15:26, the descriptive noun *ho parakleetos*, “the Comforter,” is used with the principal noun *το πνευμα*, “the Spirit.” In the Greek text, the verse begins with these words: *ο δε παρακλητος, το πνευμα το αγιον, ο ... ho de parakleetos, to pneuma to hagion, ο ...* The noun phrase *το πνευμα το αγιον* *to pneuma to hagion*, “the Holy Spirit,” is the antecedent of the neuter pronoun *ο*, which has been incorrectly translated “whom” in the KJV. Since *ο* is a neuter pronoun, it should be translated “which.” If the Greek text contained the masculine pronoun *ος*, it would be proper to translate it as “whom” to reflect the masculine gender. However, the Greek text uses the neuter form of the pronoun, not the masculine form.

The pronoun “**he**” in this verse is translated from the Greek *εκεινος* *ekeinos* and should be translated “**that one**.”

This translation of John 14:26 conveys the precise meaning of the Greek text: “But *when* the Comforter *comes*, *even* the Holy Spirit, **which** the Father will send in My name, **that one** shall teach you all things, and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I

Exegesis for the Translation of the Phrase “the Holy Spirit”

that one shall teach you all things, and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you.”

The translators of the KJV have also used the masculine pronoun “**he**” in Verse 16 of this same chapter: “And I will pray the Father, and **he** shall give you another **Comforter**, that **he** may abide with you for ever” (John 14:16, *KJV*). As Verse 17 shows, “the Comforter” is describing the Holy Spirit, or “the Spirit of truth,” which is translated from *to pneuma tes aleetheias*, the same noun phrase that is used in John 15:26. Since *pneuma* is the principal noun, the meaning of the pronoun is governed by its neuter gender, not by the masculine gender of *parakleetos*, or “Comforter,” which is a descriptive noun. This translation of John 14:16 accurately conveys the meaning of the Greek text: “And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another **Comforter**, that **it** may be with you throughout the age.”

4) “Howbeit when **he**, the Spirit of truth, is come, **he** will guide you into all truth: for **he** shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever **he** shall hear, *that* shall **he** speak: and **he** will show you things to come” (John 16:13, *KJV*).

All six occurrences of the pronoun “**he**” in this verse refer to “the Spirit of truth,” which is translated from *το πνευμα της αληθειας* *to pneuma tes aleetheias*. Since *pneuma* is neuter in gender, all six pronouns should accordingly be translated in the neuter gender. The first “**he**” is an incorrect rendering of the Greek *εκεινος* *ekeinos* and should be translated “that one.” The remaining five occurrences of “**he**” are all subjects of verbs that are governed by the neuter noun *pneuma* and should be translated “**it**.”

The correct meaning of John 16:13 is reflected in this translation: “However, when **that one** has come, *even* the Spirit of the truth, **it will lead** [verb *οδηγησει* *odeegeesei*] you into all truth because **it shall not speak** [verb *λαλησει* *laleesei*] from itself, but whatever **it shall hear** [verb *ακουση* *akousee*] **it shall speak** [verb *λαλησει* *laleesei*]. And **it shall disclose** [verb *αναγγειλει* *anaggelei*] to you the things to come.”

5) “**He** shall glorify me: for **he shall receive** of mine, and **shall show** it unto you” (John 16:14, *KJV*).

As in John 16:13, the first “**he**” is translated from the Greek *εκεινος* *ekeinos*, meaning “that one.” Since the antecedent of *ekeinos* is “the Spirit of truth” in Verse 13, both the noun and its pronoun are neuter in gender. The second “**he**,” which is the subject of the verb “**shall receive**,” is governed by “the Spirit of truth,” or *το πνευμα της αληθειας* *to pneuma tes aleetheias*, and should also be translated in the neuter gender. The verb “**shall show**,” which the translators of the KJV have rendered as a compound verb with “**shall receive**,” is also governed by “the Spirit of truth,” and should accordingly be translated in the neuter gender.

This translation of John 16:14 correctly follows the Greek text: “**That one** shall glorify Me because **it shall disclose** [verb *αναγγειλει* *anaggelei*] to you *the things that it receives* [verb *ληψεται* *leepsetai*] from Me.”

As the New Testament reveals, the Holy Spirit is not a person; rather it is the power of God. All references to the Holy Spirit in the Greek text are in the neuter gender. The use of the descriptive noun “the Comforter,” which is masculine in gender, does not alter the neuter gender of the Holy Spirit. There is no basis in the New Testament for the claim that the Holy Spirit is a third person in a trinity.

Eminent Greek Scholar Refutes Personality of the Holy Spirit

The use of the pronoun *εκεινος* *ekeinos*, “that one,” does not affirm that the Holy Spirit has personality or is a person. The arguments concerning *ekeinos*, attempting to make the Holy Spirit a third person in the Godhead, are only unsubstantiated theological theories that are not based on the true meaning of the Greek. In fact, there is no place in the New

arguments begin with the premise that the Godhead is a so-called “trinity”—a word found nowhere in the New Testament. Rather than seeking the truth of the Scriptures, the proponents of this theory must resort to twisted interpretations of Scripture in order to give a plausible, but false, explanation. However, the Greek New Testament does not teach that the Holy Spirit is a person, nor a third member of a triune Godhead. Rather, it teaches that the Holy Spirit is the power of God that He uses to accomplish His will.

The advocates of attributing personality to the Holy Spirit use several key scriptures to attempt to prove their theory. One verse in question is John 15:26, which reads: “But when the Comforter has come, which I will send to you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of the truth, which proceeds from the Father, **that one** shall bear witness of Me.”

In a detailed refutation of their claims, the eminent New Testament Greek scholar and syntax expert, Daniel B. Wallace wrote of this verse: “The use of *εκεινος* [a masculine pronoun, *that one*] here [in John 15:26] is frequently regarded by students of the NT to be an affirmation of the personality of the Spirit. Such an approach is based on the assumption that the antecedent of *εκεινος* [*that one*] is *πνευμα* [*spirit* a neuter noun]: [It is claimed], ‘the masculine pronoun *εκεινος* [*that one*] is [also] used in John 14:26 and 16:13-14 to refer to the neuter noun *πνευμα* [*spirit*] to emphasize the personality of the Holy Spirit’ ” (Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, p. 331). In Footnote 42, Wallace noted: “The view is especially popular among theologians, not infrequently becoming the mainstay [the only basis] in their argument for the personality of the Spirit” (Ibid., p. 331).

“But this [conclusion] is erroneous. In all these Johannine passages, *πνευμα* [*spirit*] is appositional to a masculine noun. The gender of *εκεινος* [*that one*] thus has nothing to do with the natural [neuter] gender of *πνευμα* [*spirit*]. The antecedent of *εκεινος*, [*that one*] in each case, is *παρακλητος* [*comforter*, a masculine noun], not *πνευμα* [*spirit*, a neuter noun]. John 14:26 reads: ο παρακλητος, το πνευμα το αγιον, ο πεμψει ο πατηρ εν τω ονοματι μου, *εκεινος* υμας διδαξει παντα ... (‘the Comforter, the Holy Spirit whom [which] the Father sends in my name, **that one** will teach you all things’). *πνευμα* [*spirit*] not only is appositional to *παρακλητος* [*comforter*] but the relative pronoun that follows it [*πνευμα* (*spirit*)] is neuter! This hardly assists the grammatical argument for the Spirit’s personality. In John 16:13-14 the immediate context is deceptive: οταν δε ελθη *εκεινος*, το πνευμα της αληθειας, οδηγη σει υμας εν τη αληθεια παση *εκεινος* εμε δοξασει ... (‘whenever **that one** comes—the Spirit of truth—he [it] will guide you in all truth....**he** [*that one*] will glorify me ...’). The *εκεινος* [*that one*] [in these verses] reaches back to v 7, where *παρακλητος* [*comforter*] is mentioned. Thus, since *παρακλητος* [*comforter*] is masculine, so is the pronoun [*εκεινος* “that one” is masculine]. Although one might argue that the Spirit’s personality is in view in these passages, the view must be based on the nature of a *παρακλητος* [*comforter*] and the things said about the Comforter, not on any supposed grammatical subtleties [concerning το πνευμα το αγιον “the Spirit of the truth,” which is neuter gender]. **Indeed, it is difficult to find any text** [in the New Testament] **in which πνευμα [spirit] is grammatically referred to with the masculine gender** [because there are not any]” (Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, pp. 331-332, some bold emphasis and all bracketed comments added).

Wallace added further comments in related footnotes. Concerning John 16:13, he wrote: “Although translations of v. 13 such as that of the NRSV may be misleading as to what the subject of the sentence is (‘When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you...’), their objective is not to be a handbook for Greek students” (Ibid., *Footnote 43*, p. 332). To paraphrase, Wallace is saying that John 16:13 in the NRSV is an incorrect translation that does not follow the Greek text.

A correct translation of John 16:13-14 reads: “However, when **that one** has come, *even* the Spirit of the truth, it will lead you into all truth because it shall not speak from itself,

Exegesis for the Translation of the Phrase “the Holy Spirit”

but whatever it shall hear it shall speak. And it shall disclose to you the things to come. **That one** shall glorify Me because it shall disclose to you *the things that* it receives from Me.”

Wallace further refuted the notion that personality of the Holy Spirit can be found in the Greek New Testament. In another extended footnote he wrote: “Besides the Johannine texts, three other passages are occasionally used for this: Eph 1:14; 2 Thess 2:6-7; and 1 John 5:7. All of these have problems. In Eph 1:14 *ὅς ἐστιν ἀρραβὼν* [*which is the earnest*] refers back to *τῷ πνεύματι* [*the spirit*] (v 13), but the masculine relative pronoun [*ὅς he/which*] (v.l.) is easily explained without resorting to seeing the theological motifs [of attempting to prove personality of the Spirit] ... In 2 Thess 2:6-7 *πνεῦμα* [*spirit*] is nowhere mentioned; *το κατεχόν/ὁ κατεχών* [*holding back/one Who is restraining*] are often assumed to both refer to the Holy Spirit. But in spite of the fact that there is much to commend this view, it certainly cannot use clear natural-gender passages in support [of personality for the Holy Spirit], nor can such a known *crux interpretum* [critical interpretation] become the basis for such a syntactical point. [In other words, such an interpretation is contrary to the Greek.] First John 5:7 is perhaps the most plausible of the passages enlisted. The masculine participle in *τρεις εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες* [*three that bear witness*] refers to *τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ τὸ αἷμα* [*the Spirit and the water and the blood*] (v 8), all neuter nouns. Some see this as an oblique reference to the Spirit’s personality ... but the fact that the author [John] has personified water and blood, turning them into witnesses along with the Spirit, may be enough to account for [the use of] the masculine gender [plural participle *μαρτυροῦντες*—*bear witness*]. This interpretation also has in its behalf the allusion to Deut. 19:15 (the necessity of ‘two or three witnesses’), for in the OT the testimony only of males was acceptable. Thus, the elder [the apostle John] may be subtly indicating (via the masculine participle) that the Spirit, water and blood are all valid witnesses” (Ibid., *Footnote 44*, p. 332, bracketed comments and some bold emphasis added).

When the context of I John 5:6-9 is included, it is clear that Wallace is quite correct: “This is He Who came by water and blood—Jesus the Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that **bears witness** [neuter singular participle] because the Spirit is the truth. For there are **three that bear witness** [masculine plural participle] on the earth: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood [all neuter nouns]; and these three *witness* unto the one *truth* [that Jesus was God manifested in the flesh and died for the sins of the world]. If we accept the witness of men, the witness of God is superior. For this is the witness of God, which He has witnessed [through the Spirit, the water and the blood] concerning His Son.”

In verse 6 “the Spirit **that bears witness**” is translated from the neuter singular participle, *μαρτυροῦν* *marturoun*. If John had intended to attribute personality to the Holy Spirit, he would have used a masculine participle, but he did not. Therefore, the shift to the masculine plural participle *μαρτυροῦντες* *marturountes* in verse 7 does not by any means constitute attributing personality to the Spirit. Moreover, if the use of the masculine plural participle in verse 7 did, in fact, attribute personality to the Holy Spirit, then it would also have attributed personality to the water and the blood. However, no such argument has ever been made. Wallace’s analysis of the three witnesses in verse 7 with John’s use of the masculine participle is correct.

Proper analysis and exegesis of these critical verses clearly reveals that the Holy Spirit does not have personality. Therefore, the Holy Spirit cannot be a third person in a triune Godhead. The doctrine that the Godhead is a trinity of three persons is found nowhere in the Old or New Testaments.

Finally, the New Testament reveals that there are only two Persons in the Godhead—God the Father and Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is revealed to be the power by which God accomplishes His will. There is no basis in the New Testament for the claim that the Holy Spirit is the third person in a trinity.

Appendix I

The Trinity

A Summary of Proofs That the Trinity Is Not a Person

Part I - Historical Proof

1) The first teaching about the Trinity began in the latter half of the second century—a hundred years after most of the New Testament had been written.

2) In 381 AD the Emperor Theodosius called the Council of Constantinople which adopted the Trinity doctrine.

3) In the 4th century **false scriptures were added to I John 5:7** "... in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one ..." References: Peake's Commentary on the Bible "... No respectable Greek MS [manuscript] contains it. Appearing first in a late 4th century Latin text, it entered the Vulgate and finally the NT [New Testament] of Erasmus [and eventually the King James]" (pg. 1038). (Also see *New Bible Commentary Revised; Commentary on The Whole Bible* Jamieson, Fausset and Brown; *The New Testament From 26 Translations*, Zondervan; and *Eight Translation New Testament*, Tyndale Publisher.)

An accurate translation of I John 5:6-8 reads: "6. This is He Who came by water and blood—Jesus the Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. 7. And it is the Spirit that bears witness because the Spirit is the truth. 8. For there are three that bear witness on the earth: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three *witness* unto the one *truth*" See footnote, page 576 for commentary.

Part II - Biblical Proof

1) The word "trinity" is not in the Bible.

2) The Holy Spirit was "poured out" on Pentecost (see Acts 2:18—Peter quoting from Joel). Also, the Holy Spirit was "poured out" upon the Gentiles (see Acts 10:45). A person is not "poured out."

3) Acts 2:2 reads: "The Holy Spirit came from heaven, audibly sounding like a mighty wind and it [the Holy Spirit] filled all the house where they were sitting." People don't sound like a mighty wind, and you don't fill a house with a person.

4) The Holy Spirit appeared as cloven tongues. A person doesn't appear as a cloven tongue (Acts 2:3).

5) Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18, 20). If the Holy Spirit were a person that would make the Holy Spirit Christ's Father!

6) The Holy Spirit is not a person but rather the power of God that He uses to accomplish His work. (See Appendix H, Exegesis of John 14, 15, 16.)

7) Sometimes God speaks of a thing or quality as if it were a person [personification] as in the following example: "Wisdom calls aloud outside; She raises her voice in the open squares." (See Proverbs 1:20-21, 33.) Another example refers to "understanding": "... lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures ..." (See Proverbs 2:3-4.) The use of "she" and "her" does not make wisdom or understanding a person. Nor can the use of "he" in the KJV and other translations make the Holy Spirit a person.

8) Christ said, "I and My Father are one" (John 10:30; 17:21-22). He never mentioned the Holy Spirit as being one with Him and His Father.

The Trinity

9) Daniel 7:13: "... the Son of Man ... came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him." Daniel, a great and loyal servant of God, spoke of only two members of the Godhead.

10) Psalm 110:1: "The LORD said to My Lord, 'Sit at My right hand ...' " David, a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), spoke of only two members of the Godhead.

11) Within the first seven verses of 11 of the 14 books Paul wrote, he gave salutations from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ but never included the Holy Spirit as part of the Godhead. Surely, if the Holy Spirit were a person and a member of a triune Godhead, Paul would have sent greetings from the Holy Spirit as well. See Romans 1:7, I Corinthians 1:3, II Corinthians 1:2, Galatians 1:3, Ephesians 1:2, Philippians 1:2, Thessalonians 1:2, I Timothy 1:2, II Timothy 1:2, Titus 1:4 and Philemon 1:3.

12) In the remaining three books ascribed to Paul, God the Father and Christ are referred to as persons, but the Holy Spirit is never referred to this way. (See Colossians 1:3, I Thessalonians 1:1, and Hebrews 1:1-2.)

13) Matthew 28:19 reads "... baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The use of "Holy Spirit" in the same sentence doesn't make it a person.

14) In John's vision of the throne of God (Rev. 4-5), he saw only the Father and the Son. He did not see a third person designated as "God, the Holy Spirit."

15) Satan's religions teach the doctrine of the TRINITY; God teaches the FAMILY.

16) God is an open FAMILY, not a closed, triangular Trinity. Converted believers can enter the God Family. They are now begotten, to be born into the family of God at the first resurrection.

Appendix J

Beliefs and Doctrines of the New Testament Church

The True Teachings and Doctrines of Jesus Christ and His Apostles As Revealed in the Holy Bible

The apostolic New Testament Church, also known as the Primitive Church of God, believed and practiced the true teachings and doctrines of Jesus Christ and His chosen apostles as revealed in the Holy Bible—The Old Testament and the New Testament. The New Testament Church of God has never ceased to exist, though it has always been a scattered “little flock,” despised and hated by the world and its great religious organizations. The New Testament records many of the persecutions that the true believers of Jesus Christ suffered during the time of the apostles at the hands of the unbelieving Jews and Romans. Later, after the death of the apostle John in 98-100 AD, a great apostate, counterfeit Christian church arose, 100 AD-325 AD. It continued to persecute the brethren of the true Church of God. Beginning in the time of the Roman Emperor Constantine, under orders from the emperor and the apostate Church leaders—its bishops and later popes—the civil government of the Roman Empire persecuted, killed and drove the true Christians beyond the bounds of the Empire. The histories written about the scattered brethren of God’s true Church, preserved by Romish and Orthodox historians, refer to them as heretics, because they steadfastly rejected the usurped ecclesiastical authority of the Roman Church and refused to believe or accept its false paganized teachings and doctrines. Rather, they have always submitted to the authority of God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Word of God, believing and practicing the true doctrines and teachings of the Bible. The following doctrinal statements are the biblical teachings and doctrines of the true Church of God from the Old and New Testaments, which are the same scriptural teachings and doctrines that the apostles of Jesus Christ taught the primitive Church of God and wrote in the New Testament. Today, the Christian Biblical Church of God derives all its teachings and doctrines from the Scriptures, as did the early New Testament Church of God. These statements are designed to give a brief summary of each doctrinal belief and are not intended to be exhaustive treatises. The scriptural references, which follow each statement, are by no means a complete listing of the many Scriptures that support these doctrines.

I. The Nature of God

The God Family

God—the Hebrew word is *Elohim*, a plural noun inherently meaning more than one—is a holy Family of intelligent Beings, composed of spirit. The God Family is eternal and all-powerful. The God Family is perfect in love, purpose and character. The God Family is Lawgiver, Creator and Sustainer of all substance and life, and upholds and controls the universe. The Scriptures reveal that the God Family created mankind “after Our image and after Our likeness.” Therefore, God is the reality of the “image and likeness” from which man was created. The God Family presently consists of God the Father and God the Son. These two members of the God Family have the same form, or “image and likeness,” which They have given to human beings, though They are composed of spirit. One of Their purposes is to increase the God Family. According to this plan and purpose, They will share Their eternal spiritual existence and Their vast creation with those human beings who will be

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born again by the resurrection from death into the God Family, thereby inheriting Their magnificent love, glory and power as sons and daughters of God throughout eternity.

Scriptural References

Gen. 1:26	Eph. 3:9-21	I John 4:8
Dan. 7:9-10	Eph. 1:3-5, 9-10	Rev. 1:14-16
Col. 1:12-27	John 4:24	Psa. 19:1-7
Psa. 8:1-6	Is. 40:12-28; 57:15	Rom. 1:20

God the Father

God the Father is the supreme, glorious, divine Spirit Being Who is the Sovereign Ruler of the universe. God the Father accomplishes His will through the power of His Holy Spirit. God the Father, Who has all power and all authority, is love. He has perfect, holy character and is full of grace and mercy. God the Father is greater than His Son Jesus Christ but shares all that He has with His Son. God the Father sent Jesus Christ, His Son, to reveal the Father's love and grace and His magnificent plan for all mankind. God the Father directly calls each individual to salvation, grants repentance, and imparts the Holy Spirit as a begettall, so that the individual becomes a child of God the Father. God the Father Himself personally loves each one He calls and is directly involved in the life of each individual, continually imparting His love, grace, mercy and blessings so that he or she can develop His loving, perfect, righteous character. He personally hears and answers the prayers of all His begotten children.

Scriptural References

I John 4:8, 16	John 6:44	John 8:16-18
John 1:1-2, 17-18	John 14:28	Eph. 3:14-19
John 16:27	Heb. 1:1-2; 2:3-9	Eph. 4:4-6
Matt. 11:27	I Cor. 15:24-28	Rev. 21:22

God the Son, Jesus Christ of Nazareth

Prior to His human birth, the *Elohim* of the God Family, Who became the Son, eternally existed with the *Elohim* of the God Family Who became the Father. All things were created by God the Father through God the Son. The Son is revealed in the Old Testament as the Lord God and Lawgiver and in the New Testament as the Word of God. In order to become the Savior of all mankind, He willingly divested Himself of His position in the God Family, giving up His majesty, glory and power, to become a fleshly human being, born of the virgin Mary and begotten of God the Father, Who directed that He be named Jesus. His full New Covenant name is Jesus Christ of Nazareth. As a human being having sinful human flesh, He was subject to the same temptations as every human being, yet He never sinned. As the perfect Lamb of God, He gave Himself to be God the Father's special, unique sacrifice through the crucifixion as an atonement for the sins of all mankind. After being dead in the grave for three days and three nights, He was resurrected to eternal life through the power of God the Father, becoming the Firstborn from among the dead. He was again invested with the full divine nature and power of the God Family. He ascended into heaven to sit at the right hand of God the Father as mankind's High Priest, Advocate and Intercessor and Head of His Church. Jesus Christ will return to earth in the power and glory of His Father to establish the kingdom and government of God on the earth. As King of Kings and Lord of Lords, He will rule the earth forever with His brothers and sisters, the children of God the Father. (See *Salvation*, *The Nature of Mankind* and *The Resurrections*.)

Scriptural References

John 1:1-3
Heb. 2:9-14
Rom. 8:3, 29
Rom. 5:8
I John 2:1-2

Phil. 2:6-11
Heb. 4:14-16
Rev. 1:5, 13-16
John 3:16
Rev. 13:8

Eph. 1:6-23
Heb. 5:7-9
Rev. 5:9-10
John 17:1-26
Col. 1:14-20

II. The Nature of Mankind

The *Elohim* of the God Family Who later became Jesus Christ personally created Adam and Eve with His own hands. He created them in the image and likeness of God, or *Elohim*, but a little lower than God. Human beings are made of flesh and blood and do not have inherent immortality. (See *Salvation*.) However, at creation God gave a spirit essence to the human brain called the "spirit of man." This spiritual dimension in the human brain imparts reasoning power and intellect and gives human beings the capacity to think, speak, learn, write, plan, devise, create, build, control, teach, choose, worship, build character, and, experience every emotion. God made male and female with the capacity to express intimate, personal love for each other as husband and wife, and through this physical union, to create children after their own kind, producing families, clans, tribes and nations. Adam and Eve were created sinless but with a nature that was subject to temptation. God gave them freedom to choose between obedience and life, or disobedience and death. After they sinned by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, God sentenced them to suffer the pain and sorrow of living with a sinful nature and finally to reap the penalty of death. This penalty of death was passed on to all mankind by the physical inheritance of sinful human nature. Human nature is inherently and naturally hostile to God and is not subject to His laws and commandments. From birth, human nature is a mixture of good and evil. When a person dies, his or her conscious thoughts cease. The body returns to the dust of the earth, and the spirit of man goes back to God. Only through God the Father's gracious and merciful plan of salvation through Jesus Christ is it possible for a person to be redeemed and saved from this sinful nature of death. God's ultimate purpose for each human being is complete reconciliation with God the Father through Jesus Christ so that he or she may enter into the Family of God as a literal son or daughter of God, sharing the same eternal existence as God. (See following entries: *The Holy Spirit*, *Salvation* and *The Resurrections*.)

Scriptural References

Gen. 1:26-27
Gen. 2:7-25; 3:1-19
Mark 7:21-22
Eccl. 3:19-21
I John 3:1-3

Psa. 8:3-6
I Cor. 2:11
Rom. 8:7-8
I Cor. 15:21-22, 44-56
Phil. 3:21

Zech. 12:1
Ez. 18:4, 20
Heb. 9:27
Rev. 21:7

III. The Love of God

God's Love Toward Us

The love of God is revealed in that the God Family created mankind in Their image and Their likeness and gave them dominion over the entire earth, which They had bountifully created for them. God the Father's profound spiritual love is fully manifested to mankind through His overall plan as revealed in the New Testament in the life, death and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ. In His supreme love, God the Father offers every human being the opportunity to be born into the God Family through the resurrection from death, becoming a literal child of God the Father, with the same form and spiritual composition as

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God the Father and God the Son. God's love and reconciliation is now extended to those He is calling and will be extended to all mankind according to His plan. God the Father's love is manifested toward those He has now called by His grace and mercy daily bestowed through Jesus Christ, His continuing intervention and blessings, and the care with which He chastens them.

Scriptural References

Deut. 4:37
I John 3:1
Heb. 12:6

John 3:16
Psa. 145:8
John 16:27; 14:21

Rom. 5:7-8
I John 4:8-10, 16
Eph. 2:4-10

Our Love Toward God

We love God because He first loved us. Our love for God is a result of God the Father's calling through the power of the Holy Spirit, which opens our minds to understand the greatness and goodness of God's love and the sinfulness of our own nature. God the Father leads us to genuine repentance and acceptance of the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins. We manifest our repentance and our faith in Jesus Christ by being baptized in water, symbolically burying the old self into the death of Jesus Christ and rising to walk in newness of life. Through the laying on of hands, the gift of the Holy Spirit is given to us as a spiritual begetting from God the Father, imparting the love of God into our hearts. The capacity to truly love God comes through His Spirit within us. We are individually to love God the Father and Jesus Christ with all our heart, all our mind, all our soul, all our strength and all our being. Jesus said that anyone who does not love God more than all others is not worthy of Him. Our love and our complete devotion to God the Father and Jesus Christ are manifested by our willingness to live by every word of God and to keep all His commandments.

Scriptural References

I John 4:16-19; 5:2-3
Rom. 5:5
John 14:15-24
Deut. 6:5

Matt. 22:37-38
I John 2:5, 15
Gal. 5:22
Deut. 13:3

Eph. 5:1-2
II John 6
Psa. 97:10
Matt. 10:37-38

Our Love Toward Brethren

Christians are to have a special love for one another because God the Father and Jesus Christ have individually called and personally love each one. As the begotten children of God, with the Holy Spirit shed abroad into their hearts, all true Christians share a special fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. This fellowship is the foundation for the new commandment that Jesus gave to His disciples to "love one another as I have loved you." This true Christian love is a sign by which all people can recognize the followers of Jesus Christ.

Scriptural References

John 13:34-35
I John 2:6-11; 5:1-2

John 15:9-10
I John 4:19-21

I John 3:16-17
II John 4-6

IV. The Holy Bible

The Holy Bible is the Word of God. God directly inspired His chosen servants by the power of His Holy Spirit to record the Scriptures for all mankind. The Holy Bible con-

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sists of both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament was written in the Hebrew language and preserved by the Masoretes, the Levites who were appointed by Ezra as the official guardians of the Old Testament. The New Testament was written and preserved in the *Koiné* Greek language by the original apostles of Jesus Christ. The apostle John completed the New Testament just before his death, writing the book of Revelation as the final book of the Bible. God has preserved the New Testament text through the Greek-speaking church. Called the *Byzantine Text*, it was the official text of the Greek-speaking church, after the days of the apostles, from 312-1453 AD. This text, also known as *The Stephens Text of 1550*, was used to translate the New Testament into English for the King James Version in 1611.

The Holy Bible contains vital spiritual knowledge revealed by God, which man cannot discover for himself. It also records the essential outline of history from the beginning of creation to Abraham, from Abraham to the birth of Jesus Christ, and from the birth of Jesus Christ to the end of the apostolic era in approximately 100 AD. The book of Revelation reveals major events prophesied to take place from the end of the apostolic era to the return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

The Bible is the very foundation of knowledge, imparting understanding of salvation through Jesus Christ and showing mankind how to live God's way of life in both the letter and the spirit of His law. True Christianity is based on the entire Word of God as it applies to the individual Christian and to the Church.

Scriptural References

II Tim. 3:16-17
Psa. 111:7-10
Prov. 30:5
Eph. 2:19-20
John 6:63

II Pet. 1:20-21
Psa. 119
Matt. 1:1-17, 4:4
Luke 4:4
II Tim. 1:9-14

Deut. 8:3
Psa. 12:6; 19:7-9
Gal. 1:8-12
Rev. 1:1-3; 22:18-19
I Cor. 14:37

V. The Laws and Commandments of God

The Nature of God's Laws

The laws and commandments of God as revealed in both the Old Testament and the New Testament are a holy and perfect set of principles based on the love of God. God's laws and commandments are designed to teach man how to love and worship God and how to love his neighbor. God has made known His laws and commandments to the world from the beginning and requires all mankind to keep them. The laws and commandments of God define what sin is, and where there is no law there is no sin. No one could be counted as a sinner, or under sin, if God did not require all the people of the world to keep His laws and commandments. The Scriptures show that God judges all nations according to their obedience or disobedience to His laws, bringing blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience or sin. Because of sin and wickedness in Noah's time, God destroyed the world with the Flood. The men of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because they were sinners before God. The Ninevites were a Gentile nation not in covenant with God, but God warned them through His prophet Jonah of His impending judgment for their sins. The inhabitants of the land of Canaan were expelled because of their religious and sexual sins. The people of Israel, God's chosen nation, also sinned grievously against God and were sent into captivity. Through sin and disobedience to God's laws and commandments, the whole world has become guilty before Him. Generation after generation has yielded to the sinfulness of human nature and has utterly failed to meet even the minimum requirements of the letter of the law.

While God has always required mankind to keep His laws and commandments in the letter of the law, He desires that every human being learn to worship Him in the spirit of the law. The full spiritual intent of God's laws is that each one learn to love God with all the

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heart, mind, soul, being and strength; and to love one's neighbor as oneself. The Scriptures reveal that obedience to God's laws in the spirit is a condition for receiving eternal life. Only through the gift of the Holy Spirit is this obedience made possible. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, each Christian can have the laws and commandments of God written in his or her heart and mind and can learn to walk daily in the spiritual obedience that God desires. The laws and commandments of God are not contrary to grace and faith but are truly established by faith. (See *Grace, Righteousness and Faith.*)

Scriptural References

Gen. 3:11-13; 4:7-11	Gen. 6:5-13; 15:16	Lev. 18:5
Jer. 18:7-10	Ez. 20:11, 13, 21	Prov. 4:4
Deut. 28:1-13	Deut. 4:1-13; 6:1-4	Gal. 3:11
Rom. 10:5	Rom. 3:9-22; 4:13-16	Rom. 2:11-13
Matt. 22:36-40	Psa. 19:1-7	Psa. 111:10
John 14:15-24	Psa. 119	I John 2:4-6
Matt. 4:4	Is. 42:21	I John 3:4
Mat. 5:17-20	I John 5:2-3	II Tim. 3:16
Heb. 8:10-12; 10:16-22	Rev. 22:14	Rev. 12:17; 14:12

The Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments, spoken by God to Israel, are the foundation of all of God's laws. They have been in effect from the beginning of mankind, over 3,000 years before their pronouncement at Mt. Sinai. Their written form is the summation of the spiritual laws which function at all times, whether a person is aware of them or not. Obedience to these commandments brings blessings, and disobedience brings curses. The Ten Commandments teach us how to express love toward God and our fellowman. They must be obeyed as a condition for receiving eternal life. (See *Faith and Grace.*)

Scriptural References

Ex. 20:1-17	Deut. 5:6-21	Deut. 30:15-20
Matt. 19:16-22	Rom. 7:7-14	Matt. 22:36-40
I John 3:22-24	Rom. 13:8-10	II John 6-10

The Weekly Sabbath

The weekly Sabbath, known as Saturday today, is the seventh day of the week. In the beginning, the Sabbath was created by God. He blessed and sanctified the seventh day at creation as a special day for rest and fellowship with Him. The Sabbath is a memorial of creation and was made for all mankind. It was the commanded day of weekly worship for 3,000 years before the Ten Commandments were given to Israel. The Fourth Commandment is a reminder to observe and to keep the Sabbath day holy.

As Lord God of the Old Testament, Jesus Christ created the Sabbath by resting on the very first seventh day and by blessing and sanctifying it. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ proclaimed that He is Lord of the Sabbath day. During His ministry on earth, He reaffirmed the sacredness of the Sabbath and taught its proper observance. Jesus Christ Himself showed by example that it is right to do good on the Sabbath day, in addition to resting from one's physical labor and secular business. The apostles of Jesus Christ and the early New Testament church observed the Sabbath and taught Gentile Christians to observe it.

The keeping of the seventh-day Sabbath is a special sign of the covenant between God and His people. God commands that it be observed from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday. During this holy time, Christians are commanded to rest from their labor and to assemble to worship God and to receive instruction from His Word. Observance of the seventh-

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day Sabbath is essential for salvation and for true fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Scriptural References

Gen. 2:1-3	Mark 2:27-28	Ex. 20:8-10
Ex. 31:13-17	Is. 58:13-14	Is. 56:1-7
Is. 66:23	Ez. 20:12, 20	Lev. 23:1-3
Luke 4:4	Acts 13:42-44	Acts 17:2
Acts 18:4, 11	Acts 19:8-10	Heb. 4:4-10

The Annual Feasts and Holy Days

The Scriptures teach that there are seven annual feasts and holy days, which were ordained by God to be observed as special commanded convocations. These feasts and holy days portray God's plan of salvation for mankind. The observance of these holy convocations is a sign between God and His people. God's annual feasts and holy days were observed by His people during Old Testament times. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ's entire ministry was centered around the spiritual meaning of these holy days. The New Testament apostolic church faithfully observed these annual feasts and holy days. The Scriptures reveal that they will be observed by all mankind after the return of Jesus Christ.

As the holy days are annual Sabbath days, they may fall on any day of the week (except Pentecost, which always falls on a Sunday). When a holy day falls on a weekly Sabbath, the special observance of the annual holy day takes precedence. God's feasts and holy days are to be observed from sunset to sunset in accordance with the calculated Hebrew Calendar as preserved by the Levitical Jews. The seven annual feasts and holy days are as follows:

<u>Feast or Holy Day</u>	<u>Commanded Scriptural Date of Observance</u>
1) Passover	14th day of the first month*
2) Unleavened Bread (7 days)	15th through 21st days of the first month (the 15th & 21st are holy days)
3) Pentecost	Counted annually**
4) Trumpets	1st day of the seventh month
5) Atonement	10th day of the seventh month
6) Tabernacles (7 days)	15th through 21st days of the seventh month (the 15th is a holy day)
7) Last Great Day	22nd day of the seventh month (a holy day)

*Not a holy day

**Fifty days are counted, beginning with the first day of the week during the Days of Unleavened Bread. The feast is observed on the fiftieth day, which always falls on the first day of the week.

Scriptural References

Lev. 23	Ex. 23:14-17; 31:13	Ex. 12:1-20
John 7:37	Matt. 26:17-18	I Cor. 5:7-8
Acts 2:1	Acts 18:21	Acts 20:16
I Cor. 16:8	Zech. 14:16-19	Is. 66:23

VI. Sin

Sin is the transgression of the holy laws and commandments of God, whether in the letter or the spirit of the law. Therefore, sin is lawlessness or anti-law. Sin is also a defile-

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ment of one's conscience. When a person knows to do good and doesn't do it, it is sin. The ultimate penalty for sin is eternal death. Upon deep and sincere repentance toward God, one's sins will be forgiven by faith in the blood and sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the payment of those sins through the mercy of God the Father. The only unpardonable sin is persistent, knowledgeable and willful transgression of the commandments and laws of God. This sin cannot be forgiven because it is willful rejection of God's salvation, willful rejection of and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of God the Father, and despising the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as an unholy thing. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the sin of condemning the works of God the Father, accomplished through the power of His Holy Spirit, and attributing such works to Satan the devil. When a person has committed the unpardonable sin, his or her conscience is seared with a hot iron, and it is impossible to be convicted by the Holy Spirit and be led to repentance. God's judgment for the unpardonable sin is the second death, or eternal death, from which there is no resurrection.

Scriptural References

I John 3:4	Rom. 7:12-14	I John 1:5-2:2
Acts 2:38	Eph. 1:7	Eph. 1:7; 2:1-10
I John 5:17	Jas. 2:10-11; 4:12	Gal. 5:19-21
Rom. 6:23	Rom. 14:23	Acts 3:19
Matt. 12:31-32	Heb. 6:4-6	Gal. 1:8-9
Heb. 10:26-27	Rev. 20:14-15	Rev. 21:8

VII. The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is not a person or a third member of a so-called Trinity. The Holy Spirit is the power by which God the Father and God the Son accomplish Their will. The impregnation of the Holy Spirit from God the Father as a spiritual begetting is granted freely to each believer upon repentance of sins, baptism by immersion, and the laying on of hands. This begetting of the Holy Spirit is the earnest and assurance of the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ. It is the power of God, which makes each begotten child of God a partaker of the divine nature and imparts the ability to develop the love of God. The fruits of the Holy Spirit are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and self-control. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit imparts the power to each individual to live in accordance with God's will and to overcome the temptations of human nature, the world, and Satan. As the spiritually begotten believer seeks to serve and obey God the Father and Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit will lead him or her into all Truth that is contained in the Word of God and is essential for salvation.

Scriptural References

Gen. 1:2	Acts 2:38	John 14:16, 26
Rom. 8:9-14	I Cor. 2:9-10	Acts 8:15-17; 19:6
Gal. 5:22-23	II Tim. 1:6-7	Eph. 1:13-14
II Cor. 1:21-22	Is. 55:1-3	John 7:37-39
I John 3:9-11	I John 4:4-8	II Pet. 1:1-11

VIII. The Grace of God

Grace is the free and undeserved gift of God the Father through Jesus Christ. The grace of God is the greatest expression of God the Father's love and all-encompassing mercy. Grace is more than the forgiveness of sins. To be under grace means to be receiving continually God's divine love, favor, blessing, gracious care, help, goodwill, benefits, gifts and goodness. God the Father is the source from which grace comes to the believer. The ONLY MEANS by which grace is granted to the believer is through the birth, life, crucifix-

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ion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the perfect sacrifice of God the Father. The believer enters the grace of God through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of his or her sins. God the Father grants His grace to each believer upon repentance of sins and baptism by immersion, which is the outward manifestation of repentance. Through grace, the believer's sins are forgiven and the righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to him or her.

Grace establishes a new spiritual relationship between the believer and God the Father and Jesus Christ. Through the unearned and unmerited gift of grace, the believer is not only chosen, called, forgiven and accepted by God the Father through His Beloved but is also begotten with the Holy Spirit, making him or her a child of God and an heir of eternal life. From this point, the spiritually begotten believer begins a new life under grace. Grace does not grant a license to practice sin by ignoring or rejecting the commandments of God. Only those who keep His commandments can abide in His love and remain under His grace. Every believer who receives the grace of God has a personal obligation to God the Father and Jesus Christ to forsake his or her old, sinful thoughts and practices and to live a new life, daily growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. For every believer who lives under grace, Jesus Christ acts as Redeemer, High Priest and Advocate. If the believer commits a sin, He intercedes to propitiate the Father and to obtain His mercy and grace. The grace of God, which comes through Jesus Christ, keeps the repentant believer in a continual state of blamelessness and sinlessness.

Scriptural References

Eph. 2:4-10, 4:7	I John 3:6-8	Rom. 5:1-11, 15-18
Rom. 3:22-25; 2:4	Gal. 2:20	Rom. 4:1-13
Psa. 103:2-4	Gal. 1:15	Gal. 5:1-4
Is. 55:6-7	Jude 4, 21	Gen. 6:8
II Tim. 1:9	I Cor. 15:10	Rom. 11:5-6
Eph. 1:3-9	Eph. 3:1-21	I Pet. 5:10

IX. Repentance

Repentance is complete remorse and sorrow for one's sins, which are the transgressions of the laws and commandments of God. Repentance is the first step in the sinner's reconciliation with God the Father and Jesus Christ. True repentance begins when God the Father opens a person's mind to understand that he or she is a sinner against God the Father, and that his or her own sins had a part in crucifying Jesus Christ. The graciousness of God the Father leads each sinner to repentance. Repentance moves each one to confess his or her sins to God the Father and to ask forgiveness, remission and pardon for those sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. True, deep, godly repentance will produce a profound change in a person's mind and attitude, called conversion, which will result in a continuing desire to live by every word of God. The truly repentant person will turn from evil thoughts and ungodly practices and will seek to conform his or her life to the will of God as revealed in the Holy Bible and as led by the Holy Spirit. Confession and repentance of sins is an ongoing process in a Christian's spiritual growth toward the perfection of Jesus Christ.

Scriptural References

Rom. 2:4	Acts 2:37-38	Luke 24:47
II Cor. 5:17	Rom. 8:5-9	II Cor. 7:9-11
Acts 3:19	Jer. 17:5-9	Mark 1:15
Luke 13:3, 5	II Tim. 2:25	Psa. 51
Acts 11:18	I John 1:6-2:2	John 6:44-45

X. Water Baptism

Upon genuine, godly repentance and acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal Savior, the believer must be baptized by complete immersion in water for the remission of his or her sins. Water baptism symbolizes the death and burial of each repentant believer—a spiritual conjoining into the death of Jesus Christ. Through this baptismal death, the believer becomes a partaker of the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ, and His blood is applied as full payment for his or her sins. Rising up out of the water is symbolic of being conjoined into the resurrection of Jesus Christ. When the believer comes up out of the watery grave of baptism, he or she rises to newness of life. In order to become a new person, each baptized believer must be begotten with the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands. The believer is then led by the Holy Spirit to walk in loving obedience to God the Father and faith in Jesus Christ.

Scriptural References

Acts 2:38
Col. 2:12

Matt. 3:13-16
Acts 8:12-17

Matt. 28:19-20
Rom. 6:3-13

XI. Justification

Justification is freely granted to the called and repentant believer by God the Father through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Justification takes place when the believer's sins are removed by the blood of Jesus Christ and he or she is put into right standing with God the Father. In order to receive God's gift of justification, a person must repent toward God, believe in the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and be baptized by immersion. The believer is then cleansed from sin and is without condemnation, placing him or her in right standing with God the Father. This state of justification is called the "gift of righteousness" because God the Father freely imputes the righteousness of Jesus Christ to the believer.

Scriptural References

Rom. 2:13
Rom. 3:24-31

Rom. 4:5-8, 24-25
I Cor. 6:11

Rom. 5:1-10, 17-21
Rom. 8:28-30

XII. Righteousness

The Righteousness of the Law

God is both Creator and Lawgiver. When God created mankind, He also established righteous laws that govern man's relationship with Him and with his fellowman. The laws of God draw a clear line between actions that are good and righteous in God's eyes as opposed to acts that are evil and sinful. Without God's laws, there would be no sin. The Scriptures declare that "where there is no law there is no sin....for by the law is the knowledge of sin." The Biblical record of the sins of Adam and Eve, and the nations that descended from them, makes it clear that God's laws have been obligatory upon mankind from the beginning.

In Old Testament times, a man or woman who kept the commandments of God, fulfilling His requirements in the letter of the law, was counted righteous before God. This type of righteousness, which was earned by doing the works of the law, brought many physical and material blessings from God—health and prosperity, deliverance from enemies, peace and long life. When God covenanted with Israel, He proclaimed through Moses that those who kept His laws and commandments "shall live in them" because they would be spared

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the punishment and curses that were appointed for lawbreakers—including death by capital punishment.

Although the righteousness of the law resulted in many blessings to the obedient, fulfilling the letter of the law did not and could not earn eternal salvation. The promise of salvation and eternal life is God's free and undeserved gift and is offered only through the righteousness of faith. The required righteousness of the letter of the law was a "schoolmaster" or tutor to reveal the sinfulness and weakness of human nature and to point to the need for a higher righteousness—the righteousness of faith.

Scriptural References

Gen. 3:11-13; 4:7-11	Gen. 6:5-13; 15:16	Lev. 18:5
Jer. 18:7-10	Ez. 20:11, 13, 21	Prov. 4:4
Deut. 28:1-13	Deut. 4:1-13; 6:1-4	Gal. 3:11
Rom. 10:5	Rom. 3:9-22; 4:13-16	Rom. 2:11-13

The Righteousness of Faith

The righteousness of faith is the gift of righteousness, which the believer receives through the abundance of the Father's grace. It is called "the righteousness of faith" because only through the faith of Jesus Christ is it possible to partake of this righteousness. When a believer is justified by faith in Jesus Christ and receives the gift of the Holy Spirit as a begettal from God the Father, the Father imputes to the believer the very righteousness of Jesus Christ so that "grace might reign through righteousness into eternal life, through Jesus Christ." This imputed righteousness is the gift of God through faith in Jesus Christ and cannot be earned by doing works of law. The righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is imputed to the believer by God the Father, far exceeds the righteousness required by the letter of the law. In His perfect righteousness, Jesus Christ not only observed the letter of the law but also fulfilled every one of His Father's commandments in the full spirit of the law. His spiritual obedience was so perfect, pure and wholehearted that He always did those things that pleased God the Father. This perfect righteousness was accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit, which He received without measure from the Father.

By His personal example and His teachings, Jesus magnified the laws and commandments of God and revealed the fullness of their intent and meaning. He showed that the spirit of the law does not nullify the letter of the law but requires a fuller, spiritual obedience. This spiritual obedience is beyond the capability of the natural mind and human will and can only be accomplished through Jesus Christ. The Scriptures reveal that when the believer is begotten with the Holy Spirit of God the Father, he or she begins to receive the very mind of Christ. With Christ's mind, the believer is strengthened to live by every word of God in the full spirit of the law, not just in the letter. With "Christ in you, the hope of glory," the believer begins to have the laws and commandments of God written upon his or her mind. Thus the laws and commandments of God are established with their full, true spiritual meaning through grace and the gift of the righteousness of faith. This gift of spiritual righteousness, which God grants to the believer, gives him or her the power to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit unto eternal life. Through the righteousness of faith, the believer is truly fulfilling the Scripture, "The just shall live by faith."

Scriptural References

Rom. 4:3-8, 13-24	Rom. 5:17-21	Rom. 3:20-31
Rom. 6:1-19	Gal. 2:20-21	Gal. 5:16, 18, 22-25
Col. 1:27-28	Rom. 7:6	Heb. 8:10
Heb. 10:16	Phil. 2:5, 13	

XIII. Sanctification

Sanctification is the act of setting someone or something apart for a holy purpose and use. Christians are in a continuing state of sanctification after repentance, baptism by immersion, and the receiving of the Holy Spirit as a begetting from God the Father. In the Scriptures, Christians are referred to as saints, meaning those who have been made holy by the sanctification of God the Father.

Scriptural References

I Cor. 1:2	Eph. 5:25-27	II Thes. 2:13-14
I Cor. 6:11	Ex. 31:13; 40:9-13	Lev. 21:1, 8
Eph. 1:3-4	Jer. 1:5	John 17:15-19

XIV. The Baptism of the Spirit

The baptism of the Spirit is the act of receiving the Holy Spirit as a begetting from God the Father. This spiritual begetting is granted to each believer through the laying on of hands after baptism by full immersion in water. Upon receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, the believer becomes a begotten child of God the Father. The baptism of the Holy Spirit places the believer into the spiritual Church of God, the Body of Jesus Christ, of which all begotten children of God are members.

Scriptural References

Matt. 3:11	Acts 2:38	Acts 8:15
Acts 19:6	I Cor. 2:12	Rom. 8:9-16
I Pet. 1:3	I John 3:9, 24	

XV. Faith

Faith is the knowledge of and active belief in the existence and power of the living God and His only begotten Son Jesus Christ. Faith is a gift from God and a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit as a begetting from God the Father, true believers are granted the indwelling presence of Jesus Christ and the very faith of Jesus Christ. This faith is the actual spiritual substance of God's Holy Spirit, which gives the believer the assurance and the confidence that what God has promised, He will perform. The fruits of righteousness in the believer's life will continually manifest the true faith of Jesus Christ that is imparted by God to each believer. Faith is made perfect by doing the good works that God the Father has ordained through Jesus Christ. This active and living faith is absolutely essential for salvation through grace. Without good works, faith is dead. Without faith, good works are of no value in God's sight. Good works alone cannot bring salvation and eternal life. While true faith will produce good works in the believer's life, these good works do not earn salvation. The good works that are done through faith are not the cause but the result of God's gift of salvation to the believer.

Scriptural References

Heb. 11:1-6	Gal. 5:22	Gal. 2:20; 3:1-14
Eph. 2:4-10	Rom. 4:20-21	Jas. 2:14-22
I Pet. 1:1-9	Rom. 1:17	Phil. 1:6; 3:3-19
I Cor. 13:2	Tit. 1:16	Rev. 14:12
Luke 7:50	Matt. 8:1-13	Jas. 5:14-15

XVI. Salvation

Salvation is the gift of God the Father by His grace and is granted to the believer through faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation cannot be earned by works of law, for there are conditions that must be met in order to receive the gift of salvation. God requires that one repent of sin, which is the transgression of His laws and commandments, and believe in His Son Jesus Christ, Whose blood paid the penalty for the sins of all mankind. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the Author and Finisher of eternal salvation for all who believe on Him. Through the blood of Jesus Christ and the acceptance of His sacrifice, the believer is reconciled to God the Father, having his or her sins completely forgiven and forgotten. By the grace of God, the believer is saved from the penalty of sin, which is eternal death, and is granted the gift of eternal life through the begetting of the Holy Spirit from God the Father.

Salvation begins when God the Father opens a person's mind to spiritual understanding, which leads to repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior. After being baptized by full immersion in water, the believer is granted the gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands. The believer then begins a new life of obedience to God through faith, working out his or her own salvation by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit and in harmony with God's Word. It is a lifelong process of spiritual growth. The Scriptures reveal that there are three distinct stages in the process of salvation: 1) The believer has been saved from past sins and from Satan the devil (Eph. 2:1-10). 2) The believer is then being saved as he or she continues in the Word of God—the gospel—in loving obedience by faith (I Cor. 1:18; 15:2). 3) The believer will ultimately be saved at the resurrection (Rom. 7:24-25; I Cor. 15:12-57; I Tim. 3:14-16). The believer's salvation will not be completed until he or she is resurrected from the dead through the power of God and is born again as a spirit being into the Family of God. In God's time and plan, everyone will have an opportunity for salvation.

Scriptural References

Eph. 2:4-10	Rom. 6:23	II Cor. 7:10
John 6:44-45	Rom. 2:4	Rom. 6:4-6
I Thes. 4:14-17	Heb. 11:6	I Cor. 15:42, 52
Acts 8:12, 15-17	Acts 11:18	I Tim. 2:4
Mark 16:16	Rom. 5:6-10	Rom. 4:21-25
Acts 19:5-6	Heb. 12:1-4	Rev. 20:6

XVII. Laying On of Hands

The laying on of hands is a special act performed by ordained elders in the churches of God while asking God the Father in prayer to confer a spiritual gift or blessing upon someone. The laying on of hands is required for the receiving of God's Holy Spirit following water baptism, for anointing the sick with oil for healing, for ordination of those selected for spiritual or physical service to the church, for blessing little children, for a special blessing during a marriage ceremony, and for other special blessings.

Scriptural References

Acts 8:15-17	Acts 19:5-6	Jas. 5:14-15
Matt. 19:13-15	Mark 16:17-18	Acts 6:6; 13:3

XVIII. Healing

The Scriptures reveal that God sometimes allows sickness to afflict individuals for a special purpose. With this exception, the sickness that we suffer is the result of physical or

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spiritual sins. Divine healing is God's forgiveness of those sins. God the Father personally intervenes when He extends healing to those who call upon Him in times of sickness or injury. This divine intervention can be directed toward anyone at any time, as God wills, because Jesus Christ paid the price for healing from every sickness with the stripes of scourging that He received before His crucifixion. When God heals us, our sins are forgiven through the stripes of the sufferings of Jesus Christ. Miracles of healing are often granted. The Scriptures teach that one who desires to be healed by God should call for the elders of the church to anoint him or her with oil in the name of Jesus Christ and to pray for God's healing and intervention. Trusting God in faith for healing is a personal matter between each individual and God.

Scriptural References

Ex. 15:26
I Pet. 2:24
Jas. 5:14-16
II Cor. 12:7-10

Psa. 103:2-3
I Cor. 11:23-30
Is. 53:4-5
John 9:1-11

Matt. 9:27-30
Matt. 8:1-17
Mark 16:15-18

XIX. The Church of God

The Spiritual Body of Christ

The Church of God is portrayed in the Bible as the spiritual Body of Jesus Christ. God the Father has appointed Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church in all things. The true Church of God is made up of all who have been called by God the Father, who have accepted His Son Jesus Christ as personal Savior, who have repented of their sins, who have been baptized by immersion, and who have received the Holy Spirit of God as a begetting from God the Father. These individuals are spiritual brethren and members of one Church—the spiritual Body of Jesus Christ—although they may be widely scattered throughout the world. It is by one and the same Spirit—the Holy Spirit of God the Father—that each one has been baptized into the Body of Jesus Christ. This spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father is the basis of all true Christian fellowship. Jesus described Himself to His disciples as “the true vine” and the Father as “the husbandman.” All true Christians are branches of the true Vine and must remain attached to the Vine in order to grow spiritually.

While there is only one spiritual Body of Christ, its members are scattered in numerous local fellowships and individual ministries around the world. Since all members of the Body of Christ have the Spirit of God, God does not limit Himself to work through any single organization. Every group or ministry that is part of the Body of Christ will manifest the fruit of God's Holy Spirit, bear the name of God, and will be keeping His commandments as magnified by Jesus Christ. The primary function of the Church is to nurture the brethren of Jesus Christ with spiritual food from God's Word so that they may grow up into the fullness of the stature of Jesus Christ. The Church also has a commission from God to preach repentance and salvation through Jesus Christ in all the world and to preach the good news of the coming kingdom and government of God in preparation for the return of Jesus Christ to rule on the earth.

Scriptural References

Eph. 1:22-23
Matt. 28:18-20
Matt. 24:14
Heb. 2:9-18

John 21:15-17
I Cor. 12:6-13
Rom. 8:9, 28-29
Rev. 1:12-20

Eph. 4:4-6, 11-16
Acts 2:47
John 15:1-8

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The Ministry of the New Testament Church of God

The New Testament Church of God has a ministry patterned after the instructions of Jesus Christ as recorded in the New Testament. Those who serve in this ministry do not exalt themselves over their brethren by exercising authority or rank but strive to serve their brethren in humility and love. The ordained elders of the New Testament Church of God understand that they have been called by God to spiritual service to fulfill the needs of their brethren. An elder may serve as a minister, teacher, pastor, evangelist, or in other needed capacities. The function that each elder fulfills varies according to the measure of the gift of Jesus Christ. The qualifications for elders are found in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. His love of the brethren and of God the Father and Jesus Christ is evidence that God has called a man to be an elder. An ordained elder must maintain an attitude of true conversion and dedication to God the Father and Jesus Christ. He must have a deep desire to serve the brethren of God and the ability to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ. The purpose of the ministry is to edify or build up the body of Christ. It is the responsibility of the ministry to teach and preserve the true doctrines of the Bible, to serve the spiritual needs of the brethren, and to provide leadership within the local congregations. Those who are ordained to evangelize also have a responsibility to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to unbelievers, to teach all who will listen, and to baptize in all nations.

Scriptural References

John 15:16	Matt. 20:20-28	Matt. 28:19-20
Tit. 1:5-9	I Tim. 3:1-7	I Pet. 5:1-10
John 21:15-17	Matt. 24:14	Eph. 4:11-13
John 13:14-16	Heb. 13:7, 17	Luke 22:24-26
Acts 13:3, 14:23	I Tim. 5:22	II Tim. 1:6-14
II Tim. 2:1-4, 14-26	II Tim. 3:14-4:4	Jer. 23:28

XX. Christian Financial Responsibility

Responsibility to Family

The Scriptures teach that Christians should be diligent to provide for their families. Any Christian who is able to work but makes no effort to support his or her family "is worse than an infidel". Jesus Christ Himself taught that a Christian should first provide for his or her family before using personal income for other purposes, including offerings to God. Jesus condemned the Jews who gave offerings, or "corban," to the temple treasury while neglecting their needy parents. God does not want Christians to neglect the basic needs of their families in order to give tithes and offerings. Those Christians who have a limited income and are able only to meet their basic needs have no actual increase from which to tithe. God desires mercy and not sacrifice.

Scriptural References

I Tim. 5:4, 8, 16	Mark 7:10-13	Prov. 31:10-28
Prov. 27:23-27	Prov. 28:19	

Responsibility to the Needy

Christians are commanded by Jesus Christ to support the poor and needy among them with compassion and understanding. A Christian attitude of true love and service should be the basis for all giving. God desires each one whom He has prospered to give cheerfully and willingly from the heart as he or she is able. Those who have an abundance but do not give because of a selfish attitude are guilty of covetousness and are sinning before God.

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Acts 2:44-45
Prov. 28:27
II Cor. 9:1-9

Acts 4:34-45
Prov. 19:17
Gal. 2:10

Psa. 41:1-3
Matt. 26:11
Jas. 2:14-17

Responsibility to the Church

In today's world, money is required to fulfill the commands of Jesus Christ to preach the gospel, to feed the flock of God and to care for the needs of the church. Therefore, Christians are directed by the Lord Jesus Christ to share their financial resources with those who serve in the ministry of God. Paul wrote, "Don't you know that those who are laboring *in* the sacred things of the temple live *of the things* of the temple, *and* those who are ministering at the altar are partakers with the altar? In the same way also [Greek *houtoos*, likewise, in the same manner] **the Lord did command** [Greek *diatassoo*, to order, to direct, to command] that those who preach the gospel are to live of the gospel" (I Cor. 9:13-14).

Those who receive support from their brethren are accountable to God and to the brethren as to how these tithes and offerings are used. Any minister who merchandises the brethren by using intimidation, compulsion or fear in order to extract tithes and offerings from them will receive stern judgment from God.

God warns His servants against exploiting the poor of His flock and taking from the meager provisions of the needy. However, God honors and blesses the poor who give as they are able, no matter how small the amount, even as Jesus commended the poor and needy widow who gave her mite.

Scriptural References

I Cor. 9:1-14
Luke 16:10-13
Luke 10:17

Luke 21:1-4
Zech. 7:7-13
Matt. 24:45-51

Luke 19:12-17
I Tim. 5:17-18
Matt. 6:19-21

The Scriptural Principle of Tithing

God created the earth and all the resources of the earth from which physical wealth is derived. Although God owns all the resources of land and sea, He has given all these things to mankind to use and to enjoy. By using what God has created, mankind is able to grow food, raise animals, harvest the forests, mine the earth and fish the seas. Because God has given all these things to mankind, He requires that men acknowledge Him as the Almighty Provider and Sustainer. The Scriptures reveal that God instituted the principle of tithing in addition to freewill offerings as a perpetual way for mankind to honor Him. The Old Testament declares that tithes and offerings belong to God and are "holy unto the Lord." Jesus reaffirmed this truth when He said, "Render ... unto God the things that are God's." The account of Abel's offering in the book of Genesis makes it clear that this practice existed from the beginning of mankind and was not restricted to God's covenant with Israel at Sinai.

Before the establishment of the Old Covenant, tithes and offerings to God were given to Melchizedek, the priest of the Most High God. The book of Genesis records that Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedek. Isaac and Jacob undoubtedly gave tithes and offerings to Melchizedek as well. When God established His covenant with Israel, the tithes and offerings were transferred to the Levitical priesthood. God said, "And behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel." Under the Old Covenant, God required His people to give Him the firstfruits of their harvest and the firstborn of their livestock as well as a tenth of the increase they derived from their crops, livestock, mining precious minerals from the earth, and profit from merchandising.

God said through the prophet Malachi that the priests were violating God's commands by offering polluted offerings and robbing God. Likewise, those who did not give the

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tithes and offerings to the Levites as God had commanded were robbing God.

Under the New Covenant, the priesthood of Melchizedek has replaced the Levitical priesthood, and the scriptural authority to receive the tithes and offerings of God has been transferred back to the order of Melchizedek. Jesus Christ, sitting at the right hand of God the Father, now holds the eternal office of High Priest of the order of Melchizedek. Christians today give their tithes and freewill offerings to support the work of Jesus Christ through His church, or they are robbing God.

In following the scriptural principle of tithing, each Christian is individually responsible to determine his or her true increase. Jesus said, "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's," thus revealing that taxes should be paid to "Caesar" (civil governments). Taxes are excluded in determining one's increase. Also excluded are expenses related to one's business or employment, which reduce actual net income. Christians whose incomes are so limited that their entire net income is required to meet basic living expenses have no true increase in God's eyes on which to tithe. The giving of money is not required for salvation. However, if God has financially blessed a Christian, he or she should willingly give as led by the Holy Spirit. Each Christian should give from the heart in a willing attitude of love and service, according to the blessings that God has bestowed—both spiritually and physically. God has promised to bless those who tithe and give offerings with all sufficiency in all things.

Scriptural References

Gen. 1:26-28
Num. 18:1-29
1 Sam. 2:12-17
Matt. 22:21

Deut. 8:1-18
Mal. 3:7-11
Mal. 1:6-14
Matt. 5:17-20

Gen. 4:3-7
Heb. 7:1-10
Mal. 2:1-10
Matt. 6:19-21

XXI. The Gospel

The word gospel means "good news." The gospel is the wonderful message of God's plan of salvation for all mankind through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son. The New Testament calls this message the gospel of grace. The gospel of grace is the good news that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world and that through His blood all who repent and believe in Him may have their sins forgiven and may enter into the Family of God. The gospel is also a message about the coming Kingdom of God on earth. It is the good news that when Jesus Christ returns to the earth, He will set up the Kingdom of God and the Government of God. He will rule all nations as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The saints who are given immortality at the first resurrection will inherit the kingdom with Jesus Christ and will rule and reign with Him as kings and priests. The gospel must be preached to all nations as a witness before Jesus Christ returns to set up His kingdom. Through the preaching of the gospel, God is preparing saints for His kingdom by calling those whom He chooses to repentance and conversion.

Scriptural References

Acts 20:24
Mark 1:14-15
Mark 16:15-16
Acts 11:19-21

John 3:16
Matt. 24:14
Matt. 28:19-20
Rom. 8:16-17

1 John 2:1-2
Rom. 10:8-18
Is. 9:6-7
1 Cor. 15

XXII. The Kingdom of God

The Kingdom of God is the Government of the Family of God. The Kingdom of God currently rules the universe. Although the Kingdom of God is not now ruling the earth, all those who have the Spirit of God are under the rule of God the Father through the lordship of Jesus Christ. The Kingdom of God will be reinstituted on the earth at the return of Jesus Christ

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as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. At that time, the Millennium will begin and the immortal saints, as the sons of God, will rule as kings and priests with Jesus Christ in the Kingdom of God. After God the Father brings the New Jerusalem from heaven to the new earth, the Kingdom of God will rule the entire universe from the new Jerusalem for all eternity.

Scriptural References

Rev. 2:26	Dan. 2:44	Mic. 4:1-4
Rev. 3:12, 21	Heb. 11:13-16	I Cor. 15:50-54
Rev. 5:10	Is. 11:1-10	Col. 1:13
Rev. 21	Is. 66:22-23	John 3:3-7

XXIII. The Resurrections

The Bible reveals two distinct types of resurrection from the dead: 1) restoration to physical life as a fleshly human being, and 2) transformation to eternal life as an immortal spirit being.

The Scriptures record the resurrection of individual persons to physical life at various times by the will of God. In Old Testament times, a widow's son was restored to life through the prayer of Elijah the prophet. Jesus' raising of Lazarus from the dead is a well-known example from New Testament times. These were special acts of mercy by God which extended the physical life of the individuals. Those whom God resurrected in this manner were not given immortality, and all died again.

Jesus Christ was the first to be resurrected to immortality by the power of God the Father. To become a human being, Jesus divested Himself of His glory and power as the Lord God of the Old Testament. When He was resurrected, He was restored to His full glory, power and honor as God. Jesus Christ is called the Firstborn from among the dead because He is the first of multiple millions who will be resurrected to immortality. When Jesus Christ returns to the earth, all true Christians who have died will be raised to eternal life as immortal spirit beings. Those Christians who are alive at the return of Jesus Christ will be changed instantaneously from flesh to spirit. This transformation to spirit is the new birth, when the saints of God—both dead and living—are truly "born again" into the Family of God. All the saints will be composed of spirit, as God is composed of spirit, and will be full members of God's divine Family. They will rule with Jesus Christ as kings and priests on the earth. This resurrection is described in the Bible as the first resurrection.

After the 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ and His saints, there will be a resurrection to physical life of all who have died without having received the opportunity for salvation. During this second physical life, each person will have his or her first and only opportunity for salvation through Jesus Christ. Those who fully accept the salvation of God will enter into the Family of God as spirit beings. Those who reject salvation through Jesus Christ will be condemned to eternal death. They will be joined by all the incorrigible wicked who have died throughout history, who will also be resurrected to physical life. All who have refused to accept salvation and have knowingly and willfully committed the unpardonable sin—blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of God the Father—will be resurrected to receive the final judgment of God. Their sentence will be to die in the lake of fire. This death is the second and final death, from which there is no resurrection.

Scriptural References

I Ki. 17:17-24	John 11:20-44	Mark 5:35-42
I Cor. 15:3-4, 20-23	Rom. 1:4	Heb. 2:9-10
John 5:28-29	I Cor. 15:23, 35-55	Rev. 20:4-6
Matt. 27:52-53	Rev. 20:11-12	Ez. 37:1-14
Rev. 20:11-15	II Pet. 3:10-12	Matt. 25:41-46

XXIV. Eternal Judgment

God is now judging every believer who has been called at this time. God's judgment of each individual begins when God opens his or her mind to understand God's way of life. With His love, grace and mercy, God gives each one who yields to His Holy Spirit the strength and the power to grow in love, faith and grace and to overcome human nature, the world and Satan the devil. God the Father holds each believer personally responsible to grow in the knowledge of His Word and in the spiritual stature and fullness of His Son Jesus Christ. If the believer loves God with all the heart and is living in faithful obedience to His Word, he or she will have the righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to him or her as the gift of God. The believer will then be judged as wholly righteous and blameless before God the Father. All who remain in this imputed righteousness of faith will be in the first resurrection and will receive eternal life at the return of Jesus Christ.

Those individuals through the ages who have had no opportunity for salvation during their lifetime will be restored to physical life in the second resurrection, which will take place after the 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ and the saints. Everyone who is raised in the second resurrection will have the same opportunity for salvation as those who were in the first resurrection. Each one will be taught the way of salvation and will have the opportunity to repent and to accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the remission of his or her sins. Each will be granted the same period of time to choose God's way of salvation. This period, called the Great White Throne Judgment, will apparently last for 100 years. During this time, all who learn to live in accordance with God's will, growing in grace and in the knowledge and character of Jesus Christ, will receive eternal life.

By the end of this period of judgment, all those who have chosen salvation will have entered into the Kingdom of God as spirit sons of God. At that time, all who have rejected their opportunity for salvation will be sentenced to the second death—their eternal judgment. All the incorrigible wicked from past ages who have committed the unpardonable sin, willfully rejecting the salvation of God, will be resurrected to physical life to join the living wicked in receiving the sentence of the second death as their eternal judgment. God will destroy all the incorrigible wicked at the same time in the lake of fire. This is the second death from which there is no resurrection.

Scriptural References

I Pet. 4:17
Rom. 2:16
Rom. 14:10-12
I Sam. 16:7

Mic. 4:1-4
Acts 10:42
II Pet. 2:9
II Tim. 4:8

Heb. 10:26-27
Rev. 20:11-14
Rev. 20:5-6
Ez. 37:12-14

XXV. Baptism of Fire

The baptism of fire is not a baptism to be sought by spiritually begotten believers, as some teach, but a baptism that is reserved for the incorrigible wicked. The Scriptures reveal that the baptism of fire is the eternal destruction of the wicked by immersion into the lake of fire and brimstone. Those who are cast into the lake of fire will not be tormented forever but will be burned up. This is the second and permanent death and God's final judgment for the unrepentant, who have committed the unpardonable sin by willfully rejecting His way of salvation through Jesus Christ. All who have hardened their hearts in their iniquities and their rebellion against God and who have committed the unpardonable sin by knowingly resisting and blaspheming the Holy Spirit, making it impossible for them to be led to repentance, are incorrigibly wicked and will be destroyed together in the lake of fire.

Scriptural References

Matt. 3:11-12
Matt. 12:31-32

Rev. 20:14-15
Rev. 21:8

Mal. 4:1-3

XXVI. Clean and Unclean Meats

As Creator, God has provided not only plants but also animals to be food for mankind. However, God did not create all animal flesh to be eaten by human beings. Because God desires mankind to sustain good health, He has revealed to mankind which animal flesh He has specifically created for food. This knowledge was made known from creation as shown in the account of Noah and the Flood. In Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14, God clearly specified which meats are fit for human consumption and which are not. The classification of clean or unclean is easily identifiable by the characteristics that God created in the animals. Any warm-blooded mammal that has split hooves and chews the cud is clean to eat. All other warm-blooded animals are unclean. Of the creatures that live in the waters, only fish with fins and scales are clean to eat; all others are unclean. Of the fowl, God forbids eating the flesh of fowl that are scavengers. All reptiles are unclean, as are all insects except locusts, grasshoppers and certain beetles.

Contrary to the belief of many professing Christians, the New Testament does not nullify God's laws of clean and unclean meats. The dispute between Jesus Christ and the Pharisees in Mark 7 was not about the eating of clean or unclean meats. Rather, it concerned His disciples eating food with unwashed hands. The vision that Peter saw which is recorded in Acts 10, was given to reveal that no human is to be called "common or unclean". It was not a divine authorization to change God's laws of clean and unclean meats.

The apostle Paul upheld the laws of clean and unclean meats as a requirement for Christians. He described the meats that Christians are permitted to eat as those "meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by the faithful, even *by* those who know the truth [the Word of God is Truth—John 17:17]" (I Tim. 4:3). Paul was clearly showing that some meats were created to be eaten, and others were not created to be eaten. Paul continued, "For every creature of God *that He designated for human consumption is* good, and nothing to be refused, *if* it is received with thanksgiving, because it is sanctified [set apart] by the Word of God [as revealed in the Scriptures] and prayer" (verse 4).

Scriptural References

Lev. 11:1-31
Acts 10:1-28
Gen. 7:2; 8:20

Deut. 14:3-20
I Tim. 4:3-5

Mark 7:1-16
Is. 66:17

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Rome's Challenge to the Protestants

Rome's Challenge—Why Do Protestants Keep Sunday??

Most Christians assume that Sunday is the biblically approved day of worship. The Roman Catholic Church protests that, indeed, it is not. The Roman Catholic Church itself without any Scriptural authority from God transferred Christian worship from the Biblical Sabbath (Saturday) to Sunday, and to try to argue that the change was made in the Bible is both dishonest and a denial of Catholic authority. If Protestantism wants to base its teachings only on the Bible, *it should worship on Saturday.*

Over one hundred years ago the *Catholic Mirror* ran a series of articles discussing the right of the Protestant churches to worship on Sunday—exposing their claim that the New Testament taught Sunday keeping to be false. The articles stressed that unless one was willing to accept the authority of the Catholic Church to designate the day of worship, the Christian should observe Saturday, the true Christian Sabbath, as the both the Old and New Testaments teach. Those articles are presented here in their entirety.

For ready reference purposes, here are links to verses quoted in the article below.

New Testament verses relating to the apostles assembling the "first day of the week"	All New Testament references to "the Lord's day" or "day of the Lord"
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Luke 24:33-40 John 20:19 John 20:26-292. Acts 2:13. Acts 20:6-7 Acts 2:464. 1 Cor. 16:1-2 Acts 18:4	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Acts 2:202. 1 Cor. 1:83. 1 Cor. 5:54. 2 Cor. 1:13-145. Phil. 1:66. Phil. 1:107. 2 Pet. 3:108. 2 Pet. 3:129. Rev. 1:10

FEBRUARY 24, 1893, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists adopted certain resolutions appealing to the government and people of the United States from the decision of the Supreme Court declaring this to be a Christian nation, and from the action of Congress in legislating upon the subject of religion, and remonstrating against the principle and all the consequences of the same. In March 1893, the International Religious Liberty Association printed these resolutions in a tract entitled *Appeal and Remonstrance*. On receipt of one of these, the editor of the *Catholic Mirror* of Baltimore, Maryland, published a series of four editorials, which appeared in that paper September, 2, 9, 16, and 23, 1893. The *Catholic Mirror* was the official organ of Cardinal Gibbons and the Papacy in the United States.

These articles, therefore, although not written by the Cardinal's own hand, appeared under his official sanction, and as the expression of the Papacy to Protestantism, and the demand of the Papacy that Protestants shall render to the Papacy an account of *why* they keep Sunday and also of *how* they keep it.

The following article (excepting the notes in brackets/minor formatting and section headings for readability and the two [internal] Appendixes) is a reprint of these editorials, including the title on the next page. [From the *Catholic Mirror* of Sept. 2, 1893](Bold emphasis added throughout).



THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH

[Catholic Sunday]

THE GENUINE OFFSPRING OF THE UNION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HIS SPOUSE. THE CLAIMS OF PROTESTANTISM TO ANY PART THEREIN PROVED TO BE GROUNDLESS, SELF-CONTRADICTORY, AND SUICIDAL

Our attention has been called to the above subject in the past week by the receipt of a brochure of twenty-one pages, published by the International Religious Liberty Association, entitled, "Appeal and Remonstrance," embodying resolutions adopted by the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists (Feb. 24, 1893). The resolutions criticize and censure, with much acerbity, the action of the United States Congress, and of the Supreme Court, for invading the rights of the people by closing the World's Fair on Sunday.

The Adventists are the only body of Christians with the Bible as their teacher, who can find no warrant in its pages for the change of the day from the seventh to the first. Hence their appellation, "Seventh-day Adventists." Their cardinal principle consists in setting apart Saturday for the exclusive worship of God, in conformity with the positive command of God Himself, repeatedly reiterated in the sacred books of the Old and New Testaments, literally obeyed by the children of Israel for thousands of years to this day, and indorsed by the teaching and practice of the Son of God whilst on earth.

Per contra, the Protestants of the world, the Adventists excepted, with the *same* Bible as their cherished and sole infallible teacher, by their practice, since their appearance in the sixteenth century, with the time-honored practice of the Jewish people before their eyes, have rejected the day named for His worship by God, and assumed, in apparent contradiction of His command, a day for His worship never once referred to for that purpose, in the pages of that Sacred Volume.

What Protestant pulpit does not ring almost every Sunday with loud and impassioned invectives against Sabbath [Catholic Sunday] violation? Who can forget the fanatical clamor of the Protestant ministers throughout the length and breadth of the land against opening the gates of the World's Fair on Sunday? The thousands of petitions, signed by millions, to save the Lord's Day from desecration? Surely, such general and widespread excitement and noisy remonstrance could not have existed without the strongest grounds for such animated protests.

And when quarters were assigned at the World's Fair to the various sects of Protestantism for the exhibition of articles, who can forget the emphatic expressions of virtuous and conscientious indignation exhibited by our Presbyterian brethren, as soon as they learned of the decision of the Supreme Court not to interfere in the Sunday opening? The newspapers informed us that they flatly refused to utilize the space accorded them, or open their boxes, demanding the right to withdraw the articles, in rigid adherence to their principles, and thus decline all contact with the sacrilegious and Sabbath-breaking Exhibition [meaning Sunday].

Doubtless, our Calvinistic brethren deserved and shared the sympathy of all the other sects, who, however, lost the opportunity of posing as martyrs in vindication of the Sabbath observance.

They thus became a "spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men," although their

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Protestant brethren, who failed to share the monopoly, were uncharitably and enviously disposed to attribute their steadfast adherence to religious principle, to Pharisaical pride and dogged obstinacy.

Purpose of Article

Our purpose in throwing off this article, is to shed such light on this all-important question (for were the Sabbath question to be removed from the Protestant pulpit, the sects would feel lost, and the preachers be deprived of their "Cheshire cheese") that our readers may be able to comprehend the question in *all its bearings*, and thus reach a clear conviction.

The Christian world is, morally speaking, united on the question and practice of worshipping God on *the first day* of the week.

The Israelites, scattered all over the earth, keep *the last day* of the week sacred to the worship of the Deity. In this particular, the Seventh-day Adventists (a sect of Christians numerically few) have also selected the same day.

[*Note:* There have *always* been seventh day Sabbath-keepers in the world since the First Century AD (other than the Seventh Day Adventists (SDA's)). Today, not only do SDA's number in the millions, but there are thousands of churches, groups and home fellowships that keep a Saturday Sabbath.]

Israelites and Adventists both appeal to the Bible for the divine command, persistently obliging the strict observance of Saturday.

The Israelite respects the authority of the Old Testament only, but the Adventist, who is a Christian, accepts the New Testament on the same ground as the Old: viz., an inspired record also. He finds that the Bible, his teacher, is consistent in both parts, that the Redeemer, during His mortal life, never kept any other day than Saturday. The Gospels plainly evidence to him this fact; whilst, in the pages of the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse, not the vestige of an act canceling the Saturday arrangement can be found.

The Adventists, therefore, in common with Israelites, derive their belief from the Old Testament, which position is confirmed by the New Testament, indorsed fully by the life and practice of the Redeemer and His apostles' teaching of the Sacred Word for nearly a century of the Christian era.

Numerically considered, the Seventh-day Adventists form an insignificant portion of the Protestant population of the earth, but, as the question is not one of numbers, but of truth, and right, a strict sense of justice forbids the condemnation of this little sect without a calm and unbiased investigation; this is none of our funeral.

The Protestant world has been, from its infancy, in the sixteenth century, in thorough accord with the Catholic Church, in keeping "holy," not Saturday, but Sunday. The discussion of the grounds that led to this unanimity of sentiment and practice of over 300 years, must help toward placing Protestantism on a solid basis in this particular, should the arguments in favor of its position overcome those furnished by the Israelites and Adventists, the Bible, the sole recognized teacher of both litigants, being the umpire and witness. If however, on the other hand, the latter furnish arguments, incontrovertible by the great mass of Protestants, both cases of litigants, appealing to their common teacher, the Bible, the great body of Protestants, so far from clamoring, as they do with vigorous pertinacity for the strict keeping of Sunday, have no other [recourse] left than the admission that they have been teaching and practising *what is Scripturally false for over three centuries*, by adopting the teaching and practice of what they have always pretended to believe an apostate church, contrary to every warrant and teaching of sacred Scripture. To add to the intensity of this Scriptural and unpardonable blunder, it involves one of the most positive and emphatic commands of God to His servant, man: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

No Protestant living today has ever yet obeyed that command, preferring to follow the apostate church referred to than his teacher the Bible, which, from Genesis to Revelation, *teaches no other doctrine*, should the Israelites and Seventh-day Adventists be correct. Both sides appeal to the Bible as their "infallible" teacher. Let the Bible decide whether Saturday

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or Sunday be the day enjoined by God. One of the two bodies must be wrong, and, whereas a false position on this all-important question involves terrible penalties, threatened by God Himself, against the transgressor of this "perpetual covenant," we shall enter on the discussion of the merits of the arguments wielded by both sides. Neither is the discussion of this paramount subject above the capacity of ordinary minds, nor does it involve extraordinary study. It resolves itself into a few plain questions easy of solution:

1. **Which day of the week does the Bible enjoin to be kept holy?**
2. **Has the New Testament modified by precept or practice the original command?**
3. **Have Protestants, since the sixteenth century, obeyed the command of God by keeping "holy" the day enjoined by their infallible guide and teacher, the Bible? And if not, why not?**

To the above three questions we pledge ourselves to furnish as many intelligent answers, which cannot fail to vindicate the truth and uphold the deformity of error.

[From the *Catholic Mirror* of Sept. 9, 1893]

"But faith, fanatic faith, one wedded fast to some dear falsehood, hugs it to the last."
—Moore.

Conformably to our promise in our last issue, we proceed to unmask one of the most flagrant errors and most unpardonable inconsistencies of the Bible rule of faith. Lest, however, we be misunderstood, we deem it necessary to premise that Protestantism recognizes no rule of faith, no teacher, save the "infallible Bible." As the Catholic yields his judgment in spiritual matters implicitly, and with the unreserved confidence, to the voice of his church, so, too, the Protestant recognizes *no teacher but the Bible*. All his spirituality is derived from its teachings. It is to him the voice of God addressing him through his sole inspired teacher. It embodies his religion, his faith, and his practice. The language of Chillingworth, "*The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, is the religion of Protestants,*" is only one form of the same idea multifariously convertible into other forms, such as "the Book of God," "the Charter of Our Salvation," "the Oracle of Our Christian Faith," "God's Text-Book to the race of Mankind," etc. It is, then, an incontrovertible fact that *the Bible alone* is the teacher of Protestant Christianity. Assuming this fact, we will now proceed to discuss the merits of the question involved in our last issue.

Recognizing what is undeniable, the fact of a direct contradiction between the teaching and practice of Protestant Christianity—the Seventh-day Adventists excepted—on the one hand, and that of the Jewish people on the other, both observing different days of the week for the worship of God, we will proceed to take the testimony of the teacher common to both claimants, the Bible. The first expression with which we come in contact in the Sacred Word, is found in Genesis 2:2 "**And on the seventh day He [God] rested from all His work which He had made.**" The next reference to this matter is to be found in Exodus 20, where God commanded the seventh day to be kept, *because* He had himself rested from the work of creation on that day; and the sacred text informs us that *for that reason* He desired it kept, in the following words; "**wherefore, the Lord blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.**" (1) Again we read in chapter 31, verse 15: "**Six days you shall do work; in the seventh day is the Sabbath, the rest holy to the Lord**"; sixteenth verse: "**it is an everlasting covenant,**" "and a perpetual sign," "for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and in the seventh He ceased from work." [Note: Scriptures quoted throughout these editorials are from the Douay, or Catholic, Version of the Bible.]

Saturday Always the Sabbath

In the Old Testament, reference is made one hundred and twenty-six times to the Sabbath, and all these texts conspire harmoniously in voicing the will of God commanding

the seventh day to be kept, because God Himself *first kept it*, making it obligatory on all as “*a perpetual covenant*.” Nor can we imagine any one foolhardy enough to question the identity of Saturday with the Sabbath or seventh day, seeing that the people of Israel have been keeping the Saturday from the giving of the law, A.M. 2514 to A.D. 1893, a period of 3383 years. With the example of the Israelites before our eyes today, there is no historical fact better established than that referred to; viz., that the chosen people of God, the guardians of the Old Testament, the living representatives of the only divine religion hitherto, had for a period of 1490 years anterior to Christianity, preserved the weekly practice, the living tradition of the correct interpretation of the special day of the week, Saturday, to be kept “holy to the Lord,” which tradition they have extended by their own practice to an additional period of 1893 years more, thus covering the full extent of the Christian dispensation. We deem it necessary to be perfectly clear on this point, for reasons that will appear more fully hereafter. The Bible—the Old Testament—confirmed by the living tradition of a weekly practice for 3383 years by the chosen people of God, teaches, then, with absolute certainty, that God had, Himself, named the day to be “kept holy to Him,”—that the day was Saturday, and that any violation of that command was punishable with death. **“Keep you My Sabbath, for it is holy unto you; he that shall profane it shall be put to death; he that shall do any work in it, his soul shall perish in the midst of his people.”** Ex 31:14.

[*Note:* In other words, the people of Israel (made up of 12 tribes—one of which is Judah, which the term “Jew” comes from) anciently maintained the correct day of the Sabbath—and the Jews (who did not lose their identity) to this day STILL keep the correct time of God’s Sabbath given to them through Moses! **Time has not been “lost”—we know that Saturday IS God’s Sabbath Day!**]

It is impossible to realize a more severe penalty than that so solemnly uttered by God Himself in the above text, on all who violate a command referred to no less than one hundred and twenty-six times in the old law. The ten commandments of the Old Testament are formally impressed on the memory of the child of the Biblical Christian as soon as possible, but there is not one of the ten made more emphatically familiar, both in Sunday School and pulpit, than that of keeping “holy” the Sabbath day.

Having secured the absolute certainty the will of God as regards the day to be kept holy, from His Sacred Word, *because* He rested on that day, which day is confirmed to us by the practice of His chosen people for thousands of years, we are naturally induced to inquire *when and where* God changed the day for His worship; for it is patent to the world that a change of day has taken place, and inasmuch as no indication of such change can be found within the pages of the Old Testament, nor in the practice of the Jewish people who continue for nearly nineteen centuries of Christianity obeying the written command, we must look to the exponent of the Christian dispensation; viz., the New Testament, for the command of God canceling the old Sabbath, Saturday.

Investigating the Sabbath in the New Testament

We now approach a period covering little short of nineteen centuries, and proceed to investigate whether the supplemental divine teacher—the New Testament—contains a decree canceling the mandate of the old law, and, at the same time, substituting a day for the divinely instituted Sabbath of the old law, viz., Saturday; for, inasmuch as Saturday was the day kept and ordered to be kept by God, *divine authority alone*, under the form of a canceling decree, could abolish the Saturday covenant, and another divine mandate, appointing by name another day to be kept “holy,” other than Saturday, is equally necessary to satisfy the conscience of the Christian believer. The Bible being the only teacher recognized by the Biblical Christian, the Old Testament failing to point out a change of day, and yet another day than Saturday being kept “holy” by the Biblical world, it is surely incumbent on the reformed Christian to point out in the pages of the New Testament the new divine decree repealing that of Saturday and substituting that of Sunday, kept by the

Biblicals since the dawn of the Reformation.

Examining the New Testament from cover to cover, critically, we find the Sabbath referred to sixty-one times. We find, too, that the Saviour invariably selected the Sabbath (Saturday) to teach in the synagogues and work miracles. The four Gospels refer to the Sabbath (Saturday) fifty-one times.

In one instance the Redeemer refers to Himself as "the Lord of the Sabbath," as mentioned by Matthew and Luke,⁽²⁾ but during the whole record of His life, whilst invariably keeping and utilizing the day (Saturday), *He never once hinted at a desire to change it.* His apostles and personal friends afford to us a striking instance of their scrupulous observance of it *after His death*, and, whilst His body was yet in tomb, Luke (23:56) informs us: "**And they returned and prepared spices and ointments, and rested on the sabbath day according to the commandment ... but on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came, bringing the spices they had prepared.**" The "spices" and "ointments" had been prepared Good Friday evening, because "the Sabbath drew near." (Verse 54.) This action on the part of the personal friends of the Saviour, proves beyond contradiction that *after His death* they kept "holy" the Saturday, *and regarded the Sunday as any other day of the week.* Can anything, therefore, be more conclusive than the apostles and the holy women never knew any Sabbath but Saturday, up to the day of Christ's death?

[*Note*⁽²⁾: It is also referred to in Mark 2:28.]

We now approach the investigation of this interesting question for the next thirty years, as narrated by the evangelist, St. Luke, in his Acts of the Apostles. Surely some vestige of the canceling act can be discovered in the practice of the Apostles during that protracted period.

But, alas! We are once more doomed to disappointment. *Nine*⁽³⁾ *times* do we find the Sabbath referred to in the Acts, but it is the *Saturday* (the old Sabbath). Should our readers desire the proof, we refer them to chapter and verse in each instance. Acts 13:14, 27, 42, 44. Once more, Acts 15:21; again, Acts 16:13; 17:2; 18:4. "**And he [Paul] reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and Greeks**"; *thus the Sabbath (Saturday) from Genesis to Revelation!!!* Thus, it is impossible to find in the New Testament the slightest interference by the Saviour or his Apostles with the original Sabbath, but on the contrary, an entire acquiescence in the original arrangement; nay a *plenary indorsement* by Him, whilst living; and an unvaried, active participation *in the keeping of that day and not [any] other by the apostles*, for thirty years after His death, as the Acts of the Apostles has abundantly testified to us.

[*Note*⁽³⁾: This should be eight.]

Hence the conclusion is inevitable; viz., that of those who follow the Bible as their guide, the Israelites and Seventh-day Adventists have exclusive weight of evidence on their side, whilst the Biblical Protestant has not a word in self-defense for his substitution of Sunday for Saturday.

[From the *Catholic Mirror* of Sept. 16, 1893.]

When his satanic majesty, who was "a murder from the beginning," "and the father of lies," undertook to open the eyes of our first mother, Eve, by stimulating her ambition, "You shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," his action was but the first of many plausible and successful efforts employed later, in the seduction of millions of her children. Like Eve, they learn too late, alas! the value of the inducements held out to allure her weak children from allegiance to God. Nor does the subject matter of this discussion form an exception to the usual tactics of his sable majesty.

Over three centuries since, he plausibly represented to a large number of discontented and ambitious Christians the bright prospect of the successful inauguration of a "new departure," by the abandonment of the Church instituted by the Son of God, as their teacher,

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and the assumption of a new teacher—*the Bible alone*—as their newly fledged oracle.

The sagacity of the evil one foresaw but the brilliant success of this maneuver. Nor did the result fall short of his most sanguine expectations.

A bold and adventurous spirit was alone needed to head the expedition. Him his satanic majesty soon found in the apostate monk, Luther, who himself repeatedly testifies to the close familiarity that existed between his master and himself, in his “Table talk,” and other works published in 1558, at Wittenberg, under the inspection of Melancthon. His colloquies with Satan on various occasions are testified to by Luther himself—a witness worthy of all credibility. What the agency of the serpent tended so effectually to achieve in the garden, the agency of Luther achieved in the Christian world. ⁽⁴⁾

“Give them a pilot to their wandering fleet,
Bold in his art, and tutored to deceit;
Whose hand adventurous shall their helm misguide
To hostile shores, or ‘whelm them in the tide.”

As the end proposed to himself by the evil one in his raid on the church of Christ was the destruction of Christianity, we are now engaged in sifting the means adopted by him to insure his success therein. So far, they have been found to be misleading, self-contradictory, and fallacious. We will now proceed with the further investigations of this imposture.

[**Note** ⁽⁴⁾: Of course, one would expect a Catholic to demonize someone such as Luther, a person who fought for reforms in the church. If Luther had continued his reforms by accepting the Bible’s Sabbath day, papists would not now be taunting “Protestants” with the inconsistency of professing to accept the Bible alone yet following the traditions of the Catholic Church in regards to God’s day of worship.]

Did Jesus Change the Sabbath Day?

Having proved to a demonstration that the Redeemer, *in no instance*, had, during the period of His life, deviated from the faithful observance of the Sabbath (Saturday), referred to by the four evangelists fifty-one times, although He had designated Himself “Lord of the Sabbath,” He never having *once*, by command or practice, hinted at a desire on His part to change the day by the substitution of another and having called special attention to the conduct of the apostles and the holy women, the very evening of His death, securing beforehand spices and ointments to be used in embalming His body the morning after the Sabbath (Saturday), as St. Luke so clearly informs us (Luke 24:1), thereby placing beyond peradventure, the divine action and will of the Son of God during life by keeping the Sabbath steadfastly; and having called attention to the action of His living representatives after his death, as proved by St. Luke; having also placed before our readers *the indisputable fact* that the apostles for the following thirty years (Acts) never deviated from the practice of their divine Master in this particular, as St. Luke (Acts 18:4) assures us: “**And he [Paul] reasoned in the synagogues every Sabbath [Saturday], and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.**” The Gentile converts were, as we see from the text, equally instructed with the Jews, to keep the Saturday, having been converted to Christianity on that day, “the Jews and the Greeks” collectively.

Having also called attention to the texts of the Acts bearing on the exclusive use of the Sabbath by the Jews and Christians for thirty years after the death of the Saviour as the *only* day of the week observed by Christ and His apostles, which period *exhausts the inspired record*, we now proceed to supplement our proofs that the Sabbath (Saturday) enjoyed this exclusive privilege, by calling attention to *every instance* wherein the sacred record refers to the first day of the week.

References to Sunday after Resurrection of Christ

The first reference to Sunday after the resurrection of Christ is to be found in St. Luke’s Gospel, chapter 24, verses 33-40, and St. John 20:19.

[*Note:* Luke 24:33-40 reads “And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them. Saying, ‘The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.’ And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread. And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, ‘Peace be unto you.’ But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them ‘Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.’ And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.” (King James Version)]

[*Note:* John 20:19 says “Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, ‘Peace be unto you.’ ” (KJV)]

The above texts themselves refer to the sole motive of this gathering of the part of the apostles. It took place on the day of the resurrection (Easter Sunday)[according to Catholic tradition], not for the purpose of inaugurating “the new departure” from the old Sabbath (Saturday) by keeping “holy” the new day, for there is not a hint given of prayer, exhortation, or the reading of the Scriptures, but it indicates the utter demoralization of the apostles by informing mankind that they were huddled together in that room in Jerusalem “for fear of the Jews,” as St. John, quoted above, plainly informs us.

The second reference to Sunday is to be found in St. John’s Gospel, 20th chapter, 26th to 29th verses: “**And after eight days, the disciples were again within, and Thomas with them.**” The resurrected Redeemer availed Himself of this meeting of all the apostles to confound the incredulity of Thomas, who had been absent from the gathering on Easter Sunday evening. This would have furnished a golden opportunity to the Redeemer to change the day in the presence of all His apostles, but we state the simple fact that, on this occasion, as on Easter day, not a word is said of prayer, praise, or reading of the Scriptures.

The third instance on record, wherein the apostles were assembled on Sunday, is to be found in Acts 2:1: “**The apostles were all of one accord in one place.**” (Feast of Pentecost—Sunday.) Now, will this text afford to our Biblical Christian brethren a vestige of hope that Sunday substitutes, at length, Saturday? For when we inform them that the Jews had been keeping *this Sunday* for 1500 years, and have been keeping it for eighteen centuries after the establishment of Christianity, at the same time keeping the weekly Sabbath, there is not to be found either consolation or comfort in this text. Pentecost is the fiftieth day after the Passover, which was called the Sabbath of weeks, consisting of seven times seven days; and the day after the completion of the seventh weekly Sabbath day, was the chief day of the entire festival, necessarily Sunday. [The count for Pentecost does not begin with the Passover day, but it begins with the first day of the week during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, making Pentecost always fall on a Sunday.] What Israelite would not pity the cause that would seek to discover the origin of the keeping of the first day of the week in his festival of Pentecost, that has been kept by him yearly for over 3,000 years? Who but the Biblical Christian, driven to the wall for a pretext to excuse his sacrilegious desecration of the Sabbath, always kept by Christ and His apostles, would have resorted to the Jewish festival of Pentecost for his act of rebellion against his God and his teacher, the Bible?

Once more, the Biblical apologists for the change of day call our attention to the Acts, chapter 20, verses 6 and 7: “**and upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread,**” etc. To all appearances, the above text should furnish some consolation to our disgruntled Biblical friends, but being Marplot, we cannot allow them even this crumb of comfort. We reply by the axiom: “*Quod probat nimis, probat nihil*”—“What proves too much, proves nothing.” Let us call attention to the same Acts 2:46: “**And they, continuing daily in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house,**” etc. Who does not see at a glance that the text produced to prove the exclusive

prerogative of Sunday, vanishes into thin air—an *ignis fatuus*—when placed in juxtaposition with the 46th verse of the same chapter? What Biblical Christian claims by this text for *Sunday alone* the same authority, St. Luke, informs us was *common to every day of the week*: “**And they, continuing daily in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house.**”

One text more presents itself, apparently leaning toward a substitution of Sunday for Saturday. It is taken from St. Paul, 1 Cor. 16:1, 2: “**Now concerning the collection for the saints,**” “**On the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store,**” etc. Presuming that the request of St. Paul had been strictly attended to, let us call attention to what had been done each Saturday during the Saviour’s life and continued for thirty years after, as the book of Acts informs us.

The followers of the Master met “*every Sabbath*” to hear the word of God; the Scriptures were read “*every Sabbath day.*” “**And Paul, as his manner was to reason in the synagogue every Sabbath, interposing the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,**” etc. Acts 18:4. What more absurd conclusion that to infer that reading of the Scriptures, prayer, exhortation, and preaching, which *formed the routine duties of every Saturday*, as had been abundantly proved, were overslaughed by a request to take up a collection on *another day of the week*?

In order to appreciate fully the value of this text now under consideration, it is only needful to recall the action of the apostles and holy women on Good Friday before sundown. They brought spices and ointments after He was taken down from the cross; they suspended all action until the Sabbath “*holy to the Lord*” had passed, and then took steps on Sunday morning to complete the process of embalming the sacred body of Jesus.

Why, may we ask, did they not proceed to complete the work of embalming on Saturday?—Because they knew well that the embalming of the sacred body of their Master would interfere with the strict observance of the Sabbath, the keeping of which was paramount; and until it can be shown that the Sabbath day *immediately preceding the Sunday of our text* had not been kept (which would be false, inasmuch as *every Sabbath had been kept*), the request of St. Paul to make the collection *on Sunday* remains to be classified with the work of the embalming of Christ’s body, which could not be effected on the Sabbath, and was consequently deferred to the next convenient day; viz., Sunday, or the first day of the week.

Having disposed of every text to be found in the New Testament referring to the Sabbath (Saturday), and to the first day of the week (Sunday); and having shown conclusively from these texts, that, so far, not a shadow of pretext can be found in the Sacred Volume for the Biblical substitution of Sunday for Saturday; it only remains for us to investigate the meaning of the expressions “*Lord’s Day,*” and “*day of the Lord,*” to be found in the New Testament, which we propose to do in our next article, and conclude with apposite remarks on the incongruities of a system of religion which we shall have proved to be indefensible, self-contradictory, and suicidal.

[From the *Catholic Mirror* of Sept. 23, 1893]

“Halting on crutches of unequal size,
One leg by truth supported, *one by lies*,
Thus sidle to the goal with awkward pace,
Secure of nothing but to lose the race.”

In the present article we propose to investigate carefully a new (and the last) class of proof assumed to convince the Biblical Christian that God had substituted Sunday for Saturday for His worship in the new law, and that the divine will is to be found recorded by the Holy Ghost in apostolic writings.

We are informed that this radical change has found expression, over and over again, in a series of texts in which the expression, “*the day of the Lord,*” or “*the Lord’s day,*” is to be found.

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The class of texts in the New Testament, under the title "Sabbath," numbering sixty-one in the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles; and the second class, in which "the first day of the week," or Sunday, having been critically examined (the latter class numbering nine); and having been found not to afford the slightest clue to a change of will on the part of God as to His day of worship by man, we now proceed to examine the third and last class of texts relied on to save the Biblical system from the arraignment of seeking to palm off on the world, in the name of God, a decree for which there is not the slightest warrant or authority from their teacher, the Bible.

References to "Day of the Lord" or "Lord's Day"

The first text of this class is to be found in the Acts of the Apostles 2:20: "**The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord shall come.**" How many Sundays have rolled by since that prophecy was spoken? So much for that effort to pervert the meaning of the sacred text from the judgment day to Sunday!

The second text of this class is to be found in 1 Cor. 1:8: "**Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.**" What simpleton does not see that the apostle here plainly indicates the day of judgment? The next text of this class that presents itself is to be found in the same Epistle, chapter 5:5: "**To deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.**" The incestuous Corinthian was, of course, saved on *the Sunday next following!!* How pitiable such a makeshift as this! The fourth text, 2 Cor. 1:13,14: "**And I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.**"

Sunday or the day of judgment, which? The fifth text is from St. Paul to the Philippians, chapter 1, verse 6: "**Being confident of this very thing, that He who hath begun a good work in you, will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ.**" The good people of Philippi, in attaining perfection *on the following Sunday*, could afford to laugh at our modern rapid transit!

We beg to submit our sixth of the class; viz., Philippians, first chapter, tenth verse: "**That he may be sincere without offense unto the day of Christ.**" That day was *next Sunday*, forsooth! Not so long to wait after all. The seventh text, 2 Peter 3:10: "**But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.**" The application of this text to Sunday passes the bounds of absurdity.

The eighth text, 2 Peter 3:12: "**Waiting for and hastening unto the coming of the day of the Lord, by which the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved,**" etc. This day of the Lord is the same referred to in the previous text, the application of both of which to *Sunday next* would have left the Christian world sleepless the next Saturday night.

We have presented to our readers eight of the nine texts relied on to bolster up by text of Scripture the sacrilegious effort to palm off the "Lord's day" for Sunday, and with what result? Each furnishes *prima facie* evidence of the last day, referring to it directly, absolutely, and unequivocally.

The ninth text wherein we meet the expression "the Lord's day," is the last to be found in the apostolic writings. The Apocalypse, or Revelation, chapter 1:10, furnishes it in the following words of John: "**I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day**"; but it will afford no more comfort to our Biblical friends than its predecessors of the same series. Has St. John used the expression previously in his Gospel or Epistles?—Emphatically, NO. Has he had occasion to refer to Sunday hitherto?—Yes, twice. How did he designate Sunday on these occasions? Easter Sunday was called by him (John 20:1) "*the first day of the week.*"

Again, chapter twenty, nineteenth verse: "**Now when it was late that same day, being the first day of the week.**" Evidently, although inspired, both in his Gospel and Epistles, he called Sunday "the first day of the week." On what grounds, then, can it be assumed that

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he dropped that designation? Was he *more inspired* when he wrote the Apocalypse, or did he adopt a new title for Sunday, because it was now in vogue?

A reply to these questions would be supererogatory especially to the latter, seeing that the same expression had been used eight times already by St. Luke, St. Paul and St. Peter, *all under divine inspiration*, and surely the Holy Spirit would not inspire St. John to call Sunday the Lord's day, whilst He inspired Sts. Luke, Paul, and Peter, collectively, to entitle the day of judgment "the Lord's day." Dialecticians reckon amongst the infallible motives of certitude, the moral motive of analogy or induction, by which we are enabled to conclude with certainty from the known to the unknown; being absolutely certain of the meaning of an expression, it can have only the same meaning when uttered the ninth time, especially when we know that on the nine occasions the expressions were *inspired by the Holy Spirit*.

Nor are the strongest intrinsic grounds wanting to prove that this, like its sister texts, containing the same meaning. St. John (Rev. 1:10) says "**I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day**"; but he furnishes us the key to this expression, chapter four, first and second verses: "**After this I looked and behold a door opened in heaven.**" A voice said to him: "**Come up hither, and I will show you the things which must be hereafter.**" Let us ascend in spirit with John. Whither?—through that "door in heaven," to heaven. And what shall we see?—"The things that must be hereafter," chapter four, first verse. He ascended in spirit to heaven. He was ordered to write, in full, his vision of what is to take place antecedent to, and concomitantly with, "the Lord's day," or the day of judgment; the expression "Lord's day" being confined in Scripture to the day of judgment exclusively.

We have studiously and accurately collected from the New Testament every available proof that could be adduced in favor of a law canceling the Sabbath day of the old law, or one substituting another day for the Christian dispensation. We have been careful to make the above distinction, lest it might be advanced that the third ⁽⁶⁾ commandment was abrogated under the new law. Any such plea has been overruled by the action of the Methodist Episcopal bishops in their pastoral 1874, and quoted by the New York *Herald* of the same date, of the following tenor:

"The Sabbath instituted in the beginning and confirmed again and again by Moses and the prophets *has never been abrogated*. A part of the moral law, not a part or tittle of its sanctity has been taken away." The above official pronouncement has committed that large body of Biblical Christians to the permanence of the third commandment under the new law.

[*Note* ⁽⁶⁾: In their catechisms, Catholic enumeration of Exodus 20, the Sabbath commandment is the third of the Ten Commandments.]

We again beg to leave to call the special attention of our readers to the twentieth of "the thirty-nine articles of religion" of the Book of Common Prayer; "It is not lawful for the church to ordain anything that is contrary to *God's written word*."

CONCLUSION

We have in this series of articles, taken much pains for the instruction of our readers to prepare them by presenting a number of *undeniable facts* found in the word of God to arrive at a conclusion absolutely irrefragable. When the Biblical system put in an appearance in the sixteenth century, it not only seized on the temporal possessions of the Church, but in its vandalic crusade stripped Christianity, as far as it could, of all the sacraments instituted by its Founder, of the holy sacrifice, etc., retaining nothing but the Bible, which its exponents pronounced *their sole teacher* in Christian doctrine and morals.

Chief amongst their articles of belief was, and is today, the permanent necessity of keeping the Sabbath [Catholic Sunday] holy. In fact, it has been for the past 300 years the only article of the Christian belief in which there has been a plenary consensus of Biblical representatives. The keeping of the Sabbath constitutes the sum and substance of the Biblical theory. The pulpits resound weekly with incessant tirades against the lax manner of keeping the Sabbath [Catholic Sunday] in Catholic countries, as contrasted with the proper,

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Christian, self-satisfied mode of keeping the day in Biblical countries. Who can ever forget the virtuous indignation manifested by the Biblical preachers throughout the length and breadth of our country, from every Protestant pulpit, as long as yet undecided; and who does not know today, that one sect, to mark its holy indignation at the decision, has never yet opened the boxes that contained its articles at the World's Fair?

These superlatively good and unctuous Christians, by conning over their Bible carefully, can find their counterpart in a certain class of unco-good people [the scribes and Pharisees] in the days of the Redeemer, who haunted Him night and day, distressed beyond measure, and scandalized beyond forbearance, because He did not keep the [seventh day] Sabbath in as straight-laced manner as themselves.

Protestants Have *Never* Kept God's Sabbath

They hated Him for using common sense in reference to the day, and He found no epithets expressive enough of His supreme contempt for their Pharisaical pride. And it is very probably that the divine mind has not modified its views today anent the blatant outcry of their followers and sympathizers at the close of this nineteenth century. But when we add to all this the fact that whilst the Pharisees of old kept the *true Sabbath*, our modern Pharisees, counting on the credulity and simplicity of their dupes, *have never once in their lives kept the true Sabbath* which their divine Master kept to His dying day, and which His apostles kept, after His example, for thirty years steward, according to the Sacred Record. The most glaring contradiction, involving a deliberate sacrilegious rejection of a most positive precept, is presented to us today in the action of the Biblical Christian world. The Bible and the Sabbath [Catholic Sunday] constitute the watchword of Protestantism; but we have demonstrated that it is *the Bible against their Sabbath* [Protestant Sunday]. We have shown that no greater contradiction ever existed than their theory and practice. We have proved that neither their Biblical ancestors nor themselves have ever kept one Sabbath day in their lives.

The Israelites and Seventh-day Adventists [and Sabbath keeping churches of God] are witnesses of their weekly desecration of the day named by God so repeatedly, and whilst they have ignored and condemned their teacher, the Bible, they have adopted a day kept by the Catholic Church. What Protestant can, after perusing these articles, with a clear conscience, continue to disobey the command of God, *enjoining Saturday to be kept*, which command his teacher, the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, records as the will of God?

The history of the world cannot present a more stupid, self-stultifying specimen of dereliction of principle than this. The teacher demands emphatically in every page that the law of the Sabbath be observed every week, by all recognizing it as "the only infallible teacher," whilst the disciples of that teacher have not once for over three [now four] hundred years observed the divine precept! That immense concourse of Biblical Christians, the Methodists, have declared that the Sabbath has never been abrogated, whilst the followers of the Church of England, together with her daughter, the Episcopal Church of the United States, are committed by the twentieth article of religion, already quoted, to the ordinance that the Church cannot lawfully ordain anything "*contrary to God's written word.*" God's written word enjoins His worship to be observed on *Saturday* absolutely, repeatedly, and most emphatically, with a most positive threat of death to him who disobeys. All the Biblical sects occupy the same self-stultifying position which no explanation can modify, much less justify.

How truly do the words of the Holy Spirit apply to this deplorable situation! "*Iniquitas mentita est sibi*"—"Iniquity hath lied to itself." Proposing to follow *the Bible only* as teacher, yet before the world, *the sole teacher* is ignominiously thrust aside, and the teaching and practice of the Catholic Church—"the mother of abomination," when it suits their purpose so to designate her—[they have] adopted, despite the most terrible threats pronounced by God Himself against those who disobey the command, "Remember to keep holy the Sabbath."

Sunday As Day of Worship Is Catholic Creation

Before closing this series of articles, we beg to call the attention of our readers once more to our caption, introductory of each; viz., 1. The Christian Sabbath [Catholic Sunday], [is] the genuine offspring of the union of the Holy Spirit with the Catholic Church His spouse. 2. The claim of Protestantism to any part therein proved to be groundless, self-contradictory, and suicidal.

The first proposition needs little proof. The Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday. We say by virtue of her divine mission, because He who called Himself the "Lord of the Sabbath," endowed her with His own power to teach, "he that heareth you, heareth Me"; commanded all who believe in Him to hear her, under penalty of being placed with "heathen and publican"; and promised to be with her to the end of the world. She holds her charter as teacher from Him—a charter as infallible as perpetual [which is a lie]. The Protestant world at its birth found the Christian Sabbath [Catholic Sunday] too strongly entrenched to run counter to its existence; it was therefore placed under the necessity of acquiescing in the arrangement, thus implying the [Catholic] Church's right to change the day, for over three [now four] hundred years. The Christian Sabbath [Catholic Sunday] is therefore *to this day*, the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic Church as spouse of the Holy Ghost, without a word of remonstrance from the Protestant world.

Let us now, however, take a glance at our second proposition, with *the Bible alone* as the teacher and guide in faith and morals. This teacher *most emphatically forbids any change in the day for paramount reasons*. The command calls for a "*perpetual covenant*." The day commanded to be kept by the teacher *has never once been kept*, thereby developing an apostasy from an assumedly fixed principle, as self-contradictory, self-stultifying, and consequently as suicidal as it is within the power of language to express.

Nor are the limits of demoralization yet reached. Far from it. *Their pretense* for leaving the bosom of the Catholic Church was for apostasy from the truth *as taught in the written word*. They adopted the written word as their sole teacher, which they had no sooner done than they abandoned it promptly, as these articles have abundantly proved; and by a perversity as willful as erroneous, they accept the teaching of the Catholic Church in direct opposition to the plain, unvaried, and constant teaching of their sole teacher in the most essential doctrine of their religion, thereby emphasizing the situation in what may be aptly designated "a mockery, a delusion, and a snare."

[EDITORS' NOTE] (Written by Michael Scheifler) — It was upon this very point that the Reformation was condemned by the Council of Trent. The Reformers had constantly charged, as here stated, that the Catholic Church had "apostatized from the truth *as contained in the written word*." "The written word," "The Bible and the Bible only," "Thus saith the Lord," were their constant watchwords; and "the Scripture, as in the written word, the sole standard of appeal," was the proclaimed platform of the Reformation and of Protestantism. "The Scripture *and tradition*." "The Bible as interpreted by the Church and according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers," was the position and claim of the Catholic Church. This was the main issue in the Council of Trent, which was called especially to consider the questions that had been raised and forced upon the attention of Europe by the Reformers.

The very first question concerning faith that was considered by the council was the question involved in this issue. There was a strong party even of the Catholics within the council who were in favor of abandoning tradition and adopting *the Scriptures only* as the standard of authority. This view was so decidedly held in the debates in the council that the pope's legates actually wrote to him that there was "a strong tendency to set aside tradition altogether and to make Scripture the sole standard of appeal." But to do this would manifestly be to go a long way toward justifying the claims of the Protestants. By this crisis there was developed upon the ultra-Catholic portion of the council the task of convincing the

others that “Scripture *and tradition*” were the only sure ground to stand upon. If this could be done, the council could be carried to issue a decree condemning the Reformation, otherwise not. The question was debated day after day, until the council was fairly brought to a standstill. Finally, after a long and intensive mental strain, the Archbishop of Reggio came into the council with substantially the following argument to the party who held for Scripture alone:

“The Protestants claim to stand upon the written word only. They profess to hold the Scripture alone as the standard of faith. They justify their revolt by the plea that the Church has apostatized from the written word and follows tradition. Now the Protestant claim, that they stand upon the written word only, is not true. Their profession of holding the Scripture alone as the standard of faith is false. PROOF: The written word explicitly enjoins the observance of the seventh day as the Sabbath. They do not observe the seventh day but reject it. If they do truly hold the scripture alone as their standard, they would be observing the seventh day as is enjoined in the Scripture throughout. Yet they not only reject the observance of the Sabbath enjoined in the written word, but they have adopted and do practice the observance of Sunday, for which they have only the tradition of the Church. Consequently the claim of ‘Scripture alone as the standard,’ *fails*; and the doctrine of ‘Scripture *and tradition*’ as essential, is fully established, the Protestants themselves being judges.”

[The Archbishop of Reggio (Gaspar [Ricciulli] de Fosso) made his speech at the last opening session of Trent, (17th Session) reconvened under a new pope (Pius IV), on the 18th of January, 1562 after having been suspended in 1552.—J. H. Holtzman, *Canon and Tradition*, published in Ludwigsburg, Germany, in 1859, page 263, and Archbishop of Reggio’s address in the 17th session of the Council of Trent, Jan. 18, 1562, in Mansi SC, Vol. 33, cols. 529, 530. Latin.]

There was no getting around this, for the Protestants’ own statement of faith—the Augsburg Confession, 1530—had clearly admitted that “the observation of the Lord’s day” had been appointed by “the Church” only [meaning the Catholic Church].

The argument was hailed in the council as of Inspiration only; the party for “Scripture alone,” surrendered; and the council at once unanimously condemned Protestantism and the whole Reformation as only an unwarranted revolt from the communion and authority of the Catholic Church; and proceeded, April 8, 1546, “to the promulgation of two decrees, the first of which, enacts under anathema, that Scripture *and tradition* are to be received and venerated equally, and that the deuterocanonical [the apocryphal] books are part of the canon of Scripture. The second decree declares the Vulgate to be the sole authentic and standard Latin version, and gives it such authority as to supersede the original texts; forbids the interpretation of Scripture contrary to the sense received by the Church, ‘or even contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers,’ ” etc. ⁽⁷⁾

[Note: ⁽⁷⁾: See the proceedings of the Council; Augsburg Confession; and Encyclopaedia Britannica, article “Trent, Council of.”]

This was the inconsistency of the Protestant practice with the Protestant profession that gave to the Catholic Church her long-sought and anxiously desired ground upon which to condemn Protestantism and the whole Reformation movement as only a selfishly ambitious rebellion against the Church authority. And in this vital controversy the key, the chiefest and culminative expression, of the Protestant inconsistency was in the rejection of the Sabbath of the Lord, the seventh day, enjoined in the Scriptures, and the adoption and observance of the Sunday as enjoined by the Catholic Church.

And this is today the position of the respective parties to this controversy. Today, as this document shows, this is the vital issue upon which the Catholic Church arraigns Protestantism and upon which she condemns the course of popular Protestantism as being “indefensible,” “self-contradictory, and suicidal.” (end of editor’s note)]

Should any of the reverend parsons, who are habituated to howl so vociferously over every real or assumed desecration of that pious fraud, the *Bible Sabbath*, think well of

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entering a protest against our logical and Scriptural dissection of their mongrel pet [that Sunday keeping is taught in the Bible], we can promise them that any reasonable attempt on their part to gather up the *disjecta membra* of the hybrid, and to restore to it a galvanized existence, will be met with genuine cordiality and respectful consideration on our part.

But we can assure our readers that we know these reverend howlers too well to expect a solitary bark from them in this instance. And they know us too well to subject themselves to the mortification which a further dissection of this antiscriptural question would necessarily entail. Their policy now is to "lay low," and they are sure to adopt it.

APPENDIX I

These articles are reprinted, and this leaflet is sent forth by the publishers, because it gives from an undeniable source and in no uncertain tone, the latest phase of the Sunday-observance controversy, which is now, and which indeed for some time has been, not only a national question with the leading nations, but also an international question. Not that we are glad to have it so; we would that Protestants everywhere were so thoroughly consistent in profession and practice that there could be no possible room for the relations between them and Rome ever to take the shape which they have now taken.

But the situation in this matter is now as it is herein set forth. There is no escaping this fact. It therefore becomes the duty of the International Religious Liberty Association to make known as widely as possible the true phase of this great question as it now stands. Not because we are pleased to have it so, but because it is so, whatever we or anybody else would or would not be pleased to have.

It is true that we have been looking for years for this question to assume precisely the attitude which it has now assumed, and which is so plainly set forth in this leaflet. We have told the people repeatedly, and Protestants especially, and yet more especially have we told those who were advocating Sunday laws and the recognition and legal establishment of Sunday by the United States, that in the course that was being pursued they were playing directly into the hands of Rome, and that as certainly as they succeeded, they would inevitably be called upon by Rome, and Rome in possession of power too, to render to her an account as to why Sunday should be kept. This, we have told the people for years, would surely come. And now that it *has* come, it is only our duty to make it known as widely as it lies in our power to do.

It may be asked, Why did not Rome come out as boldly as this before? Why did she wait so long? It was not for her interest to do so before. When she should move, she desired to move with power, and power as yet she did not have. But in their strenuous efforts for the national, governmental recognition and establishment of Sunday, the Protestants of the United States were doing more for her than she could possibly do for herself in the way of getting governmental power into her hands. This she well knew and therefore only waited. And now that the Protestants, in alliance with her, have accomplished the awful thing, she at once rises up in all her native arrogance and old-time spirit, and calls upon the Protestants to answer to her for their observance of Sunday. This, too, she does because she is secure in the power which the Protestants have so blindly placed in her hands. In other words, the power which the Protestants have thus put into her hands she will now use to their destruction. Is any other evidence needed to show that the *Catholic Mirror* (which means the Cardinal and the Catholic Church in America) has been waiting for this, than that furnished on page 21 of this leaflet? Please turn back and look at that page, and see that quotation clipped from the New York *Herald* in 1874, and which is now brought forth thus. Does not this show plainly that that statement of the Methodist bishops, the *Mirror*, all these nineteen years, has been keeping for just such a time as this? And more than this, the Protestants will find more such things which have been so laid up, and which will yet be used in a way that will both surprise and confound them.

This at present is a controversy between the Catholic Church and Protestants. As

Rome's Challenge to the Protestants

such only do we reproduce these editorials of the CATHOLIC MIRROR. The points controverted are points which are claimed by Protestants as in their favor. The argument is made by the Catholic Church; the answer devolves upon those Protestants who observe Sunday, not upon us. We can truly say, "This is none of our funeral." If they do not answer, she will make their silence their confession that she is right, and will act toward them accordingly. If they do answer, she will use against them their own words, and as occasion may demand, the power which they have put into her hands. So that, so far as she is concerned, whether the Protestant answer or not, it is all the same. And how she looks upon them henceforth is clearly manifested in the challenge made in the last paragraph of the reprint articles.

There is just one refuge left for the Protestants. That is to take their stand squarely and fully upon the "written word only," "the Bible and the Bible alone," and thus upon the Sabbath of the Lord. Thus acknowledging no authority but God's, wearing no sign but His (Eze. 20:12, 20), obeying His command, and shielded by His power, they shall have the victory over Rome and all her alliances, and stand upon the sea of glass, bearing the harps of God, with which their triumph shall be forever celebrated. (Revelation 18, and 15:2-4.)

It is not yet too late for Protestants to redeem themselves. Will they do it? Will they stand consistently upon the Protestant profession? Or will they still continue to occupy the "indefensible, self-contradictory, and suicidal" position of professing to be Protestants, yet standing on Catholic ground, receiving Catholic insult, and bearing Catholic condemnation? Will they indeed take the written word only, the Scripture alone, as their sole authority and their sole standard? Or will they still hold the "indefensible, self-contradictory, and suicidal" doctrine and practice of following the authority of the Catholic Church and of wearing the sign of her authority? Will they keep the Sabbath of the Lord, the seventh day, according to Scripture? Or will they keep the Sunday according to the tradition of the Catholic Church?

Dear reader, which will YOU do?

APPENDIX II

Since the first edition of this publication was printed, the following appeared in an editorial in the *Catholic Mirror* of Dec. 23, 1893:

"The avidity with which these editorials have been sought, and the appearance of a reprint of them by the International Religious Liberty Association, published in Chicago, entitled, 'Rome's Challenge: Why Do Protestants Keep Sunday?' and offered for sale in Chicago, New York, California, Tennessee, London, Australia, Cape Town, Africa, and Ontario, Canada, together with the continuous demand, have prompted the *Mirror* to give permanent form to them, and thus comply with the demand.

"The pages of this brochure unfold to the reader one of the most glaringly conceivable contradictions existing between the practice and the theory of the Protestant world, and unsusceptible of any rational solution, the theory claiming the Bible alone as teacher, which unequivocally and most positively commands Saturday to be kept 'holy,' whilst their practice proves that they utterly ignore the unequivocal requirements of their teacher, the Bible, and occupying Catholic ground for three centuries and a half, by the abandonment of their theory, they stand before the world today the representatives of a system the most indefensible, self-contradictory, and suicidal that can be imagined.

"We feel that we cannot interest our readers more than to produce the 'Appendix'⁽⁸⁾ which the International Religious Liberty Association, and ultra-Protestant organization, has added to the reprint of our articles. The perusal of the Appendix will confirm the fact that our argument is unanswerable, and that the only recourse left to the Protestants is either to retire from Catholic territory where they have been squatting for three centuries and a half, and accepting their own teacher, the Bible, in good faith, as so clearly suggested by the writer of 'Appendix,' commence forth-with to keep the Saturday, the day enjoined by the Bible from Genesis to Revelation; or, abandoning the Bible as their sole teacher, cease to be

Appendix K

squatters, and a living contradiction of their own principles, and taking out letters of adoption as citizens of the kingdom of Christ on earth—His Church—be no longer victims of self-delusive and necessary self-contradiction.

[*Note:* ⁽⁸⁾ At the close of this editorial, Appendix I of this pamphlet was reprinted in full.]

“The arguments contained in this pamphlet are firmly grounded on the word of God, and having been closely studied with the Bible in hand, leave no escape for the conscientious Protestant except the abandonment of Sunday worship and the return to Saturday, commanded by their teacher, the Bible, or, unwilling to abandon the tradition of the Catholic Church, which enjoins the keeping of Sunday, and which they have accepted in direct opposition to their teacher, the Bible, consistently accept her in all her teachings. **Reason and common sense demand the acceptance of one or the other of these alternatives; either Protestantism and the keeping of Saturday, or Catholicity and the keeping of Sunday.** Compromise is impossible.”

Appendix L

What Does It Mean to Be “Born Again”?

It is apparent that the early Latin church fathers made a deliberate alteration of the text in John 3:5 that, to this day, has obscured the true meaning of the phrase “born again.” This alteration has remained a part of the Latin Vulgate and is the basis of the Catholic doctrine of the “sacrament of baptism.” During the Reformation, Protestants rejected the Catholic sacrament and developed a slightly different doctrine regarding “born again.” The teachings of what it means to be “born again” and “born of God” are perhaps some of the most misunderstood teachings of the New Testament. Tragically, this has resulted in millions of false conversions.

The Catholic sacrament of baptism evolved into a religious work while various Protestant versions led to a perverted, lawless grace that rejects Jesus’ teachings that a Christian is required to keep the commandments of God. Compounding these doctrinal errors is the unscriptural belief in the immortality of the soul and the practice of infant baptism.

There is no scriptural example of infants or children being baptized. Jesus Christ was not “christened” nor was He baptized when he was a baby; in fact, He was not baptized until He was thirty years old. Neither do the New Testament accounts show that John the Baptist or the apostles baptized infants or children. The New Testament teaches that when one repents of his or her sins to God the Father and by faith accepts the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, one must be baptized by full immersion in water (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:35-36; Rom 3:23-25; 4:7-8, 24-25; 5:9-10; 6:1-6). Repentance and baptism are decisions and commitments that only an adult can make. The true New Testament teachings of what it means to be born again and born of God differ entirely from Catholic or Protestant beliefs.

The Babylonian Pagan Origin of a Counterfeit “Born Again” Doctrine

In his epoch book, *The Two Babylons*, Alexander Hislop conclusively demonstrates that pagan religions, which had their roots in ancient Babylon, had a counterfeit belief and practice of being born again, or “twice born.” Hislop wrote: “The Brahmins make it their distinguishing boast that they are ‘twice-born’ men, and that, as such, they are sure of eternal happiness. Now, the same was the case in [ancient] Babylon, and there **the new birth was conferred by baptism**. In the Chaldean mysteries, before any instruction could be received, it was required first of all, that **the person to be initiated** [into the mysteries] **submit to baptism in token of blind and implicit obedience**” (Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p. 132, bold emphasis added).

When God scattered the people from the tower of Babel, disbursing them throughout the world, they took with them their idolatrous pagan religion. Instead of worshiping the true God, they continued to worship Nimrod and Semiramis and their son Tammuz. However, because God confused mankind’s language into many languages, these false deities took many names. Regardless of their various names in ancient and even modern languages, they are these three pagan deities: Nimrod—the father god, Semiramis—the mother goddess, and Tammuz—the son and false savior. The spiritual power behind these human deities is none other than Satan the devil, who deceives the whole world (Rev. 12:9).

In the ancient Chaldean mystery religion there was a perverted myth connected with the flood of Noah about being twice-born. The pagan priests twisted the truth to fit their religious beliefs as Hislop notes: “Whatever primitive truth the Chaldean priests held, they utterly perverted and corrupted it. They willingly overlooked the fact that it was ‘the right-

eousness of the faith' which Noah 'had *before*' the flood that carried him safely through the avenging waters of that dread catastrophe and ushered him, as it were, from the womb of the ark, by a new birth, into a new world, when on the ark resting on Mount Ararat, he was released from his long confinement. They led their votaries to believe that, if they only passed through the **baptismal waters**, and the penances therewith connected, that of itself would make them like the second father of mankind, 'Diphueis,' '**twice-born**,' or '**regenerate**,' [and] would entitle them to all the privileges of 'righteous' Noah, and give them that '**new birth**'... which their consciences told them they so much needed. The Papacy acts on precisely the same principle; and from this very source has its doctrine of baptismal regeneration been derived, about which so much has been written and so many controversies been waged. Let men contend as they may, **this, and this only, will be found to be the real origin of the anti-Scriptural dogma**" (Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p. 137, bold emphasis added).

Infant Baptism: With the scattering of the people from the tower of Babel, the Babylonian religion was spread around the world. Consequently, it is no surprise that infant baptism was practiced in Mexico thousands of years before the Spanish conquest. When the Spanish invaded Mexico, they were stunned at observing an infant baptism that mirrored the Catholic ritual. Hislop explains: "The same doctrine of baptismal regeneration [as the Babylonian Mysteries and Catholic practice] was found in full vigour among the natives, when Cortez and his warriors landed on their shores. The ceremony of Mexican baptism, which was beheld with astonishment by the Spanish Roman Catholic missionaries, is thus strikingly described in Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico*: 'When everything necessary for the baptism had been made ready, all the relations of the child were assembled, and the midwife, who was the person that performed the rite of baptism, was summoned. At early dawn [showing sun worship derived from ancient Babylon and Egypt], they met together in the courtyard of the house. When the sun had risen, the midwife, taking the child in her arms, called for a little earthen vessel of water, while those about her placed the ornaments, which had been prepared for baptism, in the midst of the court. To perform the rite of baptism, she placed herself with her face toward the west [the infant facing east], and immediately began to go through certain ceremonies ... After this she sprinkled water on the head of the infant, saying, "O my child, take and receive the water of the Lord of the world [who is Satan the devil II Cor. 4:4], which is our life, which is given for the increasing and renewing of our body. It is to wash and to purify. I pray that these heavenly drops may enter into your body, and dwell there; that they may destroy and remove from you all the evil and sin which was given you before the beginning of the world, since all of us are under its power" ... She then washed the body of the child with water, and spoke in this manner: "Whencesoever thou comest, thou [the evil spirit] that art hurtful to this child, leave him and depart from him, for he now liveth anew, and is BORN ANEW; now he is purified and cleansed afresh, and our mother Chalchivitlycue [the goddess of water] bringeth him into the world." Having thus prayed, the midwife took the child in both hands, and, lifting him towards heaven [with the infant facing the rising sun] said, "O Lord, thou seest here thy creature, whom thou hast sent into the world, this place of sorrow, suffering, and penitence. Grant him, O Lord, thy gifts and inspiration, for thou art the Great God, and with thee is the great goddess." ' Here is the opus operatum without mistake. Here is baptismal regeneration and exorcism too, as thorough and complete as any Romish priest or lover of Tractarianism could desire" (Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, p. 133, bold emphasis added).

In ancient Greece, the pagan Athenians made their baptismal waters holy by plunging a flaming torch, symbolizing the power of the sun god, into the water used for baptism. Likewise, the baptismal waters used in Romish baptisms are made holy by plunging a flaming torch into the water. Referring to Catholic justification of such practices, Hislop wrote: "Of what avail is it for Bishop Hay to say, with the view of sanctifying superstition and 'making apostasy plausible,' that this is done 'to represent the fire of Divine love, which is communicated to the soul by baptism and the light of good example, which all who are bap-

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tised ought to give.’ This is the fair face put on the matter; but the fact still remains [sic] that while the Romish doctrines in regard to baptism is purely Pagan, in the ceremonies connected with the Papal baptism one of the essential rites of the ancient fire-worship is still practiced at this day, just as it was practised by the worshippers of Bacchus, the Babylonian Messiah. As Rome keeps up the remembrance of the fire-god passing through the waters and giving virtue to them, so when it speaks of the ‘Holy Ghost *suffering* for us in baptism,’ it in like manner commemorates the part which Paganism assigned to the Babylonian goddess when she plunged into the waters. The sorrows of Nimrod, or Bacchus, when in the waters were meritorious sorrows. The sorrows of his wife, in whom the Holy Ghost miraculously dwelt, were the same. The sorrows of the Madonna, then when in these waters, fleeing from Typhon’s rage, were the birth-throes by which children were born to God [born again by water]. And thus, even in the Far West, Chalchivitlycue, the Mexican ‘**goddess of the waters,**’ and ‘**mother of all the regenerate, was represented as purging the newborn infant from original sin, and bringing it anew into the world.**’ Now, the Holy Ghost was idolatrously worshipped in Babylon under the form of a ‘Dove.’ Under the same form, and with equal idolatry, the Holy Ghost is worshipped in Rome. When, therefore, we read, in opposition to every Scripture principle, that ‘*the Holy Ghost suffered for us in baptism,*’ surely it must now be manifest who is that Holy Ghost that is really intended. It is no other than Semiramis, the very incarnation of lust and all uncleanness.

“The reader has seen already how faithfully Rome has copied the Pagan exorcism [of evil spirits] in connection with baptism. All the other peculiarities attending the Romish baptism, such as the use of salt, spittle, chrism, or anointing with oil, and marking the forehead with the sign of the cross, are equally Pagan. Some of the continental advocates of Rome have admitted that some of these at least have not been derived from Scripture” (Ibid., pp. 137-138, 143-144). Hence, the doctrine and practice of infant baptism originated in ancient Babylon, and the belief that one is born again of water by baptism is derived from heathen paganism.

How did these antiscritptural, heathen, pagan practices become part of Christendom?

The Gnostic Connection, the Great Apostasy and the Early Latin Church Fathers

Jesus Christ repeatedly warned the apostles and believers about false Christs, false apostles and false teachers who would come and if possible deceive the very elect (Matt. 24:5, 11, 15, 24; see parallel accounts in Mark and Luke). The apostles likewise warned the brethren to be on guard against false apostles and teachers (II Cor. 4; 11; I and II Timothy; Titus 1; II Pet. 2; I, II and III John; Jude; Rev. 2, 3, 13 and 17). The New Testament is replete with warnings against false apostles and teachers who would come in “sheep’s clothing” but inwardly would be “ravening wolves,” seeking to pervert and destroy the truth.

Paul warned the Thessalonians in 51 AD that this apostate system, which he called the “mystery of lawlessness,” was beginning to penetrate the Church. He forewarned that some were writing counterfeit epistles in his name. Furthermore, he prophesied that this apostate system would grow and continue until the final antichrist would arise, whom Jesus would destroy at His second coming: “Now we beseech you, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken in mind, nor be troubled—neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle, as if from us, *saying* that the day of Christ is present.

“Do not let anyone deceive you by any means because *that day will not* come unless **the apostasy shall come first**, and the man of sin shall be revealed—the son of perdition, the one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is an object of worship; so that he comes into the temple of God and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God. Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I told you these things? And now you understand what is holding *him* back in order for him to be revealed in his own

set time.

“**For the mystery of lawlessness is already working**; only *there is* one Who is restraining at the present *time* until it arises out of *the* midst. And then the lawless one will be revealed (whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of His coming); *even the one whose coming is according to the inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders*, and with every deceit of unrighteousness in those who are perishing because they did not receive the love of the truth, so that they might be saved. And for this cause, God will send upon them a powerful deception that will cause them to believe *the* lie; so that all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but who took pleasure in unrighteousness” (II Thes. 2:1-12, bold emphasis added).

Thus, Satan the devil inspired his ministers of iniquity to develop a great apostate “Christianity” that Jesus Christ also identified as “BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH” (Rev. 17:5-6). They preached a false Christ, propagated false doctrines, wrote false letters, and even falsified and altered the holy Scriptures of God (II Pet. 3:16) in order to promulgate their pagan Babylonian teachings. The early leaders of this neo-gnostic Christianized apostate church established many false teachings, among them the doctrine of being born again, which is the focus of this appendix.

The Latin Vulgate: When examining John 3:3-5 in the Latin Vulgate Bible—originally translated by Jerome in 383 AD—one finds a deliberate insertion of the word “again”-into Verse 5, making it read “born **again** of water.” No Greek manuscript has the word “again” added to the phrase “born of water.” What follows is the Latin Vulgate with an English translation. Note that the Latin syntax must be reordered into English syntax most of the time and punctuation added:

3. *Respondit Iesus et dixit ei amen amen dico tibi nisi quis **natus** fuerit **denuo** non potest videre regnum Dei*

3. Jesus responded and said to him, “Amen, amen, I say to you unless anyone be **born anew**, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

4. *Dicit ad eum Nicodemus quomodo potest homo **nasci** cum senex sit numquid potest in ventrem matris suae iterato introire et **nasci***

4. Nicodemus says to him, “How can a man be **born already** being old? Can he enter into his own mother’s belly again and be **born**?”

5. *Respondit Iesus amen amen dico tibi nisi quis **renatus** fuerit **ex aqua** et Spiritu non potest introire in regnum Dei*

5. Jesus answered, “Amen, amen, I say to you unless one is **reborn [born again] of water** and Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

In Verse 3 the Latin *natus* means “born” and *denuo* means “anew” or “again.” But, *denuo* is not found in Verse 5, which reads differently. Instead, the prefix *re* has been added to *natus*, making it read *renatus*, which means “reborn” or “born again.” This addition makes the phrase read, “born **again** of water and Spirit.” This phrase is not found in any of the Greek manuscripts, which universally read: γεννηθη ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος, correctly translated, “born of water and of spirit.” Moreover, the Greek word ἀνωθεν *anōthen* “again” or “anew,” found in the Greek text in Verse 3, is not found in Verse 5.

Since the Greek word ἀνωθεν *anōthen* does not appear in Verse 5 in any Greek manuscript, the Latin text is not an accurate translation from the Greek. Also, the addition of the prefix *re* to *natus* changes the entire meaning of Verse 5. It is likely that these changes were made in order to substantiate the mistaken belief that when one is baptized, one is “**reborn** of water,” or “born **again** of water.” From this doctrine the practice of infant baptism was developed.

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Coverdale’s Latin and English New Testament: In 1538, Miles Coverdale published a side-by-side Latin Vulgate and English version of the New Testament. The Latin Vulgate he used in his day is different from the Latin Vulgate of today. The following is John 3:3-5 in Coverdale’s Latin Vulgate and his English translation printed in Southwarke, England by James Nicolson in 1538:

3. *Respondit IESVS, et dixit ei: amen amen dico tibi nisi quis **renatus** fuerit **denuo** non potest uidere regnum Dei*

3. Jesus answered, and said unto him: “Verily, verily I say unto you, without [unless] a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

4. *Dicit ad eum Nicodemus: quomodo potest homo **renasci** cum sit senex nunquid potest in uetrem matris suae iterato introire & **renasci***

4. Nicodemus says to him, “How can a man be **reborn** already being old? Can he enter into his own mother’s belly again and be **reborn**?”

5. *Respondit IESVS: amen amen dico tibi nisi quis **renatus** fuerit **ex aqua** et Spiritu non potest introire in regnum Dei*

5. Jesus answered: “Verily, verily I say unto you, without [unless] a man be **born again of water** and the holy ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

From Coverdale’s Latin-English version, it is clear that the Latin Vulgate of his day had *renatus* and *renasci*, making it read “reborn” or “born again” in Verses 3, 4 and 5. Likewise, he translated the Latin *renatus* and *renasci* as “born again” in Verses 3, 4 and 5 in his English rendition; whereas, today’s Latin Vulgate has *renatus* only in Verse 5. Therefore, all the evidence from the Latin Vulgate and the English translations makes it apparent that John 3:3, 4 and 5 was altered to support the false doctrine that one is born again at baptism.

Erasmus’ Greek-Latin Version of 1535: With his final version of the Greek Text, Erasmo Roterodamo (Erasmus of Rotterdam) translated the Byzantine Greek into Latin. His purpose was to provide a new uncorrupted Latin version of the New Testament. In his translation, he did not incorporate the mistranslations and deliberate errors of the Latin Vulgate into his Latin translation. Erasmus’ Latin translation from the Greek, with an English translation provided, is as follows:

3. *Respondit Iesus, et dixit ei amen ame dico tibi nisi quis **natus** fuerit **esupernis** non potest videre regnum Dei*

3. Jesus responded and said to him, “Amen, amen, I say to you unless anyone be **born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

4. *Dicit ad eum Nicodemus: Quomodo potest homo **nasci** cum sit senex? Num potest in uentrem matris suae iterato introire, ac **nasci**?*

4. Nicodemus says to him, “How can a man be **born** already being old? Can he enter into his mother’s womb again and be **born**?”

5. *Respondit Iesus amen amen dico tibi nisi quis **natus** fuerit **ex aqua** et Spiritu non potest introire in regnum Dei*

5. Jesus answered, “Amen, amen, I say to you unless one is **born of water** and Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

Erasmus’ Latin translation from the Greek is correct. In Verse 5, he translated the Greek word γεννηθη *gennethe* as *natus*, “born” of water, not as the Vulgate *renatus*, “born again” of water. Erasmus’ translation reveals that the Latin Vulgate was deliberately corrupted.

How Did It All Begin?

How did the false interpretation and teaching of John 3:5 develop into a deliberate mistranslation as found in the Latin Vulgate? The seeds of this teaching are rooted in one of the heresies that the apostle Paul had to address when he wrote to the Corinthians in 56 AD. Some within the Corinthian congregations were claiming that there was no resurrection of the dead, reflecting the pagan belief in the immortality of the soul. To counter this outrageous claim, Paul wrote: **“But if Christ is being preached, that He rose from the dead, how is it that some among you are saying that there is no resurrection of the dead? For if there is no resurrection from the dead, neither has Christ been raised.** And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching *is* in vain, and your faith *is* also in vain. And we are also found *to be* false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised Christ, Whom He did not raise, if indeed *the* dead are not raised.

“For if *the* dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised. But if Christ has not been raised, your faith *is* vain; you are still in your sins, and those who have fallen asleep in Christ have then perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most miserable. But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead; He has become the firstfruit of those who have fallen asleep” (I Cor. 15:12-20).

The apostles were witnesses that Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead, which is the whole foundation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Moreover, the Old and New Testaments teach about a resurrection of the dead, which will take place when Jesus Christ returns and establishes the kingdom of God on earth. At that time, the resurrected saints will reign with Him as kings and priests (Dan. 12:2-3; Rev. 5:9-10; 20:6).

While rejecting the truth of the resurrection of the dead, false teachers assumed the Babylonian antiscritptural belief in the immortality of the soul. To this day, many, if not most, within Christendom are taught that at death the soul goes to heaven for doing good or to purgatory or hell for committing various degrees of evil.

The Bible does not teach the immortality of the soul; rather, it reveals, “The soul that sins, it shall die” (Ezk. 18:4, 20). Neither does the Bible teach that when one dies, the soul goes to heaven or hell. Rather, it clearly shows that when one dies, he or she awaits the resurrection of the dead—both of the righteous and the wicked (Dan. 12:2; John 5:25-29; I Cor. 15; Rev. 20:14-15; 21:8).

The belief in the immortality of the soul fueled the doctrine of infant baptism, for if an infant were to die what would happen to its soul? Therefore, this belief necessitated baptism or christening to remove the “stain of original sin” so that if the infant died, its soul would go to heaven; if the infant lived to adulthood, salvation and heaven was assured. From *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, there is this entry on infant baptism: “Although from the first, baptism was the universal means of entry into the Christian community, the NT contains no specific authority for its administration to infants. But by a tradition at least as old as the 3rd cent., and virtually universal until the Reformation, children born to Christian parents have been baptized in infancy. In the 16th cent. this practice (pseudobaptism) was rejected by the Anabaptists and since the early 17th cent. also by the Baptists and later by the Disciples of Christ.

“Ireneaus (*Haer.*, ii. 33) speaks of Christ as ‘giving salvation to those of every age’... who are ‘regenerated’ ... through Him, and expressly includes ‘infants and little children’ ... among these. Explicit statements concerning infant baptism are made by Origen, who refers to it as an established custom, which the Church has received from the Apostles (*Hom. In Lev.*, viii. 4, *Comm. in Rom.*, v. 9). In both passages he finds the practice justified by the need which infants, no less than adults, have for liberation from original sin. Opposition to infant baptism (implying the prior existence of the practice) is voiced by Tertullian, who urges (*De Bapt.*, 18) that the baptism of children be deferred (despite Mt. 19. 14) until they can ‘know Christ’. This advocacy of delaying baptism for infants, as well as spiritually immature adults, appears to spring from Tertullian’s ideas of the impossibility or great diffi-

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culty of the remission of post-baptismal sin. Such considerations led to a widespread deferment of baptism in the 4th cent., e.g. in the cases of Constantine and of St. Augustine.... On the other hand, by the middle of the 3rd cent. infant baptism was regularly performed, as is attested by Cyprian (*Ep.* 64), where it is stated to convey remission not only of actual sins but also of original sin. From then onwards evidence for the practice is ample” (*The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, p. 701).

“In defending the propriety of Infant Baptism against the Pelagians, he [Augustine] also maintained that one of the chief effects of the Sacrament was the removal of the stain of Original Sin on the soul which bars even the new-born child from the Kingdom of Heaven [i.e., its immortal soul going to heaven], thereby developing earlier teaching from NT times, acc. to which the remission of Actual Sins, the infusion of grace, and the incorporation into the Church had been generally recognized as results of Baptism” (Ibid., p. 127).

Quotations from the Early Latin Church Fathers

In rejecting the simultaneity of the resurrection of the dead and being born again and accepting the belief in the immortality of the soul, the early Latin Church fathers thus changed the meaning of when one is born again to apply to one’s baptism. The following statements reveal that this false doctrine was formalized within fifty years after the apostolic age ended with the death of John in 98-100 AD.

St. Justin Martyr (inter 148-155 AD): “Whoever is convinced and believes that what they are taught and told by us is the truth, and professes to be able to live accordingly, is instructed to pray and to beseech God in fasting for the remission of their former sins, while we pray and fast with them. Then they are led by us to a place where there is water; and there they are reborn in the same kind of rebirth in which we ourselves were reborn: In the name of God, the Lord and Father of all, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they receive the washing with water. For Christ said, ‘**Unless you be reborn**, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.’ ... The reason for doing this, we have learned from the Apostles” (*The First Apology* 61). Since the apostles of Jesus Christ never taught infant baptism, they never learned it from them. It is more likely that they were taught it by various false apostles, who were active even during Paul’s ministry (II Cor. 11:13-15).

St. Irenaeus (c. 190 AD): “And [Naaman] dipped himself ... seven times in the Jordan” [2 Kings 5:14]. It was not for nothing that Naaman of old, when suffering from leprosy, was purified upon his being baptized, but [this served] as an indication to us. For as we are lepers in sin, we are made clean, by means of the **sacred water** and the invocation of the Lord, from our old transgressions, being spiritually regenerated as new-born babes, even as the Lord has declared: ‘Except a man be **born again** [*renatus*] **through water** and the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Fragment 34).

Recognitions of Clement (c. 221 AD): “But you will perhaps say, ‘What does the baptism of water contribute toward the worship of God?’ In the first place, because that which has pleased God is fulfilled. In the second place, because when you are **regenerated and born again of water** and of God, the frailty of your former birth, which you have through men, is cut off, and so ... you shall be able to attain salvation; but otherwise it is impossible. For thus has the true Prophet [Jesus] testified to us with an oath: “Verily, I say to you, that unless a man is **born again** [*renatus*] **of water** ... he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” ’ ” (*Recognitions* 6:9).

St. Cyprian of Carthage (c. 200-258 AD): “But afterwards, when the stain of my past life had been **washed away by means of the water of re-birth**, a light from above poured itself upon my chastened and now pure heart; afterwards through the Spirit which is breathed from heaven, **a second birth made of me a new man**.... Thus it had to be acknowledged that what was of the earth and was born of the flesh and had lived submissive to sins, had now begun to be of God, inasmuch as the Holy Spirit was animating it. (*To*

Donatus 4).

"[When] they receive also the Baptism of the Church ... then finally can they be fully sanctified and be the sons of God ... since it is written, 'Except a man be **born again** [*renatus*] **of water** and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God' " (*Letters* 71 [72]:1).

Seventh Council of Carthage (c. 256 AD): "And in the gospel our Lord Jesus Christ spoke with his divine voice, saying, 'Except a man be **born again** [*renatus*] **of water** and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.' ...Unless therefore they receive saving Baptism in the Catholic Church, which is one, they cannot be saved, but will be condemned with the carnal in the judgment of the Lord Christ."

St. Ambrose of Milan (c. 333-397 AD): "The Church was redeemed at the price of Christ's blood. Jew or Greek, it makes no difference; but if he has believed, he must circumcise himself from his sins [in Baptism—Col. 2:11-13] so that he can be saved ... for no one ascends into the kingdom of heaven except through the sacrament of Baptism.... 'Unless a man be **born again** [*renatus*] **of water** and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.' (*On Abraham* 2:11:79, 84)" (*This Rock* magazine, excerpts from August 1992 and October 1994).

From these quotes it is evident that the early Latin Church fathers had a corrupted Latin translation with the altered text of John 3:5, reading *renatus* instead of *natus*. Later, Jerome, who translated the Scriptures into Latin (383 AD), also retained the altered version of *renatus* and *renasci* in verses 3, 4 and 5, as evidenced by the Latin Vulgate of Coverdale's day—1538 AD.

A Comparison of Other Early English Translations of John 3:3, 5

William Tyndale, a Bible scholar and the first man to translate the New Testament from the Greek into English, translated John 3:3, 5 correctly. However, in his other writings, he taught that when one is converted and receives the Holy Spirit, one has been born again. Perhaps he carried this misunderstanding from the Latin Vulgate into his theology, while rendering the correct translation of "born again" and "born anew" in John 3.

Tyndale rendered the Greek words γενναω ανωθεν *gennao anothen* in John 3:3 as "born from above" and "born anew." The Greek word γενναω *gennao* means: Of a man, "to beget, to become a father"; of a woman, "to conceive, to bear." In some cases, according to the context, *gennao* does mean "born." However, *gennao* predominantly means "begotten" rather than "born." The Greek word *anothen*, means: "from above, again, anew" (Arndt & Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*).

From *The English Hexapla* (1841) we can compare Tyndale's translation of the critical verses in John 3 with five other English translations. It is evident that other translators also had problems interpreting *gennao* and *gennao anothen*. The following four versions were translated into English from the Greek text:

- 1) Tyndale 1534: "born anew," verse 3; "born again," verses 4, 7; "born," verses 4, 5, and 6.
- 2) Great Bible, Cramner 1539: "born from above," verses 3, 7; "born again," verse 4; "born," verses 4, 5, and 6.
- 3) Geneva 1557: "begotten again," verses 3, 7; "begotten," verses 4, 5 and 6.
- 4) KJV 1611: "born again," verses 3, 7; "born," verses 4, 5 and 6.

The translators of the 1557 Geneva Bible translated *gennao* as "begotten." In many instances, "begotten" is a correct translation of *gennao*. However, in John 3 "begotten" is an **incorrect** rendering. The translators of the 1599 Geneva Bible corrected this error to make it read "born" instead of "begotten."

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The following two versions were translated from the Latin Vulgate into English:

1) Wycliffe 1380: “born again,” verses 3, 7; “born” verses, 4, 6, and 7; “born **again** of water,” verse 5.

2) Rheims 1582: “born again,” verses 3, 7; “born,” verses, 4, 6, and 7; “born **again** of water,” verse 5.

It is reported that it was Wycliffe who coined the English phrase “born again,” but both Wycliffe and the translators of the Rheims version used the Latin Vulgate for their English versions.

The True Scriptural Meaning of “Born Again”

In order to fully comprehend the true Scriptural meaning of when one is born again, Jesus’ teachings in John 3:1-12 must be examined. The context of these verses proves that being born again does not mean a conversion or baptismal experience. Rather, it means a literal transformation from flesh to spirit: “Now there was a man of the Pharisees, Nicodemus by name, a ruler of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to Him, ‘Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher Who has come from God; because no one is able to do the miracles that You are doing, unless God is with him.’”

“Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, **unless anyone is born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can a man who is old be born? Can he enter his mother’s womb a second time and be born?’ Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, **unless anyone has been born of water and of Spirit**, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which has been **born of the flesh is flesh**; and that which has been **born of the Spirit is spirit**. Do not be amazed that I said to you, “It is necessary for you to be born again.” **The wind blows where it will**, and you hear its sound, but you do not know *the place* from which it comes and *the place* to which it goes; **so also is everyone who has been born of the Spirit.**’”

“Nicodemus answered and said to Him, ‘How can these things be?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘You are a teacher of Israel, and you do not know these things? Truly, truly I say to you, We speak that which We know, and We testify of that which We have seen; but you do not receive Our testimony. If I have told you earthly things, and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?’” (John 3:1-12).

It is clear that Jesus was not talking about a conversion or baptismal experience in this dialogue. Rather, he was comparing one’s physical birth—a fleshly existence—to that of being born anew or born again—an actual spiritual existence. Jesus describes two births: one of water and one of the spirit, “unless a man has been **born of water and of Spirit ...**” Next, Jesus shows the comparison between a birth of flesh and a birth of the spirit: “That which has been **born of the flesh is flesh**; and that which has been **born of the Spirit is spirit.**”

Physical Birth: When a human being is born, he or she is born of flesh—a physical being. Further, every human being has been “born of water” from the womb. **The one that has been born of water has been born of the flesh and is flesh.**

Spiritual Birth: Nicodemus missed the point when Jesus referred to a new or second birth of the Spirit: “**unless a man has been born ... of Spirit.**” What kind of existence does one have who has been born of the Spirit? Jesus answered that question when He said, “... that which has been **born of the Spirit is spirit.**” Jesus clearly meant that anyone who has been born of the Spirit is, in fact, a spirit being. The new, spiritual birth means that one who has been born again is a spirit being, no longer composed of human flesh. Since one who “has been born of the flesh is flesh,” then it follows, as Jesus said, “that which has been born of the Spirit is spirit.”

Every human is limited by fleshly existence and physical environment. However, as a spirit being, one is not bound by the flesh or limited by the physical realm. Jesus stated

that one who “has been born of the Spirit” cannot necessarily be seen, just as the wind cannot be seen: “**The wind blows where it wills**, and you hear its sound, but you do not know the *place* from which it comes and *the place* to which it goes; **so also is everyone who has been born of the Spirit**” (Verse 8). Therefore, one who has been “born again,” “born of the Spirit,” must be invisible to the human eye, having the ability to come and go as the wind. That is hardly the case of one who has been baptized and converted; he or she is still in the flesh and is limited by the flesh—subject to death. Jesus said that a fleshly human being “cannot see” or “enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:3, 5). Paul reiterated this when he emphatically stated: “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* kingdom of God” (I Cor. 15:50).

When Is One Actually Born Again? Since one is not born again at baptism or conversion, when is one literally born again, or born anew? It is through the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that the New Testament reveals when a person is born again. Matthew wrote that Jesus was the “firstborn” of the Virgin Mary (Matt. 1:25). Jesus’ human birth was by water. He was flesh (I John 4:1-2) as any other human being, but He was “God manifested in the flesh” (I Tim. 3:16).

When Jesus was resurrected from the dead by the glory of the Father, He was the “firstborn from the dead.” Therefore, Jesus was born again—born of the Spirit—at the time He was resurrected from the dead, exactly as He told Nicodemus, “That which has been born of the Spirit is spirit.”

-The apostle Paul clearly showed that Jesus was born again when he wrote: “Because by Him were all things created, the things in heaven and the things on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him. And He is before all, and by Him all things subsist. And He is the Head of the body, the church; **Who is the beginning, the firstborn from among the dead**, so that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence. For it pleased *the Father* that in Him all the fullness should dwell” (Col. 1:16-19). The apostle John also verified this when he wrote that **Jesus was “the firstborn from the dead”** (Rev. 1:5).

After His resurrection and ascension to heaven to be accepted by God the Father as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world, Jesus returned to the earth and appeared to the apostles who were assembled together in a room behind closed doors. Since a spirit being is not limited by the physical realm, the resurrected Jesus walked through doors and walls, suddenly appearing to the apostles and disciples: “Afterwards, as evening was drawing near that day, the first *day* of the weeks, and the doors were shut where the disciples had assembled for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, ‘Peace *be* to you.’ And after saying this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples rejoiced, *because they had seen the Lord*” (John 20:19-20).

As a spirit being, Jesus also had the ability to manifest Himself in human form, which He did when He walked with the two disciples to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-31). Furthermore, Jesus was able to restrain their eyes, so they did not realize that it was He, until He broke and blessed the bread. Then He immediately disappeared. This account shows that as one born again—born of the Spirit—Jesus was like the wind, as He had said to Nicodemus. He went where He wanted to go, and no one could see Him, unless He made it possible for them to see Him by manifesting Himself as a man with flesh and bone.

After Jesus disappeared, the two disciples went back to Jerusalem: “And they rose up that very hour *and* returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and those with them assembled together, saying, ‘In truth, the Lord has risen! And He has appeared to Simon.’ Then they related the things that had happened *to them* on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

“Now as they were telling these things, **Jesus Himself** [suddenly appearing] **stood in their midst** and said to them, ‘Peace *be* to you.’ But they were terrified and filled with fear, thinking *that* they beheld a spirit [a demon]. Then He said to them, ‘Why are you troubled? And why do doubts come up in your hearts? See My hands and My feet, that it is I. Touch

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Me and see *for yourselves*; for a spirit [a demon] does not have flesh and bones, as you see Me having.’ And after saying this, He showed them *His* hands and *His* feet. But while they were still disbelieving and wondering for joy, He said to them, ‘Do you have anything here to eat?’ Then they gave Him part of a broiled fish and a *piece* of honeycomb. And He took these *and* ate in their presence” (Luke 24:33-43).

As a divine spirit being, the firstborn from the dead, Jesus was able to manifest Himself as a man. A demon spirit may at times be able to manifest itself as an apparition to human beings, but it is not able to manifest itself with flesh and bone. It is little wonder that the disciples were afraid when Jesus first appeared to them.

What the Glorified Christ Looks Like: When Jesus began to give the apostle John visions for the book of Revelation, He revealed to John how He appeared in His full glory, as a spirit being: “I was in *the* Spirit on the day of the Lord; and I heard a loud voice like a trumpet behind me, saying, ‘**I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last**’; and, ‘What you see, write in a book, and send *it* to the churches that *are* in Asia: to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamos, and to Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.’ And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands; and in *the* midst of the seven lampstands *one* like ***the Son of man***, clothed in *a garment* reaching to the feet, and girded about the chest with a golden breastplate. And His head and hair *were* like white wool, white as snow; and His eyes *were* like a flame of fire; and His feet *were* like fine brass, as if *they* glowed in a furnace; and His voice *was* like *the*-sound of many waters. And in His right hand He had seven stars, and a sharp two-edged sword went out of His mouth, and His countenance *was* as the sun shining in its *full* power [Matt 17:2]. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as if dead; but He laid His right hand upon me, saying to me, ‘Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last, even the one Who is living; for I was dead, and behold, I am alive into the ages of eternity. Amen’ (Rev. 1:10-18).

Jesus Christ Is the Firstborn Among Many Brethren to Be Resurrected at His Coming

Not only is Jesus Christ the firstborn from the dead, He is also the “firstborn among many brethren” (Rom 8:29). The true body of believers is called “the church of the firstborn,” as Paul wrote: “But you have come to Mount Sion, and to *the* city of *the* living God, heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; *to the* joyous festival gathering; and to ***the church of the firstborn***, registered in *the book of life* in heaven; and to God, *the* Judge of all” (Heb. 12:22-23). It is called the church of the firstborn because believers will be resurrected, or born again—born of the Spirit—in the first resurrection when Jesus returns (Rev. 20:4-6).

Christ the Firstfruit: Paul wrote that the resurrected Jesus Christ is also called “the firstfruit” of those raised from the dead. Furthermore, he explained that the rest of the true Christians would be resurrected at Jesus’ second coming: “But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead; He has become **the firstfruit** of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man *came* death, by man also *came the* resurrection of *the* dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ ***the firstfruit***; **then, those who are Christ’s at His coming**” (I Cor. 15:20-23).

The apostle James, the brother of the Lord, referred to true Christians as “firstfruits” unto God: “Do not deceive yourselves, my beloved brethren. Every good act of giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with Whom there is no variation, nor shadow of turning. According to His own will, He begat us by *the* Word of truth, that **we might be a kind of firstfruits** of all His created beings” (Jas. 1:16-18).

Jesus taught His disciples that the harvest of the firstfruits would be at the end of the age when He returns, as He explained in the parable of the wheat and tares: “And He answered *and* said to them, ‘The one Who sows the good seed is the Son of man; **and the field**

is the world; and the good seed, these are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*. Now the enemy who sowed them is the devil; and **the harvest is *the* end of the age**, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore, as the tares are gathered and consumed in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this age. The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all the offenders and those who are practicing lawlessness; and they shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. **Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun** [glorified spirit beings, who are born again of the Spirit at the first resurrection] in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:37-43).

From these scriptures it is clear that one's soul does not go to heaven, purgatory or hell when one dies but after death awaits the resurrection. No one has ascended to heaven except Jesus (John 3:13; Acts 2:22-24), Who is at the right hand of God the Father to intercede as High Priest (Heb. 4:14-16; I John 2:1-2). At the appointed time Jesus Christ will return to the earth, and the resurrection of the saints will occur at His coming.

Because some in Corinth claimed that there was no resurrection from the dead, the apostle Paul wrote in great detail about it. He presented overwhelming evidence of the resurrection and proved the souls of dead people do not go to heaven, purgatory or hell when they die: "Nevertheless, someone will say, 'How are the dead raised? And with what body do they come?' Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body that shall be; rather, *it is* bare grain—it may be of wheat, or one of the other *grains*; and God gives it a body according to His will, and to each of the seeds its own body.

"*Likewise*, not all flesh *is* the same flesh. Rather, *there is* one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another of fish, and another of birds. And *there are* heavenly bodies, and earthly bodies; but the glory of *the* heavenly *is* different, and the *glory* of the earthly *is* different. *There is* one glory of *the* sun, and another glory of *the* moon, and another glory of *the* stars; for *one* star differs from *another* star in glory. So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.

"It is sown **a natural body** [that which has been born of the flesh is flesh]; it is raised **a spiritual body** [that which has been born of the spirit is spirit]. **There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body**; accordingly, it is written, 'The first man, Adam, became a living soul; the last Adam *became* an ever-living Spirit.' However, **the spiritual was not first, but the natural—then the spiritual**" (I Cor. 15:35-46).

These scriptures reveal that at the resurrection one will be born again of the spirit and receive a glorious spirit body, shining as the sun. Paul continued his explanation of the resurrection of the dead in verses 47-55: "The first man *is* of the earth—made of dust. The second man *is* the Lord from heaven. As *is* the one made of dust, so also *are all* those who are made of dust; and as *is* the heavenly *one*, so also *are all* those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the *one* made of dust, **we shall also bear the image of the heavenly one** [at the resurrection].

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep, but **we shall all be changed** [born again of the Spirit], in an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and **the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed**. For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility, and this mortal must put on immortality. **Now when this corruptible shall have put on incorruptibility, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."**

It is evident that the resurrection of the saints has not yet occurred. All who have died in the faith will be resurrected as immortal spirit beings. But, when will the resurrection occur?

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When Are the Saints Resurrected?

The prophet Isaiah foretold the day of the first resurrection for those who are Christ's. He prophesied that it would be the birth of a nation out of the earth. At that time the saints would be born again, born of the Spirit: “Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such a thing? **Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day?** Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children” (Isa. 66:8, KJV). The apostle Peter called Christians a royal priesthood and a holy nation: “But you *are* a chosen stock, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for a possession of *God*...” (I Pet. 2:9). When the first resurrection occurs, a holy nation of kings and priests will be born in one day, and they will rule and reign with Jesus Christ for a thousand years (Rev. 20:4-6) and live forever.

In his first epistle to the Thessalonians in 50 AD, Paul explained that the resurrection of the saints would not take place until the return of Jesus Christ to the earth: “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in exactly the same way also, those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him [because they will ascend into the air to meet Him in the clouds]. For this we say to you by *the* Word of *the* Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede those who have fallen asleep; because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with *a* shout of command, with *the* voice of an archangel and with *the* trumpet of God; and **the dead in Christ shall rise first** [born again of the Spirit]; **then we who are alive and remain** [will be changed and] **shall be caught up together with them in the clouds for the meeting with the Lord in the air**; and so shall we always be with *the* Lord” (I Thes. 4:14-18).

Jesus Christ also taught that the resurrection of the saints would occur when He returned to earth: “For as the light of day, which comes forth from *the* east and shines as far as *the* west, so also **shall the coming of the Son of man be**....But immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And **He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet; and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds** [from around the world and bring them up in the air to meet Christ] **from one end of heaven to the other**” (Matt. 24:27, 29-31).

Revelation 15 shows that the resurrected saints will meet Jesus Christ in the air, in the clouds, and stand on the sea of glass: “Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and awesome: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is filled up. **And I saw a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they were singing the song of Moses, the servant of God** [symbolizing the righteous prophets and kings who were saved], **and the song of the Lamb** [symbolizing those who were saved from Christ's first coming until the resurrection], saying, ‘Great and awesome *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty; righteous and true *are* Your ways, King of the saints. Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For *You* only *are* holy; and all the nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been revealed’ ” (Rev. 15:1-4).

After the pouring out of the seven last plagues and God's judgment against Babylon the Great (Rev. 16, 18), the glorified saints will return with Jesus Christ to the earth: “And I saw heaven open; and behold, a white horse; and He Who sat on it *is* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He does judge and make war. And His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns; *and* He had a name written that no one knows except Him. And *He* was clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and **His name is The Word of God**. And the armies in heaven [the resurrected faithful who were raised to meet Christ in the air on the sea of glass] were following Him on white horses; *and* they were clothed in fine linen, white and pure [which is the righteousness of the saints]. And out of His mouth

goes a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He shall shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury and the wrath of the Almighty God. And on *His* garment and on His thigh He has a name written: **King of kings and Lord of lords.**

“Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in *the* midst of heaven, ‘Come and gather yourselves together to the supper of the great God; so that you may eat *the* flesh of kings, and *the* flesh of chief captains, and *the* flesh of mighty men, and *the* flesh of horses, and of those who sit on them, and *the* flesh of all, free and bond, and small and great.’ And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered together to make war with Him Who sits on the horse, and with His army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet who worked miracles in his presence, by which he had deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. Those two were cast alive into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone; and the rest were killed by the sword of Him Who sits on the horse, *even the sword* that goes out of His mouth; and all the birds were filled with their flesh” (Rev. 19:11-21).

With the destruction of the Beast and the false prophet and their armies, Jesus Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords, will return to the earth in great power and glory. In that day, he will once again place His feet on the Mount of Olives from where He ascended into heaven as the apostles watched, nearly two thousand years ago: “And after saying these things, *as* they were looking at *Him*, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. Now while they were gazing intently up into heaven as He was going up, two men in white apparel suddenly stood by them, who also said, ‘You men of Galilee, why do you stand *here* looking up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, Who was taken up from you into heaven, shall come in exactly the same manner as you have seen Him go into heaven.’ Then they returned to Jerusalem from *the mountain* called Mount of Olives, which is near Jerusalem (Acts 1:9-12).

Just as Jesus ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives, the prophet Zechariah foretold that He would descend from heaven with all the saints to war against all the nations gathered at Jerusalem: “Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. **Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations,** as when he fought in the day of battle.

“**And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives,** which *is* before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, *and there shall be* a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee *to* the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: **and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.** And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the light shall not be clear, *nor* dark: but it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, *that* at evening time it shall be light. And it shall be in that day, *that* living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. **And the LORD shall be king over all the earth:** in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one” (Zech. 14:1-9).

In summary, all the scriptural evidence presented clearly reveals that one is not “born again, born of the Spirit” until the resurrection at the return of Jesus Christ. Being born again has nothing to do with baptism or conversion. When one has been born again, he or she will be a spirit being—composed of spirit. The resurrected saints will inherit the glory of Jesus Christ, Who will transform their bodies to be like His glorified body: “But for us, the commonwealth *of God* exists in *the* heavens, from where also we are waiting for *the* Savior, *the* Lord Jesus Christ; **Who will transform our vile bodies, that they may be conformed to His glorious body,** according to the inner working of His own power, *whereby He is able* to subdue all things to Himself” (Phil. 3:20-21).

This is the true meaning of “born again.”

Appendix M

What Does It Mean to Be “Born of God”?

There is great confusion about what it means to be “born again,” and similarly, “born of God.” In John 3:2-12 Jesus taught that to be born again literally means to be born of the Spirit, to become a spirit being, which will take place at the first resurrection when Jesus Christ returns. Jesus Christ is the firstborn from the dead. No one else has been resurrected to eternal life—no one has been born again. In addition, the phrase “born of God” is the result of two mistranslated Greek words, the result of the misinterpretation that one is born again when converted.

A Mistranslation of I John 3:9

The faulty translation of two Greek words in I John 3:9 in the KJV, as well as in other versions, is at the heart of the problem. The KJV reads: “Whosoever is **born** of God **doth not commit** sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and **he cannot sin**, because he is **born** of God.” This verse as translated presents irreconcilable contradictions with other verses within the Epistle of First John, as well as the rest of the New Testament.

Contrary to this incorrect translation, John wrote that Christians who have the Holy Spirit do indeed sin, and they need to confess their sins to Jesus Christ for forgiveness: “However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from every sin**. If we **say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves**, and the truth is not in us. If we **confess our own sins**, He is faithful and righteous, to **forgive us our sins**, and to **cleanse us from all unrighteousness**. If we **say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar**, and His Word is not in us. My little children, **I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin**. And **yet, if anyone does sin**, we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous; and He is *the* **propitiation for our sins**; and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*” (I John 1:7-10; 2:1-2).

In the same epistle, John wrote that if anyone should see a brother sin a sin not unto death [a sin that is repentable], he should pray for that brother, and God would give him life; that is, God would grant him forgiveness: “**If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin that is not unto death, he shall ask, and He will give him life for those who do not sin unto death**. There is a sin unto death; concerning that *sin*, I do not say that he should make *any* supplication *to God*. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death” (I John 5:16-17).

Listed below are phrases that John wrote in the first, second and fifth chapters of his first epistle, which directly contradict I John 3:9 in the KJV, “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God.” The following verses cannot be reconciled:

I John 1:7-10; 2:1-2 and 5:16-17:

- 1) The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from every sin
- 2) If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves
- 3) If we confess our own sins ... to forgive us our sins
- 4) He cleanses us from all unrighteousness
- 5) If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar
- 6) I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin
- 7) Yet, if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ
- 8) He is the propitiation for our sins
- 9) Not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*

- 10) If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *that is* not unto death, he shall ask
- 11) He will give life for those who do not sin unto death
- 12) There is a sin unto death
- 13) All unrighteousness is sin
- 14) There is a sin not unto death

It would be completely incongruous for John to write in the first and last part of his short epistle about how converted brethren do sin and need forgiveness, and at the same time to write in I John 3:9 that one who has been “born of God doth not commit sin” and “he cannot sin.” Since the Scriptures cannot contradict one another, what is the solution?

Two Mistranslated Words in I John 3:9: Only Jesus Christ has been born again by the resurrection from the dead. No one else will be born again by the resurrection from the dead until Jesus Christ’s Second Coming. Furthermore, Verse 9 as translated in the KJV does not apply to Jesus Christ and cannot apply to Christians because none of them have been resurrected from the dead. A further examination of this verse reveals two incorrectly translated Greek words.

“Born of God”: The first mistranslated word is found in the phrase “**born** of God.” The word “born” is translated from the Greek verb γενναω *gennao*. In the KJV, *gennao* has been translated as “beget, begat” or “begotten” 55 times; as “born,” 37 times; and as “conceive, bear, brought forth, deliver,” or “gender” 4 times. The contexts of the Scriptures determine whether *gennao* should be translated “begotten” or “born” (Wigram, *Englishman’s Greek Concordance of the New Testament*).

In the genealogical table of Jesus Christ’s physical lineage, *gennao* is used 42 times and has been correctly translated “begat” because the lineage is reckoned from the father, who begets the son. In these verses, it would have been incorrect to translate *gennao* as “born” because fathers do not give birth; they “beget.” Conversely, in Matthew 1:20 in reference to the Virgin Mary’s pregnancy by the power of the Holy Spirit, *gennao* has been translated in the KJV as “conceived,” with a marginal note reading “begotten”: “But while he [Joseph] thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which **is conceived** [begotten] in her is of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 1:20). A more accurate translation of this verse would read: “But as he pondered these things, behold, an angel of *the* Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary to *be* your wife, because that which **has been begotten** in her is of *the* Holy Spirit.’ ”

Luke also used the verb *gennao* in his account of the angel Gabriel’s announcement to Mary. Luke 1:35 in the KJV reads: “And the angel answered and said unto her, ‘The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that **holy thing which shall be born** of thee shall be called the Son of God.’ ” In this phrase, *gennao* is not in the future tense. Rather, it is in the present tense, passive participle, singular neuter γεννωμενον *gennomenon*. This would more correctly be translated as follows: “And the angel answered *and* said to her, ‘*The* Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and *the* power of *the* Highest shall overshadow you; and for this reason, **the Holy One being begotten** in you shall be called *the* Son of God.’ ” The use of the present passive tense participle means that while the angel Gabriel was speaking these words to Mary, God the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit was impregnating her. Therefore, it is incorrect to translate this present tense participle as a future event, as found in the KJV. While it was true that a future birth would take place, that is not the literal meaning of *gennomenon*.

With this knowledge, the first part of I John 3:9 can also be corrected by simply translating *gennao* as “begotten,” instead of “born.” As a result, the correct rendering should read: “Everyone **who has been begotten** by God ...” The phrase “who has been begotten” is translated from the Greek participle γεγεννημενος *gegennemonos*, which is a perfect passive participle of the verb *gennao*. This participle means that the begetting had already taken place in a past time. As in human life, a begetting is not a birth. The begetting takes place first,

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then after the gestation period, the birth occurs.

“Doth Not Commit Sin”: The second phrase in I John 3:9 that has not been accurately translated in the KJV is: “doth not commit sin.” There is no question that a converted person does commit sin, but upon true repentance, through the grace of God and by the blood of Jesus Christ, those sins can be forgiven. The key to understanding this phrase is an accurate translation of the Greek verb *ποιει poiei*, translated “commit.” As used in Verse 9, *ποιει poiei* is a third person, singular, present tense form of the verb *ποιεω poieo*, which means: “to do, generally, i.e., habitually, to perform, to execute, to exercise, to practice, i.e., to pursue a course of action, to be active, to work ...” (Berry, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 81).

The context of John’s epistle is not about a Christian’s inability to commit sin. Therefore, *poiei* in this context means practicing in the habitual sense. When *poiei* in Verse 9 is rendered “does not practice sin,” the contradictions created by the KJV are removed. The correct translation of this portion of Verse 9 reads: “Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin.” This is a true statement and conveys the original meaning of the Greek. Furthermore, the meaning of *poiei* is retained in the second part of Verse 9 with reference to “cannot sin,” which should read, “cannot practice sin.” Consequently, the entire verse correctly translated should read: “Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin because His seed of begetting is dwelling within him, and he is not able to practice sin because he has been begotten by God.” This rendering harmonizes with the rest of John’s epistle and removes all contradictions.

The Conversion Experience and Process

Jesus said, “Many are called but few are chosen” (Matt. 22:14). Why are only few chosen? It is because the many do not respond to God’s calling. Although they hear the word, they do not yield to God. The few, who do respond, yield to God, and He begins to work with them. Jesus clearly showed this in the parable of the sower and the seed: “Therefore, hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the wicked one comes and snatches away that which was sown in his heart. This is the one who was sown by the way. Now the one who was sown upon the rocky places is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; but because he has no root in himself, he does not endure; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, he is quickly offended. And the one who was sown among the thorns is the one who hears the word, but the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. But the one who was sown on good ground, this is the one who hears the word and understands, who indeed brings forth fruit and produces—one a hundredfold, another sixtyfold and another thirtyfold” (Matt. 13:18-23).

As a person begins to answer the call, God the Father begins to draw him. Jesus said, “No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:44). The drawing of God the Father continues as long as the person continues to believe and obey the Word of God as they learn it. However, if at any time one refuses the calling and drawing of God, at some point, according to God’s determination, He does not continue to deal with that individual.

Repentance: The calling of God the Father and Jesus Christ goes out through the preaching of the Gospel and reading of the Word of God. Repentance is the first step toward responding to that call. Though it is the Holy Spirit of God that convicts and leads one to repentance (Rom. 2:4), one must choose to repent (Luke 13:1-5).

When Peter powerfully preached the Gospel, speaking of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, he made it clear to all those gathered at the temple in Jerusalem on Pentecost 30 AD that their sins crucified Jesus Christ. This moved thousands to repent and to be baptized: “Therefore, let all the house of Israel know with full assurance that God has made

this *same* Jesus, Whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.’ Now after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart; and they said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘**Repent and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.** For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all those who are afar off, as many as *the* Lord our God may call.’ And with many other words he earnestly testified and exhorted, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation.’ Then those who joyfully received his message were baptized; and about three thousand souls were added that day” (Acts 2:36-41). True godly repentance leads to conversion: “Therefore, repent and be converted in order that your sins may be blotted out, so that *the* times of refreshing may come from *the* presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19).

Baptism: The second step in responding to God’s call is water baptism. As Peter preached, the repentant believer is to be baptized. Baptism is by full immersion in water, signifying that the repentant believer is conjoined into the death of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. The apostle Paul wrote of the true meaning of baptism: “We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein? Or are you ignorant that we, **as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death?** Therefore, we were buried with Him by baptism into death; so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life.

“For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be *in the likeness of His* resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him* in order that the body of sin might be destroyed, so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin; because the one who has died *to sin* has been justified from sin. Now if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him [at the first resurrection], knowing that Christ, having been raised from *the* dead, dies no more; death no longer has any dominion over Him. For when He died, He died unto sin once for all; but in that He lives, He lives unto God. In the same way also, you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, **do not let sin rule in your mortal body** by obeying it in the lusts thereof. Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, yield yourselves to God **as those who are alive from the dead**, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God” (Rom. 6:2-13).

Those who have been baptized are dead to living in sin as a way of life. They are to walk in newness of life and are not to let sin rule in their “mortal” bodies but fight against it, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Jesus Christ (II Cor. 10:4-5). Since those who have been baptized still have **mortal bodies**, it is evident that they have not been born again as a spirit being. Rather, when they receive the Holy Spirit, they have been “begotten again”—God the Father’s “seed” lives in them.

Receiving the Holy Spirit: The third step in responding to God’s call is to receive the Holy Spirit, which comes after repentance and baptism. The apostle Peter said, “Repent and be baptized ... for the remission of sins and **you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**” The gift of the Holy Spirit is given by the laying on of hands (Acts 8:14-17; 19:5-6).

When one receives the Holy Spirit, he or she is begotten again and receives the “seed” of eternal life from God the Father. The apostle John wrote in I John 3:9, “Everyone who has been **begotten by God** does not practice sin because **His seed of begetting is dwelling within him**, and he is not able to *practice* sin because **he has been begotten by God.**” The Greek word for “seed” is σπέρμα *sperma*. This is the same word used in English for the seed of one’s natural father. The father’s sperm begets or impregnates the mother’s egg, and a new life is conceived—begotten, but not yet born. Likewise, when one receives the Holy Spirit, God the Father begets the repentant believer with His seed of eternal life and a new spiritual life is conceived—begotten, but not yet born. As long as the seed of eternal life from God the Father remains within, the believer will not habitually practice sin. God’s Spirit will convict of sin in heart and mind, leading him to repentance and restoration.

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The Parallels Between Physical and Spiritual Begetting

In the beginning when God created man He said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them: and God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth” (Gen. 1:26-28).

As recounted in the first chapter of Genesis, God blessed mankind with the ability to share in His creation by bringing children into the world—actually reproducing themselves—children made in their own image. He ordained that children would be the result of love and the one flesh union between husband and wife. Thus, the human family has grown great. Likewise, God is reproducing Himself in human beings through the spiritual process of conversion that begins with repentance, baptism and the begetting of the Holy Spirit—the seed of eternal life from God the Father. Those who are faithful to the end will be born again at the first resurrection into His spiritual family—recreated in His spiritual image to share His glory and live forever.

Sealed by the Holy Spirit

How is a person “sealed” with the Holy Spirit? God the Father begets the repentant believer with the seed of eternal life through the power of the Holy Spirit, which unites with the spirit of his or her mind and they are sealed. Paul explained that the begetting of the Holy Spirit is only the earnest of the inheritance of God: “*Yes, in Him, in Whom we also have obtained an inheritance, having been predestinated according to His purpose, Who is working out all things according to the counsel of His own will; that we might be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ; in Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory*” (Eph. 1:11-14). And again, “But He Who establishes us with you in Christ, and Who has anointed us, is God, Who has also sealed us and has given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts” (II Cor. 1:21-22).

Begotten Again: The apostle Peter also wrote of this new begetting: “The elect ... *Who have been chosen according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, by sanctification through the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us again unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us, who are being safeguarded by the power of God through faith, for salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time....For you have been begotten again, not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible seed, by the living Word of God, which remains forever*” (I Pet. 1:1-5, 23). In the scriptures cited, Peter used the Greek word *αναγενναω anagennao* which literally means “begotten again.”

What Peter wrote concerning being begotten again is exactly what the apostle John meant when he wrote two additional comments about being begotten of God: “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ **has been begotten by God; and everyone who loves Him Who begat also loves him who has been begotten by Him....We know that anyone who is begotten by God does not practice sin; for the one who has been begotten by God keeps himself by the power of God, and the wicked one does not touch him**” (I John 5:1, 18).

Salvation Is Creation

A newly begotten child in its mother's womb is the beginning of a new creation. During the nine-month gestation period, the newly conceived infant is continually fashioned according to the pattern of the genes and chromosomes inherited from its father and mother until it is fully developed. The infant must grow physically to full term in order to be born. In the same way, a newly begotten believer must also grow spiritually in order to be born again at the resurrection. A Christian's spiritual growth produces godly character as he or she is being spiritually recreated in the image of God the Father. It is imperative for each begotten Christian to "... be growing in *the* grace and *the* knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 3:18).

Through a loving spiritual relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ by daily prayer, Bible study, and walking in the commandments of God, one grows spiritually. This new spiritual creation is the work of God the Father and Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. The believer's spiritual growth is the result of the ongoing workmanship of God: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, so that no one may boast. **For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto the good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them**" (Eph. 2:8-10).

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Christian becomes a new person in the putting off-the old carnal sinful self and ways of living and being renewed in the spirit of his or her mind. Paul wrote that God is continually at work within the heart and mind of each one He has begotten with His Spirit: "Concerning your former conduct, [that] **you put off the old man**, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts; and that **you be renewed in the spirit of your mind**; and that **you put on the new man**, which according to God is **created in righteousness and holiness of the truth**" (Eph 4:22-24).

God is perfecting a marvelous new creation within each true Christian through the power of the Holy Spirit: "Therefore, **if anyone be in Christ, he is a new creation**; the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (II Cor. 5:17). Paul also likens what God is doing within each begotten Christian as having "Christ formed in you" (Gal. 4:19). He wrote that the saints were given understanding of "... the mystery that has been hidden from ages and from generations, but has now been revealed to His saints; to whom God did will to make known what *is* the riches of **the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory**" (Col. 1:26-27).

Although God the Father and Jesus Christ are doing the perfecting work, each newly begotten child of God must submit in loving obedience. Spiritual growth takes place in the heart and mind: "I exhort you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy *and* well pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service. Do not conform yourselves to this world, but be **transformed by the renewing of your mind** in order that you may prove what *is* well pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God" (Rom 12:1-2).

God continually renews the mind through the power of the Holy Spirit by writing His laws and commandments in our hearts: "And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said, 'This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days,' says *the* Lord: **I will give My laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds**' " (Heb. 10:15-16). This operation can be compared to an actual reprogramming of the Christian's heart and mind—the process of conversion.

True Christians who have been begotten again by the seed of eternal life from God the Father are thus being perfected. The old carnal mind and the body of sin must be put to death by the power of God's Holy Spirit: "Therefore, **put to death your members** which *are* on earth—sexual immorality, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil desires, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, among whom you also once walked, when you were living in these

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things. But now, you should also put off all *these* things: wrath, indignation, malice, blasphemy, *and* foul language from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, *seeing that* you have **put off the old man** together with his deeds, and have **put on the new man, who is being renewed in knowledge** according to *the* image of Him Who created him; where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian *nor* Scythian, slave *nor* free; but Christ *is* all things, and in all” (Col 3:5-11). And again, “For this reason, we do not lose heart; but if our outward man is being brought to decay, yet **the inward man is being renewed day by day**” (II Cor. 4:16).

In order to be overcomers, Christians must continually repent and confess their sins to God, asking for forgiveness through heartfelt prayer: “If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**” (I John 1:7-9).

As stated, God the Father and Jesus accomplish the purification and cleansing of the believer through the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus uses the Word of God to cleanse the whole church because “... Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; so that He might **sanctify it, having cleansed it with the washing of water by the Word**; that He might present it to Himself *as* the glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be holy and without blame” (Eph. 5:25-27). The “washing of water by the Word” is accomplished through daily Bible study and prayer, coupled with the renewing of the Spirit. Paul wrote of the conversion process and renewing of the Holy Spirit: “For we also were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving all kinds of lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful *and* hating one another. But when the graciousness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we practiced, but **according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration** [the washing of the water by the Word] **and the renewing of the Holy Spirit**, which He richly poured out upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior; so that, having been justified by His grace, **we would become heirs according to the hope of eternal life**” (Titus 3:3-7).

The results of the spiritual regeneration and renewal of a Christian’s mind is to have the laws and commandments of God written and inscribed upon the heart (Heb. 8:10; 10:16-17) and to grow in spiritual character to have the mind of Jesus Christ: “Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of *the* Spirit, if any *deep* inner affections and compassions, fulfill my joy, that you be of the same mind, having the same love, being joined together in soul, minding the one thing. *Let* nothing *be* done through contention or vainglory, but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself. Let each one look not *only* after his own things, but *let* each one also *consider* the things of others. **Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus**” (Phil. 2:1-5).

The Loving Correction of God: Through the circumstances of life, God the Father corrects all His begotten children. Just as children need to be corrected to learn the right way, so God corrects those whom He has received, so they may learn His way. Paul wrote: “And you have already forgotten the admonition that He addresses to you as to sons: ‘My son, do not despise *the* chastening of *the* Lord, nor grow weary of being reproved by Him; for whom *the* Lord loves He chastens, and He severely disciplines every son whom He receives.’ If you endure chastening, God is dealing with you as *a Father* with *His* sons. For who is the son whom *the* Father does not chasten? But if you are without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then you are bastards and not sons.

“Furthermore, we have had our fleshly fathers who chastened *us*, and we respected *them*; should we not all the more *willingly* be subject to the Father of spirits, and live *forever*? For in the first case, they chastened *us* for a few days in whatever way seemed good to them; but in the second case, He *chastens us* for *our own* benefit that we may be partakers of His holiness. **Now truly, no chastisement for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards it yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who**

have been exercised by it. Therefore, lift up the hands that are hanging down, and *revive* the weakened knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which *is* lame be turned aside; but let it rather be healed. Pursue peace with everyone, and sanctification, without which no one will see the Lord” (Heb. 12:5-14).

Correction is an important part of Christian growth and overcoming. Correction signifies God’s love. Yielding to the correction of God brings the peaceable fruits of righteousness to create holy, righteous character, enabling one to love God even more and to grow in grace and knowledge. This is part of how God redeems His spiritual family—making each of His begotten children into a new creation.

Trials in Overcoming the World: Christians live in the world but are not part of the world. As a result, they are confronted with trials or tests of their faith. The apostle Peter wrote: “Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial among you *which is* taking place to test you, as if some strange thing *were* happening to you. But to the degree that you have a share in the sufferings of Christ, rejoice; so that, at the revelation of His glory, you also may rejoice exceedingly. If you are reviled for *the* name of Christ, *you are* blessed because the *Spirit* of glory and the Spirit of God is resting upon you; on their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. Assuredly, let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil doer, or as an overlording busybody in other people’s lives. Yet if anyone *is suffering* as a Christian, he should not be ashamed; but let him glorify God because of this” (I Pet. 4:12-16).

The purpose of trials is to strengthen and perfect a Christian’s faith: “In this you yourselves greatly rejoice; though for the present, if it is necessary, you are in distress for a little while by various trials; in order that the proving of your faith, which is much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is being tested by fire, may be found unto praise and honor and glory at *the* revelation of Jesus Christ; Whom, not having seen, you love; in Whom, *though* at the present time you do not see Him, you believe, *and* rejoice with unspeakable joy, and filled with glory; *and are* receiving the end of your faith—even *the* salvation of *your* souls” (I Pet. 1:6-9).

All the trials that Christians go through and endure are for the perfecting of their faith. In trials, Christians need to seek God and pray to Him, claiming His promises of deliverance and help and intervention. In spite of being faced with trials, God gives each Christian a comforting promise of deliverance, regardless of how severe a trial may be: “No temptation [trial] has come upon you except what is common to mankind. For God, Who *is* faithful, will not permit you to be tempted beyond what you are able *to bear*; but with the temptation, He will make a way of escape, so that you may be able to bear *it*” (I Cor. 10:13). Jesus Christ promised that He would always be with His own (Matt. 28:20), and never forsake them: “He has said, ‘In no way will I ever leave you; no—I will never forsake you in any way.’ So then, let us boldly say, ‘*The Lord is my helper, and I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?*’ ” (Heb. 13:5-6).

The Persecutions and Suffering of William Tyndale

William Tyndale was the first man to translate the New Testament from the Greek into English which he published in 1526. He suffered terrible persecution at the hands of the religious and civil authorities. Finally, in 1536 he was burned at the stake for translating and printing the Word of God. As a result of his persecutions and sufferings, he wrote about the purpose of a Christian’s trials and tribulations: “This is written [the things in the Old Testament] for our learning: for verily he is a true God; and is our God as well as theirs; and his promises are with us, as well as with them; and he [is] present with us, as well as he was with them. If we ask, we shall obtain; if we knock, he will open; if we seek, we shall find; if we thirst, his truth shall fulfill our lust [desire], Christ is with us until the world’s end. Let his little flock be bold therefore. If God be on our side, what matter maketh it who be against us,

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be they bishops, cardinals, popes, or whatsoever names they will?

“Mark this also, if God send thee to the sea, and promise to go with thee, and to bring thee safe to land, he will raise up a tempest against thee, to prove whether thou wilt abide by his word, and that thou mayest feel thy faith, and perceive his goodness. For if it were always fair weather, and thou never brought into such jeopardy, whence his mercy only delivered thee, thy faith should be but a presumption, and thou shouldest be ever unthankful to God and merciless unto thy neighbour.

“If God promise riches, the way thereto is poverty. Whom he loveth, him he chasteneth: whom he exalteth, he casteth down: whom he saveth, he damneth first ... If he promise life, he slayeth first: when he buildeth, he casteth all down first. He is no patcher; he cannot build on another man’s foundation. He will not work until all be past remedy, and be brought unto such a case, that men may see, how that his hand, his power, his mercy, his goodness and truth, hath wrought altogether. He will let no man be partaker with him of his praise and glory. His works are wonderful, and contrary unto man’s works. Who ever, saving he, delivered his own Son, his only Son, his dear Son, unto the death, and that for his enemies’ sake, to win his enemy, to overcome him with love, that he might see love, and love again, and of love to do likewise to other men, and to overcome them with well doing?” (Parker Society, *Obedience of a Christian Man*, pp. 135-136).

The apostle Paul encouraged the brethren in Rome, in spite of any trouble or suffering, always to have the promise of God’s gift of sonship in their thoughts: “For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God. Now you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God. Now if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him. **For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us**” (Rom. 8:14-18).

All the battles against sin, God’s correction, trials and tribulations, the sufferings and joys, the growing and overcoming are all a necessary part of Christian growth toward perfection in Christ: “Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof. Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from *the* dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not rule over you [cannot practice sin], because you are not under law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? **MAY IT NEVER BE!** Don’t you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but **you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you;** and having been delivered from sin, **you became the servants of righteousness.** I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh; for just as you *once* yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now **yield your members in bondage to righteousness unto sanctification**” (Rom. 6:12-19).

As an unborn infant must come to full term in order to be born, begotten Christians are to develop and grow to full term—perfected for the first resurrection. To this end, God has given the power of His Holy Spirit, His God-breathed Word and teachers. The whole assembly of brethren and elders is called “the body of Christ,” which is the Church of God. God the Father and Jesus Christ use and inspire the ministry to perfect the saints unto the fullness of Jesus Christ: “And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers **for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edification of the body of Christ;** until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **unto a perfect man,** unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ; so that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about

Appendix M

with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error; but **holding the truth in love, may in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, even Christ** from Whom all the body, fitly framed and compacted together by *that which* every joint supplies, according to *its* inner working in *the* measure of each individual part, is making the increase of the body unto *the* edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:11-16).

The apostle John wrote that we are now the children of God—yet unborn. We are as babes in the womb, and it does not yet appear what we shall be, because the actual spiritual birth will not occur until Jesus returns—then we shall be like Him: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that **we should be called the children of God!** For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, **now are we the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be;** but we know that when He is manifested [at His return], **we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is.** And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure” (I John 3:1-3). This is the reason and hope that gives Christians, who have been begotten again, the strength and inspiration, the love and determination to fulfill God’s purpose in their lives.

Appendix N

What Is Meant by “the Works of the Law”?

What is the true Scriptural meaning of “the works of the law” in relationship to “justification by faith” and commandment keeping? Traditional Protestant teachings create tremendous problems in understanding the true meaning of critical Scriptures, claiming that when a person has been justified by faith, he or she does not have to keep the commandments of God, and those who keep God’s laws and commandments are seeking justification by “the works of the law.” They cite Romans 3:20-22, 28 as proof that one who has been “saved” is not required to keep the law. In the KJV these verses read: “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference....Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.”

The phrase “by the deeds [Greek *εργων* *ergon*, “works, deeds”] of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight,” coupled with the phrases “without the law” and “without the deeds [Greek *εργων* *ergon*, “works, deeds”] of the law,” gives the impression that law and commandment keeping is not required for salvation. Among those bolstering this theory, it is claimed that “the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ” means that justification is by faith without any works. Therefore, the commandments of God are no longer binding on those who believe in Jesus because “Christ is the end of the law” (Rom. 10:4).

The confusion created by these scriptural references is further compounded by what Paul wrote in Romans 2: “For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified” (Rom 2:13). How is it that “the doers of the law shall be justified,” when “the deeds of the law” do not justify?

Paul also wrote that the law is not abolished by faith; rather the law is established by faith: “Are we, then, abolishing law through faith? **MAY IT NEVER BE!** Rather, **we are establishing law**” (Rom. 3:31). Instead of doing away with the law, Paul reaffirmed what Jesus Christ taught concerning the law, when He said: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; **I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.** For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled” (Matt. 5:17-18). (*Please see Appendix E “How Did Jesus Fulfill the Law and the Prophets?”*)

The problems in understanding these scriptures, as well as the erroneous interpretation of Romans 3:20-22, began with inaccurate translations and assumptions. The incorrect English translation began with John Wycliffe’s 1380 translation from the Latin Vulgate. In modern English it reads: “For of the works of the law, each flesh shall not be justified before him, for by the law is the knowledge of sin, but now without the law, the righteousness of God is showed, this is witnessed of the law and the prophets and the righteousness of God is by the faith of Jesus Christ in to all men and on all men that believe in him” (Samuel Bagster, *The English Hexapla*, 1841).

William Tyndale’s 1534 translation is slightly different. However, his rendition also gives the strong impression that keeping the commandments and laws was not required: “Because that by the deeds of the law, shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God. For by the law comes the knowledge of sin. Now verily is the righteousness that comes of God declared **without the fulfilling of the law**, having witness yet of the law and of the Prophets.

The righteousness no doubt which is good before God, comes by the faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe" (William Tyndale's Translation, Samuel Bagster, *The English Hexapla*, 1841; also see Tyndale's New Testament, 1536).

Upon examination of these verses, it can be noted that Tyndale added three words, "the fulfilling of," to the phrase "without the law," making it read "without the fulfilling of the law." Tyndale deviated too far from the Greek text by adding these extra words, and the resulting translation gives the impression that no one has to keep the law. However, while his translation seems to support the teaching that obedience to the laws and commandments of God is not necessary, Tyndale's other writings show that he believed the exact opposite. Nevertheless, his translation further bolstered the Protestant belief that Christians were not required to keep the law. In fact, this misinterpretation has given rise to a "lawless grace" that is rampant in the church today and is absolutely contrary to the Word of God.

The correct translation from the Greek and the proper interpretation of these verses will reveal what Paul actually meant. But first, the following words and phrases must be defined: sin, law, the letter of the law, the works of the law, the spirit of the law, justification by faith and the righteousness of God.

Definition of Key Words and Phrases

Sin: What is sin? John wrote, "Whoever committeth sin transgresseth the law; for sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4, *KJV*). A literal translation of this verse reads, "Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness." Sin cuts a person off from God, and the wages of sin is death (Rom. 3:23). There are outward sins, which are observable and known by others, and there are inward sins, which are the hidden sins of the heart and mind. Many times a person committing an inward sin is not even aware of it. Moreover, no one knows the inner sins of another because no one can read the mind of another. However, since God is a heart-knowing God, He knows the hidden sins of the heart.

The apostle Paul wrote about the evils of human nature, that there is no one who is righteous—all are sinners: "For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—*ALL—with* being under sin, exactly as it is written: '**For there is not a righteous one—not even one!** There is not one who understands; there is not one who seeks after God. They have all gone out of the way; together they have *all* become depraved. There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness. No, there is not so much as one! Their throats *are* like an open grave; with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps *is* under their lips; whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; their feet *are* swift to shed blood; destruction and misery *are* in their ways; and *the* way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.' Now then, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (Rom. 3:9-19).

Jesus revealed that sin originates within the heart and mind of man: "And He said, 'That which springs forth from *within* a man, that defiles the man. For from within, out of the hearts of men, go forth evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickednesses, guile, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; **all these evils go forth from within, and these defile a man**'" (Mark 7:20-23).

The prophet Jeremiah said, "The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and is desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9). And again Paul stated, "The carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it *be*" (Rom. 8:7).

The Law: The term "the law" in the New Testament, in most cases, refers to the laws and commandments of God as found in the five books of Moses. But in some contexts "the law" refers to the covenant that God made with Israel. In the book of Hebrews, "the law" can also refer to the ritual laws of sacrifices that were offered at the temple in Jerusalem. In other cases, "law" refers to a specific law.

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The purpose of God’s law is to define sin. It gives the knowledge of what sin is, “for through *the law is the knowledge of sin*” (Rom. 3:20). If there were no law, there would be no sin. Furthermore, if there were no sin, there would be no need for forgiveness, no need for a Savior. This is what Paul meant when he wrote, “For the law works out wrath; because where no law is, *there is no transgression*” (Rom. 4:15). Those who transgress the law, or sin, are under the penalty of sin. The ultimate end of sin is death, for “the wages of sin is death” (Rom 6:23).

The law defines sin. The law has no power to enforce or compel anyone to obey (Gal. 3:21). Even with the knowledge of the law, people sin (Rom. 7:7-25); consequently, all the world is under the law and guilty before God, whether acknowledged or not (Rom. 2:11-13; 3:19).

The Letter of the Law: From the beginning of the world, God has required all people to obey His laws and commandments in the letter of the law (Gen. 4:6-8). Later, in the days of Noah, because of sin and violence, God destroyed all life with the flood (Gen. 6:5-13). After the flood, God incorporated His laws and commandments into the covenant He made with Noah and His family (Gen. 8:20-22; 9:1-17). Later, He established His covenant with Abraham and his seed. Abraham believed God, and his faith was imputed to him as righteousness (Gen 15:4-6). When God transmitted the promises of the covenant He had established with Abraham to Isaac, God declared it was because of Abraham’s obedience: “And the LORD appeared unto him [Isaac], and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; **because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws**” (Gen. 26:2-5, *KJV*). God’s commandments, statutes and laws that Abraham was commended for keeping were the same ones that He later gave to the children of Israel at Mount Siani.

In God’s covenant with Israel, also known as the Old Covenant, the children of Israel were given a choice between life and death, blessing and cursing, dependent upon their adherence to His commandments and laws: “See, I have set before thee this day **life and good, and death and evil**; in that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

“But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, *and that* ye shall not prolong *your* days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live; that thou mayest love the LORD thy God, *and* that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he *is* thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them” (Deut. 30:15-20, *KJV*).

In Deuteronomy 28, God listed the blessings for obedience and the curses for disobedience. He expected Israel to obey all His laws and commandments in the letter of the law. In return, they would receive the physical blessings of God. The covenant with Israel offered no promise of eternal life; that would not come until Jesus Christ. (In the Old Testament, God reveals that certain chosen ones, such as the patriarchs, prophets, and certain of the righteous kings of Israel and Judah, did receive the gift and promise of eternal life. They will be in the first resurrection when Jesus Christ returns.)

The Works of the Law: This phrase, “the works of the law,” is perhaps one of the most misunderstood phrases in the epistles of Paul. The confusion over the meaning of this

phrase originates from an inaccurate translation of the Greek term, ἐργὼν νομοῦ *ergon nomou* which literally means “works of law.” It does not mean “**the** works of **the** law.” In the KJV, as well as in other versions, translators have inserted two definite articles into this phrase that are not found in the Greek text. One definite article, “the,” has been inserted before the word “works” and the other before the word “law,” making it incorrectly read “**the** works of **the** law.” Translators felt that it was necessary to add the two definite articles to help clarify the meaning, because they thought that the phrase *ergon nomou* referred exclusively to the laws and commandments of God. Thereby, it has been assumed that keeping the commandments of God is not required because “**the** works of **the** law” do not justify anyone with God. While it is true that “works of law” can refer to the laws of God, Paul undoubtedly intended a far broader application of the phrase.

If the apostle Paul had intended the phrase to read “the works of the law,” he most certainly would have written it that way in Greek. In fact, there is one verse, and one verse only, where Paul actually did write the entire phrase “the work of the law,” when he wrote: “For when *the* Gentiles, which do not have *the* law, **practice by nature the things contained in the law**, these who do not have *the* law are a law unto themselves, who show **the work of the law** written in their own hearts, their consciences bearing witness, and their reasonings also, as they accuse or defend one another” (Rom 2:14-15).

The Greek phrase in verse 15 is *το ἔργον τοῦ νομοῦ* *to ergon tou nomou* which, when translated into English reads, “the work of the law.” Here it is quite evident that Paul was indeed talking about the laws of God.

In seven other places where Paul used this term, he did not use the definite article. Rather, he wrote only the phrase ἐργὼν νομοῦ *ergon nomou*, “works of law.” In all places where *ergon nomou* appears, it should be translated as “works of law” rather than “**the** works of **the** law.” Listed below are the seven additional places where Paul used the phrase ἐργὼν νομοῦ *ergon nomou*, “works of law”:

1) Rom. 9: 31-32: “But Israel, although they followed after a law of righteousness, did not attain to a law of righteousness. Why? Because *they did not seek it* by faith, but by **works of law**; for they stumbled at the Stone of stumbling.”

2-4) Gal. 2:14-16: “But when I saw that they did not walk uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in the presence of them all, ‘If you, being a Jew, are living like the Gentiles, and not according to Judaism, why do you compel the Gentiles to judaize? We who are Jews by nature—and not sinners of *the* Gentiles—knowing that a man is not justified by **works of law**, but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ, we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified by *the* faith of Christ, and not by **works of law**; because by **works of law** shall no flesh be justified.’”

5) Gal. 3:2: “This only I desire to learn from you: did you receive the Spirit of God by **works of law**, or by *the* hearing of faith?”

6) Gal. 3:5: “Therefore *consider this*: He Who is supplying the Spirit to you, and Who is working deeds of power among you, *is He doing it* by **works of law** or by *the* hearing of faith?”

7) Gal. 3:10: “For as many as are *relying on* **works of law** are under a curse, because it is written, ‘Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things that have been written in the book of the law to do them.’”

The True Meaning of “Works of Law”: It is evident in these verses that Paul is including the traditional laws of Judaism in the phrase “works of law.” In Galatians 2, Peter and the others were not following a law of God but were observing a traditional law of Judaism to eat separately from Gentiles. Peter knew better because fifteen years earlier, when God sent Peter to Cornelius’ house, Peter said to Cornelius, “You know that **it is unlawful for a man who is a Jew** to associate with or come near to anyone of another race. But God

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has shown me *that* no man should be called common or unclean” (Acts 10:28). Peter was talking about a law of Judaism—a man-made tradition. Therefore, Paul’s use of the phrase “works of law” includes all humanly devised religious, traditional laws of Judaism (Mark 7:1-13). It can also refer to Gentile religious rituals and the sacrifices that they offered to their gods (Acts 14:8-18).

In addition, the phrase “works of law” can include all the rituals and sacrifices under the Old Covenant. Paul wrote that it was impossible for those rituals and sacrifices to atone for sin before God the Father in heaven: “For the law, having *only* a shadow of the good things that are coming, *and* not the image of those things, with the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, is never able to make perfect those who come *to worship*. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered? For once those who worship had been purified, *they would* no longer be conscious of sin. On the contrary, in *offering* these *sacrifices* year by year, *there is* a remembrance of sins; because *it is* impossible *for the* blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” (Heb. 10:1-4).

In summary, “works of law” refers to the works of any law—the laws of God, the laws of Judaism, and the laws of pagan religions. Paul undoubtedly meant the broadest use of “works of law,” which includes all works of all religions.

The Spirit of the Law: Isaiah prophesied that Jesus Christ would magnify the law: “The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake; he will magnify the law, and make *it* honourable” (Isa. 42:21). The Hebrew word translated “magnify” is *gahdal* and means: “to advance, boast, exceed, to become, do, give, make wax greater, increase, magnify” (Wigram, *Englishman’s Hebrew-Chaldee Concordance of the Old Testament*, 1980).

In all His teachings, Jesus Christ magnified the law and made it honorable, or spiritual. In His “Sermon on the Mount” Jesus repeatedly said, “You have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times* ... But I say to you ...” (Matt. 5-7). He declared and taught that the laws and commandments of God must be kept in “the spirit of the law.” In order to obey the spirit of the law, people need the Holy Spirit of God, and the laws and commandments of God need to be written in their hearts and minds (Heb. 10:16-17).

Concerning keeping the law in the spirit, Paul wrote, “... that we might serve in newness of *the* spirit, and not in *the* oldness of *the* letter ... the law *is* indeed holy, and the commandment holy and righteous and good ... For we know that the law is spiritual” (Rom. 7:6, 12, 14). In these verses, Paul is referring to the spiritual intent for keeping the commandments of God, known as “the spirit of the law.” True Christians will obey the laws and commandments of God in newness of the spirit. Not only will their obedience come from their hearts, but it will be manifest outwardly in their actions.

All of the Law and Prophets is based on love and is to be kept in the spirit of the law. This is what Jesus Christ meant when He answered the scribe’s question: “And one of the scribes who had come up *to Him*, after hearing them reasoning together *and* perceiving that He answered them well, asked Him, ‘Which is *the* first commandment of all?’ Then Jesus answered him, ‘*The* first of all the commandments *is*, “Hear, O Israel: *the* Lord our God is one Lord. And you shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.” This *is the* first commandment. And *the* second *is* like this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” There is no other commandment greater than these.’ Then the scribe said to Him, ‘Right, Master. You have spoken according to truth that God is one, and there is not another besides Him; and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *one’s* neighbor as oneself, is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.’ And Jesus, seeing that he answered with understanding, said to him, ‘You are not far from the kingdom of God.’ And no one dared to question Him any more” (Mark 12:28-34). Matthew also recorded Jesus’ declaration regarding the commandments to love God and your neighbor as yourself, “On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” (Matt. 22:40).

Jesus most emphatically taught commandment keeping based on loving God: “If you

love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments ... The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him ... If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me....As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; live in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and live in His love" (John 14:15, 21, 23-24; 15:9-10).

The apostle John wrote that the commandments of God are not burdensome: "And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments. The one who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected. By this *means* we know that we are in Him....By this *standard* we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome" (I John 2:3-5; 5:2-3).

After a person has been converted, he or she is to walk in newness of life and do the "good works" of loving God and keeping His commandments. Commandment keeping in the spirit of the law keeps a person from sinning, because "by the law is the knowledge of sin."

Justification by Faith: When one is living in a state of sin, he or she is cut off from God. In order to be made right with God, the sinner must repent to God the Father and accept the sacrifice of the blood of Jesus Christ as full payment for his or her sins. God justifies the repentant sinner apart from commandment keeping. No one can be justified in the sight of God by any work of any law. Rather, justification is given to a believer based on faith. This state of justification is called the "gift of righteousness" which God the Father freely imputes to the believer (Rom. 5:17).

The function of the laws and commandments of God is to show men how to live, as well as to show them what sin is. No law can forgive sin. No law can give eternal life. That is not the function of law. Only God the Father can justify a person from sin through Jesus Christ's sacrifice and blood, which is separate from law and commandment keeping. However, justification of past sins does not do away with the law or the good works that God requires of true believers. This is what Paul meant when he wrote: "The hearers of the law *are* not just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified" (Rom. 2:13).

The Righteousness of God: The righteousness of God is shown by His grace in forgiving sin through the blood and sacrifice of Jesus. This righteousness places the forgiven sinner in right standing with God. Paul wrote: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; *but* are **being justified freely by His grace** through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus; Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation through **faith in His blood**, in order to demonstrate **His righteousness**, in respect to the remission of the sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; *yes*, to publicly declare **His righteousness** in the present time, that He might be just, and the one Who justifies the one who *is* of *the* faith of Jesus" (Rom. 3:23-26). The righteousness of God that Paul wrote of is the expression of God's love, mercy, forgiveness and justification through Jesus Christ. In a sense, in this context, the word "justification" could be freely substituted for the word "righteousness," because the righteousness of God means the justification that He freely gives to the repentant sinner.

"Without the Law": The phrase "without the law" in the King James Version (Rom. 3:21) is another misunderstood phrase because "without" gives the impression that there is no law at all. In English, the word "without" conveys the meaning "the absence of." Therefore, some believe that those who become Christians no longer need to have any regard for the laws and commandments of God. However, in Romans 3:21, the English word

What Is Meant by “the Works of the Law”?

“without” is an incorrect translation of the Greek word *χωρίς* *choris*. *Choris* means “separately, apart from, by itself, without” (Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich, *Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 1974). The correct translation of *χωρίς* *choris* should be “**separate from law**.” Since the laws and commandments of God have not ceased to exist, the phrase “separate from law” is more precise, because it shows that the function of the law is separate from the function of justification by faith.

The Correct Translation of Romans 3:20-26

With a proper understanding of the words and phrases that the apostle Paul used, it is possible to render a more precise translation of Romans 3:20-26. The correct translation of these difficult Scriptures that Paul wrote makes them easier to understand: “Therefore, by **works of law** there shall no flesh be justified before Him; for through *the law is the* knowledge of sin. But now, **the righteousness** [justification] **of God that is separate from law** has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets; even **the righteousness** [justification] **of God that is through the faith of Jesus Christ**, toward all and upon all those who believe; for there is no difference. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; **but are being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus**; Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood, in order to demonstrate **His righteousness** [justification], **in respect to the remission of the sins that are past**, through the forbearance of God; *yes*, to publicly declare **His righteousness** [justification] in the present time, that He might be **just**, and the one Who **justifies the one who is of the faith of Jesus**.”

Forgiveness of sin and justification to God are only accomplished through the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ. These are gifts of God to the repentant sinner and cannot be earned by anyone’s works, as Paul wrote: “For by grace you have been **saved through faith**, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God, **not of works**, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus unto the good works** that God ordained beforehand, in order that we might walk in them” (Eph. 2:8-10).

While no work of any law can bring spiritual justification, God the Father and Jesus Christ do require those who have the Spirit of God to obey His laws and commandments in the spirit of the law. Law keeping and justification by faith have two different purposes. Both are required for salvation.

Appendix O

Temple Mount at Jerusalem

A summary of Ernest L. Martin's book, *The Temples that Jerusalem Forgot*
by Robert Martin

Josephus gives a different perspective of the temple than what is accepted by most historians today. This may be due to the Jews' distrust of Josephus for having capitulated to the Romans during the onslaught of Jerusalem. In reality, he was trying to save his people from the destruction and terror that would inevitably befall them with their continued resistance. Unfortunately, Josephus' capitulation to the Romans caused many within the Jewish community to view him as a traitor, and thus many within Jewish academia have dismissed him as a historian.

However, Josephus was fully aware of the cardinal features of the Temple Mount: It was built directly over the subterranean Spring of Gihon, and there were caves within its sub-surface. These features were also witnessed by Aristaeus of Egypt three hundred years before Josephus and confirmed by the Roman historian Tacitus (115 AD), who quoted eyewitnesses that were in Jerusalem before 70 AD.

Josephus informs us that Mount Zion, the City of David, was the first citadel protecting the Temple Mount from the south. Later, John Hyrcanus (Maccabees) built a palace north of the Temple Mount called Baris. Hasmonaean princes used this palace, and later, Herod the Great made it into a citadel. He renamed it Fort Antonia, in honor of Marcus Anthony. With great effort, Herod built Fort Antonia into a large enclosed area for the Romans to garrison an entire legion along with their auxiliary personnel.

Josephus Understood the Symbolism of the Gihon Spring

Gihon Spring was the only natural spring of pure water within five miles of Jerusalem in any direction. Pure water was an indispensable requirement for the essential rituals of the temple. Because of this spring of pure water, the temple was a microcosm of the Garden of Eden. (One of the rivers that flowed through the Garden of Eden was the river Gihon.) The water of Gihon was symbolic of the Water of Life.

The Gihon Spring was about a quarter mile south from today's Dome of the Rock. There are no caves or spring in the vicinity of today's Dome of the Rock. This information is crucial in determining the correct location of the Temple Mount. Josephus was fully aware of the symbolism involving the Gihon Spring and the Throne or the Holy of Holies of Almighty God, which the learned men of Judaism have ignored.

The Location of Mount Zion, Ophel and Fort Antonia

Josephus understood that the original site of Mount Zion (it was actually a mound) was located on the southern third of the southeast ridge. This was where David had built his city, and it became known as the "Lower City" of Jerusalem. The limits of David and Solomon's Jerusalem were between Kidron Valley to the east and Tyropoeon Valley to the west, with both valleys merging at the south end of the southeast ridge. The Tyropoeon Valley was gradually populated as Jerusalem grew toward the west during the time of King Uzziah. In the latter part of the second century BC, the Maccabees extensively populated this valley, and it became known as the "Upper City."

The Hinnim Valley was to the immediate west at the south end of the western hill adjoining the Kidron and Tyropoeon Valleys at the foot of the southeast ridge. On the south-

Temple Mount at Jerusalem

ern third of this ridge there were two mounds: Zion and “Ophel” (literally “humped mount”). From south to north, the two mounds together were about 400 yards in length. The distance from the top of Mount Zion to the top of Mount Ophel was over 200 yards. This ridge continued to ascend northward from Mount Ophel to where an outcrop of rock was protruding, which today is called the Dome of the Rock. The Dome of the Rock is located over 600 yards north from the top of Mount Zion and 400 yards from the top of Mount Ophel.

The Temple Mount was built on Mount Ophel over the subterranean Gihon Spring, below which were numerous subsurface caves. From this mount, the Water of Life for the temple services was immediately available. It was renowned for its purity (sweet water) over that of any other spring in the entire region.

Writing of this, Josephus states, “Now on the north side of the temple was built a citadel (Fort Antonia), whose walls were square and strong and of extraordinary firmness. The kings of the Hasmonaeen dynasty, who were also high priests before the time of Herod, called it the Tower.” Josephus further informs us, “Fort Antonia dominated the temple.” This fortress guarded the security of the temple, the city of Jerusalem and the fortress itself.

From the north, it was impossible for one to see the temple because Fort Antonia obscured the view. The hill on which the Tower of Antonia stood was the highest of the three mounds (Zion, Ophel, and Fort Antonia) on the north end of the southeast ridge.

During the Hasmonaeen dynasty, the tower of Baris was expanded to become Fort Antonia. It adjoined the new city Bezetha and further obscured the Temple Mount from the north of Jerusalem. An aqueduct coming from Bethlehem supplied Fort Antonia with water that was stored in 37 cisterns for the Tenth Legion and their support personnel, which numbered approximately 10,000 men.

No Rock Outcropping Associated with the Temple

There is no reference in Scripture or any secular historical source that describes a natural outcropping of rock located at the highest point of the ridge or hill that was associated with the Temple Mount. This includes the sites of the temple floor, the Holy of Holies and the Altar of Burnt Offering.

The Altar of Burnt Offering was formally used as a threshing floor. It is clear that the threshing floor was a level area on top of Mount Ophel, not an irregular formation of rock on top of a ridge.

Solomon built the east wall of the temple that reached upwards from the base on the east side of the hill. The foundation was built below the Kidron Valley floor, and the visible wall began from the bottom of the valley and extended upwards for three hundred cubits (450 feet). An area between the top of the hill and an artificial embankment that Solomon had built along the Kidron Valley was completely filled in with rubble and large rocks known as millo. The millo reached the top of Mount Ophel, 300 cubits—about 40 to 45 stories—above the Kidron Valley floor, further extending the temple platform to the east. As viewed from the Mount of Olives on the east, the temple area looked like a modern skyscraper with a huge platform 150 by 450 feet.

Solomon built no walls on the north, west, and south sides. However, in the course of time this hilltop area was enlarged, filling in some of those areas and enclosing the hill from its base at the floor of the Kidron Valley on the east and the Tyropoeon Valley on the west. Its southern and northern sides extended westward over the ridge between the Kidron and Tyropoeon valleys. The final foundation of the temple was shaped like a cube, and the area on top of the Temple Mount was a perfect square platform.

Solomon built his palace and judgment hall just south of the temple. This was the area of Mount Zion and the city of David, around which Jerusalem evolved. In the second century BC, Mount Zion was leveled during the time of Simon the Hasmonaeen, just south of Mount Ophel. After that time the Temple Mount was not obscured from the south by the higher elevation of Mount Zion.

Appendix O

The Gihon Spring

The Temple Mount had a natural spring with an unlimited supply of water coming from underneath the Holy of Holies. Scriptural references require a water source to be associated with the temple and its function. The Gihon Spring is referred to numerous times in the book of Psalms and by the prophets.

During the time of David and Solomon, Gihon Spring supplied the Siloam Pool and fed the Kidron Valley. Toward the end of the eighth century BC, King Hezekiah built a tunnel to supply underground water from the Gihon Spring to western Jerusalem (II Chron. 32:30). Hezekiah built this tunnel because he was expecting a siege against Jerusalem by Sennacherib, the king of Assyria.

Before 70 AD, the Jews often used the word “Siloam” to describe the whole system of the Gihon Spring—Siloam Pool, Hezekiah’s underground tunnel and the channels into the Kidron Valley. (Christians did not use the name “Gihon” but continued to use “Siloam” to describe this water network even into modern times.)

It is most significant that the pure water of Gihon Spring under the Temple Mount ran near the seat of the Holy of Holies, symbolic of the seat of Almighty God’s throne. John’s description of God’s throne in Revelation shows a river of water coming out from beneath the throne: “Then he showed me a pure river of *the* water of life, clear as crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb” (Rev. 22:1).

Destruction of the Temple Foretold

Micah prophesied of the destruction of the temple (Mic. 3:10-12): “Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor justice, and pervert all iniquity. They build up Zion with bloodshed and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for a bribe, and the priests thereof teach for pay, and the prophets thereof divine for money. Yet will they lean upon the Lord, saying is not the Lord among us? No harm can come upon us. Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, and the mountain of the temple as the bare hills.”

Jesus confirmed this prophecy as the writers of the gospels agree: Matthew 24:1-2 and Mark 13:1-2: “And after going out, Jesus departed from the temple; and His disciples came to *Him* to point out the buildings of the temple. But Jesus said to them, ‘Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, there shall not be left here even a stone upon a stone that shall not be thrown down.’”

Luke 19:43-44: “For *the* days shall come upon you that your enemies shall cast a rampart about you, and shall enclose you around and keep you in on every side, and shall level you to the ground, and your children within you; and they shall not leave in you a stone upon a stone, because you did not know the season of your visitation.”

Luke 21:5-6: “And while some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and consecrated gifts, He said, ‘*As for* these things that you now see, *the* days will come in which *there* shall not be left *one* stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.’”

Fort Antonia’s walls were 40 cubits (60 feet) high. Inside these walls, the buildings and grounds were built on a level platform. At the four corners of the walls were towers. Three of these towers were 50 cubits (75 feet) high, and the southwest tower was 70 cubits (105 feet) high. This higher tower overlooked the entire temple court to the south of Fort Antonia.

Josephus wrote that all of Fort Antonia was built over and around a rock outcrop at the summit of the ridge. Today, a mosque stands over this rock formation known as the Dome of the Rock. Completed by Abdul el-Malik in 691 AD, the mosque covers the remainder of this protruding rock but occupies only a very small fraction of the entire surface area of the 36-acre artificial platform that the Romans built.

Temple Mount at Jerusalem

Fort Antonia and the Roman Legion

A Roman legion had 5,000 infantry troops and with them 5,000 support personnel. There were 278 military personnel per acre within Fort Antonia.

The Roman garrison was the dominant feature of Jerusalem, a continuous reminder to the Jews of Rome's supremacy. Further, being four and one-half times greater in area than the Temple Mount, Fort Antonia was intimidating, and therefore, a successful tool of psychological warfare to secure Jewish conformity to Roman authority.

The crowds that assembled at the temple during the Holy Days were overseen by 2,000 Roman troops. In order to prevent disorder and riots among the Jews, they were stationed on a 45-foot wide walkway built atop the four rows of colonnades that surrounded the temple grounds. During the Jewish festivals, there were three rotations of guards, totaling 6,000 soldiers, each day.

Josephus' Description of the Colonnades

The colonnades between the temple and Fort Antonia were extended around the outer edge of the entire Temple Mount platform. These colonnades were roofed with the roadway 30 cubits (45 feet) wide. The colonnade roadway was the vantage point from which the Roman troops were able to guard the entrances and exits to and from the temple as well as keep a watchful eye on the inside area of the court (with the exception of the inside of the temple). In addition, the colonnade roadway gave them nearly instant access from Fort Antonia to the temple area. The double colonnade-bridge that connected the temple with Fort Antonia was one stade (600 feet). Josephus described two colonnades as military roadways that were an integral part of the temple. These two colonnades led from the south (west corner) wall of Fort Antonia to the gate on the north (west corner) wall of the Temple Mount. Called the Tadi Gate, this north wall was not used by the general public but only by the Roman Legion.

The Romans were very astute in military engineering and constructed their fortifications with this advantage. They understood well that the key to controlling Jerusalem was to manage and control the Temple Mount. Fort Antonia's protection was its dominant position over the Temple Mount.

Appendix P

Peter's Tomb Recently Discovered in Jerusalem

(Excerpts from personal account by F. Paul Peterson)

"While visiting a friend in Switzerland, I heard of what seemed to me one of the greatest discoveries since the time of Christ—that Peter was buried in Jerusalem and not in Rome. The source of this rumor, written in Italian, was not clear; it left considerable room for doubt, or rather wonder. Rome was the place where I could investigate the matter, and if such proved encouraging, a trip to Jerusalem might be necessary in order to gather valuable firsthand information on the subject. I therefore went to Rome. After talking to many priests and investigating various sources of information, I finally was greatly rewarded by learning where I could buy the only known book on the subject, which was also written in Italian. It is called *Gli Scavi del Dominus Flevit* printed in 1958 at the Tipografia del PP. Francescani, in Jerusalem. It was written by P. B. Bagatti and J. T. Milik, both Roman Catholic priests. The story of the discovery was there, but it seemed to be purposely hidden for much was lacking. I consequently determined to go to Jerusalem to see for myself, if possible, that which appeared to be almost unbelievable, especially since it came from priests who naturally, because of the existing tradition that Peter was buried in Rome, would be the last ones to welcome such a discovery or to bring it to the attention of the world.

"In Jerusalem I spoke to many Franciscan priests who all said, finally, though reluctantly, that the bones of Simon Bar Jona (St. Peter) were found in Jerusalem on the Franciscan monastery site called Dominus Flevit (where Jesus was supposed to have wept over Jerusalem) on the Mount of Olives ... where the names of Christian Biblical characters were found on the ossuaries (bone boxes). The names of Mary and Martha were found on one box and right next to it was one with the name of Lazarus, their brother. Other names of early Christians were found on other boxes. Of greatest interest, however, was that which was found within twelve feet from the place where the remains of Mary, Martha and Lazarus were found—the remains of St. Peter. They were found in an ossuary, on the outside of which was clearly and beautifully written in Aramaic, 'Simon Bar Jona.' ...

"The story of the cave and the ossuaries and the regular cemetery just outside of the Convent site is this: It was a Roman custom that, when a person had died and after about ten years when the body had decomposed, the grave would be opened. The bones would be placed in a small ossuary with the name of the person carefully written on the outside front. These ossuaries would then be placed in a cave as in the case of this Christian burial ground and thus making room for others. But this cave or burial place where the ossuaries were found and which was created and brought about through the natural and disinterested sequence of events, without any reason to change facts or circumstances, was a greater testimony than if there were a witness recorded, stating that Peter was buried there. And yet, even that is unmistakably recorded in the three words in Aramaic of the ossuary, Simon Bar Jona....

"When Pope Pius XII declared the Assumption of Mary to be an article of faith in 1950, the Catholic Church in Jerusalem then quickly sold the tomb of Mary to the Armenian Church. Ex-priest Lavallo told me personally that there is another tomb of St. Mary in Ephesus. But the tomb of St. Peter is altogether different for they would rather that it never existed, and to buy or sell such a site would be out of the question. It fell upon them in this manner, as I was told by a Franciscan monk of the monastery of Dominus Flevit. One of their members was spading the ground on this site in 1953, when his shovel fell through. Excavation was started and there a large underground Christian burial ground was uncovered. The initial of Christ in Greek was written there which would never have been found in

Peter's Tomb Recently Discovered in Jerusalem

a Jewish, Arab or pagan cemetery. By the structure of the writings, it was established by scientists that they were of the days just before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 A.D....You can see then, how the Christians would be inclined to have their burial ground on the Mount, for here also had been a favorite meeting place of Jesus and His disciples. In all the cemetery, nothing was found (as also in the Catacombs in Rome) which resembles Arab, Jewish, Catholic or pagan practices....

"The Catholic Church says that Peter was Pope in Rome from 41 to 66 A.D., a period of twenty-five years, but the Bible shows a different story. The book of the Acts of the Apostles (in either the Catholic or Protestant Bible) records the following: Peter was preaching the Gospel to the circumcision (the Jews) in Caesarea and Joppa in Palestine, ministering unto the household of Cornelius, which is a distance of 1,800 miles from Rome (Acts 10:23, 24). Soon after, about the year 44 A.D. (Acts 12), Peter was cast into prison in Jerusalem by Herod, but he was released by an angel. Apparently, Peter left Jerusalem and went to Babylon. Peter is not mentioned again until the Jerusalem conference in 49 AD (Acts 15:7).

"Saul was converted in 33 A.D. and became Paul the Apostle (Acts 9). Paul tells us that three years after his conversion in 36 A.D., he 'went up to Jerusalem to see Peter' (Galatians 1:18), and in 49 A.D., fourteen years later, he again went up to Jerusalem (Gal. 2:1, 8), Peter being mentioned. Soon after that he met Peter in Antioch, and as Paul says he 'withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed,' Gal. 2:11. The evidence is abundant; the truth is clear from the Scriptures ... Very few, if any, have withstood a Pope and lived (except in these days when everybody seems to withstand him). If Peter were Pope it would have been no different. Paul does not only withstand Peter but he rebukes him and blames him of being at fault....

"This ancient Christian burial ground shows that Peter died and was buried in Jerusalem, which is easily understandable since neither history nor the Bible tells of Peter's having been in Rome. To make matters more clear, the Bible tells us that Peter was the Apostle to the Jews. It was Paul who was the Apostle to the Gentiles, and both history and the Bible tells of his being in Rome. No wonder that the Roman Catholic Bishop, Strossniayer, in his great speech against papal infallibility before the Pope and the Council of 1870 said, 'Scaliger, one of the most learned men, has not hesitated to say that St. Peter's episcopate and residence in Rome ought to be classed with ridiculous legends.' Eusebius, one of the most learned men of his time, wrote the Church history up to the year 325 A.D. He said that Peter never was in Rome....

"Mark you, all the priests agree that the Vatican and St. Peter's were built over a pagan cemetery....You realize surely that Christians would never bury their dead in a pagan cemetery, and you may be very sure that pagans would never allow a Christian to be buried in their cemetery. So, even if Peter died in Rome, which is out of the question, surely the pagan cemetery under St. Peter's Basilica would be the last place in which he would have been buried....

"... But they have said that after all these years of excavation under the Vatican, they have discovered Greek words which read, 'Peter is buried here,' and it gives the date 160 A.D. First of all, the very structure of the sentence immediately gives one the impression that either quite recently or long ago, someone put the sign there hoping that it would be taken as authentic in order to establish that which then, and even now, has never been proven. Then there is a discrepancy in the date, for Peter was martyred around the year 62 A.D. and not 160 A.D. Thirdly, why is it that they mention nothing about finding bones under or around the sign? While visiting the Catacombs, one sees a few things which are not becoming to Christians but which tend to indicate that the Christians had some pagan practices similar to those of Rome today. Nothing is said about them, and only after persistent questioning will the Roman Catholic priest, who acts as guide, tell you that those things (images, etc.) were placed there centuries after the early Christian era.

"In 1950, just a few years prior to the discovery of the Christian burial ground in Jerusalem, the Pope made the strange declaration that the bones of St. Peter were found under

St. Peter's in Rome. Strange it was, for since beginning to build the church in 1450 (finished in 1626) they erected St. Peter's Tomb (?) under the large dome and Brandini serpentine columns. Since then multiplied millions were thereby deceived into believing that the remains of St. Peter were there, which the hierarchy had all along known was not true, as is proven by the late Pope's declaration. The following was published in Newsweek of July 1, 1957:

'It was in 1950 that Pope Pius XII in his Christmas message announced that the tomb of St. Peter had indeed been found, as tradition held, beneath the immense dome of the Cathedral (there was, however, no evidence that the bones uncovered there belonged to the body of the martyr).' ...

"To make an announcement of such importance when there is absolutely 'no evidence' is rather ridiculous as was also brought out in Time Magazine of October 28, 1957 ...

'A thorough account in English of the discoveries beneath St. Peter's was now available ... by British archaeologists Jocelyn Toynbee and John Ward Perkins. The authors were not members of the excavating team, but scholars Toynbee (a Roman Catholic) and Perkins (an Anglican) pored over the official Vatican reports painstakingly and examined the diggings. Their careful independent conclusions fell short of the Pope's flat statement.' (The Pope's statement that the remains of St. Peter were found under St. Peter's in Rome.) The excavation under St. Peter's for the remains of St. Peter was still going on secretly, in spite of the Pope's declaration of 1950.

"Then in 1965, an archaeologist at Rome University, Prof. Margherita Guarducci, tells of a new set of bones belonging to Peter. The story was fantastic but lacked common sense and even bordered on the infantile ... the Palo Alto Times (California), May 9, 1967, came out with an article on the subject, and I quote, 'Other experts, among them Msgr. Joseph Ruyschaert, vice prefect of the Vatican Library, are not convinced by Miss Guarducci's evidence. "There are too many unknowns," he told reporters on a recent tour of the Vatican grottoes, "There is no continuous tracing of the bones. We lack historical proof. They could be anyone's bones." The Vatican would seem to be on the monsignor's side because so far it has taken no steps to officially recognize the bones as St. Peter's,' continues the article.

"... In spite of the statements by the high Papal authority above and the resultant lesson that should have been learned, the Pope, a year later claimed the Prof. Margherita bones as those of St. Peter. When the bones were found there was little importance placed upon them and they were filed away as such. But when the first set of Peter's bones turned out so tragically, there was a vacuum left, and something had to be done. Again they turned their thoughts to the filed-away bones, the only hope they had of success. In them there was a ray of hope for the bones were minus a skull, which could go along with the story of the supposed skull of St. Peter which had for centuries been guarded in the church of St. John Lateran in Rome. With a generous mixture of ideas, suppositions, theories and wishful thinking, a fairly logical story emerged. It was then declared by Pope Paul as the Gospel truth that these now were the genuine bones of St. Peter, and most of the faithful accepted them as such. For a while all was well until another hitch developed. This time, as fate would have it, the bones in connection with the skull which was guarded for centuries as that of St. Peter, were found incompatible to the more recent bones of St. Peter. The dilemma was terrible....It was a choice of claiming these bones championed by Prof. Margherita as fake, or claiming as fake the skull accepted by hundreds of Popes as that of St. Peter. They rejected the past rather than expose themselves to the ridicule of the present.' Prof. Margherita claims in this article, which appeared in the Manchester Guardian in London, as well as the S. F. Chronicle of June 27, 1968, concerning the long accepted skull of St. Peter, as 'it is a fake.' Then the article continues, 'The hundreds of Popes and millions of Roman Catholics who have accepted and venerated the other skull were innocent victims of another early tradition.'

"But the most astounding statement in the long article found in the above mentioned newspaper was, 'The professor did not submit them to modern scientific tests, which would

Peter's Tomb Recently Discovered in Jerusalem

have determined the approximate age, because, she feared the process would have reduced them to dust.' How could any scientific study of bones be carried out without first scientifically determining the age of the person, or bones? This would be of the greatest interest and the most important for further research. Also any scientist or chemist knows that you do not have to submit the whole skeleton for testing to determine the age. A part of the shin bone or a rib would be sufficient. It appears that she was protecting her 'Peter's bones' from another possible disaster, which a wrong age would have caused. The Vatican and others have calculated through all existing evidence that Peter lived to be around 80 and 82 years and that he died around the years 62 to 64 A.D. These figures go along perfectly, as does everything else in the case, with the remains found in the Christian burial ground on the Mount of Olives and in the ossuary on which was clearly and beautifully written 'Simon Bar Jona' in Aramaic....

"The great historian, Schaff, states that the idea of Peter being in Rome is irreconcilable with the silence of the Scriptures, and even with the mere fact of Paul's epistle to the Romans. In the year 57, Paul wrote his epistle to the Roman church but does not mention Peter, although he does name 28 leaders in the church at Rome (Rom. 16:7). It must, therefore, be concluded that if the whole subject is faced with detached objectivity, the conclusion must inevitably be reached that Peter was never in Rome. Paul lived and wrote in Rome, but he declared, 'only Luke is with me.'"

Appendix Q

Chronology from the Crucifixion in 30 AD to the Destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD (All years are reckoned AD)

AD

30

- 1) Christ crucified Passover Day Nisan 14, April 5¹
- 2) Christ resurrected toward the end of the weekly Sabbath Nisan 17
- 3) Christ appears to disciples for forty days from Nisan 18 to His ascension Ivar 18, May 18¹
- 4) Holy Spirit poured out Pentecost Sunday, May 28¹
- 5) Gospel preached in Jerusalem, (Acts 3-5)

31

Gospel preached in Jerusalem Apostles compile Jesus' teachings (Acts 5 and 6)

32

- 1) Martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 6, 7)
- 2) Persecution against Church (Acts 8:1-4)
- 3) Saul's activities as leader of persecution—ravages the Church
- 4) Because of persecutions brethren scatter and preach the word everywhere (Acts 8:4)
- 5) Philip to Samaria; Simon Magus (Acts 8:5-13) Peter and John sent to Samaria (Acts 8:14-25)
- 6) Philip and Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40)

33

- 1) Saul breathes out threats and slaughter against disciples, goes to Damascus with letters from high priest (Acts 9:1-2)
- 2) Saul's conversion Spring 33 AD (Acts 9:3-18)
- 3) Saul preaches Christ in Damascus (Acts 9:19-23).
- 4) Plot to kill Saul discovered; Saul escapes by night, departs to Arabia (Acts 9:24-25), taught by Christ for three years (Gal. 1:15-18)

34

Spring 34 AD end of Saul's 1st year in Arabia

35

- 1) Spring 35 AD end of Saul's 2nd year in Arabia
- 2) Gospel of Matthew completed

36

- 1) Spring 36 AD end of Saul's 3rd year in Arabia
- 2) Saul returns to Damascus (Gal. 1:17)
- 3) Saul's first visit to Jerusalem for 15 days (Acts

9:26-30, Gal. 1:18-20)

- 4) Barnabas brings Saul to apostles Peter and James (Acts 9:27). Saul speaks boldly to Greek-speaking Jews in Jerusalem, who seek to kill him (9:28-29)
- 5) Brethren bring Saul to Caesarea and send him to Tarsus, Saul's home in Asia Minor (Acts 9:30)
- 6) Saul remains in Tarsus for four years from summer 36 AD to summer 40 AD
- 7) Churches in Judea, Galilee and Samaria have peace (Acts 9:31)

37-38

- 1) Peter evangelizes in Lydda and Joppa (Acts 9:32-41)
- 2) Peter stays with Simon the tanner many days (Acts 9:42-43)

38

- 1) Cornelius has vision; angel instructs him to send for Peter in Joppa (Acts 10:1-6)
- 2) Peter comes to Cornelius' house and many Gentiles are converted (Acts 10:24-48)
- 3) Peter reports conversion of Gentiles to elders in Jerusalem (Acts 11:1-18)
- 4) Peter remains in Jerusalem from 38 to 44 AD
- 5) Gospel of Mark written between 38 and 44 AD

39-40

- 1) Brethren scattered because of Saul's persecution; preach the Word to Jews as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch (Acts 11:19)
- 2) Certain men from Cyprus and Cyrenia preach the Word to Greeks in Antioch (Acts 11:20)
- 3) Many believe and a great number of Gentiles are converted (Acts 11:21)
- 4) Report of this comes to Jerusalem; apostles send Barnabas to Antioch to minister to them (Acts 11:22-24).
- 5) Barnabas goes to Tarsus and finds Saul and brings him to Antioch to help teach Gentiles (Acts 11:25)

40-41

Epistle of James written⁵

41

- 1) Claudius Caesar made Emperor of Rome January 25, 41 AD²

Chronology from 30 AD to 70 AD

- 2) In Antioch, Barnabas and Saul teach for a whole year—summer to summer (Acts 11:26)
 - 3) Herod Agrippa I made king of Judea by Claudius³ in spring 41 AD, reigning three years until spring 44 AD when he dies³ (Acts 12:23)
- 42-43**
- 1) Most of the apostles leave Jerusalem 42 AD to preach the Gospel to the lost sheep of the ten tribes of the house Israel scattered in all the world, as Jesus had commanded Matt. 10:5-23
 - 2) In spring 42 AD the prophet Agabus comes from Jerusalem and prophesies of coming three-year famine (43-45 AD) that occurs during years 3-5 of Claudius' reign (Acts 11:27-28)
 - 3) Disciples plant and prepare food and relief to send to saints in Jerusalem (Acts 11:29).
- 44**
- 1) In spring 44 AD food and relief sent to Jerusalem by hands of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 11:30)
 - 2) Spring 44 AD Herod Agrippa I persecutes Church and beheads the apostle James, brother of John about Passover time (Acts 12:1-2)
 - 3) During Feast of Unleavened Bread Herod Agrippa I has apostle Peter arrested and put in prison (Acts 12:3-5)
 - 4) Angels release Peter from prison, he goes to Mary's house the mother of Mark, then escapes to another place (Acts 12:6-17)
 - 5) The next day, Herod executes prison guards because Peter had escaped (Acts 12:18)
 - 6) Herod goes down to Tyre and Sidon, where God strikes him with worms and he dies—spring 44 AD^{1,3} (Acts 12:19-23)
 - 7) Barnabas and Saul return to Antioch and take John Mark with them (Acts 12:25).
 - 8) Late spring 44 AD, Barnabas and Saul ordained as apostles (Acts 13:1-3)
- 44-46**
- First evangelistic journey—2 ½ years from late spring 44 AD to fall 46 AD (Acts 13:4-52; 14:1-25)
- 46-49**
- Paul and Barnabas stay in Antioch for a long time—autumn 46 AD to late summer 49 AD—2 ½ years (Acts 14:26-28)
- 49**
- 1) Pharisaic Judaizers come down to Antioch (Acts 15:1, 5) in summer 49 AD, teaching mandatory circumcision for disciples to be saved
 - 2) Paul, Barnabas and certain others sent to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem about this question—Fall 49 AD—Feast of Tabernacles time¹ (Acts 15:2)
 - 3) Paul's third visit to Jerusalem with Barnabas, Titus, and one of the certain others, also goes with Paul (Gal. 2:1-2)
 - 4) Public welcome for Paul and party by Jerusalem brethren, apostles and elders (Acts 15:4)
 - 5) Titus not required to be circumcised (Gal. 2:2-3)
 - 6) Paul and Barnabas' private meeting with apostles James, Cephas [Peter] and John about circumcision question (Gal. 2:4-10). They agree circumcision not required for Gentiles. Paul and Barnabas' ministry to Gentiles confirmed
 - 7) Discussion and apostles' agreement and James' judgment that Gentiles need not be circumcised (Acts 15:6-22)
 - 8) Apostles' letter to Gentiles written by James (Acts 15:23-29)
 - 9) Paul's party returns to Antioch with Judas and Silas (Acts 15:30-32)
 - 10) Paul and Barnabas stay in Antioch certain days (Acts 15:35-36)
 - 11) Paul and Barnabas separate (Acts 15:37-40)
- 49-52**
- Paul's second evangelistic journey (Acts 15:40 through 18:23), three years, from late autumn 49 AD to late autumn 52 AD
- 49**
- Late autumn 49 AD to late summer 50 AD
- 1) Paul circumcises Timothy and takes him on journey through many cities, Phrygia, Galatia, and on to Troas (Acts 16:1)
 - 2) They take a ship from Troas to Neapolis and on to Philippi in Macedonia (Acts 16:9-12)
 - 3) On the day of the weeks—Pentecost 50 AD¹—they meet Lydia and baptize her and her household (Acts 16:13-15)
 - 4) Paul casts out demon from woman; is arrested and put into prison; earthquake breaks their bonds; jailer and household baptized; released and sees brethren and Lydia, then departs (Acts 16:16-40)
 - 5) Paul comes to Thessalonica, preaches in synagogue three Sabbaths. Many are converted (Acts 17:1-4)
 - 6) Paul and Silas arrested and let go (Acts 17:5-9)
 - 7) Paul and Silas to Brea (Acts 17:10-13) Paul goes to Athens; preaches on Mars' hill (Acts 17:14-34)
- 50-52**
- Late summer 50 AD to spring 52 AD Paul at Corinth
- 1) Paul preaches in synagogue every Sabbath Timothy and Silas join him (Acts 18:1-5)
 - 2) **Paul writes I Thessalonians from Corinth 50 AD⁶**
 - 3) Synagogue splits, new church formed. Paul

stays for year and a half (Acts 18:6-11)

- 4) **Paul writes II Thessalonians from Corinth 51 AD**⁶ Paul brought before judgment seat of Gallio⁴ (Acts 18:12-18) winter 51 AD and released; remains many more days until spring 52 AD
- 5) Paul goes to Ephesus with Priscilla and Aquila, preaches in synagogue. Priscilla and Aquila remain (Acts 18:18-20). Paul sails from Ephesus, goes to Caesarea and to Jerusalem to visit the church and keep Feast of Tabernacles.
- 6) Autumn 52 AD returns to Antioch (Acts 18:21-22)

52-53

- 1) Paul stays in Antioch for some time—autumn 52 AD to summer 53 AD (Acts 18:23)
- 2) During Feast of Unleavened Bread, apostle Peter comes to Antioch. After certain ones come down from James, he and Barnabas separate themselves from Gentiles to eat with Jews. Paul publicly rebukes Peter and Jews for judaizing (Gal. 2:11-20)
- 3) **Paul writes epistle to the Galatians from Antioch in late spring 53 AD**, because Judaizers are troubling all churches in Galatia, preaching another gospel—gospel of circumcision as requirement for salvation (Gal. 1:1-12)⁹

53-57

Paul's third evangelistic journey four years

- 1) Paul begins third evangelistic journey by going to Galatia first to follow up his epistle and strengthen disciples, then through Phrygia (Acts 18:23)
- 2) Aquila in Ephesus meets Apollos and instructs him more perfectly in the Scriptures to preach Christ (Acts 18:24-28). Apollos leaves Ephesus for Corinth (Acts 19:1)
- 3) Paul comes to Ephesus, stays for a little more than three years from autumn 54 AD to early winter 57 AD (Acts 19:1-20)
- 4) **Paul writes I Corinthians in late winter of 56 AD**⁷ before Passover of 57 AD
- 5) **Paul writes II Corinthians in late summer of 57 AD**⁷
- 6) Riot in Ephesus because Paul's preaching is destroying the idol business (Acts 19:21-41)
- 7) Early winter 57 AD Paul leaves Ephesus and goes to Macedonia, stays three months and visits Corinth (Acts 20:1-3)
- 8) **Paul writes Romans winter 57 AD**⁷

58

- 1) Paul and company return through Macedonia to Troas where they keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Paul preaches late on Sabbath into the first day of the weeks (Acts 20:3, 5, 7-12)
- 2) Luke and rest of company sail from Philippi after days of Unleavened Bread and meet Paul

in Troas (Acts 20:6)

- 3) Paul goes ahead on foot and Luke's company sails to Assos, where they meet Paul, and he goes with them (Acts 20:13-14)
- 4) Paul and company go to Miletus. Paul sends for elders of Ephesian church and warns them of coming apostasy (Acts 20:15-38)
- 5) Paul goes to Caesarea and stays with Philip (Acts 21:1-8)
- 6) Prophet Agabus warns Paul not to go to Jerusalem, but Paul and company go anyway (Acts 21:10-16)
- 7) Paul arrives in Jerusalem late spring 58 AD—perhaps near time of Feast of Pentecost¹ (Acts 21:17)
- 8) Paul visits James and elders, takes charges of men who have vow to complete at the temple. Jews seize Paul, but he is rescued by Roman soldiers (Acts 21:18-40)
- 9) Paul speaks to mob in Hebrew, mob again attacks him, and Roman soldiers rescue him (Acts 22:1-29)
- 10) Paul makes his defense before Sanhedrin (Acts 23:1-10)
- 11) Christ appears to him in a vision. Jews plot to kill Paul. Roman centurion and soldiers take Paul by night out of Jerusalem to Caesarea and keep him in Praetorium of Herod (Acts 23:11-35)

58-60

From early summer 58 AD to early autumn 60 AD Paul a prisoner in Caesarea

- 1) Paul a prisoner for two years, defends himself three times. Found to have done nothing worthy of death or bonds, Paul appeals to Caesar; Agrippa agrees to send Paul to Rome (Acts 24-26)
- 2) Luke has ready access to Paul during Paul's imprisonment and travels to Jerusalem and Palestine
- 3) **Luke writes his Gospel⁹ and begins writing Acts under Paul's supervision.⁹ Luke has access to records and writings from Jerusalem church which he uses to compile his gospel**

60-61

From autumn 60 AD to late winter 61 AD Paul on journey from Caesarea to Rome

- 1) Paul and company journey by ship to Rome (Acts 27:1-28:16)

61-63

Paul in prison two years—late winter 61 AD to early spring 63 AD

- 1) Roman centurion delivers Paul to commander of camp. Paul allowed to stay by himself, guarded by soldiers (Acts 28:16)
- 2) Paul speaks to Jewish religious leaders of Rome (Acts 28:17-29)

Chronology from 30 AD to 70 AD

- 3) **Paul writes Hebrews in early spring 61 AD.**
- 4) In Jerusalem, James is martyred by zealots at Passover time,^{1, 11} 62 AD
- 5) Paul remains in own hired house two years welcoming all and preaching the kingdom of God (Acts 28:30-31)
- 6) Luke finishes book of Acts up to chapter 28:31, intending to write more to be added later, but unable to do so
- 7) **Paul writes Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon¹⁰**

End of Book of Acts 63

- 1) Paul is released from prison in Rome and goes to island of Crete (Titus 1:5)

63-67

Five years

- 1) Paul leaves Titus in Crete (Titus 1:5) and goes to Nicopolis in Macedonia (Titus 3:12)
- 2) From Nicopolis Paul writes I Timothy and an epistle to Titus 63 AD
- 3) Peter writes his first epistle 64-65 AD
- 4) Peter writes his second epistle in 65-66 AD
- 5) Paul goes to Spain and Britain 64-67 AD
- 6) **Paul back in prison in Rome and writes II Timothy 67 AD**
- 7) **Nero dies June 9, 68 AD in Greece**
- 8) Is Paul martyred before Nero dies, or is he released after Nero dies? If so, does he go back to Britain to be martyred there?

67-70

- 1) Jewish revolt against Romans intensifies
- 2) Romans conquer Jerusalem and destroy city and temple AB 9-10, September 3-4, 70 AD

End Notes

- 1) Calculated Hebrew Calendar
- 2) *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, 1963; p. 210
- 3) *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, 1962; vol. 1, p. 60
- 4) *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, 1962, vol. 2. P. 351
- 5) *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 1981; vol. 3 p. 53
- 6) *Redating the New Testament*, John A. T. Robinson, 1976
- 7) *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57, 352*
- 8) *Ibid.*, pp. 79, 352 *
- 9) *A Revised Chronology*, Fred R. Coulter 2002
- 10) *Harmony of the Life of St. Paul*, Frank J Goodwin, 1988, pp. 149, 158
- 11) *The Original Bible Restored*, Ernest L Martin, 1991, p. 161

*Note: According to this chronology, in each case, the epistles of I & II Corinthians, Romans and Galatians are placed a year earlier than Robinson's, which Robinson allows for. "It must be stressed again that the absolute datings [of the epistles of Paul] could be a year or so out either way..." (Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, 1976 ed., p. 84).

Appendix R

God's Annual Feast and Holy Days

The Scriptures teach that there are seven annual feasts and holy days which were ordained by God to be observed as special commanded convocations. These feasts and holy days portray God's plan of salvation for mankind. The observance of these holy convocations is a sign between God and His people. God's annual feasts and holy days were observed by His people during the Old Testament times. In the New Testament, we find that Jesus Christ's entire ministry was centered around the spiritual meaning of these holy days. The New Testament apostolic church faithfully observed these annual feasts and holy days. The Scriptures reveal that they will be observed by all mankind after the return of Jesus Christ.

As the holy days are annual Sabbath days, they may fall on any day of the week (except Pentecost, which always falls on a Sunday). When a holy day falls on a weekly Sabbath, the special observance of the annual holy day takes precedence. God's feasts and holy days are to be observed from sunset to sunset in accordance with the Hebrew Calculated Calendar as preserved by the Levitical Jews. The seven annual feasts and holy days are as follows:

List of All the Commanded Holy Days and Feasts of God

Feasts/Holy Days	Commanded Scriptural Date of Observance	Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT) Plans for Mankind
1) Passover	14th day of the first month (Nisan, also called Abib) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not a holy day Observed previous evening. 	OT: God's promises and covenant with Abraham. God spared the firstborn of Israel and judged the gods of Egypt. NT: God's love revealed. Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God the Father, died for the sins of the world. Remission of sins through His blood—His death for yours. The New Covenant through Jesus' body and blood—eternal life.
2) Unleavened Bread (7 days)	15th through 21st days of the first month. (The 15th and 21st are holy days)	OT: God ratified His covenant with Abraham. God led the children of Israel out of Egypt into the Promised Land. NT: Christians are unleavened in Christ, overcome sin by the power of the Holy Spirit and walk in newness of life—keeping the commandments of God. They are the spiritual seed of Abraham.
3) Pentecost	Counted Annually * Fifty days are counted, beginning with the first day of the week during the Days of Unleavened Bread. The feast is observed on the fiftieth day, which always falls on the first day of the week.	OT: Israel received the Law at Mt. Sinai. The firstfruits harvest of the barley and wheat. NT: The church received the Holy Spirit. Christians are the firstfruits unto God—in the first resurrection.
4) Trumpets	1st day of the seventh month	OT: Memorial of Trumpets; God putting His presence in the temple. NT: God's triumph over Satan and all evil. Christ and Saints return to earth from Sea of Glass.

God's Annual Feast and Holy Days

Feasts/Holy Days (Continued)	Commanded Scriptural Date of Observance	Old Testament and New Testament Plans for Mankind
5) Atonement	10th day of the 7th month	OT: With special animal sacrifices the High Priest atoned for the sins of Israel. NT: Satan removed and bound; the sacrifice of Jesus Christ applied to all people of the world. Saints as spirit beings at one with God the Father and Jesus Christ.
6) Tabernacles (7 days)	15th through 21st day of the seventh month (the 15th is a holy day)	OT: Memorial of Israel's wandering in the wilderness. Israel's rest in Solomon's time. NT: Jesus Christ—God in the flesh—tabernacling with mankind. Christ by God's Spirit dwelling in the saints. Saints waiting for spiritual bodies—physical bodies temporary. 1000 year reign of Christ and the saints.
7) Last Great Day	22nd day of the 7th month (a holy day)	OT: The bounty of God's blessings to Israel. NT: 1) 2nd resurrection: Phase One—opportunity for salvation; Phase Two—final judgment of wicked cast into the lake of fire. 2) New heaven and earth. 3) New Jerusalem comes to earth. 4) God's plan for rest of eternity begins.

List of All the Commanded Holy Days and Feasts of God from 5 BC to 105 AD

The dates of the Calculated Hebrew Calendar are coordinated with the Julian Calendar

Year	Passover	Unleavened Bread (First)	Unleavened Bread (Last)	Pentecost	Feast of Trumpets	Day of Atonement	Feast of Tabernacles	Last Great Day
5 BC	MAR 22 WED	MAR 23 THU	MAR 29 WED	MAY 14 SUN	SEPT 2 SAB	SEPT 11 MON	SEPT 16 SAB	SEPT 23 SAB
4 BC	APR 11 WED	APR 12 THU	APR 18 WED	JUNE 3 SUN	SEPT 22 SAB	OCT 1 MON	OCT 6 SAB	OCT 13 SAB
3 BC	MAR 30 SAB	MAR 31 SUN	APR 6 SAB	MAY 19 SUN	SEPT 10 TUE	SEPT 19 THU	SEPT 24 TUE	OCT 1 TUE
2 BC	MAR 19 WED	MAR 20 THU	MAR 26 WED	MAY 11 SUN	AUG 30 SAB	SEPT 8 MON	SEPT 13 SAB	SEPT 20 SAB
1 BC	APR 7 WED	APR 8 THU	APR 14 WED	MAY 30 SUN	SEPT 18 SAB	SEPT 27 MON	OCT 2 SAB	OCT 9 SAB
1 AD	MAR 28 MON	MAR 29 TUE	APR 4 MON	MAY 22 SUN	SEPT 8 THU	SEPT 17 SAB	SEPT 22 THU	SEPT 29 THU
2 AD	APR 15 SAB	APR 16 SUN	APR 22 SAB	JUNE 4 SUN	SEPT 26 TUE	OCT 5 THU	OCT 10 TUE	OCT 17 TUE
3 AD	APR 4 WED	APR 5 THU	APR 11 WED	MAY 27 SUN	SEPT 15 SAB	SEPT 24 MON	SEPT 29 SAB	OCT 6 SAB
4 AD	MAR 24 MON	MAR 25 TUE	MAR 31 MON	MAY 18 SUN	SEPT 4 THU	SEPT 13 SAB	SEPT 18 THU	SEPT 25 THU
5 AD	APR 13 MON	APR 14 TUE	APR 20 MON	JUNE 7 SUN	SEPT 24 THU	OCT 3 SAB	OCT 8 THU	OCT 15 THU
6 AD	APR 2 FRI	APR 3 SAB	APR 9 FRI	MAY 23 SUN	SEPT 13 MON	SEPT 22 WED	SEPT 27 MON	OCT 4 MON
7 AD	MAR 21 MON	MAR 22 MON	MAR 28 MON	MAY 15 SUN	SEPT 1 THU	SEPT 10 SAB	SEPT 15 THU	SEPT 22 THU
8 AD	APR 9 MON	APR 10 TUE	APR 16 MON	JUNE 3 SUN	SEPT 20 THU	SEPT 29 SAB	OCT 4 THU	OCT 11 THU

Appendix R

Year	Passover	Unleavened Bread (First)	Unleavened Bread (Last)	Pentecost	Feast of Trumpets	Day of Atonement	Feast of Tabernacles	Last Great Day
9 AD	MAR 29 FRI	MAR 30 SAB	APR 5 FRI	MAY 19 SUN	SEPT 9 MON	SEPT 18 WED	SEPT 23 MON	SEPT 30 MON
10 AD	APR 16 WED	APR 17 THU	APR 23 WED	JUNE 8 SUN	SEPT 27 SAB	OCT 6 MON	OCT 11 SAB	OCT 18 SAB
11 AD	APR 6 MON	APR 7 TUE	APR 13 MON	MAY 31 SUN	SEPT 17 THU	SEPT 26 SAB	OCT 1 THU	OCT 8 THU
12 AD	MAR 25 FRI	MAR 26 SAB	APR 1 FRI	MAY 15 SUN	SEPT 5 MON	SEPT 14 WED	SEPT 19 MON	SEPT 26 MON
13 AD	APR 14 FRI	APR 15 SAB	APR 21 FRI	JUNE 4 SUN	SEPT 25 MON	OCT 4 WED	OCT 9 MON	OCT 16 MON
14 AD	APR 2 MON	APR 3 TUE	APR 9 MON	MAY 27 SUN	SEPT 13 THU	SEPT 22 SAB	SEPT 27 THU	OCT 4 THU
15 AD	MAR 22 FRI	MAR 23 SAB	MAR 29 FRI	MAY 12 SUN	SEPT 2 MON	SEPT 11 WED	SEPT 16 MON	SEPT 23 MON
16 AD	APR 10 FRI	APR 11 SAB	APR 17 FRI	MAY 31 SUN	SEPT 21 MON	SEPT 30 WED	OCT 5 MON	OCT 12 MON
17 AD	MAR 31 WED	APR 1 THU	APR 7 WED	MAY 23 SUN	SEPT 11 SAB	SEPT 20 MON	SEPT 25 SAB	OCT 2 SAB
18 AD	MAR 19 SAB	MAR 20 SUN	MAR 26 SAB	MAY 8 SUN	AUG 30 TUE	SEPT 9 THU	SEPT 13 TUE	SEPT 20 TUE
19 AD	APR 7 FRI	APR 8 SAB	APR 14 FRI	MAY 28 SUN	SEPT 18 MON	SEPT 27 WED	OCT 2 THU	OCT 9 THU
20 AD	MAR 27 WED	MAR 28 THU	APR 3 WED	MAY 19 SUN	SEPT 7 SAB	SEPT 16 MON	SEPT 21 SAB	SEPT 28 SAB
21 AD	APR 14 MON	APR 15 TUE	APR 21 MON	JUNE 8 SUN	SEPT 25 THU	OCT 4 SAB	OCT 9 THU	OCT 16 THU
22 AD	APR 4 SAB	APR 5 SUN	APR 11 SAB	MAY 24 SUN	SEPT 15 TUE	SEPT 24 THU	SEPT 29 TUE	OCT 6 TUE
23 AD	MAR 24 WED	MAR 25 THU	MAR 31 WED	MAY 16 SUN	SEPT 4 SAB	SEPT 13 MON	SEPT 18 SAB	SEPT 25 SAB
24 AD	APR 12 WED	APR 13 THU	APR 19 WED	JUNE 4 SUN	SEPT 23 SAB	OCT 2 MON	OCT 7 SAB	OCT 14 SAB
25 AD	APR 2 MON	APR 3 TUE	APR 9 MON	MAY 27 SUN	SEPT 13 THU	SEPT 22 SAB	SEPT 27 THU	OCT 4 THU
26 AD	MAR 22 FRI	MAR 23 SAB	MAR 29 FRI	MAY 12 SUN	SEPT 2 MON	SEPT 11 WED	SEPT 16 MON	SEPT 23 MON
27 AD	APR 9 WED	APR 10 THU	APR 16 WED	JUNE 1 SUN	SEPT 20 SAB	SEPT 29 MON	OCT 4 SAB	OCT 11 SAB
28 AD	MAR 29 MON	MAR 30 TUE	APR 5 MON	MAY 23 SUN	SEPT 9 THU	SEPT 18 SAB	SEPT 23 THU	SEPT 30 THU
29 AD	APR 16 SAB	APR 17 SUN	APR 23 SAB	JUNE 5 SUN	SEPT 27 TUE	OCT 6 THU	OCT 11 TUE	OCT 18 TU
30 AD	APR 5 WED	APR 6 THU	APR 12 WED	MAY 28 SUN	SEPT 16 SAB	SEPT 25 MON	SEPT 30 SAB	OCT 7 SAB
31 AD	MAR 26 MON	MAR 27 TUE	APR 2 MON	MAY 20 SUN	SEPT 6 THU	SEPT 15 SAB	SEPT 20 THU	SEPT 27 THU
32 AD	APR 14 MON	APR 15 TUE	APR 21 MON	JUNE 8 SUN	SEPT 25 THU	OCT 4 SAB	OCT 9 THU	OCT 16 THU
33 AD	APR 3 FRI	APR 4 SAB	APR 10 FRI	JUNE 24 SUN	SEPT 14 MON	SEPT 23 WED	SEPT 28 MON	OCT 5 MON
34 AD	MAR 22 MON	MAR 23 TUE	MAR 29 MON	MAY 16 SUN	SEPT 2 THU	SEPT 11 SUN	SEPT 16 THU	SEPT 23 THU
35 AD	APR 11 MON	APR 12 TUE	APR 18 MON	JUNE 5 SUN	SEPT 22 THU	OCT 1 SAB	OCT 6 THU	OCT 13 THU
36 AD	MAR 30 FRI	MAR 31 SAB	APR 6 FRI	MAY 20 SUN	SEPT 10 MON	SEPT 19 WED	SEPT 24 MON	OCT 1 MON
37 AD	MAR 20 WED	MAR 21 THU	MAR 27 WED	MAY 12 SUN	AUG 31 SAB	SEPT 9 MON	SEPT 14 SAB	SEPT 21 SAB
38 AD	APR 7 MON	APR 8 TUE	APR 14 MON	JUNE 1 SUN	SEPT 7 MON	SEPT 16 WED	SEPT 21 MON	SEPT 28 MON

God's Annual Feast and Holy Days

Year	Passover	Unleavened Bread (First)	Unleavened Bread (Last)	Pentecost	Feast of Trumpets	Day of Atonement	Feast of Tabernacles	Last Great Day
39 AD	MAR 27 FRI	MAR 28 SAB	APR 3 FRI	MAY 17 SUN	SEPT 7 MON	SEPT 16 WED	SEPT 21 MON	SEPT 28 MON
40 AD	APR 15 FRI	APR 16 SAB	APR 22 FRI	JUNE 5 SUN	SEPT 26 MON	OCT 5 WED	OCT 10 MON	OCT 17 MON
41 AD	APR 3 MON	APR 4 TUE	APR 10 MON	MAY 28 SUN	SEPT 14 THU	SEPT 23 SAB	SEPT 28 THU	OCT 5 THU
42 AD	MAR 24 SAB	MAR 25 SUN	MAR 31 SAB	MAY 13 SUN	SEPT 4 TUE	SEPT 13 THU	SEPT 18 TUE	SEPT 25 TUE
43 AD	APR 12 FRI	APR 13 SAB	APR 19 FRI	JUNE 2 SUN	SEPT 23 MON	OCT 2 WED	OCT 7 MON	OCT 14 MON
44 AD	APR 1 WED	APR 2 THU	APR 8 WED	MAY 24 SUN	SEPT 12 SAB	SEPT 21 MON	SEPT 26 SAB	OCT 3 SAB
45 AD	MAR 20 SAB	MAR 21 SUN	MAR 27 SAB	MAY 9 SUN	AUG 31 TUE	SEPT 9 THU	SEPT 14 TUE	SEPT 21 TUE
46 AD	APR 8 FRI	APR 9 SAB	APR 15 FRI	MAY 29 SUN	SEPT 19 MON	SEPT 28 WED	OCT 3 MON	OCT 10 MON
47 AD	MAR 29 WED	MAR 30 THU	APR 5 WED	MAY 21 SUN	SEPT 9 SAB	SEPT 18 MON	SEPT 23 SAB	SEPT 30 SAB
48 AD	APR 15 MON	APR 16 TUE	APR 22 MON	JUNE 9 SUN	SEPT 26 THU	OCT 5 SAB	OCT 10 THU	OCT 17 THU
49 AD	APR 5 SAB	APR 6 SUN	APR 12 SAB	MAY 25 SUN	SEPT 16 TUE	SEPT 25 THU	SEPT 30 TUE	OCT 7 TUE
50 AD	MAR 25 WED	MAR 26 THU	APR 1 WED	MAY 17 SUN	SEPT 5 SAB	SEPT 14 MON	SEPT 19 SAB	SEPT 26 SAB
51 AD	APR 14 WED	APR 15 THU	APR 21 WED	JUNE 6 SUN	SEPT 25 SAB	OCT 4 MON	OCT 9 SAB	OCT 16 SAB
52 AD	APR 3 MON	APR 4 TUE	APR 10 MON	MAY 28 SUN	SEPT 14 THU	SEPT 23 SAB	SEPT 28 THU	OCT 5 THU
53 AD	MAR 23 FRI	MAR 24 SAB	MAR 30 FRI	MAY 13 SUN	SEPT 3 MON	SEPT 12 WED	SEPT 17 MON	SEPT 24 MON
54 AD	APR 10 WED	WED 11 THU	APR 17 WED	JUNE 2 SUN	SEPT 21 SAB	SEPT 30 MON	OCT 5 SAB	OCT 12 SAB
55 AD	MAR 31 MON	APR 1 TUE	APR 7 MON	MAY 25 SUN	SEPT 11 THU	SEPT 20 SAB	SEPT 25 THU	OCT 2 THU
56 AD	MAR 19 FRI	MAR 20 SAB	MAR 26 FRI	MAY 9 SUN	AUG 30 MON	SEPT 8 WED	SEPT 13 MON	SEPT 20 MON
57 AD	APR 6 WED	APR 7 THU	APR 13 WED	MAY 29 SUN	SEPT 17 SAB	SEPT 26 MON	OCT 1 SAB	OCT 8 SAB
58 AD	MAR 27 MON	MAR 28 TUE	APR 3 MON	MAY 21 SUN	SEPT 7 THU	SEPT 16 SAB	SEPT 21 THU	SEPT 28 THU
59 AD	APR 16 MON	APR 17 TUE	APR 23 MON	JUNE 10 SUN	SEPT 27 THU	OCT 6 SAB	OCT 11 THU	OCT 18 THU
60 AD	APR 4 FRI	APR 5 SAB	APR 11 FRI	MAY 25 SUN	SEPT 15 MON	SEPT 24 WED	SEPT 29 MON	OCT 6 MON
61 AD	MAR 23 MON	MAR 24 TUE	MAR 30 MON	MAY 17 SUN	SEPT 3 THU	SEPT 12 SAB	SEPT 17 THU	SEPT 24 THU
62 AD	APR 12 MON	APR 13 TUE	APR 19 MON	JUNE 6 SUN	SEPT 23 THU	OCT 2 SAB	OCT 7 THU	OCT 14 THU
63 AD	APR 1 FRI	APR 2 SAB	APR 8 FRI	MAY 22 SUN	SEPT 12 MON	SEPT 21 WED	SEPT 26 MON	OCT 3 MON
64 AD	MAR 21 WED	MAR 22 THU	MAR 28 WED	MAY 13 SUN	SEPT 1 SAB	SEPT 10 MON	SEPT 15 SAB	SEPT 22 SAB
65 AD	APR 8 MON	APR 9 TUE	APR 15 MON	JUNE 2 SUN	SEPT 19 THU	SEPT 28 SAB	OCT 3 THU	OCT 10 THU
66 AD	MAR 28 FRI	MAR 29 SAB	APR 4 FRI	MAY 18 SUN	SEPT 8 MON	SEPT 17 WED	SEPT 22 MON	SEPT 29 MON
67 AD	APR 17 FRI	APR 18 SAB	APR 24 FRI	JUNE 7 SUN	SEPT 28 MON	OCT 7 WED	OCT 12 MON	OCT 19 MON
68 AD	APR 4 MON	APR 5 TUE	APR 11 MON	MAY 29 SUN	SEPT 15 THU	SEPT 24 SAB	SEPT 29 THU	OCT 6 THU

Appendix R

Year	Passover	Unleavened Bread (First)	Unleavened Bread (Last)	Pentecost	Feast of Trumpets	Day of Atonement	Feast of Tabernacles	Last Great Day
69 AD	MAR 25 SAB	MAR 26 SUN	APR 1 SAB	MAY 14 SUN	SEPT 5 TUE	SEPT 14 THU	SEPT 19 TUE	SEPT 26 TUE
70 AD	APR 13 FRI	APR 14 SAB	APR 20 FRI	JUNE 3 SUN	SEPT 24 MON	OCT 3 WED	OCT 8 MON	OCT 15 MON
71 AD	APR 3 WED	APR 4 THU	APR 10 WED	MAY 26 SUN	SEPT 14 SAB	SEPT 23 MON	SEPT 29 SAB	OCT 5 SAB
72 AD	MAR 21 SAB	MAR 22 SUN	MAR 28 SAB	MAY 10 SUN	SEPT 1 TUE	SEPT 10 THU	SEPT 15 TUE	SEPT 22 TUE
73 AD	APR 9 FRI	APR 10 SAB	APR 16 FRI	MAY 30 SUN	SEPT 20 MON	SEPT 29 WED	OCT 4 MON	OCT 11 MON
74 AD	MAR 30 WED	MAR 31 THU	APR 6 WED	MAY 22 SUN	SEPT 10 SAB	SEPT 19 MON	SEPT 24 SAB	OCT 1 SAB
75 AD	MAR 20 MON	MAR 21 TUE	MAR 27 MON	MAY 10 SUN	AUG 31 THU	SEPT 9 SAB	SEPT 14 THU	SEPT 21 THU
76 AD	APR 6 SAB	APR 7 SUN	APR 13 SUN	MAY 26 SUN	SEPT 17 TUE	SEPT 26 THU	OCT 1 TUE	OCT 8 TUE
77 AD	MAR 26 WED	MAR 27 THU	APR 2 WED	MAY 18 SUN	SEPT 6 SAB	SEPT 15 MON	SEPT 20 SAB	SEPT 27 SAB
78 AD	APR 5 WED	APR 16 TUE	APR 22 WED	JUNE 8 SUN	SEPT 26 SAB	OCT 5 MON	OCT 10 SAB	OCT 17 SAB
79 AD	APR 5 MON	APR 6 TUE	APR 12 MON	MAY 30 SUN	SEPT 16 THU	SEPT 25 SAB	SEPT 30 THU	OCT 7 THU
80 AD	MAR 24 FRI	MAR 25 SAB	MAR 31 FRI	MAY 14 SUN	SEPT 4 MON	SEPT 13 WED	SEPT 18 MON	SEPT 25 MON
81 AD	APR 11 WED	APR 12 THU	APR 18 WED	JUNE 10 SUN	SEPT 22 SAB	OCT 1 MON	OCT 6 SAB	OCT 13 SAB
82 AD	APR 1 MON	APR 2 TUE	APR 8 MON	MAY 26 SUN	SEPT 12 THU	SEPT 21 SAB	SEPT 26 THU	OCT 13 THU
83 AD	MAR 21 FRI	MAR 22 SAB	MAR 28 FRI	MAY 11 SUN	SEPT 1 MON	SEPT 10 WED	SEPT 15 MON	SEPT 22 MON
84 AD	APR 9 FRI	APR 10 SAB	APR 16 FRI	MAY 30 SUN	SEPT 20 MON	SEPT 29 WED	OCT 4 MON	OCT 11 MON
85 AD	MAR 28 MON	MAR 29 TUE	APR 4 MON	MAY 22 SUN	SEPT 8 THU	SEPT 17 SAB	SEPT 22 THU	SEPT 29 THU
86 AD	APR 17 MON	APR 18 TUE	APR 24 MON	JUNE 11 SUN	SEPT 28 THU	OCT 7 SAB	OCT 12 THU	OCT 19 THU
87 AD	APR 6 FRI	APR 7 SAB	APR 13 FRI	MAY 27 SUN	SEPT 17 MON	SEPT 26 WED	OCT 1 MON	OCT 8 MON
88 AD	MAR 26 WED	MAR 27 THU	APR 2 WED	MAY 18 SUN	SEPT 6 SAB	SEPT 15 MON	SEPT 20 SAB	SEPT 27 SAB
89 AD	APR 13 MON	APR 14 TUE	APR 20 MON	JUNE 7 SUN	SEPT 24 THU	OCT 3 SAB	OCT 8 THU	OCT 15 THU
90 AD	APR 2 FRI	APR 3 SAB	APR 9 FRI	MAY 23 SUN	SEPT 13 MON	SEPT 22 WED	SEPT 27 MON	OCT 4 MON
91 AD	MAR 23 WED	MAR 24 THU	MAR 30 WED	MAY 15 SUN	SEPT 3 SAB	SEPT 12 MON	SEPT 17 SAB	SEPT 24 SAB
92 AD	APR 9 MON	APR 10 TUE	APR 16 MON	JUNE 3 SUN	SEPT 20 THU	SEPT 29 SAB	OCT 4 THU	OCT 11 THU
93 AD	MAR 29 FRI	MAR 30 SAB	APR 4 FRI	MAY 19 SUN	SEPT 9 MON	SEPT 18 WED	SEPT 23 MON	SEPT 30 MON
94 AD	MAR 19 WED	MAR 20 THU	MAR 26 WED	MAY 11 SUN	AUG 30 SAB	SEPT 8 MON	SEPT 13 SAB	SEPT 20 SAB
95 AD	APR 8 WED	APR 9 THU	APR 15 WED	MAY 31 SUN	SEPT 19 SAB	SEPT 28 MON	OCT 3 SAB	OCT 10 SAB

God's Annual Feast and Holy Days

Year	Passover	Unleavened Bread (First)	Unleavened Bread (Last)	Pentecost	Feast of Trumpets	Day of Atonement	Feast of Tabernacles	Last Great Day
96 AD	MAR 26 SAB	MAR 27 SUN	APR 2 SAB	MAY 15 SUN	SEPT 6 TUE	SEPT 15 THU	SEPT 20 TUE	SEPT 27 TUE
97 AD	APR 14 FRI	APR 15 SAB	APR 21 FRI	JUNE 4 SUN	SEPT 25 MON	OCT 4 WED	OCT 9 MON	OCT 16 MON
98 AD	APR 4 WED	APR 5 THU	APR 11 WED	MAY 27 SUN	SEPT 15 SAB	SEPT 24 MON	SEPT 29 SAB	OCT 6 SAB
99 AD	MAR 25 WED	MAR 26 THU	APR 1 WED	MAY 19 SUN	SEPT 5 THU	SEPT 14 SAB	SEPT 19 THU	SEPT 26 THU
100 AD	APR 11 SAB	APR 12 SUN	APR 18 SAB	MAY 31 SUN	SEPT 22 TUE	OCT 1 THU	OCT 6 TUE	OCT 13 TUE
101 AD	MAR 31 WED	APR 1 THU	APR 7 WED	MAY 23 SUN	SEPT 11 SAB	SEPT 20 MON	SEPT 25 SAB	OCT 2 SAB
102 AD	MAR 21 MON	MAR 22 TUE	MAR 28 MON	MAY 15 SUN	SEPT 1 THU	SEPT 10 SAB	SEPT 15 THU	SEPT 22 THU
103 AD	APR 10 MON	APR 11 TUE	APR 17 MON	JUNE 4 SUN	SEPT 21 THU	SEPT 30 SAB	OCT 5 THU	OCT 12 THU
104 AD	MAR 29 FRI	MAR 30 SAB	APR 5 FRI	MAY 19 SUN	SEPT 9 MON	SEPT 18 WED	SEPT 23 MON	SEPT 30 MON
105 AD	APR 16 WED -	APR 17 TUE	APR 23 WED	JUNE 8 SUN	SEPT 27 SAB	OCT 6 MON	OCT 11 SAB	OCT 18 SAB

APPENDIX S

The Spirit of Man

The prophet Zechariah wrote that God “formed the spirit of man within him” (Zech. 12:1). The preservation of this phrase in the text demonstrates that this element was vital to God’s creation of the human race.

In his book, *Facts and Theories as to a Future State* (p. 48), biblical scholar F.W. Grant wrote: “... along with the formation of the heavens and the earth, as of equal importance with these (the body being moreover passed over in the matter) there is put by the inspired writer this formation of the spirit of man. And this is the complete upsetting of the materialistic theory [i.e., evolution]. The spirit of man is *formed* within him. It is a separate [unique] entity then in each individual man, not (like the breath of life) a common principle shared by all” (Smith, *The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, p. 1020).

When God or *Elohim* created human beings in His image and likeness, He formed the first human Adam out of the dust of the ground (Gen. 1:26-27). Common to all creatures is the breath of life (Eccl. 3:19). God imparted this to Adam and later to Eve at creation (Gen. 2:7; Job 27:3). At the same time, God formed within Adam and Eve a spirit essence unique to each of them called the “spirit of man.” (See Job 34:14 and Isaiah 42:5 for proof that humans possess both the breath of life and spirit of man.) When a person dies, his or her conscious thoughts cease, the body returns to dust and the spirit returns to God Who gave it (Psa. 6:5; Eccl. 3:20-21, 9:10, 12:7; Isa. 38:18; Heb. 12:23).

Adam and Eve were initially created sinless with a free will to choose between obedience and life, or disobedience and death. God created the first human beings very good (Gen. 1:31). However, Adam and Eve sinned and their natures were changed to being subject to the lusts of the flesh and desires of the mind (Eph. 2:1-3). All humans thereafter, except Jesus, have sinned; all are in need of forgiveness and God’s Spirit (Rom. 3:23; II Cor. 5:21). Natural persons with their five senses, led by a carnal mind, cannot obey God’s laws, nor discern His works and plans (Rom. 8:5; I Cor. 2:14). Only God can save men from their sins, and only His Spirit can give them the understanding of spiritual things.

The solution to man’s present sinful state is found later in Zechariah 12:10, where the prophet explains the basis of the restoration of Israel in the latter days. Here the LORD God of Israel spoke: “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace [see Heb. 10:29 where the Holy Spirit is known by this name] and of supplication: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced [a reference to the crucifixion of Christ], and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for *his* only son, and shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn” (Zech. 12:10, *KJV*). After His second coming, Jesus will save Judah and Israel, and the remnant of men who are left will seek the LORD, and all who repent will receive the Holy Spirit (Is. 2:2-3; Zech. 8:22-23, 10:6; John 7:37-39; Acts 15:14-17). The Holy Spirit has now been given to those whom God has called into His Church (Acts 2:38-39).

More information on the spirit of man, human nature, sin, the Holy Spirit and other related topics see Appendix J, page 770.

APPENDIX T

Ways God Communicated to the Biblical Writers

The categories that follow are from Kevin Conner and Ken Malmin's book entitled *Interpreting The Scriptures*, in which the authors have identified 20 ways that God has communicated to mankind and in particular to the biblical writers. The accompanying Bible passages have been chosen to reflect a direct connection to the 40 biblical writers. See pages 5-6 of the authors' book for definitions and a full treatment of each of the categories that follow.

How God Revealed His Word

1. Dream
2. Vision
3. Angel(s) of the LORD
4. Similitude
5. Shadow
6. Example
7. Pattern
8. Sign (Token)
9. Signifying by the Holy Spirit
10. Voice of words
11. Prophecy
12. Writing

Some Key Scriptures

Num. 12:6; I Ki. 3:5, 15; Dan. 7:1
Num. 12:6; I Sam. 3:15; Is. 1:1; Dan. 2:19;
Obad. 1:1; Nah. 1:1; Hab. 2:23; Matt. 17:9;
Acts 10:3, 16:9-10, 18:9, 26:19; II Cor. 12:1-6;
Rev. 9:17
Ex. 3:2; Josh. 5:13-15; Dan. 9:20-22; Zech. 1:9;
Acts 17:23ff; Rev. 1:1
Num. 12:8; Dan. 10:16-21; Hos. 12:10
Ex. 25:40, 26:30; Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5
Heb. 8:5
Ex. 25:9; I Chr. 28:12; I Tim. 1:16; Heb. 8:5
Ex. 3:12; II Chr. 32:24; Ez. 12:6
Acts 21:10-11; I Pet. 1:11
Ex. 33:11; Num. 7:89; Dan. 10:6, 9
Num. 12:6-8; I Pet. 1:10-12; II Pet. 1:19-20
Ex. 31:18, 32:16; I Chr. 28:11-12, 19

Literary Devices

13. Figure
 14. Type
 15. Allegory
 16. Mystery
 17. Dark Saying
 18. Riddle
 19. Proverb
 20. Parable
- I Cor. 4:6 (used by Paul as moved by the Spirit)
I Cor. 10:11 (example = types)
Gal. 4:24 (used by Paul as moved by the Spirit)
Rom. 16:25; Eph. 1:9, 3:3; Rev. 1:20, 10:7
Num. 12:8; Ps. 49:4 (Amos 8:5 is an example)
Ezek. 17:2 (God told Ezekiel to speak a riddle)
Prov. 1:1, 6; Is. 14:4; Ezek. 12:3
Ezek. 24:3

APPENDIX U

Alexandrian Text: A Prestige Text

The Alexandrian (Egyptian) text originated in a region known for its great center of learning. The two most well-known manuscripts of this text type are Vaticanus and Sinaiticus. Textual scholar Dr. Edward F. Hills described this local prestige text: "The Alexandrian text has received its name from the fact that it is that form of the New Testament which was used by Origen (182-251) in many of his writings and also by most of the other Church Fathers who, like Origen, lived at Alexandria. This Alexandrian text is found in *B* (Codex Vaticanus) and *Aleph* (Codex Sinaiticus), two manuscripts which date from the first and second half respectively of the fourth century and are the oldest complete (or nearly complete) manuscripts of the Greek New Testament known to be extant. About 25 other Greek manuscripts are Alexandrian in text, and so are the Bohairic (Northern Egypt) and Sahidic (Southern Egypt) versions. Hort (1881) distinguished between the text of *B* and that found in other Alexandrian documents where they agree with *B*. He believed that *B* contained a remarkably pure (Neutral) text which had been preserved somewhere in the West and that other documents represented a scholarly revision of this pure (Neutral) text which had been at Alexandria. Present day scholars, however, reject this distinction and attribute an Alexandrian origin to the texts of all the manuscripts of the Alexandrian class, including *B*" (Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, 1956 ed., p. 40).

According to scholar Gordon Fee, the evidence from the early papyri (P⁷⁵, P⁷², P⁴⁶) and the Alexandrian scholar Origen places the origins of the Alexandrian text in "all its particulars squarely in the second century [100s AD] ... as early as Christianity was known in that city" (Harrison, *Biblical Criticism: Historical, Literary and Textual*, p. 135). Hence, our historical reconstruction of the Alexandrian text is mainly confined to the late second and the early third century AD.

Historical Need for a Local Text: The immediate task faced by Demetrius, the first bona fide bishop of Egypt (190-232 AD), and the Catechetical School of Alexandria was to correct radical Valentinian Gnostic perversions of Christianity (Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 1, p. 94). (See Appendix V for a historical overview of the effects of Gnosticism on early Egyptian Christianity.) One of the most effective means in halting Gnostic heresy in the Egyptian churches was to produce a church text for public reading. Unfortunately, the early theologian-scribes of the Egyptian churches relied on the textual principles of the Alexandrian library and the religious traditions of the Coptic churches in producing their text.

The late Kurt Aland, textual scholar and Church historian, initially posited this historical reconstruction of the Alexandrian text: "Quite possibly Bishop Demetrius had manuscripts prepared for his newly reorganized diocese (now under the direction of his newly appointed chorepiscopoi) and for its churches in a scriptorium related to the Catechetical School (which probably existed despite the lack of any documentary evidence). Designating particular manuscripts (which probably were imported from other provinces of the broader church) to be master exemplars would have created a special 'Alexandria' text" (Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 59).

Aland quickly rejected this account, however, due to his interpretation of the textual evidence: "But this hypothesis, however intrinsically possible, does not square with the evidence of the manuscripts up to the fourth/fifth century. Thus P⁴⁵, P⁴⁶, P⁶⁶, and a whole group of other manuscripts offer a 'free' text, i.e., a text dealing with the original text in a relatively free manner with no program of standardization (or were these manuscripts also imported from elsewhere?)" (Ibid.). Aland's objection was also based upon the existence of nine manuscripts (P¹, P²³, P²⁷, P³⁵, P³⁹, P^{64/67}, P⁶⁵, P⁷⁰ and P⁷⁵), dated 200-350 AD, that exhibit a "strict" text, meaning that their scribes rarely departed from their exemplar. Aland's conten-

tion was that a second or third-century revision that resulted in the Alexandrian text was impossible based on the coexistence of texts reflecting such a divergence of scribal habits.

However, Aland conceded the possibility of an early Alexandrian revision in his description of the distribution of early manuscripts and the rise of text types: "The more loosely organized a diocese, or the greater the difference between its constituent churches, the more likely different text types would coexist (**as in Early Egypt**)" (Aland, pp. 55-56, bold added). This description certainly applies to the atmosphere prior to and during the decade of Demetrius' reorganization of the Egyptian churches (190-200 AD). Persecutions in the early 200s AD would have perpetuated a loose organization of the churches in this region. In short, the existence of divergent texts (free and strict) does not preclude the possibility of an Alexandrian revision of the original apostolic text because they could easily have coexisted, with the "free" type being produced in outlying areas among the more loosely organized congregations.

Furthermore, the presence of "mixed texts" among the early papyri has forced many scholars, including Aland, to rethink the theory of manuscript genealogy. In an essay entitled "The Significance of the Papyri for New Testament Research," Aland concluded that "mixed texts" (those containing both Byzantine and Alexandrian readings) were only possible after, and not before, a recension or systematic revision of the text (Aland, "The Significance of the Papyri for New Testament Research," *The Bible in Modern Scholarship*, p. 335-337). Because Aland appealed to classical principles of textual criticism, it was difficult for him to see the significance of the textual evidence in verifying the existence of the Byzantine and Alexandrian texts before the copying of the early papyri with mixed texts (i.e., P⁴⁶ and P⁶⁶) began ca. 200 AD.

Due to his partiality for the Alexandrian text, Aland went to considerable length to interpret the evidence in such a way as to support his conclusion that Alexandria was the source of the original text of the New Testament, and the Byzantine Text was secondary, a product of ecclesiastical influence and circulation. This is a logical impossibility in that manuscripts containing the Byzantine Text were copied by many independent scribes from widely diverse geographical areas across the Byzantine Empire (cf. Robinson, "New Testament Textual Criticism: The Case for the Byzantine Priority," *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism*, par. 98). Ironically, however, Aland's conjecture **can** be applied to the copying of the early and later Alexandrian text.

Aland again provided the historical background: "From the fourth century it [Egyptian church] had a well-defined text (known as the Alexandrian text type) because the administration of the Alexandrian patriarchs was effectively centralized....Eventually the Alexandrian text produced the Egyptian text. The circulation of this Egyptian text then became increasingly limited by the growing popularity of the Coptic versions....Athanasius, the powerful bishop of Alexandria, whose authority was felt far beyond the borders of Egypt as early as 328 [AD], governed his church with a tightly centralized administrative structure. We do not know precisely what manuscripts he designated for use as a model, but it must have been of the type represented by Codex Vaticanus or P⁷⁵. Naturally any errors in the model manuscript, whether real or imagined, would have been corrected" (Aland, *The Text*, pp. 56, 65).

Aland further described how Athanasius and the philologically trained theologians of the fourth century AD corrected and revised the earlier Alexandrian text: "What they apparently did was to take those manuscripts which they regarded as reliable—for Luke and John a manuscript such as P⁷⁵—and to correct text errors and corruptions or what they thought to be such. That is, they carried out a revision of the texts of selected manuscripts. At least the Egyptian text appears to have originated from a local text. Or, rather it seems that from the existing local texts one was selected, revised, and, through the production of copies of the revised manuscript, enforced as the dominating text in this particular ecclesiastical province. ...The text thus favored and put into circulation did not, of course, immediately become the dominating text, if in fact it ever did" (Aland, "Significance of the Papyri," p. 336).

It is very probable that Athanasius and this group of revisers conducted their textual work due to the destruction of many manuscripts during the Diocletian persecution (303-313 AD). This conclusion is warranted if the claims of New Testament scholar and author Philip Comfort are true that Palestine, Egypt and North Africa were the areas where persecution was the most severe (Comfort, *The Quest for the Original Text of the New Testament*, p. 13).

This review shows why an honest and accurate account of historical considerations must take precedence in the reconstruction of the Alexandrian text.

School of Alexandria: Bishop Demetrius began the process of producing an “official” text for the Egyptian churches by utilizing the textual methods used at the library of Alexandria. With its reported 600,000 volumes, the library and museum were renowned for their scientific studies, critical study of Homeric texts and editing of other classical works (Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 149). The accents used in modern Greek and the first Greek grammar were developed at Alexandria (Bromiley, p. 92).

The scriptorium at the Catechetical School of Alexandria, called the *Didaskaleion*, was the main vehicle in producing this official text. The school was instituted in ca. 180 AD as a “Christian university” for “the propagation of the Christian faith among the more cultural classes....Side by side with the Christian faith, the profane sciences were taught. The School had great influence on the development of Christian theology alongside the University (Museum) of Alexandria and attracted many Christians from distant parts” (Cross, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, p. 248).

The school’s intent, however, went beyond the mere propagation of Christianity to the cultural classes. Its true goal was to spread a philosophy of biblical interpretation, namely, the allegorical method: “Thus there was a fairly well-developed scholarly discipline of textual and literary criticism in antiquity, localized chiefly at Alexandria and directed primarily toward the epics of Homer. **It is common knowledge that Philo Judaeus and many Church Fathers, influenced by the philological scholarship current at Alexandria,** utilized in their interpretation of the Scriptures the methods of allegorical exegesis which had been applied to certain stories of the gods and goddesses included in the Homeric cycle” (Metzger, p. 150, emphasis added).

The school was headed by Pantaenus (180-190 AD), Clement (190-202) and Origen (202-231), respectively. Later, it came under the direct supervision of the bishop of Alexandria. The blending of Platonic and Christian thought began with Clement and Origen. Platonism specifically focused on “forms” or “ideas,” rather than on sight and experience. It was believed that by grasping the forms, a person could be perfected or attain a true well-being (Cross, p. 1101). Thus, words were no longer as important as the attainment of a purer or clearer sense behind the words. This impacted not only biblical interpretation but also the copying of the text.

The Alexandrian theologians at the school’s scriptorium were thoroughly trained linguists, grammarians and textual critics (Comfort, p. 22). Comfort explained the techniques used by scholars at the Alexandrian library and followed by theologians at the scriptorium: “The Alexandrians were concerned with preserving the original text of literary works. Textual criticism was applied to Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey* because these ancient texts existed in many manuscripts. The scribes would make text-critical decisions concerning the original wording and then produce an archetype, a manuscript produced officially and deposited in the library. Whenever necessary, further manuscripts were copied from and collated against this archetype (Birdsall 1970:312). We can presume that the same kind of textual criticism was applied to the New Testament text by Christian scribes in Alexandria. From the second century to the fourth century, the Alexandrian scribes worked to purify the text from textual corruption. Speaking of their efforts, Günther Zuntz writes (1953:271-72):

“The Alexandrian correctors strove, in ever repeated efforts, to keep the text current in their sphere free from many of the faults that had infected it in the previous period and which tended to crop up again even after they had been obelized [i.e., marked as spurious]. These labors must time and again have been checked by persecutions and the confiscation of

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Christian books, and counteracted by the continuing currency of manuscripts of the older type" (Comfort, p. 22).

Aland's earlier description along with the readings of the early Egyptian papyri indicates that the Alexandrian scribes (theologians) must have traveled to other parts of Egypt and the Roman Empire to collect manuscripts. Some of these manuscripts chosen were corrupt at various points (O'Neill, "The Rules Followed by the Editors of the Text Found in the Codex Vaticanus," *New Testament Studies*, vol. 35, pp. 227-228). The presence of 150 distinct Byzantine readings in the early papyri (cf. P⁵, P¹³, P³⁷, P⁴⁵, P⁴⁶, P⁴⁷, P⁶⁶, P⁷² and P⁷⁵) shows that the Alexandrian theologian-scribes also worked from manuscripts containing the apostolic (Byzantine) text (Sturz, *The Byzantine Text-Type and New Testament Textual Criticism*, pp. 140-159).

In their effort to achieve clearness, Hills noted that the Alexandrian scribes **deliberately** removed many words, clauses and passages that were part of the original apostolic (Byzantine) text: "In applying these methods to the New Testament manuscripts, however, these Alexandrian Christians went beyond the pagan grammarians in their zeal to purify the sacred text. They not only marked clauses and whole passages which they thought were spurious but actually removed them. And, unfortunately, their judgment in these matters was not infallible. Thus it often happened that they eliminated a portion of the genuine text and left the corruption that they ought to have removed. In this manner another distinct type of New Testament text was created, namely, the Alexandrian, which also had a wide circulation, since it originated in Alexandria, the great capital of Greek learning" (Hills, 1956 ed., p. 52).

These alterations to the text were made by fallible humans who were sometimes led in their editing of the text by their personal theological persuasion: "In the writings of the great Alexandrian scholar Origen ... we find an authentic illustration of the manner in which the Alexandrian form of the New Testament was created. In his comment on Matt. 19:17-21 (Jesus' reply to the rich young man) Origen reasons that Jesus could not have concluded his list of God's commandments with the comprehensive requirement, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*. For the reply of the young man was, *All these things have I kept from my youth up*, and Jesus evidently accepted his statement as true. But if the young man had loved his neighbor as himself, he would have been perfect, for Paul says that the whole of law is summed up in this saying, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*. But Jesus answered, *If thou wilt be perfect, etc.*, implying that the young man was not yet perfect. Therefore, Origen argued, the commandment, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*, could not have been spoken by Jesus on this occasion and was not part of the original text of Matthew. This clause had been added, he believed, by some tasteless scribe. Such were the reasoning processes by which the ancient critics of Alexandria deleted from the New Testament not only spurious readings but also many genuine ones, thus producing the Alexandrian text (found in *B* and *Aleph*), which is much shorter than the Western or Byzantine texts" (Ibid., p. 53).

While there is no proof that Origen published a critical edition of the New Testament, he was acutely aware of textual details and variations in New Testament manuscripts (Metzger, pp. 151-152). As head of the Catechetical School, Origen was in a position to influence the writing and copying of manuscripts.

Textual scholar John William Burgon confirmed this conclusion in his description of Origen's knowledge of textual details: "Indeed Origen was a Textual Critic. He spent much time and toil upon the text of the New Testament, besides his great labours in the Old [i.e., Hexapla], because he found it disfigured as he says by corruptions 'some arising from the carelessness of scribes, some from evil license of emendation, some from arbitrary omissions and interpolations.' Such a sitting in judgment, or as perhaps it should be said with more justice to Origen such a pursuit of inquiry, involved weighing of evidence on either side, of which there are many indications in his works" (Burgon, *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*, p. 151).

The Influence of Atticism: Contemporary textual research has confirmed that during the second century Alexandrian scribes and grammarians corrected the New Testament text stylistically and syntactically to the Attic or Classical Greek. Atticism was specially dominant in literary circles between 100-200 AD (Elliott, *The Principles and Practice of New Testament Textual Criticism*, p. 24).

“Attic was the dialect of Athens, during the ‘golden age’ of classical Greek (4th-5th centuries BCE). In this golden age, Athens was both the political and literary center of Greece. ‘Classical Greek’ is normally equated with Attic Greek, because of the proliferation of literary works that comes from this dialect. Attic was thus a vehicle of refinement, precision, and beauty through which some of the world’s great literature was conveyed: ‘the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the comedies of Aristophanes, the histories of Thucydides and Xenophon, the orations of Demosthenes, and the philosophical treatises of Plato’” (Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics*, p. 15).

The New Testament was written in *Koiné* Greek, which was dominant after the conquests of Alexander the Great until 330 AD when it was superseded by Byzantine Greek. The late Dr. J. Gresham Machen, professor of New Testament (NT) Greek, explained the difference between NT Greek and the literary (Attic) prose centuries before and during the period in which the NT was written: “... the New Testament is written simply in the popular form of the *Koiné* which was spoken in the cities throughout the whole of the Greek-speaking world....Undoubtedly, the language of the New Testament is **no artificial language of books ... but the natural, living language of the period**. But the Semitic influence should not be underestimated. The New Testament writers were nearly all Jews, and all of them were strongly influenced by the Old Testament. In particular, they were influenced, so far as language is concerned, by the Septuagint, and the Septuagint was influenced, as most ancient translations were, by the language of the original. The Septuagint had gone far toward producing a Greek vocabulary to express the deepest things of the religion of Israel. And this vocabulary was profoundly influential in the New Testament....the originality of the New Testament writers should not be ignored” (Gresham, *New Testament Greek for Beginners*, pp. 1-6, emphasis added).

According to scholar Dr. Jack Moorman, “Importantly for us, Koine was the dialect of the New Testament. This is a remarkable evidence of God’s providence. The Attic left too much to the imagination, whereas Koine with its greater fullness could be more precise. It was simple, lucid, plain, and full....As we might expect, signs point to Alexandria being the prime mover to bring the Scripture Text into line with the Attic dialect. The manuscripts associated with that locality, certainly beyond all others, favour the Attic-like terseness.

“Koine is distinguished from the Attic by a more frequent use of pronouns and connectives, spelling changes, Hebrew or Semitic idiom, use of the historic present and future middle, not as many compound words, certain expressions, etc. For example, ‘he answered and said’ is frequently found in the Koine text of our New Testament, whereas in Attic it is merely ‘he said’” (Moorman, *Missing in Modern Bibles: Is the Full Story Being Told?*, pp. 51-52).

A technical review of the differences between *Koiné* and Attic Greek is available in Dr. Daniel B. Wallace’s *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics*, pp. 19-20.

Atticism at Work: The text of the Gospel of Mark in today’s critical Greek texts, which are predominately Alexandrian in character, offers five clear examples of scribal revision to the Attic Greek. In Mark 9:12, 38; 10:20, 29; and 12:24 these texts contain the Attic word εφη (Eng., meaning “spoke” or “said”). At each place, the 1550 Stephens Text (Byzantine Text) contains αποκριθεις ειπεν (Eng., meaning “answering *and* said,” or answered *and* said,” or “answered saying”) or its close form. In Mark 14:29, the form εφη in the Stephens Text appears to be authentic based on usage and context.

The late George D. Kilpatrick was a pioneer in the study of Attic Greek in the New Testament and wrote many essays on the subject. Kilpatrick explained that if “we come to the New Testament from Classical Greek we soon perceive that among the distinctive fea-

tures of the Greek New Testament are idioms which, strictly speaking, are not Greek at all. No Greek of any period, left to himself, would say or write ἀποκριθεις ειπεν. In the same way 'he answered and said' is not natural English....Hence, we are not surprised when we find that often where ἀποκριθεις ειπεν and the like occur in our Greek text there are variants designed to mitigate or remove this un-Greek expression. We may even suspect that sometimes the attempt to improve the language has been successful and that the more Greek expression is in our text and the original un-Greek wording in our apparatus [foot-notes]" (Elliott, p. 16).

He continued: "εφη is a good Greek word of ancient lineage but it was going out of use in the first century. As we have seen ἀποκριθεις ειπεν is not a Greek expression at all. Have the scribes changed the good Greek to the barbarous ἀποκριθεις ειπεν or the other way about? If we may assume that their intention was to improve the evangelist's Greek rather than to degrade it, then ἀποκριθεις ειπεν will be original" (Ibid.).

A comparison of the Markan readings of the Stephens Text and modern critical editions (largely Alexandrian text) verifies Kilpatrick's assertion that Alexandrian scribes revised Mark's Gospel toward the Attic prose. This unique **original** stamp of the Markan authorship of the second Gospel has been kept distinctly intact throughout the ages in Byzantine-era manuscripts. **Unable to recognize its significance and due to a preference for certain Egyptian manuscripts, the editors of the modern critical Greek texts have opted for the Attic form. In the process, they have eliminated a divine signature from the scriptural record.**

Results of Atticism: Clement came to Alexandria from Athens with Attic training. He was the second chair of the Catechetical School precisely at the time when Demetrius was producing his local church text. Some of the Atticized readings we observe in the early Alexandrian papyri are undoubtedly due to his influence as chair of the school.

In his analysis of the scribal habits of Codex Vaticanus, textual scholar J.C. O'Neill determined that Alexandrian scribes closely followed rules in copying the text they transmitted. These rules were aimed at achieving complete lucidity or clearness of thought and style, which no doubt reflected the contemporary literary influence of Attic Greek (cf. O'Neill, pp. 218-228). O'Neill summarized: "They used good rules to sort out the variants, often successfully. But sometimes their rules led them to error, and we can see the rules from their mistakes. They preferred the shorter reading—and we should watch to see that the rule did not lead them astray. And they tried to make pertinent (if difficult) sense at all times—and we should watch to see that this rule, too, did not lead them to be too neat, too clever" (O'Neill, p. 228).

In the case of the Alexandrian text, the influence of Atticism and other factors produced readings that were "terse [short], somewhat rough, less harmonized, and generally 'more difficult'" (Harrison, p. 135).

Research of scribal habits on early Greek papyri of the New Testament shows that the average Egyptian scribe "omitted more often than he added" (Royse, "Scribal Tendencies in the Transmission of the Text of the New Testament," *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, p. 246). A subsequent study on Egyptian papyri of the Synoptic Gospels by Peter Head verifies Royse's work: "We have shown, in support of Royse's thesis, that in fact omission is the more common scribal habit. If early scribes were more likely to omit words and phrases from their texts (for whatever reason) it follows that we should not prefer the shorter reading, but rather prefer the longer reading (other factors being equal)" (Head, "Observations on Early Papyri of the Synoptic Gospels, especially on the 'Scribal Habits,'" *Biblica* 71, p. 247). These studies verified an initial investigation of Egyptian papyri conducted by E.C. Colwell in the 1960s (Colwell, "Scribal Habits in Early Papyri: A Study in the Corruption of the Text," *The Bible in Modern Scholarship*, pp. 370-389).

The influence of Atticism, though not consistently applied to all Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, is particularly strong in the Alexandrian witnesses Papyrus 75 (third

century AD) and the fourth-century Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts (Elliott, pp. 26, 46). The Alexandrian text on average omits 2,600-3,000 words, which is roughly equivalent to the number of words in I and II Peter (Moorman, p. 41). Modern critical Greek texts, such as the Westcott-Hort, Nestle-Aland and United Bible Societies editions, have mostly been based on these Alexandrian witnesses and their allies.

What this means is that texts that are fuller and more complete (e.g. *Textus Receptus* and Byzantine Text) can no longer be considered secondary and inferior in quality. The longer and fuller apostolic *Koiné* text (i.e., Byzantine Text) was stylistically edited by Alexandrian scribes to produce a shorter text. This establishes the *Koiné* text as older and closer to the original. Therefore, modern critical texts that are largely Alexandrian in nature can no longer be considered reliable witnesses to the original apostolic text.

In the nineteenth century, Dr. F.J.A. Hort, a textual scholar whose theory forms the basis of modern New Testament textual criticism, echoed the sentiments of the second-century Church scholars who wrongly appealed to the Attic brevity as a marker of quality: "Think of that vile *Textus Receptus* leaning entirely on late MSS.; it is a blessing there are such early ones" (Hort, *Life and Letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort*, vol. 1, p. 211). This background allows us to understand Hort's misguided partiality toward the earlier Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts.

Influence of Egyptian Church: The oral religious traditions and beliefs of the early Egyptian church influenced many readings of the Alexandrian text. These traditions were transferred to the Greek manuscripts through the Coptic language, specifically the Egyptian Sahidic dialect. Hills explained: "Coptic is the latest form of the language of ancient Egypt. At first it was written in native Egyptian characters, but after the beginning of the Christian era Greek capital letters were mainly employed. At least a half a dozen different Coptic dialects were spoken in ancient Egypt, but the most important of these were the Sahidic dialect spoken in southern Egypt and the Bohairic dialect spoken in northern Egypt. At a very early date the Greek New Testament was translated into Sahidic, and some of the distinctive readings of this Sahidic version are found in Papyrus 75, thus supporting the contention of Hoskier (1914) that the Alexandrian text was 'tremendously influenced' by the Sahidic version" (Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, p. 128).

The research of Hebraic scholar P.E. Kahle also shows that "Sahidic was the official dialect of the native population of Egypt and the official language of Alexandria long before the spread of Christianity" (Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, p. 100).

Most scholars date the Sahidic version to the 200-300s AD (Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament*, p. 127). Others have placed its origins in the second half of the second century, making it possibly one of the earliest versions of the New Testament (Ibid.). Nonetheless, the research of Rodolphe Kasser, who has an intimate and broad knowledge of Coptic texts, shows that the history of the Coptic dialects is intricately linked to the history of the Coptic versions. This development took place in several stages, the first being the most important for the formation of the Alexandrian text. Kasser's research shows that even before formal translations were produced (ca. 150-200 AD), numerous liturgical traditions were circulating among Egyptian Christians in Sahidic. During the next 50 years, as the number of Coptic Christians increased, Sahidic translations of biblical books and a proto-Bohairic version of the Gospel of John would be made (Ibid., pp. 129-130).

Hills offered a few examples of how the Sahidic version affected the early Alexandrian papyrus manuscripts: "... in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19) Papyrus 75 says that the Rich Man's name was *Neves*. The Sahidic version says that the Rich Man's name was *Nineve*. Why was the Rich Man given this name? Metzger (1964) says that it was because there was a wide-spread tradition among the ancient catechists of the Coptic Church that the name of the Rich Man was *Nineveh*, a name which had become the symbol of dissolute riches. Grobel (1964), on the other hand, argues that this name was derived from an old Egyptian folk-tale and that the name *Nineve* in Sahidic means *Nobody*. But, however this may be, it is obvious that this reading was taken early into the text of Pa-

papyrus 75 from the Sahidic version.

"Another Sahidic reading that found its way into the text of Papyrus 75 occurs in John 8:57. Here the majority of the New Testament documents read, *Hast thou seen Abraham?* But Papyrus 75, *Aleph*, *T*. Sahidic, Sinaitic Syriac read *Hath Abraham seen thee?* In John 10:7 Papyrus 75 agrees with the Sahidic version in reading, *I am the shepherd of the sheep*, instead of, *I am the door of the sheep*. In John 11:12 Papyrus 75 agrees with the Sahidic version against all the rest of the New Testament documents. In the other documents the disciples say (referring to Lazarus), *Lord, if he hath fallen asleep, he will be saved*. Papyrus 75 and the Sahidic version, however, read, *he will be raised*" (Hills, pp. 128-129).

We do not know precisely where, when and by whom codices Sinaiticus and Vaticanus were made. However, these Greek manuscripts exhibit detectable scribal tendencies. Herman C. Hoskier made the most complete collation of these two Greek manuscripts. He concluded that both uncials were copied in an Egyptian scriptorium and brought into conformity in 78 passages with the early Coptic versions (e.g., Bohairic and Sahidic dialect) (Hoskier, *Codex B and Its Allies: A Study and Indictment*, pp. 7, 317-325).

One example involves John 1:18. The authentic reading is "the only begotten Son" found in the Textus Receptus (Byzantine Text). The Alexandrian text and its allies (*Aleph*, *B*, P⁷⁵ and P⁶⁶) read "the only begotten God" or a form thereof. While a scribal error of the uncial letters for the *nomina sacra*, scribal abbreviations for divine names, offers a plausible explanation for the Alexandrian reading, the textual *and* historical evidence points to another conclusion: Burgon traced this reading back to its earliest source, the Gnostic Valentinus (Burgon, pp. 215-218). In this passage, Hoskier confirmed a link between the Bohairic version and the Alexandrian reading; the Sahidic reads "God did not any see ever; God the only son" (Hoskier, p. 317). In an article entitled "The Prologue of John and the Egyptian Manuscripts," textual scholar Theodore Letis documented "a possible Gnostic influence ... via the use of Coptic versions by Gnostic communities" in this passage (cf. Letis, *The Ecclesiastical Text*, pp. 107-132).

Thus all textual and historical evidence connects Gnostic scribes in Egyptian scriptorium to this corruption of John 1:18 in the early Alexandrian papyri, based on Gnostic associations with the early Coptic versions. This reading was then perpetuated by Egyptian scribes because it matched their own theological positions.

While such connections cannot always be proven beyond all doubt, Dr. Hills offered the best remedy for these heretical features of the Alexandrian text: "Thus we see that it is unwise in present-day translators to base the texts of their modern versions on recent papyrus discoveries or on *B* and *Aleph*. For all these documents come from Egypt, and Egypt during the early Christian centuries was a land in which heresies were rampant. So much was this so that, as Bauer (1934) and van Unnik (1958) have pointed out, later Egyptian Christians seem to have been ashamed of the heretical past of their country and to have drawn a veil of silence across it. This seems to be why so little is known of the history of early Egyptian Christianity. In view, therefore, of the heretical character of the early Egyptian Church, it is not surprising that the papyri, *B*, *Aleph*, and other manuscripts which hail from Egypt are liberally sprinkled with heretical readings" (Hills, p. 134).

Summary: History and modern textual research have shown that the witness of the Alexandrian text can no longer be presumed to be original. The habits of its early theologian-scribes undoubtedly mirrored the theology of the early Egyptian (Coptic) church and the textual principles practiced at the Alexandrian library.

The intent of the Catechetical School of Alexandria was to spread its philosophy to other scribes and Church scholars. In its attempts, the school was successful in that a significant number of Christian scholars became ensnared by the appeal of the Alexandrian text because the stylistic and syntactical nature of the apostolic text was not reflective of the literary quality they had become accustomed to. And since these scholars were often wealthier than common Christians, they were able to purchase manuscripts containing this text. For this reason, manuscripts of the Alexandrian type circulated outside of Egypt, which explains

how distinct Alexandrian readings appear in the New Testament citations of the early Christian scholars (Church Fathers).

Byzantine Nature of Alexandrian Text: In spite of the appeal to the Alexandrian text, the Byzantine was the dominant text in the period before, during and after the formation of the Alexandrian text. Writing posthumously for textual scholar John Burgon, Edward Miller tabulated the number of times the Greek/Latin Church Fathers quoted from either the apostolic (Byzantine) or prestige texts (Alexandrian/Western). Miller summarized: "As far as the Fathers who died before 400 A.D. are concerned....the results of the evidence, both as regards to the quantity and quality of the testimony, enable us to reply, not only that the Traditional Text [Byzantine Text] was in existence, but that it was predominant, during the period under review. Let any one who disputes this conclusion make out for the Western Text, or the Alexandrian, or for the Text of B and \aleph [Vaticanus or Sinaiticus], a case from the evidence of the Fathers which can equal or surpass that which has been placed before the reader" (Burgon, p. 116). Of the 4,383 citations from the 76 writers Miller studied, the witness favored the traditional Byzantine Text 2,630 to 1,753 times, on a ratio of 3:2 (Burgon, p. 116).

Twentieth-century critical editions of patristic writings have only slightly affected Miller's results; therefore, his conclusions that the Byzantine Text was predominantly used by the Church Fathers before 400 AD are still valid. Unfortunately, scholars compiling these editions have had a bias against the Byzantine Text as explained by textual scholar Dr. Maurice Robinson: "If the Byzantine readings now summarily dismissed in the early Fathers were legitimately included, the Fathers' overall text would be seen as more 'Byzantine' than current scholarly opinion claims. This was Burgon's original contention, which was dismissed out of hand, due to his use of 'uncritical' editions of the Fathers. Current 'critical' editions of the Fathers, however, follow the above-mentioned practice of eliminating distinctive Byzantine readings where unconfirmed by direct comment. Were this not so, the text of the Fathers would be recognized as far more Byzantine than current opinion allows" (Robinson, *The New Testament in the Original Greek according to the Byzantine/Majority Textform*, www.skypoint.com, p. 7).

Virtually 90 percent of the Alexandrian text is the autographic or original form of the New Testament text (Robinson, "New Testament Textual Criticism: The Case for the Byzantine Priority," par. 107, n. 9). The remaining percentage is a combination of stylistic changes and theologically-influenced readings.

Despite the textual differences between the Alexandrian and Byzantine texts, Robinson observed: "... the earliest surviving copies [Egyptian papyri] show a very wide range of difference among themselves, yet with a 'backbone' of general consistency running quite strongly all along, in spite of their plain blunders and/or deliberate alterations. The pre-existing 'backbone' thus served as some sort of standard which provided that relative consistency in the midst of some rather wild local deviation. Yet almost suddenly, from the late fourth century onward, a quite solid and consistent Textform [i.e., Byzantine Text] is seen in almost all quarters. This near-universality can be explained only because the Textform already had been present all along, or a 'legislated' and forced imposition of a revised text was almost simultaneously adopted in nearly all quarters without complaint. Since there is no hard evidence for the latter option, the former necessarily commends itself as the best way in which to account for the data we now possess. This is a strong argument, based upon evidence that, even in the 'wild' early manuscripts, this great 'universal' type of text was already in existence. This evidence appears in the commonly-shared text of each of those early papyri" (Robinson, n. 29).

Besides confirming the existence of 150 distinctly Byzantine readings in the early papyri, the research of textual scholar Harry Sturz also documented an additional 496 Byzantine readings in the early papyri that are supported by either the Alexandrian or Western texts. Most importantly, the data affirmed that "1) the Byzantine readings are early, and 2) the Byzantine text is unedited in the Westcott-Hort sense" (Sturz, p.130). **This means there**

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was no fourth-century Church revision of the original apostolic text as mistakenly contended by Westcott-Hort.

Textual scholar Dr. Wilbur N. Pickering described the significance of these Byzantine readings found in the early Egyptian papyri: "The magnitude of this vindication can be more fully appreciated by recalling that only about 30 percent of the New Testament has early papyrus attestation, and much of that 30 percent has only one papyrus. Where more than one covers a stretch of text, each new MS discovered vindicates added Byzantine readings. Extrapolating from the behavior of those in hand, if we had at least 3 papyri covering all parts of the New Testament, almost all of the 5000+ Byzantine readings rejected by the critical (eclectic) texts would be vindicated by an early papyrus" (Pickering, *The Identity of the New Testament Text*, 1980 ed., p. 77).

Dutch textual scholar Dr. Jakob Van Bruggen best summarized the textual evidence from early Egypt: "From the 2nd and 3rd centuries we only have papyri at our disposal. Due to climatic conditions these can practically only come to us from Egypt. For this period we, therefore, only possess representatives of Egyptian editions of the New Testament. Here we should bear in mind that Egypt was not the most flourishing part of the Church at that time. Centres like Syria, Asia-Minor, Greece, [and] Italy have left us no Greek manuscripts from these centuries. Furthermore, regarding the papyri we should bear in mind that they are not representative library-copies from Alexandria, but cheaper editions circulating in Egypt. A number of them were rediscovered more or less accidentally. These finds are very important: also the scarce data have scientific value. But the fact that the finds are incidental and restricted to certain areas, prevents us from generalizing about *the* New Testament in the first centuries on the ground of this material [alone]. It is not even possible to generalize about *the* Egyptian text of those days on the basis of this material" (Van Bruggen, *The Ancient Text of the New Testament*, pp. 25-26).

The major criticism against the Byzantine Text has been the supposed lack of support among the early Alexandrian papyri and uncials manuscripts. Once we understand that the Egyptian papyri are not representative of the textual evidence in the early apostolic churches, it becomes recognizable that at least two text types circulated in Egypt during the early centuries: The Alexandria and Byzantine texts. The work of Miller, Robinson, Sturz, Van Bruggen and others has proven that a backbone, the apostolic (Byzantine) text, served as the basis for the Alexandrian revision from the very beginning.

APPENDIX V

Gnosticism in Alexandria, Egypt

The interpretation of Church history plays a key role in how a textual critic views the manuscript evidence. In his book *The Text of the New Testament*, the late Kurt Aland, a leading European textual scholar during much of the twentieth century, conceded that Gnosticism dominated the Egyptian church before 200 AD: **"Egypt was distinguished from other provinces of the Church so far as we can judge, by the early dominance of gnosticism; this was not broken until about A.D. 200,** when Bishop Demetrius succeeded in reorganizing the diocese and establishing communications with other churches. Not until then do we have documentary evidence of the church in Egypt, although undoubtedly not only the gnostic but also the broader Church was represented there throughout the whole period. At almost the same time the Catechetical School of Alexandria was instituted as the first 'Christian university'" (Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, p. 59, bold added).

Later in his discussion of the Coptic versions of the New Testament, Aland wrote: "The lack of any reference to the church in Egypt **before 180** [AD] is probably to be explained by the predominantly gnostic character of the churches, **which hindered their recognition by official churches elsewhere**" (Ibid., p. 200, bold added).

Aland, who is partial to the Alexandrian text, appears unclear as to when the Greek church actually began in Egypt. Churches that are predominately Gnostic in character cannot be considered apostolic or orthodox by any definition. Aland reluctantly concedes this point when he states that the Egyptian churches were not recognized by "official churches elsewhere." Further, by stating that the cycle of Gnosticism in Egyptian churches was not broken until 200 AD, Aland reaffirms his earlier conclusion that Gnosticism continued as a dominant force until ties to official churches were established.

One can presume from Aland's comments and history that there was no presence of a broader church in Egypt before 200 AD. The only real **trace** of some sort of quasi-Christian presence in Egypt before this date was the Catechetical School of Alexandria and possibly the beginning of Demetrius' bishopric.

No Evidence of Apostolic Faith: The book of Acts records that Egyptian Jews were present in Jerusalem for Pentecost in 30 AD (Acts 2:10). The account in Acts shows that newly converted Egyptian Christians remained in Jerusalem for a time to become part of the Christian community (Acts 2:42-47). Later in Acts we meet the orator Apollos from Alexandria (ca. 53 AD), who had been instructed in the way of the Lord, but his knowledge of Christianity *was lacking*, for he knew only of the baptism of John (Act 18:24-28).

There is no biblical record of evangelistic outreach to Alexandria, Egypt. The Greek historian Nicephorus stated that the apostle Simon the Zealot journeyed to Egypt and North Africa as he made his way to Britain, where he was crucified and buried (cf. Cave, *Antiquitates Apostolicae*, p. 203). However, Nicephorus' narration quickly unravels amidst other testimony that indicates Simon's crucifixion occurred in Syria (Bracht, *Martyrs Mirror*, p. 91).

In addition to Nicephorus' conjecture regarding Simon the Zealot, the Church historian Eusebius claimed that John Mark, secretary to the apostle Peter, proclaimed the Gospel in Egypt and established the first churches at Alexandria (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2:16). A closer examination of Eusebius' account of Mark's evangelistic campaign in Egypt reveals that it is erroneous. The early Church historian mistakenly designated the Egyptian Jewish monastic community, known as the Therapeutae, as a Christian sect (Eusebius 2:16:2, 17:2-5). The description of this group living near Alexandria as a rigidly disciplined ascetic sect hardly distinguishes it as Christian (cf. Philo, *On a Contemplative Life*).

Most sources, including Eusebius, place Mark's martyrdom in Alexandria in the

Gnosticism in Alexandria, Egypt

eighth year of the Roman emperor Nero (62 AD). This depiction of Mark's death is chronologically impossible because when Peter wrote his First Epistle in ca. 63-64 AD, he mentioned that Mark and Silvanus were with him in Babylon (I Pet. 5:13). This dating places Mark alive a year or more after his alleged death.

In his history of the Church, Eusebius listed 11 Alexandrian bishops in a line of succession beginning after Mark's alleged death in 62 AD and ending with Demetrius in 190 AD. Since Mark was not in Egypt at the beginning of this period, it is *impossible* to determine when and if the remaining bishoprics ever existed. Eusebius described the first bishop Annianus as "a man distinguished for his piety and admirable in every respect" (Eusebius, 2:24). Oddly, he offers **no** character sketches for any of the other nine bishops. Demetrius (d. 232 AD) is the only other bishop whose biography can be found in most theological resources. Marcus, the seventh bishop listed by Eusebius, could just as well have been the famed disciple of the second-century Gnostic Valentinus. Both were in Egypt at the same time.

If these sources are unreliable in providing details concerning early Christianity in Egypt, their testimony concerning any apostolic outreach to this area must also be viewed with skepticism.

No Fertile Ground for the Gospel: It is improbable that a Christian Church could have taken root in the hostile soil of Alexandria in the early history of the Church. Alexandria was the location of the single largest Jewish community outside of Palestine in this period. Estimates place the Jewish population at one million people (Yonge, *The Works of Philo*, p. xii). The Bible offers clues to the general spiritual condition of Egyptian Hellenistic Jews in the sixth chapter of Acts. It is recorded that Stephen, full of faith and power, worked wonders and great signs among the people, especially among the Hellenistic Jews whom he was set apart to serve (Acts 6:1-6). During his ministry, there was a synagogue in Jerusalem that specifically served Hellenistic Jews, including those from Alexandria.

These Hellenistic Jews strongly resisted Stephen's preaching: "Then certain [people] arose among those of the synagogue who were called Libertines, and of the Cyrenians and **Alexandrians**, and of those from Cilicia and Asia; *and* they were disputing with Stephen. But they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke" (Acts 6:9-10). They had Stephen arrested and brought before the Jewish Sanhedrin for trial on false charges of blasphemy. Men were bribed to offer perjury against him (Acts 6:11-15). A guilty verdict evoked a punishment of death by stoning (Acts 7:54-8:1).

Thus, the Hellenistic Jewish population, being highly antagonistic toward the growing Christian church in Jerusalem, would have been equally antagonistic toward the establishment of a Christian church at Alexandria.

Textual Evidence: There is evidence that copies of the Scriptures were in Egypt before 200 AD. Papyri 52 and 90 are two small fragments that have been found containing 17 verses from the Gospel of John chapters 18 and 19. They are all that have survived from this period.

Alexandrian Hellenism sought to unite Greek philosophy and Platonic thought with the beliefs of the Jewish religion. A key historical figure behind this interpretative blend was Philo Judaeus, the famous Jewish commentator of the first century AD. A hallmark of his commentaries was his endeavor to discover allegorical meanings where they were not intended (Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, p. 485).

Most significant was Philo's use of the concept of *Logos* (Word). The late A.M. Renwick, professor of Church history at Free Church of Scotland College, explained that Philo believed "the Logos was merely an impersonal power of God, although He is the only firstborn of God, the chief of the angels, the viceroy of God, and the representative of mankind. According to Philo the creation of the universe was a gradual molding out of matter; thus evil arose. He also taught the preexistence of the soul, which is not imprisoned in the flesh. To secure salvation, therefore, mankind must break the thralldom of the flesh and rise by a sort of ecstasy to the immediate vision of God. It is clear that

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the various Gnostic sects were deeply indebted to Philo" (Ibid.).

Scholar David Scholer wrote of how Philo's beliefs affected his writings: "These issues pervade Philo's writings and illustrate the depth of Philo's utilization of Hellenistic philosophical traditions in his understanding of God and the created universe. Philo's discussions here are vital to understanding the nature of Middle Platonism, of **Hellenistic Judaism and probably part of the pre-history of gnosticism and its view of God and the cosmology**" (Yonge, p. xiv, emphasis added).

Honest evaluations of Philo's writings show that he was not a Gnostic. However, as Renwick noted, Philo's studies served as fuel for the growth of Gnosticism in Alexandria. One element so common among many of the Alexandrian forms of Gnosticism was the denial of the incarnation and work of Christ. A key aspect to genuine salvation as presented by the Gospel of John is that God (the *Logos* or Word) became flesh and tabernacled among men to redeem them from their sins (John 1:14, 29). The concept of sin was something quite different to Gnostics. For them it was "only a physical fact or quality inherent in the body and in matter everywhere" (Bromiley, p. 488). As a result, the Gnostic view of redemption or salvation was "simply each person's efforts to secure emancipation from the flesh—from physical evil" and it had little need of Christ and "no place for redemption in the Christian sense of that term" (Ibid.).

Gnostic codices discovered in December 1945 in Upper Egypt near the town of Nag Hammadi reveal that early Gnostics, like the Valentinians, adopted the writings of the apostle John and used them in formulating their heretical beliefs (Ireneaus, *Against Heresies*, 3:11:7). Gnostics, like Valentinus and Basilides, were known to have written their own "gospels" to support their own biblical interpretations (Burton, *The Causes of Corruption of the Traditional Text*, pp. 198-199).

Four of the 13 codices found at Nag Hammadi contain the *Apocryphon of John*, a pseudopigraphic Coptic Gnostic writing that describes the beliefs of the early Barbelo-Gnostics. The beliefs of this heretical group as found in the *Apocryphon of John* are almost identical to those described by early heresiologist Ireneaus in his *Against Heresies*, a work devoted to refuting the various Gnostic sects that prevailed in the latter half of the second century (Bromiley, vol. 3, p. 474). In his account, Ireneaus listed the words *Logos* (the Word) and *monogenes* (the only begotten), terms that are unique to John's authentic Gospel, especially his prologue, and the Gnostic *Apocryphon of John* (Ireneaus, *Against Heresies*, 1:29:2, 4).

It should not be surprising, therefore, that fragments of the Gospel of John were present in Egypt before the establishment of an official Christian church. This finding concurs with other historical evidence, which shows that Papyri 52 and 90 can rightly be viewed as remnants from the Alexandrian Gnostic community.

Summary: A review of the evidence before 200 AD reveals that the Egyptian church was no church at all, but a contingency of Gnostic sects. After 200 AD and through at least 231 AD, Gnosticism continued to have some influence in the official Alexandrian church. Bishop Demetrius' appointment of the famed Alexandrian scholar Origen (182-251 AD) as head of the Catechetical School at Alexandria confirms this conclusion. By all historical accounts, Origen was a pseudo-Christian Gnostic, which is verified by the condemnation of his teachings by both the Council of Alexandria (400 AD) and Council of Constantinople (553 AD) (Cross, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, pp. 1008-1009). It was in this Gnostic-Christian setting that the Alexandrian text first took form during the late second and early third centuries AD.

Appendix W

Chronology from the Jewish/Roman War (67-70 AD) to Printing/Translation of the Greek New Testament (NT)

AD

67-81

- 1) Jewish revolt against Rome intensifies
- 2) **Paul and Peter seal the three Gospels, Acts, Pauline corpus and Petrine Epistles; systematic distribution to churches from Ephesus begins**
- 3) Docetic heresy (denial of Christ's humanity) begins in Asian churches (64-67 AD), I, II and III John address this heresy
- 4) Faithful Jewish Christians, including John, flee to Pella and then to Asia Minor
- 5) Roman emperor Nero dies (68 AD); Galba becomes emperor (68-69 AD)¹
- 6) Otho, Vitellius rule empire (69 AD)
- 7) Vespasian rules empire (69-79 AD)
- 8) Roman army conquers Jerusalem, Titus destroys city and temple AB 9-10 (September 3-4, 70 AD)
- 9) Jewish Christians that survive destruction of Jerusalem apostatize and become Ebionites (belief that Christ is simply a prophet), move to Syria and produce corrupt Aramaic version of Matthew's Gospel
- 10) Titus, Vespasian's son, rules empire (79-81 AD)

81-100

- 1) Domitian, Titus' brother, rules empire (81-96 AD)
- 2) Loss of temple reading of Hebrew Old Testament causes rabbis to question established canon (Ecclesiastes, Esther, Song of Solomon): hold rabbinic discussions 90 and 118 AD
- 3) Domitian begins short, violent persecution of Christians between 94-96 AD
- 4) John exiled to Patmos (95-96) AD; writes Revelation
- 5) Nerva rules empire (96-98 AD); John released from Patmos as part of reparation program
- 6) **John and team of editors at Ephesus: edit, seal and distribute his Gospel, remaining General Epistles and Revelation, 96-99 AD**
- 7) Trajan rules empire (98-117 AD); relative peace for Christians, persecution begins 111 AD²
- 8) John dies ca. 98-100 AD

100-200

- 1) Hadrian rules empire (117-138 AD), persecuted Christians
- 2) Antoninus Pius rules empire (138-161 AD), persecuted Christians
- 3) **Syriac Peshitta NT translated from apostolic Greek NT (ca. 100-150 AD)**
- 4) Martyrdom of Ignatius, bishop of Antioch (ca. 115 AD)
- 5) Papyrus 52 (portion of John 18) copied by Gnostics in Egypt (ca. 125-150 AD)
- 6) Gnostic heretic Marcion in Rome (ca. 140 AD): creates abbreviated canon of corrupted Gospel of Luke and selected Pauline Epistles
- 7) Polycarp travels to Rome over issue of Passover (ca. 155 AD): Polycarp and Anicetus disagree and depart in peace; martyrdom soon after
- 8) **Old Latin (*Itala*) NT translated from apostolic Greek NT (ca. 157 AD)**
- 9) Western text written in Rome between 100-160? AD
- 10) Tatian creates *Diatessaron* (ca. 160 AD), a collection of writings about the life of Jesus adapted from Gospels
- 11) Marcus Aurelius rules empire (161-180 AD), persecuted Christians
- 12) Montanus begins to offer false prophecy using book of Revelation (ca. 172 AD); Eastern churches reject Revelation for nearly 300 years
- 13) Celsus writes *True Discourse* (ca. 178 AD), a literary attack on Bible
- 14) Commodus rules empire (180-192 AD)
- 15) Catechetical School of Alexandria begins (ca. 180 AD): first trace of Christianity in Egypt
- 16) Alexandrian text takes shape between 180-200? AD
- 17) Gnostic Theodotus produces corrupted recension of NT (ca. 190 AD)
- 18) Demetrius reorganizes Egyptian "churches" infiltrated by Gnosticism (ca. 190-200 AD)
- 19) Polycrates writes letter to Victor over Passover controversy (190 AD): Victor excommunicates Polycrates and Asiatic churches
- 20) Muratorian Fragment (ca. 190 AD) offers first suggested reading list
- 21) Civil War ensues in empire (ca. 192-193 AD); all emperors from 192-284 AD appointed by army

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- 22) Between 192-284 AD Christianity spreads practically unhindered due to imperial focus upon wars with barbarians³
- 23) Septimius Severus rules empire (193-211 AD), persecuted Christians
- 24) Coptic NT versions begin: many versions follow in specific dialects

200-300

- 1) Origen heads Catechetical School in Alexandria (ca. 203 AD)
- 2) Caracalla/Elagabalus rule empire (218-222 AD), tolerated Christians
- 3) Alexander Severus rules empire (222-235 AD), favored Christians
- 4) Origen deposed by Demetrius; Origen moves to Caesarea to build theological library (231 AD); produces Hexapla (231-240 AD)
- 5) Maximin rules empire (235-238 AD), persecuted Christians
- 6) Phillips rules empire (244-249 AD), favored Christians
- 7) Decius rules empire (249-251 AD), persecuted Christians
- 8) Valerian rules empire (253-260 AD), persecuted Christians
- 9) Galienus rules empire (260-268 AD), favored Christians
- 10) Aurelian rules empire (270-275 AD), persecuted Christians
- 11) Diocletian rules empire (284-305 AD)
- 12) Edict in 303 AD outlaws Christianity: **last** and most severe persecution of Christians, churches and NT manuscripts burned (303-313 AD)
- 13) Old Syriac NT translation from unknown Greek text during this century

300-400

- 1) Constantine rules empire (306-337 AD): Oct. 27, 312 AD sees vision of flaming cross, defeats opponents; becomes sole emperor in West; pseudo-conversion to Christianity
- 2) Edict of Milan (Toleration) in 313 AD grants Christians freedom of religion, churches built, tax exemption for ministers
- 3) Constantine orders 50 vellum copies of Bible prepared by Eusebius (possibly Sinaiticus and Vaticanus part of number)
- 4) **First Copying Revolution:** model papyrus manuscripts copied to vellum, older papyrus manuscripts destroyed
- 5) Constantine issues edict forbidding work on Sunday (321 AD)
- 6) Constantine defeats Licinius (323 AD), becomes sole emperor of entire Roman Empire
- 7) Constantine establishes Hellenized Christianity as official state religion (324 AD)
- 8) Constantine convenes Council of Nicea (325 AD): condemns Arianism, Passover obser-

vance becomes a crime

- 9) **Koiné Greek transformed into Byzantine Greek for copying of NT manuscripts** (330-1453 AD),⁴ early lectionary system instituted⁵
- 10) Constantine chooses Byzantium as capital and changes name to Constantinople (327 AD)
- 11) Constantius rules empire (351-361 AD), allows Arianism to flourish⁶
- 12) Julian rules empire, seeks to restore paganism (361-363 AD)
- 13) Council of Laodicea (365 AD): forbids keeping of Sabbath; publishes list of authoritative books for public reading in Asian churches: all books listed, except Revelation (cf. canons #59 and #60)
- 14) Jovian rules empire (363-364 AD), reestablishes rights for Hellenized Christianity
- 15) Gratian rules empire (364-378 AD), begins dismantling of Imperial system of worship
- 16) Theodosius rules empire (378-395 AD)
- 17) Council of Constantinople (381 AD) officially formulates doctrine of Trinity, more specifically the personhood of the Holy Spirit⁷
- 18) Jerome revises Old Latin Gospels (383 AD); rest of NT completed by unknown author or authors over centuries
- 19) Council of Carthage (397 AD), canon #24 establishes authoritative list for public reading in North African churches: all NT books listed; OT apocrypha (Wisdom of Solomon, Tobias, Judith, I and II Maccabees) allowed
- 20) Jerome translates Latin OT from Hebrew (ca. 390-405 AD)
- 21) Chrysostom encounters remnant of apostolic Christianity in Antioch (387 AD)
- 22) Theodosius outlaws paganism, membership in Imperial church compulsory, heathen join churches (394 AD)
- 23) Roman Empire divides (395 AD)
- 24) NT translations made in this century: Gothic, Ethiopic, Armenian (from Old Syriac), Georgian (from Armenian version)

400-800

- 1) Ancient forms of Gnosticism disappear during this century; appear in various forms in remaining centuries to present
- 2) Council of Ephesus (431 AD): Nestorianism (denial Jesus was God and man in one person) condemned
- 3) Armenian version revised according to Byzantine Text (ca. 431 AD)
- 4) Mocha of Tiberias adds accent marks and vowel points to Hebrew text (ca. 570 AD)⁸
- 5) Western Empire falls at hands of barbarians (476 AD); Dark Ages begins (476-1300s AD)
- 6) Greek Orthodox church and all Christendom in spiritual decline and unbelief (ca. 500-1500s AD), but Byzantine Text copied through Byzantine Empire by monks and other scribes

Chronology from 67 AD to 1611 AD

- 7) **Second Copying Revolution:** model uncial manuscripts copied into cursive script, creating minuscules; cursive script possibly instituted by Theodore of Studium (ca. 800-813 AD)

900-1611

- 1) Tiberian scholar Aaron ben Moses ben Asher seals first complete codex of Hebrew Bible with one Masoretic accentuation and punctuation system and marginal notes (ca. 930 AD)
- 2) Wycliffe English Bible Translated from Latin Vulgate (1384 AD)
- 3) Eastern Empire falls to Ottoman Empire (1453 AD), Greek scholars flee to Western Europe with Greek manuscripts of NT
- 4) Johann Gutenberg invents first movable printing press in 1450 AD; first Bible printed in Latin (Mazarin) in 1456 AD
- 5) Universities across Europe begin instruction in Greek
- 6) Complete Hebrew Bible first printed in Soncino in 1488 AD; 2nd in Naples in 1491; 3rd in Brescia in 1495
- 7) Desiderius Erasmus (1469-1536 AD) and Johann Froben publish first edition of Greek/Latin NT, 1516 AD; 2nd ed., 1519; 3rd, 1522; 4th, 1527; 5th, 1535⁹
- 8) European Reformation begins with Luther's posting of 95 theses on church door in Wittenberg on Oct. 31, 1517 AD
- 9) Cardinal Ximenes and Stunica begin Complutensian Polyglot in 1502 AD with Vulgate, Greek NT and Hebrew OT, published in 1522 AD after Ximenes' death
- 10) Tyndale (1494?-1536 AD) translates, prints first English version of NT (1525 AD) from Erasmus' 1st edition; revised edition in 1534 AD from Erasmus' 2nd edition
- 11) Coverdale English Bible (1535 AD)
- 12) Thomas Matthew English Bible by Tyndale's protégé John Rogers (1537 AD)
- 13) Great English Bible (1539 AD)
- 14) Robert Stephen (Estienne) prints 1550 Greek text of New Testament, becomes standard text for research and translation in England
- 15) Geneva English Bible (1560 AD)
- 16) Bishop's English Bible (1568 AD)
- 17) Rheims Catholic English Version of NT (1582 AD)
- 18) Authorized or King James Version (1611 AD)

End Notes:

- 1) Dating for emperors from *Halley's Bible Handbook*
- 2) Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 4, p. 217
- 3) *Ibid.*, p. 219
- 4) Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics*, p. 16
- 5) Cross, *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, p. 808
- 6) Bromiley, p. 220
- 7) Erickson, *God in Three Persons*, pp. 87-93
- 8) Ginsburg, *The Massoreth Ha-Massoreth of Elias Levita*, p. 62
- 9) Hills, *The King James Version Defended*, p. 198

APPENDIX X

Recommended Reading List

The titles and sites that follow will be helpful in gaining a broad background of this subject. This list does not constitute an endorsement of these publications, websites and publishing outlets. The reader is encouraged to obtain these publications first through the interlibrary loan process at a public library.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>ISBN#</u>
<i>The Ancient Text of the New Testament</i>	Dr. Jakob Van Bruggen	0-88756-005-9
<i>The Canon Debate</i>	Lee McDonald, ed.	1-56563-517-5
<i>The Causes of Corruption</i>	John William Burgon	1-888328-03-7
<i>The Ecclesiastical Text</i>	Dr. Theodore Letis	0-9658607-0-1
<i>Evaluating Versions of the New Testament</i>	Everett W. Fowler	0-937136-03-4
<i>A History of the Bible as Literature:</i>		
<i>From antiquity to 1700, vol. 1</i>	David Norton	0-521-33398-9
<i>From 1700 to the present day, vol. 2</i>	David Norton	0-521-33399-7
<i>Inspiration and Interpretation</i>	John William Burgon	1-888328-04-5
<i>The King James Version Defended</i>	Dr. Edward F. Hills	0-915923-00-9
<i>The Identity of the New Testament Text</i>	Dr. Wilbur Pickering	0-8407-5744-1
<i>The Majority Text: Essays and Reviews</i>	Dr. Theodore Letis	0-944355-00-5
<i>Restoring the Original Bible</i>	Dr. Ernest L. Martin	0-945657-83-8
<i>The Revision Revised</i>	John William Burgon	1-888328-01-0
<i>The Text of the New Testament</i>	Kurt/Barbara Aland	0-8028-4098-1
<i>The Text of the Old Testament</i>	Ernst Würthwein	0-8028-0788-7
<i>Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible</i>	Emanuel Tov	0-8006-3469-2
<i>The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels</i>	John William Burgon	1-888328-02-9
<i>The Word of God in English</i>	Leland Ryken	1-58134-464-3

Websites/Content

www.bible-researcher.com
<http://rosetta.reltech.org/TC/vol06/Robinson2001.html>
 Essay: "The Case for the Byzantine Priority"
www.geocities.com/Area51/Vault/1157/floyd-jones.htm
 Book: *Which Version Is the Bible?*

Webmaster

Michael Marlowe
 Dr. Maurice Robinson

 Dr. Floyd N. Jones

Publishers/Literature

The Bible for Today
 900 Park Avenue, Collingswood, NJ 08108
 856-854-4452 or www.BibleForToday.org

Institute for Biblical Textual Studies
 6010 28th St., SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546
 616-942-8498 or ibts@voyager.net

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Salvation by Faith

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. The one who believes in Him is not judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” John 3:16-18

“Although He was a Son, yet He learned obedience from the things that He suffered; and having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him.” Heb. 5:8-9

“Even *the* righteousness of God *that is* through *the* faith of Jesus Christ, toward all and upon all those who believe; for there is no difference. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; *but* are being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that *is* in Christ Jesus; Whom God has openly manifested *to be* a propitiation through faith in His blood, in order to demonstrate His righteousness, in respect to the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; *yes*, to publicly declare His righteousness in the present time, that He might be just, and the one Who justifies the one who *is* of *the* faith of Jesus.” Rom. 3:22-26

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ because it is *the* power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes—both to *the* Jew first, and to *the* Greek. For therein *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith unto faith, according as it is written: ‘The just shall live by faith.’ ” Rom. 1:16-17

“The gospel to us who are being saved, it is the power of God ... by which you are also being saved, if you are holding fast *the* words that I proclaimed to you.” I Cor. 1:17-18, 15:1

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them.” Eph. 2:8-10

“So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God Who works in you both to will and to do according to *His* good pleasure.” Phil. 2:12-13

“But these have been written, so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you may have life through His name.” John 20:31

