

The BODY OF SIN Part 2 – *and beyond*

By John Joseph
For Disciples

[It is suggested that “The Sons of God and the Sins of Adam” and “The Body of Sin Part 1” be first read.]

“You did terrible things which we did not expect. You came down.”

(Prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 64.3).

“God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear.”

(The Apostle John in 1John4.16-18).

*The world fears the day of judgment. Disciples know that God’s judgment is His love, and for them the day of judgment is always **now**. And always there is no fear.*

Dear brethren, allow me, for just a moment, to backtrack to the closing part of *The Body of Sin Part 1* to the final heading “Seeing It As It Is”. It sets the scene for what follows.

Seeing it as it is

“So, to see how the flesh operates in us and to gain an understanding of what the body of sin is and does, is to gain an enormous advantage in the spiritual life and struggle. Can we see that all those stirrings within and those thoughts that you hate and get sick and tired of experiencing – are not you!? They are not from you. They are a hangover from the old creation’s creation – the body of sin. It is his stirrings and yearnings to sin that vex the people of God who cry out as the apostle Paul who, having come through heart wrenching travail to the place of seeing this, says: “It is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” (Romans 7.17). Having come right through to the other side, he concludes: “So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God.” (Romans 7.25). Note the reiterated emphasis: with-the-mind; I; myself. Everything that he, Paul, is by nature serves the law of God gladly and naturally from the heart.

It is only the not-Paul, indeed the Saul of Tarsus, or rather his monstrous progeny under a death sentence that would by nature continue to serve the law of sin. As Paul, so too it is with you dear ones. Let not the flesh man condemn you for his deeds. Think not that his yearnings are your yearnings. They are not. His voice is but the echo of a dead man. Truly, “There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” (Romans. 8.1).

Each one who reads these lines has an extraordinary destiny in God. No one who has done anything extraordinary in God has not had first to come face to face with the rottenness of his or her own flesh which must be felt in all its bondage and tasted in all its bitterness if the full deliverance is to be reached. But from here and from the tears, we, by the ever continuing, never failing, grace of God, move on forgetting the things that are behind in death and stretching forth for the things that lie ahead in life in Christ Jesus. Great is Thy faithfulness.

In this hour God is calling and preparing His Sons. He is after something more than ordinary, and no Son of God is ordinary. God is not making you into anything that is just normal, as we call normal. It is something more, something extraordinary, and our experience therefore is extraordinary.”

The kingdom in us

In this part now we want to talk about our extraordinary experience to the extent that the Holy Spirit will give us understanding of it. For the work of God in our souls is a hidden work beyond our understanding except where the Spirit gives light. Previously, (Part 1) we’ve been given a glimpse into our inner condition as partakers of corruption in a fallen world, and an overview of God’s glorious plan of redemption to restore all things unto Himself and eradicate every vestige, every shadow, every nuance of evil entirely from the universe and grow the Kingdom starting in the depths of the hearts of men and reaching to every created world.
[For more on this see “The Blood of the Lamb is the Lamb Nature which overcomes”.] We are now moving on to glimpse the transformation of our souls from being partakers of corruption to partakers of the divine life and nature. Although the kingdom of God predates the creation of man, the Lord Jesus during His earthly sojourn announced that “the kingdom of God is at hand”. After so long time it was coming into the world of men.

He came to establish His kingdom in a fallen world and take back that which was His, but in His coming He came first not as king; His coming generated the kingdom in the earth in seed form.

And now toward the end of this dispensation, as light breaks through to disciples, while outer darkness turns to inky darkness and covers the earth and gross darkness the people, and where that darkness is seen as light and evil is seen as good by those ones who perish in this age because they received not the love of the truth (2Thess 2.10), we, in contradistinction to that blindness, are beginning to see with spiritual eyes firstly a kingdom internal and then external which began as an incorruptible seed within all who are regenerated – a kingdom, a government, a majestic monarchy ruled by the most majestic king – the increase of which is limitless. The kingdom that is within us, not by any righteousness which we have done, but by the pure grace of God, is a kingdom that begins as the smallest of seeds and not only will never end, but whose increase will never end. “...*the government shall be upon his shoulder...Of the increase of his government there shall be no end...*” (Isaiah 9.6,7). Sons of God consider this: As the kingdom within us expands so do we. In order to contain that unending increase, it must needs be that our increase must never end. **Selah.** We are flabbergasted at the stupendousness of the vision which, at this stage, is too much for our febrile minds. It is a vision that arrests mental activity. It does more than inspire us, but overpowers us and captures our heart and imagination to seek with first priority passion “the kingdom of God and His righteousness”. Jesus barely stopped speaking of the kingdom. “Seek ye first the kingdom of God.” [It may be mentioned in passing that by contrast the Lord spoke about the Church in only a few verses in one gospel]. The Church is vitally important, but relative to this age; the Kingdom is forever. To paraphrase the Lord: Seek the kingdom as your top priority and you’ll get everything else thrown in. In this age and in every age which is to come.

Believers and disciples

It was *disciples* who said to the Lord: “Teach us to pray.” To them the Lord replied: “When ye pray

say: “Our Father who art in heaven....Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done”. None but disciples can pray that prayer, for disciples only can grasp the significance of the treasure that is the kingdom. Some parliaments of the governments of this world begin their deliberations by mechanically reciting the Lord’s Prayer but it is vain repetition, as immediately after the recitation all that follows in thought, word and deed is antithetical to the kingdom.

Similarly, Sunday morning church members cannot pray this prayer because they do not see (know) the kingdom (John 3.3) nor do they do the will of God and consequentially cannot pray for it to be in the earth. It is not elitist, just truthful, and giving all glory to God to say that only *disciples* can pray from the heart “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done”. They have capacity so to pray in the same way they can say and know that Jesus is Lord, for no one can make that profession except by the Spirit of God. “...*No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost.*” (1 Cor.12.3).

The kingdom has come, at least in part, some more some less, already in their heart and their delight is to do the will of God from the heart. This deposit makes them say: “Abba Father”— because they are sons and sons know and love their Father’s kingdom in growing measure.

In growing measure disciples are sons, but not all believers are disciples. The world is full of millions of children of God, but comparatively, not many sons of God. In John ch 8, vs 31 we read: “*Then said Jesus to those Jews who believed on Him, If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed.*” In few words the Lord clears away all place for disputation. If you are continuing in His Word day by day, doing His will, endeavouring to please Him, then you are His disciple. And the promise follows: “*And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.*” Seeing truth unfolding unto liberty is witness of discipleship. Discipleship entails obedience.

Obedience

There may be times when God, should He say 'jump', we should say 'how high'? and we should jump. Such occasions may be rare. Generally, doing His will is not about snapping to attention when He speaks. Not about being some sort of vacuum head waiting for a download. The Father wants Sons. He does want obedient sons. But here again, a concept that we understand in the world when taken over into the Kingdom requires redefinition and reconceptualising because the contexts are literally worlds apart. 'Obedience' is a very good example of this. 'Obedience' in the world can have a negative connotation about it and we are drilled in it from childhood e.g. 'Santa won't have anything for you if you've not been obedient'. Being disobedient therefore can have a whiff of freedom about it. But remember this is in a fallen world; in the heaven of God's world obedience is both privilege and freedom. Fallen beings and the carnal mind are denied the privilege of obeying God. The Son of God knew heavenly principles before His incarnation into this dark world, but when here, and finding Himself in the fashion of a man: *"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which He suffered."* (Heb.5.8). We have to learn it too and that involves learning what obedience means in God's world. We seek rest and truly our rest comes when His will is done, and obedience is a step, yet an indispensable step to that goal of rest. The greatest rest is the truth, and as we come into more and more truth we come into more and more rest.

Obedience is above "being obedient". You can take a dog to what they call "obedience training". He will in time learn to do what you want him to do. If he's a good dog he will do your commands because he wants you to be pleased with him; he knows that if you're not pleased with him, he'll be miserable. But no matter how much of a good dog he is, and no matter how perfectly obedient he might become, he will never know why you want him to do the things

that you do. He will never philosophise that my master is seeking the very best for me; he never contemplates that not digging holes in the front yard is a good thing. He stops that practise because you don't like it. He likes it. He never enters into deep contemplation about why you don't like it.

As novice disciples we all go through obedience training. It is an indispensable part of our novitiate. But obedience is not the end point for those created and being remade in His image. There is a place in our redemption where obedience is transcended, in the same way as faith is transcended when full sight comes, or when law is transcended when love comes. So when the soul sees that the will of God being the outgoing of the love of God, being a mixture of infinite love and infinite wisdom is come, and receives that, then obedience is swallowed up in enlightenment.

Pain, suffering, deprivation are all products of sin and belong only to a world of sin. This world of sin exists not because the will of God is done in earth as it is in heaven, but because it is not done as it is done in heaven. The new heavens and new earth will not be wrestling with these concepts. The LORD will have a perfect Heavens, a perfect Earth and a perfect Man.

Obedience training may take time, and none is exempt, not even the Lord. He learned obedience. But having learned obedience, He didn't just repeat obedience training, but went on to better things. When the will of God is no longer seen from servant consciousness (for the servant knows not what his lord does); when blind obedience is transcended by enlightened vision, then sonship abides in the house forever (see John8.35,36).

When "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" is no longer about codes and rules and obedience as a servant but, as in heaven, is the liberated will of the enlightened, redeemed free man, then grace and growth have apprehended the will of God as sublime perfection – as perfect love and perfect

wisdom. Then the Lord Jesus and all the enlightened saints will say:

“I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea thy law is within my heart” (Ps.40.8).

Then, obedience has been fulfilled just as much as the law has been fulfilled.

Another witness to discipleship is the appearing of the fruit of the Spirit. *“By this is God glorified — by your bearing abundant fruit and thus being true disciples of mine.”* (John 15.8: Weymouth).

A downhill slide

The ones to whom the Lord was speaking in John Ch 8 aforesaid who were believers, clearly were not continuing in His word for if they were they would not have immediately spoken back against His word in the verses that follow. Their departure so quickly from listening to the word to resisting the word is a warning to all: that the Word which if followed will bless, but if rejected will lead to immediate and then to greater and greater darkness. This 8th chapter of John plots a course, a regression, from believer to anti-christ. It pays for all of us to read it carefully and see the principle in this apostasy – the downhill slide from believer to antagonist to enemy to murderer. The Lord said they were seeking to kill Him and we see their attempt to do just that in the last verse of the chapter. These were not heathen; they were not Pharisees; they were believers! A disciple is one of those who does the opposite. He/she continues in the Word, and is made free thereby. Believers, who are called to be disciples and who walk still after the flesh are in unsafe territory. How quickly they can fall! This principle holds true not just for individuals but for churches. Disciples pay a price in their flesh but rest in safety and liberty.

The big lesson for us starts by seeing there is a clear distinction between believers and disciples, and that the essence of discipleship is departure from the carnal mind.

The Carnal Mind

The carnal mind is very deceptive and craves activity. If it can't be involved in gross lusts it will settle for religious argumentation or church activities – the more the better. Down the ages it has been likened to a pig spirit by certain of the saints because of its insatiableness. Killing the carnal mind is like killing a pig – a lot of squealing, resisting, fighting to the very end. This casts some light on why at times God's judgments are so severe. Because the carnal mind is so strong. And it shows that religious activity is no measure of spirituality and is, of itself, unconnected with discipleship.

A disciple (disciplined one) is one who masters living and walking in the spiritual mind to the exclusion of the carnal mind. A simple believer thinks he can serve and even praise God out of the carnal mind. Such is actually hateful to God. This is the practice of Babylon. In fact, this is the very essence of Babylon.

Two minds of old

We always in this life have within us the potential to be of one of two minds – to be of God our Father or to be of the serpent's seed as the carnal Christian. If you are called to speak truth to religious power, then light will cut through to expose religious hypocrisy. A hypocrite thus exposed has one of two responses: 1) Cut to the heart he will fall on his face and repent, OR, 2) He will kill you.

Many of the prophets were killed by the religious, oh so holy, church (synagogue) members when the prophets shone unwanted light into the hearts of these religionists which they assuredly did not want. In truth they hate the light and will not come to the light lest their deeds should be made manifest. (see John Ch 3). This goes a long way back. Cain was a religious man; Abel was a spiritual man. A religious man was the first murderer of a righteous man. Again, religious men were the murderers of a

righteous man, the Son of Man. Think not that it is beyond imagination in a coming time of persecution where Babylonian church members to shield themselves would deliver you up to authorities even unto death. It was the Lord Himself who said:

“They shall put you out of the synagogues (assemblies): yea, the time cometh, that whomsoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service” (John 16.2).

Obviously, these words of the Lord are about religious folk who know something of service to God and do not have reference to worldly atheists or humanists. And why would they kill you thinking they were doing God service? The Lord answers this in the next verse.

“And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me”

Oh, yes, dear brethren, they knew all the traditions, they had objective truth, they formulated wonderful programs that entailed good works, they participated in myriad church activities and they loudly proclaimed His name in every service – yet they never knew the Father or His Son. They lived out of that unelect carnal seed in all their religious observances, and did not progress spiritually through relationship to effect the transition to life springing forth from the spiritual seed which lay dormant, because like all seeds and seedlings it required propagation, and they had not the time nor the inclination to pay attention to that. Moreover, the specific life that Jesus came to slay was the life they wanted to live in, and serve God in. This is the blasphemy of Rev.Ch2.9. So, thinking they were serving God with uncrucified flesh and thinking they were the ones accepted, while you, Son of God, were of those rejected, their darkened conscience delivered you up to rejection and persecution in the name of the Lord. But the LORD will show who are His.

“God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: “The Lord knows those who are his,” and, “Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.” (2Tim.2.19).

“Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name’s sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.” (Isaiah 66.5).

Two systems of old

So it is that many of those who rejected brethren perhaps of good intention belong to and operate in one or both of the two most evil systems in the world today which men have propagated down the ages with all diligence. All this goes back to the beginning. The progenitor of these systems is Babel or Babylon, the mother of Religion and Politics.

The influence of these systems has been ubiquitous but the tide is turning recently especially in the USA away from a godless, liberal polity infiltrating every institution and structure of society. Yet the proponents of this satanic flood have not given up but by a raising of the standard of God their advance is at least checked. We can now expect to see Politics’ evil sister joining in demonically empowered resistance with the political powers and becoming more prominent in rebelling against every move of God toward righteousness and the advance of His Kingdom in the world. Beware religion! Religion is law. *“...by law is the knowledge of sin”* (Roms. 3.20), not the knowledge of God. It must certainly seem incongruous to some, but it is religion that works to have people not retain God in their knowledge (Roms.1) because religion is law consciousness and law consciousness is sin consciousness which never makes a link with God. God given faith is our personal link to God.

One way to understand faith’s importance in our relationship with God is to substitute the word “faith” in the scriptures with the word

“relationship”, thus “Without relationship it is impossible to please God.” This is not advocating changing the scriptures which stand, but simply having a window in which to see the intimacy of faith. We are saved by faith. The opposite of belief is unbelief. The opposite of faith is religion.

Babel

Back at Babel one wing of the Babylonian vulture sought heaven and the other, earth.

“Let us build us a city and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven.” (Gen.11.4). Salvation by fleshly human power. Heaven, salvation, without God. The very sin of Lucifer: *“I will be like God”* (but I will do it without God). The very essence of religion. The other wing, in the same verse: *“let us make us a name lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth”* – the political manifesto. Centralized power and collective consciousness (rather than scatteredness, individual accountability), self aggrandizement, fame, systems, organization, independence of the Creator, dependence on self, man, and the creation. Their rejection of God seen in their desire for a name of their own rather than embracing His name. Religion and politics can do good and they can do evil. Their operating knowledge comes from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The Lord Jesus when standing before Pilate, the political power, intimated that of these two powers Religion was the greater evil.

“Jesus answered, You could have no power at all against me, except it were given you from above: therefore he who delivered me unto you has the greater sin.” (John 19.11).

Religion

Religion is the greater evil because it, in the name of God, enlists political power to maintain its power and in the name of God seeks to prevent the individual from direct contact with God. It has always been a stumbling block and historically has ever striven to be a mediator, an obstruction

between each person and God. It will collaborate with and work hand in glove with politics to persecute the true worshippers.

In our present world man does not know God and to a large extent, because of the (false) “image” of God projected to the world by the pervasive Babylonian system, man does not relish the thought of getting to know God. The singular job of the prophets down the ages was to show this one thing to humanity – God as He really is. The job of the prophet was to reveal the God of love and truth to man. Because the serpent’s toxin flows deep in the breast of the sons of Adam, aided and abetted by Babylon clouding and distorting the image of God that fallen men have of God, He has become someone to be avoided at all costs.

“..the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” (2Cor.4.4).

The job of the Sons and Prophets continues on the same and will continue until the scripture is fulfilled:

“And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD.” (Jer.31.34). *“...the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea”* (Isaiah 11.9).

If the world in a flash could see God as He is in truth, there would be a stampede toward God. It is Babylon and all her religions, more than anything else down the ages that have turned unbelievers away from God to nothing or false gods, and believers from entering in to knowing Him intimately out of ungodly fear.

The Oxford dictionary defines religion as: “Human recognition of superhuman controlling power and of a personal God or gods entitled to obedience and

worship.” However, when it comes to God Almighty the Creator, human-initiated recognition can never find Him out. It may arrive at mental assent that every effect requires a cause, but no matter how developed, it cannot KNOW God. And to know Him is life eternal, is “reaching unto heaven”. or rather, heaven reaching unto us. It is not mental assent or even belief that brings salvation: it is faith. God doesn’t want “human recognition”. He provides faith which enables belief which enables fellowship. Babylon in churchland has got the cart before the horse. It is faith that creates belief – not the other way round. Faith is not a system of beliefs but a living, spiritual substance given by God without which it is impossible to please God. It is not a doctrine, but a golden, spiritual bow or link between God and man (Heb.11.1&6). No one in this world has saving faith except those who are regenerated. They have faith, therefore they believe. Those without faith remain spiritually blind as bats, and that includes much or most of the religious world.

The religious world confuses faith with doctrine and doesn’t know faith or deep spiritual things or who God’s elect sons are. If and when they find out who we *really* are, they, in their darkness, will hate us as they hated Him. They won’t know why they hate us but it will be as it was with the Lord, they will hate us without a cause. It becomes clearer that we are, as it were, parachuted in behind enemy lines and the enemy is the whole world system which hates us when it realizes who we are. It hates us because it hated Him because He and we spell displacement for the rulers of the current darkness who now work in the children of disobedience. Those rulers were judged 2,000 years ago. Sentencing follows judgment. Hence their fierceness and hatred of God’s Sons. Until they are made into footstools, their rule continues and the Kingdom of God waits, and the creation continues to groan. They must by whatever means prevent the manifestation of the Sons of God and halt the bringing forth of His Kingdom.

The kingdom in the earth

But God will bring forth His Kingdom and He will manifest His sons. We begin to see why the Lord when on earth continually exhorted His followers to pray for the kingdom to come. And now when we behold on a daily basis the suffering of this world on a scale as never before seen, and the evil that will not stop its plan no matter what until man is fully subjugated, we join with Him in prayer to bring forth the kingdom of God and the knowledge of God unto that day of emancipation when the creation will be brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

The Lord Jesus was demanded of by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come.(Luke17.20). He replied: “*The kingdom of God cometh not by observation*” (Luke17.20), meaning you cannot see the coming of the kingdom with the natural eye. There is nothing to see in the manner of impressive Roman legions, of eloquent political orations, of sophisticated civilizations, of excellence and learning or of advanced technology. Nor will it be heralded by the sudden emergence of a popular political movement which will sweep away traditional structures. Things that the outward man would consider hallmarks of the coming of a great empire. All these are signs of the temporal, earthly kingdoms of this age whose temporal glory can be observed even worshipped by the outward man.

The prophet Daniel was shown by vision the coming, the conquering, the increasing of the kingdom of God (see Daniel 2.44, and all of that chapter). Unlike the *external*, transitory kingdoms of this world, the kingdom of God begins as an *inner* kingdom in the hearts of men and women, transforming in the first place Man, and overflows outward till it occupies all worlds. The Kingdom of God is the Nature of Jesus in all creation.

In responding to the Pharisees’ demands, the Lord gives them a particular answer. When you read the Lord’s words always look carefully to see who or

what group He is talking TO. If we are not cognizant WHOM the Lord Jesus is speaking TO, we are in danger of missing His meaning. For a message given to one is not a message He would give to another and vice versa. His discernment was to know the heart condition of the receiver and speak spirit and truth to it. He surely said: ‘You generation of vipers’ – to religious hypocrites whose heart condition He saw and pronounced upon in truth. And though His words were in truth and love for their good, they hated Him the more. To religious hypocrites only is it recorded that He spoke using words so apparently hard.

Fear not dear ones. The Lord will never speak a hard word to you except there be a hard part in you. Then He is speaking to that hard part. Some part of carnality or self-will will elicit from Him a hard word and until we repent and work with Him to put things right that hard word in various forms will keep coming to us. But once the carnality is excised all His words to us are soft. But whether hard or soft, all His words to us are in love for our good.

The glory of God and His kingdom will surely cover all the earth as the waters cover the sea, but for God to bring forth the kingdom in the whole world He needs not to establish it *en masse* in millions of people simultaneously. The Lord Jesus referred to His loyal followers as the little flock, and limited His close disciples to twelve and His inner circle to just three. The “great commission” was not given to millions of pew-warmers but to eleven crack troops who had been through 3½ years of intensive boot camp in His presence and even they could do nothing with all that the Lord had instilled in them till given special Holy Ghost power for which He commanded them to wait. We see at this time a rough comparison or type in the appointing of select, equipped leaders to earthly government positions of authority by a president. A king and a small group are about to change the world. The King that we serve is the rightful heir of this world who won the salvation of the world and the group

are His disciples, the sacrificial firstfruits, the Sons, who are co-workers with the Father in bringing that salvation to the world.

Holiness

Salvation is the conferring of righteousness. It is a gift. It says that I can stand before God, not because of anything I have done but because of the righteousness of another Man. After righteousness comes holiness, which is the partaking of the *nature* of that other Man.

“As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness” (Rom 6.19).

If we would be instruments in the Lord’s hands in the work of the kingdom in this age and in that which is soon coming, we must be holy even as He is holy. For we are co-workers with Him in the work of the gospel, and to work with Him means we must be like Him. For the work and glory of the gospel at its most basic is the displacement of the Adamic/Satanic nature in every person and its replacement with the nature of Christ. This is the work of the Holy Spirit and we are His instruments, His ambassadors in the work. The work ahead is monumental, but so is God. To play a part in introducing this new nature we must be of it. We must be holy.

“Be as he which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” (1Peter 1.15,16).

Uncreated holiness dwells in your heart. A holiness that no created being has. Only the Uncreated One is holy, but if He is in you then you are being made holy. It is His indwelling that makes you holy. It is no wonder that the Lord Jesus spoke continually about abiding in Him.

It is God Himself who is every particle of goodness and virtue and love and holiness that we have. Man

was never meant to be separated from God. [And we are witnessing that being played out in this age of sin]. It's not that man is evil; it's that separation from God is evil. Like the light that creates the shadow, in the ultimate sense it is God who creates the shadow because He created the light. Yet the shadow is out of the light. Similarly, whatever is outside of God is evil because it is outside of God who alone is good.

God's economy has been from the beginning evening to morning (not vice versa), always darkness to light, and a coming and going of His presence to show the creature its moribund state without Him, and to show step by step the creature's return to Him.

Our righteousness unto holiness is a work of God. We are a privileged people. The scripture tells us we are a peculiar people (1Pet.2.9) and we have known, I'm sure, some brothers and sisters whom we might think are a little – peculiar. Praise the Lord! We live in a family of colourful and endearingly peculiar people under processing, and He loves all of us not just in our end state but in our immediate state. But He wants us holy if we are to be part of the new world that is coming. So, what is all this processing about? This is what it's about: Your personal sanctification, to be with God and to love God to the fullest in truth, with no cloud of error or shadow of sin to mar that relationship **and** to be a vessel fit for the Master's use in the mighty work of the kingdom arising now in the earth. This is the time of preparation that right now we are all in.

Paradoxes

The Lord's promise is: *"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal"* (John12.25).

We do not, as the world, have to cling to this (mortal) life, because losing it is more life. The paradoxes of the spiritual life taught and lived out by the Lord Jesus and Paul: If you lose (deny) your

life you will find it; when I am weak then am I strong; give and you shall receive etc, etc. are foolishness to the world and the carnal mind, but treasure to the spiritual mind which sees beyond the surface and immediate into spiritual realities.

One of the greatest of these paradoxes is found in Revelation Ch.12. How can a lamb overcome a dragon!?

"They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives even unto death".

There are many scriptures that speak of the blood cleansing away our sin. To say, thank you Jesus for shedding Your blood and washing away my sin seems so inadequate. If we contemplate even for a few moments our state if our sins were a living permanent stain and record which could never be expunged – if we can contemplate that and realise the terribleness of that – and if it were the case, then truly it would be better that we had not been born. But God loved us so much He could not allow that to stand. And so He sent His only begotten Son.

The Blood

The Blood cleanses, but it does more than cleanse. It changes. And the aforesaid scripture is not speaking of the blood cleansing away sins, but of its instrumentality in the infusion of a new life, a new nature, a holy nature, in place of the old life and nature bequeathed to us by the first Adam. The life is in the blood. Blood is not just neutral energy, not just animating principle, but is above all – NATURE – it is virtue, morality, attitude, perspective, point of reference.[See article: The Blood of the Lamb is the Nature that Overcomes]. There can be none of God's mind in man except there be His Son's nature through His blood in man. Of course we are speaking spiritually. To speak thus of the blood is to speak of the life of God manifest in the life of His Son manifest in the life of His Sons. Spiritually, Lamb's blood was never in our fallen world before Jesus came. From this

blood, this *nature*, comes a new word of a new testimony, about this absolutely new nature. This is the “Word of their testimony” which could never come forth except for the instantiation of a new nature. “*Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks*” (Matt 12:34). Arising only from this nature comes a word so powerful that it is dragon overcoming (Rev. 12). It comes out of a heart so meek because it is a lamb’s heart and the Word from that heart is so powerful because it is the Word of a lion with the strength and boldness of a lion. It roars an unmistakable truth out of meekness. This truth overcomes all the lies of the enemy and the enemy himself. Behold the Lamb and the Lion in the Christ Head and Body! But note, it is not the word of Jesus’ testimony that overcomes, but the word of their testimony. It springs from what has happened to them. It is the story of God-life in them. This God-life is the most revolutionary thing to ever come into this fallen world. We don’t need a theological degree to know what salvation is. Our salvation is God’s life in us. Period. Full stop. And this life can never die, hence, “*they loved not their life even unto death*”. Their old life, or remaining, diminishing residue of it, is the only life that can still die. And it doesn’t matter in light of possessing eternal life.

The lamb nature

This new nature is antagonistic to the nature of the dragon and instead of being attracted, as was the old man, is repulsed; the lamb therefore prefers to die rather than succumb to indulging the old nature as before. As well as this, the lamb nature is not the pig nature squealing and resisting. The lamb nature is the nature of the sacrifice – the nature of the Lamb of God. It is natural – the NATURE of the thing – that the lamb offers its life. But as soon as it does – as soon as the Lamb lays down, the Lion arises and roars and in that process God’s power in the new nature is centre stage – and overcomes! God empowers lambs. He doesn’t empower lions. He turns lambs into lions.

Overcoming

The scripture shows our overcoming as a three-part process: 1) The Blood of the Lamb; 2) The word of their testimony, and 3) Not loving their lives to the death. But we need to major on the first part: the blood bringing a changed nature, for without that, parts 2 & 3 are meaningless.

Let us consider: “*They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb*” – what does that mean? In considering that, we must first needs understand Lordship, and what that means.

Lordship

So, firstly, what does lordship of any kind, mean? We speak of the lordship of Jesus, we call Him Lord. But what does that mean? In our past life before we knew the Lord Jesus, we had another lord. He goes by many names but the scripture tells us he is the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience (Eph. 2:2). He is the lord of disobedience. Jesus said to certain religious ones: “*You are of your father the devil.*” (John 8:44). If I am *of* something it means I have an affinity with it. Changing lords from Satan to Christ cannot be likened to changing office bosses. It is not that once Satan told us what to do and now Christ tells us what to do. Lordship really means: what is the governing agent or principle.

Nature is lordship

Christ’s lordship over us is just His nature now our nature. Our nature is just our natural state of being. So our lordship over us, whatever it be, is our nature, whatever it be. Whatever is our nature, that is our lord. Our nature is the ultimate law of our being. The lordship or nature of the children of God is Christ – Christ-ness. The lordship of people in the world is their Adam-ness. It is the nature of man that is the issue here.

An illustration may help. Say you owned one hundred Labradors, and you took them all to the

beach and you let them all go. How many would jump into the water? Ans. It would be all one hundred of them. Some might swim around, some might just flop down in the water and enjoy the waves rolling over, some would like it if you threw a stick into the water for them to fetch over and over again. And in the end, you would have a hard time in getting them out again. By nature they love water. Now, another scenario: You take your one hundred cats to the beach and let them go. How many will go for a swim or ride the waves? I dare say, None. Cats don't like water. Why the difference? It all comes down to NATURE. Hear the word of the Lord. The Holy Ghost says: *It's all about the nature of things*. When that simple, empowered, spoken word was given to me, it came with such illumination that I felt it was really the answer to the riddle of everything, of life, and of sin, and of redemption; it contained the whole meaning of life. In the years since, I see it even more. *Selah*. Only a spoken, empowered word of God has that kind of power. I pray that you would prayerfully meditate on this. I pray that that living Word would dwell in your heart unto all increasing, and fundamentally change your whole perspective in the truth and in the glorious liberty of the truth. For the truth is that God has translated you out of darkness into light and given you a heart and nature that lives and breathes and loves in Light.

The intention of God is to write His nature in the lives of His people, then in the world and in all creation.

"I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." (Jer.31.33).

All scripture witnesses that this new covenant is written in blood. To illustrate the flow on of the revelation: The change of natures is the change of the covenants. Law applies to the Old Man; Grace to the New. The latter exceeds the former by excellences of glory. The old man is under law and

whether he keeps the law or fails he is and lives in misery. The New Man is under grace and the grace is – he is given a new nature which is able to take the grace and walk in righteousness by nature. The old man is ever working against his nature. The new man just flows in his nature. God doesn't provide any grace to help the old man keep the law, hence he is destined to fail; God provides all grace to the new man, hence he is destined to triumph. This is the story of Romans 8 – the eventual destiny of the new man. There is struggle and victory, and in this groaning process of transformation from one nature to another there is no condemnation.

What comes naturally

Back to the question above: *"They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb"*, What does that mean? Fallen Adam could never overcome the devil because when he sins he participates in the devil's nature, and in his own nature. His very nature has an affinity with the dragon's nature, because man has the dragon's nature within him through Eve's 'parleying' with the serpent and receiving his seed, and being the mother of all living, passing that seed on to all.

Adam sinning is like the Labrador jumping into the water, it is natural to him. The lordship of any being is the nature of that being. The lordship of a Labrador is its Labradorness. His nature rules him. The nature of a being rules that being and is the chief governing principle of that being. We see therefore the hopeless condition of man. No amount of tinkering, of regulating, can change him, rather, restrictions upon his nature which amount to LAW, make for more sin. *"By law is the knowledge of sin."* (Roms3.20). Also, in understanding that the new nature grows within us we see why new Christians need milk and not meat, as whatever they receive at the beginning is largely processed by the carnal mind which is at enmity with God and will twist the Word to portray God in an error. We must all start off as little children learning in a new world.

Regeneration, therefore, is not simply the transfer of bosses but the instantiation of a new heart, a new nature that *by nature* loves God and righteousness because that new nature is God's nature. **Selah.** To follow and obey the Lord Jesus is the natural thing. There is no longer any law (external) but the working out of the law of a nature. And in that, all grace from God is given when needed. Since Christ came and reconciled us back to God, we who are regenerated are the only people who are at ease. We are the only people who joy in living out our nature. Evil ones in the world who do evil are living out their nature too, but they must continually confront the knowledge of good and evil internalised as 'conscience'. Religious ones have the most conflict because internally they are yet carnal but have to appear outwardly and to themselves as pious, observing rules and regulations that their heart despises. The only true ones are the ones who are true to themselves.

*"...in time past ye walked according to...the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience: and were **by nature** the children of wrath."* (Eph. 2.2,3).

New Christians, new concepts

New Christians, only yesterday by nature children of disobedience and still with unrenewed minds may baulk at the thought of lordship to anyone other than self. Jesus as Saviour, yes; Jesus as Lord, they may kick against, because their minds are yet unrenewed and concepts are held in worldly knowledge, and the carnal mind holds sway as the controlling mind, and so understanding of what Christ's Lordship means is jaundiced.

Even so, with the anointing of the Word, certain things even to new Christians can become clear quite quickly regarding lordship and the nature of the old man and the nature of the new. The old man hates the law but does the works of it, but of course not from the heart, and therefore those works are not acceptable to God because He always looks on the heart. The new man loves the law from the heart

but doesn't do the works of it because God looks upon the heart and sees that the law is fulfilled and therefore no works are necessary. It is the new creation. It is the NATURE of the thing.

Liberty

The Lord Jesus said: *"If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed."* (John 8.36).

Do we begin to see the extent of the liberty that the Lord Jesus has given us when He gave us His heart? Do we see that the Lordship of Christ is no bondage at all, but freedom, and the concept of 'lordship' in the kingdom is opposite to that in this fallen world.

Far from being no longer children of wrath by nature, we have been translated into the kingdom of His dear Son and become children of love and mercy by nature because partakers of the divine nature. As says the scripture:

*"According as his divine power has given to us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that has called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the **divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."* (2Peter1.3,4.KJV).

Or, as J.B.Phillips reads: *"May you know more and more of grace and peace as your knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord grows deeper. He has by his own action given us everything that is necessary for living the truly good life, in allowing us to know the one who has called us to him, through his own glorious goodness. It is through him that God's greatest and most precious promises have become available to us men, making it possible for you to escape the inevitable disintegration that lust produces in the world and to share in **God's essential nature**."* (2Peter1.2,3,4).

The change of nature is the all essential foundation in the battle against the enemy and is his defeat.

That is why, had these principalities and powers known this, they never would have crucified the Lord of Glory. The wisdom of God! Oh, dear brethren, are we not blessed beyond all that we can think and dream?!

Ground to stand on

So, they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb. It was a new nature now that stood against the dragon. Instead of affinity there was revulsion. Now there was push back that was real; now there was ground to stand. The new nature is in the blood of the Lamb.

Now the new creation man can say in truth to the devil: The temptation that you put before me now is not the same as it used to be. Before, your sleazy offerings had some appeal to me because I was a partaker in your nature, but now everything is different because I now have the nature of Christ and what you tempt me with not only has no appeal but it is now revolting to me.

The word of their testimony

This, in fact, is the second part of overcoming. It is the word of their testimony. Their testimony is the testimony of a changed nature. They testify that there has come an essential change of the heart. This is something that man never could have done. We see the way of victory. But can you see, dear brethren, that knowing this, while it is liberating, does not absolve us from the struggle. It gives us insight as to what's going on. It makes it possible to win, yea, even guaranteed, but it highlights again that what must be overcome and undone is the working ground of the enemy – the body of sin. The body of sin has not changed from being evil. The enemy can only work on you where he has working ground.

Enemy ground

The strategy of the enemy is to get you out of abiding in the new man. He doesn't tempt the new

man to sin because he cannot, any more than he can tempt God to sin. If he can get you to move, get you into the flesh, into choosing between good and evil, then he has got you. Revulsion returns to affinity when you are in the flesh. To paraphrase Paul: "They that are IN the flesh have an affinity for fleshly things, and they that are IN the spirit have an affinity for spiritual things" (Roms.8.5). Can we see a tremendous truth here which has delivering power in it? It is this: The futility of overcoming temptation while in the flesh. It's not about willing or wanting or trying harder, it's about changing locales. "*Walk in the spirit and you will not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*" (the apostle Paul in Gal.5.16).

So, again, the first step in the devil's device is to get you into the flesh i.e. to bring some separation between you and God. Once there you will view things from self, and initially you may find all inducements unappealing, and initially, you may have a false sense of security, but if you stay there, the enemy will tailor a temptation particularly aimed at your prior weakness and in conformity to the body of sin. And being there you are out of the spirit on a lower level and he who tempts you in that place is more powerful than you are *of yourself*. Temptation is a supernatural onslaught that can be mesmerizing, even anaesthetizing. In the case of the Lord Jesus in the wilderness, it called for angels to minister to him. In times of pressing temptation, it cannot be overstated our utter dependence on God.

*"Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. No one is to say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is **carried away** and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it has run its course, brings forth death."* (James1.12-15: NASB).

Every one is tempted *when* he is drawn away of his own lust (flesh) and enticed. Is this inevitable? The scripture is: "*Each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed...*". We want to be realists here. We live in an evil, fallen world full of

enticements, and we have a flesh principle within which is ever seeking gratification. That is the situation. The prize is not to him or her who never falls. It is to those who get up and go on. As I write this I'm mindful of the words of Oswald Chambers, a puritan preacher who said: "Out of the wreck I rise, every time." The Lord knows how to succour those who are tempted and to lift up those who fall. We must never forget that. But, even so, we can hasten the Lord's sanctifying process and make it easier on ourselves if we are wise. It is a simple thing, but the key to not giving in to temptation is to not be tempted. To not be tempted is to not be in the *place* of temptation. The Lord Jesus in giving the Lord's Prayer did not pray: "Our Father, who art in heaven,.. lead us not into sin but deliver us from evil", but..."Our Father, who art in heaven, lead us not into *temptation*". So the question is: *Where* are you? Where you are determines who you are, and who you are determines what you do. When you're in the flesh, the flesh is appealing and the spirit unappealing or simply outside your horizon. When you're in the spirit, the spirit is life and peace and all things meaningful, and the flesh repulsive. There is wonderful wisdom teaching in Proverbs 7, which is a mini-handbook on avoidance and which is included as an addendum to this treatise.

But a word of comfort is needed here. From affinity to revulsion doesn't always come immediately and strongly enough in every area of needed renewal. Spiritual growth is a major factor. At regeneration masses of sins and bad habits literally fall off. Other things more ingrained in the soul entail struggle for release. What one nature likes the other hates, and, note well, in these cases, (hear the word of the Spirit) it's not whether you want a thing or not, it's whether the Lord is the LORD. It is Christ growing up in us that grows revulsion for sin, and forms affinity for righteousness. [Is that not humbling? Is that not the ultimate offence to Religion?]

There is a maturity coming in the true Body of Christ, and as Paul says regarding Satan's wiles: We are not ignorant of his devices.

In all of this let us not lose sight of the enabling first principle: They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb which gave them the NATURE of God.

Man wants life

You and I have known people who cling desperately to the last spark of mortal life. They grasp at whatever life they can hold on to. They don't want to die. Nobody wants to die. Death is an alien principle to humans; something avoided in thought and speech and as the scripture tells us, bringing lifelong bondage through fear: "*.. through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage*" (Heb.2.15). Even those who commit suicide don't want to die. They just want the pain to stop. Circumstantial pain. Existential pain. Inescapable pain. Too unbearable to continue. Death had no part in God's unfallen creation. And it has no part in God's new creation. It was and is anathema to One who is the life creator. It is in the world presently but its reign was ended legally at Calvary and increasingly dynamically as this age closes. The Sovereign LORD uses death and even the enemy on a short leash in the training of the Sons of God, the end being not death but life. The body of sin suffers continual death. So although disciples eschew the principle of death, they see its utility in a fallen yet recovering world. Who would not want to see the death of mould, of viruses, of cancer, of sin, of the body of sin? The death process turns to life for us through our Lord Jesus. Life in all its fulness is the heritage of the world because of the heritage of Jesus Christ.

God's work in the soul

It was through fallenness that our constitution became radically changed. Instead of the spirit being the dominant aspect of our being, the soul rose up when the spirit died to God, and the soul

gained the ascendancy. Man derived everything then, as it were, horizontally, from the creation, and almost nothing vertically from God.

The soul has not the power to control the human being or to synthesize the various component parts that go into making a functioning, integrated human being. The soul is out of place in taking the headship. This is not the place to consider all of that, and you know it already. This treatise considers the reconstitution and realignment of the constituent parts of man through redemption which involves the liberation of the spirit and the salvation of the soul concerning which the destruction of the body of sin is crucial and integral. Redemption is about putting things right. Jesus is the prototype of the New Man. We are being renewed in the new, and day by day the old is vanishing away. The voyage into the New Man is not just one of discovery, but of rediscovery. More on that later.

So now, we have come full circle to returning our focus to the body of sin, and inasmuch as the Lord will reveal, we will by grace attempt to focus from God's viewpoint, that we may discern and come to recognise something of His dealings within our souls particularly with regard to that organism we would fain be rid of, and in increasing light cooperate more wholeheartedly with Him, all the while knowing, O Lord, that no chastening for the moment seems joyous but grievous. The Lord's work within a soul is deep, mysterious and largely hidden. We cannot find it out by human searching:

"For who has known the mind of the Lord? O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out"
(Rom.11.34,33).

So, do the scriptures cast any light on the intricacies of God's inner dealings with His Sons during their earthly pilgrimage in a dark world? Yes, but it is not the letter of the word that assists us. The Sons, having become corrupted by sin and death, could

never return home if it were not for the sacrifice of their Captain, the One in whom there was no sin, the only begotten Son who gave His life for His Sons and for the world. God's dealing in our souls is painful and joyful, underpinned by grace, mostly hidden at this stage in the inner world, but shown to us in part at times by the Spirit as we can bear, and illustrated metaphorically in the scriptures and understood only through revelation of the Holy Spirit by those who have eyes to see.

If, in the furnace of affliction, we can know that *"It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure"* (Phil 2.13), and that the LORD *"does not afflict or grieve willingly the children of men"* (Lam.3.33), and that *"love seeketh not her own"* (1Cor.13), then we can know that everything He does is love, and all love, and trust Him. The LORD loves your soul. *"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth"* (Heb.12.6).

It may be hard to appreciate God's love at times when we wish the path would be a bit easier. We can identify at certain times with the saints long gone, yet not far away, together with the psalmist who cries out:

"In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord; my sore ran in the night, and ceased not; my soul refused to be comforted. I remembered God and was troubled; I complained and my spirit was overwhelmed. Thou holdest mine eyes waking; I am so troubled that I cannot speak. Will the LORD cast off for ever? And will he be favourable no more? Is His mercy clean gone forever? Hath God forgotten to be gracious?. But, (at the end): "Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people the sons of Jacob and Joseph." (Psalm 77).

Man put right

The apostle Paul writes that the Word of God is a mystery. In his reading of Genesis (see 2Cor4.6) we see a figure or type of another work of God namely the redemption of man beginning with "Let there be

light” and culminating in the sixth day with man restored in the image of God. In other words the six days of (re)creation figure the progressive stages of regeneration in a soul. Each “day’s” work in the six days of Genesis where chaos turns to order; where gifts and lights and fruits are restored, and where Elohim pronounced that “God saw that it was good” parallel the stages of redemption of our souls until full restoration into the image of God. I mention this merely to show that such can never be seen in the mere letter. The Word is a mystery in that, like the iceberg, one tenth only is visible and the rest is hidden underneath in the depths. If God will allow we shall see in these two chapters of prophet Isaiah and elsewhere both an inner and an outer application of His restorative dealings in His creature. Whether inner or outer it is one and it is His work. It is the former which most occupies us in our present meditation.

At this stage of our development we can discern but a small part of God’s work in the inner world. In the detail, what He does in the soul is largely hidden from us because at this stage of our redemption, we simply could not understand it. Even so, He paints some of it on the broad canvas of creation to guide and encourage us until such time as inner sight develops and focus moves from outer to inner. Nevertheless, the outer world has always things to teach us about heavenly realities. We should all learn to look at the material world and see spiritual principles. Spiritual sight is seeing the reality behind the created world. Intellectual sight sees the world but nothing above it because no matter how sophisticated or developed it is, it lacks the one penetrative ingredient to pierce the veil and enter a higher world and that ingredient is faith. Without faith it is impossible to please God i.e. without faith there is no entry. But we have the faith of Christ. The parables of Jesus are about heavenly realities but they picture the earthly creation for our understanding and because the worlds are related.

Let us turn our attention to what lies behind the words of Prophet Isaiah from the perspective of God’s inner working in our soul. There are two things to bear in mind: The OT literal Word becomes spiritualised when brought over into the New Covenant. And 2): There is suffering involved in redemption – to the Redeemer and the Redeemed. We might wish it were different but it is we who must make peace with this, and follow on mindful there is a great difference between the old law covenant and where we stand in new covenant grace. Under the law covenant God never gave grace to keep the law. The law entailed self effort, destined to fail, to demonstrate our moral bankruptcy. The Lord Jesus brings in the new covenant and where sin did abound grace did *much more* abound (Roms.5.20). The two covenants stand in different worlds and the former has, in fact, vanished away. *“In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away”* (Heb.8.13). We stand in the righteousness of God Himself. It is Jehovah Tsidkenu – The LORD our Righteousness, in the person of Jesus Christ our Redeemer who has done this. It is marvellous indeed.

God is healing our souls. Constitutionally, man was not meant to have his power centre in the soul, but in the spirit and the spirit deriving its power from the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of power. The Holy Spirit is the Comforter because the power He gives makes comfort. He is also the Spirit of Truth and nothing comforts like Truth which makes us free, because all of God’s truth is liberating, and all of it is liberating because, simply, all of it is GOOD! Truth is power and power is comfort. Disciples know the Cross and know these principles. We find another paradox that when we are on the cross we are safe. It is the taking up and bearing the cross in obedience to the Lord that is the narrow way and can be more distressing and counter-intuitive than being on the cross. When we no longer bear the cross but the cross bears us, we

are safe. The Cross becomes a place of refuge where we are safe when all hell comes against us.

“Thou art my hiding place O LORD, thou shalt preserve me from trouble” (Ps.32.7).

We are speaking here of experiences known only to the people of God. Events or trials where our lived experience aligns with the revealed Word of God. These are described in the scriptures but these descriptions are unable to be discerned by those whose vision extends not further than the surface letter of the scriptures. These mysteries do not reveal themselves in the letter but lie hidden and waiting to be dug out from under the surface. This is what we want to look into now if the Lord will open our eyes.

Before moving on in this, it is suggested that the reader put aside this treatise for a few minutes and read carefully Isaiah Chs. 63 & 64 (attached here as addendums). Then we will look at certain verses in more depth.

As we proceed, we are mindful of the applications of scripture which fall mainly into inner, outer, and sometimes dispensational, but here for our present meditation, we are concerned with just the former. As we read we must keep this focus if we would glimpse the inner world.

The inner work of God shown in Isaiah 63 & 64

◀ Isaiah 63 ▶

New King James Version

1Who is this who comes from Edom,
With dyed garments from Bozrah,
This *One who is* glorious in His apparel,
Traveling in the greatness of His strength?—

Edom is Esau; Esau is the flesh. Bozrah was the capital city of the land of Edom. Here it is portrayed in type as the Flesh. It is the headquarters, the power centre, the operations room of the Flesh. The word “Bozra also means “fortified”. Indeed the carnal mind is defensive, argumentative, and strong.

So here is one coming from Bozra whose garments are dyed, and as we will see, they are dyed with blood, and who is coming from a great victory, travelling in great strength.

Henceforth as we read on in Isaiah, we behold underneath the written word which churchgoers take as the total Word, a mighty work of God within the soul of deliverance from evil, of healing in the soul, of liberty, and of God’s re-creation of man. And at the same time an unrelenting war by the Holy Ghost on Satan’s headquarters, on the body of sin, and the whole Adamic inheritance which is being displaced forever.

Who is this one who does these things? The answer is given.

“I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.”
It can be none other than the LORD.

2Why is Your apparel red,
And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress?

The answer is:

3“I have trodden the winepress alone,
And from the peoples no one *was* with Me.
For I have trodden them in My anger,
And trampled them in My fury;
Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments,
And I have stained all My robes.

The Lord is returning from battle against Bozrah, the citadel of the fallen flesh nature, and those who benefited from His work did not help in the work because they could not, because it was peculiarly God’s work and because to them it seemed that the Lord was angry with them so they couldn’t join Him in what he was doing because they couldn’t understand what He was doing. They thought they themselves were the objects of the LORD’s anger. But they were not.

They could not see the Lord’s twofold objective: Destruction of the enemy and his goods, and redemption and healing of the soul. A day and a year.

4For the day of vengeance *is* in My heart,
And the year of My redeemed has come.

Destruction and warfare can demolish in a day, but restoration takes time. So it is – vengeance and redemption.

The Prophets are the ones who personally knew about and wrote about these deep dealings of the LORD. Their writings are full of these things.

Prophet Hosea echoes Prophet Isaiah: *“Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he has smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know we who follow on to know the LORD.* (Hosea 6. 1-3).

We shall know!! We who continue following on.

5I looked, but *there was* no one to help,
And I wondered
That *there was* no one to uphold;
Therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me;
And My own fury, it sustained Me.

It is God that worketh in you (Phil.2.13). And, *“He who has begun a good work in you will perform it to the day of Jesus Christ”* (Phil.1.6). This is God’s sacred work as the creation was His work. Redemption is part of creation, not an afterthought. *“We are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus”* (Eph.2.10).

But it is bloody work.

6I have trodden down the peoples in My anger,
Made them drunk in My fury,
And brought down their strength to the earth.”

A very big part of the Lord’s dealings with us is the weakening of Adam’s strength, the halting of Jacob, the withering of the arm of the flesh. This involves blood, sweat and tears, spiritually, and possibly literally, and distress.

But we need to see this as Prophet Isaiah sees it, lest we be weary and faint in our minds and wonder if God is still on our side. In response to the “terrible” pronouncements in verse 6, the Prophet with insight replies to the astonishment of some folk who need to see that: *“There is no fear in love but perfect love casts out fear”* (1John4.18). The Prophet’s response is

borne out of deep relationship with God and mutual fellowship with Him in suffering and rejoicing, and in the knowledge that God is doing him good. So, he replies:

7I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD
And the praises of the LORD,
According to all that the LORD has bestowed on us,
And the great goodness toward the house of Israel,
Which He has bestowed on them according to His mercies,
According to the multitude of His lovingkindnesses.

What a contrast this is! What a reply the Prophet gives to God!! How pleasing this must be to the LORD. The Prophet can see what is going on – and he sees nothing but love. In the midst of the “anger” and the “fury” mentioned, the Prophet sees the lovingkindness of the LORD.

8For he said, Surely they are my people, Children who will not lie.” (children who have no guile) So he became their Savior.

9In all their affliction He was afflicted,
And the Angel of His Presence saved them;
In His love and in His pity He redeemed them;
And He bore them and carried them
All the days of old.

The Prophet continues...

16Doubtless You *are* our Father,
Though Abraham was ignorant of us,
And Israel does not acknowledge us.
You, O LORD, *are* our Father;
Our Redeemer from Everlasting *is* Your name.

But, that being so, the Prophet entreats:

17O LORD, why have You made us stray from Your ways,
And hardened our heart from Your fear?
Return for Your servants’ sake (we who are)
The tribes of Your inheritance.

18Your holy people have possessed *it* (Your holiness) but a little while;
Our adversaries have trodden down Your sanctuary.

His sanctuary is the holy place of the LORD within us.

The prophet laments that the LORD comes and goes, that when the LORD goes, holiness and every virtue goes too. We are left facing the bankruptcy of self. *"I know that in me, that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing"*, said the apostle Paul. (Rom.7.18).

19We have become *like those of old*, over whom
You never ruled,
Those who were never called by Your name.

Your old Adamic nature is no different to a person in the world who never has known God. Their time will come. How God will deal with the mass of humanity is not our brief here. (Save to say that the saints will under the Lord Jesus bring salvation to the world). Your preparation time is now – rejoice!

◀ Isaiah 64 ▶ (KJV)

64¹ Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence,

This is descriptive of the inner world of the soul as we will see in what follows.

² As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries that the nations may tremble at thy presence!

The Spirit is sending out a message to the enemies of your soul that things are about to heat up. Nations within you will tremble at the sense of the approaching Holy Ghost and they will feel it and you will feel it.

"God will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves from thee, be destroyed. Thou shalt not be affrighted at them: for the LORD thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible" (Deut.7.20,21).

³ When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.

See this theme elaborated in verse 5 below.

⁴ For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, a God who works for him who waits for Him. (Hebrew interlinear).

⁵ Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.

Make no mistake, these words are to God's elect who walk with Him. "Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember Thee in Thy ways" (all is good and sunny; all is well between God and Man): behold Thou art wroth. What!? What's the problem? God is meeting us to uncover and judge sin. He is doing terrifying things to those that are walking in His way that they were not looking for. These people are true disciples of God. They are rejoicing in God, working righteousness, remembering God in His ways, yet He meets them – He meets – and He is wroth because they have sinned, and they have sinned for ages and ages, they and their forefathers (KJV: continuance; Hebrew: olam = ages). God's terrifying thing is that He is going to deal with sin. We may have thought that we had conquered; that it was over and done, but we don't know our own hearts and souls. God uncovers it, and the mountains melt and come down: mountains of self-will, pride, mountains of lust, anger, revenge, unforgiveness. This "wrath of God" is not rage or damnation, but – corrective, redemptive judgment to break the

rebellion of man and heal us and restore us to Himself again. God is not a seething mass of anger, but we, on the receiving end of His corrections are wont to think He is angry with us. It feels that way. There are many comings of God in judgment to the Sons of God. And every time He comes or meets us in judgment, it is corrective judgment which returns unto righteousness. Nevertheless, the knife can cut deep to excise the infection – and there is suffering. But we surely want to be free of the accursed things, whether spirit or flesh, still lurking unknown to us in the recesses of mind and soul!

In the book of Revelation (20.12) we read: *“And I saw the dead stand before God ..and the books were opened.”* What is this opening of the books, and when does it occur? The book is your soul which has been and is being formed by all your works, good and bad.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” (2Cor. 5.10).

The angels are not up there writing all your sins in a book. When your book is opened you are opened. What is inside is revealed. Then it says: and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the books, according to their works. To be carnally minded is to be dead (Roms 7.6). Note, it is the dead i.e. the first creation, Adam and his inheritance contained in the body of sin that is being judged and condemned. God’s judgments are continual. He will set up the circumstances perfectly – and your book is opened, the secrets of the heart made manifest. God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil (Eccl. 12.14). Do not despair! God does not open your book to destroy you but to deliver you. Then the mountains will melt and fall down as judgment returns unto righteousness – His own righteousness! So it is that all of a sudden, on a sunshiny day, we behold, Thou art wroth, and we

see the sin, and the scripture says ‘we shall be saved’ but it may be better rendered from the Hebrew ‘shall we be saved?’ In this dark and dreadful place we wonder if we have lost God or lost all. What is initially most perplexing to us is that it is at our highest moral peak when the Lord has never felt so close that sudden sin assails us, and trips us up, and may overcome us. Remember it was a sunshiny day, then from nowhere came a storm. It is like a law in action that when we are inhabiting the high praises, there is one dedicated to knocking us down. We will see later in this paper why he wants always to separate us from God, and the closer we are, the more desperate he is. This is his *modus operandi*. At our highest moral peak sudden sin befalls us. The apostle Paul knew this well: *“I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.”* (Roms.7.21).

⁶ But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

And through temporarily abiding in death and temporarily losing the felt Presence of God, we say: We are all as an unclean thing and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags etc and the consciousness of sin is all we have.

⁷ And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

In this place where we cannot find the LORD, when the LORD turns His face from us, it is nigh impossible to call on Him. As Job (a Son of God) did cry: *Where is the way where light dwelleth?* (Job38.19). Poor dear Job was in darkness and being righteous he so wanted the light. We need the Holy Ghost to turn us to God and to call on Him. Truly the creature, in itself, begins nothing, continues nothing, finishes nothing. It is all a work of God.

Paul was asked: Shall we sin that grace may abound? His answer was: “God forbid.” No, we should never set out to go and sin, but when we are walking in righteousness and the praises of God, and God comes down and meets us in terrible ways that we were not looking for i.e. when He opens our book, we will encounter sin and if needs be, judgment and then restoration. Our Father’s love involves corrective discipline to bring us to the Image of Jesus. This is good news indeed. To know something of God’s ways makes His dealings understandable and therefore easier and that knowing and the knowing of Him is a joy to our soul, even in the midst of our sorrows.

For You have hidden Your face from us, and have melted us away into the hand of our iniquities. As the scripture says in verse 6: “*our iniquities like the wind have taken us away*” This seems so strong language at the beginning of our discipleship walk. But we learn that it is the well trod way of the few who go on all the way with the Lord. Many are called but few are chosen. Andrew Jukes, commenting on the trials of Joseph in the prison, states thus:

Some can trace all these confusions within. We ask our Lord that we may know the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings. He draws us by His Spirit thus to pray. A dream of power over self and sin flits before our inward man. We think a few short stages will bring us to the end, -- that His love, who has promised, will quickly give us victory. Instead of this, we discover fresh evil. The flesh, in forms strange and as yet unknown, assails and holds us captive. But we will not yield to nature and its affections. What then? Our sorrow is increased. We are thrust still lower, and a voice within untruly blames the spirit, charging its bondage on it as the result of its unfaithfulness. Could we then hear the Lord, He would tell us, all was well, -- that this discipline, painful as it is, is really indispensable. Had Joseph been happy with the Egyptian, he would not so soon have ruled Egypt. Were the flesh never to rise against the spirit, its evil would remain undiscovered, and therefore unsubdued. The elect therefore must feel the evil. Only thus do they obtain the full deliverance. (from “*Themes in Genesis*”).

The rest of Isaiah 64 is the petitioner’s plea to the LORD in groanings to remember the work of His hands. The last verse tells us that if the LORD should

be silent and not give us anything, then that itself is the affliction. The greatest conceivable affliction is to be separated from God. But, beloved, He will not be ever silent, because, in the first place He did meet us to Heal us. And, in all the misery of this temporary dealing let us ever remember who He is, for: *His mercy endures forever* (all of Psalm 136).

⁸ But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.

⁹ Be not wroth very sore, O LORD, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people.

He does remember that we are His people and He does remember our frame, that we are dust.

God is doing His good work in us. Our highest aspiration at this point in our redemption and the cry of our hearts is that we no longer serve sin. This is what all this cleanup is about. This is why His vengeance is centred on the body of sin, because,

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” (Roms. 6.6).

Dear brothers and sisters, elect sons, the foregoing will witness in varying degrees in you, and confirm many of your experiences in your walk with God. There are others, believers indeed, whom you know who are perhaps in the church system, who would not relate to much or any of it. To them it would be as a foreign language. Why this is so, is our next focus. It is the case and it is the words of the Lord Himself that: “One will be taken and the other left.” What does He mean by that?

One taken – in the will of God

One of the primary themes that runs right through scripture in the Old Testament and the New is division. Beginning with Cain and Abel, flesh and spirit, law and grace, mere believers and disciples, and children of God and children of the devil in John’s first epistle. And the early Church fathers who distinguished between two types of disciples:

the contemplative, meditative, mystical, more inward and passive disciple typified by the apostle John, and those disciples whose spiritual path is one more marked by faith and conflict typified by the apostle Peter.

A series of divisions referenced by the Lord from Luke 15 onwards begins with the parable of the prodigal son where we see one believing and occupying and not departing yet stagnating, and the other departing and rebelling for a season, suffering deprivation and enduring trials and finally returning in abject repentance to a rapturous acceptance by the Father. We need to note the demeanour of the first son here, arising from anger, jealousy and self righteousness. It is surprising to learn that the first son is a believer, the second son a disciple who being designated such by a Sovereign Lord for divine purpose had to go out and be disciple-d, which involved many ordeals and experiences, even unto sin and back. There is a tremendously important lesson for disciples here who have lived a life of upheaval and crisis and who de-preciate themselves when considering their former pew-warming brethren. "Oh, why couldn't I have lived a more virtuous life like so and so and now I wouldn't have to be purged from the effects of all that stuff that I did." Then a picture comes to mind of a scene from the future, in the new age, of a pilgrim mother in pilgrim clothes and bonnet & bow, ministering to a drug addict about deliverance from their misery. Of course with God all things are possible, and stranger things than that have occurred, and God bless the Pilgrims. The point is that disciples, some of them, have had to experience evil – to sin and back – in order to gain an experience and empathy and deliverance, and from that a ministry to empathise with those who are in the most diabolical bondage, the strongest chains, the scourge of addiction. This is to just mention one example. They have been sent out in the will of God. In the kingdom age the power of God will be manifest like never before, but right now we are not being trained for nothing. The human instruments, the sons of

God are dear to Him and hand picked for purpose. Therefore do not bewail your past. All sins are forgiven whether you think ordained or self initiated. You are the one who warms the Lord's heart, the other just the pew for two hours. You, yes you, were chosen and made for such a time as this.

The two groups manifest again in the story of Joseph and his brethren. Joseph is taken away. But where was he taken? To places where progressively his flesh was destroyed. Note that God's eye was on rulership concerning Joseph as He had aforetime shown in dreams. That which God had shown came to pass after years of processing and Joseph became governor of all Egypt. Egypt, spiritually, is the realm of sense. God makes Joseph something that none of the other patriarchs attained to i.e. master of that world of sense in himself – immunity from Egypt within, before he could be master of Egypt without. What happened to Joseph's brothers? They were left, but note that Joseph was God's instrument to save them and many others at the end. "*God did send me before you to preserve life*" (Gen. 45.5).

The process of sanctification for those called out ones bears upon the story of the unjust judge in Luke 18. This parable is central to God's dealings with the Sons and exclusive to them. Only the elect cry *unto God* "day and night". Many people suffer in this present evil world. The suffering of the elect is different because there are seasons when it can be almost non-stop (day & night), has definite degrees, and the Lord is in total control providing time for recuperation. "*But the God of all grace, who has called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you*" (1Peter 5.10). And it has purpose. The persistence of the cry to God day and night tells that it is sustained by faith. The world suffer but seldom cry out to God, and if they do, only in desperation and not 'day and night'. Their cry to God cannot be sustained because not underpinned by faith. Faith enables belief and relationship. Is it not often the case that after the

world has cried to God in their pain and got no answer, their next response is to curse and blame God – the God who all their lives under the sun, many of them pleasant and sinfully indulgent, never gave Him the time of day or uttered a simple thank you. Now, they curse Him and blame Him for their oft self inflicted maladies. Church members may cry to the Lord but crying ‘day and night’ cannot be sustained because their cry also is not underpinned by faith. So they cry for a time only. The Lord begins the parable by urging continuing prayer (rather than fainting out) and making explicit that God will hear the cries of His *elect*. “*And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?*” (Luke 18.7). Note – *elect*. Notwithstanding all the foregoing, God is gracious and merciful and His tender care is over all His works. We cannot put Him in a box and say – ‘do it this way’. Who has known the mind of the LORD or instructed Him in what He might do in any case?

But to you dear Son of God, elect and precious, walking in the will of God, the bounds of your suffering are under His absolute control and no action of spirit or pathology can exceed those prescribed by God’s limits. Will He heal you or lift your affliction? The question becomes: “Will He find faith in the earth (your earth)?” The cry of the *elect* goes up to the Throne on faith’s wings, therefore it is sustained. The Lord says:

*“But will God not at all execute the avenging of His elect, those crying to Him day and night, also being patient over them? I say to you that He will execute the avenging of them speedily. But the Son of man coming *then, will He find faith in the earth?”* (Luke 18.7,8 Gk interlinear).

His bearing up with you and not coming immediately is the furnace where your faith is increased and where blessings unknown occur in the soul. His will is to heal. When faith is increased then He will come immediately with not a moment

to lose. This is something which each son of God needs to take up prayerfully and intimately with the Father. *The word “then” in the Greek in this context denotes an interrogation to which a negative answer is presumed. (Strong’s). So the Lord is saying that it is the Father’s will to heal or to avenge or to unafflict and to do it right now, but He must bear up with His elect until faith increases. God may heal mere believers or even unbelievers because He is gracious, but He is doing a far greater work in elect Sons. This is your preparation. See (1Peter1.7):

“The trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing [revealing] of Jesus Christ”

Mary and Martha

The division between believers and disciples and the consequences for each are more profound than ever we imagined. In the story of Martha and Mary who typify these two groups the Lord lays out for us their respective ends. Probably most people who know the story of the sisters, Martha and Mary, in John’s gospel chapter 11, consider them to be two devout followers of Jesus, who because of personality differences serve Him differently. One was more outward and active, the other inward and passive. But is that an accurate or a whole picture? Or do we see a separation of two distinct types: believer and disciple? An in-depth reading of the chapter (especially in the Greek interlinear) will pay rich dividends and reveals that the differences are not personality traits but spiritual. There is not space to go into all that here [the Sisters are the subject of a separate forthcoming article], suffice to say that the scripture tells of one sister who represents a carnal believer and the other a disciple, and the Lord’s words tell us of their spiritual state and their respective ends. *“I am the resurrection and the life. The one believing into Me, though he die, he shall live. And every one living and believing into Me shall not ever die forever.”* (John 11. 25,26; Gk Interlinear).

Salvation is a free gift. Salvation is regeneration by the Spirit of God conferring faith, enabling belief. To believe only but not suffer death to the old nature, to the body of sin, to self will, is to live still in the old nature yet believing into Christ as a sort of backup. Pew warmers seek to take out fire insurance with double indemnity by tithing. Though, eventually, such a one die physically, they believing but having not *lived* in His Life, have no other life to continue in, but pass into a death in which they sleep in Christ until resurrection life comes. This is the lot of the great majority of Christendom. But to live in His Life while undergoing death to the old life, is to be a disciple, and means that upon physical death, consciousness does not sleep but transfers fully across to the spiritual body in which the disciple has been progressively living and which has been forming through all the various trials and experiences that God has before time appointed to that very end. Therefore, disciples, Sons of God, never know death. They just know relocation in the twinkling of an eye as they are clothed from above (see 1Cor.15).

Let us always be mindful that to live in Him while still encumbered by a body of flesh in this life doesn't mean to be perfect in thought and deed at all times. *"We that are in this tabernacle do groan"*, said Paul. It means to have our abode in Him, to turn to Him and not to self when our thoughts are less than perfect. It is living in Him that purifies because living in Him means He living in us.

Falls

The blessed apostle John echoing the words of the Master adjures us to "abide in Him". Says the Lord Jesus:

"Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me"(John15.4).

It is this abiding in His life that is key to discipleship, sanctification, and is our redemption.

He cautions:

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered.." (John15.6).

To turn back is destruction:

"The just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Heb.10.38,39).

This can be a frightening word. But none of you is turning back. We must not confuse turning back with experiencing a fall. All of us will experience falls, and more than a few.

The fall of Simon Peter tells of a fall of monumental proportion. Dear impetuous Peter! "Though everyone in the world should deny you, yet I will not deny you!" And he meant every word of it in his fleshly devotion. But the flesh did not stand in the testing, and he wept bitterly. The Lord Jesus knew this and foretold this, but even though He knew that Peter would fall He did not pray: "Father, don't let Peter fall. Father, don't let Peter betray me." Rather, He prayed *"..that thy faith fail not.."*, and later He said to Peter *"When you are converted strengthen your brethren."* Peter's great fall was his uprising. Without this fall Peter would never have known that his zealous devotion was from self in the power of the flesh and therefore of no benefit to the work he was to do, and had no staying power. But what God worked in him through his fall, his turning, his learning, his reinstatement, was that he became more than reinstated but a pillar in the Church and the chief apostle to the Jewish believers. We must not think that falls are to be avoided at all costs, nor should we despair when we fall. We come to see that sometimes a fall is the only way of moving on and up. We are not to seek them, but God will open our books and if we fall we will arise again. *"A just man falleth seven times and rises up again"* (Pro.24.16). God's work is progressive. The books

were formed and built and filled because of repetitive sin personal and ancestral, layer upon layer. At salvation the books were closed of necessity and forgotten, but at sanctification they are opened. The leaves of the book are the layers of the mind opened progressively layer upon layer – sin upon sin. Herein was the body of sin formed progressively. The peeling back the layers, the opening of the leaves, the entrance of light, the fire of God, the judgment, the healing unto righteousness is the unforming progressively.

“And He lifted up His eyes on His disciples and said:... Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh. ...Woe unto you that laugh now! For ye shall mourn and weep” (Luke 6. 20,21,25).

Let us ever remember, the Cross is not the end but the way to life. This kind of hope cancels out fear of death.

The world's great fear

The world has reason to fear death. We shudder when we think of how terrible it must be for those who have known no other life to have to lose it and to go some place unknown (in their thinking). But disciples who live in Christ know already another life. We have a spiritual body just waiting to be stepped into the moment our spirit leaves our body. We are becoming aware of that spiritual body now and its movements, but this awareness at this stage is just preliminary stirrings. The words of the Lord Jesus as recorded in the Greek are more emphatic than in the KJV:

“Every one living and believing into Me shall not ever die forever.”

The physical, Adamic body of disciples dies and returns to the earth, but disciples never die.

The inward appearing

The message of the Book of Revelation is given to those to whom it is addressed. And to whom is that message addressed? The introduction to the book

tells us precisely, but how many multitudes gloss over it thinking it is a message for them or the world at large.

“A revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to Him to show to His slaves things which must occur quickly. And He signified by sending through His angel to His slave, John, who testified of the Word of God and the witness of Jesus Christ even as many things as he saw. Blessed is the one reading, and those hearing the words of this prophesy, and keeping the things having been written, for the time is near” (Rev.1.1,2,3; Gk Interlinear).

The revelation of Jesus Christ is to bond slaves. The revealing of Jesus Christ IN His bond slaves is only given to bond slaves, to tell them of things that are to come forth IN them as Christ is progressively revealed, unveiled IN them. The message of the book is “the unveiling of Jesus Christ” – in His true people who are His true disciples. The message is to them and only they can understand it. They are the ones taken on to understand it and live it. The revelation matching the experience is of an internal world in upheaval transitioning from its former Adamic nature and heritage into its new life, nature and inheritance in Christ. The events described are often cataclysmic, but not literal in the outward sense. Attempts to interpret it by those to whom it is not given result in nonsense by externalising and literalising those things that are presented as “signs” (sign-ified;vs.1).

Son of Man

Son of Man can mean that unique only begotten Son or it can mean all of His progeny depending on the context. The Lord uses the term “Son of Man” continually. He is the preeminent representative Son of Man as Adam was the preeminent representative Man. But as Man is many, so Son of Man is many. Son of Man is the corporate Christ Man. Jesus rarely says “I”. He says Son of Man, being the next stage of Man and relating to more than just His person but through Him inclusive of all regenerated Sons. The

expression in scripture “when He is revealed” is not the Lord appearing in the sky to rule, to judge, to bring law and order, but His appearing in His sons. *“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory”* (Col.3.4). Additionally, the Lord Jesus just prior to the cross said to the Father: *“I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do”* (John17.4). And now the Father says: *“Sit thou at my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool.”* (Luke20.42,43). He will remain seated in glory until this is fulfilled and His enemies, delegitimized forever at the cross, are through His body of Sons, brought dynamically into abject submission. Who are the instruments to carry out this footstool ministry? They are His true body, the Sons of God, who from the Head will rule the nations in His name with a rod of iron. They will even judge angels.

Signs

“I tell you, in that night there shall be two in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, there will the eagles be gathered together.”

(The Lord Jesus in Luke 17. 34-37).

Both Matthew 24 and Luke 17 reveal deep prophetic truths about God’s deep work in His elect. The deepest work begins following “one shall be taken and the other left”, which refers not to some future single event but to a sovereign work of God in each generation down the generations where a sovereign Lord takes out an elect group for special sanctification unto holiness unto power unto usefulness in the setting up of His kingdom. The disciples simply asked, Where? It is obvious that their question does not refer to those who are left. They are left and that is all. They don’t go anywhere because they are left where they are. We don’t need to ask, ‘where are they?’, because they are still where they were. No, the question is in reference to

those who are taken – taken somewhere else. Where are they taken? To those who believe in a fanciful bodily “rapture” away from all distress, there’s nothing rapturous about this. They are taken to a place where vultures gather together to tear the flesh off bodies. Even so, grace is given in the ordeal, the vultures are God-ordained, and victory is wrought through obedience, with upholdingness guaranteed by grace. This is a place of great deliverance and purging, and there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, but in the words of the Lord Jesus the end is that:

“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear” (Matt.13.43).

So, Israel, searching the scriptures, looking for signs in the heavens, correctly expecting the imminent advent of Messiah, missed His coming because their hearts had departed from the God of Israel. Their ears had become heavy and they could not hear what the scriptures were saying, as was foretold by those very scriptures. Had their hearts been soft to God, they would have discerned the abundance of scripture foretelling the form Messiah would take, but they could not see or hear. Had they been meek before God as their prophets, they would have recognized Yeshua in Isaiah 53 and the Psalms and the Prophets. But their vision was carnal and earthly, fixated on a muscled messiah who would break the iron yoke of Rome and restore Israel to earthly prominence. Even after the resurrection, no less than disciples persisted in this belief. (See Acts 1). When Jesus came the religious leaders despised Him. The Lord told them their sin was that they did not know (appreciate) the hour of their visitation. So when they asked Him when the kingdom of God should come, He told them where they had been looking was the problem. The coming of the kingdom was not seen in the externals. He did tell them where it was even though they didn’t deserve it, and though they wouldn’t and couldn’t accept it. So He told them where not to look and He left them.

The inner circle of Peter, James and John asked Him privately the same question, and the Lord, as He always did, answered His closest plainly and privately. We know that the kingdom is not in the externals. Indeed the Kingdom of God is within you.

The sign (prelude) of the coming of the Son of man, of the coming kingdom, relates to where the carcass (the body of sin) is and where the vultures are.

“For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be, for wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.”

The sign is only to disciples.

Many of the saints bear witness in their testimony that there was a crisis in their faith walk and that crisis somehow involved a church which rejected them or from which they simply had to depart. The operative word here is not just crisis but separation. An unmistakable divine call of separation. “Two will be in the field. The one will be taken and the other left.” The call will be so clear to the one taken as if he/she were witnessing lightning. For most of these sons church issues are relevant. The Lord describes a scenario where urgency overshadows the whole picture. *“Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house”* (Matt.24.17); and, *“Pray that your flight be not in the winter”* (Matt.24.20). So it is crisis and separation.

This sovereign *separating* action of God is the accelerant to the coming forth of the kingdom. It is a watershed moment when the internal kingdom springs forth exponentially. Up to this point within each generation of called out ones the kingdom has been slowly growing...until they are... taken. This division heralds the coming of the kingdom (the government of God) because, as well as being preparation of the vessels through sanctification, it is specialized training for rulership. One taken and one left is just a particular example of a dramatic event, but does not imply that those taken and those

left are divided 50/50. Those taken in number are a relatively small group something akin to the Lord’s leaving the ninety nine sheep and seeking after the one. The one here who is lost is the one whom the Lord searches for. The one who is the disciple, among the ninety nine who are not called to this calling. Remember, the prodigal is called ‘lost’ but the Father ecstatically welcomes him back, saying he is “found” the discipleship training having been completed.

Taken and left

There are many other incidences of division that could be cited here, and which were cited earlier in this paper, and in what appears to be the last judgment which stands at the end of a line of judgments, we see the division between the sheep on the right hand and the goats on the left. The Lord God still dividing and separating as in Genesis¹ according to His redemptive plan and purpose.

In all these examples there is on the one hand the ones whom God is working upon, and on the other, those who are not presently the subjects of His attention. Down the ages it is those believers who are being sanctified and those believers who are not. We may say the division is between mere believers and disciples: those who know not the Cross and those who do know the Cross: those in whom the body of sin is intact, and those in whom the body of sin is being dismantled.

Toward the high calling – as Paul says. There are those who are taken – to a place of sanctification and purification. But there is more than that. As the carnal nature suffers calamitous damage through the consuming fire of our God, the light and the mind of Christ grow in luminosity. These disciples, the subjects of His loving attention, are not just being purified, but as the dross is consumed along with the body of sin in the divine fire, they, with newly increasing light and sight are able to come into the mysteries of the kingdom, are trained in gifts and abilities, and are fitted for rulership. And all of it is

unknown to the world and the false church. No one can understand what Sons go through except to a measure other Sons but contact between them is rare and partial in this lonely walk.

Only God

Without God nothing happens:

“Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it” (Ps.127.1).

If God hadn’t taken you on, then you would have been left, and you would today be where you were left. But you were taken. That is something to give thanks for in the midst of your sufferings! Even though there’s a low flying vulture circling and eyeing you off and salivating – as another has said, ‘Aren’t you glad!’

Why me

If you wonder why you were taken and the others left, the secret is locked up in God. Boast not in your heart but rather rejoice in the Lord at the high calling to which He has called you, and like David of old let it be a thing of perpetual pleasing puzzlement all the days of your earth life.

A generational plan

We may think that because the context of this is the coming kingdom which draws closer in manifestation, that it relates only to our times in God’s history but that would be incorrect.

The Lord God has been taking out a people for His name and purposes for an eon.

*Simon (Peter) hath declared that God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to **take out** of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” (Acts 15. 14-18).*

Why all this tribulation?

“We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” Tribulation means threshing – separating the good from the bad or useless. To enter into the kingdom we need to overcome and dispense with all those things whether flesh or spirit that would prevent us from entering into the kingdom. For example, men of war. Anger, bad temper, subtle and not so subtle put downs of people, arguing, fights, None of these “men of war” can you take with you into the kingdom of heaven.

“For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people that were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD.” (Joshua 5.6).

They could have been delivered much earlier but they would not hearken to His voice. They could not enter in till all these men of war were gone. If we obey His voice, His leading of the Spirit and submit to His inner workings, we will hasten our entry into the kingdom.

The Lord Jesus has a number of titles: Prince of Peace, the Morning Star, King of Kings, Lord of Lords – to name a few. And although He is Lord of all, He has no title: Lord of Slaves; or Lord of Serfs. He is Lord of Lords, and that means those who love and follow Him are made Lords which means in the first instance Masters of their own instrument. After that, masters of cities or planets or whatever the LORD may direct. This making of Lords, this sanctifying of Sons, is what this paper is all about.

Obstructions

It is things like men of war and other anti-God fleshly sins and spirits that are hampering our progress and causing much of our suffering and affliction. The old man’s stubborn legacy is causing problems. It is not the refining of the New Man that needs attention. That would be absurd. Christ who has been perfected needs no refining.

The impediments to our progress all relate to the old man and his displacement.

“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun IN the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear” (Matt.13.43).

This verse follows immediately after describing a massive work of God in binding the enemies of our soul and casting them into a furnace of fire, thereby allowing the radiance of the Sons of God to shine forth as the sun. Deliverance from spirit or flesh usually involves suffering where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

We are saved by faith; “by faith ye stand”. But in John chapter 3 the Lord Jesus speaks of *seeing and entering into* the kingdom. This is the fruit of faith and growth, and the result of cleansing and holiness. *“Without holiness no man shall see the Lord”* (Heb.12.14). There are many soul sicknesses that would prevent our entry into the kingdom. Men of war mentioned is just one of them.

After these more obvious things are dealt with we may find that the final battle is against self. Self likes to be on the throne even though it may know [yet there is no deception like self deception] what a colossal mess it has made of things. “I Did It My Way” was voted the most popular song ever in western culture. Never mind that ‘my way’ was absolute ruin to me and mine. *“For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls”* (1Peter.2.25).

Your last battle may be with self. But mistaken identity will not prevail over true identity.

His thoughts, His burden

One wonders what the Lord thought of as He moved around in the limitations of a fleshly body, as He thought of what was to befall Israel and the world and as He healed Adam of his most painful infirmities. Perhaps, in that He was a man, He mused that should He buckle at the Cross – that

hideous place of torture and death – then Adam remained doomed, for Adam could never save himself. Adam’s doom was his inherited nature, just as Adam’s salvation is his inherited nature. What a responsibility was on the Lord Jesus! How sublime it is for us to muse on Jesus and to muse on what He might have been musing on regarding old Adam re the Last Adam passing away and the Second Man arising, or this thing or that. Do you, dear saint, ever do that? (see 1Cor.15.47). Do we always see Jesus teaching or performing miracles, or do we see him doing some of the things that any human might like to do at times. Consider Matt13.1: *“The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side”*. Then, the scripture tells us, He plunged back into ministering to the needs of the multitude.

It was upon the Adam man that the Lord while on earth did all His miracles and healings. He healed Adam because He loved Adam (John 3.16). But, insofar as the multitude was concerned, Adam largely remained Adam. These works were done, the Lord said, “that ye might believe”. Whenever Adam believed, he obtained salvation, and from there he was able to go on to better and deeper things – the things you know about – as we discuss here.

The Lord said to His disciples: *“He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do because I go unto my Father”* (John14.12).

And because He went to the Father, the Holy Ghost was given. The greater works ministry is greater because it is firstly a ministry to Zion, to regenerated believers, and concerns much more than physical healing but the healing of their souls. And secondly, it is a ministry to the world, not to heal their bodies only as at the first ministry, but their hearts and souls. This is the forthcoming ministry of the Sons of God.

A royal family

There are many judgments and divisions. These follow on and seem to culminate in Matthew 25 with the sheep and the goats. In the judgments prior to Ch. 25 Jesus repeatedly uses the words “the kingdom of God”. But here, to those blessed ones on His right hand He says: inherit “the kingdom prepared for you”. There is a hierarchy in God’s new world in heaven and in earth. The King has the pre-eminence. The kingdom of the Lord Jesus is not a democracy; it is a kingdom, or if you like, a monarchy. Away with our worldly concepts! We have an inheritance in that kingdom by blood – and paid for with Blood. We are members of that Royal family by spiritual DNA. But the King’s word is *the* Word. It does not depend on consensus, yet every subject in the kingdom will roar Amen to every word of the King because of Love and Light. We are invited into purple and gold; we are invited to feast at a royal table. The ranks and orders and the seating arrangements are His. Will we have any say about anything – on that wonderful ‘day’ or will we be able to make suggestions or petitions? Some may say, Oh, here you are entering into dreaming. It may be so. But we are dreamers and God-given dreams come true. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. This writer can only say here, that having been given the merest taste through the Spirit – a glimpse into that future age where righteousness and love rule and where there is no law whatever, the liberty that awaits the sons is beyond anything we can dream about. Jesus said: “*Narrow is the way that leadeth unto life.*” But only the way is narrow, at the end of the way is Life, and ‘broad’ is too narrow a word to describe it.

The just judge and the way of God

The parable of the unjust judge in Luke 18 begins with the Lord’s injunction to pray always and not to faint. He is speaking to disciples, and while there is instruction in this parable as regards faith, we need also to see its application to bearing up by understanding in times of affliction and trial. The

difference between the unjust judge and the just judge is the love of God. This may not be readily seen. The unjust judge will cut short the suffering of she who cries to him for his own selfish reasons, and she in her condition would be most grateful for the relief perhaps thinking what a kind judge he is. We live in an age when any pain or discomfort is to be eschewed at all costs. There can be no suffering. No waiting for brewed coffee, but instant! Even preachers proclaim this as part of the atonement where even a headache is insufferable and is to be “cast out”. Against this view we need only to look at Paul’s life and all the disciples. The just judge, our God, our Father, loves us too much to leave infection only partially treated and will bear with our cries until all traces of sin are burned away. So let us ever remember there is loving purpose with God. He does not ever afflict willingly (from the heart) anyone, but like the surgeon He may have to cut out an offending infection to heal the patient. To repeat again what the prophet has said:

“...He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us; in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight.” (Hosea 6.1,2).

The anointed writer of Hebrews sums it up thus: “10For they (our fathers) verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness.

11Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

12Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

13And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed” (Heb.12).

None of God’s sons will be lame!

So, unlike Adam’s descendants of old, you may not be healed immediately. You are being prepared for entry into the kingdom of heaven (through much tribulation). In the parable of the unjust judge, Jesus says that the Father “bears long” with those who are in affliction, which means He does not deliver them

immediately but allows the affliction to continue for a time. Why does He bear long with them? It is simply but profoundly the love of God. He is also afflicted in all our affliction. When the Lord Jesus was here in the flesh the gospel record often tells us that he healed “them all”. There was no waiting. Demons were cast out, diseases were healed on the spot, and even sometimes when the sufferer never asked for a healing (see Mark8.22-26). [There is no more action packed story of divine power unleashed than the gospel of Mark] So why do the elect wait, often interminably it seems, for release from grievous affliction all the while crying day and night to be avenged of their merciless adversary? Why does He, who is the saviour of all men, especially of them that believe, not deliver the elect at least as timely as He delivered the masses, even those who believed not?

At that time in Jesus’ ministry His priority was to make it known that He was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. *“I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel”* (Matt.15.24), that Israel first might be saved. When asked repeatedly if He was the Messiah, He always referred to the works. *“The works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me”*(John10.25). Even John the Baptist got this answer. It was important for Israel in God’s agenda that they knew who He was and that they knew the crucial time of their visitation. They repudiated both of these and the kingdom was taken from them and given to another. History relates the sad, tragic story of that first son over the past 2,000 years. But God who is rich in mercy, as well as making a place for us through their downfall, has not cast away that first son but made provision for him at the appointed time. Who can find out His mercy and His judgments!? His mercy endures forever. (Psalm 136). His judgments are past finding out. (Roms.11.33). But Israel’s demise and reinstatement is not the subject of this treatise, even though it forms part of the story of Israel’s Messiah who through their fall became the Saviour of the world.

The Lord Jesus, confined to the flesh, understanding what that was like through experience, and what bondage it was, in all His mighty works even to the raising of the dead, was ministering to Adam. He understood Adam. He was Adam. He was the last Adam. He had compassion on Adam and alleviated his suffering whenever He could for the sake of mercy and to demonstrate by power and not words only that He was the long awaited messiah to the intent that they might believe, become disciples, and disciple the nations. That didn’t happen at that time as the scriptures had foretold. But the gifts and calling of God are without repentance (Roms.11.29), and there is more for that first son, and that too, is where we have to leave that part. Suffice to say that the time for Israel’s return back into the commonwealth of (spiritual) Israel is here now at the doors. The preliminaries to this re-grafting are unfolding daily on our news channels. Israel and the true church together as one Body of Christ. The apostle Paul in seeing this was dumfounded – oh the mystery – how unsearchable are God’s judgments and ways! It is the sons of God who are to work with God in the salvation of Israel who in turn will with us in the coming age form “all Israel” (Roms.11.26), and save all the nations. The kingdom is restored to “all Israel” which is no longer exclusively the natural branches but rather the spiritual branches, Jew and gentile one in Christ where there is neither Jew nor gentile. It is life from the dead. And the half hasn’t yet been told.

The judgment of our flesh

From the past Andrew Jukes well instructs us: “An acceptance of the judgment of our flesh is the one way to receive, and then to minister, the special blessing which God Almighty has prepared for us...the sacrificial use of God’s elect and how a perfect and upright man (Job), not yet dead to self, by suffering in the flesh is purged from self, and thus made an instrument, first to silence Satan, and then, as a priest, appointed by God, to pray and intercede for those who have condemned him.” (*The Names of God*, by Andrew Jukes).

Jane Leade adds to that:

"The physician must first give proof that he can heal himself, before he undertake others. So in this matter, the true (disciple) is taught to make a tryal of his skill upon his own inward and outward defects." She writes that we must get ourselves clean before we can make others clean. "None can set foot (in heavenly places) except those who have come through all conquering tribulations, and have dyed their garments in the Blood of the Lamb."

And the apostle Paul tells us:

"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2Tim2.20,21).

[Brethren, how good it is to bring out of our treasure house things old and new. What a debt we owe to those who have gone before].

Throughout this paper we have been saying that all this work is a work of God and not of man, yet now it might appear that there is some deviation from this message, but it is not so.

Regarding the cleaning up of our souls we must be aligned with God admitting that His cleaning up of our souls is necessary because our souls need cleaning up. The Spirit of the Lord Jesus is the initiator of the work. He is the author and finisher of our faith as we look to Him to do the work. But in that work He wants us to work *with* Him.

[God never wants anyone to work *for* Him - that hearkens to Babylon]. And what is that work? It is your work of faith. (1Thess1.3). *"This is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom He has sent"* (John6.29). To embark on this path of discipleship, the Lord requires three things of us: 1) To be honest (transparent) with Him AND, 2) To believe on Him, to look to Him, to hang on to Him on the divine roller coaster, i.e. to ascend and descend upon Him AND, 3) To present ourselves unreservedly to Him:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Roms 12.1,2).

Here is the promise of transformation. The condition: Present your bodies; The promise: you will be transformed. The word in the Greek is actually stronger than the English 'transformed'. And the promise is that the transformation will prove to us that the work of God in our soul is good, acceptable to us, and perfect for us. But we can't see that first and then say, ok, because I see it, then I present my body to receive it. No, it is still a work of faith.: Present your body as His possession, trust in Him, and revelation will follow that His will for your life is perfect for you, and that His work in you is a work of the greatest love. The promise is that there will be light and understanding of His will that it is perfect – and the transformation itself will speak for itself.

Then, *"He which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."* (Phil.1.6). *"Faithful is he that calls you, who also will do it"* (1Thess.5.24). He will do it! Our part is our work of faith. To repeat the words of the Lord: Men should always pray and not faint (give up), knowing that: *"..He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting...we shall reap if we faint not"* (Gal.6.8,9).

It goes without saying that this knowledge is not for average church goers. As stated at the beginning, this treatise is for disciples. The inward journey requires more light than the light of man. It requires more strength than the strength of man. It requires the light and strength of the Spirit of God.

To quote Jane Leade again: "[But] All that is required is that we hold fast and keep His charge,

and make Him our shelter, and safe dwelling Rock, there to abide forever.”

Prophet Isaiah speaks of the permanence of the Lord’s remedial work in the soul:

“..the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field...then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.” (Isa. 31.15-17).

In other words, God’s judgment hangs over the untouched (wilderness) areas of the soul until the Spirit brings transforming judgment, and for those areas that have been renewed, the wilderness has been transformed into a fruitful garden that will remain forever.

JP Eby puts it this way:

Judgment is God's strange work. He uses it as a tool in His redemptive and restorative processes. Men make it the end. But judgment is always a means to an end - never THE END! All men will be raised up either into a resurrection of life or a resurrection of judgment (Jn. 5:29), but for the latter THIS IS NOT THEIR END ...The end of divine Judgment – no matter its form, no matter its subject – is to bring the whole universe into harmony with His will, nature and glory. (end of quote, emphasis as per original).

God the Creator and our Father comes to mankind in the person of the Lord Jesus who is made sin for us, dies to sin, includes us in that death, rises to new life, includes us in that resurrection, and He and we become One in righteousness. **Selah**. Then follows the work of separation and sanctification.

It is the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, who works in the soul to displace old Adam and his diabolical inheritance and cut it off and promote the life and nature of Christ in the very place of old Adam. As another has said: It is bloody work but look at whose hand holds the sacrificing knife. It is our Emmanuel who loves us more than we can ever know.

But we should pause for a moment to consider that most dedicated church goers know nothing of this Word or experience. In fact, they are not at this time called to such a calling. *“I tell you, one shall be taken and the other left...”*

Before considering further the redemptive work of God in the soul, it behoves us to bring to mind the Comfort of God which is a never failing and essential therapy in the sanctification process. (by grace ye are saved).

The Spirit of Comfort

The Lord Jesus promised that He would send the Comforter (John14.16). In what way does He the Comforter comfort? There are many forms of comfort. The lifting of affliction is comfort; assurance of forgiveness is comfort; *evidence* of the Lord being with us is comfort (*Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me* 23rd psalm) especially when we walk through the shadow of the valley of death and can feel no presence of the Lord at all. It is then that He provides us with other evidence that though we may for a season not “feel” Him, He is never far away. The things of the shepherd, the rod and staff are evidence that the shepherd is close by. This speaks of uncanny evidence in our circumstances whereby He is saying “Don’t fear, I’m still here”. He will never leave us. Moreover, disciples never walk through the valley of death or the darkness of the valley of death but just the shadow of the valley of death. The world goes through the valley of death. Disciples, only through a shadow, and a shadow is more evidence, for a shadow means that light must be close by.

The Spirit of Power

The Holy Spirit is *another* comforter – Jesus said. In what way does He comfort, more directly, in the circumstances under our discussion? Does He pat us on the back and say, Never mind, tomorrow is another day; does He tell us that the glass is half full not half empty; that we should try to look on the

bright side? What is our essential need for comfort and what is the nature of that comfort that we need in pressing circumstances? Jesus said: *"I will send another comforter."*

Despite the myriad trials and predicaments in which the saints find themselves there is a common and central need we all have. What is the problem we all have that makes our trials twice heavy? The answer is found out in the experience of each one of us. It is powerlessness that is often at the root of our problem. Powerlessness to change circumstances or to bear up in circumstances. While we await light and truth to deliver us, it is comfort – it is *upholdingness* – that we need, and this the Holy Spirit provides. If we are in need of a particular truth, we know that the truth will certainly make us free, but till the truth bursts through, we can be in a vulnerable state. If we are waiting for an answer to prayer, it is a similar story. Powerlessness comes from various vexing circumstances and trials. Powerlessness is distress. It is the powerlessness we feel in dire circumstances that can drag us down and can lead into depression and even despair. We don't have what it takes. And this is precisely part of the work of God to precisely show us this. The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of Power. *"Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.."* (Acts 1.8). He is the Spirit of tongues of fire and rushing wind. He is the Spirit who lords it over the powers of nature, the powers of heaven and earth. If you belong to Christ and walk with Him, then He (the HS) is your ultimate backup. All of us need to know Him more. It is His Spirit poured into our spirit that gives us power - the very thing we need in our powerlessness. Not the power to walk on water or to walk through walls (though this is surely coming in a soon coming new age or even in the closing days of this age -- if you will forgive this aside). This is power in our spirit giving us a strength that passes understanding. They shall renew [actually, *exchange*] their strength as eagles. (see Isaiah 40.31). Immediately, power is comfort. Immediately we can overcome or at least stand our

ground. This is dynamic comfort. It is SPIRIT – it is spiritual and practical. The outward natural man may be devoid of all natural energy, the man of reason at his wits end, while the inward man is (spiritually) nuclear powered plugged into the ultimate Source of all power, and it doesn't matter what happens so long as our spirit is connected to the Spirit of God. *"He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit"* (1Cor.6.17). The LORD has exchanged our carnal power which can not avail, for His spiritual power which can not fail.

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD and he delighteth in his way, though he fall he shall not be cast down for the LORD upholdeth him with His hand" (Ps.37.23).

Whether falling or rising the Holy Spirit upholds us. We come to realise that when the pressure is on, our own resources are limited even futile. We need the power of God. We bewail the fact that often we are unable to stand in temptation. If only we could not worry and fret about the personal or family problem. If only we were not anxious about the financial or health problem. Worry, anxiety, fretting, doubt, defeatism, all of these are symptomatic of powerlessness. If we had spiritual power we wouldn't be caught up in the swirl of reasoning. It is power of the Holy Spirit in the spirit that exerts upon the soul the power from above it needs to be still and move upward above the clamour to peace and overcoming. And the Lord encourages us to seek this power:

"If you, being evil know to give good gifts to your children, how much more the Father out of Heaven will give the Holy Spirit to those asking Him." (Luke 11.13).

Rediscovery

The Spirit's work in the soul after regeneration is getting rid of the muck of the old man, to reveal the new man. The shining forth of the new man.

“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear then shall you also appear with Him in glory” (Col.3.4).

The new you; the real you. The you that was with Him before the foundation of the world. Yet unlike unfallen Adam, without naivety; not just a spirit – a spiritual being; not just a spiritual being, but a Son – of GOD, constituted of His spiritual DNA. **Selah.** The “You +” – with old Adam consigned to the dustbin of history.

“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun..”
(Matt.13.43).

The Lord said that the Spirit would also bring things to our remembrance. He will reveal things new, but also things old that we’ve forgotten from across the eons of time, if God permit. Things old and new. Revelation from God surely involves new things – new things that God is about to do or the revealing of the Word, but how much of divine revelation is re-membrance rather than ‘new’ in this cloudy amnesic world? Why does “the babe leap in our womb” at the sudden appearing of images or words related to a land of far distances in time and space and spirit? We are becoming closer:

“Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off” (Is.33.17).

Why does my heart dance (and others similarly) at just the sound of the word “Melchizedek”?

Imprisonment

The sons of God in our day are the front line troops right now being prepared by the Holy Spirit to manifest Jesus Christ in the soon coming kingdom age. The work that is going on in them is *primarily* not for this age but preparation for a massive ministry of power in the age which is soon to come, which is even now appearing at the doors. That’s why they are locked away and cannot come out. They are afflicted, misunderstood, despised, cast out of assemblies, rejected by family and friends, regarded as impediments to the good old path of

service which is the main focus and *raison d’être* of the institutionalised church. The separation of these sons and their isolation and imprisonment in God’s intensive care unit is all connected to the Holy Spirit’s specialised work of sanctification which involves dismemberment and decommissioning of the body of sin. For without the undoing of this spiritual body a pure ministry cannot come forth. Babylon has an impure ministry which produces its thousands of denominations built upon its myriad carnal teachings. Babylon is the uncrucified church. And that “church” can do things good and evil but nothing spiritual and enduring because it lacks the power. In fact, it denies the power having only a form of godliness. (2Tim.3.5). It is not a *form* of godliness but *actual* godliness that leads to holiness. We speak here of a system, not of every individual in it. God’s people are in that system, but,

“Come out of her my people that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” (Rev.18.4).

God takes His called out ones to various stages of confinement. Recall John the Baptist, Paul, Joseph, and the apostle John on Patmos. These go through different degrees: minimum security, maximum security. Paul loses his contact even with churches, to which he was called to minister. John the Baptist was in prison in the wilderness most of his life. Then follows his ministry. In Herod’s prison, in time he loses his head, his ministry of heralding the advent of the Messiah and preparing the people for that appearing being fulfilled. John, the revelator, on Patmos is exiled in lonely solitude from which he sees and records the greatest prophetic vision ever witnessed concerning the unveiling of Christ Himself. Joseph alone walks out of prison to be exalted over all Egypt the then capital of the world. In all this is the hand of God turning the evil into the good and making His chosen vessels. Whether ministry flows from the prison, as with Paul, or comes after the prison, as with Joseph, the fruit is in the prison not in the ministry.

The prison is akin to the woman of Revelation 12 in the wilderness refuge, contained but wholly safe, suffering yet producing fruit and having in that place all needs met. The wilderness is a safe house. The “they”, mentioned in that chapter, who provide for all needs are so ordered by God for the allotted time of the imprisonment. And there in that wilderness safe house the fruit grows, and an enduring ministry is established. Paul was very active in the churches until he was locked up, and many would have said, Why? But his ministry and legacy took off exponentially and lives on in his writing of half the New Testament in prison. A blessing that has been with us for the past 2,000 years and will be till the end of time. It is so with all the prisoners of the Lord. And, if I may say, on behalf of all brothers and sisters given a writing ministry: God bless the writers. O Lord give them inspiration and revelation, give them Your heart to give to others in the Body. And, to the readers, pray for the writers in their confinement, and you who are writers pray for the readers that they may be able to receive a pure word. For it is the Word that sanctifies, and it is sanctified ground (good ground) that facilitates the increase.

“Behold the kingdom of God (the planting of the seed) is at hand.” For those who are “taken” it is the time of intensified purification and destruction of the old life contemporaneously with the springing forth of the Word into a plant, and quite obviously this is not observable (“cometh not by observation”) to anyone except the ones in whom this part of the mystery is being worked out. To them as the New Life of the kingdom rises and rises, it is unmistakable that conception has progressed to gestation and a Holy Thing is coming forth. But others cannot observe it.

The apostle Paul said more than a few times: “*I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ*”. Paul had a ministry before he was imprisoned. It was an important ministry: the founding and overseeing of the churches. Yet it was from the prison that Paul’s

greatest ministry came forth and which continues on to this day. We, whom God has called out from the world, and from the institutionalised church and placed in prisons of various kinds according to His specific determination are there for His purposes, chief among which is the work of sanctification which involves the working of death dynamically upon Adam and his legacy in the soul i.e. upon the body of sin until the first legacy is no more, having been replaced by life, the body of righteousness: the life and nature of Christ. “*There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease*” (Job14.7). The first legacy is the old life of self and sin generating the body of sin – the platform upon which the devil can operate. The body of sin is his creation, the work of his hands, without which he has no platform to carry out his anti-God, anti-Christ activities in us. The prison provides God a workshop to rip and tear up the body of sin – to take away the devil’s ground of operation.

But this is a time of great affliction and suffering, even the time of Jacob’s trouble. It was Jacob who witnessed “Jacob’s ladder” rising up to heaven and One at the top who said, “I AM”. It involves great struggle, fear, affliction, and wrestling with the angel of the LORD until the summit is reached, until the Throne is gained. For the Throne is the Prize. “I AM your exceeding great reward.” If we would go all the way, our eyes must be on the Throne. Our destiny, eventually, is oneness with God at the throne through overcoming. “*To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne*” (Rev.3.21).

The throne

When the work upon the body of sin renders sufficient undoing of that organism the Throne begins to loom large, then the intensity of the battle increases several fold. Then you know something really is happening within. Then we understand that

the dragon has great wrath (and hatred toward you) because he sees he has but a short while and you have but a short distance to traverse. Narrowness of time accentuates the intensity of the attacks. He has to stop you reaching the Throne. He has to preserve at all costs the body of sin. The Throne is the place and end of the pilgrimage. And the Throne is the place and beginning of rulership.

Sanctification unto holiness...unto the perfect day. Whether on this side of the veil or the other -- that is when we arrive back home with the Father. We are heading back to Father's house but not empty handed as when we came down into this world. We go back equipped to do the Father's work in the coming kingdom age. Our destination is the Throne. Behold, I show you a mystery: We are seeking His throne and He is seeking our throne.

So there comes a day when, as we continue to travel in our spiritual journey, we do "see" something ahead that beckons us on, and then we encounter steadfast opposition.

And it is precisely when the Throne comes into view in our spiritual journey, when the inheritance comes into view, that the flesh becomes supernaturally charged to thwart our advance. This is not accidental. From Satan's point of view the people of God must not get to the Throne. Because when the Man fully re-made in the image of God reaches the throne, then God and Man are One (John 17). Way back the serpent's plan was to make a separation between God and Man. He knows what is the destiny of Man in God's agenda: that Man manifesting God, one with God, would rule all creation, and would unseat evil principalities from platforms of power in the heavenlies. He knows that on that day his kingdom is thrown down. God will have the creature defeat the creature. Man is God's weapon to defeat Satan. So we read that the dragon stands before (in front of, obstructing) their way by accusing them day and night. Have you not known it is so?

"...the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night"
(Rev.12.10).

There is a great misunderstanding of this scripture:

The dragon is not accusing anyone TO God. The LORD God would not hear of it.

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? [Certainly not Satan!] It is God that justifies."
(Roms. 8).

But the accuser is continually before the throne blocking your way by accusing you. But he is not accusing you to God; he is accusing You to You. But, as we have seen earlier, they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and faith in His blood.

The Lord God said not to the lawgiver but to the father of faith:

"I am your exceeding great reward".

What an all encompassing statement made to the father of faith!! We are seeking the Throne, our Great Reward. **Selah.** Meditate on that. The law, or our keeping of the law if that were possible, would still not make us acceptable to the Father. Truly, truly radical is our translation from the domain of darkness which we all knew into the kingdom of God, the kingdom of light, the kingdom of His dear Son.

Entry into Heaven

The only entry into God's world is a spiritual medical certificate confirming a heart transplant. Just theoretically, even if one had a perfect record in thought and deed, (I speak as a fool), the heart condition of Adam precludes entry into that heaven of God because the heart is so desperately wicked because it is inward seeking through lust. It is that way by nature. Its nature is of hell, not of heaven. Unregenerate Adam in heaven would be in hell (again I speak as a fool).

Through regeneration we have received the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ. His greatest gift to us is that He has given us His heart. The old heart bequeathed to us by Adam through natural birth, is fallen into a bucket of hospital waste to be consumed in the incinerator. The members of the body of sin are being thrown in there too.

Our spiritual entry permit, now by faith, is more than just getting through the door; it is to the throne of God. His path through His redemptive work in our souls is to our throne.

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will 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 all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new, And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.....I will be his God and he will be my son”
(Rev.21.3-7).

When we reach His Throne and He sits down upon our throne, behold the God-Man, neither God nor Man but both God and Man. God’s overseer of the worlds has arrived.

But God’s glorious plan for man, outlined in Psalm eight which is an addendum to this document begins with the Lord Jesus coming into the world. This leads us to consider a possible dialogue from long ago.

A heavenly conversation

Imagine a sunny morning in heaven. Two angels meet on a golden street corner.

Angel A: Have you heard the news?

Angel B: What news?

AA: The greatest news of all time. He’s crossed over!

AB: What! We always said it could never happen; that He could never cross over; that there was a fixed gap between the Creator and the Creation.

AA: Well, He can do anything. He’s going to do it. He’s going to become part of the creation.

AB: So, He’s going to become an angel?

AA: No.

AB: A seraphim?

AA: No.

AB: A cherubim?

AA: No.

AB: Then what?

AA: A man.

AB: A man! When will this happen?

AA: Gabriel is right now packing a bag for a trip to earth to bring the news to a fair young lady in Nazareth.

AB: Nazareth! Can any good thing ever come from there?

AA: We will see. But I’ve a hunch that Nazareth is about to change its reputation, yea, more than that, all heaven and earth is about to change. The world is about to be turned upside down. Everything we think.

AA: Oh, but oh yes, getting back to Gabriel, he does get all the good jobs!

The focal point of all history

With the Lord Jesus entering the world of men as one of us, begins the great salvation of the human race.

Without the Lord’s coming we were doomed to be the bound and shackled slaves of a fallen, merciless alien being which exists in darkness having none of

the graces of God. No mercy, no restraint, the only consideration: self and self elevation. This 'shining one' was created in celestial magnificence and man was created out of dirt.(Gen2.7). In the fulness of time, in God's amazing plan, Man Mk1("You are of your father the devil")(John 8.31) will return to dirt and Man Mk2 will ascend to celestial magnificence to take the place of the prior angelic creation which failed and which will descend to the dirt and eat that dirt (see Gen.3.14). God has ordained that Man, i.e. restored Man, Son of Man, will judge angels. Hence, the hatred in the closing days of our present age.

The serpent of old through long eons of time by self effort and beguiling man has transformed himself from a ground dweller to a formidable power inhabiting the heavenlies. In Job's day (and the book of Job is the oldest book in the bible) God asked Satan where he was up to, and he replied that he was walking around in the earth. Face to face with God is the only time that Satan must tell the truth. Satan then was a ground dweller and he said so. In the book of Revelation we see Satan as a great dragon in the heavens having ascended thereto through gaining or usurping power, then his fall where he appears again as a serpent on ground level overcome by the overcomers of Revelation 12.

Whenever man falls Satan arises further, and whenever man rises Satan falls. Satan needs man in order to ascend. Son of Man needs to overcome Satan to ascend. For the battle and the prize is all about ascension.

Ascension

In the first chapter of John's gospel Nathanael meets the Lord Jesus. The scripture (verse 47) says: "*Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no GUILE!*" The word 'saw' hardly conveys the meaning of the original Greek, which more accurately carries the much deeper meaning which is: *to know by perception* (as is rendered in some

versions). Jesus knows by inner perception that Nathanael is coming toward Him. Why did He say that Nathanael was an Israelite without guile? An Israelite is one who is of Jacob who was renamed Israel. Jacob was a swindler, a trickster. He got what he wanted by guile. In today's language we would call him a con man. Yet God loved him. He sought the LORD and spiritual things by carnal means. Yet he was ever toward God. God was pleased to call Himself over and over the God of Jacob. It was Jacob who was the one back in Genesis who saw a ladder reaching up to heaven and One at the top of it who said, I AM. And the Lord Jesus is saying to Jacob's descendant – I AM that ladder. That ladder is the Lord Jesus and He is the only way into God's heaven, the only way to the Father. To navigate all the rungs of the ladder is to ascend in consciousness all the way to the Throne. That ascension is upon the Son of Man. Each rung is healing and increasing light. We ascend rung by rung as we hold on to Christ and at each stage we are changed. The Throne is the end of our pilgrimage. It is the place of oneness with the Father – the place of rest, and in an age rapidly approaching, of mighty activity springing from rest. It is therefore so vitally important to know about this Ladder.

The Israelite, Nathanael, was without guile not because he was sinless, not because he was purer than his ancestor, Jacob, not because he had a perfect heart, but because he was coming *toward* Jesus. In chapter 3 of the same gospel, the Lord says: "*He that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.*" (vs. 21). Nathanael was coming to Jesus because the Father was drawing him to Jesus and his deeds were being made manifest that they were wrought in God. "*No man can come to me except the Father first draw him.*" (John6.44). We need to carefully consider this. A heart which is turned toward Jesus, coming toward Jesus belongs to one who is of Israel (an Israelite) and no longer of Jacob. In the Father's sight, that one just previously

full of guile is now in that action without guile. Anything done within the orbit of the Lord Jesus proclaims salvation. “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth” (Is.45.22).

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is an action of a fallen being that God accepts as truth. There is no deceit in that action. Nathanael did not have a perfect heart, but his heart was perfect toward God.

“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.”
(2Chron.16.9).

The Lord said he was an Israelite without guile, indeed. Turning to God opens a door that opens doors beyond the understanding of him who would dare enter.

“To them gave He power to become sons of God even to them that believe on His name” (John1.12).

The Lord said to Nathaniel that he had no guile (deceit) and that he would see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.

This ladder pictures the spiritual growth of the angels of God. The angels of God are the sons of God. They are rising and falling upon the Son of God as He takes them up and takes them down the planes of consciousness which is the processing work herein discussed.

To repeat, in order to embark upon this journey there must be no guile. Nothing false, no deceit. There must be truth, sincerity in dealing with One who is the Truth. If the prize is to be won, the truth that the LORD requires is basic honesty with Him, for the processing work will uncover things that we will have to be honest about, that we will have to accept in light as He shines His light of the Spirit into our soul. (See again 2Chron.16.9.) Note that it is not a perfect heart that He seeks, as no one could

even begin the journey. It is a heart that is *perfect toward Him*. A heart that no matter its impurities is perfectly inclined Godward. The Lord takes such a one up and down, and we come to see that the way up is often down. Note that the scripture in John 3 says: ascending and descending in that order which aligns perfectly with Isaiah 64 where the LORD meets His people at their spiritual peak. The ascent into the power of the Spirit to endure the descent into the depths of the soul. The Lord’s temptations in forty days and forty nights in the wilderness being the archetype of our trials where He was with the wild beasts even as we may be. We ascend into the spirit; we descend into the lowest parts of the soul.

“For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell” (Ps.86.13). With each ascent is blessing and resurrection life, and with each descent is sanctification and cleansing followed by ascent. *“As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God”* (Roms.8.14). It is the Lord, the Son of Man, who leads us through the labyrinth of the inner world, from the spirit to the dark and arid valleys of the soul and back to the sunny uplands of the spirit – all the while turning the wilderness into a garden.

The end result

“And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes” (Is.35.7).

Meditate, dear ones, what joys and adventures await when after the whole being is sanctified, cleansed and made holy, we again ascend and descend this ladder exploring all the planes of consciousness, and the finished, transformed inner regions of the soul with wide-eyed wonder.

“All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD, and thy saints shall bless thee.” (Ps.145.10).

God loved Jacob (and his values)

We return again to one of the great saints who continually blessed the LORD and that was Jacob. How often does the LORD call Himself, The God of Jacob! The Mighty One of Jacob! What is it about Jacob that the LORD loved him so much? And why did the LORD say: “Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated?” Of course we know that this was to do with God’s plan and election, but there was another factor not unrelated to this. In coming to understand this we see what values our Father values most.

Truly, we live in a time where the values of man have never been more contrary to the values of God. In our culture now evil is called good and good is called evil, and the LORD says:

“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!” (Is.5.20).

When evil is really and truly thought to be good, mankind has entered into more than just a carnal mind but into a reprobate mind, a demonic mind. Wars and rumours of wars and atrocities and disasters are the foretaste of what is yet to come to a world that spurns God and truth and inverts His values.

David was a man whom God loved. The LORD said he was a man after His own heart, who (from the heart) would do all His will. Similarly Jacob’s values aligned with God’s values. He may have used carnal means to obtain spiritual goals but he knew what was ultimate treasure and what was wood, hay and stubble. His watchwords were “work” and “wait” for that which is of value. It’s worth it! It’s worth paying the price. In our culture it has become a matter of “give it to me now – give it to me without cost (to me) – it’s my right.” This is the Esau spirit: “What do I care about a distant spiritual inheritance? I’ve got an empty belly – feed

me now.” The Jacob spirit is marked by value and respect. These things God values greatly. If you have read this paper this far then you have a Jacob spirit. It is this way of the cross of faith and patient endurance which leads to the coveted prize of the kingdom of God. The Esau spirits will never get there and the Jacob spirits will have their name changed to Israel. But Jacob/Israel, the man, never permanently entered in, but went in and out. *“...the spirit of Jacob, their father revived: and Israel said..enough, Joseph my son is yet alive.”* (Gen.45.27,28). [See also Rev.3.12: *“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out”*].

It was Jacob’s beloved son Joseph who entered in and became lord of all Egypt. Joseph said: *“God hath made me lord of all Egypt”* (Gen.45.9). For us, God is doing the same work to make us lord of soul and body and impervious to the enticements of Egypt – the world of the senses. Jesus is Lord of Lords.

No rebellion in the light

I hope readers won’t mind too much if I bring in a personal testimony at this point. It is the best way I can bring home an important truth.

A trance is a bit like a vision but not the same. In a vision you’re taken to another world. In a trance you’re aware of two worlds at once with eyes wide open.

Several years ago I had a job in the city, and at lunchtime I often went to the city square to have lunch, feed the pigeons and watch the crowds. One day particularly stands out. As I was sitting and enjoying the sun suddenly I fell into a trance. I was looking at all the people walking across the square. Some walked in straight lines, others were walking haphazardly, some fast, some slow.

Suddenly there were two pictures in my vision. One was the normal waking consciousness as ever, the other the trance. In the trance all the people

suddenly grew extended jaws i.e. their chins juttied out. At the same time their hands became fists, and then they looked up, stuck out their chins and shook their fists to the heavens. A trance is a strange thing. If someone had said to me, 'where is the post office', I could have given directions and remained in the trance. I stood up and continued watching the things in the trance. After a minute or two it ended. Then I was back in normal consciousness.

Overwhelmingly, the picture was of man's rebellion against God. A picture of utter defiance. The hostility shook me. I said to the Lord: "Lord, I know man is fallen, but why is he *SO* rebellious? The Lord replied straight away: *"That's only true in darkness, in the light it is not so."*

The revelation continued to crystallise within: There never has been a revolt against God – in the Light – for the simple reason there is nothing to rebel against. Everything that God wills for any creature whether angel or man, when seen in the light is seen in truth as being for our best possible good and highest happiness. To rebel against that would be a mad contradiction like gouging out your own eyes.

But a rebellion there has been. How can it be? In order to rebel against God there has first got to be an excursion into darkness, into a place where things appear other than what they are. In that place God will appear to be what He is not. In Eve's case God appeared to be grudging and meanly disposed, withholding wisdom and pleasure in her darkened state where she relied on self. With Lucifer: *"Thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness"*. His God given brightness or light when cut off from God became darkness and he was corrupted and rebelled. Everything changes in darkness. For both of them, their downfall was SELF. The devil did have a tempter and that tempter was self.

A search of Christian literature, even going back to medieval times, to see how the modern and the ancient saints defined SELF, will yield scant results.

The word "Self" is thrown about by authors down the ages with never a definition or an explanation of what they mean. Following prayer I received this:

SELF

Separated

Existence

Lacking

Fulfilment

Analogies

Analogies can be poor reflections or semi-accurate reflections of reality. But if we use the analogy of a computer we might just get something of a glimpse into what a fully functioning human being should be. A computer has basically two parts – hardware and software. In this analogy we are the hardware and the Spirit of God is the software. We are the instrument, ready to go; He is all the resources needed to effect that going. Without Him nothing happens; without us God is not expressed in the manifest world as He wants to be. Man is the high point of God's creation. His express manifestation. God and Man are one. What is Man? See Psalm 8 addendum.

Self can be likened to disengaged hardware floating around in a sea of darkness attracting all manner of software to engage with it, making for the coming forth of any kind of creature.

To repeat, analogies can be just approximations. But like parables, they create pictures that help us understand things. So, in making a reference to the computer, something we can see, we may be able to conceptualise something we cannot see. For example in knowing that just as hardware without software is useless because incomplete, so it is that Man without God is useless because incomplete. This is somewhat of a description of fallen man. Now imagine if that fallen being – separated, useless, functionless because cut off, were captured by evil, (re)programmed and given a whole new operating system contrary to what the original

Designer had planned – then that being would no longer be useless but toxic. Man is not a computer. God made Man in His image and is making Sons not machines. But this picture may just aid us in understanding, perhaps from another perspective, the fall, sin, and the need for redemption, and that redemption means primarily, *completeness*. A return to Eden if you will – and beyond that, more, much more. How much more? I cannot tell. But look out into the heavens on a clear night and behold the splendour of the myriad worlds that stretch out forever, and then go inside and read Psalm 8, and then go outside again and behold the creation again, and just as the garden was in the beginning all made and set up for Man, so is all the creation, for Man is the pinnacle of God's creation. Man, i.e. the Second Man, the new man, redeemed man, the man that you are, is the manifestation of God. What will each of us be eventually in God's new creation world? The blessed apostle John must have pondered this. He writes:

“Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. ...Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” (1John3.1,2).

In all our tribulation remember we are being prepared to receive an unimagined and mighty inheritance.

Shadowland (or the little foxes spoil the grapes)

Brethren, you know from experience, from times when you may have been out-of-sorts with God that you wondered why He was dealing with you in a particular way. Even Jeremiah the prophet went through this. We think: if I can just find the truth, if I can just see why He is doing this, then I will see that He is ok, and I will run to Him. But in this kind of shadow place I feel a bit inhibited. One of the tricks of the enemy is to get you to a place where there is something you don't understand about God,

His nature or His dealings with you. And you think I can't raise this issue with the Lord because it concerns His nature, and I can't question Him about that. Let me find the truth and then I will return. Herein lies the trap. It comes from an overhang from way, way back, from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, just like Adam when he departed from the light and was afraid to hear from or talk to God, when he was hiding behind a bush trying to find a fig leaf. It has been a fear of all of us ever since. But since Adam, Jesus has come to reveal the Father.

You can ask the Lord ANYTHING, with respect.

So, there are times when we go through a temporary eclipse. We enter a kind of shadowland – not gross darkness, just a shadow, and we feel disgruntled and somewhat out-of-sorts with God. We may say, Why? Why are things happening like this?

Here in this place the carnal mind is waiting an opportunity to provide us an answer. Remember, the carnal mind masquerades as a truth seeker, but is ever manoeuvring to take up an anti-God position.

So if you are in this place, and you will know by your mood and attitude toward God if it is so, the carnal mind will come forward with advice and will tell you what you need is truth. After all, God is a God of truth, is He not? Can you argue against that? But here is deception. It is not truth that you need! Because where you are, the truth is not readily perceived. It is such a temptation when in a shadow to seek the truth. But IN THAT MOMENT what we need is Light. In the Light we will see the Truth. In shadow we do not see the truth. Job, in his misery: “Oh that I wish that I could find Him” – and, “Where is the way that light dwelleth?” He looked for light.

God already knows all your thoughts and concerns. To bring them to Him is itself a movement toward the light.

The Lord Jesus said: *"He that doeth truth comes to the light"* (John 3.21).

God gives light and truth. But the temptation is to become an independent truth seeker, because we are ignorant and because we think we can't raise a certain issue with God. The carnal mind or evil spirit will spoon feed you a "truth" which is a lie when subjected to light. Humbly lay out your case before Him and your question/s and pray for light and truth. The truth is:

"If anyone lacks wisdom let him ask of God who gives liberally without finding fault and it will be given" (James 1.5).

So what now?

So...what manner of persons should we be i.e. how should we think and be in redeeming the time because the days are evil? The answer is that we should think of ourselves as nothing. Even though we are not nothing but treasured by God as His valuable Sons. But in this short life we should esteem ourselves as nothing with regard to God and brethren and eternal verities. As Paul says in Gal 6.3: *"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."*

God will honour us if we do not promote ourselves, but honour Him. John the Baptist was not nothing. He said of himself: I am nothing more than a voice crying in the wilderness, yet the Lord Jesus said of John:

"Among those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist" (Luke 7.28).

How rare it is in the world and even in the church to find a genuine person who does not elevate self even to some degree. Such a one is genuine as the Lord says: *"...but he that seeks the glory of him that sent him, the same is TRUE, and no unrighteousness is in him."* (John 7.18). There was One who could arguably have gloried in himself, but He never did. Andrew Jukes describes this better than I can:-

Now the first thing I observe of Christ is that there was more in Him than met the eye or ear. Though seen and heard He was yet hidden. The vessel, indeed, was seen: the treasure was not seen. To discern Him a certain capacity was needed, vouchsafed of God. "Flesh and blood never revealed Him" (Matt. 16.17). "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not" (John 1.10). He came neither striving nor crying among men, neither was His voice heard in the streets. (Matt. 12.16-19). But "he that was of God heard God's words: the Jews heard them not, because they were not of God" (John 8.47). Antichrists came in other guise, "saying, I am Christ" (Matt 24.5): the Christ of God never said this. "He bore not witness of Himself" (John 5.31): for He must be otherwise discerned. Even when asked, "Art thou the Christ?" His answer once and again was simply a reference to His works; (Matt 11.3-5; John 10.24); and the lost, who knew their need of such works, at once discerned Him. (end quote) [from The Mystery of the Kingdom by Andrew Jukes].

John the Baptist is a type of Sonship sanctification unto glory who suffered many calamities in the way. What happened to him after he was cast into prison? Well, he lost his head – self life, man of reason, self will, separated existence. Sons of God in prison will suffer likewise. That's primarily why they are in prison.

If we are not clinging on to who we are but entrusting our very being into God's hands, we will find that paradoxically we are gaining who we really are.

Identity

It is no startling news but it should be said that the devil is a liar. Never believe the devil's lie that to submit to God's inner working is to lose one's identity. The contrary is true. *"He that finds his life shall lose it: and he that loses his life for my sake shall find it"* (Matt. 10.39). The purpose of our adventure in this earthly incarnation is to graduate

from being pure but naive spirits to mature spiritual beings – 1) To know God in all the ways we could not have known Him as pure spirits in a pristine heaven, and 2) In the process, to know ourselves through experience, to know our true identity as having been made permanent in Christ, no longer tossed to and fro on every wind of circumstance, rock like in durability yet lamblike as Jesus, vital to God our Father, living in an increasing liberty in this world and the next, the extent of which we can not fully comprehend at this time here on earth.

In the gospel account recorded in Matthew 16 Simon Peter finds his identity. He is blessed because he sees who Jesus is. *“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”*. In seeing who Jesus is he receives another revelation, for when the Lord sees that Simon sees who HE is, He says to him: Now that you see who I am, now I will show you who *you* are. *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter..”* (vs.18). Then follows the Lord’s explanation to Peter of who he is. We will never know who we are until we see who He is. An identity within an identity. He shows us, as Simon, our true identity which is not son of Jonah, a silly bird (*Heb*), – not a son of Adam – but of that Rock which is Christ. Until we know Him and know ourselves in Him as, like Him, Son of God, we do not know ourselves at all.

The Sons must know who they are. Nothing happens until the body of Sons are de-Adamised, cleansed and equipped. This whole world goes on groaning until the Sons are manifest. (Roms 8.23). The whole creation groans and travails up to that moment (Roms 8.22). Lord, hasten the day!

No more pain

We remarked earlier that nobody wants death absolutely, and most not even in terrible circumstances How much more do those in God-life eschew death? But death is the last enemy to be destroyed because it is to be turned by God on what remains of the Adam man in the soul of the new

creation man. When Adam is no more, death is no more.

“There shall be no more death...for the former things are passed away” (Rev. 21).

So it is that all the dealings of God in those who are “taken”, all the trials and suffering, all the deep soul processing and purging comes to an end. But note when this comes to an end:

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new...And he said unto me, It is done” (Rev.21.4-6).

It is only when He sits upon the throne (the throne of your being) that all things become new. Then the former things of death, sorrow, crying, pain – are passed away forever. But note that the Lord will sit upon the throne in His time and not when man would have Him take the throne. Those with eyes to see what glory there is for man in God’s dealings, and at the same time who acutely feel His dealings, and who perceive what great help it would be if the Lord would rule now, may if they could, pressure the Lord to sit on the throne now without delay, but the Lord will not have man dictate the times, and will not reign until the work in the soul is complete. His enemies will be made footstools before He rules. See John6.15 where His followers tried to make Him king by force:

“When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone”.

He will rule when He comes into His rest. He sits upon the throne when the work is complete. Jesus is Lord when His nature in us is complete. He won’t sit until then.

That He sits speaks of rest. It is the place where God and Man are at rest – both seated. The SEVENTH day. God's Sabbath. *"The Sabbath was made for man"* (Mark2.27). Yet it is written that *"God rested"* (Gen.2.3). Yet again, it is when God rests that we rest. Our rest comes when His work and will are done perfectly in our lives. His will is done and our rest is come when we see the work perfect for us in Christ Jesus.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev.3.21).

God is good

"And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Genesis1.31).

There is a heresy abroad that God directly creates evil. Let us hearken back to the first words of creation where Elohim says: *"Let there be light"* And there was light. There was also in that instant, shadow. But Elohim never said: "Let there be shadow". There can be no shadow without light. Darkness is nothing in itself – it is the absence of light. Similarly, evil can only exist in shadow, darkness, absence of God. In the light it cannot be. Behold the precarious state of your enemy and realize why he cannot stand. In darkness he is; in light he is not. That is, in the light he could not be what he is in darkness.

The darkness is passing away and the true light already shines" (1John2.8: Gk Interlinear).

As for God who is light no amount of darkness can overcome Him.

"God is light and no darkness is in him, none!" (1John1.5: Gk Interlinear).

In absolute terms nothing can be outside of God, i.e. outside of His immensity. Yet it is darkness which is the only domain where evil can operate and have being. Evil can BE only in the absence of God. But, more, there is *ultimately* only evil in the absence of

God. Yet more, there is no pure good outside of God, as the Lord Jesus said:

"Why do you call me good. There is none good but one, that is God" (Matt 19.17).

Language limits here. But we might say if God were to "step" into darkness that darkness would instantly be dissipated, would vanish. Even the tiniest candle flame nullifies darkness around it. But the candle power of man's methods in psychology and psychoanalysis to see into and repair man's soul is too weak because the darkness is too deep, too hidden and too vast. The light that is needed is pure light of unlimited power, the Spirit of Light, the Holy Spirit. This is what is working in you. This is the salvation of your soul.

One of Us

In the Israel of Old, to have sins forgiven, the sinner or the high priest as his proxy would place hands upon a sacrificial animal while making confession and the animal would be killed as a sin offering.

The sinner and the sacrifice became one in complete mutual identification. This was an act in type of our identification with Christ in His death for us. It is a story, an event, like no other that crosses time and space: When He died we died with Him. We need to digest these words till they are part of our very being: WHEN HE DIED WE DIED WITH HIM. *"I have been crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ lives in me"* (Gal.2.20; Gk.Interlinear).

Take hold of this as a done deal. The work of salvation has been done. But just so too has the work of sanctification unto perfection been already accomplished.

"For by one offering He has perfected in perpetuity the ones being sanctified" (Heb.10.14; Gk.Interlinear).

It is from perfection that we in our discipleship walk, proceed through all the labours described in this paper. We walk from perfection into sanctification unto perfection. We have to get to where we are.

As we contemplate this and perhaps wonder why all of this is happening to us now at this time, while others we know, perhaps in the church system are still jumping and clapping, let us consider the words of the apostle Peter:

“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?”

“And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”

“Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.”
(1Peter4.17-19).

And remember the Word: “in all their affliction He was afflicted”. The identification of God through our Lord Jesus Christ with His fallen sons is so utter that no words here can describe it or do justice. The Lord was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Words fail this writer at this point who can barely say: Love endures all things; Love never fails. (1Cor.13.7,8).

“For both He sanctifying and the ones being sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brothers” (Heb.11.2).

The age coming will highlight – with the emphasis on ‘light’ – two things: the manifestation of the sons of God, and the unveiling of a God who is Love. Two things yet one thing.

New beginnings

The book of Genesis and the book of Revelation are connected. God never begins anything unless He first finishes it. All that was lost in Genesis is regained in Revelation. And between them is the story of the long pilgrimage of Man from being with God to being away from Him yet in hope of return. It is the story of God doing what man could never do – of reconciling man back to Himself by divesting Himself of all divine prerogatives and crossing a gap that even heaven itself thought was fixed, and becoming one of us in the human person

of the Lord Jesus. What a Creator who would deign to become the Creation. Because we lost His image He took our image. What a Jesus! Mystery of mysteries!

It is the story of a love that crossed oceans of time and space, and would not let go and would endure anything until His beloved was safe and the defaced image was restored. In the doing of this, *“His visage (appearance) was more defaced than any man”* (Isaiah 52.14).

Who’s to say that the book of Revelation is the last book? It is a book of endings and new beginnings. It is the new genesis. The books that follow are now being written in heaven. They are the stories of God’s new heroes. They are the stories of you.

John Joseph

ADDENDUM A

BABYLONIAN RELIGION *(by Harry A. Ironside)*

As we go back into the dim twilight of history with Scripture, we learn that the founder of Bab-el, or Babylon, was Nimrod, of whose unholy achievements we read in the 10th chapter of Genesis. He was the arch-apostate of the patriarchal age. He is described as a "mighty hunter before the Lord"-"a hunter of the souls of men," the rabbis said. Going out from the presence of the Lord, he impiously sought to gather a multitude about himself, and in defiance of the express command of God to spread abroad upon the face of the earth, he persuaded his associates and followers to join together in "building a city and a tower which should reach unto heaven." Not surely as some of us were taught in our childhood a tower by which they might climb up into the skies to escape another possible flood, but a tower of renown, rising to a great height, to be recognized as a temple or rallying center for those who did not walk in obedience to the word of the Lord. With all the effrontery of our modern apostates, they called their city and tower Bab-El, the gate of God; but it was soon changed by divine judgment into Babel, Confusion. It bore the stamp of unreality from the first, for we are told, "they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar." An imitation of that which is real and true has ever since characterized Babylon in all ages.

Nimrod, or Nimroud-bar-Cush, as he is called on the monuments, was a grandson of Ham, the unworthy son of Noah, whose character is revealed in his exposure of his father's shame. We know that Noah had brought through the flood the revelation of the true God, for he was a preacher of righteousness, and his utterances on more than one occasion show that he had the prophetic gift. Ham on the other hand seems to have been all too readily affected by the apostasy that brought the flood, for he shows no evidence of self-judgment, but the very opposite. His name, as spelled out upon Egyptian monuments is Khem, and this agrees with the literal sound of the Hebrew word rendered Ham in our Bibles. It means "swarthy," "darkened," or more literally, "the sun-burnt." The name indicates the state of the man's soul. For what is a sun-burnt person? One who is darkened by light from heaven. Ham had been granted wonderful mercies; he was saved from the flood because of his father's faith, but he abused his privileges and "turned the grace of God into lasciviousness." He was actually darkened by the burning rays of light that God caused to shine upon his soul. Thus his conscience became seared as with a hot iron, and he became the founder of a race that departed from the living God and led the way into idolatry, worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator.

We know something of what this means. We speak of people today who have become, as we say, gospel-hardened. They too have been darkened by the light, and are often the ringleaders in apostasy: "If the light that is in thee becomes darkened, how great is the darkness." There are many in the world tonight who used to listen with tears in their eyes to the story of the matchless grace of God as revealed in the cross of Christ, but are unmoved now though that story be told ever so tenderly; they have become hardened in their sins, and their seared consciences no longer feel the Spirit's breath. It is a most dangerous thing to trifle with the light from heaven.

But to proceed with our theme, Ham became darkened by the light. We know his failure and sin. But when Noah had recovered himself and knew what his son had done unto him he pronounced, by the spirit of prophecy, a curse upon Canaan, not on Ham. Do you wonder at that? I did, until I saw that God had already pronounced a blessing upon all three sons of Noah-Shem, Ham, and Japheth. So Noah passes over his unworthy son and utters a curse upon Canaan, who we can well believe was, as we say, "a chip off the old block." Ham begat a son named Cush, "the black one," and he became the father of Nimrod, the apostate leader of his generation.

Ancient lore now comes to our assistance, and tells us that the wife of Nimrod-bar-Cush was the infamous Semiramis, the First. She is reputed to have been the founder of the Babylonian mysteries and the first high-priestess of idolatry. Thus Babylon became the fountainhead of idolatry, and the mother of every heathen and pagan system in the world. The mystery-religion that was originated there spread in various forms throughout the whole earth, and as we shall see, it is with us today. It is identical with the mystery of iniquity which wrought so energetically in Paul's day, and shall have its fullest development when the Holy Spirit has departed and the Babylon of the apocalypse holds sway.

Building on the primeval promise of the woman's Seed who was to come, Semiramis bore a son whom she declared was miraculously conceived, and when she presented him to the people, he was hailed as the promised deliverer. This was Tammuz, whose worship Ezekiel protested against in the days of the captivity. Thus was introduced the mystery of the mother and the child, a form of idolatry that is older than any other known to man. The rites of this worship were secret.

Only the initiated were permitted to know its mysteries. It was Satan's effort to delude mankind with an imitation so like the truth of God that they would not know the true Seed of the woman when He came in the fullness of time. To this Justin Martyr bears definite witness.

From Babylon this mystery-religion spread to all the surrounding nations, as the years went on and the world was populated by the descendants of Noah. Everywhere the symbols were the same, and everywhere the cult of the mother and child became the popular system. Their worship was celebrated with the most disgusting and immoral practices. The image of the queen of heaven with the babe in her arms was seen everywhere, though the names might differ as languages differed. It became the mystery-religion of Phoenicia, and by the Phoenicians was carried to the ends of the earth. Ashtoreth and Tammuz, the mother and child of these hardy adventurers, became Isis and Horus in Egypt, Aphrodite and Eros in Greece, Venus and Cupid in Italy, and bore many other names in more distant places. Within 1,000 years, Babylonianism had become the religion of the world, which had rejected the Divine revelation.

Linked with the central mystery were countless lesser mysteries, the hidden meaning of which was known only to the initiates, but the outward forms were practiced by all the people. Among these were the doctrines of purgatorial purification after death, salvation by countless sacraments (such as priestly absolution), sprinkling with holy water, the offering of round cakes to the queen of heaven (as mentioned in the book of Jeremiah), dedication of virgins to the gods (which was literally sanctified prostitution), weeping for Tammuz for a period of 40 days prior to the great festival of Istar (who was said to have received her son back from the dead); for it was taught that Tammuz was slain by a wild boar and afterwards brought back to life. To him the egg was sacred, as depicting the mystery of his resurrection even as the evergreen was his chosen symbol and was set up in honor of his birth at the winter solstice, when a boar's head was eaten in memory of his conflict and a yule log burned with many mysterious observances. The sign of the cross was sacred to Tammuz, as symbolizing the life giving principle and as the first letter of his name. It is represented upon vast numbers of the most ancient altars and temples, and did not, as many have supposed originate with Christianity.

From this mystery-religion, the patriarch Abraham was separated by the divine call, and with this same evil cult the nation that sprang from him had constant conflict, until under Jezebel, a Phoenician princess, it was grafted onto what was left of the religion of Israel in the northern kingdom in the day of Ahab, and was the cause of their captivity at the last. Judah was polluted by it, for Baal-worship was but the Canaanitish form of Babylonian mysteries, and only by being sent into captivity to Babylon itself did Judah become cured of her fondness for idolatry. Baal was the Sun-God, the Life-giving One, identical with Tammuz.

When Christ came into this world the mystery of iniquity was everywhere holding sway, save where the truth of God as revealed in the Old Testament was known. Thus, when the early Christians set out upon the

great task of carrying the gospel to the ends of the earth, they found themselves everywhere confronted by this system, in one form or another; for though Babylon as a city had long been but a mystery, her mysteries had not died with her. When the city and temples were destroyed, the high-priest fled with a company of initiates and their sacred vessels and images to Pergamos, where the Symbol of the serpent was set up as the emblem of the hidden wisdom. From there, they afterwards crossed the sea and immigrated to Italy, where, they settled on the Etruscan plain. There the ancient cult was propagated under the name of the Etruscan Mysteries and eventually Rome became the headquarters of Babylonianism. The chief priests wore mitres shaped like the head of a fish, in honor of Dagon, the fish-god, the Lord of life-another form of the Tammuz mystery, as developed among Israel's old enemies, the Philistines. The chief priest when established in Rome took the title Pontifex Maximus, and this was imprinted in on his mitre. When Julius Caesar (who was an initiate like all young Romans of good family) had become the head of the States, he was elected Pontifex Maximus, and this title was held henceforth by all the Roman emperors down to Constantine the Great, who was at one and the same time, head of the church, and high priest to the heathen. The title was afterwards conferred upon the bishops of Rome, and is borne by the pope today, who is thus declared to be, not the successor of the fisherman-apostle Peter, but the direct successor of the high priest of the Babylonian mysteries, and the servant of the fish-god Dagon, for whom he wears, like his idolatrous predecessors, the fisherman's ring.

During the early centuries of the church's history, the mystery of iniquity had wrought with such astounding effect, and the Babylonian practices and teachings had been so largely absorbed by that which bore the name of the church of Christ, that the truth of the Holy Scriptures on many points had been wholly obscured, while idolatrous practices had been foisted upon the people as Christian sacraments, and the heathen philosophies took the place of gospel instruction. Thus was developed that amazing system which for a thousand years dominated Europe and trafficked in the bodies and souls of men, until the great Reformation of the 16th century brought in a measure of deliverance.

ADDENDUM B

Proverbs 7

(New American Standard Bible)

7 My son, keep my words
 And treasure my commandments within you.
 2 Keep my commandments and live,
 And my ^[a]teaching as the ^[b]apple of your eye.
 3 Bind them on your fingers;
 Write them on the tablet of your heart.
 4 Say to wisdom, "You are my sister,"
 And call understanding *your* intimate friend,
 5 So that they may keep you from an ^[c]adulteress,
 From the foreigner who flatters with her words.

 6 For at the window of my house
 I looked out through my lattice,
 7 And I saw among the naïve,
 And discerned among the ^[d]youths
 A young man lacking ^[e]sense,
 8 Passing through the street near her corner;
 And he walks along the way to her house,
 9 In the twilight, in the ^[f]evening,
 In the ^[g]middle of the night and the darkness.
 10 And behold, a woman *comes* to meet him,
 Dressed as a prostitute and cunning of heart.
 11 She is boisterous and rebellious,
 Her feet do not remain at home;
 12 *She is* now in the streets, now in the public
 squares,
 And lurks by every corner.
 13 So she seizes him and kisses him,
^[h]And with a brazen face she says to him:
 14 "I was due to offer peace offerings;
 Today I have paid my vows.

15 Therefore I have come out to meet you,
 To seek your presence diligently, and I have found
 you.
 16 I have spread my couch with coverings,
 With colored linens of Egypt.
 17 I have sprinkled my bed
 With myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.
 18 Come, let's drink our fill of love until morning;
 Let's delight ourselves with caresses.
 19 For ^[i]my husband is not at home;
 He has gone on a long journey.
 20 He has taken a bag of money ^[k]with him.
 At the full moon he will come home."
 21 With her many persuasions she entices him;
 With her ^[l]flattering lips she seduces him.
 22 Suddenly he follows her
 As an ox goes to the slaughter,
 Or as ^[m]one walks in ankle bracelets to the
 discipline of a fool,
 23 Until an arrow pierces through his liver;
 As a bird hurries to the snare,
 So he does not know that it *will cost him* his life.

 24 Now therefore, *my* sons, listen to me,
 And pay attention to the words of my mouth.
 25 Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways,
Do not stray into her paths.
 26 For many are the ^[n]victims she has brought to
 ruin,
 And numerous are all those slaughtered by her.
 27 Her house is the way to Sheol,
 Descending to the chambers of death.

(to be understood spiritually)

ADDENDUM C

Isaiah 63

(King James Version)

63 Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

² Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

³ I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

⁴ For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

⁵ And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.

⁶ And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.

⁷ I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.

⁸ For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour.

⁹ In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

¹⁰ But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.

¹¹ Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his holy Spirit within him?

¹² That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name?

¹³ That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble?

¹⁴ As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.

¹⁵ Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained?

¹⁶ Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O LORD, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.

¹⁷ O LORD, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear? Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.

¹⁸ The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary.

¹⁹ We are thine: thou never barest rule over them; they were not called by thy name.

ADDENDUM D

Isaiah 64

(King James Version)

64 Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence,

² As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence!

³ When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.

⁴ For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.

⁵ Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.

⁶ But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

⁷ And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

⁸ But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.

⁹ Be not wroth very sore, O LORD, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people.

¹⁰ Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation.

¹¹ Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste.

¹² Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O LORD? wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?

ADDENDUM E

Psalm 136

(New King James Version)

Thanksgiving to God for His Enduring Mercy

136 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good!

For His mercy *endures* forever.

² Oh, give thanks to the God of gods!

For His mercy *endures* forever.

³ Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords!

For His mercy *endures* forever:

⁴ To Him who alone does great wonders,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

⁵ To Him who by wisdom made the heavens,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

⁶ To Him who laid out the earth above the waters,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

⁷ To Him who made great lights,

For His mercy *endures* forever—

⁸ The sun to rule by day,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

⁹ The moon and stars to rule by night,

For His mercy *endures* forever.

¹⁰ To Him who struck Egypt in their firstborn,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

¹¹ And brought out Israel from among them,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

¹² With a strong hand, and with ^[a]an outstretched arm,

For His mercy *endures* forever;¹³ To Him who divided the Red Sea in two,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

¹⁴ And made Israel pass through the midst of it,
For His mercy *endures* forever;

¹⁵ But overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

¹⁶ To Him who led His people through the wilderness,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

¹⁷ To Him who struck down great kings,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

¹⁸ And slew famous kings,

For His mercy *endures* forever—

¹⁹ Sihon king of the Amorites,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

²⁰ And Og king of Bashan,

For His mercy *endures* forever—

²¹ And gave their land as a ^[b]heritage,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

²² A heritage to Israel His servant,

For His mercy *endures* forever.

²³ Who remembered us in our lowly state,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

²⁴ And rescued us from our enemies,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

²⁵ Who gives food to all flesh,

For His mercy *endures* forever.

²⁶ Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven!

For His mercy *endures* forever.

ADDENDUM F

CHRIST AS THE LAST ADAM BECOMING THE LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT

We have been called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ. Fellowship means participation or enjoyment. Therefore, we have been called into the participation and enjoyment of Christ. Day by day, we fellowship with this Christ, we enjoy this Christ, and we participate in this Christ. Never forget that this Christ is the last Adam who became a life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b). Many have heard much about the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but few have heard that Christ today is the life-giving Spirit. This is why we say that we should not trust the teachings in Christianity that miss the basic concept in the Bible.

The Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are facts, but 1 Corinthians 15:45b is also a fact. Christ today is a life-giving Spirit. This is not my word, nor is it merely my teaching; this is 1 Corinthians 15:45b: "The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit." The Christ who was made wisdom to us from God as our righteousness for our past, as our sanctification for our present, and as our redemption for our future is the life-giving Spirit today. If He were not the life-giving Spirit today, He could not be our righteousness or our sanctification. If He were not such a life-giving Spirit who lives within us, how could He be so subjective to us? He would remain who He is, and we would remain who we are. He would have nothing to do with us, and we would not be related to Him. Praise Him, He is the life-giving Spirit! At the time we called on Him, saying, "O Lord Jesus," whether or not we had the knowledge, He entered into us. Yes, He is in the heavens, but hallelujah, He is also in us! He is not only the Lamb of God, the Redeemer, the Savior, and the Lord; He is also the life-giving Spirit. "And the Lord is the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:17). Now the Lord

Jesus is the life-giving Spirit, and as the life-giving Spirit He is in us.

Today most Christians appreciate John 3:16, but we need to appreciate 1 Corinthians 15:45 more. Yet, even John 3:16 implies that Christ is the life-giving Spirit.

It says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that every one who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life." God has given His Son to us. Where is His Son today?

Without having Jesus within us, how could we have eternal life? Eternal life is simply Jesus Himself. We have eternal life because we have Jesus. God has given Him to us, and we have received Him. Now we have Him within us, so we have Jesus Himself as the eternal life. Jesus can be eternal life to us because He is within us as the life-giving Spirit. Because Jesus today is the life-giving Spirit living within us, He is everything to us.

In Indianapolis in 1968, as a brother drove me to a meeting, he said, "Brother Lee, in this country people always tell others to look to the Lord who is in the heavens while we are on earth. However, you always tell people to turn to their spirit. This seems to be a different direction." He warned me that some people were saying that this is an oriental philosophy. Earlier that same evening I had received an impression from the Lord that I should say something in the meeting about Christ being within us. After we sang and prayed in the meeting, I picked up the Bible and read Romans 8. In my speaking, I pointed out that chapter eight has two key verses concerning where Christ is. Verse 34 says that Christ is in the heavens, while verse 10 says that Christ is in us. I then asked the listeners, "Where is Christ today? In the heavens or in you?"

Using the illustration of electricity, I told them that this is an easy question to answer. The same electricity is both in the generator and in the meeting hall.

As long as electricity has been installed, whenever we need it, we should not look to the generator; we should simply go to the switch and turn it on. I then asked the listeners, "Is this oriental philosophy? No, it is not. Christ as the heavenly electricity has been installed in our spirit. When we need to apply Him, should we look to the heavens or should we turn to our spirit?" To be sure, we should turn and exercise our spirit to "switch on" by saying, "O Lord Jesus."

Another wonderful verse is 1 Corinthians 6:17, which says, "He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit." Now we should exercise our spirit. After electricity has been installed in a building, we simply go and turn on the switch. Likewise, the wonderful and marvelous Christ has been installed in our spirit (2 Tim. 4:22). Therefore, we simply need to turn to our spirit.

This is not merely my teaching; this is the divine revelation in the book of 1 Corinthians. Again I say, Christianity has missed the mark. We may have read many messages on 1 Corinthians, but not one of them told us that Christ today is the life-giving Spirit within us. Not one of them told us that we must exercise our spirit. Yet this is the basic concept of 1 Corinthians.

First Corinthians 16:18 says, "For they refreshed my spirit and yours," and 2 Corinthians 7:13 says, "His spirit has been refreshed by all of you." This shows us that our Christian life and walk is in our spirit. This is because Christ is in our spirit.

EXERCISING OUR SPIRIT BY CALLING ON THE LORD

First Corinthians tells us that we all have been called into the fellowship, the participation, of this Christ, who is now the life-giving Spirit. He has been made our righteousness for the past, our sanctification for the present, and our redemption for the future. We are one with Him as the life-giving Spirit in our spirit. Now we must call on Him (1 Cor. 12:3; Rom. 10:12). We should not merely

pray to Him or ask Him, but call on Him. Praying and asking may be illustrated by speaking something in a soft and low voice.

Calling, however, may be compared to crying, "Please help me!" To speak in this way is not only to ask or to pray; it is to call. If I were to report that a house is on fire, I would not say in a soft tone of voice, "Brother, the house is on fire. Could you come and help us?" This may be compared to praying or asking. To call, however, is like shouting, "Fire! Fire!" There is a big difference. We should try to call in this way.

When a house is on fire, no man tries to be a gentleman, and no woman tries to be a lady. In order to be rescued, they must call desperately. Similarly, when our spouse gives us a hard time, we may pray, "Lord, help me not to lose my temper," but eventually we may lose it. Rather, we need to be rescued. By calling, "O Lord Jesus," our temper will be consumed, and immediately we will be rescued.

APPLYING CHRIST BY EXERCISING OUR SPIRIT

In 1 Corinthians 2:14 Paul says, "But a soulish man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him and he is not able to know them because they are discerned spiritually." In order to know the things of the Spirit of God, we must not exercise our natural mind or our soul. This is the wrong organ. If we exercise our soul, we will be insulated from Christ as the electricity. Even a small thing, such as a thin piece of paper, can insulate electricity. We must forget about our natural mind and simply turn to our spirit. Paul said that only the spiritual ones can discern the things of the Spirit. Christ is the life-giving Spirit in our spirit, and we are one spirit with Him in our spirit. Whenever we need Him, our only way is to apply Him by exercising our spirit.

(Enjoying the Riches of Christ for the Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ, Chapter 7, by Witness Lee)

ADDENDUM G

Conformed to the Image of Christ

By Hannah Whitall Smith (1832-1911)

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

God's ultimate purpose in our creation was that we should finally be "conformed to the image of Christ." Christ was to be the firstborn among many brethren, and His brethren were to be like Him. All the discipline and training of our lives is with this end in view; and God has implanted in every human heart a longing, however unformed and unexpressed, after the best and highest it knows.

Christ is the pattern of what each one of us is to be when finished. We are "predestinated" to be conformed to His image, in order that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. We are to be "partakers of the divine nature" with Christ; we are to be filled with the spirit of Christ; we are to share His resurrection life, and to walk as He walked. We are to be one with Him, as He is one with the Father; and the glory God gave to Him, He is to give to us. And when all this is brought to pass, then, and not until then, will God's purpose in our creation be fully accomplished, and we stand forth "in his image and after his likeness."

Our likeness to His image is an accomplished fact in the mind of God, but we are, so to speak, in the manufactory as yet, and the great master Workman is at work upon us. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

And so it is written: "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

It is deeply interesting to see that this process, which was begun in Genesis, is declared to be completed in Revelation, where the "one like unto the Son of man" gave to John this significant message to the overcomers: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God; and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name." Since name always means character in the Bible, this message can only mean that at last God's purpose is accomplished, and the spiritual evolution of man is completed—he has been made, what God intended from the first, so truly into His likeness and image, as to merit having written upon him the name of God!

Words fail before such a glorious destiny as this! But our Lord foreshadows it in His wonderful prayer when He asks for His brethren that "they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them: that they may be one even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." Could oneness be closer or more complete?

Paul also foreshadows this glorious consummation when he declares that if we suffer with Christ we shall also be glorified together with Him, and when he asserts that the "sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." The whole Creation waits for the revealing of this glory, for Paul goes on to say that the "earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." And he adds finally: "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

In view of such a glorious destiny, at which I dare not do more than hint, shall we not cheerfully welcome the processes, however painful they may be, by which we are to reach it? And shall we not strive eagerly and earnestly to be "laborers together with God" in helping to bring it about?

ADDENDUM H

Frankie Moore's prayer-

(Perhaps, this prayer will speak to hearts going through the deep dealings of God within. May it remind us of the great love that covers us and lifts us out of the pits of sin and death. *F.Moore*)

“Oh God; why must you insist on leading me, once again, to that deep dark dungeon type place in my heart? The things that are resident there are ugly, slimy, creepy and crawly. Please Lord; don’t make me stare at those hideous memories all over again. I am so weary at the remembrance of those things from my past. I become fearful considering how low and depressed it will make me feel as YOUR light shines on all that despicable rubbish.”

Then a voice, which I have become very familiar with, responded: “It is expedient that you follow ME in this excursion to the deepest areas within your being.” “I see and understand your dread more than you realize.” “However, you MUST follow ME in this.” “It is of paramount importance, so resist ME no longer.” “WE together must view what is in all those nooks and crannies.” “We will dig deep and enter those places that only you and I know about. **“B U T GOD,”** I replied, “I want to forget all of those things from my past!” “Why must I face **them yet another time after all the many days and years that have passed?**” Upon my outcry, HE gently took hold of my hand as we descended downward. My heart was thumping loudly and I nearly fainted when HE said: “**LOOK!!!**” “I don’t want to look, please don’t make me do this, I begged. Let me turn back now, before we go any deeper!” He told me **NO** again and shouted even louder: “**LOOK!**” I realized that I could no longer resist or escape HIS commands. So I began to open my tightly closed eyes with much trepidation.

“LOOK, LOOK NOW!!!”He commanded me a final time. When I opened my eyes more fully, the light of HIS presence shone all around me. As I began to view what was before me, I was stunned at what I saw. “**My Lord and Savior,**” I cried. “I don’t know what to think”. “I see nothing but sunlight shining upon the most beautiful garden. There are many gorgeous flowers in full bloom. I see roses, lilies, petunias, and daisies. Indeed, I see many plants and exquisite flowers. I don’t even know some of their names or the fact that they existed. “How can this be?”

HE slowly and assuredly gave me this reply: “I have been tending MY garden inside of you ever so quietly for some time and with great purpose. I have uprooted the weeds of sorrow, regret and humiliation from your past. I wanted you to see and **FINALLY** understand that the **weeds are gone**. They are vanished forever. All of your regrets and painful memories have no more roots and will never be able to sprout again.” “Do you finally comprehend that you are **FREE**????”

I bowed low before HIM, sensing a freedom I had never quite known before. “**You are my SAVIOR,**” I shouted. He patted me ever so gently on my shoulder as HE looked deeply into my tear filled eyes and proclaimed: “The old kingdom that reigned in your heart is gone – It has been totally obliterated so that there is no trace of it anymore with its ugly fears and doubts. Now you must acknowledge and understand that the Kingdom of God within you is alive and ruling, even in the deepest recesses of your being. “Now that you have seen this for yourself, do you finally believe ME????”

“I do believe YOU Lord. I DO BELIEVE!”

ADDENDUM I

I WOULD HAVE PULLED JOSEPH OUT OF THAT PIT

"I would have pulled Joseph out. Out of that pit. Out of that prison. Out of that pain. And I would have cheated nations out of the one who God would use to deliver them from famine. I would have pulled David out. Out of Saul's spear-throwing presence. Out of the caves he hid away in. Out of the pain of rejection. And I would have cheated Israel out of a God-hearted king. I would have pulled Esther out. Out of being snatched from her only family. Out of being placed in a position she never asked for. Out of the path of a vicious, power-hungry foe. And I would have cheated a people out of the woman God would use to save their very lives. And I would have pulled Jesus off. Off of the cross. Off of the road that led to suffering and pain. Off of the path that would mean nakedness and beatings, nails and thorns. And I would have cheated the entire world out of a Savior. Out of salvation. Out of an eternity filled with no more suffering and no more pain. And oh friend. I want to pull you out. I want to change your path. I want to stop your pain. But right now I know I would be wrong. I would be out of line. I would be cheating you and cheating the world out of so much good. Because God knows. He knows the good this pain will produce. He knows the beauty this hardship will grow. He's watching over you and keeping you even in the midst of this. And He's promising you that you can trust Him. Even when it all feels like more than you can bear. So instead of trying to pull you out, I'm lifting you up. I'm kneeling before the Father and I'm asking Him to give you strength. To give you hope. I'm asking Him to protect you and to move you when the time is right. I'm asking Him to help you stay prayerful and discerning. I'm asking Him how I can best love you and be a help to you. And I'm believing He's going to use your life in powerful and beautiful ways. Ways that will leave your heart grateful and humbly thankful for this road you've been on."

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Written by Kimberly Henderson of Prov. 31 Ministries

ADDENDUM J*Psalm 8*

O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

² Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou might still the enemy and the avenger.

³ When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

⁴ What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

⁵ For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

⁶ Thou made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

⁷ All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

⁸ The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

⁹ O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

ADDENDUM K

Christian Perfection

By Oswald Chambers

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfect... —[Philippians 3:12](#)

It is a trap to presume that God wants to make us perfect specimens of what He can do— God's purpose is to make us one with Himself. The emphasis of holiness movements tends to be that God is producing specimens of holiness to put in His museum. If you accept this concept of personal holiness, your life's determined purpose will not be for God, but for what you call the evidence of God in your life. How can we say, "It could never be God's will for me to be sick"? If it was God's will to bruise His own Son ([Isaiah 53:10](#)), why shouldn't He bruise you? What shines forth and reveals God in your life is not your relative consistency to an idea of what a saint should be, but your genuine, living relationship with Jesus Christ, and your unrestrained devotion to Him whether you are well or sick.

Christian perfection is not, and never can be, human perfection. Christian perfection is the perfection of a relationship with God that shows itself to be true even amid the seemingly unimportant aspects of human life... I am called to live in such a perfect relationship with God that my life produces a yearning for God in the lives of others, not admiration for myself. God's purpose is not to perfect me to make me a trophy in His showcase; He is getting me to the place where He can use me. Let Him do what He wants.

ADDENDUM L

Ministry through Suffering

(by T. Austin-Sparks)

We were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. (2 Corinthians 1:8 ESV)

The Lord Jesus said "I am the true Vine," and it was prophesied of Him that He would tread the winepress alone. The Cross was His winepress. How He was pressed in the Cross! He was crushed and broken, but out of that breaking has come the Life which you and I have, and which so many in all the nations have received. That is true, in a measure, of His Church. It was out of the breaking and crushing of the Church that the Life came to the world. And that is true of every member, every branch of the vine. If we are to fulfill this true, living ministry, it will only be through suffering, through the winepress, through pressure and through breaking. Paul said: "*We were pressed out of measure, above strength*" (2 Corinthians 1:8 – A.V.) – but what Life has come out of that man's pressure! It is like that. We are not talking about preaching and Bible teaching, but about this great ministry of Christ giving His Life through us. It may be passed on to others through preaching, or through teaching, or through living, but if it is His Life it will come out of experiences of suffering. A preacher or a teacher who has never suffered will never minister Life.

Well, this may not seem a very pleasant outlook, but it is true. The best doctors and nurses are those who know something about suffering themselves. Some are just professional, treating you as a case – you are just case number blank. But, ah! there are others who treat you as a person, a human being, who care for you. If you ask why, you may find that they have a background of suffering themselves. They know just a little of what you are going through. We have read in the Letter to the Hebrews: "*We have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are... He is able to succour them that are tempted*" (Hebrews 4:15, 2:18). He has been the way of the winepress and we have received the benefit.

ADDENDUM M*His Great Love*

For God loved the world so much.... (John 3:16 NLT)

There is a great weight made to rest upon that little word "for" – "For God so loved the world." We say that John 3:16 is the heart of the gospel: but it is much more than that, it is the heart of the universe. There is back of all things in this created universe a heart; not just a mind or a will, a design, a reason, a power, a fiat, but a heart. We are familiar with the attempts to prove there is a design in creation, that there is a mind behind the universe, and that a will brought it into being. That is all quite good and right; but we are not so often asked to consider that behind it all there is a heart – and more heart than anything else. The reason, the will, the design, come from the heart. Everything takes its rise in the heart of God.

We have said much about the thoughts of God, the counsels of God. The nearer we get to the very center of things, the more we shall become affected by this fact, that right there in the center is a heart. It is a heart that we shall come to eventually; not an explanation to satisfy our reason, not a demonstration of power, but just a heart – but a mighty heart: and when we use that word rightly, we simply mean love. We speak of people being heartless. That means that they are without all that love means. Love is not the governing thing in their thoughts, actions, and motives; they are strangers to love. Heart then, for us, means love, and when we say that back of all things and at the center of all things there is a heart, we mean there is love.

By T. Austin-Sparks from: [His Great Love - Chapter 1](#)

ADDENDUM N

The High Calling - From *The Family of God*
by George Warnock

And so we take but one step at a time, and God is pleased. But we must not lag behind or yield to the enticements that come our way from time to time to take a shortcut. For there are many that appear to be good. You can get gifts of the Spirit freely. You might even develop for yourself a ministry, that may satisfy your heart for a season, and from which you might find a certain fulfillment. And certainly you need His gifts! But pray God that He will cause you to sit and learn from ministries that will lead you to His feet... ministries that will encourage you to take His yoke, and follow His ways. Gifts and ministries must not be considered to be in any sense ultimate... they are but means to the end... and the end pursuit of gift and ministry is to come to know Him, to be joined in like spirit unto others in the Family of God who are seeking to come to the "fullness" of Him... so that together you might be able to comprehend, to apprehend, to receive fully... the living Christ, in the full expression of His Being.

And let us not be dismayed when in spite of all our noble efforts to climb higher we feel... we just know... that we are getting lower and lower. For as we travel this way we are going to discover, as men and women of all ages have discovered... that...

The way UP is DOWN...

The way OVER is UNDER...

The way to SUCCESS is through
FAILURE...

The way to true PROSPERITY is
through spiritual BANKRUPTCY...

The way to the true RICHES, is through
POVERTY...

The way to VICTORY, is through
DEFEAT...

The way to LIFE, is through DEATH.

And therefore, for the people of the UPWARD WAY God has set before us a very clear pattern and example:

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God (Or, 'He did not consider that equality with God was something He should grasp after'): but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:5-9).

For the Son of God, the Captain of our Salvation, the Author and the Finisher of our faith... for Him the UPWARD CALL was one that brought Him lower, and lower, and lower... even unto the death of the Cross.

And so it must be with you and me. God deliver us from all that striving we see today to excel... striving for highness, for exaltation, for greatness, for bigness... even among many who profess to know the "end-time" message, and who profess to be heirs of the "Kingdom." Let us make no mistake about it... the pathway of SONSHIP leads to none of these. It takes one lower, and lower, and still lower... in order that in the Spirit of Christ we might rise higher... and higher, and still higher...