

DICKSON
ENCYCLOPEDIA
BIBLE STUDY GUIDE



DICKSON ENCYCLOPEDIA BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Roger E. Dickson

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HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT of the *Encyclopedic Bible Study Guide*

The abundant life of God's people is based on eternal values that are heavenly revealed. It has always been necessary that those who would be God's people must establish their values upon the foundation of their Creator. For this reason, God did not create us, and then leave us to our own moral inventions. On the contrary, throughout history He has always come to our rescue by revealing those principles that direct us in belief and behavior. He has always been faithful to reveal His eternal moral principles to humanity in a manner that can be understood. When we follow these moral values, it is then that we will enjoy the abundant life that was promised by Jesus to all those who would believe in Him.

It was with the preceding motivation that I committed myself to be a teacher of the word of God. In being a Bible teacher, I have always sought to follow the mandate of 2 Timothy 2:2: "*The things that you have heard from me among many witness,*" Paul wrote to Timothy, "*the same commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*" Throughout my life I have worked to fulfill this mandate from the Holy Spirit that Paul passed on to Timothy. Through the more than one hundred books that I have written, this volume is another added tool by which I have sought to accomplish the Spirit's command for me to be teacher of His inspired word worldwide. It is my prayer that it will inspire you to be the same.

This particular volume began its early development in 1971. The initial printing of the core material took place in 1972. This was the beginning of the evolution of what you now have in your hands. Throughout more than fifty years of development, editions kept finding their way into the original small book. Subsequent additions throughout the years has led to this final unabridged edition. With the addition of material throughout the years I have sought to increase the usefulness of the volume to be a textbook for Bible schools as an introduction to the Bible. At the time of the publication of this unabridged edition, the original material has now grown into what I consider to be one of the most condensed, and yet comprehensive, Bible study textbooks for preachers and teachers of the word of God.

Throughout the years I have stayed with my original objective to be a

worldwide Bible teacher through printed material. This volume was the central tool to accomplish this objective. It is my prayer, therefore, that as a recipient of this particular volume, it will aid you in being a more effective preacher and teacher of the work of God.

We now live in a dispensation of time that began with the incarnational offering of the Son of God, His resurrection, ascension, and now His glorious reign over faithful subjects who have responded to His eternal gospel sacrifice. It is in response to this good news (gospel) that obedient believers now live through the power of the gospel. In these times also, God has not left us without spiritual guidance, having through the Holy Spirit laid in our hands His instructions and a Spirit-inspired historical record of the gospel events that inspires virtuous living. I have kept the gospel foremost to my thinking as I produced the revisions and additions to this volume. If the same commitment is inspired within the hearts of the recipients of this volume, then I have been blessed with your faithfulness.

As the children of God, we need not frustrate ourselves by inventing our own codes of faith by which we would direct our lives. We find comfort in the fact that we can establish our behavior on an inspired revelation from God. In doing so, we can live with hope in this dispensation in response to the gospel that is revealed in the Bible. We can also find spiritual refreshment in the fact that we can trust the Bible to direct us in godly living through our response to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This volume was produced as a handbook to aid gospel-obedient people in their quest to live in hope under the present reign of King Jesus. Organized studies of the word of God have been presented that will aid every Christian in an orderly study of the Bible, and then be able to teach others what is learned. This book, therefore, is a road map guide for discovering those things that will create in one's mind the mind of Christ. We seek to live godly lives, and thus, in the material of this book I have sought to aid Bible lovers to discover the abundant life of following the instructions of our Creator that will eventually lead us into eternal glory in His presence.

Roger E. Dickson
Philadelphia, South Africa
2023

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How To Use This Book For Effective Bible Study

This book is unique in that it is an encyclopedia of research material of Bible subjects, and related information surrounding the Bible. The material has been condensed to an abbreviated form and formatted in a way that will offer Bible students a quick reference to needed information on hundreds of Bible subjects. For this reason, this book is a condensed Bible encyclopedia for those who are researching the Bible. The *Contents* and *Index* are the most valuable study tools to be used in accessing quickly and easily the material contained in this book. In the *Contents* there is a listing of those general subjects of interest that one might seek to study in one's personal Bible studies. As an added asset for effective research, and for quick access, the *Index* is a listing of several hundred Bible subjects, names and events. Since this volume is a research library of information to be studied for preaching and teaching the Bible, the Bible teacher will find it a valuable tool for quick and easy access to information that is pertinent to one's immediate studies. As a textbook for Bible schools, the *Contents* can be used as a guide to direct Bible students to many important Bible studies. In the worldwide distribution of this volume to millions of Bible students throughout the world, it is our prayer as the publishers that this Bible study aid will enhance the preaching and teaching of the word of God for many generations to come.

HISTORY OF THE BIBLE

Jesus said, *“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away”* (Mt 24:35). It is thrilling to examine how God has providentially guarded His word in order to provide for men of all ages His word in written form. The very fact that the Bible has survived schemes to destroy it, gives witness to the fact that it has been held in great esteem by men throughout all history. Regardless of all attacks against it, the Bible lives on in the hearts of those who have been changed by its precepts and promises.

No other book has been preserved throughout history as the Bible. The manner by which the Bible has been providentially preserved indicates that there is something different about this book than all other ancient books. Thousands of manuscripts and versions of the Bible have been preserved throughout history. If the Bible were just another book, we would at least wonder why men have given so much attention to preserving it. Our conclusion to the great care by which the Bible has been preserved is in the fact that men have considered the Bible to be more than just another book. Those who have sought to preserve the Bible have given their testimony that it is the inspired word of God.

A. literary tools for preserving the Bible:

It was always God’s intention to use man’s ability to preserve His word for His people. Since He did not intend to speak directly to man continually through the inspired spoken words of people, God chose that throughout the history of man, inspired men would write His word on writing materials in languages that could be understood by all people.

1. Writing materials:

God used writing materials of this world in order to preserve His word. In order to preserve His directions and commands, God resorted to the invention of writing and writing materials in order to preserve His word. These materials were stone, clay, potsherd, wood, leather, papyrus and vellum. Ancient writers used these materials in various ways and at various times. The ancient scribes seemed to always follow the principle of using those materials that were close at hand, the best available, and the most durable.

a. Stone writing materials: Stone was the most permanent writing material that was invented by man. When something was “written in stone,” its existence was guaranteed for centuries. Some of the oldest historical inscriptions of man we have today were written on stone. The code of Hammurabi (a king of ancient Babylon) is an inscription on stone that dates back to about 2,000 B.C., the time when Abraham was in Babylon. Stone inscriptions in Egypt extend beyond 3,000 B.C. The first written laws of God that were given to His people were inscriptions by the finger of God on tables of stone. The occasion for the inscription was the time immediately after Israel’s departure from Egyptian captivity when Israel was at the foot of Mount Sinai. From the day of the creation of Adam and Eve to the exodus of Israel from Egypt, God had communicated His will directly to man through the inspiration of prophets (Hb 1:1). However, at Mount Sinai God determined to inscribe the principles of His law for Israel on tables of stone (See Ex 31:18; 34:1,28).

b. Writing materials of clay: Man’s demand for a

writing material that could easily be produced eventually led to the use of clay. Small tablets of clay could be produced on which instructions and commands could quickly and easily be written. The use of clay as a writing material was very prominent in the Assyrian and Babylonian empires. The Assyrian Royal Library at Nineveh, that dates back to about 650 B.C., consisted of thousands of clay tablets.



The use of clay for writing dates back as far as 3,100 B.C. The clay that was used for writing was first worked and made pliable. After a smooth surface was made, a rigid sharp instrument was used to mark the various figures of writing on the surface of the soft clay. After the inscription was made, the clay was usually baked or allowed to dry in the sun, thus securing the inscription for centuries to come.

c. Potsherd writing materials: Potsherds were broken pieces of pottery. This source of writing material was generally used by the poor, or during a time of crisis when material was quickly needed. A good example of potsherd writing material is the Lachish correspondence during the invasion of Palestine by Babylonian forces in 588/587 B.C. Because potsherd was usually a small broken piece of pottery, the inscriptions that were made were very brief. Nevertheless, in the field of biblical archaeology, discoveries of inscriptions on



Potsherd of Lachish Letter during Babylonian invasion of Judah around 588 B.C.

potsherds have been very important in tracing the history of civilization throughout the land of Palestine.

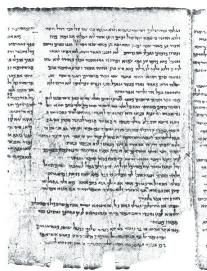
d. Wood writing materials: Wood was not generally used as a writing material because of its lack of durability and the great difficulty by which to make a smooth surface for writing. Therefore, it was often shunned as a material for preserving sacred laws and codes. There are few examples of wood writing materials. Numbers 17:2 is an example of wood being used for writing in Bible times. Some also suggest that Isaiah 30:22 and Habakkuk 2:2 are instances where wood were used for writing.

e. Leather writing materials: The use of leather as a writing material signaled the beginning of a new era for the preservation of the word of God. Leather was a more advanced material, though its use as a writing material is dated early. The use of leather dates back to the 4th Dynasty of Egypt. The historical records of Thutmose III were written on leather. It is believed that leather as a writing material dates back to as far as 3,000 B.C.

The Jews primarily used leather for the transmission of the Old Testament. Though the Ten Commandments were first written on tablets of stone, it is likely that Moses inscribed the first five books of the Old Testament on sheets of leather. Since stone would have been too cumbersome, and papyrus paper had not yet been invented, the books of Genesis through Deuteronomy were undoubtedly written on sheets of leather.

f. Papyrus writing materials: The invention of papyrus paper was the most significant invention of man that affected ancient writings. Papyrus paper was made

from the papyrus plant that commonly grew along the banks of the Nile River in Egypt. The stem of the plant was sliced, woven, pressed and allowed to dry in the sun. There is evidence that papyrus was used as a writing material as early as the 5th Dynasty of Egypt from 2,500 to 2,350 B.C. During the first century A.D., this was the most popular writing material that was used throughout the Roman Empire. It is likely that the original autographs (the original writings) of the New Testament writers were written on papyrus paper. This is true because papyrus paper was available and any other material as leather would have been difficult to obtain.



Parchment leaf
from Dead Sea
Isaiah scroll

Throughout the centuries that followed the initial inscriptions of the word of God, many copies of the Old and New Testaments were written on papyrus. Papyrus paper was less expensive than leather, and thus, numerous copies could be made of the text of the Bible for extensive distribution throughout the ancient world. Fortunately, thousands of discoveries have been made of portions of the early copies of various texts of the Bible that were written on papyrus paper. These discoveries are now used in the work of biblical investigation in order to produce final texts of the Scriptures from which translations are made.

g. Vellum writing materials: This writing material would be classified as the elite writing material of the ancient world. Vellum was a fine quality of leather that was prepared on both sides for writing. Second in use to papyrus paper, this material was used by the early Christians for making copies of the New Testament books. It was

used by the secular world for more than a thousand years after its initial discovery. Because it was used extensively by the early Christians, we have today many copies of the books of the Bible that were written on vellum.

2. The languages of man:

God used man's languages in order to preserve His word. God uses the languages of men to communicate to men. It is thus through the language of men that God has chosen to communicate His will in written form. He has used three languages through which to communicate His inspired word to men throughout history.

a. Hebrew: From the many nations of the world, and because of His promise to Abraham, God chose Israel as the nation through whom He would bring His Son into the world (Gl 3:29). Ancient Hebrew was the language of the nation of Israel at the time God determined to have His laws written in order to direct the nation. Ancient Hebrew was "the Jews' language". It was thus the language into which the Old Testament Scriptures were first written (2 Kg 18:26,28; Ne 13:24).

Ancient Hebrew was a language that was closely related to such languages as Syriac, Aramaic, Akkadian and Arabic. The ancient Hebrew alphabet had twenty-two consonants. However, since the alphabet contained no vowels, the words of the language were written in consonants only. For example, the Hebrew word for God was originally written *YHWH* (transliterated into English). The Masoretic scribes, whose work it was to make copies of the Old Testament between A.D. 500 and A.D. 1000, later added vowels to the original words in order that the an-

cient pronunciation of the words not be lost. *YHWH* was then spelled *YaHWeH*.

b. Aramaic: From the ninth century B.C. until the first century A.D., Aramaic became a commonly spoken language in the aristocratic class after the Babylonian captivity. By the time of Hezekiah around 700 B.C., Aramaic was a language that was spoken by the Jewish leaders, but not by the common people (See 2 Kg 18:26). Aramaic was the language of the nations that surrounded Israel, and thus the language environment into which Israel went into captivity.

When the Jews were in Babylonian captivity, they learned Aramaic, which was the language of their captors. After their seventy years of Babylonian captivity, therefore, Israel brought back to Palestine a generation of young people who fluently spoke the Aramaic language. It is thus believed that Aramaic became the language of Palestine after the Babylonian captivity. By the time of Jesus, it is probable that Aramaic became the common language of Palestine, and thus the language Jesus used during His ministry here on earth.

Some portions of the Old Testament have Aramaic influence. Portions that are believed to have been originally written in Aramaic are Jeremiah 10:11; Daniel 2:4 - 7:28; Ezra 4:8 - 6:18; 7:12-26. There are also a few words and phrases of Aramaic in the New Testament. These include: *talitha cumi* ("little girl, get up" - Mk 5:41), *ephphatha* ("be opened" - Mk 7:34), *eli, eli lama sabachthani* ("My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" - Mt 27:46), and *abba* ("father" - Mk 14:36, Rm 8:15, Gl 4:6).

c. Greek: Because of the great influence of the Greek

Empire two centuries before Jesus walked on this earth, the Greek language became the common trade language of the ancient world. The Greek language that was spoken by the common people is referred to as *koine* Greek. *Koine* means “common”. The New Testament manuscripts were originally written in *koine* Greek in order that they be universally read throughout the world.

There is no evidence that the original manuscripts of the New Testament were written in any other language than Greek, except for minor portions of Aramaic as listed above. Therefore, when we discuss New Testament manuscripts as the **Codex Sinaiticus**, **Codex Vaticanus** or **Codex Alexandrinus**, we are talking about manuscripts that were written in *koine* Greek. When Bible students refer to a Greek word in the text of the New Testament, reference is being made to a *koine* Greek word.

B. The canon of the Bible:

The word “canon” comes from the Greek word *kanon* which originally meant a “measuring rule”. From the fourth century, the word has been used by Bible students to refer to the collection of individual Old and New Testament books and letters into what is now called the Bible. Therefore, in reference to the Bible, the word canon is used to refer to a standard by which books are ruled inspired, and thus, considered authoritative to be brought together as the word of God. Canonical books are those books that were accepted as inspired by the early Jews and Christians. Jews or Christians, therefore, accepted those books that were in the canon of Old Testament Scriptures as the inspired word of God.

C. Higher and lower criticism:

When Bible students study the canon of the Bible, they work in areas of what is commonly called higher and lower criticism. These are not negative studies of the Bible as the words may suggest. On the contrary, these are simply fields of study wherein Bible students closely examine manuscript evidence for the preservation of the text of the Bible. They are studies that closely examine ancient texts in the original languages in which biblical texts were first written.

Higher criticism is essentially an examination of the biblical text with the purpose of determining the authorship, age, date, literary styles, and composition of the examined Bible document. Those who work in the field of lower criticism work to investigate the Hebrew text of the Old Testament and the Greek text of the New Testament. The student who works at the level of lower criticism in his or her Bible studies investigates all possible textual evidence of both the Old and New Testaments. Every student of the Bible at one time in his or her studies plays the part of the lower and higher critic. These studies are the depth to which some students of the Bible seek to go in order to determine the communication of God to man through the writing materials, language skills, and determination of man to preserve copies of the Scriptures for believers of all history.

D. Textual criticism:

The most common term that is used to refer to lower criticism is textual criticism. As introduced in the previous point, this field of study investigates the history of the ac-

cepted canon of Scriptures. The textual critic establishes for us today a history of the transmission of the biblical text. He seeks to give us a text of the Scriptures in as accurate a form as possible. It is the responsibility of the textual critic to accumulate from all manuscript sources, information by which he can produce a single text from which a translation can be made. He must consider all Hebrew manuscripts in reference to the Old Testament, and Greek manuscripts in reference to the New Testament. All versions that have been made from the original languages, as well as all quotations from the text of the Bible are considered by the textual critic in order to write a single text from which translations are made.

E. Tests for biblical canonicity:

Before any book of the present Bible became a part of the canon of Scriptures, it had to pass various tests by the people of God who originally accepted a particular book as Scripture. Therefore, all sixty-six books of the present Bible canon that we now have were considered inspired by those to whom they were first written. However, when higher and lower critics today examine the present books of the Bible, they ask and answer many questions in order to determine the canonicity of each book of the Bible.

- Did the Jews to whom the Old Testament Scriptures were first written accept as inspired the specific Old Testament book under consideration?
- Is the book endorsed, that is, considered inspired by other inspired writers of the Bible?
- Did the first century Christians accept as inspired the specific New Testament document under consideration?

- Was the specific New Testament book under consideration written in the first century?
- Were the Old Testament books recognized to be inspired by Jesus and the New Testament writers?
- Does the specific Old Testament book under consideration fit into the Divine chain of prophets who recognized one another's writings?
- Does the book under consideration harmoniously fit into the theme of God's scheme of redemption that is maintained throughout the Bible?
- Does the specific book speak with inspirational authority, that is, does it claim to be inspired from God?
- Does the document under examination contradict the teachings of other documents that are accepted as inspired?
- Does the document under examination have a "sense of inspiration", that is, does it have the literary nature of an inspired book?
- Was the writer of the book accepted as an inspired man of God?
- Is the book historically accurate?
- Does the writer of the document write with inspirational integrity?

These are only a few of the broad areas that are surveyed in studying the canonicity of ancient documents in their relationship to those books that we call God's word. Every student of the Bible should consider these subjects when doing his own in-depth studies of the Scriptures. Because every book of the present Bible passes the preceding close scrutiny, we can truly be confident that the sixty-six books of the Bible are truly in the Bible because God wanted them to be accepted as His word to man.

F. Accuracy of the text of the Bible:

One of the major unjust criticisms against the text of the Bible is that it contains many “errors” as the result of being copied over the centuries. This criticism often comes from those who know little or nothing about the Bible, or the means by which God wanted the Scriptures to be preserved throughout the centuries. God wanted to use un-inspired human hands to make copies of inspired Scripture in order to allow dedicated men to have the responsibility of transmitting biblical text from one generation to another.

1. The art of biblical text transmission:

A variant reading is where manuscript evidence may produce a variation of words or wording in a specific phrase. For example, Mark 4:24 reads in some manuscripts, *“Take heed what you hear. With what standard you measure, it will be measured to you.”* In other manuscripts the Greek text reads, *“Take heed what you hear, for with what standard you measure.”* The difference of reading between the words “with” and “for with” constitute a variant reading. Almost all variant readings are of this nature, that is, they are minor and do not affect any doctrinal principles of the Bible.

Some variant readings are more complicated than the example of Mark 4:24. We find a more complex reading when comparing 2 Kings 8:26 with 2 Chronicles 22:2. There is a variant reading concerning the age of Ahaziah when he came to the throne. 2 Kings 8:26 reads that he was twenty-two years old and 2 Chronicles 22:2 reads that he was forty-two years old. This is one of those variant readings that can easily be explained in reference to the Hebrew text. The Jews used letters to express numbers.

Since the Hebrew letters for “forty” were so similar to those for “twenty”, it is evident that some copyist transcribed the wrong letter. The account in 2 Kings is beyond doubt the correct age. If Ahaziah were forty-two when he came to the throne, as is stated in 2 Chronicles, he would have been born two years before the birth of his father who died at the age of forty (2 Kgs 8:17,24).

Many variant readings are the result of an unintentional slip of a copyist’s hand. Some were the result of copyists trying to make parallel accounts agree where there was a supposed contradiction. Some manuscripts had explanatory notes placed in the margins by those who were students of the Bible. These notes were later inadvertently inserted into the text by a scribe who thought they were part of the text that had been left out by a previous scribe. Whatever the source of each variant, all variant readings can be classified as human error. And this is the point. God was willing to use the fallibility of man in order to preserve His word throughout history. This may seem like a risky business when considering the word of God. However, when one fully understands the process of copying and distributing the Scriptures throughout history, the problem is not as great as it first appears. In fact, the more one understands the means by which God used fallible men to preserve the Scriptures, the greater one’s faith becomes in the fact that we have the word of God today in the form that God wanted us to have it.

One of the first things to understand about variant readings is that they have only a minor effect on the reading of the text. No variant reading affects any doctrinal matters in the entire Bible. Most are variations of prepositions, names, places, characters and the listing of weights

and dates. The fact is that there are few variant readings. Though critics of Christianity have completely blown out of proportion the supposed problem of variant readings, they have unjustly proclaimed to a relatively biblically illiterate audience an unfair attack against the Bible.

2. Accuracy of biblical text transmission:

The preceding helps us to better understand the will of God in allowing men to copy and transmit the Scriptures in order that they be preserved for all men of all history. Though God inspired the writers of the original autographs, why did He not inspire those scribes who dedicated themselves to copy the Scriptures? The answer to this question lies in the fact that God does not do for man what man can do for himself. One must, therefore, begin to understand God's method of preservation of the Scriptures by understanding why God used man in the first place to preserve the text of the Bible.

In order to understand why God used uninspired men to preserve the text of the Bible, we must not forget the tremendous accuracy by which the Bible has been transmitted through the centuries by godly men who have had a reverential attitude toward the Scriptures. The "miracle" of the preservation of the text of the Bible is truly inspiring.

An example of the accuracy of the biblical text was proved by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947. In particular, the Isaiah Scroll was one of the most interesting documents of this discovery. The oldest text of Isaiah prior to the Dead Sea discovery was the Masoretic text that dated around A.D. 850. The Isaiah Scroll of the Dead Sea discovery dated around 150 B.C. Therefore, there is a

nine hundred year difference between the origins of these two texts. However, when the Isaiah text of the Dead Sea discovery was compared with the Masoretic text, there were only a few minor differences between the two. Such is a magnificent testimony to the accuracy by which the Bible was copied. It is for this reason, therefore, that God knew that men had the ability to preserve His word in an acceptable manner.

Another example was the discovery of a portion of the Psalms at the Jewish stronghold of Masada, a fortress constructed by Herod in the southern Dead Sea area. The portion of the Psalms that was discovered dated twenty or thirty years prior to A.D. 73, the date Masada fell to the Romans. When this portion of Psalms was compared with the Masoretic text, it was almost exactly identical with the Masoretic text of Psalms. There are several centuries between the portion of Psalms that was discovered at Masada and the Masoretic text of Psalms.

The discovery of manuscripts that were produced only a few years from the writing of the original autographs proves that we have God's word today in an accurate form. We have God's word exactly as He wanted us to have it.

G. Textual evidence of the Old Testament:

Assuming that Moses wrote the Pentateuch (Gn - Dt) around 1,400 B.C., the first five books of the Old Testament, therefore, have been preserved for over 3,400 years. However, to say that our manuscript evidence for Genesis through Deuteronomy is 3,400 years old is not the truth. The fact is that we have copied manuscripts of the Old Testament as the Dead Sea Scrolls that date to

the first century before the time of Christ. This moves the date of manuscript evidence for the Old Testament back to a little over 2,000 years.

The number of ancient versions (translations) and manuscripts that we have in our possession today for textual comparison and research is overwhelming. There exists today many ancient versions, manuscripts and quotations of ancient writers of both the Old Testament and New Testament. The following is some of the textual evidence for the Old Testament:

1. The Targums:

When the Jews returned from Babylonian captivity in 539 B.C., many could speak only Aramaic, the language of their former captors. Since this was the case, there was the need that portions of the Old Testament be translated or paraphrased into Aramaic (See Ez 4:7 - 6:12). The need also arose that commentaries be made of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. This was undoubtedly the beginning of the writing of the Targums. The Targums were first transmitted orally, and then possibly committed to writing from the first to the eleventh century A.D.

The Targums are valuable because of their quotations of the Old Testament, as well as their translation, or paraphrase of many Old Testament verses. Their ancient origin and character are a valuable source in determining the exact Old Testament text. From their quotations of the text, we can compare the readings of Old Testament manuscripts. From their commentary of various Old Testament passages, we can understand how the ancient Jews interpreted many texts of ancient Hebrew.

2. The Talmuds:

This is a collection of sayings by various Hebrew scribes. They were first transmitted orally, but committed to writing around A.D. 200. The Talmuds are known by different names according to their origin, such as, The Palestinian Talmud, which originated in Palestine, and The Babylonian Talmud, which was discovered in Babylonia. The important thing to remember concerning the Talmuds is that they quote from every Old Testament book, making the claim that they originated from God. They give us much evidence for the Old Testament text that we use today in translating the Old Testament into other languages.

3. The Dead Sea Scrolls:

In the hills of the northwest end of the Dead Sea around early March of 1947, two Bedouin shepherds came upon one of the most significant and exciting discoveries of all history. They discovered what later became known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Found in caves above the Qumran community of the Dead Sea, these scrolls and fragments numbered in the thousands. The fragments represent more than four hundred books. Every book of the Old Testament is represented, except for the book of Esther.

The amazing thing concerning these fragments and scrolls is their ancient date. They date from about 175 B.C. to around A.D. 68. Since



Complete scroll of Isaiah that was discovered in the Dead Sea caves in 1947. Dates from 175 B.C. to A.D. 68.

our latest manuscripts of the Old Testament text prior to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls dated around A.D. 800 or 900, the significance of this discovery was of great value for textual studies of the Bible. As stated before, when the scrolls of the Dead Sea caves were compared with the Masoretic texts of the ninth and tenth centuries, only minor differences were evident.

4. The Septuagint:

The word Septuagint is a Greek word meaning “seventy.” The Septuagint is one of the most valuable aids we have in the field of textual criticism. It was the first complete translation of the Old Testament into another language. This translation of the Hebrew into Greek was first begun around 280 B.C., with the translation of the Pentateuch by about seventy men in Alexandria, Egypt. The rest of the Old Testament continued to be translated for about the next one hundred years. The Septuagint is commonly referred to with the Roman numerals LXX, indicating the seventy men who translated it.

There are some very interesting facts surrounding the Septuagint that make this version of the Old Testament Scriptures a very valuable asset in the field of textual criticism. First of all, this was the version that many Jews used during the time of Jesus and was a great factor in preparing man for the coming of the Redeemer. Second, Jesus and the apostles quoted from the Septuagint. Quotations of the Old Testament that are found in the New Testament are actually quotations from the Greek Septuagint.

The oldest fragments we have of the Septuagint today were found on an Egyptian mummy. The fragments date to around

150 B.C. This is evidence that portions of the Old Testament date to within a few hundred years of the close of the Old Testament canon by the writing of Malachi around 400 B.C.

5. The Hexapla:

The Hexapla contained a translation of the Old Testament by Origen, plus five other translations arranged in six columns. The arrangement consisted of the current Hebrew text, a transliteration of the Hebrew text, translations by Aquila (A.D. 128), Symmachus (A.D. 200), and Theodotion (A.D. 180). It also contained the Septuagint. The work was done in Caesarea and was completed around A.D. 240. Because of its great length, the Hexapla was never copied as a whole. Origen's copy was placed in the library of Caesarea. Jerome saw and studied it in the fourth century A.D. The fifth column, which was Origen's revision of the Septuagint, was copied many times, but only portions of it exist today.

6. The Nash Papyrus:

The Nash Papyrus consists of four fragments of the Ten Commandments and Deuteronomy 6:4-9. It is dated from the second century B.C. to the first century A.D. It was the oldest portion of the Old Testament known prior to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

7. The Latin Vulgate:

The Vulgate was translated from Hebrew into Latin by Jerome around A.D. 382. It was completed in A.D. 405. The Vulgate was translated with close consideration being made to the Septuagint and Origen's Hexapla. Today

there is an ancient copy of the Vulgate in the Vatican library in Rome, Italy.

8. The codices:

The word “codex” originally meant a “canon of law.” However, this term is commonly applied to ancient manuscripts of the Bible that contain in book form either all or large portions of the Old and New Testament texts. The following are some of the important codices of the Old and New Testaments with their respective dates, places of discovery, and contents. These Old Testament texts contain translations of the Old Testament into the Greek language.

a. Cairo Codex: This codex was discovered at Tiberias on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. It dates around A.D. 895. It contains the Former and Latter prophets (or, Major and Minor prophets).

b. Codex Leningrad: The date of this document is A.D. 1008. This is the largest and only complete manuscript of the entire Old Testament.

c. Codex Vaticanus: This manuscript is named after the Vatican library in Rome where it is now located. Vaticanus is dated around the middle of the fourth century A.D. It contains almost all of the Old and New Testaments.

d. Codex Alexandrinus: Alexandrinus is dated in the middle of the fifth century A.D. It contains the complete Bible except for ten leaves in the Old Testament, twenty-five leaves of the gospel of Matthew, two of John and three of 2 Corinthians.

e. Codex Sinaiticus: The Sinaiticus was discovered by Constantine Tischendorf in a monastery at the foot of the traditional site of Mount Sinai. It is dated around A.D. 340. It contains fragments of the Old Testament and almost all of the New Testament.

f. Codex Ephraemi: This codex is dated around A.D. 450 and contains sixty-four leaves of the Greek Old Testament. Except for 2 Thessalonians and 2 John, only six Old Testament books are represented.

Hundreds of other manuscripts and versions could be listed that would emphasize the fact that textual evidence is strong in support of the Old Testament. There exists also ancient Aramaic, Syrian, Coptic and Gothic versions of the Old Testament that are considered in the study of textual criticism. When we discuss textual evidence for the Old Testament, we are not discussing the evidence of a few decayed copies of the text. We are considering an enormous accumulation of material that has been preserved throughout the centuries for our investigation today. This tremendous amount of textual evidence, therefore, gives us confidence in God's plan to allow men to do the work of preserving the text of the Scriptures.

H. Textual evidence for the New Testament:

The evidence for the text of the New Testament is even greater than that for the Old Testament. The textual evidence for the New Testament falls into three areas of evidence: (1) **ancient manuscripts**, (2) **ancient versions**, and (3) "**church father**" quotations. The manuscripts, versions and quotations of the New Testament number in the tens of thousands. Three of the greatest sources for the examination of the textual critic have already been listed, that is, the Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus and Vaticanus texts. An examination of ancient manuscripts as these, plus the versions and quotations of the New Testament, will erase any doubt as to the accuracy of our present New Testament text.

We must keep in mind that the New Testament books were not all written at the same time or collected together into one book at the time of their writing. When the books were first written, they were copied individually over a period of several years and finally brought together as the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. We must keep in mind that each book was considered inspired at the time of writing. Because the books were considered inspired at the time of writing, they were thus preserved and copied as inspired Scripture.

The New Testament letters were not determined to be inspired by a council of men. They were inspired by God at the time of their writing and accepted as inspired by the first recipients (See 1 Co 14:37; see 2 Tm 3:16,17). Inspiration of the Bible was never something that was determined by councils of men. It was the gift of God to selected men who delivered the written word of God to men (2 Pt 1:20,21).

In reference to textual evidence of the New Testament, textual students have a wide range of manuscripts, versions and quotations of the early New Testament texts. The following is a brief survey of the New Testament evidence that supports the text of the New Testament that we have today:

1. Ancient New Testament manuscripts:

A manuscript is a copy of an ancient document in its original language. There are over 5,200 such Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, in either fragments, portions or complete documents, that have been discovered. This figure grows as new documents are discovered in the field

of biblical archaeology. No other ancient document of man can compare with the textual evidence that exists for the New Testament text. The 5,200 plus manuscript evidences are divided into following categories:

a. Papyri: These are portions of the New Testament Scriptures that were written on papyrus paper. Almost all of these portions of Scripture originated in Egypt. Papyri manuscripts that date from the second to the eighth centuries represent all twenty-seven books of the New Testament. There are over eighty papyri documents that exist for studies in New Testament textual criticism.

b. Uncials: These are also called majuscules. This is writing in all capitals with no spacing between letters, words or paragraphs. Many of the 267 uncials of the New Testament are only fragments. Most date from the fourth to the eleventh centuries.

c. Minuscules: Minuscules are also called cursives. This is writing in lower case Greek letters. There are 2,764 minuscules that date from the ninth to the seventeenth centuries.

d. Lectionaries: Lectionaries are written forms or orders of worship that contain various quotations of the Scriptures. There are 2,143 lectionaries that date from the third to the seventeenth centuries.

e. Ostraca: Ostraca are broken pieces of pottery which have portions or quotations of scriptures written on them. Over thirty ostraca exist as evidence of the New Testament text.

Many of the above textual evidences of the New Testament text take us back to within only a few years of the original autographs. For example, the John Rylands Papyrus, which is a fragment of the gospel of John, dates from A.D. 125 to 140. The Chester Beatty Papyrus, which contains portions of Paul's epistles, dates around A.D. 200. The P. Bodmer II, which contains most of the gospel records, dates around A.D. 200. Portions of the New Testament text are contained in the early third century Bodmer VII, VIII, the Barcelona (A.D. 200) and the Oxford (A.D. 200).

2. Ancient New Testament versions:

A version is a translation from the language of the original autograph into another language. There are more than 10,000 ancient versions of the New Testament available for textual examination. These versions date from the 2nd to the 7th century A.D. These versions are commonly grouped as **Syriac** versions (2nd to the 7th century), **Coptic** versions (3rd to the 6th century), **Gothic** versions (4th century), **Armenian** versions (4th to the 5th century), **Ethiopic** versions (6th century), **Georgian** versions (5th century) and **Nubian** versions (6th century). The following is a list of some of these groups in reference to their origin and use:

a. Old Latin versions: Latin was the official language of Rome. The New Testament was probably translated into Latin in the later part of the second century. Many separate translations were eventually made in the third and fourth centuries. In A.D. 382 a man by the name of Damascus commissioned Jerome to translate the Latin Vulgate. This translation later became the official translation of the Roman Catholic Church.

b. Old Syriac versions: Portions of the New Testament were probably first translated into the Syriac language, which is closely related to Aramaic, around the middle of the second century. Tatian is given credit for translating portions of the gospel records, called the Diatessaron, around A.D. 160. The Peshitto (meaning “correct” or “simple”) was first translated in the third century. The Peshitto translation is still used today by many people of the Middle East.

c. Gothic versions: The Gothic version was first translated by Ulfilas around the fourth century. This is the first version representing the Byzantine text.

d. Coptic versions: As Christianity spread into Egypt, the necessity arose that the Scriptures should be translated into the language of the Egyptians. The New Testament was probably translated into the Sahidic dialect in the third century. It was translated into other dialects in later years as demands arose.

Many other versions of the New Testament exist today that were translations of ancient times. Textual evidence that has been drawn from the thousands of ancient versions that we have for examination today give valuable proof to the accuracy of our New Testament text.

3. Ancient “church father” quotations:

The “church fathers” are those church leaders who lived during the second and third centuries A.D. Bible students refer to these men as “church fathers” simply because they were key figures in writing important documents in reference to the defense of Christianity and the propagation of the gospel.

The church fathers wrote letters of encouragement to persecuted and discouraged churches, as well as defenses of Christianity to Roman rulers. Contained in their writings are over 36,000 quotations of the New Testament.

a. Clement of Rome (A.D. 30-100): Some believe that this may be the Clement to which Paul referred in Philippians 4:3. Clement wrote a letter to the church in Corinth around A.D. 97. His letter contains about 150 quotations of the Old Testament and references to many of the New Testament books. Clement quoted from and showed familiarity with Romans, 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, 1 Timothy, Titus, Hebrews and 1 John. One of the important factors of Clement and the other church father quotations of the New Testament is that the early Christians accepted as inspired the twenty-seven documents of our present New Testament. At the time of Clement, the church did not accept as inspired any other New Testament books.

b. Justin (A.D. 100-165): Justin was born into an unbelieving family in the city of Samaria. He was later converted to Christianity, and then became a teacher for Jesus in Rome. He is one of the most well known second century defenders of Christianity. Because he died as a martyr, he is now known as Justin Martyr. In his writings, Justin refers to the New Testament numerous times and defends many New Testament teachings. In reference to Sunday, he wrote in his *Apology*, "And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits." Justin quoted about forty-three times from Matthew and nineteen times from Luke. Numerous other quotes were taken from John and Mark.

c. Irenaeus (125-192?): Irenaeus was an elder of Lyons and wrote extensively in defense of Christianity. Most of his writings have been lost, but one of his greatest works still survives. This is his work entitled, *Against Heresies* which was written around A.D. 185. In his writings he quoted from the New Testament over 1,800 times, referring to the four gospel records, Acts, Paul's thirteen epistles, 1 Peter, 1 John and Revelation. He considered all books of the New Testament to be inspired and authoritative, and thus gives us one of the earliest testimonies of the acceptance of the New Testament as the inspired Scriptures from God.

An important thing to remember concerning the writings of the early Apostolic Fathers is that they refer to all twenty-seven books of the New Testament to be of Divine origin. This enforces the fact that the New Testament canon was concluded with the writing of Revelation which the early Christians considered to be the last of the twenty-seven documents of the New Testament. No other first century writing was considered inspired by the early Christians.

I. Old Testament apocrypha & pseudepigrapha:

The word "apocrypha" means "hidden" or "concealed." In the context of biblical studies, the word is used to refer to a certain collection of books whose origin is dated from 200 B.C. to A.D. 100. The term "pseudepigrapha" means "false" or "spurious." This word is used to refer to a collection of Jewish literature that originated between about 200 B.C. and A.D. 200.

1. The apocrypha:

The Old Testament apocrypha is composed of fourteen books. They are: **1 & 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Additions to Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Song of the Three Young Men, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manasseh** and **1 & 2 Maccabees**. Some students have divided Baruch into two sections, thus making the **Letter of Jeremiah**. With this division the apocrypha would constitute fifteen books.

Many centuries after the establishment of the church in the first century, the Catholic Church accepted the apocryphal books as part of the Old Testament canon. At the Council of Trent in 1546, the Catholic Church rejected 1 & 2 Esdras and the Prayer of Manasseh as part of the Old Testament canon. Including the division of Baruch, this left the Catholic Church with twelve apocryphal books which they considered to be inspired, and thus are officially sanctioned books of the Catholic Church.

The Old Testament apocryphal books were a collection of Jewish literature and histories that were written during the troubled period of the Israelite nation between 200 B.C. and A.D. 100. However, they were not accepted by the Jews as inspired Scripture. Neither were they accepted as inspired by Jesus and the New Testament writers. They were accepted by the Jews only as messages of encouragement that inspired the Jewish nation throughout a unique time of struggle in their history.

2. The pseudepigrapha:

The Old Testament pseudepigrapha is composed of about

eighteen books that were also written for the purpose of giving hope to Israel in times of trouble. These books are generally divided into four major divisions. These divisions are Apocalyptic, Legendary, Poetical and Didactic.

The pseudepigrapha books were excluded from the apocrypha and the Old Testament canon. They have never been considered inspired by any religious group. False authorships were assigned to the books by their real authors in order to produce a greater impact of encouragement upon the readers. One advantage of these books is that they shed light on Jewish culture during the time of the New Testament.

During the time of the first century, these books were widely known among the Jews. The New Testament writers were undoubtedly familiar with their content and purpose. However, the inspired writers of the New Testament did not quote from these books, neither did they consider them to be inspired.

J. Controversy over the apocryphal books:

There has been much controversy over the addition of the apocrypha to the Old Testament canon. Many have claimed inspiration for these books, though they have doubtful character and many erroneous historical statements in their text. The pseudepigrapha has always had little support for being added to the canon among religious leaders and biblical students. However, the apocryphal books of the Old Testament have been added to the Bibles of some religious groups. Nevertheless, there are some serious reasons why these books should never be considered a part of the Old Testament canon of Scriptures.

1. Lack of dignity:

The apocryphal books definitely lack the dignity of inspiration. Cluttered with contradictions, historical inaccuracies, absurdities and mythology, these books do not in any way compare with the classic composition characteristics and dignity of the thirty-nine Old Testament books. There are contradictions between the books themselves, as well as many historical facts in the Old Testament and secular history.

2. Lack of inspirational claim:

The apocryphal books do not claim inspiration, nor do they claim to be the work of prophets. The prophetic characteristics that typify the Old Testament prophets are lacking in these books. They are lacking because the original writers of the apocryphal books did not believe that they were actually writing inspired Scripture.

3. Never considered part of Old Testament:

When the apocryphal books were first written, they were not considered part of the Old Testament canon. When the thirty-nine Old Testament books were written they automatically became part of the Old Testament canon. The Jews considered them inspired because their writers were known to be inspired men of God. This cannot be said of the apocryphal books. They were added hundreds of years after the close of the Old Testament canon. The exact date these books were first considered by some to be inspired is not known. The Catholic Church added them as canonical at the Council of Trent in 1546. Some ancient copies of the Septuagint contain the apocrypha. It

is doubtful, however, that these books were immediately added to the Septuagint when they were first written. The evidence seems to support the fact that the apocryphal books were added to the canon many years after their completion. In *Against Apion*, the ancient Jewish historian, Josephus, wrote at the beginning of the second century A.D.,

We have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another (as the Greeks have), but only twenty-two books [the 39 books of our Old Testament], which contain the records of all the past times, which are justly believed to be divine; ... and how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them, to take anything from them, or make any change in them.

4. Lack of recognition by New Testament:

Jesus and the New Testament writers did not recognize the apocryphal books. In conjunction with the force of the above arguments, Jesus and the New Testament writers never referred to the apocrypha, either by quotation or by inference. This is the most devastating argument against their inspiration. If these books had been added to the Old Testament canon by the time of Jesus, we would assume that Jesus and His apostles would have raised their voice in protest against these books. But no such objection is made. Since there was no objection to them, and at the same time no quotation from their texts, it is logical to conclude that they were not part of the Old Testament at the time of Jesus' ministry. It was not until the Council of Trent in 1546 that the Catholic Church accepted these books as part of the Bible. But according to all evidences that confirm a book to be considered inspired, and thus be

a part of the Bible, the apocryphal books fail to meet the standards of inspiration.

K. New Testament apocrypha & pseudepigrapha:

There are from eleven to fifteen books that are considered New Testament apocryphal books. These books originated around the second century A.D. and later. They contain superficial accounts of the early life of Jesus, false activities of the apostles, and other accounts of legendary nature. These writings should not be confused with the Apostolic Fathers who wrote from about A.D. 80 to A.D. 200. The Apostolic Fathers wrote letters in defense of Christianity and letters to strengthen churches. They never claimed inspiration. The New Testament apocryphal books are fanciful stories about Jesus and the apostles. They were not accepted as inspired when they were first written, and for that reason, neither should they be accepted as inspired today.

There are also pseudepigrapha books that were written in the early centuries of the New Testament church. There are about twenty of these books. They claim to be records of the gospel, or epistles, or apocalypses. These books have very early dates. By the ninth century, approximately 280 of these books were listed by Photius. These books claim to have been written by New Testament characters. However, none of these books were accepted as inspired by the early church.

Our present Bible contains sixty-six books that have been accepted for centuries to be the inspired written word of God. We must conclude from the analysis of the many ancient Bible documents that are in existence today that

the evidence firmly supports the accuracy of the sixty-six books of our present-day Bible. Only a misunderstanding of the facts can produce doubt in the accuracy by which the Bible has been preserved throughout history. Only the desire to solicit ancient support for religious error would force one to add to the collection of God's authoritative word any documents that are not inspired. We must confidently conclude, therefore, that the present sixty-six books of the Bible are the only Scripture that God has communicated to man. They have been given to us by God through faithful people who made accurate copies of the word of God. We can thus conclude that we have the Bible today in the exact manner God intended for us to have it. For this reason, we dare not add to or subtract from this word (Rv 22:18,19). Since this was a mandate given by the Holy Spirit in the first century, then we must assume that the mandate still holds true today. Whether written or unwritten, binding on the conscious of others religious rites, orders of worship, or ceremonies that do not stand on the authority of the word of God, is walking contrary to the final warning of Revelation 22:18,19.

THE BIBLE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology is the general study of things that remain from ancient civilizations. It is a wide field of study that includes the digging up and dusting off any relic of the past. Biblical archaeology is a special field of study that relates to the discovery of artifacts that refer to the existence and history of people and events in the Bible. The study of biblical archaeology produces some very exciting evidences that verify the historical accuracy of the Bible. No archaeological discovery has ever contradicted the historical statements that are made in the Bible.

Bible archaeology is also directed to discoveries in the development of the languages of the biblical text. Countless discoveries have been made that shed light on the meaning of Greek and Hebrew words. Such studies greatly aid Bible students, not only in understanding the text of the Bible, but also in understanding the culture of the people of Bible times. Here are some of the more exciting discoveries that have been made throughout the years:

A. The Moabite Stone:

On August 19, 1868, a German missionary in Palestine by the name of F. A. Klein was introduced to a very large black stone about one meter high. It was about a third meter wide and about twenty-nine centimeters thick. At the time, Mr. Klein had no idea concerning the real significance of this stone and its precious inscription.

Mr. Klein returned to Germany to collect money in order to purchase the stone from the Arabs. However, during the

time he was in Germany, a French scholar by the name of Clermont Ganneau, who was working in Jerusalem, heard of the German missionary's discovery. He thus set out at once for Dibon, Moab where the stone had been discovered.

Surrounded by the hostile Arabs, Clermont Ganneau made a "squeeze" (that is, an impression) of the inscription on the stone. He then returned to Jerusalem. Because of the great attention the stone was receiving, the Arabs thought that it was some superstitious idol. They thus heated the stone and poured cooled water over it in order to break it into pieces. They parted the pieces among themselves and scattered in many directions.

When Clermont Ganneau returned to offer the Arabs about two thousand dollars (about five times the price Klein had offered them), the stone had already disappeared. After many months of searching, only about two-thirds of the stone inscription was recovered. However, thanks to the work of Clermont-Ganneau in making the impression of the inscription, archaeologists still had the complete inscription that was on the stone.

After a careful translation of the inscription, it was discovered that this stone memorial was made during the reign of Mesha, king of Moab (about 850 B.C.). It was made as a tribute to Chemosh, the Moabite god. This Mesha is the same Mesha of 2 Kings 3:4,5. The inscription tells how Chemosh, the Moabite god, became angry with Moab, and thus brought the nation under the subjection of the Israelites. Mesha tells how the cities and lands of Moab were returned to him during his reign. It also reveals how Mesha rebelled against Ahab, king of Israel.

The following is a portion of the inscription:

I [am] Mesha, son of Chemosh-melech, king of Moab, the Dibonite. My father reigned over Moab 30 years and I reigned after my father. I have made this monument for Chemosh at Qorhah, a monument of salvation, for he saved me from all invaders, and let me see my desire upon all my enemies. Omri was king of Israel, and he oppressed Moab many days, for Chemosh was angry with his land. His son [Ahab] followed him and he also said: I will oppress Moab. In my days [Chemosh] said: I will see [my desire] on him and his house, and Israel surely shall perish forever. Omri took the land of Medeba [Numbers 21:30], and [Israel] dwelt in it during his days and half the days of his son, altogether 40 years. But Chemosh [gave] it back in my days. I built Baal-Meon [Joshua 13:17] and made therein the ditches; I built Kirjathaim [Numbers 32:37]. The men of Gad dwelt in the land of Ataroth [Numbers 32:3] from of old, and the king of Israel built there [the city of] Ataroth; but I made war against the city and took it And I took from thence the Arels of Yahweh and bore them before Chemosh.



Moabite Stone

Throughout the inscription Mesha speaks of many cities he built. He also records how he built many canals and aqueducts to supply his people with water. Mesha also used the Hebrew word “*Yahweh*,” a reference to the Old Testament Hebrew word for God. The inscription tells how Chemosh, the Moabite god, became angry with the people of Moab and allowed Omri, King of Israel, to conquer them and force them to pay tribute. It tells of the Moabites winning back their independence after the death of Ahab, king of Israel. Every detail of the Moabite stone corresponds to historical statements in the Bible. This has been one of the most significant archaeological discoveries concerning the historical accuracy of the biblical text.

B. The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III:

In 1846 a young lawyer by the name of Henry Layard of Constantinople made a discovery that opened our knowledge to early Assyrian history. While doing his amateur excavation at Nimrod, located in the upper Mesopotamian region, he came across a memorial monument or obelisk made by Shalmaneser III, king of Assyria. The obelisk was a four-sided black limestone pillar that stood about two meters high. It had five rows of roughly written bas reliefs (writing in clay that afterward hardens) inscribed on its sides. There were explanations in cuneiform writing at the top and bottom of the inscriptions.

This obelisk was a commemoration of the victorious acts of Shalmaneser III. The inscriptions on the face of this monument are significant in that they mention Jehu, king of Israel. In fact, there is an inscribed picture of Jehu on the monument. This inscription pictures Jehu bowing before Shalmaneser III. This is the only picture we have of an Israelite king. Jehu reigned in Israel from 841 to 814 B.C. Shalmaneser III reigned in Assyria from 859 to 824 B.C. The monument verifies that these two kings were contemporary, just as the Bible says.

Three times on the monument it is mentioned that Shalmaneser came up against the coalition of kings of Damascus and Palestine, all of whom he defeated. Damascus, whose king was Hazael (2 Kg 8:7ff), and Israel, whose king was Ahab, had an agreement to fight together against invading forces.



Black Obelisk
of Shalmaneser III
Oriental Institute

This information is given on the monument. In the eighteenth year of Shalmaneser's reign, it is said that he went up against only one king, the king of Damascus. Ahab, the king of Israel, had been killed at the battle of



Jehu bowing down before Shalmaneser III

Karkar in 853 B.C. After the death of Ahab, Israel evidently terminated their league with Hazael, king of Damascus.

The obelisk mentions that "Ahab, the king of Israel" had the strongest armies of the military group that fought against Shalmaneser at Karkar. This is confirmation of Ahab's ninth century B.C. rule. When Jehu became king of Israel he decided to pay tribute rather than fight Shalmaneser. The inscription reads, "Tribute of Jehu son of Omri; silver, gold, bowls of gold, chalices of gold, pitchers of gold, lead, a royal scepter, staves I received from him."

Shalmaneser uses the expression "son of Omri" in reference to Jehu as the successor of Omri, not the literal son of Omri. Ahaziah and Joram reigned after Ahab and before Jehu. Omri reigned before Ahab.

After the attacks of Assyria on Damascus, Hazael began his vengeful campaign against Israel. 2 Kings 10:32 states, "*In those days the Lord began to cut off parts of Israel; and Hazael conquered them in all the territory of Israel.*" This was the beginning of the end of Israel because the nation had forsaken trust in God and had placed herself at the mercy of a foreign king.

C. The Egyptian inscriptions of Shishak:

On monuments in Egypt, Shishak is given credit for the establishment of the 22nd Dynasty of Egyptian Pharaohs. At the end of the 21st Dynasty, which was marked by the death of Pasebkhanu II, Shishak ascended to the throne of Egypt. His reign extended from 945 to 924 B.C.

In 1 Kings 11 it is recorded that when Solomon became displeased with Jeroboam he forced him to flee to the land of Egypt. This event took place during the reign of Shishak. Therefore, Jeroboam was in Egypt during the reign of Shishak who was the Pharaoh of Egypt.

When Solomon died, Jeroboam returned to Palestine to rule over the northern ten tribes of Israel. This was the fulfillment of the prophecy made by Ahijah (1 Kg 11:31ff). At the same time, Rehoboam reigned over the southern tribes of Israel. Rehoboam was on the throne of Judah for about five years when Shishak began his plunder of Palestine. In 1 Kings 14:25 we read,

Now it happened, in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. And he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house. He took away everything. He also took away all the gold shields that Solomon had made.

Jerusalem was saved from being totally destroyed by Shishak. However, all the riches of the city were taken and the Jews of Judah became the servants of the king of Egypt (2 Ch 12:8). One cannot help but think that Jeroboam told Shishak about all of Jerusalem's riches while he was in Egypt. He possibly even encouraged Shishak to subdue Rehoboam. Regardless of what Jeroboam told

Shishak, Shishak took advantage of the opportunity to subdue Jeroboam's competitor in the south because he knew that Jeroboam would not interfere with his campaign against Judah.

On the walls of the temple of Amon, at Karnak in Egypt, Shishak left inscriptions describing his campaigns into Israelite territory. The inscriptions picture Shishak presenting 156 manacled prisoners from Palestine who were given in tribute to the Egyptian god Amon. It is believed that each of these prisoners represents a city in Palestine that was taken by Shishak.

Special mention is made of the city of Megiddo that was located about twenty kilometers southeast of Mount Carmel in Palestine. When Megiddo was excavated some years ago, a broken stela (an inscribed stone slab) was found that bore tales of Shishak. It also showed that Shishak might have set up a monument of remembrance in



Shishak's campaign against Israel that are carved on the walls of the temple of Karnak, Egypt

Palestine. On the south wall of the temple of Amon in Egypt, Shishak also left a list of conquered cities, not only of Judah, but also the northern kingdom of Israel.

D. The annals of Sargon II:

In Isaiah 20:1 Isaiah dated one of his oracles in the year when Sargon sent his commander-in-chief to subdue the city of Ashdod. "In the year that Tartan came to Ashdod,

when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him, and he fought against Ashdod and took it.” In this passage Sargon was named as the king of Assyria. Critics once said that the Bible at this point was inaccurate. The criticism was based on the fact that the name Sargon was not at the time found in secular history among Assyrian kings. The Bible was the only historical document that mentioned this king. However, little was known about the Assyrian Empire when these criticisms were made.

A French consular by the name of Paul-Emil Botta discovered the ruins of the palace of Sargon II in Khorsadad of the old Assyrian Empire. Khorsadad was located on the north end of the Tigris River. Botta’s expeditions later led to the discovery of many valuable documents that told of Sargon’s wars throughout his reign. A total of 22,000 tablets were eventually discovered at Khorsadad and the surrounding regions. Studies of these tablets have resulted in a tremendous amount of information that directly relates to the history of the Bible, and thus, our knowledge of the events of Bible times.

In 725 B.C. Shalmaneser V went to war against the city of Samaria, the capital of Israel. He fought against the city for a period of approximately three years. At the close of the siege, Shalmaneser mysteriously disappeared from the picture and Sargon II finished the task of destroying Samaria. In 2 Kings 17:3 Shalmaneser is given credit for starting the siege against Israel. In verse 6, however, it is simply stated that the “king of Assyria” finished the siege of Samaria. In his personal records which he made back in Assyria, Sargon claimed the final victory.

There is no contradiction here between the Bible and sec-

ular history. The annals of Sargon II simply fill in where the Bible is silent. Shalmaneser began the war against Israel and its capital, and Sargon II, who later became king of Assyria, finished the task. After he had captured the city, Sargon's records say that he led 27,290 prisoners away into captivity. He records in his records of the events,

I besieged and captured Samaria, carrying off 27,290 of the people who dwell therein. Fifty chariots I gathered from among them

After he conquered many cities in Israel, Sargon recorded that he took prisoners from Samaria and placed them in exile in Gozan (or, Guzana). Excavations have confirmed that Jews lived in these areas of exile.



Procession of Sargon's Israelite captives being led to Khorsadad, Assyria

This is exactly what the Bible says in 2 Kings 17:6. *"In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria [Sargon] took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria, and placed them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes"* (See also 2 Kg 17:24).

In Isaiah 20:1 we read that Sargon sent Tartan to fight against Ashdod. As far as the Bible account, we do not know the reasons for this attack. However, in the annals of Sargon this can be further explained. The annals read,

Azuri, king of Ashdod, planned in his heart not to pay tribute. In my anger I marched against Ashdod with my usual bodyguard. I conquered Ashdod, and Gath. I took their treasures and their peo-

ple. I settled in them people from the lands of the east. I took tribute from Philistia, Judah, Edom and Moab.

The dates of cities, peoples and countries found in the annals of Sargon correspond with the historical mention of the same in the Bible. The countries of Egypt, Elam, Moab, Edom, and the Medes, Philistines, and the Syrian people are all mentioned in the documents of Sargon. Sargon II was one of the greatest kings of Assyria who influenced events in the Bible. The annals of Sargon that were discovered at Khorsadad, combined with other Assyrian documents that have been discovered, are valuable in that they tell us of the historical environment in which the Israelites lived.

E. Hezekiah's Tunnel:

Hezekiah, Sennacherib and Esarhaddon are three kings who develop a very exciting chapter of ancient history. After the death of Sargon II, Sennacherib, his son, came to the throne of Assyria. He reigned from 705 to 681 B.C. Taking advantage of the royal turnover in Assyria, Hezekiah, king of Judah, *"rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him"* (2 Kg 18:7).

After his rebellion, Hezekiah received word that Sennacherib was going to regain his oppression of Jerusalem (2 Ch 32:2). Upon hearing this news, Hezekiah took immediate measures to fortify the city of Jerusalem against a probable Assyrian attack. In 2 Chronicles 32:3,4 we read of some of the steps that Hezekiah took in order to make the city more secure against invading forces,

He [Hezekiah] took counsel with his leaders and commanders to stop the water from the springs which were outside the city; and they

helped him. Thus many people gathered together who stopped all the springs and the brook that ran through the land, saying, "Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water?"

Hezekiah cut a tunnel from the pool of Gihon, which was outside the walls of the city, to the pool of Siloam, that was inside the city walls. A statement that was made at the close of his reign tells specifically what he did. *"This same Hezekiah also stopped the water outlet of Upper Gihon, and brought the water by tunnel to the west side of the City of David"* (2 Ch 32:30).

Hezekiah then concealed the pool of Gihon in order that the Assyrians not have water near the city during any siege of Jerusalem. The last report we have of this tunnel in the Bible is at the close of Hezekiah's reign.

Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah – all his might, and how he made a pool and a tunnel and brought water into the city – are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? (2 Kg 20:20).

As time went by, this tunnel became unnoticed and eventually lost. The last mention that was made of it was in the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus which was written around 200 B.C. (Ecc. 48:17). The tunnel was evidently unknown during the time of Josephus (A.D. 37-115) because he makes no mention of it in his writings and description of Jerusalem. It was not until the nineteenth century that the tunnel was discovered.

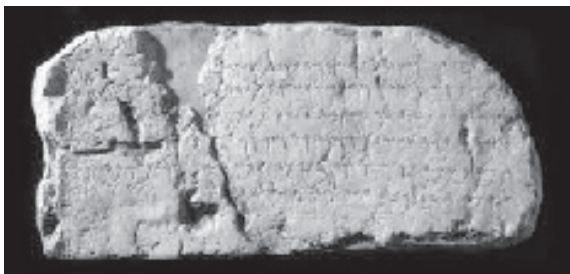
The discovery of the tunnel was made by Edward Robinson, an American scholar, and Eli Smith, a missionary in Syria. In the first part of the nineteenth century they walked through the entire length of the tunnel and found that it was a total of 1,750 feet in length (approximately

533 meters). Other characteristics of the tunnel were its zig-zag course and average height of about two meters.

The most significant discovery concerning the tunnel was stumbled upon by a young boy. While playing near the pool of Siloam, he slipped and fell. From where he lay he noticed some crudely scratched markings on the side of the wall. The boy told his teacher, Conrad Schick, what he had discovered. When Schick investigated the inscription he found that the markings covered an area about three-fourths of a meter long and about half a meter high. After further investigation, it was found that the inscription was written in classical Hebrew.

For the biblical scholarship of the world, this inscription represents some of the oldest writings of ancient Hebrew. The writing was contemporary with the days of Hezekiah, around 700 B.C. The inscription reads,

The tunnel is completed. This is the story of the tunnel. While the stonecutters were lifting up the pick, each toward his neighbor (from opposite ends), and while they were yet 3 cubits apart, there was heard a voice of one calling to another; and after that pick struck against pick; and waters flowed from the spring to the pool, 1,200 cubits, and 100 cubits was the height of the rock above.



Another important discovery gained by the inscription was the length of a cubit in relation to modern-day measurements. The length of the tunnel as given in the inscription was 1,200 cubits. By measuring the tunnel and comparing inches with cubits it was found that one cubit is equal to about 18 inches. This would be approximately 30.5 metric centimeters.

F. Sennacherib's Prism:

The history of the clash between Hezekiah and Sennacherib is significant in reference to Old Testament history. After Hezekiah's revolt against Assyria, Sennacherib began his plunder of Judah. In 2 Kings 18:13 it is stated, "*And in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and took them*" (See 2 Ch 32:1; Is 36:1). One of the cities that fell to Sennacherib was the city of Lachish.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, A. H. Layard discovered at Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, thirteen stone slabs in bas relief (inscribed writing) depicting an attack on a well-fortified city. It was believed, and later confirmed, that this was the city of Lachish. These bas reliefs found in Sennacherib's palace show the spoils of the city of Lachish which were presented to Sennacherib who is pictured to be on his throne in Assyria.

In view of Sennacherib's plunder of Palestine and attack against Jerusalem, Hezekiah made some strategic decisions. Hoping to buy more time from Sennacherib, Hezekiah "sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, 'I have done wrong. Turn away from me. Whatever you impose on me I will pay.' And the king of Assyria assessed He-

zekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold” (2 Kg 18:14). In view of what Hezekiah planned to do, we must interpret this decision on his part to pay tribute as an effort to stall any plans Sennacherib had against Jerusalem. Hezekiah’s plans may have worked for a brief period of time. Though Sennacherib received tribute from Hezekiah, he still persisted in his efforts to plunder Jerusalem, the would-be high point of his Judean campaign.

This is where we have a turn of events for the unfortunate Sennacherib who had dreams of capturing the city of Jerusalem. Here is where the importance of the prism of Sennacherib comes into the picture. This prism (also known as the Taylor Prism) is a six-sided monument that was made by Sennacherib in 691 B.C. It contains the last records of Sennacherib concerning his campaigns in Judah. On the monument, Sennacherib tells of his battle against Judah as follows,

As to Hezekiah, the Jew, he did not submit to my yoke, I laid siege to 46 of his strong cities, walled forts and to the countless small villages in their vicinity, and conquered [them] by means of well-stamped [earth] ramps, and battering-rams brought [thus] near [to the walls] [combined with] the attack by foot soldiers, [using] mines, breeches as well as sapper work. I drove out [of them] 200,150 people, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, big and small cattle beyond counting, considered [them booty]. Himself I made a prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, like a bird in a cage.



The Prism of Sennacherib

Sennacherib nowhere claims final victory of Jerusalem. This is not revealed

on his prism simply because his defeat was a humiliating experience for the armies of Assyria. Where Sennacherib stops in his description of the events that took place around Jerusalem, the Bible continues. In 2 Kings 19:35 we read,

And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the Lord went out and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand. And when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses – all dead.

When Sennacherib surrounded Jerusalem, Hezekiah went to God in prayer (2 Kg 19:14-19). God faithfully answered that prayer by destroying the army of Sennacherib.

After his dreadful defeat, Sennacherib “*departed [from Jerusalem] and went away, returned home, and remained at Nineveh*” (2 Kg 19:36). The Bible does not say how long Sennacherib dwelt in Nineveh before his assassination. His fate is recorded in 2 Kings 19:37.

Now it came to pass as he was worshiping in the temple of Nisroch his god, that his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword. And they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

There has also been discovered in the Annals of Esarhaddon the following words which correspond perfectly with the biblical account of these events. Esarhaddon stated,

... they rebelled. In order to exercise royal authority they killed Sennacherib. I became a raging lion, my mind was a fury these usurpers ... fled to an unknown land. I reached the quay on the Tigris, sent my troops across the broad river as if it were a canal. In Addar [December ... I reached Nineveh well pleased]. I ascended my father's throne with joy. The south wind was blowing ... whose breezes are propitious for royal authority ... I am Esarhaddon, King of the world, King of Assyria ... son of Sennacherib.

G. Jehoiachin's food rations:

In 597 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came up against and besieged the city of Jerusalem. He laid siege to the city and conquered it. An ancient Babylonian account recorded this event.

In the seventh year, the month of Kislev, the king of Addad mustered his troops, marched to Hatti-land, and encamped against [that is, besieged] the city of Judah and on the second day of the month of Adar he seized the city and captured the king. He appointed there a king of his own choice [lit. heart], received its heavy tribute and sent [them] to Babylon.

When Jerusalem fell, many Jews were taken into captivity, including their king, Jehoiachin (2 Ch 36:9,10). During the period Jehoiachin was in captivity, Nebuchadnezzar died and his son, Evil-merodach, rose to the throne of Babylon. The Bible records that Jehoiachin immediately found favor with the new king of Babylon. *“Evil-Merodach king of Babylon ... released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. He spoke kindly to him, and gave him a more prominent seat than those of the kings who were with him in Babylon”* (2 Kg 25:27,28). The last verse of 2 Kings 25 reads, *“And as for his [Jehoiachin's] provisions, there was a regular ration given him by the king, a portion for each day, all the days of his life”* (vs 30).

Jeremiah lived contemporary with these events. He prophesied from 627 to 575 B.C. He also recorded that the king of Babylon gave rations to the captured king of Judah.

“So Jehoiachin changed from his prison garments, and he ate bread regularly before the king all the days of his life. And as for his provisions, there was a regular ration given him by the king of Babylon, a portion for each day until the day of his death, all the days of his life” (Jr 52:32,33).

In 1899, the German Oriental Society equipped a large expedition under the direction of Professor Robert Koldewey, an architect, to excavate the mound of Babel in the area of the Euphrates River. After a period of eighteen years they discovered what is called the Ishtar Gate. Many other articles were found such as 300 clay tablets. These tablets were boxed and sent to a museum in Berlin, Germany. There they stayed until 1935.

In 1933, a man by the name of E. F. Weidner accepted the task of translating these tablets. The job was strenuous and sometimes very disappointing. However, after much hard work, Weidner suddenly came upon a familiar biblical name, Ja-V-Kinu, or Jehoiachin. He became even more sure that this was the Jehoiachin in the Bible when he found other tablets referring to this Jehoiachin as “king of the [land of] Judah.” The tablets identified him as “Yaukin, king of the land of Yahud”. What is even more exciting for Bible students is that Weidner discovered in the tablets one that specifically contained the actual food allowances of the king of Babylon which he had ordered to be given to Jehoiachin. Once again, the Bible was proved to be historically accurate. This is what we would expect since it is the word of God.

G. The Cyrus Cylinder:

Isaiah prophesied during the years from 739 to 695 B.C. During this time he made a prophecy concerning a man by the name of Cyrus. *“Thus says the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held – to subdue nations before him and loose the armor of kings, to open before him the double doors, so that the gates will not be shut”* (Is 45:1). This prophecy was made approximately two hun-

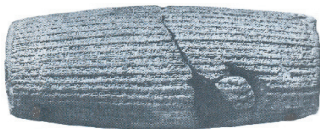
dred years before its fulfillment.

In Daniel 5:25-28 the termination of Belshazzar's reign was foretold. Daniel's inspired interpretation of the handwriting on the wall of the Babylonian palace said that Belshazzar's kingdom was coming to an end. The very evening of the vision of the handwriting and interpretation, Belshazzar was slain and Darius the Mede began to reign over the kingdom (Dn 5:30,31). This Darius the Mede, who was placed over the city of Babylon by Cyrus, was probably the ruler of the Medo-Persian Empire at the time these events occurred.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Hormuyd Rosam discovered a barrel-like clay cylinder that described the policies of Cyrus and how he overtook Babylon. This significant discovery has since been referred to as the Cyrus Cylinder.

The following portion of the inscription of the Cyrus Cylinder discusses the fall of the city of Babylon.

Marduk ... looked through all the country searching for a religious ruler He pronounced the name Cyrus, King of Anshan, declared him to be the ruler of all the world He made him set out on the road to Babylon, going at his side like a real friend.



Cyrus Cylinder

His widespread troops – their number, like that of the water of a river could not be established – strolled along, their weapons packed away. Without any battle, he [that is, Marduk] made him [Cyrus] enter his [Marduk's] town, Babylon, sparing Babylon any calamity. He delivered into his hands Nabunaid, the king who did not worship him.

Cyrus evidently took the city of Babylon without any battle. This is what both the biblical account and the Cyrus Cylinder account reveal. The date of this conquest was around 539 B.C. This was approximately two hundred years after the prophecy of Isaiah. The inscription also contains the following statement, *“I am Cyrus, king of all, the great king, the mighty king, king of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four corners of the earth.”* These words of Cyrus are recorded also in the second book of Chronicles, as well as Ezra 1:2. 2 Chronicles 36:23 states,

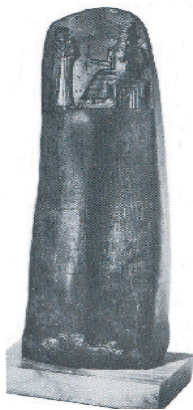
Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? May the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up!

Cyrus was a humanitarian. He cared for people and wanted all people to be at ease in their own land. His policy of letting captured peoples return to their native lands is clearly depicted on his monumental cylinder. His policy was the exact opposite of that of the Assyrian and Babylonian kings. He allowed people to return to their lands as the Bible states and the cylinder historically confirms.

There are scores of archaeological artifacts that confirm the history of the Bible, as well as the languages and customs of Bible times. There are the **Mari Tablets** that were written primarily from the eighteenth century B.C. by north-western Semites. These tablets explain many Israelite traditions. There are the **Nuzi Texts**. These texts release an enormous amount of information concerning the social and legal customs during the times of the patriarchs. The giving of a slave girl to a husband by the wife if the wife cannot bear children, is found in these texts. These texts

also further explain the birthright laws. Such laws were kept by Esau and Jacob. The **Execration** Texts belong to the late twentieth and nineteenth centuries B.C. They contain valuable information about the political and ethnic history of Palestine in the early patriarchal period.

The **Amarna Tablets** explain numerous activities of the old Babylonian Empire. The **Canaanite Alphabet Tablets** from Ugarit give us a vast amount of secular history contemporary with the times of Moses. There are also small artifacts as coins, potsherds, or stone documents that list names as Pontius Pilate, Sergius Paulus, Herod the Great, Herod Antipas, Agrippa I and II, Bernice and countless other characters of the Bible. Biblical archaeological discoveries have piled up so much in the last few decades that books on Bible archaeology must continually be revised in order to keep our knowledge current about great discoveries.



Code of Hammurabi
King of Babylon
1755 – 1750

The historical accuracy of the Bible does not prove the inspiration of the Bible. However, if the Bible is inspired it must be historically accurate. Other books of history can be historically accurate. If their record of history contradicts archaeology, then their credibility falls. If the Bible could be found to be in contradiction with history revealed through archaeology, then its inspiration would be brought under question. But the Bible is in harmony with history because it is the inspired word of God.

THE STANDARD OF THE BIBLE

A person has deprived himself of the most valuable knowledge there is in the world if he has deprived himself of a knowledge of the Bible. On the moral foundation of this one book, civilizations have been established and sustained. Only through the Bible can we understand who God is as our Creator and what we must do in order to respond to His love for us.

The word “**Bible**” comes from the Greek word *biblia* that means “book.” The Bible is God’s book of instruction for those who respond to His loving grace for all people. No other written words have affected so many people for so long in history. The reason for this is that the Bible explains the truth of the gospel, and thus directs our behavior in response to this truth.

The Bible is a library of sixty-six Holy Spirit inspired books and letters. Contrary to man-made religions that are mostly based on human religious traditions, the Bible was written by over forty Spirit-inspired men over a period of about 1,500 years. Though written by so many different people over a period of many centuries, there are no contradictions in the original Holy Spirit-directed writings of the Bible.

There is one united theme throughout the entire Bible. This theme is the eternal salvation of humanity through the sacrificial offering of the incarnate Son of God. God has subsequently sought through the Bible to inform all people concerning His desire to bring those who are obedient to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ into eternal dwelling with Him.

A. The Bible is God's blessing to man.

The Bible came to us through centuries of God's work through the Holy Spirit to inspire holy writers to reveal to obedient people of faith how to walk according to the will of their Creator.

1. The Bible is God speaking (At 1:16; 2 Tm 3:16).
2. The Bible is God speaking through the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:26; 16:13; 1 Co 2:10-13; Hb 3:7; 9:8; 10:15; 2 Pt 1:20,21).
3. The Bible is God speaking through the Holy Spirit with inspired words (Jr 36:4; 1 Co 2:13).
4. The Bible is God speaking through the Holy Spirit to men who spoke and wrote inspired words of truth (Ex 24:4; 35:1; 2 Sm 23:2; Is 51:16; Jr 36:4-6; Ez 11:5; 1 Co 14:37).
5. The Bible is God speaking through the Holy Spirit through people to people (Lk 1:70; At 28:25; Rm 1:2; 16:26).
6. The Bible is God's final word to all people of all time (Jr 1:9; Ez 2:7; 3:4,10,11,17; 1 Th 2:13; 2 Tm 3:16,17; Hb 1:1,2).

B. Trust the Bible as the word of God.

The Bible is based on the foundation of divine evidence. God not only inspired men to preach and write His word, but He also sent miraculous evidence to confirm that His word was more than the word of mere men. It was the inspired word of God that was meant to be the authority by which people would be saved and how they should conduct their lives in response to His grace.

1. The word of God that was first spoken by the early messengers of God was proven to be from God by the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit (See 1 Kg 18:30-40; Mk 16:20; Jn 20:30,31; At 2:33; 4:29,30,31; 1 Co 2:1-5; 12:7; Gl 3:5; Hb 2:3,4).
2. The word of God was first spoken and confirmed, and then written. The writers of the Bible recorded by inspiration the word that was miraculously proven to be words from God (Rm 15:4,18,19; 1 Co 2:4; 10:11; 1 Th 1:5).

C. The Bible can change lives.

If one believes the Bible to be the word of God, then he or she will treasure its message. One's life will thus be transformed as he or she seeks to follow the word of God.

1. The word of God can dwell in our hearts (Cl 3:16; 1 Jn 2:14,24; 3:9; 2 Jn 2).
2. The word of God can be laid up in our hearts so that we do not sin (Ps 37:31; 119:11).
3. The word of God can be written on our hearts (Ps 40:8; Jr 31:32,33; 2 Co 3:3; Hb 10:16).
4. The word of God changes lives when its principles are sincerely believed and obeyed (Js 1:22-25; 1 Jn 1:6,7; 2 Jn 4; 3 Jn 3,4).

D. The Bible is all-sufficient.

The Bible is all-sufficient to furnish the Christian with all instructions that are necessary to live a godly life. Because the Bible is all-sufficient for daily living, it has the power to accomplish the following in our lives:

1. The Bible has power to change our lives (1 Th 4:1,2; 1 Pt 2:1,2; 2 Pt 1:3; 3 Jn 3,4).
2. The Bible has power to bring us into eternal life (Jn 8:51; see Jn 5:24; 11:26).
3. The Bible has power to eternally save our souls (At 11:14; 20:32; Hb 4:12; Js 1:21).
4. The Bible has power to give us freedom from misguided religion (Jn 8:32; Js 1:25).
5. The Bible has power to guide us in our ministry to others (Ep 4:11-16).
6. The Bible has power to teach us God's will (Ps 119:103,104; Pv 22:6; Rm 15:4).
7. The Bible has power to admonish us to serve God (1 Co 4:14; 10:11; 2 Tm 4:1,2; Ti 1:9).
8. The Bible has power to direct us in godly living (Cl 1:5-10; 1 Tm 3:14,15; 1 Pt 5:1,2).

9. The Bible has power to reprove, rebuke and correct our daily behavior (2 Tm 3:16; Ti 1:9).

E. The Bible is God's final revelation.

The Bible is God's final revelation of instructions to man. With the writing of the book of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, God terminated all revelation of truth that He desired we should have until His Son is again revealed from heaven. Bible students must understand, therefore, that after the writing of the book of Revelation, God no longer revealed any further truth by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

1. God revealed His law from the beginning to the fathers of extended family clans (Hb 1:1,2).
2. God revealed His law to Israel at Mount Sinai (Ex 19:4-6; Dt 4:1,13; 5:1-5; Ne 8:1-3; Rm 3:1,2).
3. God revealed His call for Israel's repentance through prophets who recorded their messages, which messages we study today for our learning (Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11).
4. God revealed His final message in the first century through chosen writers (Jn 14:26; 16:13).
5. God revealed all necessary truth for us today, which truth has been recorded for our teaching and moral guidance (Gl 1:11,12; Ep 3:3-5; 2 Tm 3:16,17; 2 Pt 1:3; Jd 3).
6. God revealed sufficient instructions for us, and thus we must not add to or subtract from these instructions (Dt 4:2; Gl 1:6-9; 2 Jn 9-11; Rv 22:18,19).

F. God works through the Bible.

God intends that His revealed word of the Bible function in the following ways in the lives of those who have responded to His love and grace. Through the Bible God seeks to do the following:

1. Produce faith (Jn 20:30,31; Rm 10:17).
2. Sanctify the soul (Jn 17:17; Ep 5:26).
3. Cleanse the heart and soul (Jn 15:2,3; Ep 5:26; 1 Pt 1:22).
4. Quicken the soul (Ps 119:50,93; Ep 2:1,5).
5. Enlighten the mind (Ps 19:8).
6. Give understanding (Ps 119:104,130; Ep 3:4).
7. Lead one's life (Ps 73:24; 119:105).
8. Comfort the heart (Rm 15:4; 1 Th 3:2; 4:18).
9. Produce spiritual growth (At 20:32; Cl 1:10,11).
10. Strengthen the heart (At 20:32; Rm 16:25; 2 Tm 2:1,2).

JESUS, THE SON OF GOD

The greatest personality in human history, who has affected the lives of more than any one person, was born two thousand years ago in a humble environment and laid in the manger of a barn in Bethlehem of Judea. This was Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of the Most High God. He is the only incarnate Son of the one true and living God. Everyone who would follow Jesus, therefore, must accept Him as the incarnation of God on earth. There can be no compromise of this truth. If Jesus is who He said He was, the incarnation of God on earth, then He was just that, or the greatest liar who ever lived. And those who are Christians would be the most deceived people of the world in their belief that Jesus was the incarnation of God.

The expansion of Christianity into all the world could never have been the result of any religion that was the invention of pious religious people. The phenomenal growth of Christianity in the first century can be answered only in the fact that it had a supernatural beginning. As a great personality of history, Jesus was who He said He was, the Son of God. Nothing else answers the questions as to why Christianity has grown to the point of captivating the

hearts and minds of millions of people for more than two thousand years.

Jesus fulfilled hundreds of prophecies that were made centuries before He came into this world. He validated the divine origin of His teachings by the evidence of His miracles. He taught a moral way of life that has been unmatched by all man-made religions. And finally, He was proved to be the only Son of God by His resurrection from the dead and ascension to the right hand of God to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rm 1:4; 1 Tm 6:15).

The existence, work and character of Jesus Christ could not have been the result of some over zealous disciples. He was actually the incarnation of God into the flesh of man. Understanding that Jesus is not an invented historical character by a group of religious zealots, but the actual incarnate Son of God, should inspire every person on earth to respond to His gospel journey into this world for us.

A. The incarnaton of God in Jesus:

Our attraction to Jesus is because of who He is. If He were not truly the incarnate Son of God, and the One about whom the Bible claims Him to be, then He could never be a valid foundation upon whom people could base their faith. He is worthy of our faith only because He is the Son of God.

1. Jesus was indwelt on earth by the fullness of God (Cl 1:19; 2:9).
2. Jesus is the incarnate Word of God (Jn 1:1,14; 1 Jn 1:1,2; 2 Jn 7).
3. Jesus is the only Son of God (Jn 1:14,18; 3:16,18).
4. Jesus is one with God (Is 9:6; Jn 1:1,2; 10:30; Ti 2:13; 1 Jn 5:20).

5. Jesus is eternal in existence (Rm 9:5; Hb 7:3; Rv 1:8).
6. Jesus is omniscient, that is, all-knowing (Mt 9:4; Lk 5:22; Jn 2:25).

B. The proof of Jesus' sonship:

Both the Bible and recorded history are evidence that Jesus is who He said He was. If one believes in the Bible, then he must believe that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God (Jn 3:16; 20:30,31). Recorded history provides convincing evidence that Jesus was a personality of historical significance. He was not a mythical figure of some over zealous religious people who needed a religious figurehead to be the foundation of their faith. Jesus was real. He was the real incarnation of God on earth in the flesh of man.

1. The proof of prophecy:

We know that the Old Testament books were written before Jesus lived on earth. Significantly, in the Old Testament books there are over 300 prophecies concerning Jesus and His work. Since some of these prophecies were recorded as long as 1,400 years before Jesus lived, the evidence of prophecy of His divine existence and coming into this world is overwhelming. What is amazing is that every prophecy in the Old Testament concerning Jesus was fulfilled by Him. If it were left to chance, the probability of one person fulfilling all these prophecies would be impossible. The fact that Jesus fulfilled all of them to the last detail proves beyond doubt that He was sent from God in fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecies. (See a list of some of these prophecies under "Jesus Christ," point A in the Index to Key Bible Studies.)

2. The proof of historical existence:

Many ancient documents mention the existence of Jesus as a significant personality of history. The mention of Jesus and Christianity in the following secular historical documents proves beyond doubt that Jesus was indeed One who had great impact on the people of His time:

- a. **Julius Africanus** quoted Thallus, who lived in Rome around A.D. 52. Thallus was familiar with the darkness that came over the earth at the time Jesus was crucified (Mt 27:45).
- b. **Mara Bar-Serapion** in a letter to his son referred to the Jews' execution of "their king," a reference to Jesus.
- c. **Tacitus**, who was born around A.D. 52-54, referred to "Christus" (Christ) who suffered the penalty of death during the reign of Tiberius.
- d. **Plinius Secundus** (Pliny, the younger), governor of Bithynia around A.D. 112, wrote to Caesar Trajan concerning the problem of "Christians" in his province.
- e. **Jewish Talmud** (Jewish teachings that were compiled from A.D. 70 - 200) makes many references to "Yeshu'a of Nazareth," (Jesus, of Nazareth) though the references are made in a negative context.
- f. **Josephus**, a Jewish historian of the middle and end of the first century, refers to "Jesus, a wise man, ... a doer of marvelous deeds."

3. The proof of miracles and resurrection:

If Jesus were who He said He was, then certainly we would expect Him to have control over the supernatural environment from which He came. We would also expect Him to have control over the world of natural laws into which He came. He would thus not be subject to physical death. His resurrection was necessary. While religions of men focus on the tombs of their founders, Christians focus on the reign of a resurrected Savior. The rapid growth of the church in the first century in just a few years after its estab-

lishment can be answered only in the fact that Jesus was actually raised from the dead.

- a. Jesus worked many confirming miracles (Mt 4:23; Jn 3:2; 20:30,31; At 2:22).
- b. Jesus had power to raise Himself (Jn 10:17,18; see At 2:24-36; Ep 1:20).
- c. Jesus now reigns in heaven (Rm 5:17; 1 Co 15:20-28; Hb 8:1).

4. The proof of persecuted disciples:

The suffering and death of the early Christians can be attributed to the fact that they truly believed Jesus was the resurrected Son of God. In all the suffering and death of the disciples, at the time of death no disciple denied Jesus. Because of what they believed, the disciples were willing to pay the ultimate price for their faith.

- a. The disciples willingly suffered for Jesus (At 4:18,19; 14:22; 2 Tm 3:12).
- b. The disciples willingly died for Jesus (At 8:1-3; 12:1ff; Rv 2:10).
- c. The disciples willingly died with confidence (2 Tm 4:7).

5. The proof of the New Testament:

The existence of the ancient New Testament documents is one of the most powerful evidences for the supernatural origin of the church. The church was a powerful movement of faith in the first century because the spoken word of the gospel was first validated by the Holy Spirit (Mk 16:20; Hb 2:3,4). The message that was first spoken was then written by several men over a period of several years without any contradictions in the original autographs (2 Tm 3:16). Such proves that neither Jesus nor the church were the invention of men.

C. The power of Jesus:

No man on earth has ever claimed to be who Jesus claimed to be. He was thus either the greatest liar and deceiver who ever lived, or truly the One He claimed to be with the authority and power He now has over all things.

1. Jesus was the Creator of all things (Cl 1:16; Hb 1:2).
2. Jesus is now head of all things (Mt 28:18; Jn 13:3; Ep 1:22).
3. Jesus now reigns over all things (Rm 5:17; Ph 2:9-11; 1 Pt 3:22).
4. Jesus is now far above all powers (Ep 1:20,21).
5. Jesus will be the final judge of all (Jn 12:48; 2 Co 5:10).
6. Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tm 6:15; Rv 19:16).
7. Jesus is our only Savior (Jn 14:6; At 4:12).
8. Jesus is our High Priest (Hb 3:1; 4:14; 7:26).
9. Jesus is the Prophet (Lk 13:33; Jn 1:21; At 3:22-26).
10. Jesus is our Redeemer (Ep 1:7; Ti 2:14).
11. Jesus is our Mediator (1 Tm 2:5; Hb 8:6; 9:15; 12:24).

D. The plea of Jesus:

Because Jesus has universal authority, He is the only one who has a right to make a universal plea to all men to come to Him for eternal life in the presence of God. No prophet of God made a universal call as Jesus did that all men come to Him as the Savior of the world. Abraham called people to faith and God. Moses called Israel to faith and God. But Jesus calls people to Himself for salvation. Jesus, therefore, is more than a prophet. He is the Son of God who calls the world to Himself as the only way, truth and life.

1. Jesus says He is the only way, truth and life (Jn 14:6; see Hb 4:12).
2. Jesus is the only door through which we can enter into Him (Jn 10:9).
3. Jesus pleads that all come to Him (Mt 11:28,29).

4. Jesus says we must believe in Him (Jn 8:24).
5. Jesus says that everyone must believe and be baptized in order to be saved (Mk 16:15,16).

Religions are invented by people who are often humanistic in that they focus on the emotional or spiritual power of man. Sometimes they even focus on the mental power of an individual to conquer and control others. However, there is a difference between being religious and being Christian. All Christians are religious, but not all religious people are Christians. One is a Christian because of his identity that is explained in the New Testament. If one does not identify himself as a Christian by the word of God, then he is simply a religious person who is trusting in his own feelings, religious heritage and/or traditions. For this reason, all Christians consider the word of God to be their final authority in all matters of faith.

True Christianity is based on the power of love (Jn 3:16; 1 Jn 5:1-3). It was through love that Jesus conquered the world. Any religious group that claims to be from God, but does not seek to motivate people by the love of God, is not from God (See 2 Co 4:15; 5:14). The evidence that Christianity is from God is in the fact that the response of our faith is based on the drawing power of God's love for us (Jn 12:32). Because Christians love God in response to His love that was revealed through Jesus (Rm 5:8), it is with the same motivation that Christians reach out to others with the message of the gospel (See Jn 13:34,35).

NEW TESTAMENT WORLD OF JESUS

Our understanding of the New Testament is enhanced by knowing a few events and facts concerning the historical setting of Palestine at the time of Jesus' ministry and the establishment of the church in the first century. There are some key historical events and facts that shaped the political and religious environment of the world at that time. By understanding better the historical setting in which the early disciples lived, we can better interpret the New Testament letters. This is especially true in reference to the final years of national Israel that was consummated in A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

In order to understand the historical background of the New Testament, we must go back about 4,000 years to a man named Abraham. God promised Abraham that from him would come a great nation. His name would be great. God would give his descendants a land. From his seed, God promised that all people of the world would be blessed (Gn 12:1-3).

In Genesis 12:1-3, God promised that He would give Abraham and his descendants a specific land for their possession (Gn 17:8). This promise was renewed in Genesis 15. In the renewal of the promise, God specified that the land was the land of Canaan, or Palestine (Gn 15:18). When the nation of Israel (the descendants of Abraham) was eventually delivered from Egyptian captivity under the leadership of Moses, the twelve tribes of Israel were brought by God into this land (Ja 1:3,4). However, throughout their history they continued to rebel against God, and thus violated the covenant that God had established with them at Mount

Sinai. As a result, the northern ten tribes of Israel were first taken into Assyrian captivity in 722/21 B.C. (2 Kg 17). While the Assyrians scattered Jews throughout their empire, they also brought people from their existing empire into the land of Palestine (2 Kg 17:24). The intermarriage of these people with the Jews who were left in Palestine, eventually led to the Samaritan people.

In 586 B.C. the two southern tribes of Israel, Judah and Benjamin, were likewise carried away into Babylonian captivity (2 Kg 24). They remained in Babylonian captivity until a remnant from each tribe of Israel started to return to Palestine beginning in 536 B.C. Though a remnant returned to resettle Palestine, a great number of the Jews remained in the lands of their former captors, for they had by the time of the returns to Palestine established themselves in the former lands of the Assyrians and Babylonians.

The two major captivities of Israel (the Assyrian and Babylonian) are significant to New Testament studies. They are important because through these captivities the Jews were dispersed throughout the ancient world. Many of the dispersed Jews were still living among the nations when Jesus came. It was through the conversion of these Jews that the gospel was preached to all the world. We can thus see the providence of God in the captivities of Israel. The scattering of the Jews throughout what later became the Roman Empire led to the rapid evangelization of the ancient world. Therefore, when Jesus came into the world, it was a time ready for world evangelism. All things were ready for the Blessing that God had two thousand years before promised to Abraham (Gn 12:3; Gl 4:4).

When the Jews came to Palestine from their former lands

of captivity for the annual Passover/Pentecost feasts, a special Passover/Pentecost event was waiting for them in A.D. 30. On the Passover/Pentecost of that year, Jesus was crucified and resurrected. As the Son of God, He ascended to heaven after His resurrection. Fifty days after He was crucified on Passover, He sent forth the Holy Spirit on twelve chosen apostles on the A.D. 30 Pentecost (At 2:1-4).

It was on the Pentecost of A.D. 30 that the apostle Peter made the first official announcement of Jesus' kingdom reign from heaven (At 2:14-36; see Mt 16:18,19). When this first announcement of the gospel was made, about three thousand people initially obeyed the gospel (At 2:41). After receiving further teaching from the apostles, these immersed Jewish disciples returned to their homes throughout the nations to which they had been formerly scattered in the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, which territory was now under the control of the Roman government (See At 2:9-11). They returned with the message of the gospel.

– Political World Of The Testament –

The social and political environments of the New Testament were influenced by the historical events of three world empires. These empires were the Medo-Persian Empire, the Greek Empire, and the Roman Empire. Before the Romans occupied Palestine, there was during the Maccabean period a local Jewish struggle within Palestine to deliver the Jews from foreign occupation and control. During the end of the Greek Empire, and subsequent rise of the Roman Empire, the Jews were tossed from one controlling foreign power to another. In all this political turmoil, the foundation was laid for the coming of the Son of God

and announcement of the gospel. The opportunity was thus set for the preaching of the gospel to the world.

A. The Medo-Persian Empire (538 B.C. - 332 B.C.):

The Medo-Persian Empire came into prominence when Cyrus defeated Media in 550 B.C. and the Babylonian Empire in 539 B.C. Cyrus was a humanitarian, and thus, he encouraged exiled people throughout his realm of rule to return to their homelands. This policy led to the return to Palestine of a representative remnant of Jews who had been scattered throughout the world many years before by the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities.

There were three returns of Jews to Palestine that were led by three Old Testament characters: Zerubbabel (536 B.C.), Ezra (457 B.C.) and Nehemiah (444 B.C.). Of all the Jews who were originally scattered throughout the world in the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, many did not return to Palestine. Those Jews who did return brought with them influences of culture, religion and language that molded the Jewish society and culture of Palestine by the time the Son of God came into the world.

One of the greatest contributions that the returning exiles brought back to Palestine was the Aramaic language. Most of the exiles had been raised in an Aramaic-speaking culture in Babylonia and the old Persian Empire. Upon returning to Palestine, Aramaic was their first language. It is possible, therefore, that the language Jesus ordinarily spoke during His life and ministry was Aramaic.

The scattering of the Jews throughout the ancient world was referred to as the Dispersion (Gr., *diaspora*, see Js

1:1; 1 Pt 1:1). This dispersion of Jews was the foundation upon which the gospel was initially preached to the world in the first century. When the early evangelists went forth to preach the gospel, they went to the Jewish synagogues that had been built throughout the regions to which Jews had been scattered during the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. They thus went to a religious culture of Jewish people who had a monotheistic background of faith in one God as He was revealed through the Old Testament Scriptures. From the regional synagogues, locally converted Jews then preached the gospel to the Gentile nations of the world.

B. The Greek Empire (332 B.C. - 167 B.C.):

Alexander the Great took control of Palestine in 332 B.C. He maintained control until his death in 323 B.C. After his death, his empire was divided among his generals. However, during his rule, the Greek language spread throughout the ancient world, including Palestine. Greek became the common international language of commerce, government and literature. The Greek culture permeated the Jewish culture to the extent that many Jews adopted the Greek language and culture. This led to the rise of what was referred to as Hellenism. Hellenism was the acceptance of the Greek language and culture by many Jews and other conquered people who generally lived outside Palestine (See At 6:1).

The Greek language was so influential among the Jews after the era of Greek conquest and rule, especially among those Jews in Egypt, that portions of the Old Testament were translated from Hebrew into the Greek language around 250 B.C. This translation of the Old Testament is

referred to as the Septuagint (LXX). This was the translation from which Jesus and the New Testament writers quoted. The Septuagint was quoted because this was the translation of the Old Testament Scriptures with which most Jews in the first century were familiar.

C. The Maccabean Period (167 B.C. - 63 B.C.):

This was a period of guerrilla warfare that was waged by zealous Jews to rid Palestine of foreign Gentile occupation. The turmoil of this period began when Antiochus IV of Syria, a Gentile who ruled Palestine at the time, tried to compel the Jewish priest Mattathias to offer sacrifices to pagan gods in Jerusalem. Mattathias refused, and then fled to the hills in order to organize a militant revolt against the Gentile occupation of Palestine. Before his death in 164 B. C., Mattathias appointed his son, Judas, as his successor.

Judas soon gained the nickname Maccabeus (“the hammer”). He conducted a guerrilla war to expel the Gentile Syrians from Palestine and to restore the Sinai law and temple worship in Jerusalem. On December 14, 164 B.C., he succeeded in his quest by restoring daily burnt offerings at the temple. This day was set aside by the Jews as the feast of Dedication (or feast of lights) (Jn 10:22). The day was still honored by the time Jesus came into the world.

After Judas Maccabee’s death, his brothers assumed the leadership in the war against Syria. Jonathan (160-143 B.C.) restored the priestly aristocracy, and Simon (143-134 B.C.) restored political independence. Succeeding Jewish leaders further solidified the Jewish nation in an effort to secure independence. Under the leadership of

John Hyrcanus (134-104 B.C.), the son of Simon, the Pharisees and Sadducees became prominent religious leaders by influencing political policies among the Jews. Aristobulus I (104-103 B.C.), the son of Hyrcanus, was the first Jewish leader during this intertestament period to assume the title of "king." After his rule, his widow, Salome Alexandra, designated his oldest brother, Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.), to be the high priest and king of the Jewish nation. After the death of Alexander Jannaeus, Salome Alexandra served as Israel's only queen during the intertestament period (76-67 B.C.). She was the first wife of Hyrcanus and later the wife of Jannaeus. During her reign, the Pharisees gained religious prominence in the Sanhedrin.

Civil war broke out in Israel under the leadership of Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II (67-63 B.C.), the sons of Salome Alexandra. The Romans were eventually asked to settle the dispute. Rome decided in favor of Hyrcanus, and thus Hyrcanus was subsequently appointed high priest to rule over the provinces of Judea and Idumea. This is when Roman influence and control entered the land of Palestine. Palestine was under Roman occupation during the time of Jesus' ministry and the early history of the church. Rome remained in control until the fall of Rome in A.D. 476.

It was during the Maccabean period that the Old Testament apocryphal books were written. Though some of this literature was written during the early Roman period, the majority of the books were produced during the Jewish struggles to encourage the Jews to rid Palestine of Syrian influence. These books are 1 & 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Additions to Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah, Prayer of Azariah and the Song

of the Three Young Men, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manasseh and 1 & 2 Maccabees.

These books were never accepted as inspired books by the Jews, Jesus, the apostles, or the first century church. They were written simply for the purpose of encouraging Jews during their time of struggle for freedom before Jesus came into the world to offer them a freedom that was far greater than national freedom. The apocryphal books were accepted by the Jews only as letters of encouragement, not as inspired messages from God.

D. The Roman Empire (63 B.C. - A.D. 476):

In the last part of the first century B.C., the Roman Empire began to grow as a dominant world empire because of the turmoil of numerous civil regional wars that the Roman government settled. The city of Rome, that later became the capital of the Roman Empire, was founded in 753 B.C. As disputes were settled and peoples conquered by the Romans, vast areas of the ancient world came under the control of Rome. The Empire eventually encompassed North Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Asia Minor, Macedonia and Greece. Peace was secured by implementing Roman rule in troubled areas of the ancient world. As a result, Rome eventually became a world-ruling empire into which Jesus came and the New Testament church was established with the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Pentecost of A.D. 30.

The Roman government laid a foundation of social and political peace for the early disciples to go forth and preach the gospel. It opened up communication with a system of roads and commerce that reached to the far corners of the

Empire, which Empire extended from southern England to the Far East, and into Egypt. It was the most extensive empire of the world at the time the Son of God came into the world, thus setting the world stage for the introduction of the gospel to be preached to the world. Rome thus established an environment and system of communication and travel by which world evangelism could be accomplished in one generation.

1. Roman government:

At the top of the Roman government was the position of Caesar. He possessed the final authority of the Empire. Caesars eventually claimed deity, and thus required worship from the citizens. The following are the Roman Caesars who reigned in Rome during New Testament times:

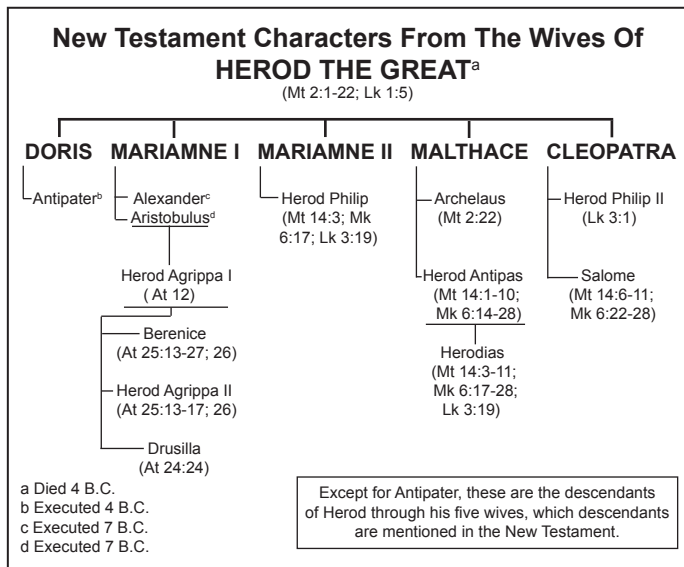
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|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Augustus (27 B.C. - A.D. 14; see Lk 2:1) | 25:10-12; 27:24; 2 Tm 4:16,17) |
| 2. Tiberius (A.D. 14-37; see Lk 3:1) | 6. Galba (A.D. 68) |
| 3. Caligula (A.D. 37-41) | 7. Otho (A.D. 69) |
| 4. Claudius (A.D. 41-54; see At 11:28; 18:2) | 8. Vitellius (A.D. 69) |
| 5. Nero (A.D. 54-68; see At | 9. Vespasian (A.D. 69-79) |
| | 10. Titus (A.D. 79-81) |
| | 11. Domitian (A.D. 81-96) |

The Roman Senate was generally made up of about three hundred members who were Senators for life. They were an advisory government body in Rome. At times in Roman history, however, they acted as the ruling body to maintain continuity in the government of the Empire when there was turmoil during those times when there was a change of Caesars. Historians generally concur that the Caesars, with the advice of the Senate, continued to rule the Roman Empire until the fall of the city of Rome in A.D. 476. After this date, the former territories that were origi-

nally controlled from Rome were then ruled by regional governments.

During Rome’s control of Palestine in the first century B.C., Herod the Great had more influence on the political environment of Palestine by the time of the birth of Jesus than any other Jewish king. Herod was firmly in control of the Jewish nation as a puppet ruler of Rome. According to our calendar today, Herod the Great died in 4 B.C. Since Jesus was born within two years before Herod died, and was crucified when He was about thirty-three years old, the events of Pentecost that are recorded in Acts 2, lead us to conclude that the church established on the Pentecost of A.D. 30.

During the time of Jesus and the early church in Palestine, Rome allowed the Jews to govern themselves to some



extent by their own kings. This succession of kings began with Herod the Great (37 B.C. - 4 B.C.), who brutally reigned over the Jews (See Mt 2:1-18; Lk 1:5). By his wife, Doris, Herod had a son named, Antipater. By Mariamne II of Simon he had Herod Philip I (Mt 14:3; Mk 6:17; Lk 3:19), the first husband of Herodias (Mk 6:17-28; Lk 3:19). By Malthace, he had Herod Antipas (Mt 14:1-10; Mk 6:14ff; Lk 3:1,19) and Archelaus (Mt 2:22). By Cleopatra, he had Herod Philip II (Lk 3:1). By Mariamne I, he had Alexander and Aristobulus. From Aristobulus came Herod Agrippa I and Herodias (Mt 14:1-12), who left Herod Philip I for his brother Herod Antipas (Mk 6:17). From this marriage came Salome (Mt 14:6-11). From Herod Agrippa I (At 12) came Bernice (At 25:13), Drusilla, who married Felix (At 24:24), and Herod Agrippa II (At 25:13-17,26).

After Herod's death, his territory was given to his sons, though they did not receive the title of "king." Herod's son, Archelaus (4 B.C. - A.D. 6), was made a tetrarch and given Judea, Samaria and Idumea. Philip (4 B.C. - A.D. 34) was made tetrarch of Auranitis, Betanea and Trachonitis (Lk 3:1). Antipas (4 B.C. - A.D. 39) was made tetrarch of Galilee and Perea (Mt 14; Lk 23:7-12). Herod Antipas appointed his brother-in-law Agrippa I as overseer of markets in Tiberias from A.D. 37 to A.D. 44 (At 12). One of the daughters of Agrippa I, Drusilla, married Felix, the procurator of Judea. Eventually, the only son of Agrippa I, Agrippa II, was given the areas formerly ruled by Philip and Lysanias. He was also given Galilee and Perea (See At 25:13-23,32). Agrippa II died in A.D. 100.

The Roman Empire was divided into provinces and districts. The provinces were divided into public and imperial provinces (At 13:7; 18:12). Public provinces were

generally governed for one year by proconsuls who were chosen by lot or selected by the Roman Senate. Imperial provinces were governed by one who was directly appointed by the Roman Emperor (See Lk 2:2). Governors, or procurators, who were often military officials, were usually appointed to rule these areas for an indefinite period with the power of military legions (Jn 19:12). At the time of Jesus, Palestine was governed by Pontius Pilate who was appointed as governor by Rome (Mt 27:11).

2. Roman military:

The principal military unit of the Roman army was the legion that consisted of 4,000 to 6,000 men. Each legion was divided into ten cohorts (At 10:1; 21:31; 27:1). The smallest military unit was the century that was commanded by a centurion. There were six centuries to a cohort (See Mt 27:54; Mk 15:39ff; At 10:1ff).

3. Roman citizenship:

Roman citizenship was a prized possession. It could be acquired by birth, service in the army, purchase, special service given to the state, or a special grant by the state in honor of a particular individual. The death penalty was enacted on those who falsely claimed citizenship. A citizen could not be punished without trial (At 16:39), or bound and scourged without thorough examination and conviction of a crime (At 22:24-29). A citizen had a right to appeal his case to Caesar (At 25:10-12).

4. Roman economy:

Slavery was at the center of the Roman economy. Some

have estimated that at the time of Jesus, from a third to a half of the Roman Empire's population were bondservants. Support of the Roman state was through taxation that was often left in the hands of local officials. Tax collectors exacted taxes from the public, keeping a portion for themselves and sending the remainder to Rome. This system was filled with corruption. Tax collectors (publicans) thus gained the reputation for being some of the most dishonest people of society.

E. Destruction of Jerusalem and temple (A.D. 70):

After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in A.D. 30, the second greatest event that affected the disciples in the first century was the consummation of national Israel in a special covenant relationship with God. This occurred with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70. We must not underestimate the significance of this God-ordained historical event in reference to biblical interpretation and the evangelistic work of the early disciples. This is particularly true in reference to Jesus' teachings in the parables, and specifically, in the context of Matthew 24 where Jesus prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

Abraham was called in order that his descendants become a monotheistic nation that would preserve a segment of society through which God could introduce His Son into the world (See Gn 12:1-3). It would be through this nation that God would send the Redeemer into the world, and His message of the gospel. We must understand, therefore, that through the seed of Abraham, the Messiah (the Christ) would come (Gl 3:16). Once the Seed came, then Israel was dissolved in fulfillment of the promise to

Abraham (Gl 3:26-29). There was no longer a need for an earthly symbol of heavenly kingdom reign. Citizens of the new kingdom reign of the new King would be the people of all nations who would submit to the gospel of King Jesus.

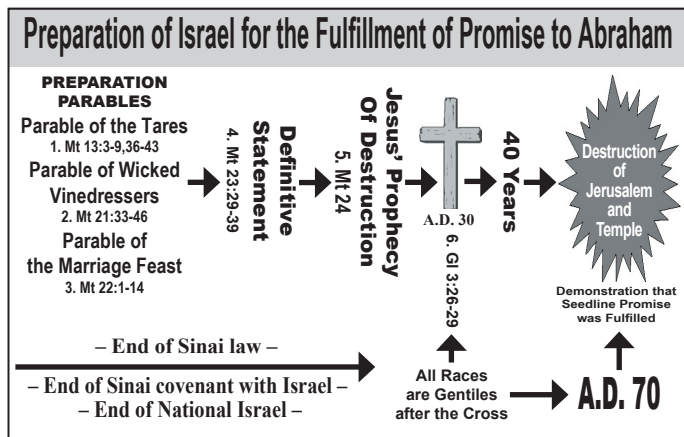
Those Israelites who were sons of Abraham by faith were brought into Christ, wherein they enjoyed a special new covenant relationship with God (See Jr 31:31-33). However, with the consummation of all that God had accomplished through Israel, it was time in A.D. 70 for the visual removal of Israel as having a special national covenant relationship with God. The righteous of God, the church, would then shine forth under the kingdom reign of King Jesus that started forty years before on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30 (See Mt 13:36-43).

After the establishment of the new covenant with God through His Son, no special covenant needed to be maintained with national Israel (Hb 8:7-13). The church of Christ is now the new Israel of God, the members of which God has now established a new covenant relationship through Jesus. It was to this end that God used the vehicle of national Israel to first bring the Savior into the world, and then take the gospel of the Savior into all the world.

The early evangelists and writers of the epistles had in mind the prophecy of Jesus concerning the destruction of Jerusalem when they wrote to the disciples of Christ within two decades before A.D. 70 (See Mt 24). This is particularly true in reference to those epistles that were written in the middle and latter part of the 60s. When Jesus and the New Testament writers prophesied concerning the coming of the Lord in judgment on unbelieving Jews, they were warning Jewish Christians to stay away from Jerusalem

and Judaism (See Jd 14,15). When the time came for the destruction to occur, the early disciples had been thoroughly warned and prepared to accept the end of national Israel. The destruction of national Israel, therefore, was the final sign to the world that the church of our Lord Jesus Christ was ordained as God's people on earth (See Mt 13:36-43).

1. **Matthew 13:3-9,36-43:** The harvest of the parable of the tares reveals the ministry of Jesus and the disciples that would take place before the end of the age of national Israel (Mt 13:39). Jesus first initiated the reaping during His earthly ministry, while His disciples continued to reap from the field of national Israel unto A.D. 70. When national Israel was terminated, then the righteous in Christ were revealed as the true people of God.
2. **Matthew 21:33-46:** The manifestation of the kingdom of God on earth was taken from the Jews who crucified the Messiah, and given to those who believed in the Stone that was rejected by national Israel (See Dn 2:34,35).
3. **Matthew 22:1-14:** Jesus announced to the Jews that they should come to His feast of the gospel. They re-



fused by rejecting Him. They also rejected the disciples as they went forth preaching the gospel to the Jews after the ascension. King Jesus subsequently destroyed the murderers who crucified Him in their city.

4. **Matthew 23:29-39:** All the rejection of the religious leaders throughout past history would come upon those leaders of Jesus' generation. It would come in the destruction of Jerusalem.
5. **Matthew 24:** Judgment on the generation to whom Jesus delivered this final declaration of the termination of Israel would come to pass in the lives of some of those who were in His immediate audience (Mk 9:1). The fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 was God's final proof that Jesus was the Son of God.
6. **Galatians 3:26-29:** Abraham was a Gentile. All Abraham's descendents were Gentiles until God established a covenant with the descendants who came through Isaac and Jacob. Jews (Israelites), therefore, existed only from the time God established a national covenant with the descendants of Abraham at Mount Sinai. When this covenant was terminated at the cross of the Messiah, then the Israelites (Jews) as a covenanted people with God ceased to exist as a distinct people in the eyes of God. All people of the world today are Gentiles. The gospel, therefore, is to go to all nations of the world as it did in the first century (Mt 28:20; see At 9:20; 13:5,14,42; 14:1; 17:1,2,10,17; 18:4,19,26; 19:8; Jn 20:30,31).

– Religious World Of The New Testament –

It was initially the policy of the Roman government to allow freedom of religion among subdued peoples that came under the control of Rome. This practice allowed the free expression of numerous religions throughout the Roman Empire at the time of Jesus. However, this policy changed

as Roman Caesars became more oppressive, even to the point of claiming deity for themselves, and subsequently, making Christianity an illegal religion. Roman state religion thus became the oppressor of the church during the last part of the first century and into the second century. This oppression was brought out in the book of Revelation that John wrote to the seven churches of Asia. Some of the religious and philosophical thinking that prevailed throughout the Empire would be the following:

A. Greek/Roman Pantheon:

Under the Greek/Roman Pantheon, Roman names were applied to Greek gods. These gods were subsequently worshiped throughout the Roman Empire (At 14:12; 19:27,35). Jupiter, the god of the sky, was identified with the Greek god Zeus. The Greek god Poseidon, the god of the sea, was called Neptune. Hades, the god of the underworld, was called Pluto.



Greek Parthenon (temple)

Hermes, the messenger god, was identified with Mercury (At 14:11,12). Rome built temples and appointed priests to administer in those temples that were constructed in honor of their gods. In these worship centers priests performed all the ceremonial rites and rituals that pertained to the pantheon of gods.

Wherever the gospel was preached, there were many who turned from the false gods that had been created after the imagination of men (See At 17:22-29; 1 Th 1:9,10). By the

end of the first century, this conversion from false gods eventually led the Christians into conflict with local traditional religious leaders (At 19), as well as the “beast” (the Roman state) and “false prophet” (Roman religion) of the Roman Empire (Rv 13).

B. Emperor Worship:

Emperor worship began as early as the death of Julius Caesar who was deified after his death. Many Caesars later claimed some degree of deity during their reign as Caesar. Domitian was particularly zealous to make this claim. The refusal of Christians to worship a particular Caesar as lord branded them as unpatriotic, and thus, insurrectionists against the Empire. Because Christians were accused of being insurrectionists, for almost 150 years after the ascension of King Jesus as the Lord of lords (1 Tm 6:15), they periodically suffered severe persecution at the hand of Caesars who sought to be the only lord of the people. The book of Revelation was written to reassure Christians as they suffered through these periods of persecution (Rv 2:10; 17:14).

Roman government persecution of the church did not officially end until the signing of the Edict of Toleration in A.D. 311. With the signing of the Edict of Milan in A.D. 313 by Constantine, Christianity was officially made the state religion. Constantine, the Caesar of Rome, who issued the Edicts had eventually accepted the validity of Christianity, and thus he himself supposedly became a Christian.

From this time in history, the Roman Empire ceased all persecution of Christians throughout the realm of Roman government control. However, by this time in the history

of the church, the church became more institutional, and thus lost its identity as a gospel-based people who had believed and obeyed the gospel. As a state religion, government influence began to mold the thinking of many in the church to the point that eventually a “head of the church” was established in Rome. It was then no longer the church of Christ, but the institutional organization of a man-made religion.

C. Religions of the Roman Empire:

Different religions permeated Roman society. There were many such religious beliefs because individuals sought a personal experience with some deity that would conform to the desires of the worshiper. Cybele of Asia Minor, Isis and Osiris of Egypt, and Mithras of Persia were only a few of these deities. Throughout the Roman Empire there was an assortment of religions that had been created after the desires of people who sought to imagine a god who would condone their evil behavior. It was from these gods that thousands turned when they discovered in Jesus the incarnate representation of the true and living God (1 Th 1:9).

On behalf of Paul, who was in prison at the time in Rome, Luke wrote the defense documents of Luke and Acts. It was one of his purposes in these two documents to Theophilus to exalt true faith that was the result of God’s supernatural intervention into the misguided world of false religions. The New Testament Christians lived in this world that was filled with religions and gods that had been created throughout the centuries. Therefore, the defense of Christian faith made by Luke in both Luke and Acts sets forth the proposition that there is only one God, and that

this God has revealed Himself only through the incarnate Son of God. The book of John was written primarily to Gentiles. In this particular document, John argued that Jesus of Nazareth was not only the Christ (the Messiah), but also the incarnate Son of God (Jn 20:30,31).

D. Occultism:

Occultism was the self-righteous performance of religious rites, rituals or ceremonies that were an expression of one's religious beliefs. Occultism was very prevalent throughout Roman society (At 8:9-24; 13:6-11; 19:19). In general, the worshipers of the various cults of Roman society superstitiously believed that supposed evil spirits and demons could be controlled by those who either knew the correct ceremonial performances or could recite the correct incantation in order to supposedly move and control the spirits. Though these religionists claimed connection with the supernatural, there is no indication throughout the Bible that any occult workers exercised any miraculous works or controlled any supposed spirits (See At 8:1-25; 19:11-20).

If there were an actual revelation of and control over supposed supernatural practices by religious practitioners, then there would have been great confusion, especially in the first century. The origin of any supernatural manifestation was from God in order that the messengers be validated as true representatives of God. The Christian must not be misled by what is considered to be the supposed miraculous work of Satan. Only God can be the origin of all that is supernatural. The works of occult leaders are simply centered around the masterful abilities of individuals to deceive people through their skillful performances, which performances they erroneously claimed

to be supernatural. It is reasonable to believe that God would never allow Satan to take control of the realm of the supernatural in order to confuse the people of God.

E. Philosophy:

Plato, a student of Socrates, lived in the fourth century B.C. His philosophies permeated the philosophical world of the Gentiles by the first century, and specifically into the second century. Plato believed that the real world was composed of ideas. The material world was only an extension or manifestation of these ideas. To him, knowledge was the ultimate salvation. In some ways, therefore, four centuries after Plato, systematic Gnosticism eventually arose with some of the philosophical thoughts of Plato, and subsequently applied to religious thinking. Even some in the church of the second century A.D. were influenced by Gnostic thinking, and thus the world view of a great majority of the second century church was changed. For Plato, knowledge was the road to self-awareness and personal self-exaltation. To the Gnostic centuries after Plato, knowledge of one's spiritual self was the final goal for spiritual enlightenment, and subsequently self-exaltation.

There were also other great religious philosophies that existed in the first century that offered the opportunity for the preaching of the freedom that came with the truth of the gospel. The **Epicureans** believed that happiness was acquired by behavior that brought about permanent pleasures. It was thus a self-oriented system of narcissistic pleasure that focused one's mind on the things of this world (See Cl 3:1,2). In some ways, and in contrast to the Epicureans, the **Stoics** believed that happiness was acquired by practicing self-control in all aspects of life. The **Cynics**

believed that the greatest virtue of life was to suppress all desires. In order to be free of desire, the Cynics believed that one must totally control all physical lusts of the body. This led to the spread of asceticism among many religious groups. Those of the Roman society who had no faith in any god believed that there was no final moral authority in life, and thus morals were determined by each person's experiences in the particular society in which he lived. The Cynics believed that what determined one's morals in one society would not necessarily serve him as a moral guide in another society.

It would be safe to say that the diversity of the many philosophical religious beliefs that we see in our world today also existed in the first century. These beliefs were dressed with different names and systems of behavior. However, the basic premises of all modern-day beliefs of misguided philosophies and religions also existed in the first century when the New Testament documents were written. When one studies the New Testament, therefore, he will discover answers for any ungodly philosophies or false religions that exist today (See Cl 2:20-22; 2 Tm 3:16,17).

Gnosticism was a belief that led to the apostasy of many in the church in the second century. This system of thought had its beginnings in the first century, and thus, there are several warnings concerning the fundamental beliefs of the Gnostics in the New Testament letters of Colossians, 1 & 2 Timothy and 1,2,3 John.

The general belief of the Gnostics was based on the self-righteous attitude of an individual who presumed that knowledge of one's inner self elevated him to a higher level of spirituality in comparison to others. The focus of

the Gnostics' salvation, therefore, depended on one's self-proclaimed awareness of the supposed inner spark of light that revealed one's salvation.

Gnosticism was essentially religious arrogance that led many Christians in the latter part of the first century, and into the second century, to turn away from the grace of the truth of the gospel. Many Christians turned away from the gospel in order to seek some inner awareness by which one could self-declare his own righteousness (See Rm 10:1-3). Thousands thus distorted the truth of the gospel by blending the gospel with the teachings of misguided men who gave up on grace and went to a religion of self-righteousness (See 2 Th 2:10-12). They did as Jude wrote of them: They became "*ungodly men who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ*" (Jd 4).

F. Judaism (the Jews' religion):

Judaism at the time of Jesus and the apostles was largely a digression from the intent of the Sinai law that was originally given to the Israelites 1,400 years before. Throughout the years, the added religious traditions of the Jews had destroyed the true intent of the law that God had revealed through Moses. Judaism was thus a mixture of the Jews' traditions and the actual statutes of the Sinai law (See Mt 15:1-9; Mk 7:1-9; At 26:5). With their additions to the Sinai law, the Jews had constructed a system of self-righteousness, as opposed to the imputed righteousness of God that came through His grace (See Rm 10:1-3).

It became difficult for the people to know what was actually the Sinai law and what was simply the traditions of the fa-

thers. Paul referred to this system of religion as Judaism, or the “Jews’ religion.” He did so because the Jews who promoted Judaism no longer conformed to the intent of the Sinai law, but to their own self-imposed religious rites, rituals and ceremonies (Gl 1:13,14). They were more interested in keeping the traditions of the fathers than the actual statutes of the Sinai law (See Mk 7:8).

Judaism developed into a legal system of religion wherein it was assumed that one could justify himself before God through perfect law-keeping. In order to guarantee strict obedience to the statutes of the Sinai law, therefore, the religious leaders added numerous rites, rituals and ceremonies to the Sinai law in order to supposedly guarantee obedience to the law itself. These traditional additions subsequently became more important than the original intent of the law (Mk 7:1-9; see Mt 23; Cl 2:20-22).

In the Jews’ efforts to make everyone conform to their legalistic code of religious behavior, the scribes and Pharisees enforced the belief that one’s supposedly perfect keeping of the added traditions would guarantee compliance to the statutes of the Sinai law. However, in their failure to focus on the actual intent of the Sinai law, they established their own system of self-righteous religiosity through obedience of their religious traditions (Rm 10:1-3).

Throughout the New Testament, the Holy Spirit inspired writers dealt extensively with the Jews’ system of legal-oriented religious behavior. This was a system of religiosity that was in contrast to the grace of God that was revealed through Jesus. In the letters that Paul wrote to the Roman and Galatian Christians, he dealt with the fallacy of any works-oriented religionist who might assume

that one can be saved by meritorious good works or perfect keeping of law (At 13:38,39; Gl 2:16).

The proposition of both Romans and Galatians is true simply because it is not possible for one to justify himself before God on the merit of either perfect law-keeping or meritorious good works. This is true because no one can keep any system of law perfectly. Neither can any good work atone for any sin. If sin were sanctified by good works, then the door would be opened for competition (boasting) in reference to self-righteousness, as well as judgment as to who could do the most or best works in order to be saved. Such conclusions would be totally contrary to the fellowship that Christians have with one another in the grace of God, wherein all are justified and sanctified by grace.

At the time Jesus came into the world, the religious leaders of Palestine promoted Judaism that had over years evolved into an institutional religion. The religious leaders of the major religious groups of Judaism had great influence on the people during the ministry of Jesus. Many of the leaders of these denominated religious groups of Judaism often came into conflict with Jesus and His message of the gospel that He introduced. This conflict continued with the disciples of Jesus even after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

1. The Pharisees:

It is believed that the Pharisees originated from among the Jews while they were in the lands of their captors in Babylonian captivity. By the time of Jesus, the Pharisees had developed into an elitist religious group among the Jews.

At the time of the ministry of Jesus, they had gained a hold on the minds and hearts of many people, and thus, intimidated many of the people into conforming to their religious system of legal obedience to the religious traditions of the fathers (See Mk 7:1-9).

The Pharisees were the most powerful and influential religious sect in Judaism at the time the Son of God came into the world. In conjunction with their written traditions, the Pharisees accepted the Sinai law with their religious traditions as their final authority in matters of faith (Mt 15:1-9; Mk 7:1-9). They also accepted many oral traditions that had been handed down from generation to generation throughout their history. They were a group of religious professionals who loved money (Lk 16:14). They also loved the influence of their authority that they exercised over the consciences of the people (See Mt 23).

2. The Sadducees:

As the Pharisees, the origin of the Sadducees is also difficult to determine. Some Bible students believe that this religious/political sect originated from Jewish government officials who descended from the priest, Zadok (See Ez 44:15,16; 48:11). Some have suggested that they were simply a political party among the Jews. Others have asserted that they were a religious party, of which many scribes were a part during the time of Jesus. Still others believe that they were an aristocratic body of elite religionists. Regardless of their origin, at the time of Jesus they were considered a separatist group who considered it honorable to dispute with any who assumed that they were teachers of the people.

The Sadducees, of whom many were priests, were the aristocrats of the Jewish religious society in Palestine. In reference to their theological foundation, they placed great emphasis on the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament). However, they were often in conflict with the Pharisees, and always in jealous conflict with Jesus (Mt 22:23-33). Their philosophy of life was basically materialistic, for they did not believe in the soul, the resurrection of the dead, or life after death (At 23:8). They believed in the free-will of man, and that one's moral behavior of life was dependent on the choices he made during life.

3. The Essenes:

The Essenes are not mentioned in the New Testament, though their behavior of a pious life influenced many faithful Jews who lived before and during the ministry of Jesus. The Jewish historian, Josephus, recorded that the Essenes were found to have dwelt in towns and villages throughout Judea. They were a religious people who were hospitable to one another. They dedicated themselves to prayer and making copies of and preserving the Old Testament Scriptures. It is believed that some lived in separate communities, practiced celibacy, and were diligent in caring for one another as a brotherhood. Some believe that John the Baptist was initially part of an Essene community.

The Essenes are often associated with the Qumran Community that was discovered on the northwestern area of the Dead Sea. This community was dedicated to copying the Old Testament Scriptures. In 1947 several copies of the books of the Old Testament, and related writings, were discovered in the caves of Qumran. A complete scroll of Isaiah was one of the scrolls that was discovered among

many portions of other scrolls. The discovery of the Isaiah scroll has proved to be one of the most significant discoveries of ancient biblical texts.

4. The Zealots:

The Zealots were Jewish nationalists whose objective it was to deliver Palestine from Roman rule and occupation. In the first century, one group of Zealots was led by Judas the Galilean, who rebelled against Rome in A.D. 6. This revolt was brutally put down by Rome. In modern-day terms, the Zealots were the Jewish terrorists within the Roman Empire. They followed the zeal of Mattathias and his sons, who many years before, were zealous for the Sinai law and the liberation of Palestine from Gentile occupation.

After the crushing of the Zealot revolt of A.D. 6, the spirit of the Zealots remained alive until the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and eventually took the Jewish stronghold of Masada in May of A.D. 74. The Zealots had intensified their anti-Rome activity in Palestine during the decade that led up to the destruction of Jerusalem. The New Testament letters of James, Jude, 1 & 2 Peter, and possibly Revelation, were written in order to prepare Jewish Christians for the great calamity of the fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the temple. These letters were also written to warn Jewish Christians not to be recruited by the Zealots who were possibly going from one synagogue to another in order to recruit patriotic Jews to join their ranks to expel the Gentiles from Palestine. If any Jewish Christians were tempted to join the insurrection against Rome, they would surely have perished in the final destruction of Jerusalem that resulted in the death of hundreds of thousands of Jews.

Simon, one of the apostles, was a Zealot before he was called into apostleship (Lk 6:15; At 1:13). The theology of the Zealots was based on the belief that God would restore Israel as a nation to its former glory that it enjoyed during the days of kings as David and Solomon. In the first century world of the early disciples, this theology had influenced the thinking of the Jews, and subsequently, distorted Jesus' immediate disciples' understanding of what He stated concerning His coming kingdom reign. When Jesus spoke of the kingdom, their interpretation of what He said was that He would restore the nation of Israel to her former national glory (At 1:6). But such was not to be the case for the kingdom was not to be of this world (See Jn 18:36-38). In fact, in the final prophecy of Jesus that is recorded in Matthew 24, Jesus prophesied that all those physical things in which the Jews took great pride, would in forty years after His crucifixion and ascension, be destroyed.

All of the preceding philosophies and religions permeated Roman society at the time Jesus and the early evangelists preached the gospel in the first century. It was truly an opportune time in history for God to send His Son into the world with a unifying message of freedom from both sin and religion (Gl 4:4). It was a time of relative political peace. Communication and travel were possible throughout the Roman Empire. It was a time of expectation in the midst of religious confusion. Jews had been scattered throughout the Roman Empire where synagogues were built. After the Pentecost of A.D. 30, it was to these synagogues that the early evangelists initially went with the message of the gospel.

God had providentially placed the Jews throughout the

Middle East in order to lay the foundation for world evangelism. When converted Jews returned home after their conversion during one of the annual Passover/Pentecost feasts in Jerusalem for many years after the A.D. 30 Passover/Pentecost feast, they returned with the message of the gospel that was daily preached in the temple courtyard (See At 5:42; 8:26-40). God had thus prepared the best environment at the right time in the history of the world in which to send His Son into the world for the redemption of mankind. When Jesus eventually came into the world, therefore, it was time for a transition from the Sinai covenant and law to the New Testament covenant and law that is established with all those who obey the gospel.

– Change From Old To New Covenant –

One of the most important subjects in Bible study is to determine which law of God was in force at any one time from the beginning of creation until today. It is especially critical to separate the covenant and law under which the Jews lived in the Old Testament from the covenant and law under which Christians live today.

A. From Genesis to Mount Sinai:

Before the giving of the Sinai law to Israel at Mount Sinai, God worked with all those who were of the faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Job may have also lived during the time of these patriarchs. With these people of faith God gave law through the fathers of the clans who lived before and during their time (Rm 2:14; Hb 1:1,2). Before God called the children of Israel into a special covenant relationship at Mount Sinai, there was no such thing as a Jewish race since a Jew is defined as one who was an

Israelite and in a covenant relationship with God as a part of national Israel.

After God established a special covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai, He continued to work with the Gentiles in reference to law as He had always worked with all mankind from the beginning of time. All of God's work with humanity through law has always been for the purpose of leading all people of faith to the revelation of the Son of God at a predetermined time in history.

From Mount Sinai onward, God worked in a special covenant relationship with Israel. With this covenant, God also gave the Jews the Sinai law. This covenant and law would remain in force with the Jews until the activation of the new covenant that was revealed and established in Acts 2 in A.D. 30. When studying through the material that is revealed in the New Testament from Acts through Revelation, therefore, one must keep in mind that the new covenant and law under which we now live as Christians has freed us from the Sinai covenant and law under which the Jews lived until the announcement of the gospel on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30 (Rm 7:1-4; Hb 9:16,17). This new covenant and law will be in force until Jesus comes again. The Bible student must be cautious, therefore, not to bring laws from the Sinai law into the new covenant and law relationship that God now has with the gospel-obedient people of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

B. From the ministry of Jesus to Pentecost:

In the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, God recorded for us the events that would lead to the last days of national Israel. It was during this time that Jesus came

to finalize the Sinai covenant and law that were originally established between God and Israel at Mount Sinai. By fulfilling the purpose for which that covenant and law were given, Jesus fulfilled the Sinai law (See Mt 5:17,18). It was thus nailed to the cross (Cl 2:14; Hb 10:9).

C. Fulfillment of all prophecies:

The fact that Jesus fulfilled the purpose for which the Sinai law was given to the nation of Israel means that there was an end of that law when the nation of Israel was consummated in Christ. At the end of His ministry, and prior to His ascension, Jesus reminded His disciples that all Old Testament prophecies had been fulfilled in Him (Lk 24:44). The Sinai law to which Jesus referred in Matthew 5:17,18 was fulfilled by the end of His ministry. Therefore, when the Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled in Christ, then the covenant and law that God had given to the nation of Israel came to an end.

The special covenant relationship that God had established with national Israel 1,400 years before Jesus came was consummated in Christ. This consummation of the Sinai covenant and law took place when Jesus established His covenant with those who obeyed the gospel on and after the Pentecost of Acts 2. Jesus took away the Sinai covenant that God had established with the nation of Israel in order to establish His new covenant that was ratified by the blood of His Son (Hb 10:9). All those who have obeyed the gospel since the Pentecost of A.D. 30, therefore, have now come into a new covenant relationship with God (Mt 26:26-29). They are now married to Christ (Rm 7:1-4).

D. From earthly ministry to heavenly reign:

It is important to understand that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John record Jesus' earthly ministry to the Jews in order to bring them to the gospel and acceptance of His kingdom reign that was to be established at the time of His ascension (See At 2:14-36; Ep 1:20-23). Jesus lived under the Sinai covenant and law. His ministry was to the Jews. Many things that Jesus said and did during His ministry, therefore, must be understood in the context of His ministry to the Jews, who with Himself, were living under the Sinai law. He lived without sin in reference to His obedience to the Sinai law (Hb 4:15). It is important to understand this lest we bring teachings of the Sinai law into the New Testament covenant and law under which those who have obeyed the gospel now live. Jesus came to fulfill the Sinai law.

E. Rightly dividing covenants and laws:


In order to understand the New Testament, we must rightly divide the word of God (2 Tm 2:15). We must understand what Jesus taught in reference to the Sinai covenant and law that God had established only with the nation of Israel, the Jews. Jesus' revelation of truth for us today was revealed through Himself and His apostles (See Jn 12:48; 14:26; 16:13).

The New Testament (covenant) of Jesus was established when men and women first came into a covenant relationship with God on the Pentecost of A.D. 30, which event is recorded in Acts 2. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, therefore, are books that record events of the Old Testament era while the Jews were still in a national covenant relationship with God. Acts through Revelation, however, record

the events of the early disciples who were in a new covenant relationship with God because of their obedience to the gospel, which gospel had not been fully revealed during the earthly ministry of Jesus. Jesus' personal teachings were recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John for the benefit of His disciples (Jn 12:30,48). However, after His ascension, He continued to teach through His chosen apostles, to whom all necessary truth was later revealed by the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:26; 16:13).

F. Teaching through the Christ-sent apostles:

Throughout His ministry, Jesus prophesied of the new covenant and law that would come for those who would obey His gospel call (Mt 26:26-28; Jn 3:3-5). However, He reminded His disciples that in His immediate audience many would not understand His prophesied message to Israel, that the Jews' special covenant relationship with God through the Sinai covenant and law was coming to an end (See Mt 13:10-17). Nevertheless, it would be understood by those who would later come into a covenant relationship with God through their obedience to the gospel. Their obedience to the gospel meant that God had transferred them away from the kingdom of Israel to the kingdom reign of King Jesus (Cl 1:13). Throughout His

<p>THE SINAI Covenant & Law</p> <p>Israel Only Levitical Priesthood Shadow of the Substance Prophecy of the Christ Limited To Israel!</p>		<p>THE GOSPEL Covenant & Law</p> <p>All People High Priest of Jesus Revealed Truth of Gospel Established in Christ Offered To All!</p>
<p>Galatians 4:21 – 5:1</p>		

ministry, therefore, Jesus led the Jews to the announcement of His kingdom reign. This would be the time when people would first come into a covenant relationship with God through their obedience to the gospel (At 2:38,41).

G. First proclamation of gospel and response:

In fulfillment of Jesus' promise of Matthew 16:18,19, Peter stood up on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30 and officially announced for the first time in history the good news of the death of Jesus for our sins, His resurrection for our hope, and ascension to the right hand of God to reign as King of kings (At 2:29-33; 1 Tm 6:15). When thousands heard this gospel message, they were cut to the heart. In response to Peter's gospel message, therefore, thousands of people repented and asked what they should do in response to Peter's gospel message (At 2:37). Subsequently, and on that very day, about three thousand people were immersed into a new covenant relationship with God (At 2:37-41). This initiated the new covenant that God established with mankind through His incarnate Son.

Beginning on the day of Pentecost, God revealed through the apostles by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, all necessary truth for the nurturing and building up of those who obeyed the gospel (Jn 14:26; 16:13; Jd 3). The New Testament era thus began on the day of Pentecost, and will continue until Jesus comes again at the end of time. It began with the first official announcement of Jesus as the reigning King of kings. It will end at the time of His final coming when He returns kingdom reign to God the Father in order that God may be all in all (1 Co 15:24-28).

JESUS' MINISTRY EVENTS AND TEACHINGS*

Introduction to Jesus

- Luke explains his research (Lk 1:1-4).
- John introduces the incarnate Word (Jn 1:1-14).
- Genealogies of Jesus (Mt 1:1-17; Lk 3:23-38).

Jerusalem

- Birth of John announced to Zacharias (Lk 1:5-25).

Nazareth

- Birth of Jesus announced to Mary (Lk 1:26-38).
- Angel appears to Joseph (Mt 1:18-25).
- Mary's visit to Elizabeth; Mary's song of praise (Lk 1:39-56).

Juttah (?)

- Birth of John the Baptist (Lk 1:57-80).

Bethlehem

- Birth of Jesus (Lk 2:1-7).

Near Bethlehem

- Angels visit the shepherds (Lk 2:8-20).

Bethlehem and Jerusalem

- Circumcision of Jesus (Lk 2:21).

Jerusalem

- Jesus presented at the temple; Simon's prophecy; Anna's testimony (Lk 2:22-38).

Bethlehem and Jerusalem

- Visit of the wise men (Mt 2:1-12).
- Joseph and Mary, with Jesus, flee to Egypt; Herod slaughters babies (Mt 2:13-18).

Nazareth

- Joseph and Mary return with Jesus from Egypt and go to Nazareth (Mt 2:19-23; Lk 2:39,40).

Jerusalem

- Visit of Jesus to Jerusalem with Joseph and Mary (Lk 2:41-50).

Nazareth

- Eighteen years growing up in Nazareth (Lk 2:51,52).

* It is almost impossible to develop a consistent chronology of the ministry and teachings of Jesus. This is true because the four writers of the ministry and teachings of Jesus wrote with the purpose of developing different themes in their specific documents. Chronological order was not their priority in recording important teachings of Jesus, and specifically, where Jesus was when He taught on a particular subject.

Initial Ministry of Jesus

Jordan desert

- Ministry of John the Baptist (Mt 3:1-12; Mk 1:1-8; Lk 3:1-14; Jn 1:19-28).

Jordan River

- Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist (Mt 3:13-17; Mk 1:9-11; Lk 3:21,22; Jn 1:29-34).

Judean Desert

- Temptation of Jesus in the wilderness (Mt 4:1-11; Mk 1:12,13; Lk 4:1-13).
- Jesus begins ministry at about 30 years of age (Lk 3:23).

Bethany

- John's testimony of Jesus (Jn 1:15-36).
- Jesus' first disciples (Jn 1:35-42).
- Jesus receives more disciples (Jn 1:43-51).

Galilee

- Jesus returns to Galilee; teaching in the synagogues (Lk 3:23; 4:14,15; Jn 1:43-51).

Cana

- Marriage feast at Cana and first miracle (Jn 2:1-11).

Capernaum

- Jesus' visit to Capernaum and His family (Jn 2:12).

Judean Mission (The First Passover)

Jerusalem

- First cleansing of the temple (Jn 2:13-25).
- Night visit of Nicodemus (Jn 3:1-21).

Judean countryside

- Dispute between John and Jesus' disciples (Jn 3:22-26).
- Testimony of John the Baptist (Jn 3:27-36).

Jerusalem

- John the Baptist is imprisoned (Lk 3:19,20).

Second Galilean Mission

Galilee

- Jesus departs for Galilee (Mt 4:12; Mk 1:14,15; Lk 4:14,15; Jn 4:1-3).

Samaria (Sychar)

- Encounter with the Samaritan woman at a well (Jn 4:4-42).

Galilee

- Arrival in Galilee and public teaching (Mt 4:17; Mk 1:14,15; Lk 4:14,15; Jn 4:43-45).
- Four disciples called to be fishers of men (Mt 4:18-22; Mk 1:16-20; Lk 5:1-11).

Cana

- Healing of the nobleman's son (Jn 4:46-54).

Nazareth

- Rejection and forcefully led out of the city (Lk 4:16-30).
- Departure from Nazareth for Capernaum (Mt 4:13-17).

Capernaum

- Jesus heals a man possessed with a demon (Mk 1:21-28; Lk 4:31-37).
- Jesus heals Peter's wife's mother and others (Mt 8:14,15; Mk 1:29-31; Lk 4:38,39).
- Multitudes are healed (Mt 8:16,17; Mk 1:32-34; Lk 4:40,41).
- Jesus prays in a desert place (Mk 1:35; Lk 4:42).
- Jesus states His mission (Mk 1:36-38; Lk 4:43).

Galilee

- Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5:1 - 7:27).
- Response to the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 7:28,29).
- Leper cleansed (Mt 8:1-4; Mk 1:40-45; Lk 5:12-14).

Capernaum

- Return to Capernaum by boat; healing of a paralytic (Mt 9:1-8; Mk 2:1-12; Lk 5:17-26).

Sea of Galilee

- Paralytic healed and forgiven (Mt 9:1-9; Mk 2:1-12; Lk 5:18-26; Jn 4:1-30).
- Call of Matthew; eating in Levi's house (Mt 9:9-13; Mk 2:14-17; Lk 5:27-32).
- Teachings on fasting (Mt 9:14-17; Mk 2:18-22; Lk 5:33-39).

Mission to Jerusalem (The Second Passover)

Jerusalem

- Healing at pool of Bethesda during the Passover/Pentecost feast (Jn 5:1-47).

On way to Galilee

- Disciples pluck ears of corn (mealie) on the Sabbath (Mt 12:1-8; Mk 2:23-28; Lk 6:1-5).
- Healing of a withered hand on the Sabbath (Mt 12:9-13; Mk 3:1-6; Lk 6:6-11).

- Pharisees counsel to do away with Jesus (Mt 12:14; Mk 3:6; Lk 6:11).

Third Mission to Galilee

Galilee

- Healing by the Sea of Galilee (Mt 12:15-21; Mk 3:7-12).

Near Capernaum

- Identity of the twelve apostles (Mt 10:1-4; Mk 3:13-19; Lk 6:12-19).
- Sending of the twelve apostles on a limited commission (Mt 10:5-42).

Capernaum

- Sermon on the Plain (Lk 6:20-49) [?].
- Healing of a centurion's bondservant (Mt 8:5-13; Lk 7:1-10).

Nain

- Jesus raises a widow's son (Lk 7:11-17).
- From prison, John the Baptist sends his disciples to Jesus (Mt 11:2-15; Lk 7:18-30).
- Jesus' rejection of His generation (Mt 11:16-19; Lk 7:31,35).
- Woes to Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum; Jesus' invitation to come (Mt 11:20-30).
- Jesus is anointed by a penitent woman (Lk 7:36-50).

Galilee

- Mission tour in Galilee (Lk 8:1-3).

Capernaum

- Jesus heals a demoniac; accusation of being Beelzebul (Mt 12:22-37; Mk 3:20-30).
- Demands for a sign from the religious leaders (Mt 12:38-45).
- Jesus' earthly family (Mt 12:46-50; Mk 3:31-35; Lk 8:19-21).

Sea of Galilee

- Parable of the sower (Mt 13:1-23; Mk 4:1-20,26-29; Lk 8:4-15).
- Parable of the shining light (Mk 4:21-25; Lk 8:16-18).
- Continued teaching through parables (Mt 13:24-52; Mk 4:30-34).
- Storm at sea (Mt 8:18-27; Mk 4:35-41; Lk 8:22-25).

Gadara

- Jesus casts demons out of two demoniacs (Mt 8:28-34; Mk 5:1-20; Lk 8:26-40).
- Raising Jairus's daughter; healing woman with blood flow (Mt 9:18-26; Mk 5:21-43; Lk 8:41-56).

Capernaum

- Two blind men healed; man with a mute spirit healed (Mt 9:27-34).

Nazareth

- Jesus teaches in His own country and is rejected (Mt 13:54-58; Mk 6:1-6).

Capernaum

- Third mission tour in Galilee; the Twelve sent out (Mt 9:35 - 11:1; Mk 6:7-13; Lk 9:1-6).
- Herod supposes Jesus to be John; John is beheaded (Mt 14:1-12; Mk 6:14-29; Lk 9:7-9).
- Return of the Twelve (Mk 6:30,31; Lk 9:10,11).

Sea of Galilee

- Feeding of the 5,000 (Mt 14:13-21; Mk 6:32-44; Lk 9:12-17; Jn 6:1-14).

Sea of Galilee and Gennesaret

- Walking on water; reception at Gennesaret (Mt 14:22-36; Mk 6:45-56; Lk 8:40; Jn 6:15-21).
- Teaching concerning the bread of life (Jn 6:22-71).

Capernaum

- Exchanging the word of God for the religious traditions of men (Mt 15:1-20; Mk 7:1-23).

Coast of Tyre and Sidon

- Jesus at the borders of Tyre and Sidon; encounter with a Syrophenician woman (Mt 15:21-28; Mk 7:24-30).

Sea of Galilee

- Healing of deaf mute (Mk 7:31-37).
- Return through Decapolis; feeding of the 4,000 (Mt 15:29-38; Mk 8:1-9).

Magdala

- Warning concerning the leaven of the Pharisees (Mt 16:5-12; Mk 8:14-21).
- Healing of a blind man (Mk 8:22-26).

Bethsaida

- Jesus crosses Sea of Galilee; healing a blind man (Mt 16:5-12; Mk 8:18-26).

Near Caesarea-Philippi

- Disciples again profess their faith in Jesus (Mt 16:13-20; Mk 8:27-30; Lk 9:18-21).
- Jesus prophesies His death and resurrection (Mt 16:21-28; Mk 8:31-9:1; Lk 9:22-27).

Mt. Hermon [?]

- The transfiguration (Mt 17:1-13; Mk 9:2-13; Lk 9:28-36).
- Healing of a demoniac (Mt 17:14-21; Mk 9:14-29; Lk 9:37-42).

Galilee

- Jesus again foretells His death and resurrection (Mt 17:22,23; Mk 9:30-32; Lk 9:43-45).

Capernaum

- Jesus miraculously provides Peter with tax money (Mt 17:24-27).
- Disciples debate as to who is the greatest (Mt 18:1-35; Mk 9:33-50; Lk 9:46-50).
- Decision about going to the feast of tabernacles in Jerusalem (Jn 7:1-13).

Mission to Jerusalem**Road to Jerusalem**

- Rejection by Samaritan village on way to the feast of tabernacles (Lk 9:51-56).
- Teaching on the cost of discipleship (Mt 8:18-22; Lk 9:57-62).
- Teaching in the temple courtyard (Jn 7:14-39).
- Division among the people over accepting Jesus (Jn 7:40-53).

Jerusalem and area

- Jesus at the feast of tabernacles; encounter with an adulteress woman (Jn 8:1-11).
- Jesus claims to be the eternal light of the world (Jn 8:12-58).
- Jews attempt to stone Jesus (Jn 8:59).
- Parable of the good Samaritan (Lk 10:29-37).
- Jesus visits Mary and Martha (Lk 10:38-42).
- Disciples again taught how to pray (Lk 11:1-13).
- The seventy-two sent forth to preach and their return (Lk 10:1-24).
- Healing on the Sabbath of a man born blind (Jn 9:1-41).
- Teaching that Jesus is the Good Shepherd (Jn 10:1-21).

Beyond the Jordan

- Jesus at the feast of Dedication; withdraw beyond the Jordan (Jn 10:22-42).

Bethany

- Jesus raises Lazarus (Jn 11:1-45).
- Pharisees again plan to do away with Jesus (Jn 11:46-57).

Withdraw to Ephraim (?)**Ephraim**

- Discourse on prayer and accusations concerning Beelzebul (Lk 11:1-28).
- The sign of Jonah; parable of the lamp; woe to religious leaders (Lk 11:29-54).
- Parables of rich fool; servants; the wise steward (Lk 12:1-49; see also Mt 6:25-38; 10:26-37; 24:45-51).
- Parable of the barren fig tree (Lk 13:1-9).

Near Jordan

- Woman healed on the Sabbath; parable of mustard seed and the leaven (Lk 13:10-21).

Near Perea

- Questions on salvation; reply to Herod; lament over Jerusalem (Lk 13:22-35).
- Discourse at a chief Pharisee's house (Lk 14:1-24).

Near Jerusalem

- Discussion on commitment to discipleship (Lk 14:25-35).
- Teaching through parables (Lk 15:1 - 16:13).
- Warning against false religious leaders (Lk 16:14-17).

Last Mission to Jerusalem (The Third Passover)

Road to Jerusalem

- Ten lepers healed (Lk 17:11-19).
- Discussion concerning the coming kingdom reign of Jesus (Lk 17:20-39).
- Teaching on fornication and divorce (Mt 19:1-12; Mk 10:1-12).

Perea

- Jesus blesses little children (Mt 19:13-15; Mk 10:13-16; Lk 18:15-17).
- Encounter with the rich young ruler (Mt 19:16-30; Mk 10:17-31; Lk 18:18-30).
- Parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Mt 20:1-16).
- Jesus speaks of His crucifixion, death and resurrection (Mt 20:17-19; Mk 10:32-34; Lk 18:31-34).
- Leadership ambitions of James and John (Mt 20:20-28; Mk 10:35-45).

Near Jericho

- Blind men healed (Mt 20:29-34; Mk 10:46-52; Lk 18:35-43).
- Visit to Zacchaeus' house; parable of the pounds (Lk 19:1-27).

Bethany

- Jesus and disciples eat at Mary, Martha and Lazarus' house (Jn 12:1-11).

East of Jerusalem

- Triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Mt 21:1-11,14-17; Mk 11:1-11; Lk 19:29-44; Jn 12:12-19).

Jerusalem

- Cursing of fig tree; second cleansing of temple (Mt 21:12-22; Mk 11:12-25; Lk 19:45-48).
- Jesus' authority challenged (Mt 21:23-27; Mk 11:27-33; Lk 20:1-8).
- Three parables of warning (Mt 21:28 - 22:14; Mk 12:1-12; Lk 20:9-18).
- Jewish religious leaders challenge Jesus (Mt 22:15-40; Mk 12:13-34; Lk 20:20-40).

- Jesus challenges the religious leaders (Mt 22:41-46; Mk 12:35-40; Lk 20:41-47).
- Widow contributes two coins (Mk 12:41-44; Lk 21:1-4).
- Greeks seek Jesus (Jn 12:20-36).
- Religious leaders reject Jesus (Jn 12:37-50).
- Prophecy of the end of the seedline nation with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple (Mt 24,25; Mk 13; Lk 21:5-36).
- Jesus prophesies His betrayal (Mt 26:1-5; Mk 14:1,2; Jn 12:2-8).
- Judas bargains to betray Jesus (Mt 26:14-16; Mk 14:10,11; Lk 22:3-6).

Upper room at friend's house

- Jesus eats the last supper with the disciples; washing of disciples' feet (Mt 26:17-30; Mk 14:12-25; Lk 22:7-30; Jn 13:1-30).
- Jesus speaks of His departure (Mt 26:31-35; Mk 14:27-31; Lk 22:31-38; Jn 13:31 - 16:33).
- Singing of hymn and departure to Mount of Olives (Mt 26:29; Mk 14:26).

Garden of Gethsemane

- Jesus' agony in Gethsemane (Mt 26:36-46; Mk 14:32-42; Lk 22:39-46; Jn 18:1).
- Prayer for the disciples (Jn 17).
- The betrayal and arrest (Mt 26:47-56; Mk 14:43-52; Lk 22:47-53; Jn 18:2-11).

Temple in Jerusalem

- Trial before Jewish religious leaders (Mt 26:75 - 27:10; Mk 14:53-72; Lk 22:54-71; Jn 18:12-23).
- First trial before Jewish leadership (Annas) (Mt 26:57; Mk 14:53-65; Jn 18:12-24).
- Second trial before Jewish leadership (Caiaphas) (Mt 26:57; Jn 18:24-27).

Pilate's judgment seat and Herod's court

- Trial before Pilate and Herod Antipas (Mt 27:2,11-31; Mk 15:1-20; Lk 23:1-25; Jn 18:28-19:16).

Outside Jerusalem

- The crucifixion at Calvary (Mt 27:32-56; Mk 15:21-41; Lk 23:26-49; Jn 19:17-37).

Garden tomb outside city

- Burial in a tomb; revisit of tomb by women (Mt 27:57-61; Mk 15:40-46; Lk 23:50-55; Jn 19:38-42).
- Guards posted at the tomb (Mt 27:62-66; Mk 15:42).
- The resurrection (Mt 28:1-10; Mk 16:1-8; Lk 24:1-12; Jn 20:1-18).

Jerusalem

- Report of the guards to Jewish religious leaders (Mt 28:11-15).

Galilee

- Breakfast by the sea (Jn 21).
- Commissions to preach the gospel [?] (Mt 28:16-20; Mk 16:14-20; Lk 24:36-49).
- Ascension to the right hand of God in heaven (At 1:9-11).

Bethany

- Ascension to the right hand of God in heaven (Lk 24:5-51; At 1:9-11).

APPEARANCES OF JESUS

The following is a suggested order of the appearances. Since it is difficult to determine the time of some of the appearances of Jesus, we cannot be precise concerning the chronology of all the appearances.

- Jesus appeared before Mary Magdalene (Mk 16:9-11).
- Jesus appeared before the two Marys (Mt 28:9,10).
- Jesus appeared before two disciples on a road to Emmaus (Mk 16:12,13; Lk 24:13-32).
- Jesus appeared before Peter (Lk 24:33-35).
- Jesus appeared before ten apostles (Mk 16:14; Lk 24:36-43).
- Jesus appeared before eleven apostles (Lk 20:19-25).
- Jesus appeared before the twelve apostles at sea of Galilee (Lk 21:1-25).
- Jesus appeared before five hundred brethren (1 Co 15:6).
- Jesus appeared before the James (1 Co 15:7).
- Jesus appeared before the twelve apostles in Galilee (Mt 28:16-20; Mk 16:15-18).
- Jesus appeared before the twelve apostles at Mount of Olivet (Lk 24:44-49).
- Jesus appeared before the twelve apostles at the ascension (Mt 28:18-20; Lk 24:50-52; At 1:3-12).
- Jesus appeared before Paul (At 9:3-9).

INTRODUCTION TO OLD & NEW TESTAMENTS

BOOK: **AUTHOR:** **DATE:**

– The Pentateuch –

- GENESIS** Moses* Between 1440 & 1400 B.C.
 Directed to: The twelve tribes of Israel
 Purpose: To reveal the beginning of civilization; rebirth of civilization through Noah; beginning of God's efforts to preserve a seed-line culture of faith through Abraham and his descendants.
- EXODUS** Moses* Between 1440 & 1400 B.C.
 Directed to: The twelve tribes of Israel
 Purpose: A historical continuation of Genesis, with focus on the establishment of the twelve tribes as the seedline nation from which the promised Blessing to Abraham would be fulfilled.
- LEVITICUS** Moses* Between 1440 & 1400 B.C.
 Directed to: The twelve tribes of Israel
 Purpose: Laws, regulations and ordinances for the sons of Levi, who would become the Levitical tribe of priests among the Israelites.
- NUMBERS** Moses* Between 1440 & 1400 B.C.
 Directed to: The twelve tribes of Israel
 Purpose: National census of the twelve tribes in order to determine military strength, and support for the Levitical priests.
- DEUTERONOMY** Moses* Between 1440 & 1400 B.C.
 Directed to: A new generation of Israelites before entrance into Canaan
 Purpose: Review history of Israel's establishment as nation, with emphasis on the laws of the covenant that were given at Mount Sinai.

– Conquest and Residence in Palestine –

- JOSHUA** Joshua* Around 1375 B.C.
 Directed to: The resident twelve tribes of Israel as a nation in Palestine
 Purpose: To strengthen the spirit of Joshua, the successor of Moses, in his leadership to begin the conquest of the land that God had five hundred years before promised to Abraham.
- JUDGES** Samuel [?]* Before 992 B.C.
 Directed to: The twelve tribes of Israel

Purpose: Restoration after repeated fall into sin; oppression by enemies; repeated cries to God for deliverance; efforts made to restore the unfaithful through the leadership of God-called warriors and priests who led the people back to God.

RUTH [?]* Between 1300 & 1000 B.C.

Directed to: The general audience of the faithful

Purpose: To fill in a genealogical link in the ancestry of David to the Messiah by a Gentile widow from Moab.

1 SAMUEL Samuel* Between 1115 & 1000 B.C.

Directed to: The twelve tribes of Israel

Purpose: While functioning as a judge, prophet and priest, Samuel, with other unnamed prophets, ministered as a principle spiritual leader to preserve the seedline nation of Israel.

2 SAMUEL Samuel* Between 1115 & 1000 B.C.

Directed to: The twelve tribes of Israel

Purpose: Continuation of the theme of 1 Samuel, with mention of historical parallel events in 1 Chronicles 10 – 29; focus on God's efforts to preserve the seedline nation until the arrival of the Messiah.

1 & 2 KINGS Jeremiah [?]* Between 560 & 550 B.C.

Directed to: Primarily to the northern kingdom of Israel, with the southern kingdom in mind.

Purpose: Written originally as one book to reveal the providence of God in preserving the seedline nation of Israel from the death of David to a few years after the Babylonian captivity of 586 B.C.

1 & 2 CHRONICLES Ezra [?]* Latter part of 5th century

Directed to: 1 & 2 Chronicles focus on the southern kingdom of Israel, with information for the returning exiles.

Purpose: To reassure returning exiles that God was not finished with Israel as the seedline nation to bring the Messiah into the world; reassurance that the seedline of David would continue until the Messiah came.

– Return of the Remnant –

EZRA Ezra* Between 440 & 400 B.C.

Directed to: The restored remnant of all twelve tribes of Israel

Purpose: To restore the remnant to the word of God and social purity as the people of God; to encourage moral restrictions against idolatry into which their forefathers had fallen.

NEHEMIAH Nehemiah* Sometime after 430 B.C.

Directed to: The restored remnant of all twelve tribes of Israel
 Purpose: History of the returnees and a reminder that Israel would be restored from their captivity in order that the promise of the Messiah through the seedline of David be fulfilled.

ESTHER Mordecai [?]* Between 480 & 460 B.C.
 Directed to: Jews who were still in the captivity of the Persian Empire.
 Purpose: The providential work of God to preserve the Jews as the seedline nation until the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham.

– Wisdom Literature –

JOB [?]* Sometime before 1445 B.C.
 Directed to: Written in Hebrew poetry for the Israelites who would later be delivered from Egyptian captivity.

Purpose: To answer the question as to why the righteous suffer, and to reveal true faith that continues to be maintained, though one may endure suffering that he does not understand.

PSALMS David and others* From 1400 to 586 B.C.
 Directed to: Written in Hebrew poetry for Israel throughout their history from Moses to the Babylonian exile.

Purpose: To give words of wisdom; reveal Messianic prophecies; present individual and national lamentations; express the outpouring of repentance, praise, worship, thanksgiving, liturgy; and calls on God to judge those who persecute the righteous.

PROVERBS Solomon and others* From 970 to 930 B.C.
 Directed to: The posterity of Israel throughout their generations.
 Purpose: Short pithy statements that reveal wisdom and define the fear of God as obedience to the moral principles of God's word.

ECCLESIASTES Solomon* During the 40 years before 931 B.C.
 Directed to: Those who would fear God and keep His commandments.
 Purpose: To reveal that the purpose of life is to fear God and be obedient to the principles of His word, as opposed to lusting after all the vanities of life. Happiness is not found in the material things of this life. It can be found only with God.

SONG OF SOLOMON Solomon* Sometime before 931 B.C.
 Directed to: Two people who have committed themselves to one another.
 Purpose: To reveal God's view of the sanctity of a marriage relationship between a man and a woman.

– The Major Prophets –

ISAIAH Isaiah* Between 740 & 700 B.C.

Directed to: The tribes of the southern kingdom of Israel.

Purpose: In view of the last years of the southern kingdom, Isaiah sought to prolong the inevitable end of Judah by calling the people to repentance. After delivering messages of judgment, Isaiah gave hope of the coming Branch as the Messiah.

JEREMIAH Jeremiah* Sometime before 560 B.C.

Directed to: The southern kingdom of Israel in her last days.

Purpose: To admonish the southern kingdom in her last days of turmoil. The inevitable captivity by the Babylonians meant that Israel would forever lose the possession of her own homeland.

EZEKIEL Ezekiel* Between 592 & 570 B.C.

Directed to: Being in Babylonian captivity by the River Chebar, Ezekiel addressed the Jewish captives in Babylon.

Purpose: While writing apocalyptically with many cryptic symbols, Ezekiel directed his message specifically to the Jewish captives to submit to their existing captivity, but maintain hope in the coming Messiah. The captives would be restored to the promised land, but not as a people who would enjoy a God-ordained independent state as in the past.

DANIEL Daniel* Around 530 B.C.

Directed to: To fellow Jews in exile

Purpose: To encourage the captives that God was still in control of the nations, and thus would protect His people in the midst of international turmoil until the final consummation of Israel. Before that time, the Son of Man would be crowned King of kings in heaven at the right hand of the Ancient of Days.

– The Minor Prophets –

HOSEA Hosea* From 770 to 697 B.C.

Directed to: The northern kingdom of Israel in her final years.

Purpose: To reveal the sorrow of God because His people had created gods after their own imagination, and subsequently turned from Him and the Sinai law of God. The people were thus doomed to Assyrian captivity that would come in 722/21 B.C.

JOEL Joel* In the 7th century B.C.

Directed to: The northern kingdom of Israel in her final years.

Purpose: To remind the people of Judah that the locust plague and drought were the intervention of God to encourage repentance. Seated in this message of judgment was the Messianic promise that in the last days of Israel God would pour out His Spirit.

AMOS Amos* Around 760 B.C.

Directed to: The northern and southern kingdoms of Israel

Purpose: Though with a concluding message of hope, a stern message of judgment is made against the rich for oppressing the poor; Amos pronounced the end of the northern kingdom.

OBADIAH Obadiah* Sometime after 586 B.C.

Directed to: The Edomites

Purpose: Because the Edomites captured and sold into slavery fleeing Jews during the final days of Jerusalem and Judea, Edom would go into oblivion as a nation for her sin.

JONAH Jonah* Shortly before 722/21 B.C.

Directed to: The city of Nineveh of Assyria

Purpose: Since God was sending the Assyrians to terminate the northern kingdom of Israel, He sent the prophet Jonah to the capital of the Assyrian Empire in order to inspire repentance on the part of the Assyrians who would after 722/21 B.C. receive thousands of captive Jews into their society.

MICAH Micah* Between 735 & 700 B.C.

Directed to: Primarily to the northern kingdom of Israel

Purpose: With the fall and captivity of the northern kingdom in view, and contemporary with Isaiah in the city of Jerusalem, Micah foretold the fall of the northern kingdom, though after the calamities, God would establish His kingdom reign in the last days of national Israel.

NAHUM Nahum* Between 663 & 612 B.C.

Directed to: The northern and southern kingdoms of Israel

Purpose: Without any negative judgments against the people of God, Nahum focused on the Ninevites because of their arrogant treatment of the captive Israelites who were in their care.

HABAKKUK Habakkuk* Sometime before 586 B.C.

Directed to: The southern kingdom of Israel

Purpose: Habakkuk was encouraged to ask God why He would allow the righteous to suffer at the hands of the wicked. He questions that if God is all good and powerful, then why would He allow the righteous to suffer. As in Job's case, God gives no answer.

ZEPHANIAH Zephaniah* Between 640 & 609 B.C.

Directed to: The northern kingdom of Israel

Purpose: With the coming destruction by the Babylonian army, "the day of the Lord" would be a time when God would bring judgment on the arrogant idolaters and the socially unjust of Judah.

HAGGAI Haggai* 520 B.C.

Directed to: The returned remnant who were formerly in captivity.

Purpose: In view of the fact that eighteen years after their return, the temple was still lying in ruins, the local leaders needed encouragement and motivation to overcome all opposition in order to commence the rebuilding.

ZECHARIAH Zechariah* 520 B.C. and after

Directed to: Resident returnees in the land of Palestine

Purpose: With a great deal of metaphorical symbolism, Zechariah inspired the returned remnant to complete the rebuilding of the temple regardless of all the turmoil of the surrounding nations. They were to do their work in hope of the kingdom reign that would be established by the coming Messiah.

MALACHI Malachi* Between 460 & 450 B.C.

Directed to: Resident returnees in the land of Palestine

Purpose: Malachi pronounced that the people were involved in immoral living and insincere offerings at the altar. In their marriage to foreign women, they were losing the true identity of the seedline people through whom the Messiah would come into the world.

– The Life and Ministry of Jesus –

MATTHEW Matthew* Between A.D. 60 & 65

Directed to: Jewish Christians

Purpose: To prepare Jewish readers to accept Jesus to be the One who fulfilled all prophecies concerning the Messiah.

MARK John Mark* Between A.D. 65 & 70

Directed to: Primarily Gentile Christians

Purpose: To magnify the wonderful works of Jesus.

LUKE Luke* Around A.D. 62,63

Directed to: Theophilus, a Gentile official

Purpose: To defend Christianity on behalf of Paul by emphasizing the cause (Christ) of Christianity.

JOHN John* Between A.D. 60 & 70

Directed to: Gentile Christians in general

Purpose: To prove that Jesus was the incarnate Word, as well as the Christ and Son of God.

– History of the Early Church –

ACTS Luke* Around A.D. 62,63
 Directed to: Theophilus, a Gentile official
 Purpose: To defend Christianity on behalf of Paul by emphasizing the effect of Christ on the lives of people.

– Letters to the Churches –

ROMANS Paul* Between A.D. 56 & 59
 Directed to: Christians in Rome
 Purpose: To affirm that justification is by faith in the grace of God.

1 CORINTHIANS Paul* Around A.D. 54,55
 Directed to: The disciples throughout Achaia
 Purpose: To correct divisive attitudes and immoral living.

2 CORINTHIANS Paul* Between A.D. 54 & 56
 Directed to: The disciples throughout Achaia
 Purpose: To defend humble servitude in Christ.

GALATIANS Paul* Between A.D. 47 & 49
 Directed to: Jewish and Gentile Christians throughout Galatia
 Purpose: To uphold salvation by God's grace as opposed to meritorious good works or perfect law-keeping.

EPHESIANS Paul* Between A.D. 61 & 63
 Directed to: Predominantly Gentile Christians in Ephesus
 Purpose: To define the community of God, the body of Christ.

PHILIPPIANS Paul* Between A.D. 61 & 63
 Directed to: Christians in Philippi
 Purpose: To exhort the disciples to rejoice in Christ-like behavior.

COLOSSIANS Paul* Between A.D. 61 & 63
 Directed to: Predominantly Gentile Christians in Colosse
 Purpose: To exalt the preeminence of Christ for a Christ-centered life as opposed to traditional religions.

1 THESSALONIANS Paul* Between A.D. 50 & 52
 Directed to: Christians in Thessalonica
 Purpose: To give hope to the disciples in the coming resurrection.

2 THESSALONIANS Paul* Between A.D. 50 & 52
 Directed to: Christians in Thessalonica
 Purpose: To comfort those who are persecuted; give added information concerning the final coming; exhort the disorderly.

1 TIMOTHY Paul* Between A.D. 61 & 63
 Directed to: Timothy, the evangelist
 Purpose: To encourage Timothy to assume the responsibility of edi-

ifying the disciples by teaching the truth of the gospel.

2 TIMOTHY Paul* Around A.D. 67

Directed to: Timothy, the evangelist

Purpose: To encourage Timothy to face the attack of false teachers.

TITUS Paul* Around A.D. 67

Directed to: Titus, the evangelist

Purpose: To encourage Titus to mobilize the disciples to stand against the infiltration of false teachings.

PHILEMON Paul* Between A.D. 61 & 63

Directed to: Philemon, a faithful friend of Paul

Purpose: To remind Philemon to forgive and receive his runaway slave, Onesimus.

HEBREWS Paul or Barnabas (?)* Between A.D. 64 & 68

Directed to: Christians who were of Jewish heritage

Purpose: To encourage faithfulness to Christ and the new covenant in view of the rise of Jewish nationalism prior to A.D. 70.

JAMES James* Between A.D. 62 & 68

Directed to: To the dispersed Jewish Christians

Purpose: To encourage faithful Jewish Christians who were intimidated by Jewish nationalists in their conflict with Roman oppression.

1 PETER Peter* Between A.D. 63 & 66

Directed to: Dispersed Christian Jews in five Roman provinces

Purpose: To encourage the disciples to remain faithful to a Christ-centered life during times of Jewish nationalism.

2 PETER Peter* Between A.D. 65 & 67

Directed to: Jewish Christians who were affected by the invasion of arrogant Jewish insurrectionists against the Roman Empire.

Purpose: To warn against the invasion of false teachers and affirm their judgment by God's judgment on national Israel.

1 JOHN John* Between A.D. 60 & 96

Directed to: First century Christians in general who were affected by those who were moving beyond the commandments of God

Purpose: To encourage discipleship because of one's belief in the incarnate Son of God.

2 JOHN John* Between A.D. 60 & 96

Directed to: A faithful Christian woman

Purpose: To encourage the elect sister and warn her about those who come to her with false teachings.

3 JOHN John* Between A.D. 60 & 96

Directed to: Gaius, a faithful financial supporter of evangelists

Purpose: To reaffirm Gaius' leadership of sending forth evangelists in the midst of the dictatorial leadership of Diotrophes.

JUDE	Jude*	Between A.D. 65 & 67
	Directed to: Faithful Jewish Christians	
	Purpose: To encourage faithful Jewish Christians in view of the Jewish insurrectionists who were about to face the judgment of God.	

– Prophecy –

REVELATION	John*	Between A.D. 65 & 96
	Directed to: The seven churches in Asia	
	Purpose: To encourage Christians to remain faithful in the midst of great persecution.	

* For information on all writers, see Appendix 4, page 344

MONIES, WEIGHTS, TIMES & MEASURES

A. Money:

• Old Testament:

Talent	91 lb. (troy)	60 minas	3000 shekels	60,000 gerahs
Mina	18.2 oz. (troy)		50 shekels	1,000 gerahs
Shekel	.364 oz. (troy)			

• New Testament:

Gerah	.0182 oz. (troy)	1 day's wage	64 pennies	20 gerahs
Denarius	16 copper coins	1/16 day's wage	4 pennies	128 mites
Copper coin		1/64 day's wage		8 mites
Quadrans		1/128 day's wage		2 mites
Mite				

The Temple Tax was equal to two day's wages

B. Lengths:

Cubit	18 inches	.5 meter
Span	9 inches	23 centimeters
Handbreadth	3 inches	8 centimeters

C. Weights:

Talent (60 minas)	75 pounds	34 kilograms
Mina (50 shekels)	1 1/4 pounds	.6 kilograms
Shekel (2 bekas)	2/5 ounce	11.5 kilograms
Pim (2/3 shekel)	1/3 ounce	7.6 grams
Beka (10 gerahs)	1/5 ounce	5.5 grams
Gerah	1/50 ounce	.6 grams

D. The Jewish Day:

NIGHT		DAY	
First watch:	Sunset to 9 ^{PM}	First watch:	Sunrise to 9 ^{AM}
Second watch:	9 ^{PM} to midnight	Second watch:	9 ^{AM} to noon
Third watch:	midnight to 3 ^{AM}	Third watch:	Noon to 3 ^{PM}
Fourth watch:	3 ^{AM} to sunrise	Fourth watch:	3 ^{PM} to sunset
* The Jewish day began at sunset			

E. The Jewish Calendar:

Months	Corresponds to:	No. of Days	Month of Civil Year	Month of Sacred Year
Tishri	Sept.–Oct.	30 days	1st	7th
Heshvan	Oct.–Nov.	29 or 30	2nd	8th
Chislev	Nov.–Dec.	29 or 30	3rd	9th
Tebeth	Dec.–Jan.	29	4th	10th
Shebat	Jan.–Feb.	30	5th	11th
Adar	Feb.–Mar.	29 or 30	6th	12th
Nisan	Mar.–Apr.	30	7th	1st
Iyar	Apr.–May	29	8th	2nd
Sivan	May–June	30	9th	3rd
Tammuz	June–July	29	10th	4th
Ab	July–Aug.	30	11th	5th
Elul	Aug.–Sept.	29	12th	6th

F. The Jewish Feasts:

Passover (Unleavened Bread)	Nisan 14-21	Mar.–Apr.	Mt 26:17-20 Ex 12:43ff
Pentecost (Firstfruits or Weeks)	Sivan 6	May–June	At 2:1 Dt 16:9-12 Nm 29:1-6
Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah)	Tishri 1,2	Sept.–Oct.	
Atonement (Yom Kippur)	Tishri 10	Sept.–Oct.	Lv 23:26-32; Hb 9:7
Tabernacles (Booths)	Tishri 15-22	Sept.–Oct.	Ne 8:13-18; Jn 7:2
Dedication (Hanukkah)	Chislev 25 (8 days)	Nov.–Dec.	Jn 10:22
Purim	Adar 14,15	Feb.–Mar.	Et 9:18-32

FIRST PRINCIPLES IN BIBLE STUDY

Understanding the divisions, purpose and literary composition of the Bible is necessary in order to rightly divide the word of God (2 Tm 2:15). We must divide those texts of the Bible that apply to Christians today, from those texts that applied to those who lived before the establishment of the new covenant and law on the Pentecost of A.D. 30.

A. The Old Testament Scriptures:

There are thirty-nine books in the Old Testament. These books were originally written in the ancient Hebrew language between about 1440 and 400 B.C. Though other ancient nations were addressed in prophecy in the Old Testament, the major part of the Old Testament was directed specifically to the nation of Israel. The Sinai law portion of the Old Testament was given in conjunction with God's covenant He made with the nation of Israel. The covenant was given at Mount Sinai around 1440 B.C. (Ex 19:5,6).



The first five books of the Old Testament (the Pentateuch, or law) were written to give Israel direction concerning what God required of the people in order to maintain the covenant that He established with the nation at Mount Sinai (Dt 5:1-5). The remainder of the Old Testament books were written to give historical and prophetic teaching to keep the children of Israel focused on God and the promise of the coming Messiah.

Israel was chosen from among the nations in order to pre-

serve a seedline for the fulfillment of the promise of the Redeemer that was first made in Genesis 3:15. It was in fulfillment of this promise that the Son of God came into the world for the redemption of mankind. We subsequently have the Old Testament Scriptures today in order to study how God preserved the seedline of the Messiah by working with the nation of Israel and surrounding nations. We can thus learn from the Old Testament examples of obedience and disobedience of nations and individuals in their response to the providence of God to preserve the seedline of woman until the Seed came into the world (Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11).

“But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under [the Sinai] law” (Gl 4:4). Jesus was born when the Sinai law was still in force. He thus lived under and according to the Sinai law. **The New Testament books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, therefore, are actually histories of Jesus’ ministry under the Sinai law to bring the Jews to the point of accepting Him as the promised Messiah.** These books are continued histories of Israel under the old covenant



and law until God established the new covenant and law with all those who obeyed the gospel after Acts 2. When we study the life of Jesus, therefore, we must understand that Jesus was living as a Jew under the Sinai law.

B. The New Testament Scriptures:

There are twenty-seven books (letters) in the New Testament. The New Testament documents are inspired let-

ters that were originally written in the *koine* (common) Greek language. They were written within the first seventy years after Jesus died on the cross. They were originally directed to either churches or individuals in the first century. The first four books of the New Testament (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) are histories of the life and ministry of Jesus. The document of Acts is a history of the establishment of the church as a result of the early response to the gospel. Romans through Revelation are letters by which the Holy Spirit directed and corrected the lives of spiritually maturing disciples (See 2 Tm 3:16,17). The twenty-seven New Testament books are what Christians use today to guide their lives, though Christians are directed to the Old Testament books for learning and admonition (Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11). However, it is through the New Testament Scriptures that the law of Christ has been revealed to us who are now in a new covenant relationship with God.



Revelation of the Son of God to the Seedline Nation
Matthew – John

History of Response to the Gospel
Acts

Instructions for Gospel-Centered Disciples
Romans – Jude

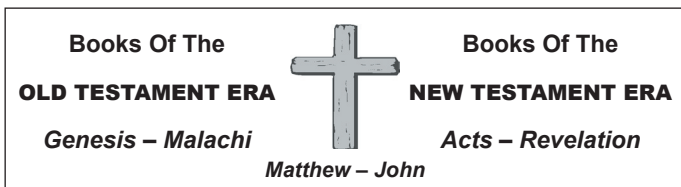
Encouragement in Times of Persecution
Revelation

– Nature Of Old And New Testaments –

One of the first challenges that faces the Bible student is to understand that the Bible is a collection of literature that was written over a period of about two thousand years. Each book of this collection was written for a specific purpose and to a specific people concerning circumstances that faced them in their particular era of history. Though there are two general collections of Bible literature referred to as the Old and New Testaments, these two major collections can be subdivided into different categories. Placing the books in the appropriate category of the final collection is vital in order to understand the content of each book.

A. Purpose of the Old and New Testaments:

The Old Testament was written primarily for the purpose of directing national Israel toward God’s eternal plan of salvation that would be revealed through the Messiah. The New Testament was written to reveal Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, and thus the One through whom the truth of the gospel was revealed. The New Testament was written to encourage all people of all nations to accept Jesus, not only as the Messiah of Israel, but also as the Son of God who gives eternal life to all those who obey the gospel (Jn 20:30,31). Therefore, these two major divisions of the Bible differ in reference to their purpose for being written, and their application in our lives.



B. Divisions within the Old Testament:

The Sinai law (Genesis – Deuteronomy) was given by the Holy Spirit through Moses specifically to the nation of Israel (Lk 24:44; Jn 1:17). This was a theocratic law, that is, it contained both civil and moral laws for the citizens of Israel. The statutes of this law were given directly by God in order to direct the nation of Israel until the Messiah came. After the original law was given at Mount Sinai, God sent judges and prophets to His people (At 3:24; 13:20). These inspired men also wrote additional books for Israel's spiritual correction and direction. The thirty-nine books of the Old Testament can thus be divided into four categories of Scripture: Beginnings and Sinai Law, History, Wisdom Literature, and the Prophets of Israel. This division of the books is based on the general content of each book and the type of literature contained in the books.



When God established a covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai (Ex 6:1-5; Dt 5:2,3), He also gave the people laws to be obeyed (Dt 4:1-14; 6:1-9; Rm 3:1,2). However, when God established a covenant with Israel, and gave them

laws as conditions for maintaining the covenant, He had a greater purpose in mind than the Sinai covenant and law alone. His greater purpose was to send His Son into the world for the salvation of mankind (Gn 3:15; Gl 3:15-19). The purpose for the existence of Israel, with the old covenant and law, therefore, was to prepare the way for the Savior by preserving among all people of the world, a special people of faith (Gl 4:4).

– Origin Of Sinai Covenant And Law –

Every Bible student must understand that Christians are not under the Sinai law that was given to Israel at Mount Sinai. Though there are valuable principles in the Sinai law, especially concerning moral behavior, Christians must understand that their relationship with the Sinai law is different than their relationship with Christ and His word, which relationship embodies a new covenant and law.

A. Definition of covenant and law:

There is a difference between **covenant** and **law**. Covenant refers to an agreement that is established between two parties. Law refers to the conditions that are necessary in order to maintain a covenant relationship.



Therefore, when God established a covenant with individuals or nations, there were conditions for the maintenance of the covenant that had to be

obeyed. Throughout history, God established covenants with people and gave laws by which those covenant relationships had to be maintained (See Gn 6:18; 9:9-17; 15:18; 17:2).

B. Conditions for keeping God's covenants:

At Mount Sinai God established a covenant with the nation of Israel around 1440 B.C. The conditions for keeping this covenant were the laws that came with the covenant. Israel had to keep the Sinai law, therefore, in order to remain in their covenant relationship with God.

1. The Sinai law was given through Moses to Israel at Mount Sinai about 1,440 years before the coming of the Messiah (Ex 19:11,18-20; Dt 33:2; Ne 9:13; Jn 1:17).
2. The Sinai law was given only to the nation of Israel in order to preserve the identity of Israel as the seedline nation (Ex 19:4-6; Dt 4:1,13; 5:1-5; Ne 8:1; Rm 3:1,2).
3. The Sinai law was given as a condition for Israel to remain in a covenant relationship with God until the Messiah came (Dt 4:1-14).

– Purpose Of Sinai Covenant And Law –

Since God chose Israel out of the nations of the world in order to preserve a people of faith for the coming of the Son of God, then the purpose of the Sinai covenant and law, with the exhortation of the prophets, was to lead all Israel to the incarnate Son of God who would bring redemption into the world.

1. The Sinai covenant and law were given to preserve Abraham's heritage until God could fulfill His promise to Abraham that in his seed all nations of the world would be blessed with salvation in Christ (Gn 12:1-3; Gl 3:8,16-19).
2. The Sinai covenant and law were a shadow that was cast by

good things that were yet to come in the history of Israel (Cl 2:16,17; Hb 10:1).

3. The Sinai law was a tutor, or headmaster, to preserve a portion of humanity (the nation of Israel) until people could be delivered to faith in the sacrificial Lamb of God (Jn 1:29; Gl 4:4; 3:24,25).
4. The Sinai law was given to reveal one's inability to be justified by perfect law-keeping. Sincere believers were thus driven to depend on the grace of God that came through faith in the gospel of the incarnate Son of God. People of faith were driven to the justification and sanctification of the cross because no one could obey any law perfectly in order to be either self-justified or self-sanctified before God (Rm 3:20; 7:7,24,25; Gl 2:16).
5. The Sinai law was given in order to guide the behavior of Israel concerning what to do in order to maintain their covenant relationship with God (Gl 3:24,25).
6. The Sinai law was written to inform Christians under the new covenant and law of Christ concerning the work of God in the lives of those who lived under the Sinai law (Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11).



– Fulfillment Of Sinai Covenant And Law –

Though the Old Testament contains valuable history and moral principles, the Bible student must not forget that we have the Old Testament today primarily as the foundation upon which the Sonship of the incarnate Son of God is confirmed and established. God laid the foundation for the revelation of His Son into this world through the establishment of the nation of Israel. We must not forget that this purpose for the establishment of the nation of Israel, as well as all the prophetic messages that saturate the Old Testament Scriptures, is the primary reason we have the Old Testament in our lives today. The very existence of the Old Testament confirms that Jesus of Nazareth was the in-

carnation of God into this world, as well as the ascension and coronation of King Jesus to reign at the right hand of God on David's throne. He will reign until He has put down the last enemy, death, and then deliver the subjects into a heavenly kingdom wherein God is all in all.



A. Consummation of national Israel:

God never intended that the Sinai covenant and law be a permanent covenant and law for all people for all time. It was not permanent because God never intended that national Israel should exist in a special covenant relationship with Him until the end of time. On the contrary, God intended that national Israel would eventually be dissolved in Christ, wherein there is neither Jew nor Gentile because we are one in Christ (Gl 3:26-29).

National Israel was the vehicle through which God brought the Jews to Christ. Therefore, at the time when the old covenant and law were established with Israel at Mount Sinai, God intended that in the future of Israel He would establish a new covenant and law with all those of faith who desired to come into a covenant relationship with Him

through faith (Jr 31:31-34; Hb 8:7-13). Christians are now in this new covenant relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ (Rm 9:1-33).

During the ministry of Jesus, Jesus prophesied concerning the coming of both the church and His kingdom reign. This is particularly revealed in the parables. He also taught concerning the consummation of national Israel. This would be the end of Israel as a nation, since the nation had fulfilled her purpose in bringing the Jews to redemption in Christ (Gl 3:15-25). The Sinai law, with national Israel, subsequently ended at the cross. The church is now the nation of God, wherein there is neither Jew nor Gentile (Gl 3:26-29). The church of Christ will continue to the final coming of Jesus, and eventually she will be taken, as the bride of Christ, into eternal glory with Him (1 Th 4:13-18). This is the hope of every Christian, and thus the comfort Christians have in times of struggle (2 Pt 3:8-16).

B. Instituting a sufficient sacrifice:

God never intended that animal sacrifices and the Levitical priesthood of Israel should continue until the end of the world (Hb 7:11-28; 10:1-4). On the contrary, He planned that in the future of Israel, Jesus would come in order to fulfill the Sinai covenant and law, and then establish a new covenant with all those who would personally choose to be born again into a covenant with God (Mt 5:17,18; Lk 24:44; Hb 10:9,10). God planned before the creation of the world, and thousands of years before the existence of Israel, that the incarnate Son of God would be the eternal offering for the sins of all the world (Rv 13:8). Israel was established, with the animal sacrifices, in order to prepare the way for this historical event.

C. Building a research library:

Since the original purpose of the Sinai covenant and law was fulfilled in Christ, God changed the purpose for which the covenant and law are now recorded for us in the Old Testament. The Old Testament is now a book of covenants and laws that were written for our learning and instruction in principles and examples of moral behavior (Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11). The written record of the old covenant and law have now become the Christian's research library for understanding the work of God in the affairs of this world. The Christian in this era, therefore, has the privilege of having a Holy Spirit inspired biblical research library of the work of God through history.

1. The Son of God was revealed in order to fulfill the purpose for which the Sinai covenant and law were given to Israel (Mt 5:17,18). Once fulfilled, the law became void, and God's special covenant relationship with Israel was dissolved when the new covenant was activated.
2. The Son of God was revealed to take away the Sinai covenant and law in order to establish a new covenant and law (Hb 10:9,10).
3. The Son of God established the law of grace that was based on the truth of the gospel (Jn 1:17).
4. The Sinai law was abolished, though its eternal moral principles live on in the New Testament (Ep 2:14-16; Cl 2:14; Hb 9:16,17).
5. The law of God for man was changed from the Sinai law to the law of Christ because the priesthood was changed from the Levitical priesthood of the Sinai law to the High Priesthood of Jesus, who, contrary to the Sinai law, was born of the tribe of Judah (Hb 7:11-25).
6. Christians are dead to the Sinai law because they have been married to Christ, with whom they are now in a new covenant and law relationship with God (Rm 7:1-4).
7. Christians are free from the bondage of trying to keep any law perfectly in order to save themselves, for they are under grace, not perfect law-keeping (Rm 6:14; Gl 4:21 – 5:1).

– New Covenant And Law –

In their relationship with God, people of faith have never lived outside a covenant relationship with God. Inherent in any covenant, however, are conditions (laws). People of faith must live within these conditions in order to maintain a relationship with God. It is incumbent on every person who believes in God, that he or she discover in the word of God the conditions for establishing and maintaining a covenant relationship with God.

A. Dead to the Sinai law:

Once the Sinai covenant and law were fulfilled in Christ, God established a new covenant with all those who would choose to come into a covenant relationship with Him through faith in His grace. When one comes into this new covenant relationship with God today through obedience to the gospel (Rm 6:3-6), he or she comes under the direction of the law of Christ. Therefore, in their obedience to the gospel, Christians have become dead to the Sinai law (Rm 7:4). They are now married to Christ (Rm 7:1-3).

B. Alive through grace and faith:

The new covenant that Christians now have with God does not mean that they are in a relationship with God wherein they must keep law perfectly in order to save themselves. On the contrary, Christians are under the law of grace, not a system of perfect law-keeping (Rm 6:14). Their new covenant relationship with God means that they are saved by grace because of their faith in God. They are not saved by any self-righteous system of perfect law-keeping by which they can declare their own salvation. Christians re-

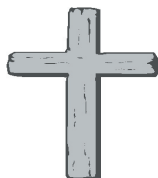
joy in the grace of God because they realize that no one can be justified before God through perfect keeping of law (Gl 2:16). It is the grace of God, therefore, that motivates them to obey the law of God because of their appreciation for their salvation that they have in Christ (2 Co 4:15).

– Superiority Of The New Covenant –

Since there was a specific purpose for which the Old Testament Scriptures came into existence over many centuries, there is no comparison between the Old and New Testaments. Both writings are beneficial for Christian growth (See Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11). The comparison is in reference to the old and new covenants. Since the old covenant was based on the offering of animal blood, the new covenant was established on the foundation of the blood of the incarnate Son of God. In this way, the new covenant is far superior to the old covenant.

A. The first gospel announcement:

The blood offering of the new covenant was accomplished by the incarnational offering of the Son of God on the cross of Calvary (Hb 9:16,17). The new covenant of this offering was inaugurated on earth when Peter announced for the first time in history the gospel on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30. In response to Peter's announcement, men and women for the first time in history came into a new covenant relationship with God when they obediently responded to the gospel.



**An Eternal
Atoning Sacrifice
Of Incarnational
Blood**

B. First responses to the gospel:

People came into a new covenant relationship with God because they were obedient to the gospel by immersion in water for the remission of their sins (At 2:38-41). Therefore, the new covenant was initiated when people responded by immersion to the first announcement of the gospel offering of the Son of God for our sins, His resurrection for our hope, ascension, and His existing kingdom reign (At 2:14-36). In comparison to the old covenant that God established with the nation of Israel, the new covenant is better for the following reasons:

1. It is better because the covenant was established by the blood of Jesus (Hb 7:22; 8:6).
2. It is better because our hope is guaranteed by the sonship of Jesus (Hb 7:19).
3. It is better because its promises are based on the cross (Hb 8:6).
4. It is better because the sacrifice of the Son of God is better than animals (Hb 9:23).
5. It is better because its hope is based on Jesus who was resurrected (Hb 10:34).
6. It is better because we will be resurrected never to die again (Hb 11:35).
7. It is better because the blood offering of Jesus guarantees remission of sins (Hb 12:24).

– Nature Of The New Covenant And Law –

The nature of the new covenant and law of Christ is different from the old covenant and law. The following points define the nature of the new covenant and law that God now has with all those who have come into a covenant relationship with Him through obedience to the gospel:

1. The new covenant and law are made available to all people in all nations who respond to the gospel (Mt 28:19; Mk 16:15).

2. The new covenant and law were dedicated by the blood of the Son of God (1 Co 5:7; Hb 10:10,19,20).
3. The new covenant offers assurance because it is based on the blood of Jesus (Hb 7:25).
4. The new covenant was secured by the eternal offering of the Son of God (Hb 9:28).
5. The new covenant has Jesus as an eternal High Priest (Hb 8:1; 9:11).
6. The new covenant offers justification by grace that is based on obedient faith (Rm 5:1,2; 1 Co 6:11).
7. The new covenant has a law that is written on the hearts of obedient believers (Hb 8:10).
8. The new covenant contains spiritual ordinances for spiritual people (Jn 4:23,24; 6:63).
9. The new covenant was inaugurated and established by the Son of God (Hb 2:1-4; 10:9,10).
10. The new covenant contains a law that will be the standard of judgment for those who have lived in response to the gospel (Jn 12:48).

A. Under grace and faith:

Christians are now under grace and faith in their covenant relationship with God (Rm 6:14). They must seek direction in life from the word of God, and be assured of their justification from sin by the blood of Jesus. If one seeks to be justified by obedience to the Sinai law today, while trying to maintain a relationship with God that is based on one's supposed perfect law-keeping, then he is fallen from the grace of God. He is cut off from Christ (Gl 5:1-4). If one seeks to use any meritorious system of good works or perfect law-keeping in an attempt to justify himself before God, then he is marginalizing the justification and sanctification of the cross of the Son of God.

B. Set free, stay free:

One simply cannot be justified before God on the basis of

perfect law-keeping or the supposed atonement of meritorious good works (Rm 3:20; Gl 2:16; 3:11,12). This is true because no one can keep any law perfectly. No one can do enough good works to atone for one sin (Rm 3:9,10). Therefore, by faith we must be joined to Christ in a new covenant relationship with God in order to be justified by His grace that was made possible by the atonement of the sacrificial blood of Jesus (Rm 7:24,25; Gl 3:26-29). This is great news for Christians since they need not offer animal sacrifices as did the Jews in a futile effort to receive remission of sins (Hb 10:1-4). Neither must Christians keep the Jewish feast days that were a part of the Sinai law. Christians have thus been set free from the ordinances of the Sinai law by the sacrificial offering of Jesus (Rm 7:1-4). They are free from the bondage of having to save themselves on the merit of their own good works or supposed ability to keep God's law perfectly (Gl 5:1).

– Authority Of God's Word –

Though some people may base their worship and service to God solely on human emotions and traditions, the final authority for all things that pertain to our relationship with God must be guided by His word. People of faith can be reassured in their relationship with God only when they objectively make the word of God the final authority in all matters of faith. They can do this only by allowing God's word to direct their beliefs and behavior to remember the following:

1. The word of God furnishes us with all truth (Jn 14:26; 16:13).
2. The word of God is all sufficient to direct godly living (2 Tm 3:16,17).
3. The word of God furnishes us with all that pertains to gospel living (1 Pt 1:3).

4. The word of God is the source by which we preach the truth of the gospel (Gl 1:6-9).
5. The word of God will be the standard by which we will be judged (Jn 12:48).
6. The word of God is final, and our only authority in matters of faith (Dt 4:2; Rv 22:18,19).
7. The word of God must guide us in all matters of obedience (2 Jn 9,10).
8. The word of God is the source from which we determine our salvation (Js 1:21).
9. The word of God is the foundation for unity (Jn 17:20,21; 1 Co 1:10; Ph 1:27).

Christians have freedom in matters of opinion. Religious rites, rituals and ceremonies bring Christians into bondage when they are practiced as law. But when such religious practices are not discussed in the Bible, then we know that we are set free from having such practices bound on our consciences. The word of God sets us free in order that we can make our own decisions in reference to our own personal opinions (interpretations). We are set free from opinions that are bound as law in order to be set free by the law of God.

STATE OF THE SOUL

There are important points that God wants everyone to know in reference to the condition of our souls. Realizing the condition of our soul in reference to eternal life should motivate us to establish a covenant relationship with God that will take us beyond this world. Therefore, everyone must understand the nature of our relationship with God in reference to the spiritual condition of our souls. Realizing the condition of our own souls should motivate us to find a solution for sin.

A. God is the Creator of all things (Gn 1:1,26,27):

God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit created all things through the Son of God (Jn 1:1,2; Cl 1:16). Since God created us, this gives Him the right to give us moral laws by which we must conduct our lives. Since God is the Creator, He also has the right to demand obedience of His laws. Therefore, the one true and living God expects everyone on earth to submit to His leading through His word.

1. God is one, though He has manifested Himself through the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Dt 4:35; 6:4,5; Is 44:6-8; 45:5,18).
2. God desires obedience from those He created (Mc 6:8; Mt 7:21; Jn 14:15; 15:10,14; 1 Jn 3:23).
3. God seeks those who will worship Him in spirit and the truth of the gospel (Jn 4:23,24).

B. Inability to keep law perfectly (Rm 3:9,10,23):

Everyone has sinned. In fact, if one says he or she has not sinned, then God says that that person is a liar (1 Jn 1:8-10). Therefore, each one of us must recognize our sin in order to prepare our souls to meet God in judgment.

1. Sin comes when we personally yield to temptation (Mt 4:1-11; Js 1:13-15; Rv 3:2,3).
2. Sin in our lives is that over which we must mourn and repent (At 3:19; Js 4:1-9; 2 Pt 3:9).
3. Sin must be confessed before God (Ps 51:2-5; Lm 3:40-42; Js 5:16; 1 Jn 1:8-10).

C. Sin is the transgression of God's law (1 Jn 3:4):

We sin against God by voluntarily transgressing His word. We sin by not doing that which God has told us to do in

His word. We also sin by doing that which God has told us not to do in His word. Some specific sinful ways of life are stated in the word of God, such as fornication, idolatry, adultery, homosexuality, sodomy, stealing, covetousness, drunkenness and extortion (See 1 Co 6:9,10; Gl 5:17-21).

1. Transgression in sin is rebellion against God (Ps 81:11; Jr 7:24; Hs 4:6).
2. Transgression in sin makes one an enemy of God (Js 4:4).
3. Transgression in sin is living after selfish desires (Rm 8:12-14; Gl 5:19-21; Ep 2:1-3).

D. Sin is not living according to law (Js 4:17):

We sin when we do not do those principles of good that are defined in the word of God. If our conscience has been guided by God's word to do good, then we sin when we fail to do what is right (Rm 14:23). Though a specific good deed may not be stated in the word of God, we sin if we fail to do those things that we know to be good.

1. We must seek opportunities to do good to fellow believers (Mt 25:41-46).
2. We must seek opportunities to do good to all men (Gl 2:10; 6:10; 1 Jn 3:10-23).
3. We must seek opportunities to be the servants of others (Mk 10:42-45; Rm 12:1,2).

E. Sin separates one from God (Is 59:1,2):

When we think of sin, we must always think about being separated from the One who can take us into eternal life. Our sins damage our souls, and a damaged soul that is not repaired by the gospel cannot dwell in the presence of God. Separation from God means that we must be reconciled, or brought back to Him in order to have eternal life.

In order that we might dwell in the presence of God, we must find a solution for our soul that has been damaged by our sins. Damaged souls can be fixed only by the blood of an incarnate God.

SIN ► SEPARATION ► DEATH ► DESTRUCTION

1. Sin separates one from the presence of God (Mt 7:21-23).
2. Separation from God will result in the destruction of the soul (Mt 10:28; 25:41).
3. Separation from the presence of God will lead to an eternal destruction (2 Th 1:7-9).

F. The wages of sin is death (Rm 6:23):

The result of separation from God is spiritual death. One is spiritually dead because sin has stained his soul, and thus one with a stained soul cannot be in the presence of God. The final payment for souls that are stained with sin will be the second death, or separation from God.

1. The spiritually dead will suffer condemnation (Jn 5:28,29).
2. The spiritually dead will go into punishment (Mt 25:46).
3. The spiritually dead will suffer permanent separation from God (Rv 20:12-15).
4. The spiritually dead will be destroyed for eternity (Mt 10:28; 2 Th 1:6-9).

G. The problem of spiritual death:

Walking in sin means that one is spiritually dead (Rm 5:12). As the representative of the human race, Adam was the first to introduce sin into the world. Everyone since Adam suffers spiritual death, not because of Adam's personal



sin, but because everyone personally sins against God (Rm 3:9,10,23). Therefore, if we do not find a solution for our sins, we will die in our sins because we have personally sinned against God (Lk 13:3,5; At 3:19).

Adam suffered the guilt of his own sin. We are in sin because every individual is guilty of committing sin. This means that everyone is spiritually separated from God because of his or her own personal sins against God. **Spiritual death, therefore, is our first and greatest problem.**

1. We were born pure of sin because God created our spirits (Ec 12:7; Zc 12:1).
2. We were born with a pure spirit that has been given to us by the Father of our spirits (Is 42:5; Hb 12:9).
3. We were born with the choice to obey or disobey the word of God (Ez 18:4,14-28).
4. We were born with the responsibility to make choices, and thus we will be held accountable for our own sins (Pv 1:29; Ja 24:15).

H. The problem of physical death:

We have the problem of physical death because we are mortal outside the presence of God (1 Co 15:20-22). When Adam sinned, not only was he separated from the Tree of Life, but all humanity was separated with him from this source of eternal life. Therefore, all of us suffer from the consequences of his sin, and thus we must all physically die (Gn 3:22-24). We must all physically die in consequence to Adam being separated from the Tree of Life. **Physical death, therefore, is our second greatest problem.**



2st Problem
PHYSICAL
DEATH

1. At birth, everyone is destined to physically die (Ec 3:20; Hb 9:27).
2. At death, our spirit is separated from the body (Js 2:26).
3. At death, our spirit returns to God who created it (Ec 12:7; Lk 23:46; At 7:59).
4. At death, our body returns to dust (Jb 34: 15; Ec 12:7).
5. At death, our hope is for a new body (2 Co 5:1-8; Ph 3:20,21).
6. At death, our hope is to be with Jesus (2 Co 5:8; Ph 1:21-24).

– Survey Of God’s Gospel Plan –

God could not be considered a just God if He were to create a mortal individual that He knew would sin, and yet not provide His creation with a solution for sin. If we were created without an opportunity to be delivered from the curse of sin and death, then God would have been fiendish for creating us. If God knew that we would, without any freedom to choose, be condemned to hell because of our personal sins, then He would not be a God of love.

The fact that God is love means that He first had to create that which He could love. His love would also mean that He would offer to those whom He loved the opportunity to be with Him in His presence for eternity (1 Jn 4:8). Before the creation of the world, therefore, the gospel plan of redemption as a solution for sin was planned in the mind of God. Before the creation, the Son of God had already made the commitment to offer Himself for our sins on the cross of Calvary. An appointed time in history was made when this eternal gospel plan would be revealed on earth (Jn 3:16; Rm 5:8; Gl 4:4).

A. Hear and believe the gospel (Mk 1:14,15):

The good news (gospel) is about the Son of God coming into this world in order to solve our spiritual and physical

death problems. It is good news that the incarnate Son of God died for our sins (Mt 20:28; Jn 3:16). It is good news that He was resurrected in order to give us hope of being resurrected when He comes again (1 Co 15:50-57). Jesus asks us to believe the good news in order that we act on the fact that the good news is true. Since His coming was the revelation of God's love for us, then we should respond to His love by obedience to the gospel (2 Co 5:14).

1. Everyone must learn the good news about the coming of Jesus (Jn 6:45).
2. Everyone must believe the gospel (Mk 16:16; Jn 3:16; 8:24; At 16:30-34).
3. Everyone must believe that Jesus is the Christ and Son of God (Mt 16:13-16; Jn 20:30,31).
4. Everyone must preach the gospel to others (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15,16).

B. Escaping impending consequences (2 Th 1:7-9):

It is necessary that everyone respond to God's gospel plan in order to escape the consequences of the impending final judgment (2 Th 1:7-9). It is certain that Jesus is coming again! When He does come He will punish with everlasting destruction those who do not respond to and obey the good news of God's call to escape the coming destruction of our souls (See Mt 10:28; 1 Pt 4:17). Since every man will be held accountable for his own sins, then everyone must ask and answer the following two questions:

**WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?
HOW CAN ONE OBEY THE GOSPEL?**

C. The message of the gospel:

The gospel (good news) is the **incarnation** of the Son of God into the flesh of man, His **death** for our sins, His **resurrection** for our hope, His **ascension**, His **coronation** to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords in His present kingdom reign, and His **consummation** of all things when He comes again.

The central message of the gospel is the atoning death of Jesus, His burial, and resurrection (1 Co 15:1-4). The incarnation of the Son of God was for the purpose of revealing to the world the good news of all things that surround the salvation of all those who would believe on Jesus. He was the incarnate Son of God who first dwelt in spirit with God as God (Jn 1:1-14). He then lowered Himself from His eternal state of existence and dwelt among men in order to go to the cross (Ph 2:5-11). As the Son of God, therefore, He became the atoning sacrifice between God and repentant believers in order that we could have access to eternal life in the presence of God through Him (1 Tm 2:5; Hb 8:6; 12:24). The gospel story begins, therefore, with the revelation of the incarnate Son of God who came into this world in order to go to the cross to reconcile us to God (2 Co 5:17-21). The final event of the gospel will be when the resurrected King Jesus is revealed again from heaven (1 Co 15:24-28; 1 Th 4:13-18).

D. The report of the gospel:

It was the sacrificial work of Jesus and His resurrection that completed His gospel to this world and His purpose for coming into this world. The Spirit-inspired reports of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John reveal this gospel journey

of the Son of God. In 1 Corinthians 15:1,2, Paul reminded the disciples in Corinth how they came into a covenant relationship with God. He had preached the gospel (good news) to them through the medium of words. The Corinthians received the report of Paul by accepting as true what he reported concerning the death and resurrection of Jesus. It was through their faith in the historical events of these gospel events wherein they stood. The truth of the gospel was their faith in those historical events that became the foundation of their lives. And thus, they continued in their salvation because of they continued in their response to the gospel that they had obeyed. However, their salvation was conditioned on the fact that they continue to believe Paul's report of the gospel.

E. The gospel is explained:

In 1 Corinthians 15:4,5 Paul explained briefly the historical event of the gospel as the following:

**– JESUS DIED FOR OUR SIN PROBLEM –
– Jesus Was Buried In A Tomb –
– JESUS WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD –**

1. Jesus was the Son of God (Mt 16:13-16; Jn 20:30,31).
2. Jesus was the fulfillment of prophecy concerning the Messiah (Mt 5:17,18; Lk 24:44).
3. Jesus provided our reconciliation with God (2 Co 5:17-21).
4. Jesus is the mediator through whom we approach God (Ep 2:11-13; 1 Tm 2:5).
5. Jesus ascended to be the King and Lord of our lives (Ep 1:20-23; Ph 2:5-11).
6. Jesus is now Lord of lords (At 2:29-36; 1 Pt 3:22).
7. Jesus is now King of kings (1 Tm 6:15; Rv 19:16)
8. Jesus is now head over all things (Ep 1:22,23; Cl 1:18).

F. Responding to the grace of God:

The revealed grace of God must cause us to respond to the gospel of His Son (2 Co 4:15). In Romans 6:3 Paul explained that one responds to the gospel by baptism “into Christ” through immersion (baptism). Romans 6:4,5 explains that we are buried with Jesus. We are subsequently resurrected with Jesus out of the “tomb” of water. However, Romans 6:6 explains that before one can obey the gospel by immersion in water, he or she must first be crucified with Jesus. In other words, one must believe in Jesus and repent of sins before he or she is immersed for remission of sins (At 2:38; 3:19). One must commit to changing his or her life by submitting to the will of God (Js 4:6; 1 Pt 5:5). Once this commitment is made to be a disciple of Jesus (Mt 28:19), then one is ready to join with Jesus in His death, burial and resurrection.

RESPONDING TO THE GOSPEL

1. People must first hear the gospel (Mt 13:9; Jn 5:24,25; 6:45).
2. People must believe the gospel (Mk 1:14,15; Jn 3:16; 8:24,47; 20:30,31).
3. People must repent of sins in response to the gospel (Lk 13:3; At 2:38; 3:19; 2 Pt 3:9).
4. People must commit their lives to be a disciple (Mt 10:32,33; 28:19,20; Rm 10:9,10; 1 Tm 6:12).
5. People must obey the gospel by immersion into the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (Mk 16:15,16; Jn 3:3-5; At 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pt 3:21).
6. People in the thousands in the first century responded to the gospel (At 2:41-47; 8:5-13,26-40; 9:17,18; 10:34-48; 16:13-15,24-34; 18:8; 19:5).

– A Gospel Relationship With God –

When one is baptized into Christ, he reveals his response

to the gospel of God's grace. In baptism, therefore, we receive the blessing of a new covenant relationship with Jesus because we have acted on our faith and revealed our appreciation for the gospel journey of Jesus into this world. In our new covenant relationship with Jesus after baptism, we receive the following spiritual blessings in reference to our obedience to the gospel:

A. Baptism into the body of Christ:

We are baptized into the one universal body of believers (1 Co 12:13). By obedience to the gospel (immersion), one comes into a relationship with the spiritual body of Christ. This is the worldwide church (assembly) of Christ. Jesus is the only controlling head of this body of believers (Cl 1:18). The baptized believer has the advantage of Jesus controlling his or her life through His inspired word (See Jn 15:5-7; 2 Tm 3:16,17).

B. Receiving all spiritual blessings:

All spiritual blessings are in the body of Christ (Ep 1:3). By obedience to the gospel, one receives all spiritual blessings in Christ that relate to our salvation. These blessings are made possible by what Jesus accomplished in His sacrificial offering on the cross and resurrection from the dead. The following are the spiritual blessings that one receives when he or she comes into a covenant relationship with Christ:

1. **Redemption and forgiveness** (Ep 1:7): By obedience to the gospel one is purchased (redeemed) by the sacrificial blood of Jesus, and thus, forgiven of all past sins (At 20:28; Rm 3:24-26; 1 Co 6:20; 7:23; Gl 4:4,5; Cl 1:13,14).
2. **Sanctification** (1 Co 1:2): By obedience to the gospel one is

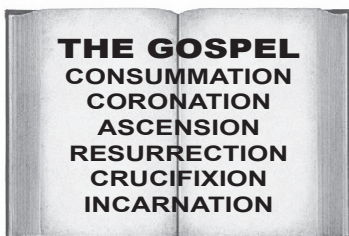
- cleansed (sanctified) of all sin, and thus reconciled to God (Jn 17:17,19; At 26:17,18; Rm 15:16; 1 Co 6:11).
3. **Justification** (1 Co 6:11): By obedience to the gospel we come into the realm where we are justified of all our sins (Rm 3:14,28; 5:1,9,16,18; 8:30; Gl 2:16,17; 3:24).
 4. **No condemnation** (Rm 8:1): By obedience to the gospel one comes into Christ where there is no condemnation by God in this life, nor in the life to come (Mk 16:16).
 5. **New creation** (2 Co 5:17): By obedience to the gospel one comes into Christ where he is made a new creature as a result of the forgiveness of all past sins (See Rm 6:4; Gl 6:15; Ep 2:1-18; 4:17-24). He remains a new creature in Christ by the continual cleansing of his sins by the blood of Jesus (1 Jn 1:7-9).
 6. **Eternal life** (1 Jn 5:11): By obedience to the gospel one comes into Christ where he has the hope of eternal dwelling with God (Jn 10:27,28; 2 Tm 1:10; Ti 1:2).
 7. **Salvation** (2 Tm 2:10): By obedience to the gospel one comes into Christ where he partakes of the preceding spiritual blessings. All these blessings mean that we are saved from condemnation (Ep 1:9-13). When one is in Christ, he or she is a member of the body of Christ that is the assembly of God's people who are called out of the world by the gospel of Jesus (2 Th 2:14). One is a part of this body, the church of Christ, that is destined for eternal life in heaven. Baptized believers are destined for heaven simply because they are the one worldwide body of gospel-redeemed people on earth. Every person, therefore, must make a voluntary choice to become a part of this body.

– Gospel Versus Religion –

Upon hearing the gospel, everyone must determine to answer the prayer of Jesus on the night of His betrayal that all His disciples “may be one” (Jn 17:21). This can happen only if all of us base our faith and obedience on His gospel. Therefore, we must be united in believing the six major facts and events of the gospel in reference to the gospel journey of the Son of God. These facts and events are Jesus’ incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, present kingdom reign, and final consummation.

A. The Bible is the report of the gospel:

The Bible is not the gospel, but the inspired report of the gospel, both in prophecy and fulfillment of prophecy. The entire Bible is a news report of the six facts and events of the gospel. From the very beginning of the Bible after the fall of man into sin, a promise was made by God in Genesis 3:15 of a future gospel event that would bring those who believe and obey the gospel back into fellowship with God, and thus unity among all those who believe in the incarnate Son of God. The Old Testament, therefore, was written to first focus our minds on



the prophetic coming of the Son of God through the seed of woman (See Luke 1:26-38; 2:8-11; 24:46,47). The Old Testament is a written record of prophecy about the coming revelation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It was written in order to provide us with a continued source of research about the Seed of woman who was eventually identified in the New Testament as Jesus of Nazareth (See Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11). The final event of the gospel will never be written, for the gospel of the consummation of all things will mark the end of all things. The consummation has been revealed through metaphors in prophetic language because nothing as it has ever happened before in history.

B. The gospel is the foundation for unity:

All who believe in Jesus can be united upon the foundation of the gospel. This is true because the very nature of the

gospel is that it brings all believers together on the foundation of a common faith (Jd 3).

1. We can be united on the fact that Jesus was the only begotten Son of God who came in the flesh of man (See Jn 1:1,2,14; 20:30,31; Ph 2:5-8).
2. We can be united on the sacrificial death of Jesus for our sins (See 1 Co 15:3).
3. We can be united on the fact that we all know Jesus as our resurrected Savior (See 2 Co 5:16; 2 Tm 1:10).
4. We can be united on the fact that Jesus now has all authority (Mt 28:18).
5. We can be united on the fact that Jesus is now reigning as King of kings (Ep 1:20-23; Ph 2:9-11; 1 Tm 6:15; Hb 2:8; 1 Pt 3:22).

C. Choices that have eternal consequences:

Everyone in the world must make a choice as to how he or she will live, for there are three ways in which to live in this world. Depending on which way one chooses to live will determine one's eternal destiny. The first two choices will result in eternal destruction from the presence of God (2 Th 1:6-9). Only the last choice will result in our existence with God for eternity.

1. Living without faith:

One can live as a "pagan," that is, live with no religious faith at all. The majority of the world today lives in this manner. People may be good citizens of the community, but they may have no faith in God. And if one has no faith in God, then he has no unchangeable moral standard by which to control his moral behavior. Subsequently, moral behavior is determined by what is common in society. Unfortunately, such people live without any hope of life after death.

2. Living with religion:

There are many in the world who live religiously. They have a faith by which they seek to please the god in which they believe. However, living religiously does not mean that one is living as a Christian, or according to or in response to the gospel. It does not mean that one is actually pleasing God. And then there are many faiths of the world whose adherents have no concept of Jesus as the Son of God. Muslims, Buddhists, and many other religions of the world, worship a “higher power” that they have created after their own imagination, or according to the religious traditions that they obey as a matter of conscience. These are people of faith, but they are living their faith without any knowledge of the incarnate Son of God.

There are also those religious people who include in their faith Jesus as the Son of God. However, their faith is limited. They often believe according to the following words of Jesus: *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven”* (Mt 7:21). In these words Jesus spoke of those who believe in Him, but they have little desire to study and obey what He commands.

Jesus came into a world of many religions, specifically the world of the Jews’ religion (Gl 1:13,14). Those who lived according to the Jews’ religion lived a religious life. However, many of the Jews at the time of Jesus had created a religion after their own religious traditions (Mk 7:1-9). Such systems of traditional religiosity will not produce unity among those who believe on Jesus as the Son of God. Unity can never be based on religion because everyone has different religious traditions, rituals and ceremonies by

which they identify their unique religion. Living religiously, therefore, is not living according to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ that produces unity. Religion always produces division, for religion is always based on divisive religious traditions or dogma.

3. Living in response to the gospel:

If living religiously will not bring us together into the unified body of Christ, then religion can never be the foundation upon which we can answer the prayer of Jesus to be universally united as one body (Jn 17:20,21). Only by living in response to the gospel will we enjoy the benefits of a united body in Christ.

a. Gospel versus religion: There is a difference between living religiously and living in response to the gospel. The books of Romans and Galatians explain the difference between living according to religion and living according to the gospel. For example, the Holy Spirit explained in Romans 10:1-3 that the religionist may *“have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge”* of what God requires. Therefore, religionists, *“being ignorant of God’s righteousness and seeking to establish their own righteousness,”* will not submit themselves to the righteousness of God. Those who are religious in their faith, but ignorant of the Bible, will always create a religion because of their own lack of knowledge of the word of God. Their religions, therefore, will inherently be divisive. In their religions, they will do many good works to sanctify themselves. However, they forget that in living the gospel all sanctification for sin was accomplished when Jesus poured out His blood at the cross.

b. Gospel versus religious self-sanctification and self-justification: Religion is a system of self-sanctification in reference to atoning for one's own sins through good works. The **sanctification** of the gospel means that we were cleansed of all sin by the cross through the sacrificial blood of Jesus. This is good news! And if we walk in the light of the gospel of Jesus, then we are cleansed of our sins every day of our lives by the blood of Jesus (1 Jn 1:7). If we seek to perform certain religious traditions, rituals, or ceremonies in order to cleanse our own sins meritoriously, then we are trying to either subsidize or minimize the sanctification of the cross of Jesus. As a system of self-sanctification, therefore, we are actually assuming that Jesus did not completely cleanse our sins at the cross (Hb 10:10,14,29).

c. The emotional consequences of religion: Religion always leaves one with a sense of guilt. One always feels guilty that he or she is not doing enough to be cleansed of all his or her sins through good works. In religion, one is always trying to justify himself or herself before God through good works. By doing such, one is saying to Jesus that His cleansing of our sins and justification at the cross was not sufficient. But when one lives the gospel, he or she understands that good works cannot be a system to justify ourselves before God (Gl 2:16). Good works are the result of one walking in gratitude of his or her salvation in Christ (Ep 2:10). Faith in the grace of God causes one to walk in thanksgiving of what Jesus did for us through the cross, resurrection and present kingdom reign (2 Co 4:15). Gospel motivates us (2 Co 5:14). We are motivated because we realize how much He loved us (1 Jn 4:19). Gospel-motivated Christians work because they are saved, not in order to be saved (See Ep 2:4-10).

d. Objective obedience: Objective obedience of the word of God in response to the gospel means that one reads the instructions of God in the Bible. He then objectively obeys what the Bibles declares he must do. In reference to our salvation, therefore, we do not have the right to declare our own salvation. This is a declaration that can be made only by God. For example, Jesus made the declarative statement, "*He who believes and is baptized will be saved*" (Mk 16:16; See Rm 6:3). Therefore, when one is baptized, it is the Holy Spirit-inspired word of God that declares one to be saved. When we speak of objective obedience of the gospel, we are allowing the Bible to declare what is essential to do in order to have a salvational (covenant) relationship with God, as well as the point in time when we are declared saved.

e. Subjective obedience: No individual has the right to self-declare his own salvation on the merit of his good works, or supposed perfect obedience to the law of God. Neither can emotional experiences be offered to God as sanctification for one's sins. These are all subjective systems of obedience, meaning that the individual is the origin of whatever he claims should merit his salvation. This is the religion of self-righteousness (See Rm 10:1-3).

All religion is subjective in the sense that the adherents to a particular religious discipline believe that obedience to the traditions, rituals and ceremonies of a particular religion justify the adherents before God. Since religion is an expression of man's subjective response to the traditions that define any particular religion, or the ongoing experiential emotions of the adherents, then all religion leads one contrary to objective obedience of the word of God as the final authority in all matters of faith. Those who walk

according to an objective response to the gospel, believe that the word of God must be the final authority in all matters of faith.

THE BODY OF CHRIST

The church was in the mind of God before the creation of this world. Since the church is the body of those who have been redeemed by the sacrificial blood of the incarnate Son of God, then the church is the signal to the world that Christians believe in a God of love. God has always loved His people throughout the history of the world because He had planned the atoning sacrifice of His Son before the first words were spoken to bring all things into existence.

– Prophecy And Fulfillment –

Our correct interpretation of key Old Testament prophecies will lead us to appreciate more the fact that Jesus was the Christ and the Son of God who is presently reigning from heaven over all things (See Jn 20:30,31). Even the gospel of the incarnation of the Son of God into and out of this world can be understood correctly only if we approach properly the prophecies that foretold His coming into this world in order to ascend to the throne of God above this world. And at the end of His galactic reign, He is coming again to fetch us out of this world. This is all gospel news, and thus adds meaning to the cross of Calvary.

If we fail to understand correctly the fundamental prophecies that foretold the coming of the Son of God into and out of this world, then we will conjure up all sorts of twisted conclusions concerning Messianic prophecies of the in-

carnation and redemption ministry of the Son of God. The result will be that we will not fully appreciate the present gospel reign of King Jesus. At least we will have a limited view of Jesus' present kingdom, and a confused understanding of the church (assembly) of subjects over which He is now head.

Add to this the fact that we will also fail to see in the Lord Jesus Christ the complete fulfillment of all those prophetic statements that He spoke concerning His coming into this world. In doing this, we will be denying the totality of the good news (gospel) that was revealed through the Son of God. The result of our misunderstanding will invariably lead us to constructing a false hope for ourselves concerning things that will supposedly take place when Jesus comes again. We would certainly conclude, therefore, that Jesus did not speak out of deception when He stated the following to His disciples just prior to His ascension to the right hand of God: *"These are the words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, **that all things must be fulfilled that were written in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets and the Psalms, concerning Me**"* (Lk 24:44).

Jesus Christ, as the resurrected and ascended Son of God, still reigns over all things. This is just as it was prophesied in the Old Testament. This is exactly what He promised His disciples during His earthly ministry. Jesus is now in control of all the physical world and all the worlds throughout the universe (See Ep 1:19-23; Hb 1:3). This truth is at the heart of Old Testament prophecies concerning King Jesus and His present kingdom reign.

The universe is under the galactic sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ. Even Satan and demons are within His realm

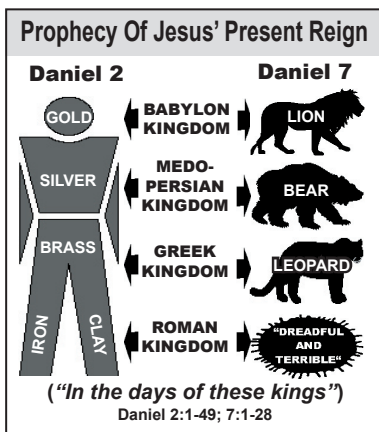
of authority (1 Pt 3:22). Regardless of what may happen on earth, or things in the spiritual world, we can be assured that Jesus reigns as the supreme authority over all things in the heavens and on earth.

Among the approximately three hundred Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah (Greek, "Christ"), the prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7 refer specifically to the present kingdom reign of King Jesus and the time in history when this reign began. These two fundamental prophecies are sufficient to help us understanding the present kingdom and reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A. The prophecy of Daniel 2:

In Daniel 2, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was given a special vision from God. This vision was of a man-like image. It had a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly of brass, and feet and legs part of iron and part of clay (Dn 2:31-35). God sent Daniel to interpret this vision for the confused and frustrated, if not fearful, Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel 2 was a visionary prophecy of four world kingdoms. Reference was first to Nebuchadnezzar and his existing kingdom. After him, three other kingdoms were to follow (Dn 2:36-45). The head of gold thus represented the



Babylonian Kingdom; the breast and arms of silver was the Medo-Persian Kingdom; the belly of brass was the Greek Kingdom; the feet and legs of part iron and part clay was the Roman Kingdom.

In reference to the final fourth kingdom that was presented in the vision, something wonderful would happen during the existence of this kingdom that was paramount concerning the kingdom reign of King Jesus. Here is a truth that we must not miss in reference to the fourth kingdom, which was the Roman Empire: It was in the days of the Roman Kingdom that God would establish a new kingdom (Dn 2:44).

This would be a kingdom reign that would be revealed directly from God. What is important to keep in mind is that this prophecy has already been fulfilled in every detail! It was fulfilled when the present kingdom and reign of King Jesus began at the time of His ascension and coronation (See At 2:22-36). Recognizing this fulfillment is essential in order to come to a correct understanding of the present gospel reign of King Jesus. The Daniel 2 vision of Nebuchadnezzar has been fulfilled.

B. The prophecy of Daniel 7:

Daniel 7 is a parallel prophecy of the same four world kingdoms of Nebuchadnezzar's vision of Daniel 2. In the Daniel 7 vision, Daniel himself foresaw the ascension of the Son of Man (the Christ) to the Ancient of Days (God) (See Dn 7:13,14).

When the Son of Man ascended to His throne in heaven, kingdom reign and dominion were given to Him (See also

the prophecies of 2 Sm 7:12,13; Ps 16:8-11; 110:1; Zc 6:12,13; Jl 2:28-32; Is 2:1-5; Mc 4:1-3).

It must be noted that Daniel 7 was a prophecy of an ascension, not a descending to this world. God the Father (the Ancient of Days) is pictured to be in heaven, not on this earth. Therefore, the giving and existence of the sovereignty of the ascended King took place in heaven, not on this earth. Any understanding of prophecy that would assume that Jesus would set His foot on this earth again after His ascension is simply false.

Understood together, the prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7, with many other prophecies, speak of the resurrection, ascension, and coronation of King Jesus to the right hand of the Father in heaven. These prophecies foretold that the resurrected Jesus would be King over all things while He sat on the throne of David in heaven, which throne continues to be the same as the throne of God. (David's throne on earth in the history of Israel was only an expression of the authority of God's throne in heaven.) Therefore, Daniel 7 speaks of the gospel (good news) of the coronation and reign of King Jesus when He metaphorically sat down on "**David's throne**" (See At 2:29-36). He now reigns with all authority over all things from this throne (Mt 28:18).

On His throne at the right hand of God. It was prophesied in Daniel 2 and 7 that King Jesus would function as both a priest and king (See Hb 7:1-10). God's house would be the spiritual dwelling into which people from all nations would flow as they were drawn to the sovereignty of King Jesus (1 Tm 3:15). The kingdom and reign of the Son in heaven, therefore, would be manifested on earth through subjects of the kingdom who responded to the gospel of

the crucified King. The submitted subjects would be the church (assembly) of God's people.

When anyone obeys the gospel, therefore, he or she reveals that for which Jesus asked His disciples to pray while He was still with them on earth. Until the time of His coronation that was specifically prophesied in Daniel 7, the disciples were to pray, "*Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*" (Mt 6:10). Every time someone responds to the good news of the incarnate Son of God, the will of the Father is done on earth in obedient hearts as it is done in heaven. The "visibility" of the present reign of King Jesus, therefore, was first revealed on earth when people first responded to the kingdom reign of King Jesus from heaven.

This is what Paul had in mind when he wrote that the obedient "*reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ*" (Rm 5:17). Those who are obedient to the gospel, reign on earth at this time with King Jesus who now reigns from heaven. Their reign, therefore, is validated only by His existing reign. In other words, it is as Paul wrote to Timothy, that if we died with Christ in baptism (Rm 6:3-6), and suffer with Him in this life, then "we will also reign with Him" in this life (2 Tm 2:11,12).

It is important to remember, therefore, that when we study Old Testament prophecy, we must keep in mind that prophecy in reference to kingdom matters was all about King Jesus. Church, on the other hand, is about people, and in particular, those of us today who are members of the church.

The prophecies, therefore, were not made directly about

us, the church, but about the incarnate Son of God who would come into this world, pay a redemption sacrifice for our sins, and then ascend to the right hand of the Father (the Ancient of Days) to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tm 6:15). Therefore, when we study Old Testament prophecy, we are discovering in prophecy important matters concerning King Jesus and His kingdom. We are not searching in prophecy for something about ourselves. We as “church” are the result of the incarnation of the Son of God into this world and His coronation.

We must always keep in mind that Old Testament prophecy in reference to our salvation is primarily about the Son of God who gave up being God, and ventured into this world in a body of flesh and blood in order that we might have an opportunity to spend eternity with Him where He now is (See Jn 1:1,2,14; Ph 2:5-8).

C. Jesus and John prophesied the kingdom:

As the forerunner of Jesus, John the Baptist was the one crying in the wilderness of Palestine to prepare the way for the Messiah. In preparation for the Messiah’s coming, therefore, John proclaimed, “*Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight*” (Mt 3:3; see Is 40:3; MI 3:1).

Jesus followed John’s preparation for His coming kingdom reign. Jesus wanted to make very clear that this coming kingdom was near in their future: “*My kingdom is not of this world*” (Jn 18:36). In this direct statement to Pilate, Jesus informed Pilate that He was born for the purpose of being a king, but not a king on this earth (Jn 18:37). On the occasion when Jesus made this statement, Pilate needed to be assured that the kingdom of Jesus was not going to

be a kingdom of this world as those with which Pilate was familiar, and with which the Roman Empire was constantly struggling to control.

Therefore, we must take from this statement of Jesus to Pilate that His kingdom would never be a kingdom of this world. Any teaching that one might construe from either Old Testament prophecy, or fulfillment in the New Testament, that the kingdom reign of Jesus would eventually be a physical kingdom of this world, is simply incorrect. If we would come to such a conclusion, then we both minimize and marginalize the present gospel kingdom and reign of King Jesus. We must restudy the prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7, and then remind ourselves that these prophetic visions were fulfilled over two thousand years ago.

1. John announced Jesus' kingdom reign.

John preached, "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*" (Mt 3:1,2). The word "kingdom" refers to reign or sovereignty, from which rule goes forth. The phrases "of heaven" and "of God" define the origin of the reign and rule. Jesus' reign, therefore, proceeds from God and out of heaven. John's declaration that the origin of Jesus' reign out of heaven and of God would mean that His reign would always be heavenly, not of this earth.

The phrase "at hand" directed the attention of John's immediate audience to the nearness or immediate establishment of the kingdom reign from heaven in reference to the ministries of both John and Jesus. Therefore, in reference to John's ministry, Jesus' kingdom reign was soon to be established. It was not a kingdom that would be postponed for establishment over two thousand years in

the future after the time John first preached this message. It was a kingdom that was to be established in the first century. When we speak of the kingdom and reign of King Jesus, therefore, this kingdom and reign was set up soon after it was first announced by both Jesus and John the Baptist during their ministries.

2. Jesus announced His coming kingdom reign.

After John, Jesus prophesied, *“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand”* (Mk 1:14,15). In order to emphasize the immediate nature of the establishment of His kingdom reign, Jesus said that some of His immediate disciples would not die before His kingdom was established (Mk 9:1; see Lk 9:27). This is a very significant truth in reference to the kingdom about which both John and Jesus spoke.

The immediate establishment of the kingdom in the lifetime of some of Jesus’ immediate disciples argues against any teaching that asserts that Jesus was speaking of the establishment of a physical kingdom on earth when He comes again. If He would establish such a kingdom when He comes, then it would be an earthly kingdom that would be beneficial only for those who would be alive at the time of His coming. An earthly kingdom in the future would salvationally benefit no one who lived on the earth for thousands of years before His second coming. This is true because none of the faithfuls in the Old Testament would have any salvational benefit from such an earthly kingdom reign of Jesus.

For this reason, there is no mention in Old Testament prophecy or New Testament fulfillment of anything con-

cerning the salvational benefit of a supposed earthly kingdom reign of Jesus. And since this is true, then there is no mention in the Old Testament or the New Testament of any earthly kingdom reign of King Jesus. What is mentioned in reference to salvational matters in Old Testament prophecy has already been fully completed in Jesus' incarnation and redemptive sacrifice on the cross in the first century (See Rm 3:25; Hb 9:15).

Therefore, all that was prophesied in the Old Testament concerning salvational matters has already taken place. The only thing that remains in reference to the totality of the gospel journey of the incarnate Son of God, is the good news of His coming. He is coming again in order to take His people of faith from this present world into a new heavens and earth (See 1 Th 4:13-18). Our hope is expressed in the final words that the Holy Spirit gave to Peter (See 2 Pt 3:10-12).

3. Jesus prophesied He would establish His church.

On one occasion during His earthly ministry, Jesus asked His disciples, *"Who do you say that I am?"* (Mt 16:15). Peter responded, *"You are the Christ [Messiah], the Son of the living God"* (Mt 16:16). Peter's confession was true. Jesus was the prophesied Messiah (Christ) because He fulfilled all Old Testament prophecies concerning His incarnation into this world, His earthly ministry, and redemptive sin-bearing sacrifice on the cross (See Lk 24:44). He was proved to be the Son of God because the Father worked miracles through Him in order to confirm Him as the Christ (Jn 3:2; 20:30,31; see 3:2).

The messiahship and sonship of Jesus are thus the rock upon which the church of believers is founded (Mt 16:18).

This simply means that those who believe that Jesus was the fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecies concerning the Christ (Messiah), and that He was the incarnate Son of God, had a right to become subjects of His kingdom reign. It is as Jesus said, *“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become the children of God, even to those who believe in His name”* (Jn 1:12). When one’s belief moves him or her to respond in baptism to the gospel news, then he or she is added to the assembly (church) of Christ.

(We must keep in mind that receiving and believing in King Jesus only gives us “the right” to become children of God. We must follow through on our receiving and believing with baptism into the death, burial and resurrection of our King in order to be His subjects as part of His body - Rm 6:3-6).

In Matthew 16:19 Jesus spoke of His universal kingdom. He said to Peter, *“I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven.”* “Keys” metaphorically refers to the privilege to reveal heavenly authority. Peter was given the initial authority (privilege) to unlock the kingdom reign (authority) of Jesus from heaven. He was the first person to officially and publicly announce the reign of King Jesus. This he did in A.D. 30 on the day of Pentecost as is recorded in Acts 2 (See At 2:22-36).

D. Pentecost was a transition in history:

Though the gospel of the cross was the greatest event in world history, the effects of the cross did not take place until the first official announcement of the gospel by the apostle Peter on the Pentecost of A.D. 30. It was on this

Beginning Of The Gospel Age
PENTECOST, A.D. 30*
ACTS 2

Is 2:1-5	In the Last Days	Hb 12:1,2
Mc 4:1-3	Lord's House Established	1 Tm 3:15
	All Nations Added	Mt 28:19
	Word from Jerusalem	Lk 24:47
	Judge Nations	Jn 12:48
	Peace on Earth	2 Th 3:16
Dn 2:44	Days of Roman Kings	Lk 3:1-4
	The Stone	Rm 16:20
Dn 7:13,14	Coming in the Clouds	At 1:9-11
Jl 2:28-32	"Afterward" – Last Days	At 2:16-24
	Spirit Poured Out	At 2:1-4
Jr 31:31-34	New Covenant	Hb 8:6-18

* See Appendix 3

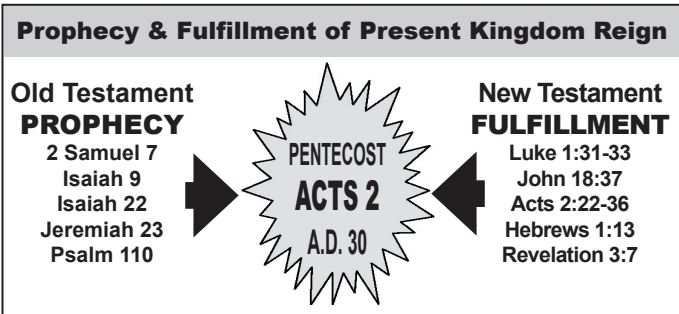
day when men and women first responded to the first official announcement of the eternal outpouring of the blood of the incarnate Son of God about seven weeks before. It was on this day that all prophecies in reference to the eternal purpose of the cross was made known to man. It was on this day that all things "*written in the law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms*" concerning Jesus were finally fulfilled (Lk 24:44). Therefore, in prophecy, God stated that in the future of Israel, He would do the following in reference to the new King who would be seated on the throne of David in heaven:

1. He would establish a mountain of power above all governments of the world (Is 2:1-5).
2. He would call all people of the world to come unto His sovereignty (Mc 4:1-3).
3. He would never allow His sovereignty to pass away (Dn 2:44).

4. He would ascend to the throne of God in heaven, and there be given dominion, glory and sovereignty over all things (Dn 7:13,14).
5. He would in the last days of Israel fulfill all prophecies concerning the new kingdom reign of the ascended Son of Man (Jl 2:28-32).
6. He would be the new King who would establish a new covenant with both Jews and Gentiles (Jr 31:31-34).

E. Prophecy and fulfillment of Jesus' reign:

The present extent of the kingdom reign of Jesus must not be underestimated. Jesus is now reigning over all created things of the universe. This reign began when He ascended to the Father. It was then that He was given authority over all things (Mt 28:18). He is not coming in the future to give up this galactic reign in order to reign on one planet of the universe, that is, this earth. It was foretold in prophecy that His present reign would be total, and thus, not marginalized in any way. As the Father reigned over all things before the ascension, so the Son now has assumed this reign.



1. **2 Samuel 7:** God promised David that One would sit upon his throne, and thus this new King would reign forever (See Lk 1:31-33).
2. **Isaiah 9:** In the future of national Israel a child would be born, and unto Him would be given authority over the people, being

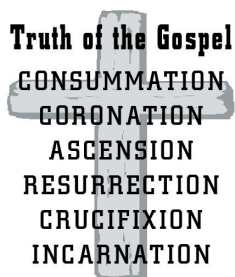
- called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace (See Lk 1:31-33).
3. **Isaiah 22:** Though Israel would be scattered among the nations, after their captivity the key (authority) of the house of David would be restored to One who would heal the people of God (See Jn 18:37).
 4. **Jeremiah 23:** The One who was coming in the history of national Israel would be the Righteous Branch who would reign over the remnant of Israel that would return from captivity (See Rv 3:7).
 5. **Psalms 110:** In the future of David, the Lord God would anoint the Lord, who would descend from David, to the position of sitting at the right hand of authority of God in heaven (See At 2:22-36).

– Revelation Of The Truth Of The Gospel –

The phrase “truth of the gospel” does not refer to a catechism of doctrine, but to the truth of the events of the gospel, and what they mean to the redemption of those who obey the gospel.

A. Allowing the Bible to be its own dictionary:

The Bible must always be allowed to define its own words and phrases. One very important term or phrase that is used and defined in the Bible is the phrase “the truth of the gospel.” In most cases, the Holy Spirit used the phrase “the truth” to stand for the extended phrase, “the truth of the gospel,” which means that “the gospel is true.” The event of Jesus coming into and going out of this world is historically true.



In the book of Galatians, the Holy Spirit used both “the

truth” and “the truth of the gospel” to argue against those who would seek to justify themselves by meritorious obedience to any system of legal catechisms of religious rites, rituals and ceremonies. In contrast to religious self-justification, the Holy Spirit argued that Christians are justified only by “the truth of the gospel.” Any other efforts that one might attempt to do in order to self-justify himself before God are simply “another gospel” (Gl 1:6-9). The book of Galatians, therefore, is a document that is written against any supposed self-justification through one’s attempt to keep religious rites, rituals and ceremonies, or any law perfectly in order to be saved (Gl 2:16; see At 13:39). The truth of the gospel, therefore, stands against all “other gospels.”

Contrary to any efforts of self-justification, Christians have been justified by faith in the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ at the cross. The truth in this context is not a set of doctrinal laws, but the justification that comes to us through the incarnational offering of the Son of God, His crucifixion and resurrection (1 Co 15:3,4). This historical event in reference to our salvation actually happened. It is true. Therefore, this is the truth of the incarnation, atoning death, bodily resurrection of Jesus, ascension, and present priesthood and kingship of the Lord Jesus Christ. The phrase “truth of the gospel,” therefore, refers to Jesus and His salvational ministry at the cross, not to a legal set of laws by which we would attempt to legally save ourselves.

B. Jesus is the truth of the gospel:

Jesus proclaimed that He personally was the truth. As the truth, He would set those who believe in Him free from

sin and their futile efforts to justify themselves through religious inventions (Jn 8:32). Once set free, those who would seek to return to obedience of meritorious religious rules in order to justify themselves would be going back into the bondage of religion (Gl 5:1).

Jesus declared that He was “*the truth and the life*” (Jn 14:6). When He stood before Pilate, He testified that He was the truth who had come into the world (Jn 18:37). He was the truth to whom John the Baptist had given his testimony (Jn 5:33). He was thus the truth of the good news (gospel) who came into the world (Gl 2:5). Therefore, when Christians preach “*the word of the **truth of the gospel,***” they are preaching Jesus and His sacrificial offering for our sins (Cl 1:5).

C. Worshipful response to the truth of the gospel:

God the Father seeks those who will worship Him in spirit and in response to the truth of the gospel of His Son (Jn 4:24). Those who believe in the redemption of the gospel of the cross, and thus have been baptized in response to this truth, are the body of those who are worshiping God in response to the grace of God that was revealed on the cross (2 Co 4:15). If we do not obey God in response to the gospel of His grace, then we are not walking “*straight-forward about the **truth of the gospel***” (Gl 2:14). Those who seek to worship God according to the religious rites, rituals and ceremonies of man are not worshiping God totally in response to the gospel of God’s grace that was revealed on the cross. For this reason, such worship is in vain because it is in response to one’s own ability to supposedly keep law perfectly, and not in response to the truth of the gospel of God’s grace (See Mk 7:7).

1. All must come to a knowledge of the truth of the gospel (1 Tm 2:4; 2 Tm 3:6,7; see 2 Pt 3:18).
2. Christians support and preach the truth of the gospel in Christ (1 Tm 2:7; 3 Jn 8).
3. The church is the result of those who have believed the truth of the gospel (1 Tm 3:15).
4. Christians appreciate all things because they know the truth of the gospel (1 Tm 4:3).
5. Godly living leads to a better understanding of the truth of the gospel (2 Tm 2:24,25; Ti 1:2; Js 5:19,20; see 2 Pt 3:18).
6. Ungodliness reveals that one is destitute of the truth of the gospel (1 Tm 6:3-5; 2 Tm 3:8).
7. Some Christians stray from the truth of the gospel (2 Tm 2:17,18; 4:3,4; Ti 1:13,14).
8. There is no atonement for those who stray from the truth of the gospel (Hb 10:26).
9. The truth of the gospel does not dwell in the disobedient (1 Jn 2:4).
10. Those who know the truth of the gospel seek instruction from God (1 Jn 2:21).
11. Grateful living reveals that one is of the truth of the gospel (1 Jn 3:19; see 2 Co 5:14; 1 Jn 4:9,19).
12. The truth of the gospel dwells in Christians through obedience (2 Jn 1,2; 3 Jn 3,4).
13. The Holy Spirit bears witness to the truth of the gospel (1 Jn 5:6).

– Identity Of Gospel-Obedient Believers –

The church is God's community of believers in the world who have responded to the gospel of the heavenly kingdom reign of King Jesus. People are members of the church because they have responded to the truth of the gospel. This is the universal body of Christ that exists wherever there is at least one person who has obeyed the gospel. Individuals are members of the church because of their faith in Jesus as their Savior and King of kings. Because of their faith, they have submitted to the present kingdom reign of Jesus (Rm 6:3-6). Through continued

faith and obedience, members of the body have made Jesus the Lord of their lives. Therefore, the word “church” is used in the New Testament to refer to the people of God who are called out of the world through their objective obedience to the gospel (1 Th 2:12,13). These are the people who have been reconciled to God. They have been brought back into fellowship with God through the gospel of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus at the cross.



A. Bible description of God's people as individuals:

1. They are disciples because they are learners of Jesus (At 11:26; 2 Pt 3:18).
2. They are Christians because they called after Christ (At 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pt 4:16).
3. They are saints because they have been sanctified of sin (Rm 1:7; Ep 1:1; Ph 1:1).
4. They are children of God because God is their Father (Gl 3:26; 4:5; 1 Jn 3:1,2).
5. They are brethren because they are of a common faith (Ph 4:21; 1 Pt 2:17).
6. They are members because they function in unity as the body of Christ (1 Co 12:27).
7. They are servants because they serve others (Rm 16:1,2; Gl 6:10).
8. They are priests because they daily serve and worship God (1 Pt 2:5,9; Rv 1:6).

B. Bible description of God's global community:

1. It is the church of God because Christians belong to God (1 Co 1:2).

2. It is the church of Christ because Christians belong to Christ (Rm 16:16).
3. It is the body of Christ because Christians are members (1 Co 12:27; Ep 1:22,23).
4. It is the house of God because God dwells in the members (1 Tm 3:15).
5. It is the flock of God because elders see over the needs of the members (1 Pt 5:2,3).
6. It is the church of the Lord (God) because Jesus is the Master (At 20:28).
7. It is the household of God because Christians are God's family (Ep 2:19).
8. It is the temple of God because God dwells in worshipful hearts (2 Co 6:16).
9. It is the bride of Christ because Christians are waiting for the Bridegroom (Rv 21:9).

– Gospel Relationship With God –

Because of their obedience to the gospel, Christians have come into a covenant fellowship with God. This relationship with God will remain throughout eternity because Christians will remain in the presence of God. This world, therefore, is not their home (Ep 2:6, 19; Ph 3:20). They look forward to a new heavens and earth that is yet to come (2 Pt 3:13). When the new habitation comes, Christians will enjoy the reward of their present covenant relationship with God. It is because of the following that Christians have hope of an eternal presence with God:

1. Christians have been immersed into fellowship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19,20; Jn 15:4; 1 Co 1:9; 1 Jn 1:3).
2. Christians have been purchased by the blood of Jesus (At 20:28; Ep 1:7,14; Hb 9:14).
3. Christians have been sanctified by the blood of Jesus (Ti 2:14; Hb 1:3; 1 Jn 1:7).
4. Christians are a holy priesthood of God (1 Pt 2:5; Rv 1:6; 5:10; 20:6).
5. Christians are a holy nation of God (1 Pt 2:9).

6. Christians have enrolled in a heavenly citizenship (Ep 2:6,19; Ph 3:20,21).
7. Christians have been reconciled to God through Jesus (2 Co 5:18-21; Cl 1:20-22).

– Christian’s Relationship With King Jesus –

Because Jesus has offered Himself on behalf of those who have responded to the gospel, Christians have a special relationship with the Son of God. They are fellow heirs with Jesus in the kingdom (Rm 8:17; Gl 3:26-29; Ep 3:6). Therefore, they partake of all that Jesus brought into the world through His sacrifice on the cross.

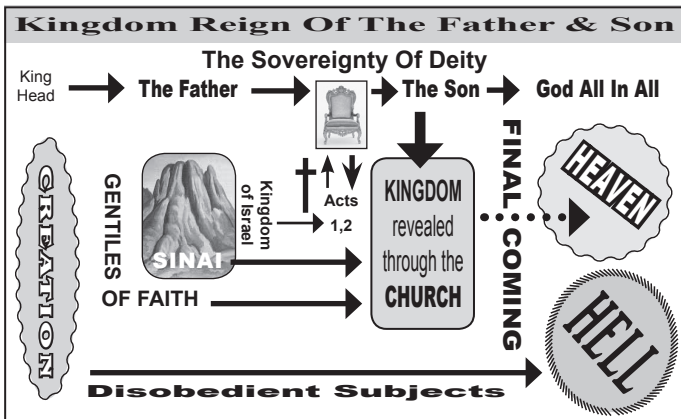
1. Christians are built on the rock of Jesus’ sonship and messiahship (Mt 16:15-19).
2. Christians are founded upon Jesus as the Son of God (1 Co 3:10,11).
3. Christians walk in submission to Jesus’ headship (Cl 1:18).
4. Christians are established on Jesus as their cornerstone (Ep 2:19-22).
5. Christians walk in subjection to the kingship of Jesus (1 Tm 6:15; Rv 19:16).
6. Christians are represented before God by Jesus, their High Priest (Hb 4:14-16).
7. Christians live in response to the gospel and Jesus’ word (Jn 8:31; see Jn 14:15; 15:14).
8. Christians are sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ep 1:13).
9. Christians have the Holy Spirit in the inner man (Ep 3:14-17).
10. Christians have Jesus as their advocate before the Father (1 Jn 2:1).
11. Christians have Jesus as their intercessor with the Father (Rm 8:34).
12. Christians have Jesus as their mediator with the Father (1 Tm 2:5).

– Gospel Reign Of King Jesus –

God has not left His people in confusion on earth. He has

seated His Son at His right hand to rule from heaven by the authority of His written word (Jn 12:48). He is the only head of the church, and thus, all control of the church on earth must come from the authority of His word (Cl 1:16-18). There is no other head or authority over the church who should compete with the sovereignty of Jesus as the only king and head of the universal body of believers.

Christians on earth have submitted themselves to the kingdom reign of Jesus (Ep 1:20-22; Ph 2:5-11; Cl 3:14; 1 Pt 5:6). This means that those who would be leading members of the body on earth must be slaves to the members of Jesus' body for which He gave Himself as a ransom for sins (Mk 10:35-45; Lk 22:24-30; Jn 13:1-17). The relationship of the members with one another, therefore, is based on service. It is based on service because in service to one another the members reveal their response to the gospel of their King (2 Co 4:15; 2 Co 5:14; Gl 5:13). Christians are servants who seek to fill one another's needs and the needs of those around whom they live (1 Co 16:15,16; Gl 2:10; 6:10).



As our head, Jesus seeks to direct our lives through His word (Mt 11:28,29; Jn 8:31; Rv 3:20). As our King, we voluntarily submit to His lordship in our hearts (Lk 17:20,21). As our High Priest, we trust in Jesus to mediate on behalf of our sin problem before the Father (Jn 1:29; 1 Jn 1:7).

A. Jesus is the King of the kingdom.

Jesus is the King of all things (Jn 18:36,37; Rv 3:21). He reigns over all (Mt 28:18; 1 Pt 3:22). This means that the Father has subjected all things in both the spiritual realm and the material world to the control of Jesus (Is 9:6,7; Ep 1:20-23; Ph 2:9,10; Hb 1:3). He will reign over all things until He comes again. When He comes at the end of time, He will return all authority to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (1 Co 15:20-28). Jesus' sole kingship over all things will be finalized at His final coming.

B. Jesus is the Head of the church.

Jesus is the head of the body which is the church (Ep 5:23; Cl 1:18). The word "head" means that Jesus has control. This means that there can be no other controlling head of the church, either in heaven or on earth. Jesus must be the center of reference for all that we do in our lives. His headship must be unchallenged by any who would assume to be in control of the universal church of Christ. The church is composed of those on earth who have responded to the gospel reign of Jesus from heaven. They have submitted to Him as their King, and thus, the church is the group of obedient subjects on earth who have responded to the gospel reign of King Jesus in heaven.

C. Jesus is the High Priest in the temple of God.

Jesus is our High Priest who is seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven (Hb 4:14-16; 8:1,6). This is the position of kingdom authority. Because He is in this position of authority, He makes intercession for all Christians (Hb 7:25; 9:24; 1 Jn 2:1). As a result of believers submitting to the kingdom reign of King Jesus, they have been added to the assembly of God's people that is called the church (At 2:47). The church, therefore, is the manifestation on earth of the kingdom reign of Jesus in heaven. As King of His kingdom, Jesus functions on behalf of His subjects as a High Priest in reference to their sins. Therefore, He is our High Priest who works on our behalf as our advocate before God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (1 Tm 2:5; 1 Jn 2:1).

D. The sovereignty of Deity has always exist.

When the galaxies were created, God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit reigned over their creation. When God called Israel at Mount Sinai in order to establish a national covenant with the seed of Abraham, the Father continued as Israel's King until a new King was designated (1 Ch 29:11,12; Ps 103:19; Jr 10:10). During the time the Father was the King of Israel, prophecy was made that a new King was coming (Dn 2:44; 7:13,14). This new King came in Jesus Christ who now reigns over all things (Mt 28:18; Ep 1:22-23; Ph 2:5-11; Hb 1:3). King Jesus will reign until the consummation of all things at His final coming. It will be then that sovereignty over the galaxies will be returned to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (1 Co 15:26-28). Until that time, the church is the universal body of those on earth who have responded to the gospel kingdom reign

of King Jesus. Because of their response to the gospel of Jesus, they are the saints who are prepared for heaven.

– Organic Function Of The Body –

The church is a vibrant community of believers who have submitted themselves to the kingdom reign of Jesus. Because Christians are a community of people who have responded to the gospel by baptism into Christ, they continue to live in gratitude for all that Jesus has and is doing for them as their King, Priest and Head. The members of the church, therefore, seek to be servants of others in order to prepare their characters for eternal dwelling (Rm 12:1,2).

A. Shepherds (elders) of the flock:

A plurality of men who are qualified to be shepherds (elders) serve the body through teaching and example. The shepherds as a group have been designated by the flock to assume the responsibility of caring for the flock of God. Shepherds are publicly recognized and designated by the church in every region to serve the spiritual needs of the members (At 14:23; 1 Pt 5:3). They are designated in order to offer spiritual service and leadership for the flock of God through teaching and godly examples (At 20:17; Ph 1:1; Ti 1:5; 1 Pt 5:3). Shepherds, or elders, are those who are older in age (At 11:30; 14:23; 15:2,4,6,22; 1 Tm 5:1,17). The Greek word for “presbyter” is sometimes translated “bishop” (At 20:28; 1 Tm 3:1). These men are also referred to as “pastors” or “shepherds.”

1. Shepherds must have qualities in service and godly behavior before being designated to minister to the needs of the flock of

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- God (Ep 4:11; 1 Tm 3:1-7; Ti 1:5-9; 1 Pt 5:2).
 2. Shepherds lead the church by their godly examples (1 Tm 5:17; 1 Pt 5:1-3).
 3. Shepherds are teachers of the word of God (Ep 4:11; 1 Tm 5:17; Ti 1:9).
 4. Shepherds guard the flock from the threat of false teaching (At 20:28-32; Ti 1:9).
 5. Shepherds admonish the flock with the word of God (1 Th 5:12,13; Js 5:14,15).

B. Menservants (deacons) of the body:

Menservants (Greek, *diakonos*) are especially qualified men who are designated by the church to serve special physical and spiritual needs of the members of the church. They work with all the members of the body in order to lead the members to serve one another (Ph 1:1).

1. Designated menservants (deacons) have qualities of work and life before they are designated to serve (1 Tm 3:8-10,12,13).
2. Menservants minister to fulfill specific needs (At 6:1-7).

C. Evangelists preach and teach the gospel:

The primary work of the evangelist is to go forth and proclaim the good news (the gospel) of the Lord Jesus to the lost (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15,16; 2 Tm 4:5). Evangelists are sent forth by the church to proclaim the gospel. They are sent forth because of the state of condemnation in which all the world is because people have neither heard nor obeyed the gospel (Rm 10:14,15; 3 Jn 1-8).

1. Evangelists proclaim the gospel to the lost (Rm 1:14,15; 1 Co 9:16; 1 Pt 1:25).
2. Evangelists teach the truth of the gospel (2 Tm 2:2; Ti 3:8).
3. Evangelists fulfill the specific work of gospel preaching (At 21:8; Ep 4:11; 2 Tm 4:5).

4. Evangelists minister to the spiritual needs of the flock (1 Th 3:2; 2 Tm 4:5; 1 Pt 4:11).
5. Evangelists proclaim the truth of the gospel to unbelievers (2 Tm 4:2).
6. Evangelists proclaim the warnings given in the word of God (1 Tm 1:3-10; 4:1-3,6,11-16).
7. Evangelists give examples of godly living in response to the gospel (1 Tm 4:12).
8. Evangelists instruct the church concerning greater details of the gospel (Rm 1:13-16).

– Work Of Gospel-Obedient Disciples –

The body of Christ is a living organism that is filled with the Spirit of God. Members of the body thrive on earth throughout the world as one body. They function in this world to continue the work of Jesus to seek and to save the lost (Lk 19:10). By preaching and living the gospel, the members of the body preach the gospel in order to bring souls into the eternal dwelling of the presence of God. Since Christians have submitted themselves to the lordship of Jesus in their lives, they are committed to carry out the mission of Jesus to all the world. As members of the universal church of Christ, they seek to do the following:

A. Christians preach the gospel to the world.

Jesus commissioned His disciples to continue His mission of telling the world the good news of His incarnation, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, priesthood, kingship, and eventual consummation of all things (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15,16; Lk 24:46,47). The early church accepted the challenge of this gospel mission (At 5:42; 6:7; 8:4; Cl 1:23). Therefore, until Jesus comes again, Christians must accept the challenge of preaching the gospel to the world in order to populate heaven by calling all the world into obe-

dience of the gospel (1 Th 2:12). Because Christians have responded to the gospel, it is natural for them to preach the gospel. Gospel-obedient people preach the message of the gospel.

B. Christians care for physical needs.

The church is a family of gospel-motivated people who care for the needs of one another and the needs of the communities in which they live (See Mt 25:31-46; 2 Co 4:15; 5:14).

1. Christians do that which is good to all men (Mt 25:31-46; Gl 6:10).
2. Christians especially do good to one another (1 Jn 3:17,18).
3. Christians sacrificially give to the needs of others (At 2:44,45; 4:32-37).
4. Christians are benevolent to widows and orphans (At 6:1-6; 1 Tm 5:3-16; Js 1:27).
5. Christians are zealous to help the poor (Mt 7:11,12; Lk 4:18; 6:30,31; 14:12-14; Gl 2:10).

C. Christians edify themselves.

Christians are the house of God, and as such, they must function as gospel-driven members of God's family (1 Tm 3:15).

1. As the household of God, God dwells in Christians who are continually edified by His word in order to grow spiritually (1 Co 3:9; Ep 2:21).
2. As the household of God living in His grace, Christians grow in their knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Pt 3:18).
3. As the household of God, Christians edify themselves with God's word (1 Co 14:3-5,12,26).
4. As the household of God, Christians allow themselves to be admonished by the word of God (At 20:31; Gl 6:1,2; Ep 5:19; Cl 3:16; Hb 10:24,25).
5. As the household of God, every member functions as a vital part of the whole (Ep 4:11-16).

– Gospel-Motivated Worship –

Gospel-motivated disciples worship God with both a reverential fear and an adoration that comes from recognizing God's greatness as our Creator. The gospel causes them to worship in spirit and in response to the truth of the gospel (Jn 4:24,25; 2 Co 4:15). Worship flows from the heart of the one who recognizes that God is the Creator and the One who sustains one's total existence (Gn 24:26,27; Ex 4:31; 14:31-15:19; Ps 96:1-9; Jn 9:35-38; Rv 1:10-18; 4:11). Therefore, worship is the natural response of those who understand the incarnational offering of the Son of God in order to bring reverential worshipers into His eternal presence.

People do not have the right to create a god after their own image, and then, create worship of this god according to their own desires. It is the responsibility of every gospel-obedient believer to seek information in God's revealed word as to how God desires to be worshiped. Not all worship that is witnessed today in the religious world is acceptable to God. The following systems of worship are identified in the New Testament to be unacceptable worship of God:

A. Vain worship:

When people develop a ceremonial religion after their own desires that is based solely on either human religious traditions, rites, rituals, ceremonies, or human emotions, then they are worshipping God in vain. This is useless worship in the eyes of God because such worship focuses on the subjective desires of individuals who seek to worship God according to their own will (See Mt 15:1-9; Mk 7:1-9). It

is self-centered worship because the worshiper seeks to validate his worship experience with his legal obedience to human religious traditions.

B. Ignorant worship:

Men may understand that there is a God. However, they may be ignorant of who this God is. In their ignorance of the one true and living God, they will create a god in their own imagination who supposedly behaves as they behave. They then seek to worship this god according to their own inventions as to how they suppose this god seeks to be worshiped. This is the ignorant worship that was common among the ancient Greeks. Such worship of imagined gods is unacceptable to the one true and living God (See At 17:16-30).

C. Self-willed worship:

When one seeks to worship God according to his own desires, then he is worshiping according to his own will, not the will of the God in whom he believes. This worship is unacceptable to God because it is subjectively focused on the one who worships, and not on God who is to be worshiped (See Cl 2:20-23). Self-will worship is conducted in the lives of religious people when they establish as authority in their worship either human religious traditions, rituals, ceremonies, or the experiential performances that often mislead the worshiper.

Many religious people unfortunately base their faith and worship on either a legal system of meritorious obedience that they have performed in compliance with their religious heritage, or on the experiential behavior that is common

among some religious cults. Unfortunately, these foundations for worship are contrary to the true worship that God seeks. One's worship of and service to God must always depend on what God considers to be the final authority for our faith. Those who walk by faith must never forget that a wrong foundation for faith will result in worship that is unacceptable to God.

D. Human religious traditions:

Throughout the history of any religious group, human religious traditions, whether expressed through ceremonial rites or rituals, become entrenched in the behavior of the adherents of any particular group, and thus become the religious heritage of the group. When unique identities are commonly practiced by different religious groups, then denominations are formed. The process of denominating begins when religious people start conducting themselves after unique religious patterns that are accepted by each unique group. This is a natural process of religious behavior with all people of faith. We must be careful not to establish any religious tradition as a unique law that would identify our particular religious group. God never intended that His people bind their religious traditions of faith on one another in a manner that would divide the universal body of Christ.

1. Human religious traditions can be misleading.

All people live by traditions that have been handed down to them from their forefathers (Mk 7:1-9). However, when considering how we should please God, human religious traditions can often be very misleading. They can be misleading if our forefathers, did not know the Bible. In other

words, we can be very religious in our beliefs, just as the Greek Athenians Paul encountered, but have no knowledge of the one true and living God. Therefore, we would be worshiping God in ignorance because we have little knowledge of God (At 17:23).

2. Human religious traditions originate from people.

They are the invention of those who have little knowledge of the Bible, or have never had a copy of the Bible. Therefore, such religious traditions will lead us away from God. Our emphasis on religious traditions is actually an effort to say to God that we do not need Him to direct our lives through His word. We must, therefore, be cautious. People often establish traditions as the foundation of their faith and behavior. Those who are religious, but ignorant of the word of God, will establish religious groups that are based on the authority of man and not on the authority of the word of God (See Rm 1:18-32; 10:1-3). They will subsequently be worshiping God in vain.

3. Human religious traditions lead away from God's word.

Religious traditions become dangerous when they make us feel comfortable in our religiosity. And when we are comfortable in our religion, we have little desire to search the word of God for direction. This is precisely what happened in the history of the nation of Israel. Human religious traditions led Israel away from worshiping the one true and living God. The people turned to worshiping Baal gods that they had created after their own imagination (See Hs 4:6; Mt 15:1-9; Mk 7:7-9).

4. Human religious traditions should never be the authority for belief, behavior and worship.

It is not wrong to do things in a traditional manner. However, when the traditional manner by which we do something in the area of faith becomes the only way something is to be done, then the tradition becomes wrong. It becomes wrong because our contentment with human religious traditions always leads us away from basing our faith solely on the word of God. Since our traditions are often stronger than our desire to search the word of God, and thus find what God desires, then we must conclude that human religious traditions can never be the foundation upon which we should base our beliefs, behavior and worship in reference to faith. The word of God must be the final authority in all matters of our faith (Rm 10:17).

E. Humanistic (self-centered) worship:

Many religious people seek within themselves a foundation upon which to build their religious beliefs, behavior, and thus secure emotional satisfaction in worship. Unfortunately, they conclude that if something feels right, then it must be right. Hysterical experiences often become the experiential confirmation that one is supposedly right with God in behavior and worship. This is self-centered worship. Such worship gives one a sense of self-sanctification when he or she has supposedly had an emotional experience in worship. In this system of worship, however, worship itself becomes a legal system of validation by which one seeks to justify himself before God.

1. Led away from God by self-centered worship.

If we believe that something is right because such is based on emotional experiences, then we are saying that we want our personal experiences to be the authority of our faith (See Rm 3:1-3,10-18). We are asking God to accept our emotional experiences as the foundation upon which we would establish our beliefs, behavior and worship. We are thus asking God to approve our beliefs, behavior and worship, though we may lose our sobriety in our experiential behavior. What we are actually asking of God is that we want to be the center of our religious faith rather than allowing God to direct us through His word. Such religious behavior is humanistic because people make themselves the source of authority for their faith. Individuals are made the center of reference for validating what is supposedly pleasing to God.

2. People cannot establish their own moral standards.

Concerning our moral standards, God spoke through Jeremiah that we do not have the ability to establish our own moral standards (Jr 10:23). God instructed that it is impossible for man to provide his own morals from that which comes from within himself. We must conclude, therefore, that neither human intellect nor emotions can give us the correct foundation for our faith. If we forget the will of God in these matters, we will lead ourselves away from God (Is 5:13; Ez 22:26; Hs 4:6).

3. People cannot trust their feelings and emotions.

God said, *“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death”* (Pv 14:12). We may feel that something is right, while at the same time actually be living contrary to the will of God. Jesus spoke of some who

prophesied in His name and would do many marvelous works. However, because they did not follow the word of God, they were working iniquity (Mt 7:21). This truth should move sincere people to study seriously the word of God with all their heart. We must be moved to the Bible in order that we not lead ourselves away from God with our own religious deceptions (2 Th 2:10-12).

– **Worship In Spirit And Truth** –

Christians seek to worship God according to the instructions of His word (Jn 8:31). They worship in spirit and in response to the truth of the gospel (Jn 4:23,24).

- **Worship in spirit:** To worship God in response to the gospel means that our worship must be based on our knowledge of the gospel of Jesus that is revealed in the word of God. To worship in spirit means to focus on worship that is inspired by our understanding of what God did for us through the incarnational offering of His Son. Worship in spirit is not worship that is inspired by the physical environment in which we are at the time we worship, nor is it worship that is inspired by the mesmerizing entertainment that is sometimes provided by fellow worshipers. Worship in spirit is contrary to the performance of religious rituals and ceremonies. This is true because the performance of man-made religious rituals and ceremonies deceive one into believing that he or she has worshiped God spiritually. But when worship ceremonies take the place of an outpouring of one's heart, worshipers often deceived into thinking that the performance of the ceremonies have been acceptable to God.

- **Worship in truth:** True worship is motivated by real-

izing what God did for us, not what we can do for Him in our worship performances. In this way, gospel-driven Christians are first inspired to worship God with the daily service of their lives (See Rm 12:1,2). Their worship is not confined to any particular location, opened or closed with any prayers, or legally performed through any rites, rituals or ceremonies. On the contrary, Christians can bring their individual spirits of worship together as a group at any time and place and worship God from what pours out of their thankful hearts in response to the truth of the gospel (At 4:23-31; 1 Co 4:15).

A. Worship as an individual:

For those who have believed and obeyed the gospel, worship of God is an everyday opportunity to express reverence and thanksgiving to God for the offering of His Son (2 Co 4:15). The Christian's worship is an outward expression of an inward thanksgiving for what it cost the Lord Jesus for us to have a personal covenant relationship with God.

1. Christians manifest their worship by sacrificial service (Rm 12:1,2).
2. Christians function as priests of God (1 Pt 2:5,9).
3. Christians bear their crosses (Lk 9:23; 2 Tm 3:12).
4. Christians fellowship and praise God (At 2:46,47).
5. Christians proclaim God's word (At 5:42).
6. Christians pray and offer supplications to God (1 Th 5:17).
7. Christians give to the needs of others (Gl 6:10; Ti 2:7; 3:8).
8. Christians express their thanksgiving to God (2 Co 4:15).

B. Worship with others:

Because of their love for one another (Jn 13:34,35), Christians seek to be with one another whenever possible (Hb

10:24,25). They seek to bring their attitudes of worship together into assembly with others, especially on the first day of the week (Sunday). The word of God urges Christians to take every opportunity to assemble together for mutual exhortation and praise of God, though our worship is not confined to an assembly, nor is it dependent on an assembly with other worshipers in order to perform certain ceremonies of worship. In the first century, Christians commonly assembled with one another in order to express their worship of God and to reaffirm their love for one another (Jn 13:34,35). However, their worship was not confined to their public assemblies.

1. Christians daily teach and admonish one another with song (1 Co 14:15; Ep 5:16; Cl 3:16).
2. Christians daily sing praises to God (Ep 5:19; Cl 3:16).
3. Christians daily pray together (At 4:23-31; 12:5,12; 1 Co 14:14-17).
4. Christians daily do good works (At 4:32-37; 1 Co 16:1,2; 2 Co 8:1-9; Ph 4:18).
5. Christians weekly remember Jesus' sacrifice by partaking of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week (Mt 26:26-29; Mk 14:22-25; Lk 22:17-20; At 20:7; 1 Co 11:23-25).
6. Christians remember the one body when they partake of the Supper (1 Co 10:16,17).
7. Christians assemble to encourage one another to love and do good works (Hb 10:24,25).

It is the responsibility of every Christian to manifest in his or her life the gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Co 2:15,16). The righteous behavior of the Christian is not confined to special physical locations or limited to specific times during the week (Jn 4:19-24; At 17:24-28). Since God is everywhere, Christians can worship Him anywhere. The Christian life is a daily manifestation of the lordship of Jesus in one's life in response to the gospel (Gl 2:20). It is a manifestation of the fulfillment of Jesus' promise that we enjoy this life

to its fullest with hope of a better life to come (Jn 10:10). Christians, therefore, should live in a manner that encourages inquiries from unbelievers concerning the nature of their faith and hope (1 Pt 3:15).

– Fellowship Of The Body –

Since Christians can worship and study God's word anywhere and anytime it is convenient, then establishing an assembly for worship and Bible study is easy. Since there were no purpose-built church buildings for the first three centuries in the history of the church, the first Christians found it convenient to assemble in their own homes. This practical place of assembly made it possible for the disciples to be mobile throughout the world, as well as easily move from one location to another in times of persecution (At 8:4).

A. Assembly in the convenience of a home:

The Bible does not emphasize a particular place for the assembly of the saints. However, in order to begin an assembly of God's people in one's own community, one must be assured that the early Christians first assembled for worship and mutual edification in their homes. It is a historical fact that for almost three hundred years after the church was established in A.D. 30, the early Christians regularly met for assembly in their homes. It was not until the early reign of the Roman Emperor Constantine that the first buildings were constructed for the specific purpose of conducting assemblies for the church. This was around the year A.D. 323.

1. Aquila and Priscilla met with others in their home in Rome (Rm 16:3-5).

2. Aquila and Priscilla met with others in their home in Ephesus (1 Co 16:19).
3. Philemon met with others in his home (Pl 1,2).
4. Nympha met with others in her home in Colosse (Cl 4:15).
5. Christians met with one another from house to house (At 2:46).
6. Christians taught the word of God from house to house (At 20:20).

B. Assemblies of the saints:

The following are some practical suggestions to remember when beginning an assembly in either one's house, a public school classroom, or rented hall.

1. Ask for wisdom from God to boldly begin an assembly (Mk 11:24; Cl 4:3,4).
2. Find a quiet location that is suitable for worship and Bible study (See At 16:15,34).
3. Designate a specific time and location for the assembly in order to encourage others in the community to attend for worship and Bible study (See At 3:1; 16:13).
4. Inform everyone in the community concerning the intention of calling people together in order to worship God and study His word (See At 16:15,34; Cl 4:16; 1 Tm 4:13).
5. Focus first on a study of the gospel (See Rm 6:3-6; 1 Co 15:1-4). Paul desired to meet with the Christians in Rome in order to study the gospel with them (Rm 1:13-16; see 2 Pt 3:18).
6. If possible, have a regular love feast together as the early Christians (2 Pt 2:13; Jd 12). As in the first century, this is an opportune time to partake of the Lord's Supper (See 1 Co 11).
7. The disciples of the first century customarily used unleavened bread for the Lord's Supper. This bread can be made by mixing flour with milk or water, and then adding a small portion of oil and salt. The mixture is stirred until a thick paste is formed. It is then spread over a smooth heated surface and baked for a few minutes.
8. Unleavened bread—bread without leaven—was the bread that was used during the Jewish Passover Feast (Ex 12). It was during this feast that Jesus instituted His Supper, and thus He



- used unleavened bread to represent His body (Mt 26:17,26-29). For Christians, the metaphor of the unleavened bread signifies that sin has been purged out of the body of believers (1 Co 5:7,8).
9. After eating the bread, Jesus took the fruit of the vine that was either grape juice or grape wine (Mt 26:27; Lk 22:17). If one's group has only a limited amount of grape juice or grape wine, it can be diluted with water in order to increase the amount so everyone can partake. Some have even boiled raisins in water in order to make the fruit of the vine. However, if neither unleavened bread nor the fruit of the vine are available, then the assembled Christians can take time to read the Bible, study and meditate concerning the meaning of the Lord's Supper.
 10. Christians should take the opportunity in assembly to exhort one another with songs (Ep 5:19; Cl 3:16). Prayer should be offered for all things, especially for those with either spiritual or physical needs (Ph 4:6; 1 Th 5:17). Bible study must be central to any assembly. The assembly is also an opportunity to contribute to special needs, as well as supporting evangelists to go forth and preach the gospel (See 1 Co 16:1,2; Ph 4:17,18; 3 Jn 5-8).
 11. When several groups are meeting at different houses in a particular region, everyone must remember that all the members in the region are still one church. If all the members cannot regularly come together in one location every Sunday, then plans can possibly be made for everyone to come together in one place for an occasional celebration.
 12. All the assemblies that are meeting throughout a particular region should make a special effort to have a common collection for benevolence and mission work to other villages, towns and cities (See Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15,16; At 8:4; 5:42; 2 Co 8:1-4; 1 Th 1:1-10).
 13. Every effort should be made not to denominate groups of disciples from one another simply because all the members in one region cannot meet together at the same place and time on a regular basis (See 1 Co 1:10; Ph 1:27; Cl 3:12-14; 3 Jn 9,10).

We must always remember the words of Jesus, that worship of God is not confined to a specific location (See Jn 4:21-23; At 17:24,25). God is not concerned with where we may assemble as the church, whether in homes, in public buildings, or in our own purpose-built facilities.

Worship takes place in the hearts of men and women who daily worship God anywhere in spirit in response to the truth of the gospel.

What is important is that we seek to restore gospel-obedient disciples in our communities. Though there will be opposition from those who have twisted the Scriptures in order to create a religion after their own desires, we must take a stand for the truth of the gospel. Persecution is a part of living the Christian life (At 8:4; 14:22; 2 Tm 3:12). However, we must keep in mind that those who are persecuted for the sake of doing right will be blessed by God (Mt 5:10-12; Js 1:2-4). Therefore, every Christian must be encouraged not to be ashamed of the gospel (Rm 1:16). Every disciple must be encouraged to preach the gospel (2 Tm 4:1,2). Christians must boldly stand up before others and confess that Jesus is the Christ, the incarnate Son of God (Mt 10:32,33; 16:13-15; At 4:18-20).

– Victory Of The Seedline Wars –

We must never forget that a war between God and Satan began with the pronouncement that from the seed of woman, God would eternally correct the sin of Adam, and all humanity (Gn 3:15). Once God said that the Seed would crush the head of Satan, then Satan launched relentless attacks throughout history in order to terminate the seedline of woman. Satan knew, that from the seedline of woman, a Seed would eventually come forth who would cast himself and all his demon followers into fire and brimstone (See Mt 25:41; Rv 20:13-15).

Satan was almost victorious when every imagination of man became evil, leaving only eight souls to be saved

by the ark of Noah (Gn 6:5). But even after the flood of Noah's day, the wars continued between good and evil. In every case, however, the seedline of woman prevailed, and finally, the Seed was victorious on the cross of Calvary. Read of these wars in the following texts:

Satan's Attacks**God's Counter Attacks**

Cain kills Abel (Gn 4:1-8)	▶ Seth is born (Gn 4:25)
Degradation of humanity (Gn 6:5-7)	▶ Preservation of Noah (Gn 6:8)
Idolatry of humanity (Rm 1:21-25)	▶ Call of Abraham (Gn 12:1-3)
Barrenness of Sarah (Gn 15:18)	▶ Birth of Isaac (Gn 17:16-19; 21:2,3)
Starvation of Isaac's family (Gn 26:1)	▶ Flight to Abimelech (Gn 26:2,3)
Esau's murder scheme (Gn 27:41)	▶ Jacob's flight (Gn 27:43; 28:13,14)
Israel is enslaved (Gn 37)	▶ Joseph rescues (Gn 45:7)
Israel's apostasy (Ex 32)	▶ God's patience (Ex 32:13,14)
Israel's lack of faith (Nm 13,14)	▶ New nation born (Nm 14:26-29)
Apostasy of Israel (2 Kg 17:16-18)	▶ Preservation of Judah (2 Kg 23:24)
Apostasy of Judah (2 Kg 24:8-12)	▶ Return of remnant (Is 10:21-23)
Murder of babies (Mt 2:1-18)	▶ Flight to Egypt (Mt 2:13)
Diverting Seed's destiny (Mt 4:1-7)	▶ Seed focuses on mission (Jn 8:50)
Jew's false religion (Mk 7:1-9)	▶ Sons of Abraham by faith (Rm 4)
Desertion of followers (Jn 6:66)	▶ Faithful disciples (Jn 6:68,69)
Desertion of family (Jn 7:5)	▶ Acceptance of family (Gl 1:19)
The Seed is killed (Lk 23:46)	▶ THE SEED IS RAISED (Mk 16:6)

INDEX TO KEY BIBLE STUDIES

The following is a list of key Bible subjects that are commonly studied by Bible students for teaching and preaching. The scriptures that are listed confirm the statements that are made in support of the subject.

AUTHORITY

Since the word of God has come from God through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, then in all matters of faith the word of God must be our final authority. This means that when we discuss matters of faith, the Bible must be our final source to confirm our faith.

A. The authority of Jesus:

1. Jesus as God is to be worshiped (Ps 89:7; Mt 14:33).
2. Jesus had authority on earth (Mt 7:29; 28:18; Mk 1:22,27; Lk 20:2-8; Jn 13:3; 17:2).
3. Jesus had authority to forgive sins (Lk 5:24).
4. Jesus had authority over demons (Mk 1:27).
5. Jesus had authority to judge (Jn 5:22,27; At 17:30,31).
6. Jesus now has all authority over all things (Mt 28:18; Jn 13:3; 17:2).
7. Jesus rules with all authority (1 Co 15:24; Ep 1:20-23; 1 Pt 3:22; Rv 12:5; 19:15).
8. Jesus upholds all things by His power (Hb 1:3).
9. Jesus is head over all things (Cl 1:16).
10. Jesus is King and Lord of all things (1 Tm 6:15)

B. Authority of God's word:

1. It is inspired (2 Tm 3:16,17; 2 Pt 1:20,21).
2. It is God's commandment (1 Co 14:37).
3. It is the truth (Jn 14:26; 16:13; 2 Pt 1:3).
4. It is all-sufficient (2 Tm 3:16).
5. It is God's final authority for man (Dt 4:2; Gl 1:6-9; Jd 3; Rv 22:18,19).
6. It will be the standard of judgment (Jn 12:48).

7. It must be obeyed (Jn 14:15; 15:14; 2 Jn 9).
8. It will save our souls (Js 1:21).

C. Authority of the word among the disciples:

1. Disfellowship (1 Co 5:4,5,11; 2 Th 3:6).
2. Identify factious person (Rm 16:17,18).
3. Select evangelists and organize (At 6:1-6).
4. Designate elders (At 14:23; Ti 1:5).

D. Authority of civil government:

1. Citizens obey civil law (Rm 13:1-7; Ti 3:1,2; 1 Pt 2:13-17).
2. Citizens must live righteously (1 Pt 3:8-17).
3. Citizens must live in harmony with God's law (At 4:18-20; 5:27-29).
4. Citizens must pray for rulers (1 Tm 2:1,2).
5. Citizens must honor rulers (1 Pt 2:17).
6. Citizens must pay taxes (Mt 22:21).
7. Citizens must not rail against authorities (Jd 8).

BAPTISM
(Immersion)

The English word "baptism" is a transliteration of the Greek word *baptizo*, which means "to dip," "to plunge," "to immerse," or "to overwhelm."

A. Definition of baptism (immersion):

1. One is buried by immersion (Rm 6:4).
2. One is buried with Christ (Cl 2:12).
3. Much water is required for immersion (Jn 3:23).

B. Candidates for immersion:

1. Those taught the gospel (Mt 28:19,20; Jn 6:45).
2. Those who believe the gospel (Mk 16:16; At 2:36-38; 8:36,37; 16:30-33).
3. Those who repent of sins (At 2:36-38,41; 3:19).

4. Those who are adults (At 8:12).

C. Reasons for immersion:

1. To become a new person (Rm 6:4,5).
2. To be in Christ (Rm 6:3; Gl 3:26,27).
3. To put on Christ (Gl 3:27).
4. To be of Christ (1 Co 1:12,13).
5. To be regenerated (Ti 3:5).
6. To be washed of sin (At 22:16).
7. To receive remission of sins (At 2:38).
8. To be saved (Mk 16:16; 1 Pt 3:21).
9. To be freed from condemnation (Mk 16:16).

D. Examples of immersion:

1. The Jews on Pentecost (At 2:31-47).
2. The Samaritans (At 8:5-13).
3. The Ethiopian eunuch (At 8:26-40).
4. Saul of Tarsus (At 9:10-19).
5. Cornelius and his household (At 10:24-48).
6. Lydia and her household (At 16:13-15).
7. The Philippian jailor (At 16:25-34).
8. The Corinthians (At 18:8).
9. The Ephesians (At 19:1-5).

E. Spiritual blessings resulting from immersion:

1. Forgiveness of sins (Ep 1:7).
2. Redemption (Rm 1:14; Cl 1:14).
3. Becoming a new creation (2 Co 5:17).
4. Fellowship with the sons of God (Gl 3:26,27).
5. Eternal life (1 Jn 5:11).
6. Receiving the seal of the Spirit (Ep 1:13).
7. Being in a state of no condemnation (Rm 8:1).
8. Sanctification from all sins (1 Co 1:2; 6:9-11).
9. Eternal salvation (2 Tm 2:10).

BENEVOLENCE

Benevolence is one's goodwill toward his fellow man without expecting repayment. One manifests his brotherhood toward humanity by reaching out and having mercy on others.

A. Commandments concerning benevolence:

1. Help orphans and widows (Js 1:27).
2. Remember the poor (Mt 19:21; Gl 2:10).
3. Give to the needy (At 20:34,35; Ep 4:28).
4. Help the saints (1 Co 16:1,2; Gl 6:10; 1 Jn 3:16-23).

B. Examples of benevolence:

1. Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37).
2. Benevolence of the early Christians (At 2:45; 4:32-37; 6:1-6; 1 Co 16:1,2; 2 Co 9).
3. Benevolence of Philipians (2 Co 8:1-4; Ph 4:14-18).

C. Rewards for being benevolent:

1. Produces rewards to come (1 Tm 6:17-19).
2. Produces blessedness (At 20:32-35).
3. Enriches one's life (Pv 11:25; Is 58:10,11).
4. Exemplifies God's grace (Rm 12:6,13).
5. Brings reward in life (Lk 6:38).
6. Produces happiness (Jn 13:17).

BLOOD

The significance of a blood sacrifice is based on the fact that life is offered for the saving of another life. In the spiritual realm, sacrificial death takes place in order that another might have eternal life.

A. Old Testament blood offering of animals:

1. Life is in the blood (Lv 17:11).
2. No forgiveness without shedding of blood (Hb 9:22).
3. Animal blood was offered for atonement (Lv 17:11).
4. Animal life was offered to ratify a covenant between

man and God (Hb 9:19,20).

5. Blood sacrifice was offered annually (Hb 9:7).
6. Animal sacrifice could not bring forgiveness of sins (Hb 10:1-4).

B. New Testament blood offering of Jesus:

1. Jesus offered His blood only once for all for all time (Rm 3:25; Hb 9:12,25-28).
2. New covenant instituted by the blood offering of Jesus (Mt 26:28; Mk 14:24).
3. We symbolically drink Jesus' blood (Jn 6:53-56).
4. We commune with Jesus' blood (1 Co 10:16).
5. Brought near to God by Jesus' blood (Ep 2:13).
6. Set free by Jesus' blood offering (Rv 1:5).
7. Justified by Jesus' blood offering (Rm 5:9).
8. Atonement was accomplished by the blood offering of Jesus (Rm 3:25).
9. Redemption was accomplished by the blood offering of Jesus (Ep 1:7; Cl 1:14; Hb 9:12).
10. Peace with God through Jesus' blood (Cl 1:20).
11. Cleansed of sins by Jesus' blood offering (Hb 13:12; 1 Jn 1:7; Rv 7:14).
12. Bought from sin by Jesus' blood offering (At 20:28; 1 Co 6:19,20; 1 Pt 1:18,19).
13. Victorious over death by Jesus' blood (Rv 12:11).
14. Enter holy place through Jesus' blood (Hb 10:19).
15. One can turn from Jesus' blood (Hb 10:29).

CHRISTIAN

The name "Christian" refers to one who is a disciple of Christ, and thus, follows the instructions of His word. Christians seek to live incarnation-ally as the Son of God was incarnational for them. Christians are known, therefore, because of their servant relationships with others.

A. References to the disciples as Christians:

1. Disciples were first called Christians in Antioch of Syria (At 11:26).
2. Agrippa thought Paul wanted to make him a Christian (At 26:28).
3. Disciples are to glorify God in this name (1 Pt 4:16).

B. References to the disciples:

1. Saints (At 9:13; Rm 1:7; 8:27; Ep 1:1; Ph 1:1).
2. Children of God (Gl 3:26; 4:5; 1 Jn 3:1,2).
3. Brethren (Jn 20:17; At 15:23; Ph 4:21; 1 Pt 2:17).
4. Members (1 Co 12:27).
5. Servants (Rm 16:1,2).
6. Priests (1 Pt 2:5,6; Rv 1:6).
7. Believers (At 15:23; Gl 6:10; 1 Tm 4:12).

COMING OF JESUS

The Greek word *parousia* is often translated "coming" in the English Bible. The word means "presence." Jesus' presence (coming) was manifested "in time" in His judgment on Jerusalem in A.D. 70. He will be manifested at the "end of time" when He comes again.

A. Events of Jesus' final coming:

1. He will come (Jn 6:40,44).
2. He will come quickly (1 Th 5:2).
3. He will descend with a shout (1 Th 4:16).
4. He will come at the sound of the trumpet (1 Co 15:52).
5. He will be seen by every eye (Rv 1:7).
6. He will come in the clouds (At 1:9-11).
7. He will come with fire (2 Th 1:7-9).
8. He will come with angels (Mt 25:31; 2 Th 1:7-9).
9. He will bring the souls of saints (1 Th 3:13; 4:14).
10. He will raise the dead (Jn 5:28,29).
11. He will bodily change Christians (1 Co 15:52).
12. He will reunite the souls of the righteous with their res-

- urrected bodies (1 Th 4:14-16).
13. He will judge the living (Jn 12:48).
 14. He will take the righteous to heaven (1Th 4:16,17).
 15. Earth and heavens will pass away (2 Pt 3:9-11).
 16. Satan, his angels and the wicked will be cast into the destruction of hell (Mt 25:41; 2 Th 1:7-9).

B. The time of Jesus' final coming:

1. He will come at an unexpected time (1 Th 5:2,3).
2. He will come as a thief (1 Th 5:2).
3. He will come at the last trumpet (1 Co 15:51,52).
4. He will come at an unknown time (Mt 24:27,26).
5. He will come regardless of scoffers (2 Pt 3:3,4).

C. Why Jesus is coming again:

1. Coming to enlighten hidden things (1 Co 4:5).
2. Coming to take vengeance (2 Th 1:7-9).
3. Coming for the bodies of dead saints (1 Th 4:16).
4. Coming for living saints (1 Th 4:17).
5. Coming to execute judgment (2 Tm 4:1; Jd 14).
6. Coming to resurrect the dead (Jn 5:28,29; 1 Co 15:50-58).
7. Coming to destroy physical death (1 Co 15:24-26).
8. Coming to reward the saints (Mt 16:27; Jn 5:28,29; 2 Tm 4:6-8).
9. Coming to glorify saints (Ph 3:20,21).
10. Coming to reveal glory to saints (Rm 8:18).

D. Attitude toward Jesus' final coming:

1. We should pray for coming (Rv 22:20).
2. We should love His coming (2 Tm 4:8).
3. We should look for His coming (Ti 2:13; Ph 3:20,21; Hb 9:28).
4. We should wait for His coming (1 Co 1:7; 1 Th 1:10).
5. We should have comfort and confidence in His coming (2 Th 1:7; 1 Jn 2:28).

6. We should be ready for His coming (Mt 25:1-13).
7. We should desire His coming (2 Pt 3:12).
8. We should hope for His coming (1 Pt 1:13).
9. We should look forward to receiving Him (1 Pt 4:13).

CONFESSION

Confession of Jesus as our Lord and confession of our sins are a proclamation of our commitment to be disciples of Jesus. Confession manifests our dependence on Jesus. Confession of our faults manifests our dependence on one another.

A. Confession of Jesus:

1. Confess Son of God came in the flesh (2 Jn 7).
2. Confess Jesus with our life (Mt 10:32,33).
3. Confess Jesus with confidence (Jn 9:22; 12:42,43; 2 Tm 2:12).
4. Confess Jesus as our Lord (Rm 10:9,10).
5. Confess Jesus before men (Lk 12:8; Jn 9:22).
6. Confess in order to have the Father (1 Jn 2:23; 4:15).
7. Confession should be by all (Ph 2:9,10).
8. Confession proves we are of God (1 Jn 4:2).
9. Must not turn from our confession (Hb 3:1; 4:14).
10. Faithful will be confessed before God (Mt 10:32).
11. Victorious will be confessed before God (Rv 3:5).

B. Confession of our sins:

1. Forgiveness is conditioned on confession (1 Jn 1:9).
2. Self-deceived will not confess (1 Jn 1:8-10).

C. Confession to one another:

1. Confess faults to one another (Js 5:16).

COVENANT

A covenant is an agreement between two parties that is based on conditions. As Israel was in a special covenant relationship with God, God's

people are now in a covenant relationship with Him. The condition for the covenant is law that is established by God.

A. Examples of covenants between God and man:

1. God's covenant with Noah (Gn 6:18).
2. God's covenant with all mankind (Gn 9:9-16).
3. God's covenant with Abraham (Gn 15:18; 17:2-21).
4. God's covenant with Israel (Ex 6:4,5; 34:10-28).
5. God's covenant with David (2 Ch 7:18).

B. God's covenant with Christians:

1. Prophecy of the new covenant (Jr 31:31-34; Hb 8:8).
2. Christians are in a new covenant (Hb 8:13).
3. Jesus is mediator of new covenant (Hb 8:6; 12:24).
4. Jesus offered blood for the new covenant (Mt 26:26-28; Hb 13:20).
5. We have an everlasting covenant (Hb 13:20).

CROSS **(Crucifixion)**

Death by nailing on a cross of wood was a common means of Roman execution. The Greek word *stauros* referred to an upright stake on which convicted criminals were commonly executed by the Roman government.

A. Prophecy of the cross (crucifixion):

1. The cross was planned before creation (Rv 13:8).
2. Jesus would crush Satan at the cross (Gn 3:15).
3. Jesus would suffer for our sins (Is 53).
4. Events of the cross were foretold (Ps 22).

B. The event of the cross:

1. Record of crucifixion (Mt 27; Mk 15; Lk 23; Jn 19).
2. Jesus died before witnesses (At 26:26).
3. His death gave witness to His sonship (Mt 27:54).
4. Jesus willingly died (Jn 3:14-16; 8:28; 10:18).

5. He was cursed for our sake (2 Co 5:21; Gl 3:13).
6. He endured the cross for the joy after it (Hb 12:2).
7. He humbled himself to a death on the cross (Ph 2:5-8).

C. Purpose of the cross:

1. To take away sins (Jn 1:29; Hb 2:9).
2. To bear our sins in His body (2 Co 5:21; 1 Pt 2:24).
3. To save us from our sins (Mt 1:20,21).
4. To wash us of our sins (1 Jn 1:7; Rv 1:5).
5. To reveal God's grace (Ti 2:11).
6. To redeem us from sin (Ti 2:14).
7. To reconcile us to God (Rm 5:8-10; Ep 2:14-16).
8. To establish a new covenant (Mt 26:28).
9. To purchase His body, the church (At 20:28).

D. Effect of the cross:

1. It is the power of God to salvation (1 Co 1:18-24).
2. Christians boast in the cross (Gl 6:14).
3. Christians preach the cross (1 Co 2:2).
4. Christians bear their own cross as Jesus bore their sins on the cross (Mt 10:38; Lk 9:23; 16:24,25; Gl 2:20; 5:24; 6:14).

DEATH

We must physically die because we have been separated from the tree of life. In physical death, the body and spirit are separated. Death is the loss of life that results in the separation of the body and spirit.

A. Description of physical death:

1. Death is an appointment (Hb 9:27).
2. Death is a necessity (1 Co 15:22).
3. Death was introduced into the world by Adam (Gn 3:22; 1 Co 15:21).
4. Death is a termination of the present physical body (1 Co 15:51,52).

5. Death is a sleep of the body (Jn 11:11-14; At 7:60; 13:36; 1 Th 4:13-18).
6. Death is being unclothed with the body (2 Co 5:1-8).
7. Death is a separation of spirit and body (Js 2:26).
8. Death is giving up the spirit (Gn 25:18; Jb 3:11).
9. Death results in return of spirit to God (Ec 12:7).
10. Death results in a return of the body to dust (Gn 3:19; Ec 12:7).
11. Death is the dissolving of our earthly tabernacle (2 Co 5:1; 2 Pt 1:13,14).
12. Death results in our departure from this world (Ph 1:23; 2 Tm 4:6).

B. The Christian and physical death:

1. Death of the saint is noticed by God (Ps 115:15).
2. Death is a rest for the Christian (Rv 14:13).
3. Death to be with Jesus is better for the Christian (Ec 7:1; Ph 1:23).
4. Death is gain for the Christian (Ph 1:21).
5. Death is victory for the Christian over physical death (1 Co 15:50-57).
6. Death is not without hope (Ph 3:12-14; 1 Th 4:13-18; Ti 1:2; Hb 6:18,19).
7. Death will be terminated by the resurrection (1 Co 15:26; Rv 20:11-15).

C. Description of spiritual death:

1. It is caused by sin (Is 59:2; Rm 6:23).
2. It is caused by separation from God (Is 59:1,2; 2 Th 1:9).
3. It is the state of the wicked (Mt 25:41,46).
4. It will lead to the second death (Rv 20:14; 21:8).
5. It will result in eternal destruction (2 Th 1:7-9; Rv 20:13-17).
6. It does not affect the Christian (Jn 8:51,52).

D. Description of the second death:

1. It is the final separation from God (Rv 20:6).
2. It is being cast into destruction (Mt 10:28; Rv 20:14).
3. Christians will not suffer second death (Rv 2:11).
4. The wicked will suffer the second death (Rv 21:8).

DEMONS

Demons are also referred to as unclean spirits, evil spirits, and the devil's angels. God allowed demons to possess people in the first century in order to reveal the authority and power of Jesus and His disciples over Satan's kingdom of darkness.

A. Cases of demon possession in first century:

1. Matthew 8:28-34 (Mk 5:1-20; Lk 8:26-39)
2. Luke 8:1-3
3. Matthew 9:32-34
4. Matthew 12:22,23 (Mk 3:20-27)
5. Matthew 15:21-23 (Mk 7:24-30)
6. Matthew 17:14-21 (Mk 9:17-29; Lk 9:37-43)
7. Luke 4:33-37 (Mk 1:21-28,32-34)
8. Acts 8:7
9. Acts 16:16-18
10. Acts 19:13-16

B. The beliefs of demons:

1. They recognized their final judgment (Mt 8:29; 25:41; Mk 1:24; 2 Pt 2:4; Jd 6).
2. They believed in God (Lk 8:28; Js 2:19).
3. They recognized the deity of Jesus (Mt 8:29; Mk 1:24; Lk 4:34).
4. They recognized the sovereignty of Jesus (Mt 8:29; Mk 5:6,7; Lk 8:31).
5. They recognized their own termination (Mk 1:24; Lk 4:33-36; 2 Pt 2:4; Jd 6).

C. Biblical definition of demon possession:

1. Demons could comprehend the prophecies of their own doom (Mt 8:29).
2. Demons could speak (Mk 1:34).
3. Demons could carry on a coherent conversation (Mk 5:7).
4. Demons could obey (Mt 8:16; 17:18).
5. Demons could entreat (Lk 8:31).
6. Demons had intellectual abilities (Mt 8:29; Mk 1:24).
7. Some demons stimulated the physical strength of those they possessed (Lk 8:29).
8. Some demons possibly caused physical deformities (Lk 13:11-17).
9. Some demons possibly caused blindness (Mt 12:22).
10. Some demons possibly caused muteness (Mk 9:17,25).
11. Some demons possibly drove the individual they possessed to suicidal mania (Mk 9:22).
12. Some demons possibly caused mental disorders (Mt 8:28,29; Lk 8:26-36).
13. Demons could easily be cast out by the word of Jesus (Mt 17:18; Lk 9:41,42).
14. Demons could easily be cast out by Jesus' disciples (Lk 10:17; At 16:16-18; 19:11,12).
15. Demons could pass through "waterless places" and not find rest (Mt 12:43-45).
16. Demons could leave people and enter animals (Mk 5:12-14).
17. Demons indwelt ordinary people who did not practice occult religions that promoted psychological and mental control (See Mk 9:14-29). The possessed son had been troubled with an unclean spirit from childhood.
18. Demons recognized and confessed the Son of God (Lk 8:28).
19. Demons confessed the one true God (Lk 8:28).

D. Characteristics of New Testament exorcism:

1. Exorcism was in the name of Jesus (Lk 10:17; At 16:18).
2. Exorcism was by word only (Mt 8:16).
3. Exorcism was by the finger of God (Lk 11:20).
4. Exorcism was by command (At 16:18; 19:13-15).
5. Exorcism was a miraculous work (At 8:7,13).
6. Exorcism was worked only by Jesus and His disciples in the first century (Mt 9:32-34; Mk 9:38-41; 16:17; Lk 10:17-20).

DISCIPLINE

Discipline refers to the self-restraint of an individual to first conform to the will of God. Through discipline, the disciple of Jesus voluntarily controls his or her behavior with a spirit of sobriety. It is the responsibility of every Christian to exercise self-control over behavior and emotions.

A. Those the church is to discipline:

1. Those who do not work to financially support themselves (2 Th 3:6-15).
2. Those who continue in sin (1 Co 5:11).
3. Those who cause division (Rm 16:17,18; Ti 3:10).
4. Those who will not repent (1 Co 5:3-5,13).

B. Nature and extent of disfellowship:

1. Have no company with the disfellowshipped (1 Co 5:11; 2 Th 3:14).
2. Put away the sinner from fellowship (1 Co 5:13).
3. Treat the sinner as an unbeliever (Mt 18:15-17).
4. Admonish the sinner as a brother (2 Th 3:15).
5. Faithful not obligated to pray for some rebellious brothers who refuse to repent (1 Jn 5:16).

C. Conduct of church in disfellowshipping sinner:

1. Pray for the one who is in sin (Ph 4:6; 1 Jn 5:16).

2. First privately warn sinner (Mt 18:15).
3. Take witnesses to confront sinner (Mt 18:16).
4. Take case of unrepentant before church (Mt 18:17).
5. Seek to restore the sinner with a spirit of love (2 Co 2:6-9; Gl 6:1; Cl 3:13).
6. Sinner should be reprovved before the church (1 Tm 5:20).
7. Special care should be taken in reference to elders who are accused of sin (1 Tm 5:19).
8. Whole church is involved in withdrawal of fellowship (1 Co 5:4-7,13).
9. Faithful are not required to pray for those who refuse to repent (1 Jn 5:16).

D. Reasons for discipline:

1. To cause sinner to be ashamed (2 Th 3:14).
2. To promote sinner's repentance (1 Co 5:5).
3. To purge sin from the church (1 Co 5:6,7).
4. To prove obedience of the church (2 Co 2:9).
5. To strike fear in hearts of the faithful (At 5:11; 2 Co 7:11; 1 Tm 5:20).

DIVISION

Unity among God's people is a manifestation that each member of the body has submitted to the authority that comes from Jesus. This means that in matters of faith, all the members have submitted to the final authority of the word of God.

A. The sin of division:

1. Faction and parties are wrong (Gl 5:19,20).
2. Division is condemned (1 Co 1:10-13; 2 Co 13:11).
3. Division is carnal (1 Co 3:3).
4. God hates division (Pv 6:19).
5. Factious man is to be rejected (Ti 3:10).
6. The disciples must turn from the one who causes divi-

sion by binding his will on others (Rm 16:17,18).

B. Things that cause division:

1. A factious person (Ti 3:10).
2. Teaching a gospel of legalism (Gl 1:6-9).
3. Carnally minded Christians (1 Co 3:1-9).
4. Those who do not obey (Rm 2:8).
5. Those who speak evil of the truth of the gospel (2 Pt 2:1,2).
6. A sectarian spirit by calling oneself after the names of men (1 Co 1:12,13; 3:3-5).
7. Binding traditions of men (Mt 15:1-9; Mk 7:1-9).
8. Binding religious traditions as law (Mk 7:1-9; Gl 1:6-9; 4:17; Rv 22:18,19).
9. Recruiting members to follow legalistic teachings that are either religious rites or ceremonies (Gl 4:17).
10. Drawing away disciples after one's self or personal opinions (At 20:30).
11. By those who serve themselves (Rm 16:17,18).

C. Why division is wrong:

1. It causes unbelief (Jn 17:20-22).
2. It is based on the carnal thinking of believers (1 Co 1:10; 3:3; Ph 1:27).
3. It is contrary to teaching of the one universal body of Christ (Ep 4:4; Cl 1:18).
4. It divides those who are in Christ (Ps 133; 1 Co 1:13; 12:13-25).
5. It is contrary to unity (Ep 2:11-22; 4:4-6).
6. It validates the teachings of men (Cl 2:20-23).

DIVORCE

Divorce (Gr., *apoluo*) is the dissolving of a marriage contract between a man and a woman, and thus freeing each party from marital responsibilities.

A. Old Testament teaching on divorce:

1. God discouraged divorce (Dt 24:1-4).
2. Some hardened themselves against God's law of marriage (Mt 19:8).
3. God allowed Moses to give a certificate of divorce (Dt 24:1-4; Mt 19:8).
4. God's original law was one man for one woman for one's entire life (Gn 2:21-24; Mt 19:8).
5. God hates divorce (Mt 19:16).
6. Some Jews put their wives away because they married outside their covenant relationship with God (Ez 9:1-15; 10:1-44).

B. New Testament teaching on divorce:

1. Marriage is binding (Mt 19:3-9; Mk 10:2-9; Rm 7:2,3).
2. Fornication gives right to break the marriage contract with one's mate (Mt 5:27-32; Mk 10:11,12).
3. Putting away one's spouse except for fornication, and subsequent remarriage, makes one an adulterated person (Lk 16:18).
4. Adulterers will be judged (Hb 13:4; Rv 21:8).
5. Adulterers will not inherit kingdom (1 Co 6:9,10).
6. Separation is possible when living together is impossible (1 Co 7:10,11).
7. Separated couples must remain unmarried, or be reconciled to one another (1 Co 7:11).
8. Christian who is deserted by an unbelieving spouse is not under the bondage of the marriage contract (1 Co 7:10-15).

DRUNKENNESS

Drunkenness (Gr., *methe*) is the loss of the control of one's senses because of the intoxicating influence of alcohol.

A. Drunkenness causes the following:

1. One to be mocked (Pv 20:1).
2. Foolish behavior (Is 28:7).
3. Loss of financial well-being (Pv 23:21).
4. Loss of self-control (Pv 20:1).
5. Injustice to others (Is 5:22,23).
6. Disorderly behavior (Gn 9:21,22; Mt 24:48-51; Rm 13:13).
7. Stumbling in life (Pv 26:9).
8. Death (Dt 21:20,21).

B. Negative spiritual results of drunkenness:

1. Disfellowship from church (1 Co 5:11).
2. Rejection from kingdom (1 Co 6:10; Gl 5:21).
3. Sometimes physical death (Dt 21:20,21).
4. Eternal damnation (Gl 5:19-22).

FAITH

Faith (Gr., *pistis*) is a conscious belief in that which is beyond one's empirical world. Superstition is belief without evidence, whereas faith is based on evidence.

A. Definition of obedient faith:

1. Faith is the evidence of unseen things (Hb 11:1).
2. Faith completes assurance (Rm 4:20,21).
3. Faith is expressed in work (Jn 6:29; 1 Th 1:3).
4. Faith originates in the heart (Rm 10:9,10).
5. Faith works through love (Gl 5:6).
6. Faith hearkens to God's will (Rm 10:16).
7. Faith obeys (Rm 10:16; Hb 11:4-31).
8. Faith without works is dead (Js 2:14-26).
9. Faith is not walking on the foundation of the things we experience (Jn 20:24-29; 2 Co 5:7).

B. Sources of obedient faith:

1. Faith comes by hearing and believing the gospel (Mk

16:16; Jn 17:20; Rm 10:17).

2. Jesus is the author of faith (Hb 12:2).
3. Faith is produced by believing that Jesus is the Christ and Son of God (Jn 20:30,31).
4. Faith stands in the power of God (1 Co 2:5).
5. Faith comes by following heroes of faith (Hb 11).

C. Necessity of obedient faith:

1. Necessary to believe (Jn 8:24).
2. Necessary for salvation (Mk 16:16; Jn 3:16-18).
3. Necessary for remission of sins (At 10:43).
4. Necessary to please God (Hb 11:6).
5. Necessary for eternal life (Jn 3:36).
6. Necessary for justification (At 13:39).

D. Results of obedient faith:

1. Peace (Rm 5:1; Ph 4:6).
2. Sanctification (At 15:9).
3. Justification (Rm 3:27,28).
4. Life in Christ (Jn 20:31).
5. Eternal life (Jn 3:16; 6:47; 20:31).

E. Examples of obedient faith:

1. Old Testament patriarchs (Hb 11).
2. Jesus (Jn 13:1-17; Gl 2:16).
3. Moses (Hb 3:2-5).
4. The Wise Steward (Lk 12:41-48).
5. Multi-talented people (Mt 25:14-30).
6. The centurion (Mt 8:5-13; 9:20-29).
7. Christians who stand faithful (1 Co 4:1ff; 15:58; 16:13; Ep 6:10; Ti 2:10; Rv 2:10).

FAITHFULNESS

Faithfulness refers to one's dependence on the gospel of God's grace, and thus remaining true to the conditions of the covenant one has with God.

A. God is faithful ...

1. ... to those He calls (1 Th 5:24).
2. ... to forgive sin (1 Jn 1:9).
3. ... to provide a way of escape (1 Co 10:13).
4. ... to protect us from evil (Ps 31:23; 2 Th 3:3).
5. ... to keep His promises (1 Co 1:9; Hb 10:23).
6. ... to establish the saints (2 Th 3:3).

B. We must be faithful:

1. Faithfulness required (Lk 16:10-12; 1 Co 4:2).
2. Faithful stewards (Mt 24:45-49; Ti 2:10).
3. Faithful servants (Mt 25:14-23; Ep 6:5-9).
4. Faithful over small things (Lk 19:17).
5. Faithful people preach gospel (2 Tm 2:2).
6. Faithful unto death (Rv 2:10; 17:14).
7. Faithful wives (1 Tm 3:11).

C. Examples of faithfulness:

1. Jesus (Hb 3:2).
2. Abraham (Gl 3:9).
3. Timothy (1 Co 4:17).
4. Tychicus (Ep 6:21; Cl 4:7).
5. Epaphras (Cl 1:7).
6. Onesimus (Cl 4:9).
7. Moses (Nm 12:7; Hb 3:5).
8. Antipas (Rv 2:13).

D. Christians must be faithful in ...

1. ... caring for orphans and widows (Js 1:27).
2. ... helping others (Gl 6:2).

3. ... giving to others (Mt 6:1-4; 10:8; 1 Co 16:1,2).
4. ... assembling with the saints (Hb 10:24,25).
5. ... prayer (1 Th 5:17).
6. ... teaching (1 Tm 3:2; 4:11,13; 5:17; 6:2).

E. Rewards of the faithful:

1. Crown of life (Rv 2:10).
2. Enter the presence of the Lord (Mt 25:21).
3. Abound with blessings (Pv 28:20).

FALSE TEACHERS

The biblical definition of a false teacher is one who denies a fundamental teaching upon which Christianity is founded, that is, the truth of the gospel. Anyone who would question or deny the gospel of the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, coronation, or consummation of the Son of God would be a false teacher.

A. Existence of false teachers:

1. They were prophesied by Jesus (Mt 24:24).
2. They exist today because they existed in Israel (2 Pt 2:1,2).
3. They existed in the last days of national Israel (2 Th 2:10-12; 2 Tm 3:1-9).
4. They would be among the disciples until Jesus comes (At 20:28-30; Ti 1:10,11).

B. Character of false teachers:

1. They serve themselves (Rm 16:17,18).
2. They are arrogant (2 Pt 2:12-19; Jd 8-16).
3. They do not love truth of the gospel (2 Th 2:10-12).
4. They do not understand truth of the gospel (1 Tm 1:7).
5. They seek to recruit a following (Gl 4:17).
6. They seek to escape persecution (Gl 6:12).

C. Work of false teachers:

1. They seek to recruit to their teaching (Gl 4:17).
2. They speak empty words (Ep 5:6ff; 2 Pt 2:18,19).
3. They are deceitful workers (2 Co 11:13-15).
4. They teach false doctrines (1 Tm 4:1-4).
5. They teach another gospel (Gl 1:6-9).
6. They go beyond the truth of the gospel (2 Jn 9).
7. They deny the incarnation of the Son (2 Jn 7).
8. They bind their opinions (Rm 16:17,18).
9. They teach self-justification through perfect law-keeping (Rm 3:19-31; Gl 2:16; 3:11,12; 5:4).

D. Reward of false teachers:

1. They are to be marked by church (Rm 16:17,18).
2. They will eventually be accursed (Gl 1:6-9).
3. They will suffer the darkness of hell (2 Pt 2:17; Jd 13-15; Rv 21:8).

FAMILY

God's purpose for the family is to produce citizens for this world who will be able to cohabit with one another in life. The family is an institution of God that is based on divine principles.

A. Principles concerning marriage:

1. God instituted one man for one woman for life (Gn 2:18,21-24; 3:16; Mt 19:4-8).
2. God allows putting away of spouse if fornication is committed by either spouse (Mt 5:31,32; 19:3-9; Mk 10:2-12; Lk 16:18; Rm 7:1-3; 1 Co 7:1-7).
3. God allows separation when living together is impossible (1 Co 7:10-17).
4. Deserted believer is not under the bondage of the marriage contract (1 Co 7:15).
5. Sexual relations outside marriage is adultery (Rm 7:1-3).

B. Responsibilities of family members:

1. The husband is the head of the wife (Ep 5:23).
2. Husbands must love their wives (Ep 5:25).
3. Wives are to be in subjection to husbands for the sake of the children (Ep 5:22; Cl 3:18).
4. Wives are to love husbands and children (Ti 2:4).
5. Wives are to be keepers of the home (Ti 2:5).
6. Wives follow husbands (1 Co 9:5; 1 Pt 3:5,6).
7. Children are to be obedient to parents (Ep 6:1; Cl 3:20).
8. Fathers are to admonish children (Ps 22:6; Ep 6:4).
9. Parents are to teach children (Dt 6:1-9; Pv 22:6).

FASTING

Fasting is depriving the body of either food or drink in order to focus one's attention on the spiritual nature of man. Fasting is not a command. It is often coupled with prayer in order to manifest one's dependence on God's help.

A. Fasting in the Old Testament:

1. Fasting (Jg 20:26; 1 Sm 7:6; 2 Sm 12:21-23; Ps 35:13; 69:10; 109:24; Is 58:3,4; Jr 14:12; Ez 8:23; Dn 9:3; Ne 1:4; Et 4:16; Jl 2:12).

B. Fasting in the New Testament:

1. Fasting is a ministry (Lk 2:37).
2. Jesus fasted forty days (Mt 4:2).
3. The Pharisees and John's disciples fasted (Mt 9:14,15; Mk 2:18; Lk 5:33-35; 18:12).
4. The early evangelists fasted (At 13:1-3).
5. Jesus expected His disciples to fast (Mk 9:29).
6. Jesus gave instructions on fasting (Mt 6:16-18).

FEAR

Fear of God is a positive attitude in one's life, for the fear of God is de-

fined as obedience to His will. Fear of that which is in our environment is a negative attitude that works against faith, for faith and love work against fear.

A. The things that men fear:

1. Fear of God (Gn 42:18; Ps 19:9; 34:9; 36:1; 111:10; Ec 12:13; Mt 10:28; 1 Pt 2:17).
2. Fear of man (Pv 29:25; Jn 9:22; At 5:26).
3. Fear of death (Ps 23:4; Hb 2:15).

B. Biblical exhortations concerning fear:

1. Do not fear that which is of this world (Is 35:4; Mt 1:20; 10:31; 28:5; Lk 12:32; At 27:24; 2 Tm 1:7; Hb 13:6; Rv 2:10).
2. Godly fear (Hb 5:7).
3. Fear promotes obedience to the will of God (Lv 25:17,36,43; Dt 6:13-15; 7:4; At 10:35; 13:16,26; 2 Co 5:10; Rv 14:9,10).
4. Necessary fear (Rm 11:20; Hb 4:1).
5. Cases of fear (Gn 22:12; 28:16,17; 42:18; Ex 1:17,21; 9:20; Mk 5:33; At 10:2; Hb 11:7).

FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness is the release from the mind and heart of the offended feelings of resentment toward an offender, which feelings, if harbored, will hinder the spiritual and emotional growth of the offended. Unforgiveness leads to bitterness.

A. God's forgiveness:

1. God is ready to forgive our sins (Ps 86:5).
2. God forgives trespasses (Cl 2:13; 1 Jn 2:12).
3. God forgives all manner of sin (Mt 12:31).
4. God will not forgive sin against the Spirit (Mt 12:31).
5. God remembers our sins no more (Hb 10:17).
6. God forgives for the sake of Christ (Ep 4:32).
7. Forgiveness is in Christ (Ep 1:7; Cl 1:14).

8. Confessed sin is forgiven (1 Jn 1:9).
9. God forgives those who forgive (Mt 6:14,15).
10. Jesus forgave sin when on earth (Mt 9:6).

B. Christians forgiving one another:

1. Blessed are the merciful (Mt 5:7; Lk 6:35-37).
2. Forgive an evil person (Mt 5:39-46; Lk 6:27-34).
3. Forgive as we have been forgiven (Mt 6:12).
4. Forgive to be forgiven (Mt 6:14,15, Mk 11:25).
5. Continually forgive (Mt 18:21-35).
6. Have a forgiving spirit (Ep 4:32).
7. Have a forbearing spirit (Cl 3:13).
8. Forgive the repentant (Mt 18:21,22; Lk 17:3,4).
9. Forgive enemies (Pv 24:17; 25:21; Rm 12:20).
10. Forgive persecutors (1 Co 4:12,13).
11. Vengeance belongs to God (Rm 12:14,17-21; 1 Pt 3:9).

FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS

Fundamental, or essential beliefs concerning the truth of the gospel, must be believed and obeyed in order for one to be a child of God. This is truth concerning the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, coronation and consummation in reference to the gospel journey of Jesus into and out of this world.

A. Essential beliefs of the Christian (Ep 4:4-6):

1. One God (Dt 6:4; Mt 2:10).
2. One Lord (At 2:36; Ep 1:20-23; Ph 2:5-11; 1 Pt 3:22).
3. One Holy Spirit (1 Co 12:4-7).
4. One faith (Rm 10:8; Cl 2:6,7; Jd 3).
5. One body (the church) (At 20:28; 1 Co 12:12-27; Ep 5:23-27; Cl 1:18).
6. One hope (Ti 1:2; Hb 6:18,19; 1 Pt 1:3-12).
7. One immersion (At 2:38; Rm 6:3-6; 1 Co 12:13).

B. Essential behavior of the Christian:

1. Abhor the works of the flesh (Gl 5:19-21; Ep 5:5).
2. Live in response to the gospel (1 Th 4:3; Rv 21:8).
3. Live after the fruit of the Spirit (Gl 5:22,23).

C. Essential attitudes of the Christian:

1. Love God with heart, soul and mind (Mt 22:40).
2. Love neighbor as self (Mt 22:39; Gl 5:14).
3. Love as Jesus loved us (Jn 13:34,35).

GIVING

Giving of oneself and one's possessions is an expression of one's appreciation and thanksgiving for his salvation by the grace of God.

A. The nature and reason for giving:

1. We are entrusted with God's goods (Lk 16:1-13).
2. We are to produce (Mt 25:14-30).
3. We are to sacrifice our lives (Rm 12:1,2).
4. We are to deny ourselves (Lk 9:23).
5. We are to forsake the world (Mt 6:34; 1 Jn 2:15).
6. We are to crucify ourselves (Rm 6:6; Gl 2:19-21).
7. We are to set minds on things above (Cl 3:1,2).

B. Attitudes for giving:

1. Give according to ability (1 Co 16:1,2).
2. Give liberally (2 Co 9:6-15).
3. Give out of our poverty (Mk 12:42,43; 2 Co 8:1-4).
4. Give cheerfully (Mt 10:8; Lk 6:38; 12:33; 2 Co 9:7).
5. Give humbly (Mt 6:1-4).
6. Give with purpose (At 11:29; 2 Co 8:3-12; 9:7).

C. What to give:

1. Money (At 4:32-35; 1 Co 16:1,2; 2 Co 9).
2. Material things (Ph 4:18,19).

3. Ourselves (Rm 12:1,2; Gl 2:20).

D. When to give:

1. Whenever needs arise (Mt 5:42; 1 Co 16:1,2; Gl 6:10; Ep 4:28).
2. On regular basis for special needs (1 Co 16:1-3).
3. When we are taught the word of God (Gl 6:6).

E. Motives for giving:

1. Because of love (1 Co 13:3; 2 Co 5:14; 1 Jn 3:17).
2. Because it is more blessed to give (At 20:35).
3. Because we are debtors to God (Rm 1:14).
4. Because we want the gospel preached to the lost (At 8:4; 2 Co 11:7-9; 3 Jn 7,8).
5. Because others need help (At 2:44,45; 4:32-37).
6. Because we are commanded (1 Co 9:14).

GOD

All things exist because there is a Higher Power, God (Gr., *theos*), from whom all things have originated. It is the logical assumption for the existence of all things. God, therefore, exists apart from the minds of men.

A. The nature of God:

1. He is eternal (Ex 3:13,14; Ps 102:24-27; Is 57:15).
2. He is all-knowing (omniscient) (Jb 37:16; Ps 139:2-4; 147:4,5; Mt 10:29,30; Rm 11:22-36).
3. He is everywhere (omnipresent) (Ps 139:8-12; Jr 16:17; 23:23,24; At 17:28,29; Hb 4:13).
4. He is all-powerful (omnipotent) (Gn 1:3,11; Ps 33:8,9; Is 40:21-31; Jr 32:17; Hb 13:5,6; Rv 11:17).
5. He knows the hearts of all men (1 Kg 8:39; Lk 16:15; At 1:24; Rm 8:27; Rv 2:23).
6. He is unchangeable (Nm 23:19; 1 Sm 15:29; Js 1:17).
7. He is faithful (Is 49:7; Rm 3:3-5; 1 Co 1:9; 10:13; 1 Th 5:23,24; 2 Th 3:3; 1 Pt 4:19; 1 Jn 1).

8. He is impartial (Dt 10:17; At 10:34,35; Rm 2:11).
9. He is merciful (Mt 5:45; Lk 6:36; 15:11-24; Rm 2:4).
10. He is holy (Is 6:3; Js 1:13; 1 Pt 1:15,16; Rv 4:8).
11. He is love (Jn 3:16; 1 Jn 3:1; 4:7,8,19).

B. Man's response to God's existence:

1. We must not create a concept of god after our own image (Ex 20:1-6; At 14:8-15; 17:16-31; 1 Jn 5:21).
2. We should seek God (Dt 4:29; Mt 6:33; At 17:27).
3. We should trust God (Pv 2:6; 3:5; Mk 11:22; Hb 11:6).
4. We should worship only God (Dt 10:12,21; Ec 12:13; Jn 4:23,24; Hb 12:28,29).
5. We should obey God (Jn 14:15; 15:14; 1 Jn 5:3).
6. We should love God (Mt 22:37-40).

GOSPEL

The English word "gospel" is a translation of the Greek word *euaggelion* which means "good news." The gospel is the good news of Jesus' incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, coronation and eventual consummation of all things when He comes again. The gospel is reported through the inspired word of God.

A. Facts about the gospel:

1. The gospel is good news (Lk 2:10,11).
2. The central message of the gospel is Jesus' death for our sins, His burial and His resurrection for our hope (1 Co 15:1-4).
3. The gospel can be declared, preached, received and testified to (Mk 1:14,15; At 20:24; 1 Co 15:1,2).
4. The gospel is glorious (2 Co 4:4; 1 Tm 1:11).
5. The gospel is the mystery of God that is revealed (Ep 1:9; 3:3,4; 6:19; Cl 1:26,27; 4:3).
6. The gospel is God's grace revealed to man through the cross (Gl 2:5,14; Ti 2:11).
7. The gospel is God's power unto salvation (Rm 1:16).

8. We will be judged by the gospel (Rm 2:16).
9. Those who do not obey the gospel will be lost (Mk 16:15,16; 2 Th 1:7-9; 1 Pt 4:17).

B. Results of obedient response to the gospel:

1. Immersion into the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (Mk 16:16; Rm 6:3-6; 2 Th 1:7-9; 1 Pt 4:17).
2. Salvation (Rm 1:16; 1 Co 15:2; 2 Tm 2:10).
3. Being born anew (Jn 3:3-5; 1 Co 4:15).
4. Coming into a relationship with Christ (Rm 6:3).
5. Having a good conscience toward God (1 Pt 3:21).
6. Answering the call of the gospel (2 Th 2:13,14).
7. Fellowship with one another (Ph 1:5,27).

GRACE

In reference to our salvation, grace (Gr., *charis*) is the unmerited favor of God toward man. Grace was made possible by the sacrificial offering of Jesus on the cross. Grace, therefore, must be a free gift of God because we cannot, through meritorious works or perfect keeping of law, earn God's favor and justification. God saves by grace because of our obedient response to the truth of the gospel.

A. Origin of grace:

1. Grace was given by God (Rm 15:15; Ep 2:8).
2. Grace came through Jesus (Jn 1:17; Rm 1:5).
3. Grace revealed through Jesus (1 Co 1:4; Ep 4:7).
4. Grace revealed on the cross (2 Tm 1:9; Ti 2:11).
5. Grace is accessed by faith (Rm 5:2).

B. Description of grace:

1. Grace is great (At 4:33).
2. Grace is glorious (Ep 1:6).
3. Grace is abundant (Rm 5:15-20).
4. Grace is the gift of God (Ep 2:8; 3:7).
5. Grace is free (Rm 5:15).

C. Results of grace:

1. God's unmerited favor toward man (Rm 5:8; Ep 2:4,8,9; Ti 2:11; 3:5).
2. Justification from sin (Rm 3:23,24; Ti 3:7).
3. Made alive with Christ (Ep 2:5-8)
4. Salvation (At 15:11; Rm 8:1).
- D. Relationship between grace and salvation:
 1. We are saved by grace (Ep 2:5).
 2. We are justified by grace (Rm 3:23,24; Ti 3:7).
 3. We stand in the realm of grace (Rm 5:2; 1 Pt 5:12).
 4. We grow in the realm of grace (2 Co 8:7; 2 Pt 3:18).
 5. We continue in grace (At 13:43).
 6. We hope through grace (2 Th 2:16).
 7. We abound through grace (Rm 5:17; 2 Co 9:8).
 8. We are called by grace (Gl 1:15,16; 2 Tm 1:9).
 9. The humble receive grace (Js 4:6; 1 Pt 5:5).
 10. We can fall from grace (Gl 5:4).
 11. We must not turn grace into lascivious living (Rm 6:1,2; Jd 4).
 12. We cannot earn grace (At 13:39; Rm 4:4; Ep 2:9; Ti 3:4,5).
 13. We are taught to live godly (Ti 2:11,12).

HEAVEN

Heaven is the future realm of dwelling wherein those who have obeyed the gospel will have access to eternal life because they are in the presence of God. The preaching of the gospel, therefore, is presenting the opportunity to unbelievers that they too can join with all the obedient in an eternal dwelling.

A. The nature of heaven:

1. Dwelling place of God (Mt 6:9; 10:31,32; 18:10).
2. Dwelling place of Jesus (Hb 8:1; 9:24; 10:12).
3. Realm from which Jesus came (Jn 16:28).
4. Dwelling place of angels (Mt 18:10).

5. Place of no flesh and blood (1 Co 15:50).

B. The spiritual environment of heaven:

1. Place of rest (2 Co 5:1-10; Hb 4:1-4,9-11, Rv 14:23).
2. Place of joy (Mt 25:21; Lk 15:7,10; Rv 21:4).
3. Place of no sorrow (Rv 7:16,17; 21:4).
4. Place of righteousness (2 Pt 3:13; Rv 22:15).
5. Place of glory (Rm 8:18; 2 Co 4:17; Cl 3:4).
6. Place of no death (Lk 20:35,36; Rv 20:14; 21:4).
7. Place of eternity (Mt 25:46; 1 Th 4:17; Hb 5:9).

C. The purpose of heaven:

1. Reward for the obedient (Mt 5:11,12; Cl 3:24).
2. Inheritance for God's children (Ep 1:14; Cl 1:12; 3:24; 1 Pt 1:4).
3. Immortality for the mortal (1 Co 15:42,50; 2 Co 5:4).
4. Crown of victory for the faithful (1 Co 9:24,25; 2 Tm 4:8; Js 1:12; 1 Pt 5:4; Rv 2:10).

D. Those who will inherit heaven:

1. The pure in heart (Mt 5:4-10).
2. The persecuted Christian (Mt 5:12; Rv 2:10).
3. The undefiled (Rv 21:27).
4. The moral believer (Gl 5:19-21; Rv 22:15).
5. Obedient faithful Christians (Mt 25:31-40).

HELL

The Greek word *gehenna* is translated "hell." The English word "hell" is also used in some translations to translate the word *hades*, a word that refers to the unseen realm of the dead. *Gehenna* originally referred to the consumption of waste in the Valley of Hinnom outside the walls of Jerusalem.

A. The use of *gehenna* in the New Testament:

1. Jesus referred to *gehenna* (hell): (Mt 5:22,29,30;

10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Mk 9:45; Lk 12:5).

2. James referred to *gehenna* (Js 3:6).

B. Description of hell:

1. A place of punishment (Mt 25:46; Hb 10:29).
2. A place of condemnation (Mt 23:33; Jn 5:29).
3. A place of destruction (Mt 7:13,14; 2 Th 1:9).
4. A place of fiery torment (Mt 18:8; 25:41; Mk 9:48; Rv 19:20; 20:10,14,15; 21:8).
5. A place of darkness (Mt 8:12; 25:30; Jd 13).
6. A place of anguish (Mt 8:12; 25:30).

C. Occupants of hell:

1. Satan and his angels (Mt 25:41; see Mt 8:29; 2 Pt 2:4; Jd 6).
2. Those who do not know God (2 Th 1:7-9).
3. Those who do not obey the gospel (2 Th 1:7-9).

HOPE

The Christian hopes in that which is yet to come. Hope is based on one's faith that God has prepared for His people something far greater than our existence in this present world. Therefore, hope is a vital emotional foundation on which Christian attitudes are built.

A. The origin of hope:

1. Originates from the word of God (Ps 119:42,43,81, 114,147).
2. Originates from God's promises (At 26:6,7; Ti 1:2).
3. Originates from the oath of God (Hb 6:18,19).
4. Originates from trusting God (Ps 78:7; 146:5; Jr 17:17; Rm 15:13).
5. Originates from love (1 Co 13:7).

B. Description of the Christian's hope:

1. It is better (Hb 7:19).
2. It is good (2 Th 2:16).

3. It is blessed (Ti 2:13).
4. It is steadfast (Hb 6:19).
5. It is living (1 Pt 1:3).

C. That in which Christians hope:

1. Final coming of Jesus (Rm 8:22-25; Ti 2:13; Rv 22:20).
2. The bodily resurrection (At 23:6; 2 Co 5:1-8).
3. Eternal life (Ti 1:2; 3:7).
4. Glory (Rm 5:2; 8:18; Cl 1:27).
5. Christ (1 Co 15:19; 1 Th 1:1).

D. Emotional results of hope:

1. Hope gives peace of mind (At 2:26; Ph 4:6).
2. Hope generates boldness (Rm 5:5).
3. Hope produces rejoicing (Rm 12:12).
4. Hope encourages unity (Ep 4:4).
5. Hope gives assurance (Pv 14:32; Hb 6:11).
6. Hope is an anchor for life (Hb 6:18,19).
7. Hope produces moral discipline (1 Jn 3:3).

HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the third personality of the Godhead who has no specific name. He is the Holy Spirit who works in and through Christians in this dispensation of time in order to accomplish the continued work of King Jesus. It is beyond our understanding to comprehend all that the Spirit does, for His work is not limited to our understanding of what He does.

A. References to the Holy Spirit:

1. Spirit (At 2:4; 1 Tm 4:1).
2. Spirit of truth (Jn 14:17; 16:13).
3. Holy Spirit (Mt 3:11; 28:19).
4. Spirit of God (1 Co 6:11; Ph 3:3).
5. Spirit of Christ (Rm 8:9; Ph 1:19).

B. The Holy Spirit as a manifestation of God:

1. God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have manifested themselves as three on the same occasions (Gn 1:26; Mt 3:16,17; 28:20; Mk 1:9-11; At 10:38; 1 Co 12:4-6).
2. The Spirit is Lord (2 Co 3:16-18).
3. The Spirit is omniscient (Is 40:12-17; 1 Co 2:10,11).
4. The Spirit is omnipresent (Ps 139:7-10).
5. The Spirit is eternal (Hb 9:14).

C. The Holy Spirit during the ministry of Jesus:

1. Jesus was conceived by the Spirit (Mt 1:18-20).
2. The Spirit came upon Jesus (Mt 3:16).
3. Jesus was full of the Spirit (Lk 4:1; Jn 4:34).
4. Jesus administered the Spirit (Mt 8:11; At 1:5; 11:16).
5. Jesus promised the Spirit to the apostles (Jn 14:26; 16:13; 20:22).
6. Jesus worked through the Spirit (Mt 12:18,28; Lk 4:14; At 1:2).
7. Jesus worked through the Spirit to raise Himself from the dead (Jn 10:17,18; Rm 8:11).

D. The Christian and the Holy Spirit:

1. Christians received the Spirit (At 2:38; Gl 3:2,3,14).
2. Christians have the Spirit (1 Co 6:19; 7:40).
3. Christians have the indwelling of the Spirit (Rm 8:9; 1 Co 3:16; 6:19; Ep 2:22; 2 Tm 1:14).
4. Christian's body is the temple of the Spirit (1 Co 3:16).
5. Christian behavior should manifest the fruit of the Spirit (Gl 5:22,23).
6. Christians are strengthened by the Spirit (Ep 3:16).
7. Christians are filled with the Spirit (Ep 5:18,19).
8. The Spirit is the guarantee of the Christian's sonship (Rm 8:15,16; Gl 4:6; Ep 1:14; 4:30).

E. First century work of the Spirit:

1. Joel prophesied that the Spirit would be poured out on all flesh (Jl 2:28).
2. Jesus promised that the apostles would be baptized with the Spirit (At 1:1-8).
3. The apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30 (At 2:1-4).
4. By the laying on of the hands of the Christ-sent apostles the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were given to others (At 18:8; 19:6; Rm 1:11).
5. Jesus promised that the early church as a group would work miracles (Mk 16:14-20; Hb 2:3,4).
6. The Holy Spirit inspired the written word of God in order to guide Christians throughout the centuries (2 Tm 3:16,17; 2 Pt 1:3; Jd 3).
7. The miraculous gifts passed away with the completion of the written word of God (1 Co 13:8-10).
8. The Bible warns of those who would deceive others through false miraculous works (Mt 24:11,23,24; 2 Th 2:9-12).
9. The Spirit continues to lead Christians today through the word of God (Rm 8:14; Gl 5:18)

JERUSALEM'S DESTRUCTION

Jesus' prophecy of the termination of national Israel with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple is recorded in Mt 24, Mk 13 and Lk 21. This prophecy was fulfilled in A.D. 70. The parables that lead up to this prophecy are recorded in Mt 13:3-9,36-42; 21:33-46; 22:1-14; 23:29-39. This destruction was the coming of Jesus in time in judgment on national Israel.

A. Jesus' Mt 24 prophecy of events surrounding the fall of Jerusalem and national Israel:

1. Jewish nationalism in reference to Jerusalem (vs 1).
2. Imminent destruction of Jerusalem (vs 2).

3. Disciples question Jesus about destruction (vs 3).
4. Warning against false messiahs (vss 4,5).
5. Rumors of Roman wars against the Jews (vs 6).
6. Consequences of wars against the Jews (vs 7).
7. Beginning of Jews' sorrows from war (vs 8).
8. Jewish disciples persecuted (vs 9).
9. Jewish disciples offended and betrayed (vs 10).
10. Dangers of false teachers in times of trial (vs 11).
11. Presence of anarchy and lovelessness (vs 12).
12. Endure to end of national Israel (vs 13).
13. Preach to all the Roman Empire (vs 14).
14. Abomination of Roman armies (vss 15-18).
15. Pray for easy flight from Jerusalem (vss 19,20).
16. Great tribulation of national Israel (vs 21).
17. War shortened for the sake of Christians (vs 22).
18. Proclamation of false messiahs (vs 23).
19. Rise of false messiahs and preachers (vs 24).
20. Warning against deception (vs 25).
21. Final coming will be self-evident (vss 26,27).
22. Consumption of the nation of Israel (vs 28).
23. Downfall of national Israel (vs 29).
24. Signal that Jesus is presently reigning (vs 30).
25. Evangelists go forth to preach the gospel (vs 31).
26. Parable of the Fig Tree (vss 32,33).
27. Prophecy fulfilled in generation of Jesus' disciples (vs 34).
28. God's word will endure through Israel's fall (vs 35).
29. While on earth Jesus did not know when the fall would come (vs 36).
30. The wicked Jews will be taken away (vss 37-39).
31. The gospel-obedient Jews will be left (vss 40,41).
32. Watch for the signs of Roman's coming (vs 42).
33. Destruction will come upon unwatchful (vss 43,44).
34. Be a faithful and wise servant in kingdom (vss 45-47).
35. Evil servant will be destroyed (vss 48-51).

B. New Testament writers and the termination of national Israel:

1. The coming judgment of national Israel was near when James wrote in A.D. 67,68 (Js 5:7,8).
2. It was the last times of national Israel when Jude wrote in A.D. 65 to 67 (Jd 17,18).
3. The hour of judgment had come on national Israel when Peter wrote around A.D. 65 (1 Pt 4:17,18).
4. Antichrists were present, and thus, John wrote in the last hour of national Israel in A.D. 65-68 (1 Jn 2:18).

JESUS CHRIST

The word "Christ" is from the Greek word *cristos* that means "the anointed." Christ is the equivalent Greek word for the Jewish Messiah. Jesus was the anointed one of God who fulfilled all prophecy concerning the Messiah of Israel.

A. Prophecy of the Messiah (Christ):

1. Seed of woman would crush Satan (Gn 3:15).
2. Descendant of Abraham (Gn 12:1-3; see Gl 3:16).
3. Descendant of Isaac (Gn 21:12; see Hb 11:18).
4. Born of Judah (Gn 49:10; see Hb 7:17).
5. Descendant of David (2 Sm 4:12ff; see Rv 22:16).
6. Born of a virgin (Is 7:14; see Mt 1:23).
7. Born in Bethlehem (Mc 5:2; see Mt 2:1,8; Jn 7:42).
8. Born during Roman Empire (Dn 2:44; 7:13,14).
9. Have a forerunner (Ml 3:1; 4:5; see Mt 3:1-3).
10. Slaughter of babies at birthplace (Jr 31:15; see Mt 2:16-18).
11. Sojourner in Egypt (Hs 11:1; see Mt 2:15).
12. Live in Galilee (Is 9:1,2; see Mt 4:15).
13. Live in Nazareth (Mt 2:23).
14. Teach in parables (Ps 78:2; Is 6:9,10; see Mt 13:34,35).
15. Would be betrayed (Ps 41:9; see Mk 14:66-72).

16. Die with malefactors (Is 53:9,12; see Lk 22:37).
17. Would be pierced (Ps 22:16; see Jn 19:34-37).
18. Would rise from the dead (Ps 16:10; see At 2:32).
19. Would ascend to heaven (Ps 68:18; see Lk 24:51).

B. References to Jesus:

1. King (Mt 2:2; 21:15; Jn 18:36).
2. Lord (At 2:36; Rm 10:9; Ph 2:11).
3. Emmanuel (Is 7:14; Mt 1:23).
4. Alpha and Omega (Rv 22:13).
5. Good Shepherd (Jn 10:1-14; 1 Pt 2:25; 5:4).
6. Prince of peace (Is 9:6).
7. God (Is 9:6; Jn 1:1,2; 1 Jn 5:20).
8. High Priest (Hb 3:1; 4:14; 7:26).
9. Lamb (Jn 1:29; At 8:32-35).
10. Prince of life (At 3:15).
11. Savior (At 4:12; Ep 5:23; 1 Jn 4:14).
12. The Word (1 Jn 1:1,2).
13. Son of David (Mt 1:1; Lk 1:32; Rv 5:5; 22:16).
14. Son of Man (Mk 2:27,28; Lk 19:10).
15. Prophet (Jn 1:21; Lk 13:33; At 3:22-26).
16. Bridegroom (Mt 9:14,15; 2 Co 11:2; Rv 19:7; 21:9).
17. Bread of life (Jn 6:35-68).
18. The Just One (At 3:14; 7:52; 22:14).

C. Divine characteristics of Jesus:

1. He was holy (Lk 1:35; Rv 3:7).
2. He was righteous (Is 53:11; At 3:14; 1 Jn 2:1).
3. He was sinless (Jn 8:46; 2 Co 5:21; Hb 4:15; 7:26).
4. He was faithful (2 Th 3:3; 2 Tm 2:13).
5. He was obedient (Jn 4:34; 6:38; Hb 5:8).
6. He was compassionate (Lk 7:13; 19:41; Hb 2:17).
7. He was loving (Jn 13:1; 15:13,14).
8. He was forgiving (Lk 23:34).

9. He was humble (Is 53:7; Ph 2:8).
10. He was sacrificial (Ph 2:5-7).

D. Human characteristics of Jesus:

1. He was born of a woman (Lk 1:30,31; Gl 4:4).
2. He was flesh and blood (Jn 1:14; Hb 2:14).
3. He knew hunger (Mt 4:2; 21:18).
4. He knew thirst (Jn 4:7; 19:28).
5. He knew sorrow and grief (Is 53:3,4; Lk 22:44).
6. He could be tempted (Hb 4:15).
7. He knew what it was to be tired (Jn 4:6).

E. Ministry of Jesus:

1. To reveal the Father (Jn 1:18; 14:7-9).
2. To be an atoning sacrifice for sins (Jn 1:29; 1 Co 15:1-4; Ep 1:7; Hb 9:14,28; 1 Jn 3:5).
3. To destroy the works of the devil (Jn 1:4; 8:12,32; 10:10; 17:3; Hb 2:14,15; 1 Jn 3:8).
4. To become our High Priest (Hb 2:17,18; 4:14-16; 7:25).
5. To work on our behalf from heaven (Rm 8:34; Hb 1:1-3; 7:25; 12:25; 1 Jn 2:1).
6. To give hope of the resurrection (1 Co 15:20-22).

JUDGMENT

God has come in judgment on nations and people "in time." These judgments illustrate His coming in judgment on the world through Jesus at the "end of time." The purpose of His judgments in time is to bring about the purpose for the existence of the world, that is, to encourage obedience to His will in order that believers come into His realm of eternal existence.

A. Time of the final judgment:

1. At the last day (Jn 12:48).
2. At an appointed day (At 17:31).
3. Immediately for those who die (Hb 9:27).

4. When Jesus returns for the living (Mt 25:31,32).

B. Description of the day of judgment:

1. All judged before Jesus (2 Co 5:10).
2. A day of wrath for wicked (Rm 2:5; Rv 6:15-17).
3. A day of destruction (2 Th 1:7-9; 2 Pt 3:7).
4. All will be revealed (Mk 4:22; Rm 2:16; 1 Co 4:5).
5. A day of fiery indignation (Hb 10:27).
6. Judgment without respect of persons (1 Pt 1:17).
7. Judgment by God's standard (Jn 12:48; Rv 20:11-15).
8. Our works will be manifested (1 Co 3:13; 2 Co 5:10).
9. Saints can be bold toward (1 Jn 4:17).
10. Jesus will reward (Rv 1:23; 20:12; 22:12).

C. Standard of judgment:

1. Judged by Jesus' word (Jn 12:48; Rm 2:16; Js 2:12).
2. Judged from the book of life (Rv 20:12,15).
3. Judged by deeds (Mt 16:27; 25:31-46; Rm 2:6; 2 Co 5:10; 1 Pt 1:17; Rv 20:13).

D. Jesus will judge:

1. Jesus has authority to judge (Jn 5:22; At 17:31).
2. Jesus is ordained to judge (Mt 16:27; At 10:42).

E. Results of judgment:

1. Wicked and righteous will be separated (Mt 25:32,34, 41,46).
2. Righteous rewarded with life (2 Tm 4:8; Rv 11:18).
3. Wicked will suffer destruction (Mt 10:28; 2 Th 1:7-9).
4. Saints will rest (Jn 5:29; Rv 14:13).

JUSTIFICATION

Justification means that we are legally made right before God as a result of God's forgiveness of our sins through the sacrificial blood offering of Jesus.

A. Origin of justification:

1. Made available through grace (Rm 3:24; 5:17-21; Ti 3:7).
2. Made possible by Jesus' blood (Rm 5:9).
3. Made possible by Jesus' resurrection (Rm 4:25).
4. Made possible by sacrifice of Jesus (Rm 5:18).
5. Made applicable by faith (At 13:39; Rm 3:26-28; 5:1; Gl 3:8,24).

B. Means of justification:

1. Justified by God's grace (Rm 3:24).
2. Justified by faith (Rm 3:28; 5:1; Gl 3:8).
3. Justified by works (Js 2:21-25).
4. Justified by Jesus' blood (Rm 5:9).

C. Necessity of justification:

1. To receive forgiveness of sins (At 13:38,39).
2. To have peace with God (Rm 5:1).
3. To be heirs of eternal life (Ti 3:7).

D. Conditions for justification:

1. Believe in Jesus (At 13:39; Rm 3:26; 5:1).
2. Obey the gospel (Rm 8:30; 2 Th 2:14).
3. Abide in faith (Rm 3:26-30; 5:1; Gl 3:24).
4. Maintain works (Ep 2:10; Js 2:21-26).

E. One is not justified by the following:

1. Perfect keeping of law (Rm 3:20; Gl 2:16; 5:4).
2. Meritorious good deeds (Rm 11:6; Ep 2:9).
3. Faith only (Js 2:21-26).

KINGDOM REIGN

In reference to God's authority, the word "kingdom" (Gr., *basileia*) refers to kingdom reign from heaven. In this time, the church (Gr., *ekklesia*) is the assembly of those on earth who have submitted to the kingdom reign of Jesus from heaven.

A. Reign of the Father in the Old Testament:

1. Father was king (Ps 10:16; 24:10; 44:4; Is 33:22; Jr 10:10).
2. Father reigned (Ex 15:18).
3. Father was king and head over all (1 Ch 29:11,12; Ps 103:19).
4. Father ruled over all nations (Ps 22:27,28).

B. Prophecy of Jesus' reign on David's throne:

1. Father would give reign to Son (Dn 2:31-45).
2. Jesus would ascend to reign (Dn 7:13,14).
3. Jesus would reign on David's throne of authority from heaven (1 Ch 28:5; 29:23; At 2:14-36).
4. Father would give reign to Son (Mt 28:18; Jn 3:35; 13:3; 17:2; 1 Co 15:26-28).

C. Jesus' present kingdom reign:

1. Jesus ascended to reign (At 1:9-11).
2. His kingdom came with power (Mk 9:1; At 2:1-4).
3. He is King of kings (1 Tm 6:15; Rv 1:5; 17:14; 19:16).
4. He reigns at the right hand of God (Hb 8:1).
5. He reigns over all (Ep 1:20-22).
6. He reigns over the nations (Rv 2:26,27; 12:5).
7. Angels are subject to His kingship (Hb 2:8; 1 Pt 3:22; Rv 11:15).
8. All should now bow to Him (Ph 2:5-11).
9. Christians presently reign with Him (Rm 5:17; 2 Tm 2:11,12).
10. He will reign until final coming (1 Co 15:26-28).

LEADERSHIP

Leadership among the people of God is carried out by the loving servanthood of those who seek to service the needs of others. Leaders are thus identified by serving the needs of the church.

A. Principles of gospel leadership:

1. Understand the mission of Jesus (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15; At 5:42).
2. Self-examination of one's life (Rm 11:20; 1 Co 10:12; 11:28; 2 Co 13:5; Gl 6:1,4; Js 1:22-25).
3. Love the church (Mt 20:28; Jn 10:11;13:34,35; 15:13).
4. Set examples of service (1 Co 11:1; 1 Tm 4:12).
5. Humbly serve (Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45; 1 Co 16:15,16; Gl 6:1,2; Hb 13:17; 1 Jn 5:16).
6. Be recognized for leadership (At 6:3; 14:23; 15:22; 1 Tm 3:1-7; Ti 1:4-9).
7. Have the backing of the disciples (At 6:5; 15:22; 1 Co 16:3; 2 Co 2:6; 8:16-24).
8. Be a visionary (Jg 5:2; Mt 28:19; Mk 16:15; At 9:15; 20:24; Rm 15:23,24; Ph 3:14).

B. Jesus' Mt 23 teaching on legalistic leadership in contrast to servanthood leadership (Lk 11:37-54):

1. Lordship leaders like to dictate decisions (vs 2).
2. Lordship leaders say and do not (vss 3,4; Gl 6:13).
3. Lordship leaders love positions (vss 5-7).
4. Servant leaders do not need public recognition (vs 8; At 10:25,26; 14:14,15).
5. Servant leaders do not resort to traditions (vs 9; Mk 7:1-9).
6. Servant leaders do not resort to their position to maintain authority (vs 10).
7. Servant leaders manifest humility (vss 11,12; Mk 10:43,44).
8. Conduct of dictatorial and legalistic leaders:
 - a. One becomes a self-appointed guardian of the truth (vs 13).
 - b. One subjects others to his interpretations and opinions (vs 15; Mk 7:9).

- c. One emphasizes trivial details over the most important commands of the law (vss 16-22).
- d. One neglects the weightier matters of the law by concentrating on the lesser matters (vss 23,24; Mt 12:8).
- e. One gives heed to ceremonial cleansing instead of inward sanctification (vss 25,26).
- f. One gives an outward appearance of religiosity, but inwardly he is spiritually and morally dead (vss 27,28).
- g. One publicly honors the fathers, but inwardly aligns himself with those who oppose the saints (vss 29-36).

LORD'S DAY

The term "Lord's Day" was used in the first and second century writings of Christians to refer to the first day of the week, or Sunday.

A. Christians and the Lord's Day:

1. It is the day after the Sabbath (Mt 28:1; Mk 16:1,2).
2. Sunday is called the Lord's Day (Rv 1:10).
3. Jesus was raised on this day (Mk 16:9; Jn 20:1,19).
4. Christians meet on this day (At 20:27; 1 Co 16:1,2).
5. Christians made special contributions on Sunday (1 Co 16:1,2).
6. Christians ate their love feast and partook of the Lord's Supper on Sunday (At 20:7; 1 Co 11:20-29).
7. The church was established on the Jewish feast of Pentecost, which is Sunday (At 2:1).

LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper was instituted by Jesus for His disciples when He ate the Jewish Passover meal with them the night of His betrayal. The early disciples continued the tradition of a meal, during which they partook of the Supper. The Supper remained connected to the love feast until the fourth century A.D., when it was eventually separated from the love feast meal, which meal eventually faded away at the assembly of the saints.

A. References to the Lord's Supper:

1. The Supper was eaten during the breaking of bread (At 2:42; 20:7).
2. The Supper is a communion (fellowship) with Jesus and with one another (1 Co 10:16).
3. It is called the Supper with the Lord (1 Co 11:20).

B. Remembering Jesus through the Lord's Supper:

1. The bread is in memory of the body of Jesus (Mt 26:26; 1 Co 11:24).
2. The one bread is a reminder that there is one body (1 Co 10:16,17).
3. The fruit of the vine is in memory of the blood of the covenant (Mt 26:27,28; Lk 22:19,20).
4. The Supper is in memory of Jesus' death and our covenant with God (Lk 22:19,20; 1 Co 11:27-34).

C. First disciples regularly partook of the Supper:

1. The first disciples gathered on Sunday (1 Co 16:1,2).
2. The first disciples ate a love feast when they came together on Sunday (At 20:7; 1 Co 11:20-29).
3. The first disciples partook of the Supper as often as possible (1 Co 11:24,25).
4. The first disciples had a love feast, during which they partook of the Supper (At 20:7; 1 Co 11:17-34; 2 Pt 2:13; Jd 12).

LOVE

The Greek word *agape* is an action word of strong emotion that was used in the New Testament to express relationships between two parties. It is the word that is commonly used to refer to the love that exists between God and man and between Christians. *Agape* love defines the nature of the people of God.

A. God's love:

1. God is love (1 Jn 4:16).

2. God's love revealed in Christ (Jn 3:16; 1 Jn 4:8-11).
3. God loved those whom He had created (Jn 3:16; Rm 5:8; Ti 3:4; 1 Jn 4:19).
4. God loves His children (2 Th 2:16; 1 Jn 3:1).
5. God loves a cheerful giver (2 Co 9:7).

B. Jesus' love:

1. Jesus loved His disciples (Jn 13:1; 15:9-13).
2. Jesus sacrificed Himself because of love (Gl 2:20).
3. Jesus gave an example of love (1 Jn 3:16).
4. Jesus' love is enduring (Rm 8:35).
5. Jesus loves the church (Ep 5:2,25).
6. Jesus' love motivates love (2 Co 5:14; 1 Jn 4:19).

C. The Christian's love:

1. Love God (Mt 22:37,38).
2. Love one another (Jn 13:34,35; 15:12; Rm 12:9; Gl 5:13-15; 1 Th 3:12; 1 Pt 1:22; 2:17; 1 Jn 2:10; 4:7,21).
3. Love enemies (Mt 5:44).
4. Love the Lord (Jn 8:42; 1 Co 16:22; 2 Co 5:14).

D. Nature of love:

1. Nature of love explained and illustrated (1 Co 13).
2. Love sacrifices for others (Jn 15:9-13; 2 Co 5:14; 1 Jn 3:16,17; 4:9-11).
3. Love is the first commandment (Mt 22:37,38).
4. Love destroys fear of judgment (1 Jn 4:17-19).
5. Love is fruit of the Spirit (Gl 5:22).
6. Love works no harm to others (Rm 13:10).
7. Love is from the heart (Mt 22:37).
8. Love works through faith (Gl 5:6).

E. Love and obedience:

1. Love is doing God's commandments (1 Jn 5:2,3).

2. Love is doing Jesus' commandments (Jn 14:15,21-24; 15:14).
3. Love moves one to obey God's word (Jn 15:10).
4. Love brings assurance through obedience (1 Jn 2:3-5).
5. When obedience ceases love ceases (Rv 2:4,5).

MIRACLES

The miraculous work of God in the Bible was revealed to the senses of people for specific purposes. Confirming miracles were not perceived through faith, but through the sense perceptions of those who beheld the miracles. Though God works behind the scene of sense perceptions today, this work is perceived through faith. There is a difference between this providential work of God in the lives of His people today and the confirming miraculous work of God in the first century in order to validate Jesus as the Son of God, and the gospel message of the disciples as they went forth to preach.

A. Greek words used to define miracles:

1. A miracle as a *teras* (wonder) referred to the impact the miraculous work had on men (At 2:22,43; 4:30; 5:12; 6:8; 15:12; Hb 2:4).
2. A miracle as a *semeion* (sign) referred to God who worked the miracle (Mk 16:20; Jn 3:2; At 14:3; 2 Co 12:12; Hb 2:4).
3. A miracle as a *dunamis* (power) referred to the supernatural power that was self-evident in the signs (Mt 12:28; At 2:22; 15:12; 19:11).
4. A miracle as an *ergon* (work) referred to the environment in which God dwells (Jn 5:36; 6:28,29; 7:21; 10:25,32,37,38; 14:11,12; 15:24).

B. Definition of true confirming miracles:

1. A confirming miracle was perceived by the senses of man (At 4:14-16; 26:26).
2. A confirming miracle was unquestionably perceived as a miraculous happening (Ex 14:13; 1 Kg 18:17-46; Mk 16:20;

- Jn 3:2; 5:26; 10:38; 11:43-45; 14:11; At 2:22; Hb 2:3,4).
3. A confirming miracle was not the ordinary occurrence of natural laws (Mt 8:23-27; Mk 4:35-41; 6:45-52; Jn 2:1-11).
 4. A confirming miracle was instantaneous (At 3:6-8).
 5. A confirming miracle could not be denied by unbelievers (1 Kg 18:30-40; Jn 11:45,46; At 4:14-16; 26:26).
 6. A confirming miracle could be clearly seen (At 4:14-16; 26:26).

C. Purpose of confirming miracles:

1. Confirming miracles revealed God's glory (Jn 11:4,40-42).
2. Confirming miracles revealed Jesus' glory (Jn 2:11).
3. Confirming miracles proved Jesus' sonship (Mt 11:2-6; Lk 7:20-22; Jn 3:2; 4:48; 5:36; 9:16; 11:42; 20:30,31).
4. Confirming miracles proved God's messengers (Mk 16:17-20; Jn 3:2; 2 Co 12:12; Hb 2:3,4).
5. Confirming miracles confirmed the word of God (Mk 16:20; Hb 2:3,4).

D. The confirming miracles of Jesus:

1. Turning of water into wine (Jn 2:1-11).
2. Healing of the nobleman's son (Jn 4:46-54).
3. First catch of fish (Lk 5:1-11).
4. Capernaum demoniac (Mk 1:23-27; Lk 4:33-36).
5. Healing Simon's mother-in-law (Mt 8:14-17; Mk 1:29-31; Lk 4:38-40).
6. Healing a leper (Mt 8:1-4; Mk 1:40-45; Lk 5:12-14).
7. Healing a paralytic (Mt 9:1-8; Mk 2:1-12; Lk 5:17-26).
8. Healing an impotent man (Jn 5:1-16).
9. Healing man with withered hand (Mt 12:9-13; Mk 3:1-5; Lk 6:6-11).
10. Healing centurion's servant (Lk 7:1-10).
11. Healing centurion's son (Mt 8:5-13).

12. Healing widow's son (Lk 7:11-16).
13. Healing blind & mute man (Lk 7:11-16).
14. Calming of stormy sea (Mt 8:23-27; Mk 4:35-41; Lk 8:22-25).
15. Healing Gadarene demoniacs (Mt 8:28-32; Mk 5:1-20; Lk 8:26-29).
16. Healing woman with issue of blood (Mt 9:20-22; Mk 5:25-34; Lk 8:43-48).
17. Raising of Jairus' daughter (Mt 9:18,19,23-26; Mk 5:22,24,35-43; Lk 8:41,42,49-56).
18. Healing two blind men (Mt 9:27-31).
19. Healing a dumb demoniac (Mt 9:32,33).
20. Feeding the 5,000 (Mt 14:15-21; Mk 6:34-44; Lk 9:12-17; Jn 6:5-14).
21. Walking on the water (Mt 14:25-32; Mk 6:45-51; Jn 6:14-21).
22. Healing Syrophenician daughter (Mt:15:21-28; Mk 7:24-30).
23. Healing deaf and dumb (Mk 7:31-37).
24. Feeding the 4,000 (Mt 15:32-39; Mk 8:1-9).
25. Healing a blind man (Mk 8:22-26).

E. Passing of confirming miracles:

1. Miracles confirmed the spoken word of God's messengers in the first century (Mk 16:20; Hb 2:3,4).
2. Miraculous gifts were given only by the laying on of the Christ-sent apostles' hands (At 8:18; Rm 1:11).
3. The word of God has been confirmed, and thus the open miraculous confirmation of God's messengers and His word has passed away (1 Co 13:8-10).
4. The word of God is now sufficient to produce faith and godly direction (Jn 20:30,31; 2 Tm 3:16,17; 2 Pt 1:3).
5. God continues to work today in a providential manner behind the curtain of natural law (Rm 8:28; Ep 3:20).

6. Those who believe, and yet have not seen miracles, are more blessed (Jn 20:24-29).

OBEDIENCE

Obedience is one's response to the gospel of God's grace. Obedience to the conditions of the new covenant is the natural response of those who are thankful for the gospel.

A. Obedience is the following:

1. Yielding to God's will (Rm 6:16,17; Js 4:6-10; 1 Pt 5:6,7).
2. Doing God's will (Mt 7:21-27; Js 1:22-25; 1 Jn 3:18).
3. Willingness to forsake all in response to the gospel (Mt 10:37-39; Mk 10:29,30; Lk 9:23,61,62; 14:25-35; Rm 12:1,2; Gl 2:20; Ph 3:7,8).
4. Forsaking the world (Mt 6:34; Js 4:4; 1 Jn 2:15).
5. Focusing on things above (Mt 6:19-21,33; Cl 3:2).
6. Walking in response to Jesus (Jn 15:14; Gl 1:10; 1 Th 2:4).
7. Living after spiritual examples (Jn 13:15; 1 Co 11:1; 1 Pt 2:21).
8. Offering one's life as a spiritual sacrifice (Rm 6:13,16,19; 12:1,2; 2 Co 8:5; Ph 3:7,8; Hb 13:15,16; 1 Pt 2:5).
9. Doing the righteousness of God (At 10:34,35; 1 Jn 2:29).
10. Loving Jesus (Jn 14:15; 15:14).
11. Loving others as we have been loved (1 Jn 4:19).

B. Examples of obedience:

1. Abraham (Gn 22:2,3; Hb 11:8-10).
2. Jesus as the Son of God (Lk 22:42; Jn 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 7:17; 9:31; Hb 5:8,9).
3. The faithful in the Old Testament (Hb 11).
4. The twelve apostles (Mt 4:20-22; 19:29; Lk 5:10,11,28; 18:28).
5. Paul (Ph 3:4-11; Gl 2:20).

6. The disciples of Jesus (Lk 9:23).

PARABLES OF JESUS

A parable is a metaphorical story that reveals a specific truth. Parables were taken from real-life situations in order to teach spiritual truths.

A. The parables of Jesus:

1. The sower (Mt 13:3-8,18-23; Mk 4:3-8,14-20; Lk 8:5-8,11-15).
2. The tares (Mt 13:24-30,36-43).
3. The scattered seed (Mk 4:26-29).
4. The mustard seed (Mt 13:31,32; Mk 4:30-32; Lk 13:18,19).
5. The leaven (Mt 13:33; Lk 13:20,21).
6. The hidden treasure (Mt 13:44).
7. The pearl (Mt 13:45,46).
8. The net (Mt 13:47-50).
9. The unmerciful servant (Mt 18:23-35).
10. The laborers (Mt 20:1-16).
11. The two sons (Mt 21:28-32).
12. The tenants (Mt 21:33-44; Mk 12:1-12; Lk 20:9-18).
13. The wedding banquet (Mt 22:1-14).
14. The virgins (Mt 25:1-13).
15. The talents (Mt 25:14-30).
16. The householder (Mk 13:33-37).
17. The curse of the fig tree (Mt 24:32,33; Mk 13:28,29; Lk 21:29-31).
18. The two debtors (Lk 7:41-43).
19. The good Samaritan (Lk 10:30-37).
20. The friend at midnight (Lk 11:5-8).
21. The rich fool (Lk 12:16-21).
22. The watchful (Lk 12:35-40).
23. The wise steward (Lk 12:41-48).
24. The barren fig tree (Lk 13:6-9).
25. The wedding guest (Lk 14:7-11).

26. The great supper (Lk 14:15-24).
27. The cost of commitment (Lk 14:25-35).
28. The lost sheep (Mt 18:12-14; Lk 15:3-7).
29. The lost coin (Lk 15:8-10).
30. The prodigal son (Lk 15:11-32).
31. The unjust steward (Lk 16:1-13).
32. The unprofitable servant (Lk 17:7-10).
33. The persistent widow (Lk 18:1-8).
34. The Pharisee and the tax collector (Lk 18:9-14).
35. The ten minas (Lk 19:11-27).

PRAYER

Prayer is an expression of one's most inner feelings of thanksgiving to God and pleading for His help. In the Bible, prayer is often coupled with fasting on the part of the one who prepares his or her mind for prayer.

A. Necessity of prayer:

1. Pray after Jesus' example (Lk 5:16; 6:12; 22:45).
2. Jesus gave a model prayer (Lk 11:1-4).
3. Example of the Christian's prayers (At 2:42; 6:4; 12:5; Rm 1:9; 12:12).

B. How to pray:

1. Pray to God the Father (Mt 6:9; Jn 16:23,26).
2. Pray with the right to approach God through Jesus (Jn 14:13; Rm 1:8; Cl 3:17).
3. Pray in faith (Mt 21:22; Js 1:6,7).
4. Pray earnestly (Cl 4:12; Js 5:16,17).
5. Pray believing (Mt 21:22; Mk 11:24).
6. Pray everywhere (1 Tm 2:8).
7. Pray publicly (At 4:23-31).
8. Pray in secret (Mt 6:4-6).
9. Pray in humility (Js 1:5-8).
10. Pray unselfishly (Js 4:3).
11. Pray with thanksgiving (Ph 4:6).

12. Pray according to God's will (1 Jn 5:14).
13. Pray unceasingly (Rm 12:12; Cl 1:3,9; 1 Th 5:17; 3:10).
14. Pray intensely (Mt 7:7-11; Cl 4:12).
15. Pray out of obedient living (1 Jn 3:22; Js 5:16).

C. That for which to pray:

1. Persecutors (Mt 5:44).
2. Wisdom (Js 1:5-8).
3. Daily bread (Mt 6:11).
4. That God's will be done (Mt 6:10).
5. Forgiveness (Mt 6:12).
6. For relief from temptation (Mt 6:13).
7. For one another (Js 5:16).
8. For deliverance from trials (Mt 6:13; 2 Th 3:1,2).
9. For relief from sickness (Js 5:14,15).
10. Wisdom for leaders (1 Tm 2:1,2).
11. For laborers in God's harvest (Mt 9:38).

D. God's response to prayer:

1. He restores health (2 Kg 20:1-4; Js 5:13-16).
2. He opens doors (Mt 6:9-13; 1 Co 16:9; 2 Co 2:12).
3. He provides food (Mt 6:25-34).
4. He provides escape from sin (1 Co 10:13).
5. He delivers (Rm 15:30-32; 2 Tm 4:18; 2 Pt 2:9).
6. He raises up evangelists (Mt 9:38; 1 Tm 1:12).
7. He limits temptations (Ps 125:3; Lk 22:32; 1 Co 10:13).
8. He aids in our service (1 Co 8:6).
9. He gives safe journeys (Rm 1:9,10).
10. He protects (Pv 18:10; 29:25; 2 Co 1:10,11; Pl 22).
11. He changes adversity (Ph 1:12-19).
12. He produces opportunities (At 19:8-10; Cl 4:3; Pl 14).
13. He helps us stand (Cl 4:12; 2 Jn 4; 3 Jn 3,4).

14. He brings brethren together (1 Th 3:10).
15. He brings forth fruit (1 Co 3:5,6; 1 Th 1:2-8; 2 Th 1:11,12).
16. He makes fruit glorify Jesus (1 Co 1:31; 1 Th 2:20).
17. He opens doors for preaching (Ep 6:18,19; 2 Th 3:1,2).
18. He delivers from wicked (2 Th 3:1,2; 2 Tm 4:17).

PREACHING

The Greek word *euangelizo* is used in the New Testament to refer to believers announcing the good news to unbelievers. The other Greek word, *kerusso*, is likewise used to proclaim the gospel to unbelievers.

A. Preaching is a work of all believers.

1. Must preach the gospel (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15).
2. Must preach to the lost (At 5:42).
3. Must preach God's wisdom (Ep 3:10,11).
4. Must edify the church (Ep 4:11,12; 2 Tm 4:2).
5. Must send out preachers (Rm 10:8-15; 3 Jn 5-8).
6. Must support preachers (1 Co 9:14; Gl 6:6).

B. References to preachers:

1. He is an evangelist (At 21:8; Ep 4:11).
2. He is a minister (2 Tm 4:5; 1 Pt 4:11).
3. He is a servant (2 Tm 2:24).
4. He is a proclaimer (Rm 1:15; Gl 4:13).

C. Work of the preacher:

1. Proclaim the truth of the gospel (2 Tm 4:2).
2. Preach to the lost (Rm 10:14,15).
3. Warn against error (1 Tm 1:3,10; 4:1-3,6,11-16; 2 Tm 1:13; 4:2-4; Ti 2:1).
4. Set forth selected elders (1 Tm 3:1-13; Ti 1:5-9).
5. Reprove elders who sin (1 Tm 5:19-21).
6. Provide an example (1 Tm 4:12; 6:11; Ti 2:7).

7. Teach (2 Tm 2:2; Ti 3:8ff).
8. Refuse false teaching (1 Tm 4:7; 6:20,21; 2 Tm 2:23).
9. Lead by example and teaching (Ti 1:5).

D. Life of the preacher:

1. Be honest and pure (1 Tm 5:22; 6:11; 2 Tm 2:22).
2. Be enduring in hardship (2 Tm 2:3-5; 3:12).
3. Be courageous (At 20:22-24; 2 Tm 1:8).
4. Be diligent (1 Co 15:10).
5. Be faithful (Rm 15:17-19).
6. Be industrious (2 Co 10:12-16; 1 Tm 4:15).
7. Be in control of one's self (1 Co 9:25-29).
8. Be sincere (2 Co 4:1,2).
9. Be prayerful (At 6:4; 1 Th 5:17).
10. Be impartial (1 Tm 5:21).
11. Be obedient (At 16:9,10; 1 Tm 6:14).
12. Be godly (1 Tm 4:7,8).
13. Be in the truth of the gospel (2 Tm 3:14).
14. Be an example (1 Tm 4:12; Ti 2:1).
15. Be meek (Ti 3:2).
16. Be in control of speech (2 Tm 2:24,25).
17. Be cautious about controversies (Ti 3:9).
18. Be longsuffering (2 Tm 4:2).
19. Be serious (2 Tm 4:5).
20. Be confident (2 Tm 1:6,7).
21. Be cautious about behavior (1 Tm 4:16; 5:22).
22. Be a teacher (1 Tm 4:11,16).

REDEMPTION

Redemption is being delivered from what one cannot deliver himself. It is as Israel was redeemed from captivity from which they could not deliver themselves. Likewise, Christians have been redeemed from sin. Under no circumstances could the alien sinner deliver himself or her self from the bondage of sin by good works or meritorious works of law. For this reason, everyone had to be deliver from sin by grace.

A. Redemption in Old Testament:

1. Israel was redeemed as a nation out of Egyptian bondage (Ex 6:6; 15:13).
2. Laws were given to Israel concerning redemption in their society (Lv 25:25-49; 27:13-31).
3. Examples of redemption (Rt 4:4-6; Is 44:22,23).
4. Israel looked for spiritual redemption (Lk 2:38).

B. The Christian's redemption by the Son of God:

1. God's people redeemed through Jesus (Lk 1:68).
2. Redeemed by Jesus' blood (Ep 1:7; Cl 1:14; Rv 5:9).
3. Blood redeemed those under the law (Hb 9:15).
4. Redeemed from the curse of law (Gl 3:13).
5. Redeemed from justification through perfect law-keeping (Gl 4:5).
6. Redeemed from iniquity (Ti 2:14).
7. Redeemed in Christ (Rm 3:24; 1 Co 1:30; Ep 1:7; Cl 1:14).
8. Redeemed for all time (Hb 9:12).
9. Wait for redemption of body (Rm 8:23).
10. Church redemption in the end (Ep 1:13,14; 4:30).

REPENTANCE

Repentance is a change in thinking and life behavior because one changes his or her heart in response to the gospel. True repentance must be manifested by the change of one's behavior.

A. Definition of repentance:

1. It is a change of mind (Mt 21:28,29).
2. It is returning to our "first love" (Rv 2:5).
3. It is turning to God (1 Sm 7:3; At 9:35; 26:20; Lk 17:4).
4. It is part of conversion to God (At 3:19; 15:3).
5. It produces joy in heaven (Lk 15:7,10).
6. It is the product of godly sorrow (2 Co 7:9,10).

B. Repentance is commanded:

1. Jesus said we must repent (Lk 13:3,5).
2. God commands repentance (At 2:38; 8:22; 17:30,31; 2 Pt 3:9).
3. Men must repent of wickedness (Rv 2:16,21,22).

C. Things that stimulate repentance:

1. Fear of judgment (At 17:30,31).
2. The goodness and gospel of God (Rm 2:4).
3. The patience of God (2 Pt 3:9).
4. Conviction of our sins (At 2:37,38).
5. Godly sorrow (2 Co 7:10).
6. Exhortation by brothers (Lk 17:3; Gl 6:1; 1 Jn 5:16).

D. Why people do not repent:

1. Because of willful sinning (Hb 6:6).
2. By failing to see sinful self (Lk 18:9-14; Js 1:23,24).
3. By not hearing the gospel (Mk 16:15,16)

RESURRECTION

Resurrection in reference to our physical bodies means that this present body will be bodily resurrected, though it will be changed. We do not know the nature of the resurrected body, though we will be resurrected to be like Jesus now is.

A. Resurrection of Jesus:

1. Was prophesied (Ps 16:10,11; At 13:34,35).
2. Was prophesied by Jesus (Mk 9:9,10; Jn 2:19-22).
3. Was preached by apostles (At 2:32; 1 Co 15).
4. Was declaration of Jesus' sonship (Rm 1:4).
5. Was bodily (Jn 20:27-31).

B. Time of the final resurrection:

1. At Jesus' final coming (1 Th 4:13-18; Mt 25:31ff).
2. At the sound of last trumpet (1 Co 15:52; 1 Th 4:16).

3. At the end of all things (1 Co 15:20-28).
4. At the last day (Jn 6:39-44; 11:23,24).
5. At the last hour (Jn 5:28,29).

C. Those who will be resurrected:

1. The good and evil (Jn 5:28,29).
2. The righteous saints (1 Th 4:13-18).
3. The just (Lk 14:14).

D. Certainty of the resurrection:

1. Was made certain by Jesus' resurrection (1 Co 15:20-22; Cl 1:18).
2. Made possible by God's power (1 Co 6:14; 2 Co 4:14).
3. Preached by inspiration of Spirit (At 1:22; 4:2,33; 17:18,32).

E. Bodily resurrection of the saints:

1. We will be changed (1 Co 15:51).
2. We will be changed to have a body like Jesus (Ph 3:21; 1 Jn 3:2).
3. We will have a glorious body (1 Co 15:43; Ph 3:21).
4. We will have an incorruptible body (1 Co 15:52-54).
5. We will have a habitation from God (2 Co 5:1-8).
6. We will have a spiritual body (1 Co 15:44).
7. We will be like angels (Mt 22:30).
8. We do not fully know what we will be (1 Jn 3:2).

F. Resurrection of the righteous:

1. Raised to forever be with the Lord (1 Th 4:17).
2. Raised to everlasting life (Jn 5:29).
3. Raised to certain life (Mt 25:46).
4. Raised to receive glory (Rm 8:18; 1 Co 15:43).
5. Raised to have an incorruptible body (1 Co 15:42).
6. Raised to receive immortality (1 Co 15:50-54).

7. Raised to receive a reward (Lk 14:12-14).

G. Resurrection of the unrighteous:

1. Raised for judgment and condemnation (Mt 7:23; 24:41; At 10:42; 2 Co 5:10).
2. Raised for certain punishment (Mt 25:46).
3. Raised to experience God's wrath (Rm 2:5; 1 Th 1:10).
4. Raised for certain destruction (2 Th 1:9; Ph 3:19).

SATAN

Satan (Gr., *satanas*), the devil (Gr., *diabolos*), and serpent, is the adversary of God and His people. He works against all that is good and right in order to bring into destruction those who are created by God.

A. Satan is the adversary:

1. Adversary of God and Christ (Mt 4:10; 12:26; Mk 1:13; 3:23,26; 4:15; Jn 13:27).
2. Adversary of God's people (Jb 1:6-11; 2:1-5; Lk 22:31; At 5:3; Rm 16:20; 1 Co 5:5; 7:5; 2 Co 11:14; 12:7; 1 Th 2:18; 1 Tm 1:20; 5:15; Rv 12:9).
3. Adversary of all men (Lk 13:16; At 26:18; 2 Th 2:9; Rv 12:9,10; 20:7).
4. He is a real spiritual entity (Jn 14:30; 2 Co 5:21; Hb 4:15).

B. The work of Satan:

1. He tempts (Mt 4:1; Lk 4:2,13; 1 Co 7:5; Ep 4:27).
2. He ensnares (1 Tm 3:7; 2 Tm 2:26).
3. He devours (1 Pt 5:8).
4. He takes captive (2 Tm 2:26).
5. He is an enemy (Mt 13:39).
6. He takes advantage of us (2 Co 2:11).
7. He hinders (1 Th 2:18).
8. He is the father of liars (Jn 8:44).
9. He oppresses (At 10:38).
10. He fills one's heart (At 5:3).

C. In view of Satan, what Christians must do:

1. Do not give opportunity to Satan (Ep 4:27).
2. Stand against (Ep 6:11).
3. Resist (Js 4:7).
4. Crush under our feet (Rm 16:20).

D. The doom of Satan:

1. Doom sealed by the cross of Christ (Lk 10:18; Rv 20:2,10).
2. Christ triumphed over (Hb 2:14; 1 Jn 3:8).
3. Christians have victory over (Rm 16:20).
4. Satan will be destroyed (Mt 25:41; Rv 20:10).

SIN

The Greek word for sin (Gr., *harmartia*) means to “miss the mark.” Sin, therefore, is one missing the mark of perfection in order to be considered righteous before God. All have sinned, and thus, it is not possible for anyone to keep any law perfectly in order to stand justified before God.

A. Definition of sin:

1. Sin is breaking God’s law (1 Jn 3:4).
2. Sin is not doing biblical principles of good (Js 4:17).
3. Sin is doing that which is against one’s conscience (Rm 14:23).
4. Sin is doing unrighteousness (1 Jn 5:17).
5. Sin is not inherited from the parents (Ez 18:20).
6. Sin against the Holy Spirit is rejection of the gospel, and thus is unforgivable (Mt 12:31; Mk 3:29; Lk 12:10; Hb 6:4-8; 10:26-31; 1 Jn 5:16).

B. Things that cause sin:

1. One’s own heart (Mt 15:19).
2. The work of Satan (Jn 8:44; 1 Pt 5:8).
3. The lust of man (Js 1:13-15; 1 Jn 2:15,16).
4. Pride of life (1 Pt 5:6,7).
5. Love of the world (Js 4:4; 1 Jn 2:15).

C. Results of sin:

1. Destruction from presence of God (2 Th 1:7-9).
2. Separation from God (Is 59:1,2).
3. Spiritual death (Rm 6:23; Ep 2:1-3).
4. Eternal separation from Jesus (Mt 7:21-23).

D. Solution for sin:

1. Cleansing of Jesus' blood (Ep 1:3,7; 1 Jn 1:7-9).
2. Jesus' death makes forgiveness possible (Is 53; 1 Pt 2:24).
3. Sin can be forgiven (1 Jn 3:5,6).
4. One is baptized for remission of sins (At 2:38).
5. In baptism God washes away sin (At 22:16).

SINGING

The Greek word *psallo* refers to the use of the vocal cords in order to produce a melody in song. Singing is a medium by which the word of God is taught, as well as the means by which Christians edify one another. Worshipful singing originates from the heart.

A. The Christian and singing:

1. We should sing as Jesus sang (Mt 26:30; Mk 14:26).
2. We should sing everywhere as Paul and Silas sang in prison (At 16:25).
3. We should sing with understanding of what we sing (1 Co 14:15).
4. We should sing with melody in our hearts (Ep 5:19).
5. We should teach and admonish one another through songs (Cl 3:16).
6. We should sing with a merry heart (Js 5:13).
7. We should sing as the people of God (Hb 2:12).
8. We should praise God in singing (Rm 15:9).

STUDY

Bible study is the natural behavior of those who love God, and thus,

hunger and thirst after what He has revealed. True disciples are those who continually seek God's directions in the Bible in order to pattern their behavior after His word.

A. Correct attitudes toward Bible study:

1. Love truth of the gospel (Ps 119:97; 2 Th 2:10-12).
2. Have faith in God (Hb 11:6).
3. Be diligent intellectually (2 Tm 2:15; Ti 2:14).
4. Respect Bible as God's word (1 Th 2:13; 2 Tm 3:16,17; 1 Pt 1:20,21).
5. Expect to know the truth of the gospel (Jn 8:31; Ep 3:3-5).
6. Pray for wisdom in study (Js 1:5-8).

B. Correct motives for Bible study:

1. Motivated to know the truth of the gospel (Ps 23:2,3; Mt 5:6; Jn 7:17; 8:32).
2. Motivated to obey God (Jn 15:14; Js 1:22-25).
3. Motivated to know how to war against Satan (Ep 6:10-18; 2 Tm 2:14,15; 4:1-4).
4. Motivated to save one's self (Jn 6:63; 1 Tm 4:16; Js 1:21).
5. Motivated to teach (Hb 5:12; 2 Tm 2:15; 1 Pt 3:15).
6. Motivated by Paul's example (2 Tm 4:13).
7. Motivated to grow in knowledge (Cl 1:10; 1 Pt 3:18).
8. Motivated by thirst for righteousness (Mt 5:6; 1 Pt 2:2).
9. Give heed to reading God's word (1 Tm 4:13).

C. Correct reasons for Bible study:

1. To grow in faith (Rm 10:17; Hb 11:6).
2. To know God and Jesus (Jn 17:1-3; 1 Jn 2:2-4).
3. To know the way of salvation (Rm 1:16; 1 Co 15:1,2; Js 1:21).
4. To know the truth of the gospel (Jn 8:32; 17:17; 1 Pt 1:22,23).

5. To learn from the Old Testament (Rm 15:4).
6. To be admonished (1 Co 10:11).
7. To be considered noble by God (At 17:11).
8. To be approved by God (2 Tm 2:15).
9. To become furnished for good works (2 Tm 3:17).
10. To be instructed in righteousness (2 Tm 3:16).
11. To be wise unto salvation (2 Tm 3:15).

TEACHING

The more one studies the word of God, the more he is motivated to share with others what he has learned. Preaching is a ministry of the believers to unbelievers in reference to the gospel, whereas teaching is a ministry of the believers with believers.

A. Those who are to teach:

1. Preachers (At 14:21; 1 Tm 6:2; 2 Tm 2:2,24-26).
2. Elders (1 Tm 3:2).
3. All Christians (Mt 28:19,20; At 5:42; 20:20; Hb 5:12).
4. Experienced Christian women (Ti 2:3,4).
5. Parents (Dt 6:4-9; 11:18-20).

B. When and where to teach:

1. Every day (Lk 9:23; At 5:42).
2. Everywhere (At 5:42).
3. In religious centers (Mt 26:55; At 17:1-3; 18:4).
4. In educational centers (At 17:16ff).
5. In schools (At 19:8-10).

C. What to teach:

1. The truth of the gospel (Rm 1:13-16; 2 Tm 2:2; Hb 8:11,12).
2. The teachings of Jesus (Mt 28:20).
3. Good things (Ti 2:3).
4. Christian attitudes and behavior (1 Tm 4:6-11; Ti 2:4,5).

5. The word of God (Ps 119:12,26,66; 2 Jn 9).
6. The apostles' examples (2 Th 2:15; 1 Tm 1:3).
7. The Old Testament (Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11).

D. The teacher:

1. Must take heed to self (1 Tm 4:16).
2. Must discipline self (1 Co 9:27).
3. Must be knowledgeable of the Bible (1 Tm 1:7).
4. Must realize great responsibility (Js 3:1).

TEMPTATION

Temptation arises within ourselves when we are enticed to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life in a way that is contrary to the will of God. Therefore, Christians must exercise self-control in all areas of speech and behavior in order that they not be led astray by yielding to temptation.

A. How man is tempted:

1. By the work of Satan (Mt 4:3; 6:13; Lk 22:31,32; 1 Co 7:5; 1 Th 3:5).
2. By yielding to our lusts (Js 1:14; 2 Pt 2:18).
3. By the influence of the world (1 Jn 2:15-17).
4. By the riches of the world (Mt 13:22; 1 Tm 6:9).

B. Important facts about temptation:

1. God does not tempt man (Js 1:13).
2. Satan will flee when resisted (Js 4:7).
3. God provides a way of escape from temptation (1 Co 10:13; Js 1:12).
4. Pray for strength (Mt 6:13; 26:41; Mk 14:38; Lk 22:46).
5. Overcoming temptation produces growth (Js 1:2-4,12; 1 Pt 1:5,6).
6. God delivers the tested (2 Pt 2:9; Rv 3:10).
7. The weak may fall (Lk 8:13).

8. Jesus was tempted as we are (Mt 4:1ff; Hb 2:18; 4:15).
9. Jesus aids the tempted (Hb 2:18).

TEN COMMANDMENTS

Except for the fourth commandment concerning the Sabbath, that was a special sign of the covenant between God and the nation of Israel, the principles of the other nine commandments in Ex 20 are found in the New Testament. This is true because the moral teachings of the commandments have always been principles of God by which people should live.

A. Principles of the commandments for Christians under the new covenant:

1. Do not worship other gods (Mt 4:10; At 14:15; 17:24-28; 1 Co 8:5,6; Rv 22:9).
2. Do not worship idols (At 14:15; 15:20; 17:29; Rm 1:20-24; 1 Co 8:4-6; 10:7; 1 Jn 5:21).
3. Do not swear (Mt 5:34; 12:36; Ep 4:29; Cl 3:8; Js 5:12).
4. Do not disobey parents (Ep 6:1-3; Cl 3:20; 1 Tm 5:8).
5. Do not hate (Mt 5:21,22,38,39; Rm 13:9; 1 Pt 4:15; 1 Jn 3:15).
6. Do not lust (Mt 5:27,28; 19:8,9; 1 Co 6:9; Gl 5:19).
7. Do not steal (1 Co 6:10; Ep 4:28; 2 Th 3:10-12; 1 Pt 4:15).
8. Do not lie (Ep 4:24; Cl 3:9; Rv 21:8; 22:15).
9. Do not covet (Lk 12:15; 1 Co 5:11; Ep 5:3; Cl 3:5).

TONGUE

The manner by which one speaks, and the content of what he says, is the manifestation of what one thinks and feels. Christians seek to control the use of their speech in their relationships with others. For this reason, Christians must control what they say in their relationships with others.

A. Nature of the tongue:

1. Causes great problems (Js 3:5).
2. Causes sin (Ps 39:1).

3. Causes trouble (Pv 21:6).
4. Cannot be totally controlled (Js 3:6).
5. Death and life are in its power (Pv 18:21).

B. Evils of the uncontrolled tongue:

1. Backbiting and gossip (Pv 25:23; 1 Tm 5:13).
2. Hypocrisy (Pv 22:23; 1 Tm 3:8).
3. Hastiness (Pv 29:20; Js 1:19).
4. Falsehoods (Ps 120:3; Pv 21:6).
5. Perverseness (Pv 17:20).
6. Deceit (Pv 6:24; 12:19; Mc 6:12; Rm 3:13).
7. Vain religion (Js 1:26).

C. Instructions concerning the tongue:

1. Be slow to speak (Js 1:19).
2. Speak with graciousness (Ec 10:12).
3. Speak with grace seasoned with salt (Cl 4:6).
4. Control how much one speaks (Ps 34:13; Js 1:26).
5. Speak with wisdom (Ps 37:30; Js 3:13-18).
6. Speak with kindness (Pv 31:26).
7. Be an example in speech (1 Tm 4:12).

TONGUES (Languages)

The Greek word that is often translated "tongues" (*glossa*) is better translated "languages." Speaking in a language meant that the speaker was saying words that were different than his first language. In the New Testament, speaking in languages meant that one spoke in a language by the aid of the Holy Spirit that he had never before learned or spoken. The miraculous speaking in languages was for the benefit of rapidly preaching the gospel to every ethnic group of the world.

A. The Christian and languages:

1. The apostles spoke in different languages on Pentecost by the aid of the Holy Spirit (At 2:1-4,6-8,11).

2. The household of Cornelius spoke in different languages to validate their acceptance by God (At 10:44-46; 11:15-18).
3. The Ephesians spoke in other languages (At 19:1-6).
4. The Corinthians misused the gift of languages (1 Co 12; 14).
5. Speaking in inspired languages ceased with the revelation of the complete word of God (1 Co 13:8-10).

THOUSAND-YEAR REIGN

Revelation was written with many symbols, or figures of speech (Rv 1:1). By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, John prophesied that what he said would "shortly come to pass" in the lifetime of the first readers of Revelation (Rv 1:1; 22:6), and thus, these things came to pass soon after he wrote them. Revelation 20 below is a principle revelation concerning the immediate future of the recipients of the book:

A. The Christian and the "thousand years":

1. Messenger comes with authority to bind Satan (vs 1).
2. Satan is bound by the gospel (vs 2; see Jn 12:31; Lk 10:17-19; 1 Co 15:20-22; Ep 1:20-23; Cl 2:15; Hb 2:14,15).
3. Disciples are guarded against Satan by power of the gospel (vs 3; see Rm 1:16; 1 Co 10:13; 1 Pt 5:8).
4. Saints reign in life with the power of the gospel (vs 4; see Mt 19:28; Rm 5:17; 2 Tm 2:11,12).
5. First resurrection is from waters of baptism (vs 5; see Jn 5:24-29; Rm 6:3-6; Ep 2:5,6; Cl 2:12,13).
6. Termination of those now dead in sin (vs 6; see Rv 2:11; 20:14; 21:8).
7. Limited release of Satan (vss 7,8).
8. Deliverance of the church (vs 9; Rv 2:10).
9. Judgment and condemnation of Satan (vs 10; see Mt 25:41).
10. Revelation of the Great White Throne (vs 11; see Jn

- 5:22; 12:48; At 17:31; 2 Co 5:10; 2 Tm 4:1; Rv 6:14; 16:20).
11. Judgment of the righteous (vs 12; see Rv 14:13).
 12. Judgment of the wicked (vs 13; see 2 Th 1:7-9).
 13. The end of physical death (vs 14; see 1 Co 15:26-28).
 14. Destiny of the wicked (vs 15; see Mt 7:23; 25:41).

UNITY

Unity of the body of Christ is a fundamental teaching that is manifested in the oneness of believers in their common covenant relationship with God. Unity is inherent in the gospel, and thus all those who have obeyed the gospel throughout the world are one united body in Christ.

A. Unity is commanded:

1. Be of the same mind (Rom 15:5,6; 1 Co 1:10; 2 Co 13:11).
2. Speak the same thing (1 Co 1:10).
3. Be united on fundamental teachings (Ep 4:4-6).
4. Jesus prayed for unity (Jn 17:20-23).
5. The body is to be united (1 Co 12:13-25).
6. Maintain oneness of the faith (Ep 4:13-16).
7. Be united in apostles' teaching (At 2:41-47).
8. Be of one mind (Ph 2:2; 3:16).
9. Walk by the same rule (Ph 3:16,17).
10. Endeavor to keep unity of the faith (Ep 4:3).
11. Strive together for unity of the faith (Ph 1:27).
12. It is good to dwell in unity (Ps 133:1).

B. Causes for disunity:

1. False teachers (Ti 3:10; 2 Jn 9-11).
2. Unnecessary arguments over opinions (1 Tm 1:4; 6:4; 2 Tm 2:16,23).
3. Argumentative attitudes (2 Tm 2:14).
4. Misapplying the Scriptures (2 Pt 3:16).
5. Carnal thinking (1 Co 3:3).

6. Binding traditions and opinions (Gl 1:6-9; 4:17).
7. Compelling others to submit to legalistic doctrine (Gl 6:12).

WORSHIP

Worship is a daily reverential outpouring of one's heart in response to the gospel of Jesus. Worship is not confined to a specific location, but comes forth from the heart of those who respond to the daily presence of God in their lives. Worship is not acted out through meritorious rituals and ceremonies, but is a natural expression of thanksgiving for the gospel.

A. Worship is reverential homage of God:

1. Worship God (Mt 4:10; Jn 4:21-24; 1 Co 14:25; Rv 4:10; 7:11; 11:16; 19:10; 22:9).
2. Worship of Jesus while on earth (Mt 2:2-11; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; Jn 9:38; Hb 1:6).

B. Types of worship:

1. Ignorant worship (At 17:23).
2. Vain worship (Mt 15:8,9; Mk 7:1-9).
3. Man-made worship (Cl 2:23).
4. True worship in spirit (Jn 4:23,24; Ph 3:3).

C. The Christian's worship:

1. God seeks worshipers (Jn 4:23).
2. Worship in spirit and truth (Jn 4:24).
3. Worship is not confined to a location (Jn 4:21).
4. Worship is not legally performed through man-made rituals and ceremonies (At 17:24,25).
5. Worship can take place at any time and place (Mt 2:2,11; 8:2; 9:18; 15:25; 28:9; Mk 15:19; At 8:27).
6. Worship as a living sacrifice (Rm 12:1).

YOUTH

It is the purpose of the home to maintain the principles and attitudes that

must be instilled within the thinking and hearts of young people. The home is the environment wherein young people are trained for adulthood and to be a benefit to society. The children should submit to the direction of the parents in order that they reflect the spirit of Jesus in the world.

A. The young should manifest the following:

1. Abstain from evil (1 Th 5:22).
2. Be mature in mind (Ti 2:6).
3. Flee lusts of the flesh (2 Tm 2:22).
4. Keep law of God (Pv 7:1ff; 28:7).
5. Remember God (Ec 12:1).
6. Be an example (1 Tm 4:12).
7. Be enthusiastic (1 Sm 17:26-50).
8. Listen to the word of God (Ps 119:9).
9. Praise God (Ps 148:12).
10. Listen to parents (Pv 10:1; 13:1; 17:25).
11. Be obedient to parents' instructions (Ep 6:1).
12. Honor parents (Ep 6:2).

B. The young should not do the following:

1. Have evil companions (1 Co 15:33).
2. Despise father's instructions (Pv 15:5).
3. Allow others to despise them (1 Tm 4:12).
4. Be self-willed (Lk 15:11-21).
5. Be disobedient to parents (Ep 6:1).

CONCORDANCE OF KEY SUBJECTS

A

Abide: Ps 15:1; 91:1; Jn 8:31; 14:16; 15:4,7,9; 1 Co 13:13; 1 Pt 1:23; 1 Jn 2:17; 3:17; 4:13

Abomination: Pv 6:16; Ez 8:6; Dn 12:11; Mt 24:15; Rv 17:4,5

Admonition: Rm 15:14; 1 Co 10:11; Ep 6:4

Adultery: Ex 20:14; Jb 24:15; Mt 5:28-32; Mk 10:11; Jn 8:3; 1 Co 6:9; Hb 13:4; Rv 2:22

Adversity: Pv 17:17; Is 30:20

Affliction: Jb 5:17; 34:28; Ps 119:50,67; Is 53:4,7; 63:9; Jr 16:19; 2 Co 4:17; Ph 1:16; 1 Ti 5:10; Rm 12:12

Affraid: Gn 3:10; 14:1; 26:24; Lv 26:6; Ps 18:4; 56:3; Is 17:2; Mt 14:27; Rm 13:4; 1 Pt 3:6

Alive: Dt 32:39; Ps 55:15; At 1:3; 1 Co 15:22; Ep 2:5; Cl 2:13; 1 Th 4:15; 1 Pt 3:18; Rv 1:18; 19:20

Angels: Jb 4:18; Ps 8:5; 91:11; Mt 4:6; 24:36; 25:31; 26:53; Jn 5:4; 20:12; At 5:19; 7:35; 27:23; 2 Co 11:14; Cl 2:18; Hb 1:4; 13:2; 1 Pt 1:12; 2 Pt 2:4; Jd 6; Rv 5:2

Anger: Gn 4:6; 18:30; Ps 2:12; 30:4,5; 103:8,9; Pv 15:1; 20:2; 29:22; Ec 7:9; Ez 7:3; Mt 5:22; Mk 3:5; Ep 4:26,31

Anoint: 1 Sm 16:3; 2 Sm 1:14; Ps 23:5; Mk 14:8; Lk 4:18; Js 5:14; 1 Jn 2:20; Rv 3:18

Antichrist: 1 Jn 2:18; 4:3; 2 Jn 7

Apostle: Mt 10:2; Lk 6:13; Rm 1:1; 1 Co 15:9; 2 Co 12:12; Gl 1:19; Ep 4:11; 1 Tm 2:7; Hb 3:1; Rv 2:2

Ascend: Ps 24:3; 139:8; Is 14:13; Jn 6:62; Ep 4:8; Rv 11:12

Ashamed: Ps 25:2; Jr 17:13; Mk 8:38; Rm 1:16; Ph 1:20; Hb 11:16; 1 Pt 3:16; 4:16; 1 Jn 2:28

Assurance: Cl 2:2; 1 Th 1:5; Hb 6:11; 10:22

Atonement: Ex 30:10; Lv 17:11; 23:28; Ez 16:63

Authority: Mt 7:29; 28:18; Lk 4:6; Jn 5:27; 17:2; 1 Co 11:10; 1 Tm 2:2; Ti 2:15; Jd 8

B

Backsliding: Pv 14:14; Mt 24:12; Hb 10:38

Baptism (immersion): Mt 3:11; 20:22; 21:25; Mk 16:16; Lk 12:50; Jn 4:1; At 2:38; 16:33; 18:8; 22:16; Rm 6:4; 1 Co 12:13; Gl 3:27; Ep 4:5; Cl 2:12; Hb 6:2; 1 Pt 3:21

Bear: Ps 91:12; Is 53:11; Zc 6:13; Mt 7:18; 17:17; Jn 15:2; Gl 6:2,17; Hb 9:28

Beginning: Gn 1:1; Jn 1:1; 2:11; 8:44; 15:27; Hb 7:3; Rv 3:14; 21:6

Believe: 2 Ch 20:20; Mk 9:24; 16:14-16; Lk 8:13; 24:25; Jn 1:12; 5:38; 6:30; 11:42; 20:31; Rm 10:9,14; 1 Co 7:12; 2 Co 4:13; Gl 3:22; Ph 1:29; Hb 11:6; Js 2:19; 1 Jn 4:1

Blameless: Ps 51:4; Cl 1:22; 1 Th 3:13; 5:23; 2 Pt 3:14

Blaspheme: Mt 12:31; 26:65; 27:39; Lk 23:39; Rm 2:24; 1 Tm 1:20; 6:1; 2 Tm 3:2; 1 Pt 4:14; Rv 13:5,6; 17:3

Blessed: Gn 1:22; 12:3; Ps 1:1; 32:2; 33:12; Pv 31:28; Mt 5:3,11; 21:9; 25:34; Lk 1:28; Jn 20:29; At 20:35; Ep 1:3; Rv 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 20:6; 22:7,14

Blood: Gn 9:6; Lv 14:11; Is 1:15; Mt 26:28; 27:8,25; Lk 22:20; Jn 1:13; 6:54; At 20:28; Rm 3:25; 5:9; Ep 2:13; 6:12; Cl 1:20; Hb 9:20,22; 10:19; 1 Pt 1:2,19; 1 Jn 1:7 Rv 1:5

Body: Mt 6:22; 10:28; 26:26; Jn 2:21; Rm 7:24; 8:23; 12:4; 1 Co 9:27; 11:24; 12:13,27; 13:3; 15:44; Cl 1:22; 1 Pt 2:24

Bondage: Ex 13:14; Rm 8:15; Gl 2:4; 4:24; 5:1; Hb 2:15; 2 Pt 2:19

Born: Jb 5:7; 14:1; Ec 3:2; Is 9:6; Mt 1:16; Lk 2:11; Jn 3:3,6; 18:37; 1 Pt 1:23; 1 Jn 4:7; 5:1,18

- Branch:** Is 11:1; Jr 23:5; 33:15; Zc 3:8; 6:12; Jn 15:2
- Brethren:** Mt 23:8; 25:40; Rm 8:29; 1 Co 8:12; 15:6; 2 Co 11:26; Hb 2:17; 1 Pt 1:22; 1 Jn 3:14-16; Rv 22:9
- Bridegroom:** Is 62:5; Mt 9:15; 25:1; Mk 2:19
- Brother:** Gn 4:9; Pv 18:19; Mt 10:21; 18:21; Jn 11:23; 1 Co 6:6; 1 Jn 3:15
- Burden:** 2 Ch 6:29; Ps 55:22; Mt 11:30; 23:4; Gl 6:2; 1 Th 2:9; Rv 2:24
- C**
- Chasten:** Jb 5:17; 34:31; Ps 69:10; 118:18; Pv 19:18; Is 53:5; Hb 12:7-10; Rv 3:19
- Children:** Ps 127:3; Pv 31:28; Mt 10:21; 18:3; 19:14; Jn 1:12; 8:39; Rm 8:16; Ep 2:3; Ph 2:15; 1 Jn 3:2
- Christ:** Mt 1:1,16; 16:16; 26:63; Lk 2:11; Rm 8:34; 15:3; 1 Co 1:13; Gl 2:17,20; Ep 3:17; 5:14,23; Ph 1:21; 2:11; Cl 1:27; 3:4,11; 1 Tm 2:5; Hb 13:8; 1 Jn 1:7; 5:1; Rv 12:10; 20:4
- Christian:** At 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pt 4:16
- Church:** Mt 16:18; Ep 5:25,29; Cl 1:24; Hb 12:23; Rv 1:4,20; 2:1; 22:16
- Circumcision:** Gn 10:16; 17:10; Dt 30:6; Jr 4:4; At 15:5; Rm 2:29; 3:30; 1 Co 7:19; Gl 2:5-7; 5:2-6; Cl 2:11
- Cleanse:** Ps 19:12; 51:2; 119:9; Mt 10:8; Ep 5:26
- Comfort:** Ps 23:4; Is 40:1; 51:3; 61:1,2; Lm 1:2; Jn 14:1; 2 Co 1:3,5; 7:6; Ph 2:1; 1 Th 5:11
- Coming:** Is 62:11; Mt 1:1; 3:11; 11:3; 24:3,48; Mk 13:26; Lk 3:16; 1 Co 15:23; 2 Pt 1:16; 3:4; Rv 22:7
- Commandment:** Ex 34:28; Ps 19:8; 119:47,86,96; Mt 15:9; 22:36-40; Jn 13:34; 14:21,31; Rm 7:9; Ep 6:2; Cl 2:22; 1 Jn 2:7; 3:23,24; 2 Jn 4
- Compassion:** Ps 78:38; 86:15; Lm 3:32; Mt 9:36; Rm 9:15; Hb 5:2; Js 5:11; Jd 22
- Condemnation:** Mt 23:14,34; Mk 3:29; Jn 3:17-19; 5:29; 8:11; Rm 2:1; 3:8; 8:1; 1 Tm 5:12; 1 Jn 3:21; Jd 4
- Confession:** Ps 32:5; Jn 9:22; Rm 10:9,10; 14:11; Hb 3:1; 4:14; 5:2; Js 5:16; 1 Jn 1:9; 4:15; Jd 22; Rv 3:5
- Conscience:** Jn 8:9; At 24:16; Rm 9:1; 13:5; 1 Co 10:25; 1 Tm 3:9; 4:2; Hb 9:14; 1 Pt 3:16
- Contentment:** Ph 4:11; Hb 13:5
- Corruption:** Gn 6:12; Ps 14:3; Rm 8:21; 1 Co 15:42,50; 2 Co 7:2; 11:3; Gl 6:8; 2 Tm 3:8; Js 5:2; Jd 10; Rv 19:2
- Counsel:** Jb 12:13; 38:2; Ps 1:1; 55:14; Pv 11:14; 20:5; Jn 12:10; Ep 1:11; Hb 6:17; Rv 3:18
- Courage:** Dt 31:6; Ja 1:9; Dn 3:16,17; At 28:15; Ph 1:28
- Covenant:** Gn 6:18; 15:18; Ex 31:16; 1 Ch 16:15; Jb 31:1; Ps 25:14; 132:12; Jr 31:31; Mt 3:1; Lk 22:20; Gl 3:17; Hb 8:6,13; 12:24; 13:20
- Covetousness:** Pv 28:16; Lk 12:15; Rm 7:7; Ep 5:3; Hb 13:5
- Created:** Gn 1:27; Ps 104:30; Ec 12:1; Is 40:26; Mt 2:10; 1 Co 11:9; Ep 2:10; 3:9; 4:24; Cl 1:16; Rv 4:11
- Cross:** Mt 10:38; 27:32,40; Mk 15:13; Jn 19:10; 1 Co 1:17; Gl 6:12-14; Ep 2:16; Ph 3:18; Hb 12:2
- Crown:** Ps 65:11; Is 28:1; Lm 5:16; Mt 27:29; 1 Co 9:25; Ph 4:1; 2 Tm 4:8; Rv 3:11; 14:14
- Crucified:** Mt 27:22; Lk 23:33; At 2:23; Rm 6:6; 1 Co 1:13; 2:2,8; 2 Co 13:4; Gl 2:20
- D**
- Darkness:** Ps 107:10; 139:12; Is 9:2; Mt 6:23; 8:12; Lk 22:53; Jn 3:19; 12:35; Ep 5:8; 6:12; Cl 1:13; Hb 12:18; 1 Pt 2:9; 2 Pt 2:17; 1 Jn 1:5; 2:8; Jd 13
- Dead:** Ps 88:10; Ec 9:5; Mt 8:22; 11:5; 22:32; Lk 15:24; Jn 5:25; Rm 6:4,11; 7:8; 14:9; 1 Co 15:12,29; Ep 2:1; Js 2:26
- Death:** Jb 10:21; Ps 13:3; 23:4; Pv 8:36; Is 25:8; Ez 18:32; Rm 5:14,21; 6:9,23; 7:5; 1 Co 11:26; 15:21,54-56; 2 Co 2:16; Ph 2:8; Hb 2:9,14; 1 Pt 3:18; 1 Jn 5:16; Rv 2:10
- Deceive:** Mt 24:11,24; Rm 7:11; 1 Co 3:18; 2 Co 11:3; Ep 4:14; 5:6; 1 Tm

2:14; 2 Tm 3:13
Deliverance: Jb 5:19; Ps 22:8; 91:15; Pv 2:16; 21:31; Dn 3:17; 6:22; Mt 27:43; 2 Ti 4:18; Hb 11:35; 2 Pt 2:9

Demons: Dt 32:17; Lk 9:1; 10:17; 1 Co 10:21; Js 2:19; Rv 18:2

Desolate: Is 62:4; Jr 4:7; Mt 23:38; 24:15; Lk 21:20; Rv 18:19

Despise: Lv 26:15; 1 Sm 2:30; Pv 13:13; 14:21; 15:20; 23:22; MI 1:6; Mt 6:24; Rm 2:4; 1 Co 11:22

Destroy: Gn 18:23; Ps 101:8; 145:20; Is 11:9; Mt 5:17; 10:28; Mk 14:58; Lk 6:9; 9:56; 1 Co 1:19; Js 4:12

Destruction: Ps 103:4; Pv 16:18; Is 19:18; Rm 9:22; Ph 3:19; 1 Th 5:3; 2 Th 1:9; 1 Tm 6:9; 2 Pt 3:16

Devil: Mt 4:1; 25:41; Lk 8:12; Jn 6:70; 8:44; 13:2; Ep 4:27; 6:11; 2 Tm 2:26; Js 4:7; 1 Jn 3:8; Jd 9; Rv 2:10

Disciple: Mt 9:14; 10:24,42; 15:2; Lk 14:26; Jn 21:7; At 11:26

Disobedient: Rm 10:21; Ti 3:3; 1 Pt 2:7; 3:20

Division: Rm 16:17; 1 Co 1:10; 11:18; Ti 3:10; Jd 19

Doubt: Mt 14:31; Mk 4:40; Lk 24:38

Drunkennes: Gn 9:21; Is 24:20; Jr 23:9; Ez 23:33; Jn 2:10; At 2:15; Rm 13:13; 1 Co 5:11; 11:21; Rv 17:6

E

Edification: Rm 15:2; 1 Co 8:1; 10:23; 14:3,4; 1 Tm 1:4

Elders: Lk 9:22; At 14:23; 20:17; 1 Tm 5:17; Ti 1:5; Hb 11:2; Js 5:14

Elect: 1 Pt 1:2; 2:6; 2 Pt 1:10

Enemy: Ps 23:5; Pv 25:21; Mt 5:43,44; Rm 5:10; 1 Co 15:25,26; Gl 4:16; 2 Th 3:15; Hb 10:13; Js 4:4

Envy: Jb 5:2; Pv 14:30; 23:17; Rm 1:29; 13:13; 1 Co 13:4; Gl 5:21; Ti 3:3

Eternal: Mt 19:16; Mk 10:30; Jn 3:15; 10:28; 17:2,3; Rm 2:7; 2 Co 4:17; 1 Tm 6:12; Ti 1:2; 1 Jn 3:15; 5:11,13; Jd 21

Evil: Gn 2:9; 3:5; 6:5; Ps 23:4; 52:3; Pv 14:19; 15:3; Jr 29:11; Am 5:14; Mt 6:13; 12:34; Jn 3:20; Rm 12:17; 1 Co 13:5

Example: Mt 1:19; Jn 13:15; 1 Co 10:11;

Ph 3:17; 1 Th 1:7; 2 Th 3:9; 1 Tm 4:12; 1 Pt 2:21; 5:3; Jd 7

Exhortation: At 13:15; Rm 12:8; 2 Th 3:12; 1 Tm 5:1; Ti 1:9; 2:15; Hb 3:13

F

Faith: Mt 6:30; 8:10; Lk 17:5; 18:8; At 26:18; Rm 1:17; 3:28; 4:5; 10:17; 11:20; 2 Co 13:5; Gl 2:20; 3:7,25; 6:10; Ep 2:8; 4:5; 6:16; 1 Th 1:3; Hb 11:1,6; Js 2:14-26; 2 Pt 1:5

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SPECIAL OCCASIONS

MARRIAGE CEREMONY AND VOWS

The following sermon and wedding ceremony is an example for joining two together in marriage. Both the sermon and vows should be adapted for the particular culture or occasion of the two who are joining themselves together in marriage.

A. Lesson before the vows:

1. Marriage is ...

- a. ... God's institution of one man for one woman for life (Gn 2:18-24; Mt 19:6).
- b. ... God's order in headship and submission (1 Co 11:3; Ep 5:22,23).
- c. ... God's direction in marriage relationships (Ep 5:21-33; Cl 3:18,19).
- d. ... God's blessing in sexual relationships between a man and woman (1 Co 7:1-5).

2. Marriage fulfills ...

- a. ... legal requirements of civil law.
- b. ... divine requirements of an agreed upon covenant between a man and woman.

B. Statements of commitment to the marriage covenant:

1. (Director states to the groom.)

“ _____ (man’s name), will you have this woman to be your wedded wife, to live together after God’s ordinance of marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honor and keep her in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, keep yourself only for her as long as you both shall live?”

2. (Director states to the bride.)

“ _____ (bride’s name), will you have this man to be your wedded husband, to live together after God’s ordinance of marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honor and keep him in sickness and in health; and forsaking all others, keep yourself only for him as long as you both shall live?”

C. Declaration of the marriage covenant with the giving of a ring or other symbol:

1. (Groom repeats after the director)

“I _____ (groom states his name) take you, _____ (name of bride), to be my wedded wife in the Lord. In giving this ring as a token of remembrance, I establish a covenant of marriage with you, in the presence of our Savior. I promise to love you as Christ loved the church. I promise to maintain the divine order of spiritual headship and leadership in our family. I promise to be your provider and protector for the remainder of your life.”

2. (Bride repeats after the director.)

"I _____ (bride states her name) take you _____ (name of groom), to be my wedded husband in the Lord. In giving this ring as a token of remembrance, I establish a covenant of marriage with you, in the presence of our Savior. I promise to love you by being a devoted wife. I promise to maintain the divine order of marriage by being a keeper of the home. I promise to be a godly helper for you for the remainder of your life."

TEXT FOR FUNERAL SERMONS

(The following biblical texts are suitable scriptures to be read and discussed at funerals.)

- A. **Death of a child** (Gn 22:7-14; 2 Sm 12:15-23; Is 40:9-11; Jr 31:15-17; Mt 18:1-6,10-14; Mk 10:13-16).
- B. **Death of a young person** (Ps 103:15-19; Ec 12:1; Ez 16:60; Mt 25:1-13; Mk 5:22,23,35-43; Lk 7:11-15; 18:18-30; Jn 11:16-45; 14:1-3).
- C. **Death of middle aged person** (Jb 14; Ps 39:4,5; 49:6-20; 103:15,16; Js 4:13-15).
- D. **Death of an older person** (Jb 5:17-27; Ps 23; 39; 71:7-21; 73:24-26; 90; Ec 12; Rm 8:35-39; 2 Tm 4:6-8).

E. General subjects for funerals:

- 1. **Life is frail** (Jb 7:9,10; 14:1,2; 30:23; Ps 89:47,48; 90:3-6; Ec 8:8; 9:12; 2 Co 5:10; Hb 9:27; Js 4:13-15).
- 2. **Comfort in death** (Is 40:25-31; Mt 5:4; Jn 14:1-3; 2 Co 1:3,4; 4:8-18; 12:7-10; 1 Th 4:13-18; 5:9-11; Hb 12:5-11; 1 Pt 1:22-25).
- 3. **Immortality** (Jb 19:25-27; 2 Co 5:1-10; 1 Th 4:13-18; 1 Tm 6:7).
- 4. **Hope in death** (Jn 10:1-16; Rm 8:18-39; 2 Tm 4:6-8; Hb 12:18-24; 1 Pt 1:13-21).
- 5. **Resurrection from the dead** (Mt 28:1-10; Jn 5:25-29; 6:40,51; 11:25,26; 1 Co 15:12-28, 35-58; Rv 1:17,18; 14:13).
- 6. **Glory for the righteous** (Rm 8:18; Rv 7:9-17; 21:1-7,22-27; see "Heaven" in Concordance).


Appendix 1

SHARING THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL

When one obeys the gospel, then he or she has assumed the responsibility to share the gospel with others. The excitement of the first century disciples in their response to the gospel moved them to go into all the world with a message that God had visited this world through the incarnation of His Son. The following series of charts are given in order to provide a suggested presentation of organized thoughts that Christians can use to share with others their obedience to the truth of the gospel. Whether personally, or publicly, the thoughts of each chart that are presented in this series must be clearly understood by everyone who would seek to either obey or share the gospel with others.*

Chart 1

• **Creation:** God, as our Creator, and the Creator of all things, inherently has the authority and the right to determine how we are to live with one another. Since He is our Creator, then He has the right to give laws, and then hold us accountable for obedience to those laws. If one is not willing to submit to the will of God, then he will not



Since God is Our Creator, ...

...does He have the authority to give laws to man?

YES NO
(READ John 12:48)

... does He have authority to hold us accountable to His laws?

YES NO
(READ 2 Corinthians 5:10)

* The purpose of the charts is to give a visual illustration of the gospel journey of Jesus. The charts are simple, and thus, they can be drawn on a piece of paper and left with the one with whom one is studying the gospel.

seek to discover the gospel that has now been revealed. He will not seek to believe the truth of this gospel, and thus, he will not search for that which will bring eternal life.

• **Incarnation:** In order for God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to link with those whom They created in the beginning, God the Son had to come into this world on behalf of those who were created. Since God the Son was the Creator of mankind, then only He could come into this world in order to make an eternal offering on our behalf to bring His created beings into eternity, wherein He, the Father and Holy Spirit have dwelt for eternity.

CREATION:

1. Before coming into this world, Jesus was one with the eternal Godhead (Gn 1:26; Cl 1:19).
2. God the Son was the Creator of all things (Ep 3:9; Cl 1:16,17; Hb 1:10; Rv 3:14; see Jn 17:5).
3. Nothing was created outside the creative work of the Son of God (Jn 1:1-3).

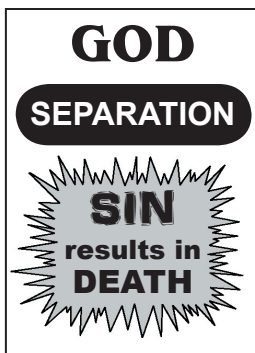
INCARNATION:

1. The Son of God first existed in the form of God (Ph 2:6).
2. The Son of God was as God before the creation (Jn 1:1).
3. The Son of God had a body prepared for Him in which He would dwell on earth (Hb 10:5).
4. The Son of God humbled Himself to become as a man (Ph 2:8).
5. The Son of God was incarnate in the flesh of man (Jn 1:14).
6. The Son of God came in the flesh because He loved those whom He had created (Jn 3:16; Rm 5:8).

Chart 2

Throughout the existence of the world, God has always given laws for all His creation to obey. However, it is not possible for any person to keep any system of law perfectly in order that one can save himself. We all sin, and thus, without a solution for our problem of sin, we are separated from God. When one sins, he cannot do good works in order to atone for his sins. He cannot do good works simply because it is not possible for one to earn eternal life. We cannot put God in our debt through our good works (Rm 4:4). Therefore, we are hopelessly lost because we

cannot meritoriously save ourselves through perfect law-keeping or doing good works to atone for our sins. Only God can deliver us from our problem of sin, for it is against God that we sin. Those who are honest with themselves recognize their predicament in sin. They will thus be driven to find a solution for their sin. Their faith will drive them to look for God's solution for sin. When one realizes that he cannot save himself from his own sin, then he seeks through faith God's solution for sin.



1. Every person who has lived on earth has sinned against God (Rm 3:9,10,23).
2. The result of all sin is that sin separates one from God (Is 59:1,2).
3. When one is separated from God, this separation will result in eternal destruction, and thus one is spiritually dead in reference to having any spiritual relationship with God (Rm 6:23).

Chart 3

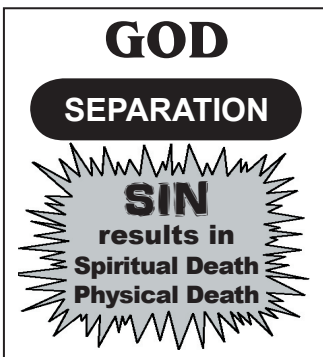
The result of separation from God is death, both spiritual and physical. Once a person comes to the age at which he is accountable for his own sins, then he is separated from God because of sin.

- **Spiritual death** is the result of every person on earth being separated from God because of his own sins. When Adam sinned against God, he had to suffer the guilt of his own sin. In like manner, when a person personally sins against God, he must bear the guilt of his own sin. Suffering the guilt of one's own sins means that one must give account of his sins before God. Until one finds a solution for his sins, he is walking in condemnation.

- **Physical death** is the consequence of Adam's sin. He was

driven from the Tree of Life, and subsequently, all humanity was separated from the Tree of Life because we are descendants from Adam. As a result of our separation from the Tree of Life, all of us must physically die.

• **GOOD NEWS** for death problems! Every person needs good news (the gospel) for his two greatest problems of spiritual and physical death. Because of



His love for all humanity, God sent His Son into the world with good news for our spiritual and physical death problems. Since we could not save ourselves through perfect law-keeping, or meritorious good works, then the good news is that the grace of God was manifested through the atoning sacrifice of the incarnate Son of God, Jesus, on the cross.

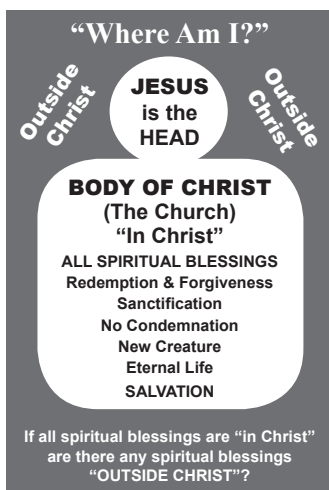
1. All humanity was separated from the Tree of Life when Adam was driven out of the garden of Eden (Gn 3:22-24).
2. Because every person cannot eat of the Tree of Life, then all people must physically die (1 Co 15:20-22; Hb 9:27).
3. As Adam suffered from the spiritual consequences of his own sin, so also must every person, for every person sins (Rm 5:12).
4. Because of His love for us, the Son of God came into the world in order to redeem us from our state of condemnation in sin (Is 53:11; Rm 5:15; Ti 2:11).
5. Because of His desire that we dwell with Him in eternity, Jesus will come again in order to redeem our bodies from the grave (Jn 5:28,29; 11:35; 1 Co 15:35-58; 1 Th 4:13-18).

Chart 4

The phrase “in Christ” refers to a relationship that one has with God through the incarnate Son of God. If one is not “in Christ,” then there is no eternal existence outside this realm of dwelling. When one is “in Christ,” therefore, he is in a special covenant

relationship with God that has eternal blessings. If one is not "in Christ," then he is "outside Christ." He is outside a covenant relationship with God, which position also has eternal consequences. All spiritual blessings in reference to our salvation are the blessings that result from one coming into a covenant relationship with God. It is for this reason that everyone who would exist with God for eternity must come into Christ where there is salvation in a relationship God. God sent His Son into this world in order to offer to everyone an opportunity to come into an eternal covenant relationship with Him.

When we speak of the truth of the gospel, therefore, we are referring to what God did through His Son in order to offer to all people the opportunity to spend eternity with Him "in Christ."



1. If one is baptized into Christ, then he is baptized into the one body of Christ (1 Co 12:13).
2. If one receives all spiritual blessings in Christ, then there are no spiritual blessings for those who are outside Christ (Ep 1:3).
3. If one is redeemed from sin in Christ, and thus is forgiven of all sins, then there is no redemption or forgiveness for those who have not been baptized into Christ (Ep 1:3).
4. If one is sanctified of sins by the blood of Jesus in Christ, then there is no cleansing of sins for those who are outside Christ (1 Co 1:2; 1 Jn 1:7).
5. If one is not walking in a state of condemnation in Christ, then all those who are outside Christ are walking in condemnation (Mk 16:16; Rm 8:1).
6. If one is a new creation in Christ, then he is an old creation stained with sin outside Christ, needing to be born again in order to be a new creation (Jn 3:3-5).
7. If one has eternal life in Christ, then he has only eternal death in

his future outside Christ (1 Jn 5:11).

8. If one is saved in Christ, then he is not saved if he has not been baptized into Christ (2 Tm 2:10).

Chart 5

Understanding the text of **2 Thessalonians 1:7-9** is critical concerning one's salvation. It is first important to understand that the word "gospel" in this text does not refer to a set of laws that one must obey in order to self-justify himself before God. If such were the case, then no one could perfectly obey what one would consider to be the gospel.

This is true because no one can obey any system of law perfectly in order to justify himself before God. For this reason, it is important to understand that this text is using the word "gospel" as it is used in the New Testament, that is, the good news about



the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension and kingdom reign of King Jesus. The Holy Spirit guided the hand of Paul in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 to inscribe the critical point that one must respond to the gospel journey of the Son of God in order to be saved. The text clearly states that the gospel must be obeyed if one would seek to escape the coming destruction from the presence of God.

1. There is a final day coming in this world (Jn 6:38).
2. In the last day all will stand before Jesus and be judged (At 17:30,31).
3. Those who have not obeyed the gospel by the last day will not be saved (1 Pt 4:17).
4. Those who have not obeyed the gospel will suffer separation from God, and thus be destroyed forever (Mt 10:28).
5. After the last day, the righteous will go into eternal life, but those who have not obeyed the gospel will, with the devil and his angels, go into destruction (Mt 25:41,46).

Chart 6

The gospel was a salvational event that took place over two thousand years ago outside Jerusalem. This gospel event can be declared, preached, received, and stood within. The central event of the gospel was the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our sins. This atoning sacrifice is good news about our problem of sin. The gospel was also Jesus' resurrection from the dead. His resurrection gives us hope that we too will be resurrected never to die again. The gospel is good news about our problem of sin and our problem of physical death. Though the gospel occurred over two thousand ago, one can still connect with it today. The Bible is the inspired prophecy and report of this historical event. The Bible reports to us what happened in the past with the death of Jesus for our sins, His resurrection for our hope, and His coronation for our security (See 1 Co 15:1-4).

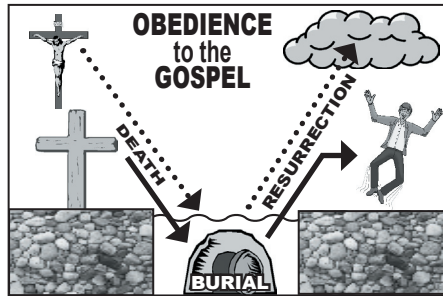


1. Jesus' death for our sins and His resurrection for our hope is the core of the gospel (1 Co 15:1-4).
2. Jesus' death was an atoning sacrifice for our sins (1 Co 15:3).
3. Jesus' ascension to the right hand of God was for the purpose of being our high priest (1 Tm 2:5; Hb 8:1).
4. Jesus' reign as King of kings gives us emotional security (Ep 1:20-23).
5. Jesus' final coming to receive us unto Himself is for our hope (Jn 14:3; 1 Th 4:13-18).

Chart 7

In order for one to obey an event, an event must also take place in one's life. In order to obey the event of the death of Jesus, one must spiritually die to sin. The old man of sin must be crucified with Christ. One is dead in sin until he is buried, and then, resurrected with Jesus. Therefore, in order to walk in newness of life,

one obeys the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. The gospel is the event of Jesus' death for our sins and His resurrection for our hope. One obeys the gospel by being crucified through repentance on the cross with Je-



sus, being buried in a tomb of water, and then being resurrected with Jesus. In doing this, one has obeyed the gospel, and subsequently, walks in newness of life (See Rm 6:1-6). This is the greatest event that one can experience in life.

1. Once one has obeyed the gospel, then he must preach the gospel (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15,16).
2. Once one has obeyed the gospel, then as Jesus, he must seek and save the lost (Lk 19:10).
3. Before one responds to the gospel, he or she must count the cost of discipleship (Lk 14:25-35).
4. Once those in the first century obeyed the gospel, they preached the gospel (See At 2:41-47; 8:4-18,30-39; 9:17,18; 10:34-48; 16:13; 16:25-34; 18:8; 19:1-5).

• Objective obedience to the gospel:

If one claims to be a Christian, then he or she should review the preceding study in order to make sure that one can be declared by God to be saved. We must remember that we cannot self-declare our own salvation. Too many people throughout the world today have self-declared themselves saved, and yet, they have not obeyed the gospel. Faith, repentance, and obedience to the gospel in baptism results in our salvation and addition to the universal church of Christ. When one obeys the gospel in baptism, he or she is saved because his sins are washed away by the blood-offering of Jesus on the cross (At 2:38). When one obeys the gospel, he or she is subsequently added by God to the body of Christ (At 2:47). Therefore, once one has fulfilled all

that God requires that one must do in order to be saved, then it is God, through His word, who declares that we are saved, and thus, added to the universal body of believers.

Wherever there is a baptized believer anywhere in the world, the church exists, for one is added to the universal church of Christ by God upon obedience to the gospel. Therefore, it is necessary that every person in the world be informed concerning the good news that the Son of God was incarnate into this world in order to give every person an opportunity for eternal life. It is the responsibility of every baptized disciple of Jesus to make it possible that the gospel go into all the world. The work of a disciple is to populate heaven by giving every person the opportunity to hear and respond by obedient faith to the grace of God that was offered through the offering of incarnate Son of God on the cross. It is the nature of a gospel-obedient disciple, therefore, to disciple others to Jesus by preaching the gospel (Mt 28:19,20).

Appendix 2

HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

The Bible is not difficult to understand. Honest people who come to the Bible with a spirit of humility will easily understand those things that are necessary in order to please God. Though we may not understand all that is in the Bible, God has made sure that we can understand those things that will lead us to eternal life. Our concern, therefore, must not be in reference to what we do not understand, but in reference to those things we do understand and are necessary for our salvation. These things are clearly revealed in the Bible. This is especially true in reference to understanding the gospel. Those things or events about the gospel are clearly revealed in the Bible.

– GOD GIVES COMMANDS –

We must come to the Bible with the belief that God was able to

communicate His law to humanity in a manner that we, through our normal mental abilities, would be able to both understand the Bible and come into fellowship with one another through obedience to the gospel.

We must not place ourselves in a position of binding laws or religious opinions on one another where God has not bound laws. As we must not neglect laws where God has bound law, we must be very cautious about binding where God has not bound (Mt 16:18,19; see Dt 4:2; see Rv 22:18,19). The following are some preliminary principles that begin our journey to better understanding the Bible, and subsequently apply its principles to our lives:

A. Discovering God's will:

Through the Scriptures, God has given a pattern of moral conduct for all people in order that we enjoy life to the fullest. To understand this, we must first understand that God is the Creator of all things (Gn 1:1,26). Because He is the Creator, He has absolute authority over all things (See Ex 15:18; Ps 29:10; 146:10; Dn 4:34-37; Ep 1:20-22; Ph 2:8-11). His authority extends to the physical world (Hb 1:3). His authority extends to the world of all humanity. This authority as Creator gives Him the right to give us law. It also gives Him the right to demand conformity (obedience) to those laws.

Because God is our Creator, we must assume that He has communicated moral laws to us in order to morally direct all societies. Without such direction, we would live in confusion. Jeremiah 10:23 correctly explains that it is not possible for us to determine our own moral laws (See Jr 10:23; see Pv 20:24; Is 26:7). In view of this fact, therefore, we must recognize the authority of God for giving us moral laws by which we can conduct our relationships with our fellow citizens of this world.

We must also assume that the laws that God gave would be given in a manner that could be understood with common sense.

And it must be assumed that God could communicate His law to us in a manner that the obedient, in a spirit of love, could find unity with fellow believers in obeying them.

B. Authority of God before the ascension:

Divine authority originated from and was exercised by the Father before the ascension of Jesus. God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have communicated law to humanity throughout history. However, in order to understand what communication is applicable to us today, we must first clearly understand how God has communicated to us in this particular dispensation of time in which we now live.

1. God did not remain silent.

The Father communicated His will to the ancient fathers. During the time before the ascension of Jesus to the right hand of the Father, all authority and law originated collectively from God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It was communicated to man through the Holy Spirit (2 Pt 1:20,21). God, the Father, was King and head over the affairs of all things before the giving of the Sinai law on Mount Sinai. Law was delivered to people through the fathers of family tribal groups. Those through whom God delivered His word were either His prophets, priests or kings. In this way, God spoke directly to heads of families as Noah (Gn 7:1ff), Abraham (Gn 12:1-3), Melchizedek (See Hb 7:11-17) and Jacob (Gn 28:10-22).

2. God communicated to Israel.

In order to preserve a people for the coming of the Savior of the world into this world, the Father selected and communicated His will to the nation of Israel. The Father chose the Israelite nation from the nations of the world. He first communicated His law to them on Mount Sinai (Dt 5:1-5). After the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament) was given to Israel, God

continued to communicate with Israel through inspired prophets, priests and kings (See Hb 1:1; see Ex 4:1-7; Nm 12:6-8; Jr 1:7-10). By inspiration, God directed these great prophets to reveal His will (2 Pt 1:20,21; see Zc 7:12). Therefore, through the inspired word of the Holy Spirit, God delegated the authority of spoken and written law to the prophets, who in turn delivered the word of God to the people (See Dt 18:18-22; Is 51:16; 59:21).

When the prophets recorded their Holy Spirit inspired message, that record became authoritative in the lives of people as the word of God. The written word was to be read and obeyed just as the inspired spoken word of the prophets (See Dt 31:9-11; Ja 8:34,35; 2 Kg 23:2,3).

3. God communicated to the Gentiles.

God communicated to the Gentiles through verbally “handed-down” moral laws and prophetic priests. God chose the nation of Israel in order to preserve a “portion of humanity” through which He could fulfill the seedline promise, and thus bring His Son into the world. In order to preserve the Israelite nation, He communicated to the nation on many occasions in order to keep people from digressing into moral self-destruction as those who lived before the flood of Noah’s day (See Gn 6:5).

The Old Testament as we have it came into existence because of this vast amount of divine communication to Israel from the giving the ten commandment law on Mount Sinai to the time of Malachi. The Old Testament, therefore, was first directed to the nation of Israel. Because the nation of Israel was called to Mount Sinai for a special covenant relationship with God, this meant that the rest of the people of the world would be known as Gentiles.

We must not think that because God concentrated on preserving the nation of Israel in order to bring into the world the Savior, that He forgot the rest of the world. He did not. God worked with the Gentiles through Gentile priests as Jethro of Midian (Ex 18). He

even worked through the Gentile prophet Balaam who gave his prophetic gift over for hire (Nm 22,23; Ne 13:2). God was even concerned with the entire Gentile city of Nineveh, and thus, He sent a Jewish prophet, Jonah, to them.

After the giving of the ten commandment law on Mount Sinai to the nation of Israel, God expected the Gentiles to continue to verbally hand down His moral laws from generation to generation. Though these divinely given moral laws sometimes became distorted through the process of oral communication and tradition, God still expected the Gentiles to live in obedience to their consciences (See Rm 2:13-15).

The Gentiles were a law unto themselves, not that they were left to establish their own moral laws, but that they were left to the "law of their consciences." God expected them to follow what was right according to their conscience. He expected the Gentiles to do as all men did before the giving of written law on Mount Sinai to Israel. He expected them to communicate continually to their children God's revealed moral laws. At the final judgment, therefore, Paul affirmed that those Gentiles who lived contemporary with the nation of Israel will be judged by the "law of the conscience."

4. The Father delegated authority to the Son.

Divine authority of the Father was eventually delegated to the Son. God now communicates His will today through Jesus, to whom He has now given all authority (Mt 28:19; Jn 14:24). The Son's source of authority came from the Father (Jn 5:19). Therefore, Jesus said, "*I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me*" (Jn 5:30; see 6:38; 8:28; 12:48; Hb 1:2). Jesus now speaks with all authority from the right hand of the Father (Ep 1:20,21; see Ph 2:10,11). As the reigning incarnate Son of God, the Lord Jesus has the right to now reign with all authority from heaven.

5. The Son speaks through His word.

Through inspiration of the apostles and prophets, Jesus now speaks with all authority to those who have come into a new covenant relationship with Him. All authority and kingdom reign now originate from the Son. He is the head of all things (Ep 1:22). However, Jesus has manifested this authority to all people through the inspired new covenant apostles and prophets (Jn 17:8).

During His early ministry, Jesus taught the apostles many truths concerning the gospel. However, they had much more to learn when He left them on His return to heaven. Jesus subsequently promised that the Holy Spirit would reveal to them all truth concerning the gospel (See Jn 14:26; 16:13). When the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles in Acts 2:1-4, He reveal to the apostles all the truth concerning the gospel. The apostles, therefore, were the medium of continued revelation of the truth of the gospel to the world (See Mt 18:18; 1 Co 2:7-13).

In view of the divine approval and inspiration of the apostles, we must accept the teachings of the apostles as the word of God (Jn 13:20; see Mt 10:40). If we receive the teachings of the inspired apostles, it is the same as receiving the teachings of Jesus, for the teachings originated from the same source. Therefore, Jesus' warning of John 12:48, that His word will be the standard of judgment in the last day, applies to the apostles' words as much as it applies to Jesus' personal statements (Compare Ep 2:19,20; 4:11; 1 Co 12:28).

6. Father delegated all authority to Son.

The authority of the Father was delegated to the Son who revealed His authoritative written word by inspiration of the apostles and prophets. The apostles are all dead. However, the authority of the truth that was revealed to them continues through the Holy Spirit-inspired writings of the apostles and prophets.

The apostles and prophets took the mystery of the gospel that was revealed to them, and combined it with other inspired moral teachings that would continue to be revealed through them. Everything that we should know concerning the truth of the gospel and our function as the people of God has been recorded. Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the apostles and prophets wrote down everything for us as the documents of the New Testament (1 Co 2:13). It is this written word that has authority in the lives of all those who seek to be disciples of Jesus (1 Co 14:37; 2 Tm 3:16).

All truth that is necessary for salvation and godly living has been delivered to us through word of revelation (2 Tm 3:17). The “faith,” or that body of revealed truth from the Lord, “*was once for all delivered to the saints*” (Jd 3). God’s “*power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue*” (2 Pt 1:3). As students searching for the abundant life, we must search the Scriptures in order to discover the will of God. We must seek for those fundamental truths that give us hope and the assurance that we are obeying God’s will.

C. Divine commands to be obeyed:

God has given humanity commands that must be obeyed. In order to understand God’s communication through word of revelation, there are some key concepts that must be understood. We must also investigate how God has been specific in His commands. When we understand the nature of God’s commands, we then understand the liberty of choice that God has allowed us to have in the generic areas of application of His commands.

1. The specifics of commands:

By “specific” we mean the definite, concise and exact elements or aspects of the command that is given for one to obey. For example, Jesus specifically commanded, “*Go into all the world and*

preach the gospel to every creature" (Mt 16:15). The specifics of this command are those things that Jesus wants us to accomplish. These are the things we cannot change, neither can we ignore them. Those who are seeking to be disciples of Jesus will seek to obey the specifics of His commands.

2. Inclusive & exclusive nature of commands:

By "exclusive" we mean that the specifics of the command imply **the forbidding of anything that would take the place of that which is specified in the command itself**. By "inclusive" we mean **anything that is not mentioned in the command itself but is necessary in order to accomplish the command**.

Peter specified that one must be baptized in order to receive the remission of sins (At 2:38). This command excluded any other means that we might devise in order to supposedly save ourselves, though he did not specifically mention all the theologies of men by which they might self-declare their own salvation. What is inclusive in the command is that one must be baptized. This action is necessary on the part of every person if he or she desires to receive the remission of sins.

3. The general areas of commands:

By general, or generic, we mean that **one is allowed freedom**, or liberty of choice concerning how certain commands can be accomplished because **particulars are not mentioned in the commands themselves**. Therefore, if one desires the remission of all his sins in order to be saved, he or she has the choice of who will baptize him or her or when and where he or she will be baptized. One has freedom of choice in areas where there are no specifics

THE COMMAND OF GOD

AREA OF GENERICS

Freedom for Choice
Subordinate Expedients
Incidental Actions and Aids

AREA OF SPECIFICS

No Freedom of Choice
No Substitution by Coordinates

in the command. **The point is that the specifics of a command add restrictions and the generics give liberty.**

The command to be baptized is generic in the manner of carrying out that which is required even if there are suggestions and examples as to how the command can be carried out. An example of a specific command is binding only if there is a specific command behind the example, or if the example is specifically commanded to be obeyed.

4. Coordinates in relation to commands:

Paul specifically called on Christians to speak to one another in song (Ep 5:19; Cl 3:16). There are two types of music, vocal and instrumental. Each of these is specific and different types of music. Therefore, they are coordinate, that is, they are of the same class and can stand alone in existence in order to produce music. What is important to remember is that a coordinate that is commanded should never be replaced by another coordinate. Though both coordinates may be allowed, one coordinate should never take the place of the other.

5. The subordinates to the command:

That which is used to accomplish what is commanded is a subordinate. Song books would be subordinates to accomplish the command to sing. Song books are thus incidental to carrying out the command to sing. In other words, incidentals are often aids that are used to carry out the command, but they are not included in the command itself. Incidentals are in the area of freedom of choice. Therefore, songs books and tuning forks would be subordinate to the command to sing. They are simply expedients (things of choice) that are used in order to carry out the function of singing. Incidentals are sometimes necessary expedients. However, because they are subordinate, they do not take the place of anything that is specified in the command.

Incidentals also must not be confused with the command by being made a part of the command. They are matters of individual choice and must not be bound as a command. If they are bound as part of a command, then they have been elevated to that which is necessary in order to obey the command. However, incidentals should never be made part of the command. If we have an example of how a command is carried out in the New Testament, we must be careful as to how we follow that example. Unless the example is specified by the authority of the original command as to how the command is to be carried out, then we cannot bind the incidentals as part of the command.

When we study and apply the word of God to our lives, we are seeking to serve God out of a good conscience. God did not communicate His will to us in a way that would frustrate our efforts to understand what He wants us to do in obedience to His will. Neither did He communicate His will in a way that would cause division among those who seek to serve Him. Therefore, when we study of the Bible, we must assume that it is not difficult to determine exactly what God wants us to do in order to please Him. His fundamental teachings are always easy to determine.

– UNDERSTANDING GOD’S COMMANDS –

The following are some biblical examples of how to apply principles that will help us to better understand the Bible. These are all common sense rules. They are commonly used principles that we use in our speech on a daily basis.

A. Noah and the ark:

In Genesis 6:14 God commanded Noah to construct the ark out of gopher wood. There are other types of wood that are coordinate to **gopher wood**. However, Noah could not have used a coordinate as pine or oak wood and still be fulfilling the specifics of the command of God to use gopher wood. The command to use gopher wood, therefore, was specific. **Since it was specific,**

it excluded the substitution of any coordinates as pine or oak wood. Because gopher wood was specified in the command, all other coordinates were excluded, **even though they were not expressly forbidden in the command itself.** In other words, the specifics of a command forbid other coordinates. Specifics forbid substituting anything that would take the place of that which is specified in the command.

THE COMMAND OF GOD

“Build Ark of Gopher Wood

AREA OF GENERICS

Subordinates & Incidentals

Freedom for Choice

[Hammers, Saws, Building Plans]

AREA OF SPECIFICS

No Freedom of Choice

“Build with Gopher Wood”

However, there were some expedients, or incidentals, that were within Noah’s freedom of choice in order to carry out the specifics of the command. Noah was commanded to build with gopher wood. How to carry out the command to build is generic. Hammers, saws and plans for building would be incidentals or expedients that would be necessary in order to carry out the specifics of the command to build and use gopher wood.

This example illustrates show that the command to build an ark of gopher wood had both generic and specific aspects. God expected Noah to exercise his liberty of choice in doing all that was necessary in order to accomplish both the generics and specifics of the command.

At the beginning of the construction, we might suppose that the decision was made to use nails in order to build the ark. However, after many years of construction, suppose Shem came to the “building business meeting” and suggested that wooden pegs be used instead of nails. Since neither nails nor pegs were specified in the command, there could be a choice as to whether to use either nails or pegs. Since nails rusted away, the wooden pegs would have been a better suggestion.

Sometimes suggestions need to be made in reference to a command that would expedite the command. Simply because something has traditionally be done in a certain way does not exalt the traditional way of carrying out a command a law in itself. If such were to happen in reference to obedience to carry out the specifics of a command, then the law is broken when the traditional way is also made a law.

We must also consider this matter in reference to unity. Suppose Shem chooses pegs. However, Ham wants to use nails. Now there is a difference of opinion around which the two must work in unity. Shem and Ham could build different parts of the ark out of nails and some parts out of pegs. The ark would still be built; the command would be obeyed. They could even work at different areas of the ark using their nails or pegs. Unity would still prevail in accomplishing that which is specified in the command. In using both nails and pegs there would be areas where they must cooperate, and therefore, they must accommodate one another's opinions.

B. Nadab, Abihu and strange fire:

The two priests of God, Nadab and Abihu, were given specifics in a command concerning the use of fire at the altar of God. However, they used what Moses identified as "*strange fire*" (Lv 10:1,2). In violation of the specifics of this command of God they paid the ultimate penalty of death. They paid this penalty because they used fire that God "*had not commanded them.*" Therefore, when God declares specifics in a command, He is serious about those specifics being obeyed as He has so spoken.

It is the task of the biblical interpreter to identify that which is specifically required in a statement of command. Once the specifics are identified, then these specifics must be obeyed. However, in identifying the specifics **we also identify the areas of liberty.** God is serious about the application of the specifics. He is also serious about not stealing away His authority of the specifics by

our binding matters of opinion and traditions. When we seek to make law those things that are not specifics, then we are elevating our opinions and traditions to the level of law, and thus, bringing down the authority of the word of God to be no greater than the authority of our human traditions and opinions.

C. Priest from the tribe of Levi:

The context of Hebrews 7:11-14 is an excellent illustration of the specific and generic nature of God's commands. Under the law of Moses, priests were to be only of the tribe of Levi. This was a specific command. However, Jesus is our high priest today and He is of another tribe. The Hebrew writer revealed that Jesus was of the tribe of Judah (Hb 7:13). But Moses was silent on this exclusion, for "*of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood*" (Hb 7:14). Moses did not forbid one from being a priest if he were from the tribe of Judah when the command was given that priests be only of the tribe of Levi. However, under the Sinai law, the specifics of the command inherently forbid such. The specific excluded any priest from any other tribe. The Hebrew writer's argument in Hebrews 7:11-14, therefore, is that **the law must be changed**. And it was. However, it was God who changed the law, not man. We must be cautioned never to try to change God's commands when He has given specifics.

1. Honoring the silence of the Scriptures:

This brings us to the point of honoring **the silence of the Scriptures**. Direct commands infer exclusion where specifics are mentioned. The direct command is usually silent on what is excluded from the statement of the command itself. In other words, when God gives a command to do something, He is usually silent in the command concerning what not to do in the area of the command. On the other hand, if He gives a command on what not to do, He is often silent on reasons why one should not do such and such.

Depending on the context and nature of the direct command, silence of the Scriptures may mean freedom of choice or **it may mean exclusion of any other choice**. For example, in Exodus 25:10 – 28:43 God gave specific commands to Moses concerning the construction of the Ark of the Covenant, the Tabernacle, and its furniture. These were commands that contained many specifics defining exactly how God wanted the construction to be accomplished. Therefore, there was no freedom of choice allowed in the area where God gave specific directions for construction. In this case, God was not silent concerning many of the specifics of construction. His instructions, therefore, would be restrictive. That is, Moses could not obey the specified instructions of construction by doing something different from the specifics of the commands. However, in those areas of construction that God did not specify construction procedures, there was freedom. Moses could make a decision concerning those areas where God did not specify construction.

2. Honoring the liberties of a command:

In the generic areas of a command there is liberty of choice. Jesus said, “*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another*” (Jn 13:34). The command here is specific in the sense that we must love one another. However, it is generic in the sense of how we are to express our love. Therefore, one has liberty as to how he is to express his love for others. The generic nature of a command, however, includes silence. Jesus did not specify how the love was to be expressed in carrying out the command itself. **This silence of the Scriptures frees one to choose how to carry out or apply the command**. One may resort to other scriptures in order to find examples or even commands that would define how to carry out a particular command (See Js 1:27; Gl 6:1,2). However, the examples or commands of other scriptures usually give instructions on particular areas on how the command to love was obeyed by the early disciples.

The specific command to love is a broad command. We would

not assume that God would give us a list of practices (scriptures) on how this or similar commands should be accomplished. Nevertheless, we do find many examples in the New Testament of how this command was carried out in the lives of the early disciples.

3. Honoring the law of grace:

Under a law of principles, as the New Testament law of grace, there is always the danger of binding on the church the opinions of others as to how to accomplish the principles of the law. If the obedient do not have a clear understanding of the freedom of the law of Christ, they will seek to bind either opinions or traditions in the areas where freedom is allowed. In fact, if one does not understand the principle that the Holy Spirit expressed in Romans 6:14, he will have a difficult time understanding these principles: “... *for you are not under law, but under grace.*”

This was the misunderstanding that Paul addressed in the Galatian letter. Legalistic-oriented Jewish Christians who were previously under the legalistic system of Judaism brought into the church a legal system of justification. Through law-keeping, they supposed, they could justify themselves before God. The source of the legal statutes they sought to bind on the church originated from their past religion. Today, we must be careful not to bind where God has loosed. When God has given freedom, no man has the authority to bind (Gal 5:1,2).

We must keep in mind that the specifics of a command exclude all coordinates of that which is specified. However, one is generally allowed freedom of choice surrounding the specifics of commands in the New Testament as long as the command is accomplished and no coordinates are allowed to substitute for the specifics of the command. Those actions that are chosen to complete generics must not add to or subtract from the specifics of the command. And that which is chosen must not become a substitute for what God specifies.

Because God is silent concerning the addition, subtraction and substitution of coordinates, does not mean that one has freedom in this area. **One's liberty in carrying out God's specifics does not give him the right to add to, subtract from, or make a substitution for that which is specifically commanded.** Our freedoms must never be allowed to make changes in what the Bible specifically requires of us.

However, we do have liberty in those areas that do not contradict the specifics of a command. This is something that needs no explanation. We preach the gospel through gospel meetings, but there are no examples of gospel meetings in the New Testament. We teach children the Bible in group Bible studies, but there are no examples of children's Bible classes in the New Testament. The point is that the specifics are being fulfilled when the gospel is being preached and children are being taught the Bible. Specifics are being fulfilled while freedom is being maintained in the area of silence.

– DIRECT COMMANDS FROM GOD –

God has given direct commands in order to direct the lives of His people (1 Co 14:37; 1 Pt 4:11). He intends that we speak where the Bible speaks. This principle is also seen in Moses' exhortation to Israel that they not add to or subtract from God's word (Dt 4:2). The Israelites were not to add religious laws where God had not spoken. They were not to subtract laws where He had spoken (See 2 Jn 9).

A. Do not add or subtract:

When we study the Bible, therefore, we must be careful not to take away from God's commands; neither should we add to His commands. God has spoken, and thus, He expects to be heard. He has commanded, and thus, He demands to be obeyed. Anyone who would claim to be guided by His will must listen for His commandments concerning what He demands.

B. Do not elevate opinions to law:

In considering the direct commands of God, there are two areas to consider: First, we must seek to understand God's communication to us through command. Second, we must seek to understand the place of opinion in reference to the interpretation of the commands. These areas of study help us focus our attention on understanding exactly what God wants us to be in obedience to His direct commands.

If God demands obedience from His creation, then it logically follows that He has commanded a principle of life that He expects us to follow. Jesus left *"us an example, that you should follow His steps"* (1 Pt 2:21). He said, *"Man will not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God"* (Mt 4:4). Paul urged, *"Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ"* (1 Co 11:1; see Ph 3:17). It is this pattern of fundamental Christian belief and gospel behavior that Christians must seek to follow. Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life"* (Jn 14:6). Therefore, we must seek that way, that truth and that life, for no one comes to the Father except through Jesus (Jn 14:6).

C. Establishing fundamental principles:

Understanding this behavioral principle of life depends on our approach to biblical interpretation. It is first necessary, therefore, to be able to discern from the Bible exactly what the commands of God are concerning both fundamental doctrinal belief and moral behavior. When we discover the teachings of these two essential areas of belief and behavior, we have discovered the pattern of belief and moral behavior after which Christians must pattern their lives.

In order to establish what is fundamental and necessary for obedience, God has given commands that are clearly understood. He has always worked with His people with the principle of establishing clear commandments that must be obeyed. Jesus and

the New Testament writers likewise spoke clearly in giving instruction. Jesus said, *"If you love Me, keep My commandments"* (Jn 14:15). *"You are My friends if you do whatever I command you"* (Jn 15:14). He commissioned the apostles to teach the baptized disciples *"to observe all things that I have commanded you"* (Mt 28:20). Paul restated this principle to the Corinthians when he reminded them to *"acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord"* (1 Co 14:37; see 1 Tm 4:11; 2 Pt 3:2).

D. Seeking to please God:

As sincere disciples who seek to please God, we desire to know exactly what God wants us to do. We want to know what examples or patterns in the Bible are binding on us as the flock of God.

It is important to understand the specifics of God's commands that are necessary for one to obey in order to be pleasing to Him. There are truths that we learn from the Bible. However, truths are to be believed, and when obedience is required, they must be obeyed. There are direct commands that must be believed and obeyed. All commands are truth, **but not all truth from God is a command**. It is a truth that God cannot lie (Ti 1:2). But this is not a truth that we are commanded to obey, even though our obedience may be motivated by the truth that God cannot lie.

E. Salvation based on gospel, not knowledge:

When one obeys the truth of the gospel, he actually responds to the gospel that leads to the sanctification of his soul by the blood of Jesus (See Rm 2:8; Gl 3:1; 1 Pt 1:22; 1 Jn 1:6). However, one's lack of knowledge of the Bible may be the basis for not knowing many truths that are revealed in the Bible that are necessary for our salvation.

Knowledge of a great amount of truth is not necessarily a

condition for salvation. One may be very ignorant of many Bible teachings, and yet, know and obey the simple gospel. In other words, one's knowledge of the Bible, other than in the area of knowing what is essential to do in reference to obedience to the gospel, is not a condition for salvation. The sixty-year-old Bible scholar is no more saved because of his great Bible knowledge than the recent convert who is still dripping from the waters of baptism.

F. Linking truth with command:

If we do not believe the truth of Jesus' teaching, we are unlikely to obey what He says. This is the meaning behind what Jesus said in John 8:24: *"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins"* (See Rm 10:17). Our belief in Jesus as the Son of God should motivate us to respond in a positive way to His commands.

In order to obey the commands of God, we must understand the system of communication that God used to communicate His will to us. If we are to seek His will, we must understand those fundamental principles of grammar by which He has communicated all salvational requirements that we must know and do in order to be saved.

G. Understanding God's communication:

The following are common grammatical structures of language that are used in every-day language of communication. God has used these ordinary grammatical structures of language in order to communicate to us. We must assume that His communication is clear enough for the average person to understand that which is essential for salvation. As Bible students, we must understand the following in order to understand God's communication throughout the Bible. If one does not understand these common methods of communication, he or she will have a difficult time understanding the Bible.

1. Imperative statements:

Direct commands in the Bible are imperative statements. Examples would be, *“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season”* (2 Tm 4:2), and *“Repent therefore and be converted”* (At 3:19). These statements are imperative commands. This is the most common manner by which God communicates what He requires people to do. When God wants us to behave after a certain pattern of conduct, He delivers His will through imperative command.

2. Interrogative statements:

An interrogative is **a question that often demands a response**. Interrogatives are questions that often have the same force as an imperative command. Ananias asked Paul, *“And now why are you waiting?”* (At 22:16). The implication in the context is, “Be baptized immediately.” Peter asked, *“What will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?”* (1 Pt 4:17). The answer that is demanded in the context is that they will be condemned because they did not obey the gospel. 1 Corinthians 6:7 Paul asked, *“Why do you not rather accept wrong?”* In other words, Paul is inferring the command that one should not retaliate if he or she is cheated. One should take the loss and move on.

3. Declarative statements:

A declarative statement is not a direct command. It is **a statement of fact; a statement of truth**. As a statement of truth or fact, the Bible is demanding belief in that truth or fact. Or, as a statement of fact or truth, the Bible is demanding that one conform to that fact or truth in order to be well-pleasing to God. Jesus said, *“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me will not walk in darkness, but have the light of life”* (Jn 8:12). This is a statement of fact. In order for one to have the “light of life,” therefore, he must follow Jesus. Though this is not a direct com-

mand, it is a statement which demands that one follow Jesus in order to have the “light of life.”

Jesus also said, *“He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned”* (Mk 16:16). This is a simple declarative statement of Jesus which says that if one is not baptized he cannot be saved. This statement is not an imperative command in this context. It is a declarative statement of fact. It carries the same force as a command because it is a fact of action that one must do in order to be saved.

Hebrews 11:6 declares, *“But without faith it is impossible to please Him ... for he who comes to God must believe.”* This declaration is binding, though it does not come to us as an imperative command in this context. You cannot please God without faith in Him.

4. Hortatory statements:

A hortatory statement is **a statement giving encouragement or advice**. It is a statement of exhortation, inciting one to do that which is advised. Hebrews 6:1 is a good example. The Hebrew writer stated, *“Let us go on to perfection.”* In the statement, the Hebrew writer is saying that we must go beyond the first principles of teaching and go on to greater understandings. In the statement, therefore, there is the necessity to grow up in Christ.

5. Optative statements:

An optative statement is **the expression of a wish or desire**. Paul’s statement of 1 Thessalonians 4:13 is a good illustration. *“But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep.”* In this desire of Paul, he was requesting that they listen to what he had to say concerning those Christians who had died.

In interpreting the Scriptures, it is important to understand that

fundamental teaching is established by imperative and declarative statements. However, **inferences that we understand from Scripture by human deduction and logic do not have the same weight as imperative and declarative statements.** These inferences may establish truth to be believed. Nevertheless, those teachings that are absolutely fundamental to Christian belief, especially in the area of commands we must obey in order to be saved, **are revealed to us in the Bible as direct statements and commands.** These truths may not always be stated as a direct command in every context. Nevertheless, because of their essential nature to our salvation, we would expect to find them somewhere in the Bible in the form of a direct command.

From a strictly grammatical standpoint, statements of the imperative mood constitute true direct commands. Nevertheless, statements by any other grammatical mood reveal truth that is to be believed. We certainly would not believe that God would reveal to us fundamental truths solely through figurative language. Neither would it be reasonable to believe that essential teachings for our salvation would be revealed through deductive reasoning on our part.

Fellowship among disciples should be established upon the basis of direct command or declarative statements on fundamental teachings that have reference to our salvation. Those teachings, however, that are based exclusively on the ability of human deduction and logic are always subject to the fallibility of human thinking. They are sometimes subject to a novice understanding of the Scriptures by those who are new in the faith or weak in understanding the Bible. We must conclude, therefore, that any command of God that we should obey comes to us in clear declarative or imperative statements.

H. Establishing matters of opinion:

Much division among the disciples results from people not being

able to make a distinction between something that is an opinion and something that is a direct command from God. Likewise, there are some who are religiously sincere, but they do not know the Bible well enough to distinguish between God's commands and man's religious traditions. The result of not being able to distinguish between the two leads many to binding on the minds of people of those opinions and religious traditions that are confused with the commands of God.

Opinions must be clearly identified as opinions. And when we have determined an interpretation as an opinion, then we must not allow it to become a test of fellowship among the disciples. We also must be able to identify our religious traditions, for all religions set up behavioral patterns of tradition by which the adherents carry out God's will. Those who do not realize that they are following traditional behavioral patterns in their religious behavior usually have the greatest difficulty in separating what is essential teaching and moral behavior from what the Bible actually commands. The following are some points that will help us to determine the place of opinions in Christian fellowship:

1. Opinions are derived from human reasoning.

Opinions concerning the interpretation of Scripture are often derived by human deductions and logic. They are developed by human reasoning concerning statements that are made in the Bible. Fortunately, opinions are generally true. However, their correctness may be limited by culture or education on the part of the one making them. In other words, one person's opinions may carry more weight because of years of experience and Bible study. On the other hand, another's opinions may be limited by inexperience or lack of Bible knowledge. If the opinions of the stronger or experienced brother, therefore, are made to reign over the opinions of the weaker brother, then the weaker brother can be greatly intimidated. If the stronger, more educated brother is faulty in his Christian attitude, he may look down on the less educated brother and not consider his opinions. For this

reason, Christians should be careful concerning their opinions. Their opinions must not become the test upon which fellowship among believers is either made or broken (See Rm 14).

2. Opinions cannot become a test of fellowship.

Because opinions are derived from human reasoning and not declarative statements or direct commands, they cannot be made a test for determining fellowship among the brethren. Neither can they be made a test for breaking fellowship. We must not allow one person's reasoning ability to become the standard to determine truth, or the behavior of the saints. This is undoubtedly what Paul referred to in 2 Timothy 3:7 when he said that there were those who were "*always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*" Though one may have studied the Bible for many years, his or her opinions of interpretation in certain areas may be wrong because he or she has a wrong attitude. Many years of Bible study do not guarantee correct interpretation.

Every Christian must seek harmony with his or her brother or sister in Christ. This concept is certainly in the context of Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 10:23,24. "*All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful; all things are lawful for me, but all things do not edify. Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being.*" An atmosphere that is free of intimidation must always exist among the members of the body where every member is encouraged to study the Scriptures. The intellect and logic of one individual must not be set against another in the realm of opinion (See Js 4:11,12).

– EXAMPLES OF OBEDIENCE –

Throughout the Bible there are examples of how the people of God served God and responded to His love for them. Examples of service to God have been recorded in order to give us a better understanding and application of truth that is revealed in the

Bible. When one studies the Bible, therefore, he discovers many examples of how men and women responded to God. The example of the early Christians' lives furnishes us with a model to illustrate the response of the people to the gospel. This was the meaning behind Paul's statement in 2 Corinthians 4:15: "*For all things [of the gospel] are for your sakes, so that the grace that is reaching many people may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.*"

We must keep in mind that because the Holy Spirit recorded a particular example of the response of the early Christians to the gospel that He meant that their example should be bound as law. **If God intended that the record of an example of obedience of the New Testament Christians constituted a statement of law, then we would be bound to follow every example of the New Testament.** As we will discover later, this would lead us to be very inconsistent in our service to God, if not very divisive of the body of Christ. In fact, it would make unity in service to God impossible.

All of us desire to allow God to direct our beliefs and behavior through His word. We want to be biblical in the sense of doing that which God requires of us. However, we want to "*rightly divide the word of truth*" in order to produce unity of believers and confidence in our own lives that we are pleasing to God (2 Tm 2:15).

A. The purpose of examples:

To the Corinthians, Paul wrote, "*Now all these things [in Israel] happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition*" (1 Co 10:11). We are to receive admonition from recorded examples of the lives of those who lived in Old Testament times. Also in reference to Old Testament events, Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome, "*For whatsoever things were written before were written for our learning*" (Rm 15:4). We are to learn from recorded Old Testament examples. We learn from those who either responded positively or negatively to the will of God.

Paul told the Corinthians, *“Imitate me, just as I imitate Christ”* (1 Co 11:1). Paul did establish himself as a “model” to be followed as he so expressed himself to the Philippians (See Ph 4:9). Likewise, he instructed Timothy, *“Be an example to the believers”* (1 Tm 4:12; see Ti 2:7). He told elders to be *“examples to the flock”* (1 Pt 5:3). He stated that churches were examples to other churches (1 Th 1:6-8; 2:14; 2 Co 9:2). Therefore, examples we read in the Bible are important for our learning what we can do in order to respond to the will of God.

From the above statements in Scripture, we must conclude that the recorded examples of the early Christians should play an important part in our lives as Christians today. After all, the Holy Spirit had many of the examples of the early Christians recorded for our learning. However, we would be cautious here because those negative responses to the will of God that are recorded would be patterns of behavior that we should not do. Positive responses as examples would define acceptable examples of how we can respond to the will of God. The following points help us better understand the purpose of these examples as they are recorded in the New Testament and applied to our lives:

1. Examples give warnings.

The Old Testament examples were preserved in order to provide warnings for New Testament Christians (See Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11). The disobedience of the Old Testament individuals *“became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted”* (1 Co 10:6). Sodom and Gomorrah *“are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire”* (Jd 7; see 2 Pt 2:6). The Hebrew writer concluded, *“Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience”* (Hb 4:11).

As the Old Testament examples were recorded by inspiration to give New Testament Christians (and us) examples, **so the Holy Spirit inspired the recording of examples of the first cen-**

tury Christians in order to provide us today with examples of obedience and disobedience. It would be fair to conclude that we should approach the New Testament examples as the Holy Spirit instructed the first Christians to approach the Old Testament examples, that is, for admonition and learning (Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11).

We have the advantage today of two sources of inspired literature for studying examples. The first century Christians had the record of Old Testament Scriptures. We today have both the Old Testament Scriptures and the New Testament Scriptures.

2. Examples give models.

There are actually four Greek words that are translated “example” in the English New Testament. **Hupogrammos** is used only once (1 Pt 2:21). It is used with reference to Jesus leaving us a “pattern” or “model” of suffering that we should follow. “*Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps.*” This does not mean that we should go out and intentionally seek to suffer in the exact same manner in which Jesus suffered, and consequently, die on a literal cross. We will suffer after Jesus’ pattern of suffering, but our suffering will often be in a different manner. The example of Jesus only expresses a pattern of suffering that Christians must accept if the occasion calls for such. Anyone who would choose to live the gospel that Jesus lived, will suffer in the same way He suffered (See Lk 14:25-45).

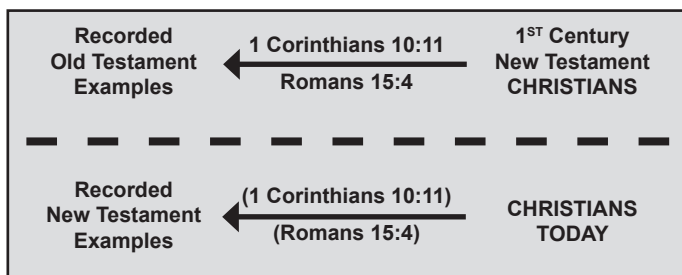
The Greek word **deigma** is also used once in the New Testament (See Jd 7). It refers to something “standing as a model” or “example.” The Greek word **hupodeigma** also means an example, model or pattern. It is used several times in the New Testament. It usually refers to a bad model or example that one should not follow (See Hb 4:11).

The most common Greek word used in reference to examples is **tupos**. This, and the other three Greek words, are trans-

lated “example” and carry the meaning of “pattern” or “model.” This is the concept of a model that is expressed in passages as John 13:15: “*For I [Jesus] have given you **an example**, that you should do as I have done to you.*” This statement was made in the context of washing feet. However, Jesus is not saying that we should literally wash feet. The illustration of the example is humble service to one another. This statement of Jesus should caution us about making a binding practice out of certain examples that were meant to teach a greater lesson than the example itself. Jesus, and the other early Christians had a right to use common cultural practices of their day in order to illustrate greater spiritual lessons. Therefore, we must caution ourselves about making law those examples they used to illustrate gospel behavior. If we do this, we will miss the entire point of what Jesus and the disciples intended to teach.

Therefore, examples can be role models for us to imitate, but not obey as law. They give us a goal to which to aspire. They illustrate spiritual concepts that we must accept into our behavior. Examples illustrate the extent or manner by which sincere believers responded to the gospel.

In the context of this point, the exhortation Paul made to the Roman and Corinthian Christians concerning the Old Testament characters would reasonably be applied to Christians today looking back to the first century Christians. Paul set forth the Old Testament characters as examples that the early Christians (and us) must seriously consider (Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11). However, not all of the examples of the Old Testament characters were good. Nevertheless, in the Old Testament there were many models of faithfulness such as those mentioned in Hebrews 11. Therefore, **we should apply the same principle of interpretation to the many examples in the New Testament as Paul exhorted the first century Christians to consider all the examples of behavior in the Old Testament times.**



In both the Old and New Testaments, there are good examples to follow and bad examples to shun. Paul did not set these models or examples as law to be elevated to be equal in authority as the commands of God. He only exhorted Christians to look at the examples of Old Testament characters in their response to the will of God. He wanted us to see the spiritual application of the examples of the Old Testament believers in their response to the will of God. We should, therefore, approach New Testament examples with this same principle of application. In the New Testament examples we are given insight into how people can respond to the gospel.

3. Examples edify.

Paul used the example of the zeal of the Corinthian disciples to stir up many other disciples in other locations (2 Co 9:2). The gospel response of the Thessalonian disciples edified all the Christians throughout Macedonia and Achaia (1 Th 1:6-8). The generous spirit of sacrifice and contribution of the Macedonian Christians was used to motivate the Corinthians to likewise respond to the gospel (2 Co 8:1-3). Paul's personal boldness of preaching while in prison encouraged others to be bold in Rome (Ph 1:12-14).

The example of the faithful Old Testament heroes of faith edifies us today to become stronger and to press on to the goal of heaven (Hb 12:1-3). We encourage others to glorify God by our

example of living the gospel (Mt 5:16), though our examples can also have a negative effect on others if we do not live according to the gospel (1 Co 8:10). Therefore, the examples or models of faithfulness of the early Christians give us encouragement. We are edified by their lives of faithfulness (Rv 2:13), zeal (At 8:4), and generosity (At 4:34,35; 2 Co 8:1-5). In this sense, we refer to their responses to the gospel in order to better our lives today.

The examples of New Testament Christians in the above sense were never recorded for the purpose of establishing law to be obeyed. Examples are simply illustrations of how others responded either in a positive or negative way to the word of God. They were recorded to motivate, stimulate and encourage us to respond in a positive manner to the gospel of Jesus. We are edified by the early Christians' response to God's will. This edification should motivate us to also respond to the gospel in a similar manner, though not necessarily in the same way as the recorded examples in the New Testament.

4. Examples clarify and apply commands.

When we study how the early believers obeyed the commands of God, we can often better understand what the commands implied. Jesus commanded His disciples immediately before His ascension to make disciples and to teach them "*to observe all things that I have commanded you*" (Mt 28:20). The disciples' "observance" (obedience) of Jesus' commands gives us an example that spurs us on to obedience.

The New Testament, therefore, is both a record of the commands that the apostles gave to the early disciples and a record of how infant disciples struggled to live in response to the gospel. We must be cautious, therefore, in how we view the inspired record of their examples of how they responded to the gospel. Certainly, these examples of obedience were not perfect as our obedience would likewise not be perfect.

Because the first disciples had personal contact with the apostles themselves does not necessitate that their examples of obedience should be elevated to the authority of the commands of the apostles. This is where we as Bible students must be very careful in studying the subject of examples. Simply because we read of someone's action in the New Testament does not automatically assume that that action is a binding law on Christians today. To elevate such examples to binding laws is to misunderstand the whole point of why the Holy Spirit had the examples recorded in the first place.

5. Examples illustrate obedience to commands.

The examples of obedience by the first Christians give us an indication of how commands can be obeyed. For example, the early disciples baptized repentant believers in rivers and lakes. These are open bodies of water. These examples give us an indication of how the command to baptize people can be obeyed. However, such examples do not exclude constructed baptisteries for baptisms, though constructed baptisteries are not mentioned in the New Testament.

The early Christians in Jerusalem *"had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need"* (At 2:44,45; see 4:34,35). Here is an example that is not binding on Christians outside the historical context in which it took place. If it is an example that must be bound as law today, then when one becomes a Christian, he or she must sell what he or she has and give to others. But this would be taking the example out of its historical context.

In the historical context, Jews had journeyed from throughout the Roman world to come to the Passover/Pentecost feast. They brought enough provisions or funds with them to reside in Jerusalem from Passover to Pentecost, which was a period of fifty days. But after the feast, they planned to return home. However, many of these people obeyed the gospel, and subsequently

sought to stay on in Jerusalem in order to be taught further by the apostles (At 2:42). The visitors, therefore, simply ran out of provisions.

This was then the time for the local Christians to step in and give an example of gospel behavior according to what John wrote in 1 John 3:17: *“Whoever has this world’s goods and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him.”* The local Jerusalem Christians loved their new brothers and sisters in Christ, and thus, they chose to sell their local possessions in order to keep the visitors in Jerusalem as long as possible before they had to go home. The local brethren knew that when those visitors went forth, they would go forth preaching the gospel to the Jews in the synagogues from where they came. The example of Act 2:44,45, therefore, was an evangelistic statement after what John wrote to and of Gaius in 1 John 5-8.

In Acts 5 it is recorded that Ananias and Sapphira sold some of their possessions. Unfortunately, they lied to the Holy Spirit concerning the amount for which the possessions were sold (At 5:1,2). Nevertheless, Peter said to them that *“while it remained, was it not your own?”* (At 5:4). In other words, they were not under any obligation to follow the example of what other Christians were doing in the matter of selling possessions and giving. We must also keep in mind that this was an “approved example” by the apostles to sell the possessions. The apostles approved the selling of the possessions and giving to those in need. **But this approved example was not binding on Christians as a law.** What the Christians did was only an illustration of how Christians can respond to the gospel.

We must be cautioned, therefore, about binding examples of the first century Christians on ourselves today. An example without the backing of a command cannot be bound upon Christians or made a test of fellowship. Though there may be a direct command behind the example, **the example itself may be only one**

way by which the command can be carried out in the lives of Christians. The context in which the example rests must be thoroughly studied in order to determine its application to us today.

B. The nature of examples:

Most of the difficulty concerning the subject of examples is centered around the nature of the example itself. It is for this reason that we must understand the relationship of examples with direct commands. Since this is the area where most people misunderstand the inspired record of the behavior of the first century Christians, it is important to establish a consistent manner by which we approach the examples of the New Testament.

1. Examples often find authority in commands.

Examples do not have inherent authority. They do not have authority simply because they are recorded in the Bible. Therefore, it would be quite difficult to say that an example is binding if there were no direct command that stood behind the example. The recorded example that a particular individual or individuals did something in the first century does not make the example of their behavior a law of God.

Examples are never given the same authority in the Bible as direct commands. An example would be binding only if there is a command that stands behind it. Because of this, the example, without a command behind it, can never carry the same authority as a command. The authority of any example we would bind on ourselves must have a background command. It is thus the command that is obeyed, not the example as we see it recorded in the Bible.

Now consider the relationship of an example with the generic and specific aspects of a command or declarative statement. In reference to the specific details of a command, the example of

obedience illustrates **a specific way that the command or declarative statement can be carried out.** In reference to the generic aspects of a command, the example illustrates only one way a command could possibly be fulfilled.

Though written as a sarcasm in its original context, wherein even religious unbelievers were taking care of orphans and widows, James somewhat chided the lazy and unconcerned Christians to whom he wrote: *“Pure and undefiled religion ... is this: to take of ... widows”* (Js 1:27). In other words, if even religious unbelievers take care of their orphans and widows, then certainly a Christian’s faith must be expressed in doing at least the same.

The specific aspect of this declarative statement is to take care of widows. If one would have “pure religion,” then he or she must take care of widows as the unbelieving religionists do in their community. However, **this statement is generic in the sense that no system of caring is defined within the statement itself.** It is specific in the sense that widows are to be care for if one would be as those who have “pure religion.” But if there are no widows for which to care, one is still a child of God.

Acts 6 is only one example of how widows were cared for in the early church. However, the continued revelation of Paul gave specific instructions as to who was to be classified as an eligible widow for the care of the church (1 Tm 5:3-16). Paul was quite strict in this matter, for only those sisters who had rendered great faithfulness were to be enrolled as a widow for which the church had responsibility. The church did not fall under a mandate of taking care of all the widows in the community. In taking care of widows, therefore, there is much that lies within the area of choice as to how the command is to be carried out, and to whom the care is to be given.

A command often has general elements as to how the specifics are to be carried out. The recorded examples in the New Testament are often illustrations of how commands were carried

out by the early Christians. We would not, therefore, bind the example in Acts 6 of “appointing seven men” concerning the administration to widows. This was a “command” of the apostles to the disciples in Jerusalem in that historical context. What is important is that the specific command to care for widows was being obeyed. The incidentals surrounding the enactment of the command are not binding examples.

With the generics of a command, **the New Testament example is usually only one option of how the command is fulfilled.**

Jesus commanded, “*Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature*” (Mk 16:15). The command to go into all the world is specific. However, the manner or means by which one is to go is generic. If one goes by walking, then his example is only one illustration of how the command can be fulfilled. Going by ship, as Paul, is another example. However, neither the going by walking nor by ship is binding, though they are New Testament examples of how the early Christians went into all the world.

The Bible student must understand that the specifics of the commands are what is important. And it is upon the specifics of the commands, not the example, that the foundation for unity must be maintained. To do this, we must understand that examples allow liberty by manifesting the liberty by which the New Testament Christians obeyed God. They can be permissive in that they allow freedom of choice. The example gives us permission as to how a command can be obeyed. As the apostles gave an example of how they went into all the world, we must not assume that we should bind their examples as law, knowing that how they obeyed the great commission to go into all the world was only one way it can be accomplished.

2. Examples allow liberty of choice.

In order to determine whether an example is binding, we can use the illustration of the life of Jesus. We must imitate Jesus or follow in His steps (See Jn 13:15; 1 Pt 2:21). But not every-

thing that Jesus did is binding on us today. Jesus fasted (Mt 4:2), taught in synagogues (Mt 9:35), taught while sitting down (Mt 5:1; 13:2), taught by parables (Mt 13), prayed on mountains (Mt 14:23), taught in the temple of Jerusalem (Mt 26:55), taught in houses (Mt 8:14; 9:10,23,28; Lk 20:36), and kept the Passover/Pentecost feasts (Jn 2:13). Simply because Jesus did these things does not mean that they are binding as law on Christians today. They can be binding only if there is a command that they be bound.

There are several historical incidental events surrounding Jesus' institution of the Lord's Supper (See Lk 22:7-23). We would consider these incidentals at the time He ate the Jewish Passover with the disciples, during which He instituted the Supper. The disciples partook of the Supper in a city, in a guest room, in an upper room, and in a reclining position. Only men partook of it, and they probably used only one cup. Jesus instituted the Supper during the Jewish Passover feast. In so instituting His Supper, Jesus partook of the cup, then the bread, and then the cup again after the Supper. There was no "authorized" sequential order by which He mandated the order of partaking of the cup and the bread (See Lk 22:17,19,20). His example of order in partaking of the cup was only an example of how He at the time, instituted the Supper.

We do not have a right to choose from the above institution of the Supper only those incidentals that we wish to bind.

Incidentals that surrounded the event, even things that were done, do not constitute law to be established simply because they were incidentals that took place at the time. The point that is emphasized from the above list of events surrounding the Lord's Supper is that the Bible interpreter must be consistent in his or her approach in the application of Bible examples. An example of how a command is carried out, therefore, in and of itself, is not binding. If we get into a contest of picking what incidentals we think are binding, then we will develop an atmosphere that is totally contrary to purpose of what the Supper is all about, that is, unity that is based on our common obedience to the gospel.

One should also consider the negative side of the examples of some New Testament disciples. The Corinthian church had its many problems. Among many things, they were involved in lawsuits between themselves (1 Co 6), immorality (1 Co 5) and denomination-ism (1 Co 1). This is why there is no New Testament command that churches should today follow all the examples of New Testament churches as if these examples were binding as law.

3. Examples establish divine truth.

There are times when an example teaches a significant truth. A good illustration of this is the laying on of the apostles' hands in order to impart the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit to others (See At 8:18; 2 Tm 1:6; see Rm 1:11). In the absence of a specific command for this action on the part of the apostles in order to impart the gifts, we discover a significant truth by noticing the examples of how the apostles accomplished this ministry which was unique only with them.

Though truths are often established by examples, their application as far as obedience to the truth of the gospel is concerned, must be demanded only insofar as there is a command that stands behind the example. Truths are to be believed. Our values and lives are motivated by the truths we believe. However, when it comes to obedience demanded by God, Christians must submit their living to that which is directly commanded by God. In other words, biblical commandments that demand our obedience for salvation must be derived from direct statements and commands in the Bible. Individual actions and historical events in the Bible do not demand this type of authority in relation to the salvation of the individual. We must understand, therefore, that direct commands concerning unity have greater weight in Christian fellowship than the examples of the early Christians who sought in their own lives to obey God in their response to the gospel. We must always exalt direct commands above examples. In doing this, we will establish and maintain a better consistency to maintain the unity of the faith

– INFERRED TRUTH –

What is meant by “inference” are those deductions that we conclude from information or facts that are actually given in the text. God intended that we use our reasoning power to search the Scriptures (See Rm 12:2), as Paul reasoned with the Jews (At 17:2; see 24:25). Truth is understood in the Scriptures by a diligent application of one’s mental processes in study of the word of God (2 Tm 2:15). We would assume that the more one studies, the better he or she will understand the Bible. The more one studies, the more truth one will learn.

This is true because the more one studies, the more he or she can infer from the text the background of activity that was going on when a particular letter or book of the Bible was written. The very foundation upon which inferences are formulated, therefore, **makes them subject to the intellectual abilities of the student.** Such should make us cautious concerning the application of “necessary inferences” in determining that which would be considered fundamental teaching.

One’s intellectual capabilities, and vast knowledge of the Bible, should not be made the judge and lawgiver of truth among disciples. We must remember that what one learns from the Scriptures through a process of logic and deduction must not be used to determine fellowship. This is necessarily true because the deductions of different individuals are often different. However, God does expect us to use our intellect in order to discover truth, and especially, better understand the particular texts we are studying. People reason every day of their lives. Therefore, God expects us to be challenged with our reasoning abilities in order to discover the richness of His revelation.

It is a general rule of literary justice not to make an author say something that he did not expressly state in clear phrases. We may not infer that the original author is saying something

by his use of words or phrases that have numerous shades of meaning. Some meanings may have been entirely foreign to the author's understanding or intentions when he first used the words or phrases.

We must first judge a document from what it clearly states in the context of the historical environment in which it was originally written. We must interpret any document from the viewpoint of the author who wrote it. It is unfair, if not dishonest, to interpret a document from the perspective of our personal agenda or bias. It is not honest scholarship to make an author say something he never intended to say.

We must recognize that God has revealed fundamental and necessary truth for us through clear statements in His word. He also knew that people have a great tendency to "read between the lines," or to look beyond what is clearly stated in order to discover facts that are in the background environment. Therefore, God not only inspired clear statements in the Scriptures, He also revealed the teaching of such statements in a way that would challenge the reasoning ability of students to discover truth. This is why the Bible has an appeal as a study book, both to the novice Bible student, as well as to the aged scribe. However, when one studies those things that are inferred from what is actually stated, he must be cautioned that his reasoning is subject to his own fallibility.

Though the Bible was written to challenge our thinking, we must allow it to speak for itself. We must never make it say something that it does not clearly state. We must not bind on people those concepts we deduct through human reasoning simply because human reasoning is fallible. It is for this reason that we must be careful not to construct systematic theologies that can be understood only by the educated. Those things that are necessary for salvation can easily be understood by all Bible students.

Truth that is deducted from necessary inferences in the study

of literature is a common practice in all fields of interpretation. Everyone **infers** something from things that are stated. We approach the Bible in a way to infer from the text those things that are **necessarily** deduced from facts and statements that are given in the text.

It is important to fully understand what God expects of us in understanding the Bible through necessary inferences. God communicated His word to us in a way that would challenge us to learn by inference, and thus be motivated to learn more. In other words, the more we learn from our studies, the better we can infer what a particular text is saying. Some would say that this is the practice of “reading between the lines.” The more we study, therefore, the more we can understand the foundation upon which instructions were given to the early disciples. The Bible was written in common literary form by which we communicate to one another on a regular basis. We thus understand in communication what is inferred, and what is necessarily inferred.

A. Understanding by inference:

One discovers truth by inference when he logically deduces conclusions from the facts and circumstances that are given in the text. An inference is not a mere guess or hunch. It is a logical mental process to discover facts or truth of circumstances that are implied by the statement of particulars in any particular text.

B. Understanding what is necessary:

A necessary inference is an undeniable conclusion that must be made from the facts and circumstances that are given in the text. This is not simply a mere inference that would be one’s deductive opinion of what the facts and circumstances imply. **A necessary inference is clearly and indisputably implied from the stated facts of the text.** When objectively studied, the necessary inference is the only logical deduction that one can make from the facts or circumstances that are stated.

It is clear that inferences demand deductions and deductions call for the ability of an individual to exercise logic. Therefore, this manner by which we study is inherently dependent on the ability of an individual to logically deduct truth from clearly given facts. For this reason, **we would caution ourselves not to make a test of fellowship those teachings that are derived solely from necessary inferences.** This is necessary else we digress to fellowshiping only those people who have the education to deduct truths upon which we would base our fellowship. Also, we must not allow our fellowship to be dependent on a few selected scholars of the Bible who have deducted certain teachings that they may have dogmatized as doctrine.

Because of the differences in individual intellect, maturity and motives, different people will often infer different conclusions. Different people may derive different inferences from the same passage. In other words, an inference may not be a necessary inference. Depending on the background of the students, their deductions will often vary. Nevertheless, God expects us to use our reasoning in order to study His word. He expects us to come to the same conclusion of truth concerning those things that are necessarily inferred from the text. This may not always be possible, but we would assume that honest and sincere students of God's word would come to the same conclusions almost every time.

– FIGURES OF SPEECH –

All languages use figures of speech and idiomatic expressions of communication. Translators are usually able to bring the figures of speech of Hebrew and Greek into a new language. However, idiomatic expressions are sometimes a little more difficult to translate. Nevertheless, we must understand the uses of figures of speech that are commonly used in all languages, including the languages of the Bible.

Before one can properly understand the Bible, he must clearly

understand the use of figurative language. One of the great errors of biblical interpretation is the literalization of figurative speech that were commonly used by the Holy Spirit in order to write the Bible. This error of interpretation usually results from a failure to identify figures of speech in the text.

Our dictionary is a list of words that we use to define our relationships with one another and the material world. Every definition in this dictionary originates from our human behavioral experiences. The Holy Spirit's task in revelation and inspiration, therefore, was to use our defined words in order to explain that which is often beyond this world. In order to do this, the Holy Spirit had to sometimes use figures of speech, many of which were metaphors.

Since we are confined to the physical world, it is difficult for us to understand that which is beyond this world. We cannot fully understand heaven simply because there are no earthly-defined words that can define heaven that is beyond this world. We cannot fully understand the nature and character of God simply because God is beyond this world. The God of the Bible is beyond the definition of the words of our dictionary.

A. Personification:

Personification is a type of metaphor that gives human qualities and experiences to places, things and ideas. In other words, the emotional actions of man and his human capabilities and nature are applied to places, things and ideas. The places, things and ideas are viewed as living entities that carry out the actions of people. Jesus said, "*Tomorrow will worry about its own things*" (Mt 6:34). Jesus here used a period of time ("tomorrow") as having a human ability ("worry"). However, days are not living entities that can literally worry.

Paul wrote, "*But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire*" (Rm 7:8; see vss 17-

20). Paul personifies sin by making it an entity that would seem to exist apart from man. Sin does not exist apart from the existence of man. However, Paul personifies the word “sin” in Romans 7 to portray an entity that acts upon him. Therefore, in interpretation, one must be careful not to literalize the meaning of words and phrases that are personifications.

B. Simile:

A simile is an actual comparison by using the words like or as. By using a simile, the inspired writer is trying to help us understand that which is beyond our experience by comparing it to something of our experience. Therefore, we must look beyond the simile in order to understand that which is being signified.

For example, in Revelation 14:2 John seeks to describe a heavenly picture that is beyond our earthly experience. He does this by using actions of our earthly experience. He wrote that he “*heard a voice from heaven, as the sound of many waters ... as the sound of harpers harping with their harps.*” John was not saying that there are literal harps in heaven. He was simply saying that **the voice** sounded **like** harpers playing on their harps.

C. Metaphor:

A metaphor is a figure of speech that suggests or implies a comparison. One thing is compared to another by speaking of it as if it were that other thing. In other words, the writer uses those words that explain earthly things to symbolize spiritual truth.

This is the most important figure of speech that is used in the Bible. This is especially true in the efforts of inspired writers to explain that which is beyond this world. It is difficult to understand many key concepts of the Bible without understanding the Spirit’s use of a metaphor.

Through metaphors, the Spirit seeks to explain God, heaven and eternal actions through things and experiences of our life. This necessitates, therefore, that the biblical metaphors must first be understood in their earthly setting in order for us to understand the rich meaning that the Spirit is trying to convey. We must first understand the literal and actual meaning of the metaphors as the first biblical audiences understood them. In doing this we can appreciate the message the Spirit is trying to convey through a metaphor.

We must also keep in mind that the metaphor, as other figures of speech, does not represent itself. We must look beyond the metaphor to discover its meaning. Too often, interpreters stumble in interpretation by literalizing metaphors. We must move past the historical seat from which the metaphor was taken in order to understand that to which the inspired writer was pointing. The following are two types of metaphors that are commonly used in reference to God:

1. Anthropopathisms:

With the use of a word as an anthropopathism, **God is described with human emotions, passions and desires.** In Genesis 6:6 it is stated, “*And the Lord was **sorry** that He had made man on the earth, and He was **grieved** in His heart.*” Our immediate inclination is to interpret the anthropopathisms here according to their human emotions. However, we must caution ourselves against doing this lest we create a god who is not above our own emotions. Consider also Deuteronomy 13:17: “*So none of the accursed things will remain in your hand, so that the Lord may turn from the **fierceness of His anger.***” If we understand this human emotion as it is used in reference to God, exactly as we would understand them in reference to man, then we have created a god that is not above our own emotions. God is not a God of fierceness, as we would be fierce. He is love (1 Jn 4:8).

2. Anthropomorphisms:

This is the assigning of human physical characteristics to God. For example, God said to Israel, *“I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians ... I will redeem you with an outstretched arm”* (Ex 6:6; see 15:16). The Psalmist wrote, *“The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous ... the face of the Lord is against those who do evil”* (Ps 34:15,16). God does not have literal arms, a face and eyes, for God is spirit (Jn 4:24). A spirit does not have physical features. We create a god after our own likeness when we miss the meaning of the metaphorical anthropomorphism that explains God as having human characteristics.

The Bible is full of precious and rich metaphors. Metaphors as **“sacrifice,” “redemption”** and **“justification”** are used in reference to the Christian’s salvation. Jesus was a **sacrifice** for our sins (2 Co 5:21). The literal and actual origin of the metaphor finds its historical setting in the sacrificial lamb that was literally and actually burned on an altar in the Old Testament. However, Jesus’ sacrifice was greater than the Old Testament sacrifices (Hb 9:23). We have been **redeemed** by the blood of Jesus (Ep 1:7). One of the historical settings of this metaphor is taken from God’s literal “redeeming” of Israel out of Egyptian captivity (Ex 6:6). However, our redemption from sin is greater than Israel’s national redemption from Egyptian captivity. The metaphor points us to something greater than the historical event from which it was seated.

D. Synecdoche:

In a synecdoche a part is used to refer to the whole, or vice versa. For example, in Mark 16:16 the words “believe” and “baptize” stand for all that is necessary to be saved. The action of baptism is used to stand for all that is necessary in order for one to be saved. This would include faith and repentance. Jesus used the word “believe” in John 3:16 in the same manner. “Be-

lieve” stands for everything that is necessary in order to have eternal life.

E. Metonymy:

A metonymy is the use of one word for another word that it suggests. For example, in Luke 16:19-32 Abraham said to the rich man, “They have Moses and the Prophets.” Jesus did not mean that they literally had the presence of Moses and the other prophets. What is actually meant is that they had the writings of Moses and the Prophets. The figure of the “key” of David that is used many times in the Bible is not a literal key, but simply a metonymy referring to the heavenly authority expressed on earth through the reign of David (Is 22:22; Rv 3:7; see also examples in Rm 12:1; Ph 1:20).

F. Hyperbole:

A hyperbole is an exaggeration to express a truth. Jesus used a hyperbole in Matthew 19:24: *“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”* Another example is Luke 14:26: *“If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother ... he cannot be My disciple”* (See Gn 22:17; Dt 1:28; 2 Ch 28:4; Mt 6:3.) ‘

The figure of a hyperbole must not be taken literally. One must search for the truth that is being expressed by the exaggeration. Hyperbole is used to express a serious truth.

G. Irony:

This is often referred to as **sarcasm**. **It is an expression in which the meaning is clearly opposite to what the words say.** Consider Paul’s statement in 1 Corinthians 4:8 in the background of those in Corinth who were puffed up and thought they knew all truth: **“You are already full! You are already rich! You have**

reigned as kings without us – and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you.” Also consider the irony of the context of 1 Corinthians 6:3 in view of the same group of arrogant false apostles in Corinth who probably claimed the right to judge angels. “Do you not know that we will judge angels?” (See examples in Jb 12:2; Mk 15:32.) Again, the irony is not to be taken literally. It is used to teach truth by being sarcastic about the false beliefs surrounding the one being taught.

H. Euphemism:

This is the literary practice of substituting a less offensive word for another. Paul used such in 1 Thessalonians 4:13: “But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have **fallen asleep**” (See also At 7:60). “Asleep” here is a euphemism for death. It is a more gentle word than the word “death.”

I. Parable:

A parable is **an earthly story that is used to reveal a spiritual truth.** It is a comparative story. We might refer to a parable as a metaphorical story that is used to tell a spiritual truth. Several parables are recorded in the New Testament (See Mt 13). Unfortunately, many assign spiritual truths to every statement of the parables. However, one must be careful not to make a parable mean more than it was meant to say. Also, one must not become so involved in the story of the parable that he forgets the spiritual truth that the parable was meant to convey.

One must remember that a parable is a “metaphorical story” that is meant to convey a truth that is greater than the story itself. Details must be given in order to tell a story. However, every detail that is given in order to tell the story is not necessarily meant to be understood to signify some truth. We must seek for the general truth of the metaphorical parable, not become encumbered with the details that were necessary in order to tell the parable.

J. Apocalyptic & cryptic:

The books of Ezekiel, Daniel and Revelation are in many places written with a literary style of writing called **apocalyptic writing**. In apocalyptic writing, **it is the purpose of the writer to conceal the truth from the enemies of God**. At the same time, **it is the goal of the writer to reveal truth to those who are God's people**.

Cryptic symbols are often used in this type of literature. **A cryptic symbol is an unreal and horrifying word picture that conveys a message to the reader through the construction of a graphic portrayal of the victory of good over evil**. When one studies books that were written as apocalyptic literature, he must first understand the text figuratively, and then seek literal truths of the text.

K. Other figures of speech:

There are several other figures of speech with which one must become familiar when studying the Bible. An **allegory** is an extended metaphor. It gives a spiritual meaning to a historical event (See Ps 80:8-15; Jn 10:1-18; Gl 4:21-31). A **litotes** is an understatement to give emphasis or a different meaning (See Ps 51:17; Is 42:3). A **meiosis** is a statement where less is said than what is meant (See 1 Th 2:15; Hb 13:17). In an **ellipsis**, or **brachylogy**, a concise or abridged statement omits words or phrases (See Gn 3:22; Ex 32:32; Jn 6:27; 1 Co 6:13; 2 Co 5:13; 1 Jn 5:9). A **zeugma** is the use of two nouns that are grammatically constructed to one verb (See Lk 1:64; 1 Co 3:2). In an **apophysis** the author emphasizes what he wants to say by implying it in what is actually said (See Pl 19). A **paronomasia** is a pun statement (See Mt 8:22). An **oxymoron** combines words or ideas that are opposite (See Mt 6:23).

Appendix 3

THE LAST PENTECOST

Acts 2 marks a paradigm shift in reference to God's view of humanity upon the face of the earth. Acts 2 is thus a shift from the Old Testament era to the New Testament era. All history of God's people that took place before and after the Pentecost of Acts 2 was changed.

After the Pentecost of Acts 2, the Jews who lived under the Sinai law would no longer be judged by the standard of the Sinai law. All Gentiles who lived before the giving of the Sinai law to the Jews, but lived by faith under a law unto themselves, would likewise transition unto the same standard of judgment that was revealed at the cross (See Jn 12:48).

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are historical records of Jesus' ministry under the Sinai law in order to prepare the Jews' for His ascension to the right hand of God in order to assume all authority over all things. Jesus' ministry was also a call to all people of faith in all the world to respond to the gospel that was revealed through the crucified, resurrected, ascended and reigning Son of God at the right hand of Son of God.

According to our calendar today, it is difficult to determine the exact year of the crucifixion of Jesus, and thus, the year for the establishment of the church in Acts 2. In order to come to some conclusions concerning the year of the Acts 2 Pentecost, and the establishment of the church, there are some specific historical facts that every Bible student must consider. These are historical facts that we cannot ignore, neither can we discount them because of any previous traditional assumptions, or mistakes on the part of past biblical scholarship. It is the objective of the student to consider all known facts concerning a proposition, and then come to some conclusions in what best fits all the known

facts of history. Objective minds seek to base beliefs on facts, regardless of traditionally accepted conclusions. Therefore, we are challenged with the following points in reference to drawing conclusions concerning the date of the Acts 2 Pentecost. This would help in coming to some conclusions concerning the establishment of the church in the first century according to the birth of the Son of God.

A. Crucifixion before the Passover feast.

There is little debate over the fact that Jesus was crucified before the Passover feast of the Jews, though there is some debate over the exact day of the week Jesus ate the Passover meal with the disciples. The Passover lamb was traditionally eaten on the 14th of Nisan, on Friday evening before the Sabbath and the Pentecost that followed the Sabbath. Because the 14th of Nisan was determined by the new moon, it would be very difficult to determine the exact day in reference to our calendar today when Jesus ate His last Passover meal with His disciples. Some argue that He ate the meal on Thursday evening. Others believe He ate the meal on Friday evening.

(There is a good argument for the Thursday evening eating of the meal, which would make this a pre-Passover meal. It would be logical to conclude this because we could assume that Jesus wanted to be on the cross on Calvary as the offered Passover Lamb for our sins at the time the Jews were eating the Passover lamb in their homes.)

The biblical text concerning the time Jesus ate the Passover meal with His disciples is not clear. Because the New Testament writers left us little exact information on this subject, we would conclude that the Holy Spirit does not want us to ponder the matter in reference to an exact day, even the exact day of the week Jesus ate His Passover meal. Our focus should be on the event, and the fact that He was three days in the tomb as He had prophesied (Mt 12:40). We are more concerned that He was raised

early on the first day of the week (Mk 16:9). The important fact to remember is that He Himself was the Passover lamb, and the crucifixion took place during the Passover feast of the Jews.

B. Three visits to Jerusalem for Passovers.

It is not easy to determine how many times Jesus visited Jerusalem during His adult earthly ministry. For this reason, it is difficult to determine the length of His earthly ministry. Estimates for the length of His ministry have been anywhere from two and a half to five and a half years in length. Since the record of the gospel according to John seems to be the most historical in recording the number of visits Jesus made to the feasts of the Jews, **we use John's document to establish a possible number of visits Jesus made to Jerusalem during His ministry.** (See the chronology of the events of Jesus ministry on page 62.)

1. First visit to Jerusalem:

During His ministry, Jesus first went up to Jerusalem for the Passover/Pentecost feast that is mentioned in John 2:13. This visit took place after the first signs of Jesus in Capernaum (Jn 2:11). We are not told how long He was into His ministry when He made this trip, but we could assume that He was no less than six months into His ministry.

2. Second visit to Jerusalem:

There is another "*feast of the Jews*" mentioned in John 5:1 "when Jesus again went up to Jerusalem. However, the difficulty is to determine whether this was the annual Passover/Pentecost feast, or another feast of the Jews. Some have suggested that this "*feast of the Jews*" could have been the feast of Tabernacles that took place in the month Tishi. If this is true, then regardless of John 5:1 being a specific reference to the Passover, reference would be to a second trip of Jesus to Jerusalem to a feast that was an annual feast of the Jews. It would represent a year in

which a second Passover visit took place during His ministry. However, we do not know if Jesus attended any other feast of Tabernacles except the one that is mentioned in John 7:2.

We might assume, therefore, that the *“feast of the Jews”* in John 5:1 was the annual Passover/Pentecost feast of the Jews. However, some have also suggested that the *“feast of the Jews”* in John 5:1 was the feast of Dedication, or even the feast of Purim. It is difficult to determine which specific feast is under consideration. Nevertheless, many Bible students believe that John 5:1 was a Passover feast, and thus, Jesus’ second visit to Jerusalem.

Another Passover/Pentecost feast is mentioned in John 6:4. Because of the increased hostility that was mounting against Him, however, Jesus did not attend this Passover. John simply recorded, *“He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews sought to kill him”* (Jn 7:1).

Now what complicates the matter is the fact that this may have been the second Passover of Jesus’ ministry, not the *“feast of the Jews”* mentioned in John 5:1. But if the *“feast of the Jews”* in John 5:1 were a Passover, then John 6:4 was the third, and the John 13:1 Passover was the fourth. This would make Jesus’ ministry the traditional three and a half years in length.

3. Third visit to Jerusalem:

The last feast of Passover that Jesus attended is recorded in John 13:1. This was the feast during which He was crucified. Since John 2:13 was the first Passover visit, and assuming that John 5:1 was a Passover, and thus the second Passover visit, with John 6:4 being a Passover that was not attended, then the John 13:1 would be the third and last Passover that Jesus attended in Jerusalem.

In his chronology of the Passover visits, John recorded that Je-

sus attended two specifically mentioned Passover feasts, the one in John 2:13 and the one in 13:1. He did not attend the John 6:4 Passover. If the “*feast of the Jews*” in John 5:1 is another Passover, then He attended three during His ministry, but over a period of four Passovers, one just after the beginning and the last at the time of His crucifixion. If there were four Passovers during Jesus’ ministry, then Jesus’ ministry would have been over three years in length, possibly over four years. Assuming that He was into His ministry at least six months before the John 2:13 Passover visit, then we conclude that His ministry was not shorter than three and a half years, but no longer than this period of time.

C. The beginning of Jesus’ ministry.

“*Now when He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was **about thirty years of age***” (Lk 3:23). Under the Sinai law, this was the common age when priests began their ministry (Nm 4:1-3,22,23,29,30). The word “about” in Luke 3:23 adds some ambiguity to the matter, but we assume that Jesus was somewhere in His 30th year at the beginning of His earthly ministry. We could assume that the Holy Spirit added the word “about” in order for us not to focus on exactly what we are doing here, that is, trying to determine an exact date for the crucifixion and establishment of the church. Nevertheless, when we add “about” thirty with the time of the earthly ministry of the preceding points, we come up with Jesus’ approximate age at the time of His death. Jesus would have been at least thirty-three years of age when He was crucified, and the church established on the Pentecost after His crucifixion.

D. Jesus’ birth during reign of Caesar Augustus.

In reference to the Roman Empire, Jesus was born when Augustus was Caesar of Rome. Luke recorded that a Roman census that took place during this time, which census affected the lives of both Joseph and Mary (Lk 2:1-4). It was because of this census that Joseph and Mary made their way to Bethlehem, the prophesied location of the birth of the Messiah (Mc 5:2).

E. Jesus' birth during reign of Herod the Great.

Jesus was born during the latter years of the reign of Herod the Great (Mt 2:1-6). It was Herod who commissioned the slaughter of the Bethlehem babies who were two years of age and under (Mt 2:16). He made this proclamation of genocide in order to make sure that Jesus would be included in the slaughter. However, this does not mean that Jesus was as old as two years by the time of the slaughter. It simply means that Herod was not sure about the time of Jesus' birth, and thus he wanted to make sure that Jesus was included in the slaughter.

When determining the date of the birth of Jesus and the establishment of the church, we must connect Jesus' visits to Jerusalem for the Passover/Pentecost feasts, with the following important facts:

1. The testimony of encyclopedias & dictionaries:

Since Jesus was born during the final days of Herod, **then it is imperative that we determine the date of the death of Herod in reference to our calendar today.** We must keep in mind that when we establish a year in which Jesus was born, we do so in reference to our modern-day calendars. We are not determining this date from the Roman calendar, though the Roman calendar must be considered in order to determine the date of Herod's life history.

As will be pointed out later, there was a discrepancy made in affixing the Roman calendar dates with our modern-day calendar, which discrepancy was noted and corrected over a century ago. But in reference to our calendar today, all secular and biblical encyclopedias and dictionaries establish the date of Herod's death to have occurred in Jericho the last of **March in 4 B.C.** The *World Book Encyclopedia* states, "Herod the Great (73? - 4 B.C.) ruled all Palestine **from 37 to 4 B.C.**" (1976, Vol. 9, p. 198). Other encyclopedias or dictionaries do not contradict this state-

ment. Though first published in 1917, the 1939 edition of the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* states that **Herod died in 4 B.C.** (1939, Vol. 2, p. 668). *The New Bible Dictionary* affirms the 4 B.C. date. Historically speaking, therefore, one will not find any encyclopedia or dictionary that will disagree with the 4 B.C. date for the death of Herod. Remembering this, is very important when determining the date of the Pentecost events of Acts 2.

2. The record of Josephus:

Josephus was a Jewish historian whose work transitioned from the latter part of the 1st century into the 2nd century. In his *Antiquities*, XVII, 6, 4, he alluded to an eclipse of the moon that occurred shortly before the death of Herod. Thus the birth of Jesus could not have occurred after the death of Herod, or after this eclipse since Jesus was born during Herod's reign. The eclipse establishes the time of Herod's death, which eclipse also helps us to determine the time of Jesus' birth in reference to our calendar today.

Here are some conclusions that we must ponder concerning the A.D. 30 date of writing for the document of Acts: (1) According to our calendar today, Herod died in 4 B.C. (2) Jesus was about thirty years old when He began His ministry. (3) According to the book of John, Jesus' ministry was about three and a half years in length, which means that He was about thirty-three years old when He was crucified.

From the preceding historical facts, we can place the birth of Jesus somewhere in the two-year window between Herod's death in 4 B.C., and his slaughter of babies two years old and under, which would take the birth of Jesus back to possibly 6 B.C. When we consider all these figures and historical facts, we come up with the crucifixion and establishment of the church around **A.D. 30** according to our calendar today. This is the date that most current Bible resource books use in reference to the events that transpired and were recorded by Luke in Acts 2.

Appendix 4**BIOGRAPHY OF BIBLE WRITERS****MOSES: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy**

Moses is given credit for being guided by the Holy Spirit to write the first five books of the Bible (Lk 24:44; Jn 7:19-23). He was born in Egypt (Ex 2:1,2) to the Hebrew slave parents of Amram and Jochebed (Ex 6:20). His brother was Aaron and his sister was Miriam. Soon after his birth, he was placed in a basket in the Nile River by his mother in order to save his life from Pharaoh's efforts to kill the Hebrews' newborn male babies. He was subsequently found by Pharaoh's daughter, adopted and brought up in Pharaoh's house (Ex 2:3-10). As he grew up, he was instructed in all the wisdom and culture of the Egyptians (At 7:22). Unfortunately, as an adult, and after killing an Egyptian in defense of a fellow Hebrew, Moses fled to Midian. He spent forty years in Midian (Ex 2:15; 7:30) where he married Zipporah, the daughter of Jethro, a Gentile priest of Midian (Ex 2:21; 18:2). When Moses was eighty years old, God called him up on Mount Sinai in order to give him a mandate to lead the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage and to the promised land of Canaan (Ex 12:29-51; 14:1-31). Once Moses safely led the children of Israel out of Egypt and back to the foot of Mount Sinai, he received the ten commandment law from God on the mountain (Ex 20:1-20; 21). After being given the ten commandments, Moses led Israel through about 38 years of wilderness wanderings. During this time he was directed by God to write what is called the Pentateuch, the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy (See Ps 90; Mk 1:44; Jn 5:46,47; 7:19-22; At 26:22). After his years of leading the Israelites in their wandering in the wilderness, and at the time Israel was about to enter into the land of promise, God informed Moses that he would not be allowed to enter the land (See Nm 20:10-13; 27:12-14). Before Israel crossed the Jordan into the promised land, Moses died at the age of 120, and was buried by God somewhere in the land of Moab (Dt 34:5-8; see Jd 9).

JOSHUA: Joshua

The name Joshua means, "the Lord will save." The Greek equiv-

alent of the name is “Jesus” (See At 7:45; Hb 4:8). The name sometimes takes the form of the name Hoshea (Nm 13:8). Joshua was the son of Nun and from the tribe of Ephraim (Nm 13:8). He was initially chosen to be the representative of his tribe, the tribe of Ephraim (Nm 13:8,16). He was later chosen as one of twelve spies who were sent to spy out the land of Canaan immediately after Israel received the law on Mt. Sinai (Nm 13:8,16). He manifested his military skills when he led in Israel’s battle against the Amalekites (Ex 17:9). After Israel was condemned to wandering in the wilderness, he worked as Moses’ assistant (Ex 13:8; 24:13; 32:17; Ja 1:1). He was placed in charge of the tabernacle when idolatry led to God’s threat to destroy the nation (Ex 33:11). He was loyal to Moses and his command because he realized that Moses was God’s authority on earth (Nm 11:24-29). As the Spirit-led successor of Moses (Nm 27:18), he was commissioned directly by God to lead Israel in the conquest of Canaan (Ex 17:8,9; Dt 31:14,23). Joshua was approximately 85 years old at the time he assumed the leadership of Israel. After successfully leading God’s people in their national conquest of Canaan, he died when he was 110 years old. He was buried at Timnath Serah in Ephraim (Ja 24:29,30).

SAMUEL: Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel

Samuel was born of Elkanah (1 Sm 1:1,2) in answer to a prayer by his mother, Hannah (1 Sm 1:9-20). He was of the tribe of Levi, and thus dedicated to the service of the tabernacle by his mother according to the law (1 Sm 1:24-28). He is considered the first of a succession of Old Testament prophets who ministered the word of God to the nation of Israel. However, in view of the actions of the “man of God” in 1 Samuel 2:27-36, there may have been others who functioned as prophets in Israel, but were not recorded before the coming of Samuel. Samuel was the only person who functioned as a judge, prophet and priest for Israel (See 2:35). Jewish tradition attributes the authorship of Judges to Samuel. However, it is uncertain as to who wrote Judges. In reference to the nature of the content of Judges, we can assume that the Holy Spirit used one or several different writers to record the events of the book. In reference to 1 & 2 Samuel, ancient Jewish tradition attributes most of the writing of 1 & 2 Samuel to Samuel. However, since portions of 1 Samuel were written con-

cerning the death of Samuel, we would assume that these portions were not written by Samuel (1 Sm 25:1). Some have suggested that in view of the statements of 1 Chronicles 29:29,30, **Nathan** and **Gad** may have participated in the writing of some portions of 1 Samuel, though the support for this conclusion is weak. It is possible that Nathan, the prophet, or Gad, the seer, wrote the book of 2 Samuel (See 1 Ch 29:29,30). The writer referred to other writings that were not a part of the Bible, such as the *Book of Jasher* (2 Sm 1:18) and the *Chronicles of King David* (1 Ch 27:24). These two documents of the events in the history of Israel have been lost, but were never considered inspired by the Jews.

JEREMIAH: 1 & 2 Kings (?), Jeremiah, Lamentations

Jeremiah was born in a small village northeast of Jerusalem called "Anathoth" (Jr 1:1-3). Anathoth was possibly a Levitical city that dated back to the time of Joshua (Ja 21:18; see 1 Kg 2:26). Jeremiah's father was Hilkiah, who was possibly from a family of priests who were descendants from Abiathar. Jeremiah's name means "the Lord has appointed," or, "whom the Lord sends forth." It seems that Jeremiah belonged to, or was associated with, the aristocratic class, and thus moved among the princes and rulers of Judah with social ease. His ministry, therefore, took place primarily in Jerusalem. In order to declare his message to the last remaining tribal territory of Israel, Judah, the young Jeremiah was quite emotional in his ministry (Compare 11:13-23; 12:1-6; 15:10-21; 17:14-18; 18:18-23; 20:7-18). Therefore, many Bible students have viewed Jeremiah as the weeping prophet of Israel because he was often despondent, discouraged and temperamental in reference to the burden of his mission to an apostate people who would not repent. However, when studying the book of Jeremiah to its conclusion, it is discovered that Jeremiah was a prophet of hope, regardless of the moral degradation of the generation in which he lived and the calamity he experienced in the fall of Jerusalem. He was unfortunately given the responsibility of being the last prophet of God to see the doom of the Israelites because of their apostasy. But he was also given a message of hope beyond the doom. We can only view Jeremiah as an astringent personality in a time of woeful apostasy among God's people, which apostasy resulted in the final remnants of national Israel being terminated as an indepen-

dent nation in the land of Palestine. In reference to the history that surrounded the ministry of Jeremiah, it is assumed by some that he also wrote 1 & 2 Kings. These two books were originally combined as one book.

EZRA: 1 & 2 Chronicles (?), Ezra

Ezra, the scribe and priest, was the writer of the book of Ezra. His name means “help.” Ezra was a Levitical priest. He was the great grandson of Hilkiah who was the high priest during the reign of Josiah (Ez 7:1-5). He was a descendant of Aaron. As a scribe, he was one who was educated in the law of God and a dedicated teacher of that law (Ez 7:6). He was very zealous for the word of God, having a deep conviction concerning obedience to God (Ez 7:10). As a student of the word of God, he taught the law both to the people of God in captivity, as well as to those who had returned to Judah after the Babylonian captivity (Ne 8:1-8). Ezra was born among the Babylonian exiles in the land of captivity, and subsequently raised in Babylon (Er 7:6). Because of his work as a scribe (teacher) among the Israelite captives, he was held in high esteem among the Medo-Persian officials. According to Jewish tradition, it was believed that Ezra also wrote 1 & 2 Chronicles. This is believed because the book of Ezra immediately begins where 2 Chronicles concludes (2 Ch 36:22,23; Er 1:1-3).

NEHEMIAH: Nehemiah

Because much of the book of Nehemiah was written in the first person, we assume that Nehemiah wrote the book of Nehemiah. The name Nehemiah means “the Lord comforts.” He was the son of Hachabiah of Judah, and held the prominent position as a cupbearer for the king of the Medo-Persian Empire. He was later appointed by the Persian King Artaxerxes I to be the governor of Judah. As a leader, Nehemiah spoke those things to the people that they did not necessarily want to hear. He continued his teaching to the point where he received great resistance from the people. Nevertheless, in the midst of great opposition, He was able to maintain his strength in teaching because of his passion for the law of God. Contemporary prophets with Nehemiah would be Ezra and Malachi. We would also assume that both Haggai and Zephaniah overlapped the ministry of Nehemiah.

MORDECAI (?): Esther

It is simply speculation that Mordecai was the writer of the book of Esther. This book is named after the principal character, Esther. Her Jewish name was Hadassah. Some believe that she was Queen Amestris whom the historian Herodotus mentioned as queen during the reign of Xerxes (Ahasuerus), the king of Persia. The name Esther means "a star," which was possibly given to her because of her unique beauty. Among Jewish scholars there is no agreement concerning the writer, though many have suggested that Mordecai, Esther's uncle, wrote the book. Some have suggested that Ezra was the writer. There are even some who have thought that the source of the material was copied from records of the Persian Empire, and then transcribed as a book by a scribe who lived sometime in the latter part of the 4th century B.C. Regardless of who actually wrote the book, the Jews accepted the book of Esther as part of the Old Testament canon of Scriptures.

JOB: Job

Both Ezekiel and James mention Job as a historical character (Ez 14:20; Js 5:11). However, there is no suggestion within the book itself as to who wrote the book of Job. Suggestions of authorship have included both Job and Moses. But there are questions concerning the authorship by either person. Because the writer used the Israelites' covenant word for God, *Yahweh*, the book could have been written after the captivity of Israel in Egypt. However, the events of the book probably occurred before the existence of national Israel. The nationality of Job is not known. We are not told if he was a Jew or a Gentile. Some have asserted that he was an Israelite, though this assumption is questioned. Except for the prologue and epilogue that were written in prose, the covenant word *Yahweh* is used only a few times throughout the book. References that are used to refer to God are the common terms that were used by other religious people prior to the history of national Israel. Job could have been a Gentile, for he lived in Uz (Edom) that was a land of the East (Jb 1:3). However, because the book was included in the Old Testament canon of Scriptures, it is argued that Job was of Abrahamic descent, though not necessarily one who lived during the time of Israel's existence when the children of Israel were in the land of Palestine.

DAVID: Psalms

Writers of the Psalms were **Moses** (Ps 90), **David** (73 psalms), **Solomon** (Ps 72 & 127), **Asaph** (12 psalms), **Heman** (Ps 88), **Ethan** (Ps 89), **Hezekiah** (10 psalms), and the **sons of Korah** (11 psalms). The remainder of the psalms were written by unknown writers. We do not know who collected all the psalms together into the compilation that we presently have in our Bibles as the book of Psalms. Jewish tradition gives credit to Nehemiah for doing this. Some have affirmed that Ezra or Hezekiah collected many of the psalms. Since David was the sweet singer of Israel, and a skilled musician, we would assume that he began the compilation of the psalms during his reign as king of Israel (See 1 Sm 16:16,18; 2 Sm 6:5; 1 Ch 16:4-6). He was a poet of Israel (2 Sm 1:19-27), and one who was familiar with music and musical instruments with which many of the psalms were sung (Am 6:5). Being one who was filled with the Holy Spirit (1 Sm 16:13), we would assume that in writing many psalms himself (2 Sm 23:1,2), David would have brought them together into some order for posterity, including those psalms that were written before he lived.

SOLOMON: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon

Solomon is given credit for writing Proverbs 1 – 29. **Agur**, the son of Jakeh, wrote chapter 30, and **Lemuel** and his mother wrote chapter 31. Solomon was the son of David and Bathsheba (2 Sm 12:24). The name Solomon means “peaceful.” Nathan, the prophet, gave him the name Jedidiah, that means “beloved of the Lord” (2 Sm 12:24,25). Solomon stated 3,000 proverbs and wrote 1,005 songs (1 Kg 4:29-34; see 1 Kg 3:3-14). He also wrote all the book of Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, as well as Psalms 72 & 127. His Spirit-inspired wisdom was recorded as the book of Proverbs (1 Kg 3:11,12). Solomon began his reign of all Israel around 970 B.C. His reign resulted in great economic and national accomplishments for the nation of Israel. He built the temple (1 Kg 5, 6). He also built the king’s palace for himself and succeeding kings (1 Kg 7:1-12). One of his greatest accomplishments was the economic development of the nation (1 Kg 10:14-23; 2 Ch 9:10-27). In reference to his political developments, the borders of Israel reached their greatest extent during his reign (1 Kg 4:21). After reigning for forty years, his kingship came to an end with his death (1 Kg 11:42). However, within five

years of his death, the twelve tribes of Israel were divided into the northern and southern kingdoms. Though Solomon was known as one of the greatest kings of the world (See 1 Kg 3:16-28; 4:29-34), he also introduced within the society of Israel a moral and religious culture that eventually led to the downfall of Israel. He had 700 wives and 300 concubines. He establish a wrong moral example for the people by marrying foreign women who brought their religious beliefs into the culture of Israel. These wives turned his heart to idolatry (1 Kg 11:1-9), and thus he led Israel on a path to idolatrous religion that would eventually bring an end to the nation as an independent national Israel in Palestine (1 Kg 12:10).

ISAIAH: Isaiah

Isaiah was born somewhere between 760 and 780 B.C. He was a prophet of the southern kingdom of Israel, Judah. He was the son of Amoz. It is traditionally believed that Amoz was the brother of King Amaziah. If this is true, then Isaiah was born into an aristocratic family, having access to the royal court throughout his life. We do know that his ministry was centered primarily in the city of Jerusalem, while he worked among those who were in power. He was married and had two sons. The oldest was named Shearjashub, meaning, "a remnant will return" (Is 7:3). The younger was named Mahershalahashbaz, meaning, "hastening to the spoils," or, "hurrying to the prey" (Is 8:3,18). Both names were prophetic of the imminent plunder by the Assyrians of both Damascus (Syria) and Samaria (Israel). We are not informed concerning the ministry of his wife, for Isaiah referred to her as "the prophetess" (Is 8:3). Though she did not function as Isaiah in reference to prophecy concerning nations, we would assume from her designation as a prophetess that she shared in teaching the people the will of God. Whatever the case, both husband and wife worked together in the ministry of teaching.

EZEKIEL: Ezekiel

Ezekiel, the priest, was the writer of the book of Ezekiel (Ez 1:3). The meaning of his name is, "God will strengthen." His father's name was Buzi (Ez 1:3). He was a priest who descended from Zadok, of the family of Eleazer, the son of Aaron (Ez 1:3; see 40:46). He was born in 622 B.C. during the time of King Josiah's

reform. When he was in his twenties he was taken with the first captives and King Jehoiachin into Babylon captivity in 597 B.C. This was the first Babylonian captivity when Nebuchadnezzar carried away into captivity 10,000 of the most prominent of the people of Judah (2 Kg 24:14-16). Ezekiel's home in Babylonia was Telabib that was located by the River Chebar, about one hundred kilometers south of Babylon. Ezekiel was called to be a spokesman for God at the age of thirty, the age at which priests assumed their duties. The Lord came to him through a great vision with a personal destiny that he had to fulfill (Ez 1:3 – 3:11). Ezekiel was a married man, though he lost his wife in the 9th year of his captivity and the 4th year of his ministry (Ez 24:15-18). She died at the same time the Babylonians began their siege of the city of Jerusalem (Ez 24:1,15-18). Contemporary with Ezekiel was Daniel, who prophesied in the city of Babylon. While Daniel lived through the period of seventy years of captivity, Ezekiel probably died before 536 B.C., the date of the release of the captives.

DANIEL: Daniel

The name Daniel means "God is my judge." His name was later changed by the Babylonians to Belteshazzar, meaning "protect his life." Daniel was born around 620 B.C. In 605 B.C., and at the age of fifteen, he was taken by Nebuchadnezzar with 10,000 captives into Babylonian captivity. He spent the rest of his life in captivity, dying at the age of 85 to 90 years old, sometime after the release of the first group of exiles who were released by the Medes and Persians in 536 B.C. Daniel was born of the tribe of Judah, and possibly a descendant of the royal Davidic family (See Dn 1:3-6).

HOSEA: Hosea

The book of Hosea was written by Hosea (Hs 1:1), the son of Beeri. We know nothing of Hosea's early years, other than the fact that he taught the word of God to the northern kingdom of Israel. The name Hosea means "salvation." It is derived from the same root Hebrew word for Joshua and Jesus. Hosea was commanded by God to marry Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim. After their marriage, however, she became unfaithful, leaving Hosea and giving herself over to prostitution. Nevertheless, Hosea was devoted to her, and thus took her back as his wife according to

the command of God. Through Gomer, Hosea had three children (Hs 1:3-9). The first was Jezreel, meaning "vengeance." The second was Lo-Ruhamah, meaning "not pitied," or, "have no more mercy." The third was Lo-Ammi, meaning "not my people." The name of each child explained God's relationship with His people in the northern kingdom of Israel throughout their time of apostasy. Hosea was the first prophet to address the northern kingdom, prophesying God's judgment upon the kingdom for its apostasy to idol religion. The sorrow that befell Hosea in his family proclaimed the sorrow that God felt for His people of the northern kingdom who went after idol gods. As Hosea's wife turned from him, so Israel turned from their God who had given them birth by bringing them out of Egyptian captivity. As Gomer played the harlot, Israel played the harlot with gods they had created after their own imagination.

JOEL: Joel

Joel is confirmed by Peter to be the writer of the book of Joel (See At 1:16,17). Joel was the son of Pethuel (Jl 1:1). His name means "the Lord is God," or, "Jehovah is God." We know nothing of Joel outside what is stated of him in the book of Joel. He was the prophet of restoration among God's people, speaking boldly and powerfully the word of God from Judah to a nation that God wanted to bring to repentance. In a message of judgment and hope, he planted in the minds of the people an event in the future when God would pour out the Holy Spirit.

AMOS: Amos

Nothing is known of Amos except what is revealed in the book of Amos. Amos was from Tekoa, a small mountain village about fifteen kilometers south of Jerusalem (2 Ch 11:6; 20:20). He was a shepherd and a farmer of sycamore fig trees. His name means "burden bearer." It has been suggested that he was a prophet who was called from the poorer people of Judah in order to preach to the rich urban centers. He, too, possibly suffered in the exploitation of the poor by the rich urbanites. Amos' humble nature was brought out in his statement that he was not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet (Am 7:14). He was thus not a professional prophet, but supported himself as a shepherd and farmer. Neither did he claim to be from any school for the prophets (See

2 Kg 2:3). Because of the message that he had to deliver to Judah and Israel, God called him because he was a straightforward person. He was stern and fearless in the face of any opposition. Because he was deeply devoted to the law of God, he was courageous in delivering a message of judgment to those who were living contrary to the principles of God's will.

OBADIAH: Obadiah

Of the thirteen men known as Obadiah in the Old Testament, we cannot identify any as the Obadiah of the book of Obadiah. All we know about him is revealed in his book. The name Obadiah means "servant of the Lord." From the nature of the book of Obadiah, we would conclude that he was patriotic to his people, and thus he had great consternation toward Edom for what that nation did historically to the Israelites in their times of calamity.

JONAH: Jonah

The writer of the book of Jonah does not specifically name himself as the writer. We assume he is the writer from the statement that is made of the writer in Jonah 1:1. He was the son of Amittai. His name means "dove." He was from Gath-hepher in the territory of Zebulun in northern Israel. His ministry took place during the reign of Jeroboam II who was king of the northern kingdom of Israel. The ministry of Jonah began after Elisha. He was contemporary with Amos and Hosea who taught the people in the northern kingdom, while Isaiah and Micah taught in the southern kingdom. The contents of Jonah point out that Jonah was very patriotic to the Israelite people. However, his patriotism led him to be somewhat prejudiced in relation to his concern for the salvation of other people. By Jonah's time in the history of the northern kingdom, the Israelites had long forgotten their responsibility of being a light to the Gentiles concerning the one truth and living God. Instead of reaching out to the nations with their faith, they became very introverted, both in their faith and in their culture.

MICAH: Micah

Micah is given credit for writing the book of Micah (Mc 1:1). This is not the Micah of 1 Kings 22:8, but the Micah from the farming village of Moresheth Gath, about thirty kilometers from Jerusalem. The name Micah means "who is like the Lord." We know

nothing about Micah other than what is revealed in his book. He was mentioned by Jeremiah (Jr 26:18; see Mc 3:12). Other prophets also validated the authorship of Micah by quoting from his writings (See Is 41:15; Ez 22:25; Zp 3:19; compare Mc 4:1-4 and Is 2:2-4). Micah was a country prophet. At the time of his ministry, there was great oppression of the poor by the rich. Micah prophesied against the rich who were taking advantage of the poor for their own benefit. In dealing with the sins of a morally unjust society, Micah validated his message to be coming from the power of the Spirit of God (Mc 3:8). He was thus very confident and straightforward in his stern message to those who perpetuated evil injustices and inequity in society. At the time of his ministry, Isaiah was preaching to the aristocrats in the city of Jerusalem. Micah was the country preacher to the northern kingdom, and thus remained in the rural areas. He prophesied against the northern kingdom until its fall in 722/21 B.C. He then focused on the social evils of Jerusalem, for the unrighteous rulers and religious leaders of the city were leading Judah in the same direction of destruction as their northern sister that was taken into captivity.

NAHUM: Naham

Nahum, the Elkoshite, wrote the book of Nahum. What is known about Nahum is revealed only in this book. His name means "full of comfort." He was from Elhush, the location of which is not known. Some have suggested that Elhush was a village about five kilometers south of Nineveh. Others have stated that this was a small village in Galilee, or possibly a village that was located somewhere in the southwestern region of Judea. Contemporary prophets with Nahum were Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Huldah and Josiah of Judah.

HABAKKUK: Habakkuk

Habakkuk was a prophet of Judah. His name means "love's embrace," or, "he who embraces." We are told nothing concerning his life. From the statement made in Habakkuk 3:19, we might conclude that Habakkuk was a Levite of the temple in Jerusalem who was involved in the instruments that were played during the sacrifices. Some have suggested that he was the son of the Shunammite woman whom Elisha restored to life (2 Kg 4:16-37). Though there are many suggestions concerning the identity of

this prophet, there is no clear statement of his identity outside what is revealed in the book of Habakkuk.

ZEPHANIAH: Zephaniah

We know nothing of the life of Zephaniah other than what is stated in Zephaniah 1:1. Likewise, we understand the nature of his ministry only by what is revealed in his book. In the introductory verse, Zephaniah traced his lineage back four generations. His great, great grandfather was King Hezekiah of Judah. He was thus of royal lineage. The name Zephaniah means “he whom the Lord has protected,” or, “he whom the Lord hides.” He was a prophet who was contemporary with Jeremiah. His predecessors were Nahum and Habakkuk. He was probably a resident of Jerusalem. Because he was born of a royal family, he probably associated easily with the royalty of the time.

HAGGAI: Haggai

We know nothing about Haggai other than what is written in this book and what is stated in Ezra 5:1; 6:14. The name Haggai means “festive” or “festival.” At the time of the writing of the book, we know that he was a former exile in Babylonian captivity who had recently returned to Palestine. When the Medo-Persians, under the kingship of King Cyrus, released the captives in 536 B.C., Haggai was among the initial captives who returned to the land. Zechariah was a contemporary prophet at the time of Haggai’s ministry.

ZECHARIAH: Zechariah

In Ezra 5:1 and 6:14, Zechariah is mentioned with Haggai as a prophet to those who had returned to Palestine after the Babylonian captivity. There are 27 Zechariahs mentioned in the Bible. The Zechariah of this book was a priest of God and prophet to the returnees. Zechariah’s name means “he whom the Lord remembers.” Zechariah was the son of Berechiah who was the son of Iddo (Zc 1:1). Ezra referred to him as the son of Iddo (Er 5:1; 6:14). Berechiah, Zechariah’s father, died before Iddo, Zechariah’s grandfather. And thus the account of Ezra focuses on Zechariah assuming the priestly heritage of his grandfather, rather than his father. Iddo was a Levitical priest who returned from Babylonian captivity with the first returnees under the leadership of Zerubbabel (Ne 12:1,4,7). It may have been that Zechariah

succeeded his grandfather in leadership in ministry as a priest (Ne 12:1-16). However, neither he nor Haggai took any leadership role among the returnees until after they had been in the land for eighteen years. Only then were they called by God to the ministry of prophecy. Zechariah was evidently a young man upon his initial arrival in the land with his family (Zc 2:4), and thus he was used by God only when he was of age to fulfill the role of a prophet.

MALACHI: Malachi

We know nothing about the prophet Malachi other than what is revealed in his book. Malachi is a shortened version of the name Malachiyah, meaning “the messenger of the Lord.” Malachi’s name defines the nature of his prophecy in reference to the messenger of the Lord who would be sent before the coming of the Messiah. In fact, the word “messenger” refers to three different individuals in the book. It refers to Malachi himself as the messenger who delivered the message of the book of Malachi to Israel. The word is then used to refer to John the Baptist as the messenger who would announce the coming of the Messiah. And finally, the word refers to the Messiah. As the immediate messenger of God, Malachi was a straightforward prophet of the Lord in that he was direct in approaching the negligence of the people in reference to their obedience to the word of God.

MATTHEW: Matthew

The name Matthew means “gift of God.” Matthew, the apostle and the son of Alphaeus, who was formerly known as Levi (Mk 2:14), has been commonly accepted as the writer of the book of Matthew (Mt 9:9-13; 10:3). He was formerly a tax collector in Capernaum before being personally called by Jesus to apostleship (Mt 9:9; Lk 5:27,28; see At 1:13).

MARK: Mark

John Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, was the writer of the book of Mark. John was his Jewish name and Mark was his Roman or Gentile name. He was possibly the son of Mary who was the sister of Barnabas (At 12:12; Cl 4:10), and thus Barnabas would have been his uncle. Mark may have been the young man who fled naked at the time of Jesus’ trials (Mk 14:51,52). John Mark journeyed with Paul and Barnabas on Paul’s first mission journey

(At 12:25 – 13:1-13). However, for some unknown reason he did not continue with the work of the mission trip, and thus, turned back to Jerusalem (At 13:13; 15:37,38). Nevertheless, eleven years later when Paul was in a Roman prison, he called for Mark who was then profitable to him for the ministry (2 Tm 4:11). Mark was with Paul at some time during Paul's imprisonment (Cl 4:10; Pl 24). He may have also been with Peter in Babylon (1 Pt 5:13).

LUKE: Luke, Acts

Luke, a physician, was the writer of both Luke and Acts. He was the companion of Paul on several mission journeys (See the "we sections" of At 16:10-17; 20:5 – 21:17; 27:2 – 28:16). Both the documents of Luke and Acts were addressed to the same person, Theophilus. These two documents should thus be read together in order to see the complete story the author desires that we understand concerning the effect of the gospel on the lives of people in the first century (Lk 1:3; At 1:1). Luke set out to write an orderly account of Jesus' ministry in order that Theophilus might know the certainty of those things he had been told concerning the gospel (Lk 1:3,4). Luke wrote these two defense documents of the gospel in a historical arrangement in order to give a chronological order of events in the life of Jesus (Luke) and the life of the early disciples (Acts), specifically, Paul. Assuming that Acts, as well as Luke, were written as defense documents to defend the gospel, we would thus conclude that Luke was specifically chosen by God to be the scribe to write both Luke and Acts. Therefore, Luke, the Gentile doctor (Cl 4:14), was qualified as one who would best write a defense to a court of Gentile judges concerning the impact the gospel had on the life of the prisoner Paul. Luke was probably not a personal eyewitness to Jesus and the gospel events. He could thus write of the life of Jesus from the perspective of a secondary witness.

JOHN: John, 1,2 & 3 John, Revelation

The writer of five books of the New Testament is the apostle John, the brother of James and son of Zebedee and Salome. John was a Jew from Galilee of Palestine who was very familiar with the geography of his homeland (Jn 1:44; 2:1; 4:5,6,21; 9:7; 11:18; 18:1). As a Jew, he was also very familiar with Jewish religious traditions (Jn 1:19-38; 4:9,20). Those to whom he wrote

were not that familiar with either Palestine or Jewish customs. Therefore, John was careful to describe in his writing various locations of Palestine and Jewish customs with which his readers were not familiar. Though John does not specifically identify himself in the letter of the gospel of John, Bible students have associated the “beloved disciple,” who was a close companion of Jesus, to be the apostle John (Jn 13:23; 18:15,16; 19:25-27; 21:20). The early Christians knew the identity of the “beloved disciple.” Therefore, John could identify himself as the author of John by simply referring to himself as the “beloved disciple.” Since James, the brother of John, was killed early in the history of the church (At 12:2), and Peter, Philip and Thomas are spoken of in the third person in the gospel of John, we would assume that John is the best candidate for the authorship of the document of John. This John was from Bethsaida. He was one of two sons of Zebedee and a fisherman by trade (Mk 1:19,20). Salome, his mother, was possibly the sister of Mary who was the mother of Jesus (Compare Mt 27:56; Mk 15:40; Jn 19:23). John and his brother James were partners with Peter and Andrew in a fishing business on the Sea of Galilee. The two brothers were also called the “sons of Thunder” (Mk 3:17). In John 20:8, John was the disciple who “saw and believed.” The name John means, “the Lord is gracious.” Because of his writing on the subject of love, John became known as the apostle of love. Tradition says that he died near Ephesus around 98 A.D. It is believed that he was the last Christ-sent apostle to die, which means that he was in his late teens when he was first called by Jesus into apostleship. The literary style of writing and Greek grammar used in John, John, 1,2,3 John, and Revelation link these five books to the same author.

PAUL: Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews (?)

The name Paul was Greek, whereas the name Saul was Jewish. Paul was a Jew (At 21:39; 22:3) of the tribe of Benjamin (Ph 3:5). He was born in the city of Tarsus of the Roman province of Cilicia. Some of his relatives from the same area are mentioned in the last chapter of Romans (Rm 16:7,11,21; see At 23:16). Paul was educated at the feet of the well-known Jewish Rabbi Gamaliel (At

22:3; 23:6; 26:5; Ph 3:5). He was educated as a Pharisee. Before his obedience to the gospel, he was a Jewish authority with a mandate to bind and cast Christians into prison (At 22:4,5). He was well-known the by priests of the Jewish hierarchy (At 26:4), who had given him authority to bind and imprison Christians (At 26:10). However, because of the nature of His personality, and zeal for what he believed was right, he was personally called by Jesus to be a Christ-sent apostle, specifically to the Gentiles (At 9:1-15; 22:3-21; 26:12-18). Paul later wrote that he was “put into the ministry” (1 Tm 1:12), “separated unto the gospel” (Rm 1:1), and made a “prisoner of Jesus” (Ep 3:1). As a Christ-sent apostle, he was “born out of due time,” or the time when Jesus personally called His apostles (1 Co 15:8; see Lk 6:12-16). Because he was bold in character, Jesus gave him a special mission to the house of Israel, Gentiles and kings (At 9:15; 22:15). In his work, Jesus intended for him to give special emphasis on opening the door for the gospel into the Gentile world (At 22:21; Gl 2:7). Though his emphasis was on the Gentiles, throughout his ministry he never forgot the Jews (Rm 9:1-3; 10:1; At 14:1; 17:1,2). Paul was conscientious (1 Tm 1:3), pioneering (Rm 15:20), intellectual (At 22:3; Gl 1:14), humble (1 Co 15:9; Ep 3:8; 1 Tm 1:15), trustworthy (1 Tm 1:2), honest (1 Tm 1:13), obedient (At 26:19), bold (At 9:27-29), zealous (At 22:3; Gl 1:13,14; Ph 3:6), aggressive (At 9:19,20; 19:30), righteous (Ph 3:6), sacrificial (Ph 3:7,8), determined (At 15:37-39), concerned (9:1-3; 10:1), daring (At 21:13), loving (1 Co 13; Cl 3:12ff), and enduring (2 Co 11:23-28).

JAMES: James

It is believed by most that the writer of the book of James, who identifies himself as a servant of Jesus Christ (Js 1:1), is the Lord's half brother whom Paul mentions in Galatians 1:19. Throughout the New Testament there is mention of at least five different individuals who are referred to as James: (1) There is James, the son of Alphaeus, who was one of the twelve Christ-called and sent apostles (Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18; Lk 6:15; At 1:13). (2) There is James who was also one of the twelve whose brother was Judas (not Judas Iscariot) (Lk 6:16). (3) There is the James who is mentioned in Mark 15:40 (See Mt 27:56; Jn 19:25). (4) There is James, the son of Zebedee and brother of the apostle John (Mt 10:2; Mk 3:17; Lk 6:14; At 1:13). (5) There is James

who was the half brother of Jesus (Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3). It is this last James that many believe was the inspired author of the epistle of James (See Jn 7:5; At 1:14; 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; 1 Co 15:7; Gl 2:9). The apostle James was killed early in the history of the church and before this letter was written (At 12:1,2). James, the half brother of Jesus, became a prominent leader of the disciples in Jerusalem after he overcame his initial unbelief during the ministry of Jesus, and subsequently was used to write the book of James (Jn 7:5; At 15:13; Gl 1:19).

PETER: 1 & 2 Peter

The inspired writer of 1 & 2 Peter is Peter, the apostle. Peter's original name in Hebrew was Simeon (Jn 21:15-17; At 15:14; 2 Pt 1:1). His father's name was Jonah (Mt 16:17) and his brother's name was Andrew (Jn 1:35-42). He was married (Mt 8:14,15; Mk 1:30), and his wife went with him as he moved from one location to another throughout his life in order to preach the gospel (1 Co 9:5). Peter was born in Bethsaida (Jn 1:44). However, he was living in Capernaum in Galilee at the time he was called by Jesus to be an apostle (Mk 1:14-20). At the time of his calling, he was in a fishing business with James and John, the sons of Zebedee (Jn 1:35-42). When he was called to be an apostle, Jesus changed his name from Simeon to Cephas, which name means "rock" (Jn 1:42; Mt 16:17). Since he was personally designated as a shepherd (elder) of God's people in his latter years, he also had children according to the qualifications of elders (1 Pt 5:1,13; Ti 1:6).

JUDE: Jude

The writer of the book of Jude, was Jude, the brother of James and half brother of Jesus. The name Jude was a common Jewish name that means "renowned." In the New Testament there are at least nine individuals who wore the name "Jude" (See Mt 10:4; 13:55; Lk 3:26,30,33; 6:16; Jn 14:22; At 5:37; 9:11; 15:22; Jd 1). The name was used to refer to two of the Christ-sent apostles (Jn 14:22). The Jude who wrote the book of Jude was the brother of the prominently known James of Jerusalem, and thus, also the half brother of our Lord (At 15:13; Gl 1:19; 2:9). James was a son of Mary and Joseph after the birth of Jesus (Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3).

JUDGES OF ISRAEL

Mesopotamian Oppression

1382 – 1374 B.C.

(Jd 3:8)

Othniel Deliverance

1374 – 1334 B.C.

(Jg 3:7-11)

Eglon / Moab Oppression

1334 – 1316 B.C.

(Jb 3:14)

Ehud / Shamgar Deliverance

1316 – 1236 B.C.

(Jg 3:12-31)

Canaanite Oppression

1236 – 1216 B.C.

(Jg 4:3)

Deborah / Barak Deliverance

1216 – 1176 B.C.

(Jg 4 – 5)

Midianite Oppression

1176 – 1169 B.C.

(Jg 6:1)

Gideon Deliverance

1169 - 1129 B.C.

(Jg 6 – 8)

Abimelech Oppression

1129 – 1126 B.C.

(Jg 9:22)

Tola / Jair Deliverance

1126 – 1103 B.C.

(Jg 10:1-5)

Ammonite Oppression

1103 – 1063 B.C.

Jephthah Deliverance

(Jg 10:6 – 12:7)

Southern Palistine Oppression

Ibzan Deiverance

(Jg 12:8-10)

Northern Palistine Oppression

Elon Deliverance

(Jg 12:11,12)

Central Palistine Oppression

Abdon Deliverance

(Jg 12:13-15)

Palistine Plains Oppression

Samson Deliverance

(Jg 13 – 16)

KINGS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

UNITED KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

Saul

(40 year reign - At 13:21)

David

(40 year reign; 1 Kg 2:11)

Solomon

(970 – 931; 1 Kg 11:42)

DIVIDED KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

JUDAH

The Southern Kingdom

Rehoboam (931/30 – 913)

Abijam (913 – 911/10)

Asa (911/10 – 870/69)

Jehoshaphat (870/69 – 848)

Jehoram (848 – 841)

Ahaziah (841)

Athaliah (841 – 835)

Joash (836 – 796)

Amaziah (796 – 767)

Azariah (767 – 740/39)

Jotham (740/39 – 732/31)

Ahaz (732/31 – 716/15)

Hezekiah (716/15 – 687/86)

Manasseh (687/86 – 643/42)

Amon (643/42 – 641/40)

Josiah (640/39 – 609)

Jehoahaz (609)

Jehoiakin (609 – 597)

Jehoiachin (597)

Zedekiah (597 – 587)

ISRAEL

The Northern Kingdom

Jeroboam I (931/30 – 910/9)

Nadab (910/9 – 909/8)

Baasha (909/8 – 886/5)

Elah (886/5 – 885/4)

Zimri (885/4)

Tibni (885/4 – 880)

Omri (880 – 874/3)

Ahab (874/3 – 853)

Ahaziah (853 – 852)

Joram (852 – 841)

Jehu (841 – 814/3)

Jehoahaz (814/3 – 798)

Jehoash (798 – 782/1)

Jeroboam II (782/1 – 753)

Zachariah (753 – 752)

Shallum (752)

Menahem (752 – 742/1)

Pekahiah (742/1 – 740/39)

Pekah (740/39 – 732/1)

Hoshea (732/1 – 723/2)

Many of the kings of both Judah and Israel reigned co-regent with one another. An older or retiring father would hand over authority to his son, and thus, the dates that overlap indicate that such an arrangement was often made between a father and son.

PROPHETS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

JOEL	(880 - 750) (?)	2 Kg 11:1 – 15:7
AMOS	(760)	2 Kg 14:23; 15:7
JONAH	(760)	2 Kg 14:23-29
HOSEA	(760 - 722)	2 Kg 14:23 – 18:37
MICAH	(742 - 687)	2 Kg 15:31 – 20:21; 2 Ch 27:1 – 32:33; Is 7:1 – 8:22; Jr 26:17-19
ISAIAH	(740 - 700)	2 Kg 15:1 – 20:21; 26:1 – 32:33
NAHUM	(664 - 612) (?)	2 Kg 22:1 – 23:30; 2 Ch 34:1 – 36:1; Zp 2:13 – 15
ZEPHANIAH	(from 640)	2 Kg 22:1 – 23:34; 2 Ch 34:1 – 36:4
JEREMIAH	(626 - 587)	2 Kg 22:1 – 25:30; 2 Ch 34:1 – 36:21
HABAKKUK	(605)	2 Kg 23:31 – 24:7
DANIEL	(605 - 535)	2 Kg 24:1 – 25:30; 2 Ch 36:5-23
EZEKIEL	(593 - 570)	2 Kg 24:8 – 25:26; 2 Ch 36:9-21
OBADIAH	(from 587) (?)	2 Kg 25; 2 Ch 36:11-21
HAGGAI	(520)	Er 5:1 – 6:22
ZECHARIAH	(from 520)	Er 5:1 – 6:22
MALACHI	(433)	Ne 13

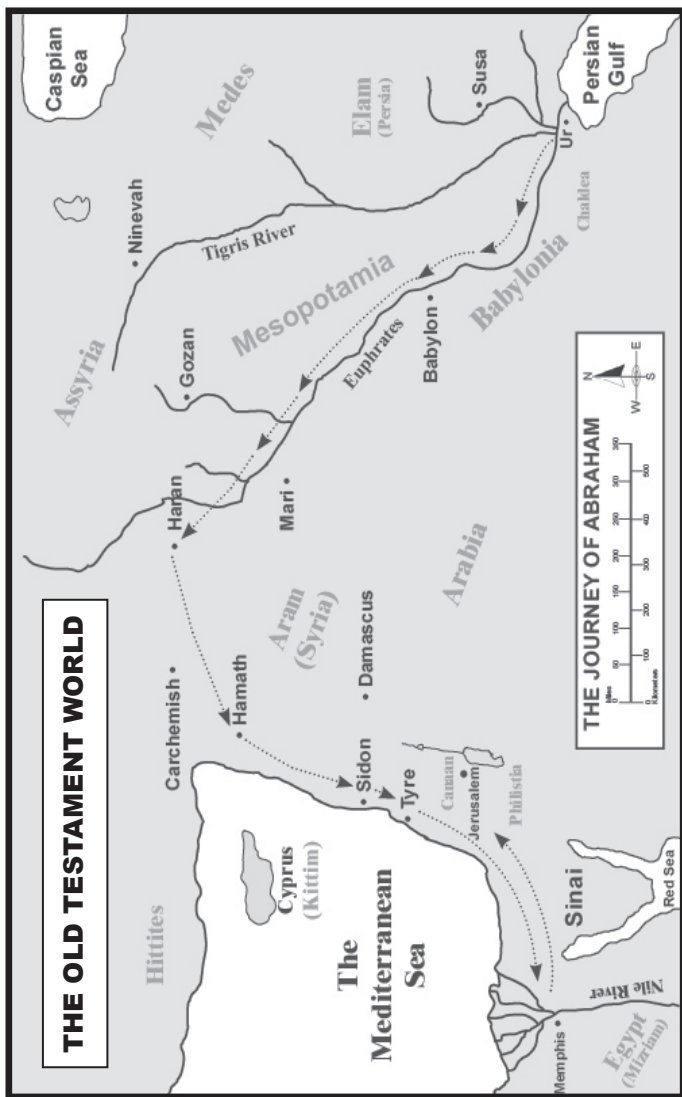
DAILY BIBLE READING

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
1 Gn 1-3	1 Lv 1-4	1 Dt 5-7
2 Gn 4-7	2 Lv 5-7	2 Dt 8-10
3 Gn 8-11	3 Lv 8-9	3 Dt 11-13
4 Gn 12-15	4 Lv 10-12	4 Dt 14-17
5 Gn 16-18	5 Lv 13	5 Dt 18-20
6 Gn 19-20	6 Lv 14-15	6 Dt 21-23
7 Gn 21-23	7 Lv 16-18	7 Dt 24-26
8 Gn 24-25	8 Lv 19-21	8 Dt 27-28
9 Gn 26-28	9 Lv 22-23	9 Dt 29-31
10 Gn 29-30	10 Lv 24-25	10 Dt 32-34
11 Gn 31-32	11 Lv 26-27	11 Ja 1-4
12 Gn 33-35	12 Nm 1-2	12 Ja 5-7
13 Gn 36-38	13 Nm 3-4	13 Ja 8-9
14 Gn 39-41	14 Nm 5-6	14 Ja 10-11
15 Gn 42-44	15 Nm 7	15 Ja 12-14
16 Gn 45-47	16 Nm 8-10	16 Ja 15-17
17 Gn 48-50	17 Nm 11-13	17 Ja 18-20
18 Ex 1-3	18 Nm 14-15	18 Ja 21-22
19 Ex 4-6	19 Nm 16-18	19 Ja 23-24
20 Ex 7-9	20 Nm 19-21	20 Ja 1-3
21 Ex 10-12	21 Nm 22-24	21 Ja 4-6
22 Ex 13-15	22 Nm 25-26	22 Ja 7-8
23 Ex 16-18	23 Nm 27-29	23 Jg 9-10
24 Ex 19-21	24 Nm 30-31	24 Jg 11-13
25 Ex 22-24	25 Nm 32-33	25 Jg 14-16
26 Ex 25-27	26 Nm 34-36	26 Jg 17-19
27 Ex 28-29	27 Dt 1-2	27 Jg 20-21
28 Ex 30-32	28 Dt 3-4	28 Rt 1-4
29 Ex 33-35		29 1 Sm 1-3
30 Ex 36-38		30 1 Sm 4-7
31 Ex 39-40		31 1 Sm 8-10

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1 1 Sm 11-13	1 2 Kg 8-9	1 Er 9-10
2 1 Sm 14-15	2 2 Kg 10-12	2 Ne 1-3
3 1 Sm 16-17	3 2 Kg 13-14	3 Ne 4-6
4 1 Sm 18-20	4 2 Kg 15-16	4 Ne 7-8
5 1 Sm 21-24	5 2 Kg 17-18	5 Ne 9-10
6 1 Sm 25-27	6 2 Kg 19-21	6 Ne 11-13
7 1 Sm 28-31	7 2 Kg 22-25	7 Et 1-3
8 2 Sm 1-3	8 1 Ch 1	8 Et 4-7
9 2 Sm 4-7	9 1 Ch 2-4	9 Et 8-10
10 2 Sm 8-11	10 1 Ch 5-6	10 Jb 1-5
11 2 Sm 12-13	11 1 Ch 7-9	11 Jb 6-10
12 2 Sm 14-15	12 1 Ch 10-12	12 Jb 11-15
13 2 Sm 16-17	13 1 Ch 13-16	13 Jb 16-21
14 2 Sm 18-19	14 1 Ch 17-19	14 Jb 22-28
15 2 Sm 20-22	15 1 Ch 20-23	15 Jb 29-33
16 2 Sm 23-24	16 1 Ch 24-26	16 Jb 34-37
17 1 Kg 1	17 1 Ch 27-29	17 Jb 38-42
18 1 Kg 2-3	18 2 Ch 1-4	18 Ps 1-9
19 1 Kg 4-6	19 2 Ch 5-7	19 Ps 10-17
20 1 Kg 7	20 2 Ch 8-10	20 Ps 18-22
21 1 Kg 8	21 2 Ch 11-14	21 Ps 23-31
22 1 Kg 9-10	22 2 Ch 15-18	22 Ps 32-37
23 1 Kg 11-12	23 2 Ch 19-22	23 Ps 38-44
24 1 Kg 13-14	24 2 Ch 23-25	24 Ps 45-51
25 1 Kg 15-17	25 2 Ch 26-28	25 Ps 52-59
26 1 Kg 18-19	26 2 Ch 29-30	26 Ps 60-67
27 1 Kg 20-22	27 2 Ch 31-33	27 Ps 68-71
28 2 Kg 1-2	28 2 Ch 34-36	28 Ps 72-77
29 2 Kg 3-4	29 Er 1-2	29 Ps 78-81
30 2 Kg 5-7	30 Er 3-5	30 Ps 82-89
	31 Er 6-8	

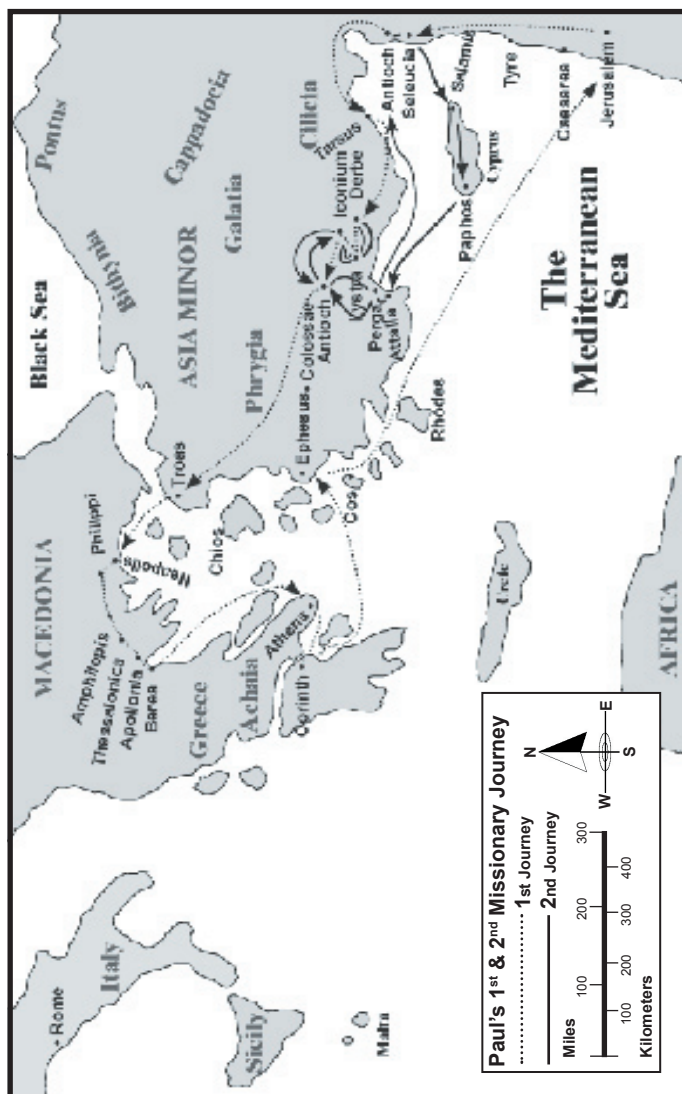
JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
1 Ps 90-97	1 Is 43-47	1 Ez 17-19
2 Ps 98-104	2 Is 48-51	2 Ez 20-21
3 Ps 105-107	3 Is 52-56	3 Ez 22-23
4 Ps 108-116	4 Is 57-59	4 Ez 24-26
5 Ps 117-118	5 Is 60-63	5 Ez 27-28
6 Ps 119	6 Is 64-66	6 Ez 29-31
7 Ps 120-135	7 Jr 1-3	7 Ez 32-33
8 Ps 136-142	8 Jr 4-6	8 Ez 34-36
9 Ps 143-150	9 Jr 7-9	9 Ez 37-38
10 Pv 1-4	10 Jr 10-12	10 Ez 39-40
11 Pv 5-8	11 Jr 13-15	11 Ez 41-43
12 Pv 9-13	12 Jr 16-18	12 Ez 44-45
13 Pv 14-17	13 Jr 19-22	13 Ez 46-48
14 Pv 18-21	14 Jr 23-25	14 Dn 1-2
15 Pv 22-24	15 Jr 26-27	15 Dn 3-4
16 Pv 25-28	16 Jr 28-30	16 Dn 5-6
17 Pv 29-31	17 Jr 31-32	17 Dn 7-8
18 Ec 1-6	18 Jr 33-35	18 Dn 9-10
19 Ec 7-12	19 Jr 36-38	19 Dn 11-12
20 Ss 1-8	20 Jr 39-41	20 Hs 1-7
21 Is 1-4	21 Jr 42-44	21 Hs 8-14
22 Is 5-8	22 Jr 45-48	22 Jl 1-3
23 Is 9-12	23 Jr 49-50	23 Am 1-5
24 Is 13-16	24 Jr 51-52	24 Am 6-9; Ob
25 Is 17-21	25 Lm 1-2	25 Jh1-4/Mc1-2
26 Is 22-25	26 Lm 3-5	26 Mc 3-7
27 Is 26-28	27 Ez 1-4	27 Nh; Hk
28 Is 29-31	28 Ez 5-8	28 Zp / Hg
29 Is 32-35	29 Ez 9-12	29 Zc 1-6
30 Is 36-38	30 Ez 13-15	30 Zc 7-10
31 Is 39-42	31 Ez 16	

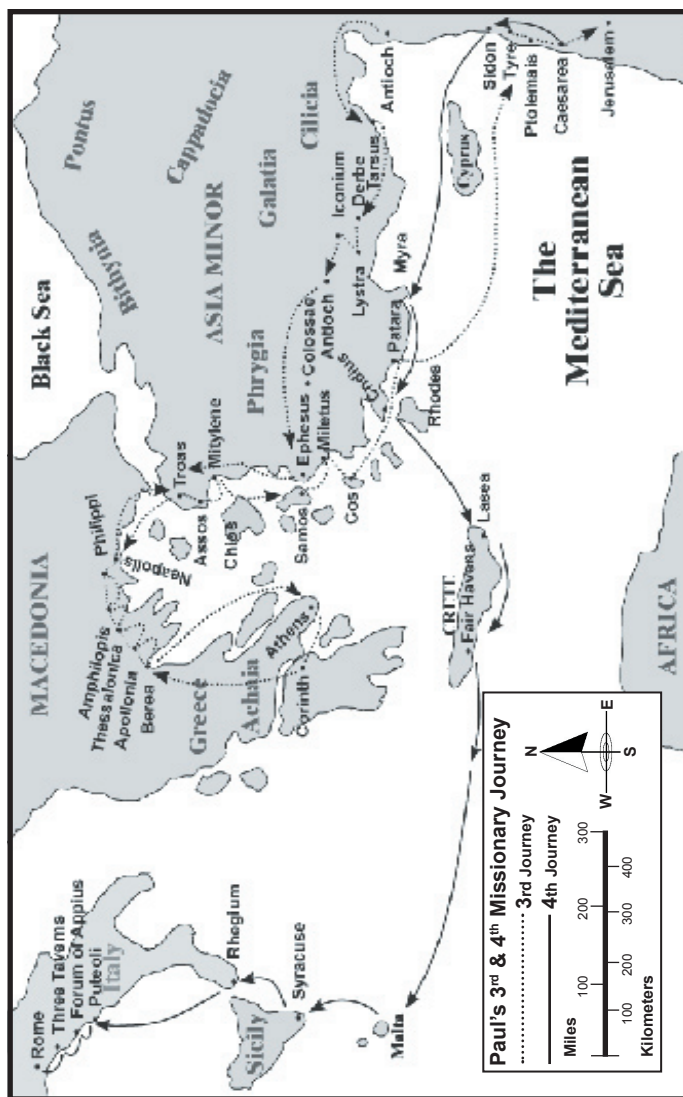
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
1 Zc 11-14	1 Lk 21-22	1 1 Co 12-14
2 Mt 1-4	2 Lk 23-24	2 1 Co 15-16
3 Mt 1-4	3 Jn 1-3	3 2 Co 1-4
4 Mt 5-6	4 Jn 4-5	4 2 Co 5-8
5 Mt 7-9	5 Jn 6-7	5 2 Co 9-13
6 Mt 10-12	6 Jn 8-9	6 Gl 1-6
7 Mt 13-14	7 Jn 10-11	7 Ep 1-3
8 Mt 15-17	8 Jn 12-13	8 Ep 4-6
9 Mt 18-20	9 Jn 14-16	9 Ph 1-4
10 Mt 21-22	10 Jn 17-18	10 Cl 1-4
11 Mt 23-24	11 Jn 19-21	11 1 Th 1-5
12 Mt 25-26	12 At 1-3	12 2 Th 1-3
13 Mt 27-28	13 At 4-6	13 1 Tm 1-4
14 Mk 1-3	14 At 7-8	14 1 Tm 5-6
15 Mk 4-5	15 At 9-10	15 2 Tm 1-4
16 Mk 6-7	16 At 11-13	16 Ti / Pt
17 Mk 8-9	17 At 14-16	17 Hb 1-5
18 Mk 10-11	18 At 17-18	18 Hb 6-9
19 Mk 12-13	19 At 19-20	19 Hb 10-11
20 Mk 14-16	20 At 21-22	20 Hb 12-13
21 Lk 1	21 At 23-25	21 Js 1-5
22 Lk 2-3	22 At 26-28	22 1 Pt 1-5
23 Lk 4-5	23 Rm 1-3	23 2 Pt 1-3
24 Lk 6-7	24 Rm 4-7	24 1 Jn 1-5
25 Lk 8	25 Rm 8-10	25 2, 3 Jn / Jd
26 Lk 9	26 Rm 11-14	26 Rv 1-3
27 Lk 10-11	27 Rm 15-16	27 Rv 4-8
28 Lk 12-13	28 1 Co 1-4	28 Rv 9-12
29 Lk 14-16	29 1 Co 5-8	29 Rv 13-16
30 Lk 17-18	30 1 Co 9-11	30 Rv 17-19
31 Lk 19-20		31 Rv 20-22











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ABBREVIATIONS**OLD TESTAMENT**

Gn	Genesis
Ex	Exodus
Lv	Leviticus
Nm	Numbers
Dt	Deuteronomy
Ja	Joshua
Jg	Judges
Rt	Ruth
1 Sm	1 Samuel
2 Sm	2 Samuel
1 Kg	1 Kings
2 Kg	2 Kings
1 Ch	1 Chronicles
2 Ch	2 Chronicles
Er	Ezra
Ne	Nehemiah
Et	Esther
Jb	Job
Ps	Psalms
Pv	Proverbs
Ec	Ecclesiastes
Ss	Song of Solomon
Is	Isaiah
Jr	Jeremiah
Lm	Lamentations
Ez	Ezekiel
Dn	Daniel
Hs	Hosea
Jl	Joel
Am	Amos
Ob	Obadiah
Jh	Jonah
Mc	Micah
Nh	Nahum
Hk	Habakkuk
Zp	Zephaniah
Hg	Haggai
Zc	Zechariah
Ml	Malachi

NEW TESTAMENT

Mt	Matthew
Mk	Mark
Lk	Luke
Jn	John
At	Acts
Rm	Romans
1 Co	1 Corinthians
2 Co	2 Corinthians
Gl	Galatians
Ep	Ephesians
Ph	Philippians
Cl	Colossians
1 Th	1 Thessalonians
2 Th	2 Thessalonians
1 Tm	1 Timothy
2 Tm	2 Timothy
Ti	Titus
Pl	Philemon
Hb	Hebrews
Js	James
1 Pt	1 Peter
2 Pt	2 Peter
1 Jn	1 John
2 Jn	2 John
3 Jn	3 John
Jd	Jude
Rv	Revelation