

Who Said That You Should Be Perfect?

The true guide to preparing for your future

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Chapter 1

Who said that you should be perfect?

From the time I was a small child, I have been plagued by the thought that I must be perfect. People like to say that ‘practice makes perfect’. However, my mother told me that if you practice something wrong, then you would never get it right no matter how much you practice. She would also tell me that the saying should be ‘*perfect* practice makes perfect’. So because of my upbringing, I have since childhood been of the opinion that I should be perfect. However, most people also say that ‘no one is perfect’ and that no one expects us to be perfect. For Christians, it is taught by many that only Jesus was perfect and that God does not expect us to be perfect. As we will see later, this flies in the face of what Jesus actually said in the Bible.

The problem with achieving perfection lies in the very nature of the human make up. Humans are inherently flawed, but they have an internal drive to want to achieve perfection. For non-Christians there are several approaches to trying to become ‘perfect’. Some people try to find *physical* perfection through diet and exercise. Some try by having cosmetic surgery. People in some cultures even go to great lengths of physical abuse, for example, some even flog themselves to try to bring about perfection! However as we will see, this is not the way to reach *eternal* perfection. Human wisdom cannot in and of itself lead to perfection, as it comes from the same flawed source as the imperfection itself.¹ So a catch 22 exists in that we desire inwardly to be perfect, but in and of ourselves we cannot achieve the perfection. Therefore, people down through the ages have found ways to encourage themselves by believing and teaching that perfection is unachievable. People have convinced themselves that because they do not inherently have the power to become perfect, they must therefore be willing to accept less than perfection. Since they have convinced themselves of this, they then stop trying and become somewhat lazy in their walk in this life. People accept lack of perfection as the norm and do not seek to change. Some people even go the opposite direction becoming evil, because they see the flaws in themselves and others and feel that doing good deeds is just a waste of time. What then is the solution?

In order to address this problem, let us first define perfection. The word *perfect* implies flawlessness. It suggests no error in one’s walk in this life. The very essence of the word suggests deification. If we are perfect, then we will no longer fail in anything. Although this is true in a sense, the real meaning of the word perfect from an eternal perspective implies *maturity*. In the New Testament of the Bible, the Greek word from which perfect is translated is *teleios*. Teleios suggests an end point. For example teleios is the word from which the prefix in the word telescope comes. From this we see that *perfection is an endpoint that we must aspire to*. That endpoint must be further defined based upon one’s belief system. For those who believe that perfection is not possible, or to some even desirable, this endpoint will fall short of what most would label as perfect. Because we are so accustomed to living with imperfection, we may not recognize perfection when we see it. This is certainly the case for people who deny the perfection of Jesus Christ.

¹ The Holy Bible, (THB) James 3:13-18

Those who deny that Jesus Christ was the Son of God will no doubt also deny His perfection. Those who believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God will believe in His perfection, but will ascribe that perfection to the fact that He *was* the Son of God. They will then probably believe that since no one else has that Devine origin, they will not be able to achieve the same perfection. If we believe this, we will not even try to achieve perfection, since then it would be fruitless to do so. Further, we will continue to make excuses for our failure to achieve the same perfection. Thus is the state of almost every person on earth. Although this is sad, it is true. If, on the other hand, we begin to examine the idea that perfection *is* possible in this life, then we can begin to see whether or not there is a true way to reach that perfected state before we die.

Who then expects us to become perfected? The answer to that question is God does. He is the one who told us to be perfect.² The purpose of this book then is to not only present the concept that perfection in this life is *possible*, but that it is actually *expected* of us. In the upcoming pages we will also outline the way to become perfected in this life and in the next.

²THB, Matthew 5:48

Chapter 2

Who are we?

The complexity of the human being and other aspects of our natural world beg the question of an intelligent creator. No one in his or her right mind could deny the existence of our intelligent design.¹ Even given millions of years, there is no way that the earth and its contents as we know them could have evolved. Some modern scientists are beginning to admit this. Therefore I will leave the discussion of the existence of God to those who *choose* to have no hope of eternity. For those who believe that there is an all powerful creator whom we call God, the only thing that needs to be decided is who we are, what God wants us to do and how He wants us to go about doing it. In other words, who are we and why did God create us?

For the answers to these issues, we need only look to the natural world and human relationships to see just what God had in mind when He created us. Families that have healthy relationships mimic the relationship that God wants to have with us. *It is the family characteristic of God that He placed into us that shows us what He wants from us.* God's will is that the human race has the same overall appearance and function on earth as things are in heaven where God lives.² We will delineate why He did this later.

God created us with an internal desire to have loving relationships with other people. Even if we look to the animal kingdom, we will see that there is an expression of love between members of families. Love can also span the gap between animals and humans. This emotional attachment and drive for relational love is undeniable. Even evil people have a desire for the approval of others. Very few individuals can live exclusive of other people. We all desire to be loved and to give love.

God also placed in us the desire to have a relationship with Him. This drive for spiritual fulfillment exists in every human. It is one of the things that separate humans from animals. Again, even evil people often acknowledge the existence of 'higher powers' and have the desire to worship. Satan and his unclean spirits serve as 'gods' to some people. However, the people whom the true God has made for His kingdom have the deep desire to love this one true God, through His Son Jesus Christ.

The problem for people of the world, and even most Christians, comes when deciding what constitutes love. Most people experience a 'feeling of love' for others. Some even say they 'love' God. However, love is more than a feeling. *More importantly, love is a decision-based process.* We must *decide* to express our love for God and for other people. Those who base their loving actions on *feelings* have difficulty holding on to solid relationships with others. This is why there is such a high divorce rate in the world, especially in developed countries. In societies in which people are allowed to do whatever they 'feel' like doing, the vast majority of the time those people will never develop true solid love in their lives. They will spend their lives chasing feelings and fail to capture what it is that they are really looking for. Watching movies and reading 'fairy tales' made about 'love stories' exemplifies this concept. People in these stories go

¹ THB, Romans 1:18-32

² THB, Matthew 6:10 and Luke 11:2

through all kinds of things just to get together in order to satisfy the drive that ‘loving feelings’ give them. The story usually ends when they finally do get together. Then we want to believe that there was ‘love at first sight’ and that they ‘lived happily ever after’. *However, starting a loving relationship is only the beginning of the love walk.* If we followed the stories further, we would likely find that many of these Hollywood and fairy tale couples would eventually split up. Why? They would split up because they would continue to act on self-centered *feelings*. This approach to love is what human wisdom propagates to the world through tradition, literature and the entertainment industry.

Unfortunately, the Hollywood and fairy tale approach to love will *not* work long term. That is why fairy tales are just that. They are *tales*, which is a nice way of saying that they are lies! If we buy into the lies that the world feeds us, then we will suffer the consequences. Almost every young girl, again especially in developed countries, is raised with and actively taught the misconception that there will be a ‘Prince Charming’ who will marry her and she then will have the ‘perfect life’. They then seek after this fairy tale life with a fancy wedding and all. When the realization of the reality of normal life strikes them, they are often devastated that it is not the way they had envisioned. This is why the world’s approach to love will never work and one of the reasons there is so much misery in the world. However, if we make a solid *decision* to express what is called *unconditional love*, there would be no reason to get divorced or attack one another. Then people would find true long-term happiness. Then we would be able to take the ‘good with the bad’, working together. Further, there would be less ‘bad’, because everyone would be treating others as they would want to be treated.³

Love is a complex process that requires certain characteristics, both *intrinsic* and *developed*. Most of the motivational drive for love is intrinsic. God puts this drive into us. However, the main characteristics that are required for ongoing success in loving relationships with God and other people require development. The essence of God is love. Only God can perfect love in us, through His Son Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit.⁴

Humans were created in the image of God, and were given dominion over the earth.⁵ One of the main reasons that God created us is to love Him. ***The only thing we can give to God that He does not already have is our love.*** We must however first receive God’s love, because we cannot give away something that we do not have. We must receive the love of God before we can give true love back to God or to other people.⁶ That is why it is so important to develop a true loving relationship with God before we attempt to give love to other people. We show our love for God primarily by our obedience to Him.⁷

Loving God is not enough. Some people just want a relationship with God without having to deal with other people. This is *not* acceptable to God. He also wants us to develop loving relationships with other human beings. Some people want only to have

³ THB, Matthew 7:12 and Luke 6:31

⁴ THB, John chapter 15 and I John 4:7-21

⁵ THB, Genesis 1:26-28

⁶ THB, I John 4:19

⁷ THB, John 14:15-24, John 15:9-10 and I John 5:3

relationships with other people and not with God. This is also not acceptable to God.⁸ We are supposed to develop the ability to express true love toward God, as well as toward other people. We need this ability in order to develop an eternal character of truly ‘ever after’ living in a loving relationship with God and His family. God created human beings in order to develop them into an extension of His ‘family’.⁹ However, He created us with an innate *inability* to carry this out in and of ourselves. Further, the ‘fall’ of Eve and Adam by entering into sin through disobedience to God in the Garden of Eden, created a ‘sin nature’ in us that we can only overcome through Jesus Christ, the Son of God.¹⁰ Although people will continually try to deny this truth, it will never change the fact that it *is* true. People who do not accept this will find out one day that they will have lost out on the rest of eternity, only then it will be too late. **That is why it is so important now to accept that Jesus Christ is the only way to eternal salvation and gaining the ability to truly live ‘happily ever after’.**¹¹

The ability to walk in love can only be accomplished through Jesus Christ, by the power of God via His Holy Spirit. God sent us the Holy Spirit in order to help us do what we are supposed to do. The Holy Spirit is the member of the Godhead who wields the power for the Father. The Holy Spirit is also the one who gives us God’s power to do what God put us here on earth to do.¹² With God’s help, through Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit, we can do anything, including becoming perfected in God’s love.¹³ On the other hand, we cannot do anything of true value for ourselves, others or God without God’s help through Jesus.¹⁴ Even Jesus did nothing of His own accord.¹⁵ This is why the human race as a whole has failed in its attempt to rule over the earth, as it has largely rejected Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the true, complete teachings that He provided to us. The ‘fairy tale’ stories that the world, especially Hollywood, propagate are based on the plan of God for Christians to ‘marry’ the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ, and ‘live happily ever after’ in the presence of God. The good news, (*i.e.*, the gospel of Jesus Christ) is that we CAN marry Him and we WILL then live happily ever after...FOREVER, but only if we do it God’s way.¹⁶

This good news is that Jesus died for us on the cross. He did this in order to make us right with God the Father.¹⁷ The message of the cross on which Jesus died is summed up in one word...*LOVE*. ***The vertical component of the cross represents our loving relationship with God. The horizontal component of the cross represents our loving relationship with other people.*** God requires *both*. However, there is no support for the loving relationship with other people, (*i.e.*, the horizontal component of the cross), without a loving relationship with God, (*i.e.*, the vertical component of the cross).¹⁸ It is

⁸ THB, Leviticus 19:18, Mathew 19:19, 22:39, Mark 12:30-31, Luke 10:25-37, John 15:12-14, Romans 13:8-10 and Galatians 5:12-15

⁹ THB, Romans 8:29-30

¹⁰ THB, Genesis chapter 3 and Romans 7:13-25; Apocrypha of the Old Testament, II Esdras 4:22-31

¹¹ THB, John 14:6, Acts 4:5-12 and Galatians 3:22

¹² THB, John 14:26, 15:26, Acts 1:1-8 and Romans 8:1-39

¹³ THB, Philippians 4:13

¹⁴ THB, John 15:5

¹⁵ THB, John 5:19 and 30, 8:28

¹⁶ THB, John 3:22-36, II Corinthians 11:2-4 and Revelation 7-9, chapter 21 and 22:12-17

¹⁷ THB, Romans 4:25

¹⁸ THB, Matthew 22:34-40

the perfection of these relationships that God seeks for us. However, this can only be accomplished with God's help through Jesus and the Holy Spirit. If we better understand the purpose of our creation, then we might be able to cooperate with God in accomplishing the true purpose He has for our lives, and why He created us.

Chapter 3

Why did God create us?

Why did God decide to create humans to become an extension of His family? The reason is that He needed to replace the angels He lost due to the fall of Lucifer. Lucifer, (whose name meant *morning star*) was one of the leader, or arch, angels that God had previously created in order to take care of Him in His heavenly kingdom. When God created the earth, He made Lucifer ruler of the earth. Lucifer, (whose name, after his fall from grace, God changed to Satan, which means *adversary*) is also referred to in the Bible by various other names, (e.g., king or prince of Tyre, king of Babylon, the devil, Beelzebub, prince of the power of the air, god of this world, etc.). Modern man has been in existence for only approximately six thousand years, since God created Adam. Many years before He created Adam, God placed Lucifer and other angels on the earth in the first Garden of Eden. Lucifer had it all - position of authority, wealth, good looks, a great voice and talent for music. He was created *perfect*, but *pride* resulted in his fall. He had so much going for him that he thought he could take over heaven and replace God Himself!¹

In the book of Genesis, the Bible tells us that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth became without form and void, (*i.e.*, desolation, confusion and chaos abounded). Since God is not the author of confusion, this shows that there was an event that took place to lead to this state, as He would not have created it this way. The event that brought destruction, desolation, confusion and chaos to the earth was the fall of Lucifer. God then changed his name to Satan, because he had become the enemy or ‘adversary’. Before Satan was cast out of heaven, he had convinced one third of the angels to follow him in his rebellion against God. When Michael, another archangel, and the rest of the good angels, cast the rebellious angels out of heaven and down to the earth, God changed their character from beauty and splendor to darkness, confusion and ugliness. To this day these fallen angels remain in a state of confusion with ‘scrambled’ minds. After the fall, these spirit beings could not understand or operate in the truth even if they wanted to. This ‘fall’ was the event that destroyed the surface of the earth. It created a state of disorder and darkness. These fallen angels *still* operate in the earth in the unseen realm of the spirit.² It is our job to overcome them by the power of God, through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit working in our lives. It is their job to try to destroy us. You can think of them as spiritual ‘personal trainers’. God’s purpose for these unclean spirits still being here on earth is to ‘drive’ us toward God, and away from the pride that caused their fall.³

God decided on a special plan for humans. Since He had lost a large number of angels in Satan’s rebellion, He decided to replace them. This time however, He would create beings that would start out as mortal, so that He could destroy them if they got out of hand.⁴ *Since God gave humans a free will, He could then test people and prove them*

¹ THB, Ezekiel 28:11-19, Isaiah 14:3-23, Matthew 10:25 and 12:25-30 and Ephesians 2:2

² THB, Genesis 1:1-2, Luke 10:18-20, John 8:44, I Corinthians 14:33, II Corinthians 11:13-15 and Revelation 1:20, 12:3-4 and Vv. 7-9

³ THB, Leviticus 26:18-20, Job chapter 33, esp. verse 17, Proverbs 16:18, Isaiah 23:8-9, Zephaniah 3:1-13, Mark 7:18-23, I Timothy 3:1-7, I John 2:15-17, Ephesians 2:1-7 and Ephesians 6:10-12

⁴ THB, Genesis chapters 6-10, II Peter chapter 2 and Jude

*through trials and tribulation to see if they would willfully choose His ways over their own way, or the way of Satan.*⁵ God would give these new human beings the *opportunity* to become part of His immortal family. However, He would create humans initially *lower* than the angels that He had previously created, but with the *potential* to become members of, or even possibly rule within, the angelic realm.⁶ In other words God created humans with the potential to become *'sons' or children of God*. God did this in one sense in order to 'silence' the mouth of Satan who had failed God.⁷

Humans were created as weak mortal beings so they would therefore be subject to deception from the fallen angels. God does not waste anything; He would use these fallen angels to help drive a group of humans toward God in an 'elective' way. This would insure to God that these people would *choose* Him and His ways over the selfish, prideful desire that led Lucifer into sin. *Once these people had of their own free will chosen to follow God's ways rather than their own way, or the ways of Satan, they would have proven themselves worthy of being eternal members of God's family.* These people would ultimately be rewarded with a resurrection from death into eternal life in the presence of God.⁸ On the other hand, the people who reject the ways of God through Jesus Christ will be rewarded with permanent destruction.⁹

Knowing the difficult task that humans would have in suffering through and overcoming the wiles of the devil and his evil kingdom of darkness, God made a certain way for humans to enter the kingdom of heaven through His Son Jesus Christ.¹⁰ God knew that humans would in their innate weakness fail and sin, (*i.e.*, disobey God).¹¹ Once people sinned, God put the 'sin nature' into the genetic code. Humans then could not exist in the presence of God, who is perfect and cannot live in the presence of sinful people.¹² Jesus would be the first member of this new family. He would suffer and die for our shortcomings. He would be the sacrifice to God for our sins and die in our place, (*i.e.*, the *propitiation* for our sins) so that we could have a way where there was previously no way.¹³ The only things that we would have to do are to believe and confess that Jesus is our savior or Messiah, and obey God. God would help us in this regard by sending His Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen us.¹⁴ Anyone who denies this way of God, denies God Himself, and operates according to the antichrist spirit, (*i.e.*, the devil).¹⁵

⁵ THB, Deuteronomy chapter 8, Isaiah 48:10, Luke 22:24-30, James 1:2-4, I Peter chapters 1-3 and Hebrews 2:8-9, 5:8-9,

⁶ THB, Matthew 22:23-32, Mark 12:18-27 and I Corinthians 6:3

⁷ THB, Psalm chapter 8, esp. Vv. 5-8, Matthew 5:9, Luke 20:27-40, Romans chapters 1-8, Galatians 3:26-29 and Hebrews chapters 2-4

⁸ THB, Luke 22:24-30, I Thessalonians 4:13-18 and Revelation 20:1-6

⁹ THB, Daniel 12:1-3, Matthew 22:23-33, Mark 12:18-27, Luke 14:7-35, 20:27-40, John 5:4-30, 11:1-27, Acts 2:29-47, 24:15-16, Romans 1:1-7, 6:1-14, I Corinthians chapter 15, Philippians chapter 3, Hebrews 6:1-8, chapter 10-11, I Peter 1:3-12, 3:18-22 and Revelation chapter 20

¹⁰ THB, John 14:6

¹¹ THB, Genesis chapter 3

¹² THB, Psalm chapter 15 and 24:1-6

¹³ THB, Romans 3:21-26, 8:18-39, Hebrews 2:14-18, I John 2:1-2 and 4:7-11

¹⁴ THB, John 14:15-31

¹⁵ THB, Luke 10:1-20, esp. v. 16, John 12:42-50, Romans 3:19-31, 8:18-38, esp. v. 29, 10:5-13, Hebrews 2:14-18 and I John 2:1-11 and chapter 4

The good news, (a.k.a., the '*gospel*') is that not only would God make the way into His family certain, if we would *repent* of our sins and *believe in* and accept His Son Jesus as our Lord and Savior, but through His Holy Spirit He would provide the power we would need in order to get the job done to complete the work of salvation. We would receive authority over the devil through Jesus and the power to overcome Satan through the Holy Spirit.¹⁶ This would give us the tools that we would need to move toward perfection in Christ Jesus. The authority over the devil and his unclean spirits comes to us through the name of Jesus Christ. The power comes to us from Jesus in the form of a baptism of the Holy Spirit. This baptism would also be a baptism of fire that, if used properly, would 'burn out' the garbage in our hearts and minds that separates us from God's perfected state.¹⁷ Now that we know why God created us, then we can try to understand why God created us the way He did. Then we can begin to move toward the goal that God has set forth for our lives.

¹⁶ THB, Psalm 85:7 and 119:41, Isaiah 62:11, Luke 9:1-2, 10:17-20, Acts 1:1-11, Ephesians 1:3-14, Philippians 2:12-13 and I Peter 2:2

¹⁷ THB, Matthew 3:1-12, Mark 1:4-8, Luke 3:16, John 14:15-31, Romans 12:1-2 and Titus 3:1-11

Chapter 4

How are we made?

Now that we know why God made us, then it would be helpful to know how God made us. It would also be helpful to know what it means symbolically to be made in the way that we are. It is apparent from scientific studies that the human body, just like the earth, is physically a carbon-based entity composed mostly of water. The entire earth is carbon-based land surrounded by water. It was out of the earth that the human was formed.¹ The Bible says that God is a fountain of living waters. It also says that Jesus is the Word of God. The Word of God is the 'water' by which we live and with which we 'cleanse' our souls. If we 'drink' in of Jesus, who is this 'living water', which means to believe in Him, then we will also have rivers of 'water' or 'living water', (*i.e.*, the Holy Spirit, who is one with Jesus) flowing from inside us and this will lead us into *eternal* life. Water gives life to the natural earth. If there is no water, (*i.e.*, a drought) then there is no life either in the plant or the animal kingdom. Thus, water is one of the things that symbolize the essence of God through Jesus and the Holy Spirit, which is love. This is why God chose to make us mostly of water. Even the entire earth was covered by water before man was created. As we will see later, this is because of the fall of Lucifer. The water was symbolic of baptism of the earth from the fall of Satan, long before man was created in the image of God. The water covering the earth is also symbolic of the love of God, through Jesus, covering the 'sin' of the earth from the fall of Lucifer and his evil angels. All things created out of the water were created through the water, which is Jesus.²

The carbon-based elements of the human body that form the substance of the flesh are symbolic of the 'dust' of the Earth. Just as dirt and water do not mix, the 'flesh' is the antithesis of love, which is the essence of God. Humans are innately drawn to water. This is again because, though most people do not know it, the water represents Jesus. Water is constantly eroding the earth, which is symbolic of the love of God, (through Jesus who is the Word of God), working in the earth to overcome the sin of the flesh. That is why in the end-of-times there will be much flooding and the seas overcoming much of the land. This is also the reason that submersion water baptism symbolizes the washing away of sin and breaking the power of the sinful flesh in a person's life. Since God is Spirit and not composed of flesh, He ultimately cannot therefore dwell with anything made of flesh. Jesus came in the flesh, but before He could return to heaven He had to be glorified again with His 'immortal body'. In order for any human to live in the presence of God they will also have to be changed into this same kind of body.³

When He made Adam from the dust of the earth, God 'blew' His spirit into the human and placed in him a soul, which was his personality including the free will. Thus, the atmosphere, which gives us the breath of life, also represents the Holy Spirit. We will die even sooner without air than without water. Also, we cannot breathe in water. This shows

¹ THB, Genesis chapter 1, 2:7 and Psalm 24:1-2 and chapter 104

² THB, Deuteronomy 8:3, Proverbs 10:12, Jeremiah 2:13 and 17:13, Matthew 4:4, Luke 4:4 and 10:18, John 1:1-4, 4:1-14 and 7:37-39, II Corinthians 4:16, Ephesians 5:26, Hebrews chapter 1, I Peter 4:8, I John 4:8 and 15-16 and Revelation 19:13,

³ THB, Genesis 6:3, Isaiah 40:6-8, Luke 9:27-36, 21:25 and 24:25-26, John 1:14-18, 7:39, 12:16 and Vv. 23-28 and 20:17, Romans chapter 6, I Corinthians 15:35-58, I John 3:2 and Revelation 6:14

that we require both, but for separate and equally important purposes, though air is of utmost importance. This is why it is so important NOT to blaspheme the Holy Spirit, as that is the only sin that will not be forgiven.⁴ God made humans in His image. Since God took Adam from the earth, then the earth symbolizes Jesus and the atmosphere represents the Holy Spirit, and therefore these both are symbolic of God and His work in the earth through these 'two witnesses'. Since Jesus is one with the Father and the Holy Spirit, then there are really three witnesses from heaven in the earth for the kingdom of light. God the Father bears witness of Jesus through the powerful miracles done through Jesus by the Holy Spirit, as well as in the blood shed by Jesus. The blood represents the Father's love and the blood of Jesus is His life and the light of the world. Thus, these aspects of humans show that even though there are differences in how the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit operate, they are all united as one, indivisible and individually necessary for true *eternal* life.⁵

The body of a human also requires food to live. This food represents our dependence on God for nourishment. The Bible tells us that Jesus is the 'bread of life'. As we saw He is also called the Word of God. Thus, we really require Jesus to nourish our soul by spending time in God's Word. If we do not eat, then we will eventually die. If we do not 'eat' God's Word, which is Christ, then we will die 'spiritually'. Therefore, if we 'abide' in Jesus and do the will of God, then this is our true food that will bring eternal life. This is why we eat the bread of communion; also know as the Lord's Supper. The bread of communion represents the body of Jesus and by eating it we can receive healing and strength in our fleshly bodies. That is why we should strive to take it every day, as Jesus is our 'daily bread'. However, we must take it with a right attitude of heart, or it will do the opposite and bring judgment from God in the form of sickness and possibly even death.⁶

The blood that courses through our vessels was placed there in order to symbolize God the Father. This blood carries important elements of the atmosphere, such as oxygen, which represent the Holy Spirit, and is composed mostly of water, which represents Jesus. Blood is necessary in order to keep the person alive and healthy. If a person loses enough blood they will die. Therefore, the blood also represents the essence of God, which is *love*. It is the blood of Jesus that was shed for our sins. Therefore His blood, (which represents the *love of the Father*) covered a multitude of sins. The blood of Jesus is the life of God and the light of the world. This is why we drink the 'blood' of Jesus, as represented by the wine of communion. If we take this wine as often as we can, (we should try to take it every day) then we are 'drinking in' the love of God and thereby overcoming sin in our lives. This is one of the ways that we 'abide' in Jesus, by taking communion. By doing this it will 'energize' our natural bodies and help keep us from getting sick. However again as we saw above, it is better NOT to take communion if a person has issues in their

⁴ THB, Matthew 12:31-32, Mark 3:28 and Luke 12:10

⁵ THB, Genesis 1:26 and 2:7 and John 3:1-21, 4:32-34, 8:13-20 and chapters 14-17 and I John 5:6-13

⁶ THB, Genesis 3:19, Exodus chapter 16 and 34:27-28, Deuteronomy 8:3, Matthew 4:1-4, 6:11, 26:26, John chapter 6, 8:30-36, 14:15-18 and chapter 15 and I Corinthians 10:16-17 and 11:17-34

heart that are at odds with God, or else as we mentioned above they may be ‘eating and drinking judgment upon themselves’ in the form of sickness and even death.⁷

God made humans flesh so that He could destroy them if they would not do what He wanted them to do.⁸ The reason that God composed humans of 2/3 water and 1/3 mineral is that it is symbolic of how He established essentially everything on the Earth. Because Satan turned one third of the angels when he rebelled, this left two thirds as good. Because of this ratio, and the fact that God has three persons in the ‘Godhead’, (*i.e.*, Father, Son and Holy Spirit) many things done in the Earth are in thirds. Thus, the two parts water in the Earth and in humans symbolizes the remaining 2/3 good angels in heaven, as well as the work of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in the earth. The one-third mineral, which comes from the dust of the earth, symbolizes the devil and the evil one third fallen angels.

When God said ‘let there be light’ as recorded in Genesis, He was activating Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the remaining 2/3 good angels in the earth. He separated the light from the darkness, (which was already there from the fall of Lucifer) and called the light ‘Day’ and the darkness ‘Night’. This was then considered the first ‘day’. The sun, moon and stars were not created until the fourth ‘day’.⁹ This separation of the two kingdoms, (*i.e.*, the ‘kingdom of light’ and the ‘kingdom of darkness’) remains to this day. Therefore, the kingdom of light in the earth now includes all true Christians. The kingdom of darkness is now composed of the devil, his evil fallen angels, demons and any human or entity working for the devil. N.B., demons are not the same as fallen angels, who have their own bodies. Demons are the disembodied spirits of the Nephilim, which are hybrid offspring of human women and fallen angels as described in the Bible in Genesis chapter 6. Demons are also known as ghosts and seek to inhabit a human or other body, (*e.g.*, an animal). These two kingdoms also still operate in the unseen spirit realm of the earth.¹⁰ We cannot usually see these spirits, but sometimes the spirit realm manifests itself in the natural. Then they can appear visible and tangible to us.¹¹

These instances of manifestation of the spirit realm into the natural generally bring surprise and shock, even to those who know the spirits exist. People who do not follow the true ways of God may still be confronted by spiritual activity. These occurrences will generally be considered as manifestation of ghosts, or spirits of departed ancestors, etc. However, in most cases it is the activity of unclean spirits. Once we understand this concept, then we can deal with them correctly.¹²

⁷ THB, Genesis 4:9-15, and 9:3-7, Exodus chapters 11-12, Deuteronomy 12:23, 15:23, Proverbs 10:12, John 1:1-4, 3:16, 15:1-12 and 19:34, Acts 20:28, Romans 3:21-26, 5:9 and 8:11, I Corinthians 10:16, 11:25-28, Ephesians 1:7 and 2:13, Colossians 1:9-23, Hebrews chapter 10 and 13:7-21, I Peter 1:16-21 and 4:8 and I John 1:7 and 5:6-8

⁸ THB, Genesis 6:11-13 and 9:8-17, Psalm chapter 90, Isaiah 66:14-17 and Revelation 20:11-15

⁹ THB, Genesis 1:3-19

¹⁰ THB, II Corinthians 4:16-18

¹¹ THB, Genesis 16:7-14, 19:1-25, 32:1-2 and 32:24-32, Numbers 22:22-41, Joshua 5:13-15, Daniel 7:15-28, 8:15-27, 9:20-27 and 10:4-21, Matthew 4:1-11, Luke 1:5-38, 2:8-15 and 4:1-14, Acts 5:17-22, 8:26, 9:1-19, 10:1-23, 12:5-24 and 27:23-24 and II Corinthians 11:14

¹² THB, Matthew 17:14-21, Mark 5:1-20 and 16:14-20, Luke 10:17-20 and Acts 16:16-18

Humans are composed of spirit, soul and body.¹³ The spirit and soul have eternal potential, but the body is mortal flesh. This is why as the body ages and the person sees someone different in the mirror as they age. This is difficult to accept, since the potentially eternal soul and spirit ‘feel’ the same on the inside. This is also why people have difficulty accepting the imperfections of the body, since the soul and spirit of the ‘internal person’ intrinsically know only perfection. The spirit is what gives us life. It comes from God. If the spirit leaves the body, the body dies. The soul is the person’s personality, made up of the mind, free will and emotions. The plan of God is that while we are in the flesh, we must prove ourselves to Him; that we will obey Him and not rebel like Lucifer did. If God is convinced of this, then He will grant us eternal life through His Son Jesus Christ. The most important part of obedience to God is accepting Jesus as our Lord and savior.¹⁴ If people do not accept Jesus as their Lord and savior, then they are in rebellion already and they do not deserve to have eternal life in the presence of God.¹⁵ Rebellious people have been in existence since the beginning of time, as we know it.¹⁶ People that repent, (*i.e.*, tell God they are sorry from the heart and turn away from their evil ways) will be forgiven by God and restored.¹⁷

When someone dies, the spirit and soul leave the body. If the person has been obedient to God and received Jesus, then that person’s spirit and soul go to a place called paradise, or ‘Abraham’s bosom’. If the person is disobedient and rebellious, then the spirit and soul go to a place called hell.¹⁸ These two diametrically opposed locations are holding places for departed spirit-souls, until the return of Christ and beyond.¹⁹ Paradise is a place of peace and happiness. Hell is a place of torment. Once a person arrives in either place, there is no going back. This is why it is so important to receive Jesus as Lord and savior *now*, in order to be ‘born again’. This way the person can be a new creation and let the ‘old man’ and old way of sinful life symbolically die, so that they can be saved, (from hell).²⁰ It is the *only* way to be certain that a person will receive salvation. There is no other way to God, except through Jesus Christ.²¹ Those who receive Jesus Christ and are saved will enter the kingdom of heaven and live forever in the presence of God. Everyone else will eventually end up in the lake of fire and there meet eternal destruction. Humans will not live in the lake of fire; they will be eternally destroyed in it. This is why it is called the ‘second death’. The disobedient people who chose not to receive Jesus Christ as their savior will ultimately be destroyed in this way. However, until they are thrown into the lake of fire, if they have died, their souls will remain in torment in hell.²² It is imperative that people who want to live with God forever and not perish in the lake of fire, accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior and walk with the Holy Spirit, until either they ‘die in Christ’ or Jesus comes back. This is the only certain way they will escape hell and

¹³ THB, I Thessalonians 5:23

¹⁴ THB, Matthew 22:23-32, Mark 12:18-27, Luke 20:27-38, John 19:30, Romans chapter 10 and James 2:26

¹⁵ THB, Mark 16:15-16

¹⁶ THB, Genesis chapters 3-4

¹⁷ THB, II Samuel chapter 20, the book of Job, esp. chapter 42, Psalm 32:1-2 and I Corinthians 15:9-11

¹⁸ THB, Luke 16:19-31 and 23:26-43, II Corinthians 12:1-10, II Peter chapter 2 and Jude

¹⁹ THB, Jude 14-15 and Revelation chapter 20; Apocrypha of the Old Testament, II Esdras 7:75- 115

²⁰ THB, John 3:1-21, Romans chapter 6, Ephesians 4:17-24, Colossians 3:1-11 and I Peter 1:22-25

²¹ THB, John 14:6

²² THB, Matthew 10:28 and 13:24-43 and Revelation chapters 30-22

the lake of fire. Although, there will be a second resurrection of people who have not received Jesus and those people will be judged according to their works. But first they will have a long time in hell.²³

Therefore we see how we are made, why God made us and what is to become of us. Now we must try to understand what God expects from us.

²³ THB, Matthew 10:16-22, Matthew 24:3-14, Mark 13:3-13 and Revelation 20:11-15

Chapter 5

What does God expect from us?

After God created humans in His image with a mortal body of flesh and a potentially immortal soul and spirit, He then allowed the devil, in the form a reptile, to deceive them. After the deception of the enemy, God put the ‘sin nature’ into the human genetic code.¹ Every human after Adam and Eve would then be ‘born into sin’, or have a ‘sinful nature’ that is contained within the ‘flesh’.² The physical fleshly body would be the part of the human being that would ‘house’ the spirit and soul during the person’s life on earth. The spirit, (*i.e.*, the ‘inward man’) comes directly from God and intrinsically knows what God wants.³ The flesh, after the ‘fall’ of Adam and Eve, is cursed and will last only a short time. After the flood of Noah, God decided that humans would live no more than 120 years.⁴ The spirit is perfect and unchanging. The flesh is weak and flawed. The soul is stuck in between the two. The soul has the free will. It is God’s desire that the soul, including the free will, would *choose* to follow His ways.⁵ When the person is born, the flesh and soul are immature. It was the immature mind of Lucifer that allowed him to sin against God. God wanted the ‘replacements’ of Lucifer and his rebellious angels, (*i.e.*, humans) to be tested *BEFORE* He gave them eternal bodies. This is why God created humans mortal. The life of the human on earth would be used to prove to God whether or not they would obey Him. God decided that humans, who had received Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior, would be resurrected if they died, or changed if they were still alive when Jesus returns. They would then receive a glorified, immortal body. The soul and spirit would join this glorified body and the end result would be the complete, immortal person. These ‘glorified’ beings would then dwell with God forever.⁶

Since God does not waste anything, He decided to use the devil and his fallen angels to do some of the ‘testing’ of the humans. The fall of Eve and Adam was in the great plan of God. If humans did not sin and fall short of the requirement of God to obey Him, then they would not need Jesus Christ to save them. It was God’s plan to get the sin ‘out of the way’ *before* He allowed humans to become immortal. God created humans lower than the angels, but with the potential to become ‘like the angels’ and join the family of God. This plan would also shut the mouth of the devil forever.⁷ Satan would enjoy being allowed to ‘test’ these ‘lowly’ humans. He hates humans, since they are potentially his replacements. However, the devil is only allowed to touch the lives of people who are disobedient, or even the obedient ones who need further maturation of their soul. He must ask permission to attack obedient people.⁸ Obedient people can expect and ask for God’s protection, but disobedient people expose themselves to the works of the devil by virtue of being out

¹ THB, Genesis chapter 3 and Romans chapters 6-8

² THB, Galatians chapter 5 and Colossians 2:6-23, especially the NLT; Apocrypha of the Old Testament, II Esdras 3:21-22 and 4:26-32

³ THB, Romans 7:22

⁴ THB, Genesis 6:3; Apocrypha of the Old Testament, Sirach 18:7

⁵ THB, Deuteronomy chapter 30

⁶ THB, I Corinthians 15:35-58, II Corinthians 4:5 - 5:10, I Thessalonians 4:13-17, Philippians 3:17-21 and Revelation 20:4-6

⁷ THB, Psalm chapter 8 and Matthew 22:29-32

⁸ THB, The book of Job and Luke 22:31-34

from under the wing of God's protection. The wicked people will also reap God's direct judgment.⁹ People who repent and turn from their evil ways can come into God's grace through Jesus Christ. However, people who are obedient for a time, then turn evil, will give up their salvation and still end up in the lake of fire, which is the second, eternal death.¹⁰

When babies are born, they require complete care. As humans grow and mature in the flesh, they become more independent and can accept more responsibility. This process mirrors the process that God created for the human soul. However, most people, including Christian leaders, do not understand this concept in God's great plan. If children are not properly loved and nurtured, (including proper punishment for doing wrong, being rewarded for doing the right thing and *NOT* being rewarded for doing wrong) they will grow up without the ability to discern good from evil. If they are properly punished for error and rewarded for good, obedient acts, they will be able to contribute to society in a positive way.¹¹ When people receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and get submersion baptized in water, they are 'born again'. This is symbolic of having a newborn soul. The mind, will and emotions then can start over in Christ. Their former sins and future *unintentional* sins are 'covered' by the blood of Jesus' sacrifice.¹²

Once people accept Jesus as Lord and Savior and are baptized in water, they will receive salvation, (*i.e.*, they will not end up in hell or eventually the lake of fire). The baptism 'cleanses' them of sin and breaks the power of sin in their lives. They symbolically 'die' to the sin nature of the flesh and are reborn into the 'Spirit'.¹³ The next step in the process of soul maturation is to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This gives the person power, (*i.e.*, grace) to do what God wants them to do and, through Jesus, to have authority and power over the devil and his demons.¹⁴

After a person is saved through Christ, born again from above and they have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the next step in the maturation process of the soul is for the person to go into the spiritual 'wilderness'. The wilderness is a time in a person's life in which God will test them through temptation from the devil. God will give the devil opportunity to do things to the person and in their lives to tempt them to disobey God. If the person has daily spent time with God and been trained up in God's Word, (which is the responsibility of those in the Christian church to teach them) then they will be able to withstand the trials of the devil. The minimum time they will spend in the 'wilderness' will be 40 days and nights. If they keep control of their tongue, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and believe and trust in God's Word, then they will come out of the wilderness within a short time, (minimum 6 weeks). They will come out of the wilderness with the POWER of God. If on the other hand, they grumble and complain, and do not believe

⁹ THB, Numbers 14:6-9, II Samuel 22:2-3 and 31-37, Psalm 2:12, 7:1-5, chapters 11, 18, 31, 57, 61-62, 71, 89 and 91, Proverbs 19:23 and 30:5 and Lamentations 2:3,

¹⁰ THB, Jeremiah chapter 16, Ezekiel 33:1-20, Matthew 10:22, Hebrews 6:4-8 and 10:26-31 and Revelation 21:7-8

¹¹ THB, Proverbs 13:24 and 22:6

¹² THB, I Corinthians 10:14-22, Ephesians 2:11-13, Colossians 1:19-23, Hebrews 9:11-28, chapter 10, 12:18-24 and 13:20-21, I Peter 1:1-2, I John 1:5-10 and Revelation 7:13-17 and 12:7-12

¹³ THB, Mark 16:15-16, John 3:1-21, Romans chapters 6-8 and 10:6-13 and I Peter 1:22-23

¹⁴ Matthew 3:1-12, Mark 1:4-8, Luke 3:16, 9:1-2, 10:17-20, John 14:15-31, Acts 1:1-11, Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 1:3-14, Philippians 2:12-13 and I Peter 2:2 and Titus 3:1-11

God's Word, (*i.e.*, do not have faith) then they will stay in the wilderness until they learn to grow up and walk in the Spirit, or die trying.¹⁵ The problem in the modern Christian church is that this process that was established by Jesus and confirmed by the apostles is not taught to believers today. Therefore they do not know how to grow up in Christ and thus can never get to the place of perfection or glorify God by finishing the work He sent them here on earth to do.¹⁶

It is this maturation process of the soul that God wants from us. If we learn how the process works, then it is easier to cooperate with the Holy Spirit of God and to follow in Jesus' footsteps.

¹⁵ THB, Deuteronomy chapter 8, Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:4-13, Luke 4:1-15 and I Corinthians 10:1-13

¹⁶ THB, John 15:8 and 17:4

Chapter 6

What is involved in the process of soul maturation?

In order for us to get to the place God wants to be, we need to follow the patterns established by God's people, especially Jesus Christ, as recorded in the Bible. It is helpful for us to understand the plan of God for humans, so that we can see more clearly what it is that God is doing in our lives. God wants us to accept His Son Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, so that we can be saved from the second, eternal death in the lake of fire. Following salvation, we need to be water baptized in order to become 'spiritually clean' and to break the power of sin in our lives. Then it is necessary to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit from Jesus in order to have the power, or grace, to do what God wants us to do. Immediately after receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, (which may be, but is not always accompanied by speaking in tongues, *i.e.*, the heavenly language of God) we must have a 'spiritual wilderness' experience. If we can with the help of God keep from complaining, then the wilderness experience does not have to be very long, (minimum 40 days and nights). After we come out of the spiritual wilderness, where we are tempted by the devil and tested to see if we will obey God, then the Holy Spirit will bring power into our lives. This power will usually be in the form of one or more 'gifts' of the Holy Spirit.¹ After we receive our salvation, the job God has for us is to preach the gospel, or good news of repentance of sin and redemption through Jesus Christ. When we preach the Word of God by the direction of the Holy Spirit, then God will confirm that Word with miracles, (*i.e.*, signs and wonders).² However, we must be mature in our souls in order to use this power properly.

Wisdom is the most important initial thing we must receive from God in order to mature in our soul. When we get wisdom from God, we must also get understanding and knowledge in order to be able to use the wisdom properly. *These three characteristics, wisdom, understanding and knowledge, are what God used to create the universe and make it work.* They are also what we must use to properly do everything here on earth.³ The way to get wisdom is to simply ask God for it and believe He will provide it.⁴ However, it is important that we only use God's wisdom, because there are two types of wisdom that operate in the world. The wisdom of God is pure, peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without hypocrisy or partiality. People who operate by this wisdom produce the fruit of righteousness, which is sown in peace by these peacekeepers. However, the other type of wisdom that operates and *predominates* in the world is human wisdom. This wisdom does not come from God, but from the devil. When people operate in human wisdom it comes from a heart of self-seeking and bitter envy. This wisdom is earthly and sensual because it originates in the earth, makes sense to the human mind and feels good to the flesh. For example, it feels good to tell someone off when they come against you. However, this is not what Jesus taught us when He said

¹ THB, Luke 4:14 and I Corinthians chapter 12

² THB, Jeremiah 32:21, Mark 16:14-20, Acts chapter 2, chapter 4, 5:1-16, 6:8-10, 14:3, Romans 15:17-20, II Corinthians 12:12 and Hebrews 2:1-4

³ THB, Proverbs 3:13-26, 4:5-13 and 24:3-4

⁴ THB, James 1:5-8

to show love even for our enemies and to turn the other cheek. The wisdom of the world, (*i.e.*, human wisdom) leads to confusion and every evil thing on the earth.⁵ The wisdom of God is ‘foolishness’ to people who operate in the wisdom of the world. For example, why should we show love for our enemies or why would putting a drop of oil on someone’s head, laying hands on them and speaking some words in prayer cause a disease like cancer or HIV/AIDS to go away, but it works for people who live according to Christ and are operating in the power of the Holy Spirit.⁶ As we will see later there are also two types of understanding and two types of knowledge that operate in the earth.

Again, in order to receive God’s wisdom we must ask, but we must also be obedient to God. If we fear God, then we will obey Him and *only then* will He give us His wisdom, understanding and knowledge. The knowledge of God is what gives us true understanding. This is not only having knowledge *about* God, but also actually receiving and having the *mind of Christ* and thinking the same thoughts as God. If we operate in God’s wisdom, then we will not get sick and will live a long, happy and prosperous life.⁷ It is important for us to learn these things and to use them, in order for us to get to the place we need to get to in this life and to fulfill God’s purposes in our lives, for now and forever. We only have one chance to prove ourselves to God and we need to be serious about it, as our eternity hangs in the balance.

Once we have been saved, baptized in both water and by the Holy Spirit and have gone successfully through the ‘wilderness’, then it is time for us to get to work for God. The rest of the Christian journey is aimed at becoming as close to ‘Christ-like’ as possible. *This is the process of soul maturation.* The soul maturation process, or sanctification, is carried out by operating in the wisdom of God, along with understanding of God’s plan in the earth and for our lives, as well as the knowledge of God with the mind of Christ. Each day we must get up and spend our time with God in prayer, asking Him what we should do for the day and for His guidance and protection. We must pray for those in our lives as God directs us. We should then lay our hands on our own body and pray healing and health into it. Then we must spend time reading and studying God’s Word, the Bible. There is no Godly wisdom in the Koran or other false writings such as the Book of Mormon. These writings are satanic in origin and teach from the wisdom of the devil. If we follow the leading and anointing of the Holy Spirit of God, then such things will not deceive us. There are however, other writings of God’s true people that are not included in the modern day Bible. These works are referred to as the Apocrypha. These writings are available from almost any Christian bookstore and are good to study. Some of the mysteries of end-time events are revealed in the Apocrypha. Either before or following our time in the Word of God, we should take communion. After we finish spending time with God in the morning, we must take up and don the entire armor of God and spend the day in prayer, as we go about doing the will of God. Every day is a battle against Satan and his unclean spirits of the kingdom of darkness. He wants to keep us out of God’s will and we must endeavor to stay in God’s will. The battle is in prayer and the enemy will do

⁵ THB, Luke 6:27-36, I Corinthians chapter 2, 3:18-20 and James 3:13-18

⁶ THB, James 5:14-15

⁷ THB, Psalm 111:10, Proverbs 1:7, chapter 2, 8:13-14, 9:10, 14:15-35, 15:33, 16:6-7, 19:23, 22:4, Acts 9:31 and I Corinthians 2:16

anything to keep us from praying. This is why we must make prayer a priority throughout the day, in order to gain victory over the devil.⁸

Each day that we wake up is a new day for us to try again to do correctly things that we failed at the day before. The symbolism of sleep is that of death. Each night we ‘die’ for the sins of that day, and each morning we are ‘resurrected’ to a new life to try again.⁹ This is the way we walk out the process of becoming perfected in Christ. Jesus gave us an outline of what God expects us to achieve. Most Bible scholars call this outline the ‘Sermon on the Mount’, but it may also be called ‘*the path to perfection*’.¹⁰ The symbolism of Jesus preaching these words on the Mount of Olives is that this is the piece of ground that He will plant His feet on when He returns, at the time of the first resurrection of perfected people.¹¹ Obeying God and *daily* keeping to the pattern of order in our lives, as established by Jesus and the apostles, is how we walk out the Christian life ‘in the Spirit’. God expects us to move steadily along this path, until either we die in Christ, or Jesus comes back.¹² Maturation of the soul requires that we practice learning how to discern right from wrong, and *choose* to do the right thing, by the power of God operating in our lives.¹³ Then we can move down the path to perfection.

⁸ THB, I Corinthians 1:26-31, Galatians 1:6-9, Ephesians 6:10-18, Colossians chapter 2, I Thessalonians 4:1-8 and 5:12-22, II Thessalonians 2:13-17, I Peter chapter 1 and I John 2:26-27; Apocrypha of the Old Testament, II Esdras

⁹ THB, Psalm 42:8 and 68:19-20, Luke 9:23-27, John 11:11-14 and I Corinthians 15:31

¹⁰ THB, Matthew chapters 5-7

¹¹ THB, Zechariah 14:3-9, esp. V. 4 and Revelation 19:11 - 20:6

¹² THB, Galatians 5:16-26, Philippians chapter 3 and II Thessalonians 3:6-15

¹³ THB, Hebrews 5:14

Chapter 7

How do we become perfected?

The main reason that God created humans was in order for them to become replacements for Satan and the fallen angels. These angels had followed Satan in his rebellion against God. When Satan fell from heaven and struck the earth, the surface of the earth was destroyed. God recreated the surface of the earth and repopulated the planet with humans, animals and plants.¹ The humans were created mortal in order to show Satan what minimal beings God could use to replace him and to allow God to test and prove humans, BEFORE He granted them eternal life. God knew in advance that humans were weak and would fail to keep His commandments. Therefore, He planned to send His Son Jesus to the earth as the Messiah or Christ, (the Deliverer) for the failed people. Jesus would live the perfect life as a human, suffering the same temptations as we have, but without sin. Then He would die on the cross for the sins of the world. This would make a certain way for some of the humans, (as many as would receive Jesus) to become children of God and make it into the kingdom of heaven. This would be the main way that people would become perfected, that is they would die 'in Christ'. Then God would resurrect them when Jesus came back to the earth a second time. This 'first resurrection' would be a resurrection only of the people who had received Jesus, were saved and 'born again'. There would be a 'second resurrection' for those who rejected this way of eternal life, and that would occur on 'Judgment Day'. The first time Jesus would come to 'save' the world and the second time He would come to judge the world, on the 'last day'. However, even people who rejected Jesus would not have an excuse, because God had shown Himself in all of the order that people see in the earth.²

This plan of God seems like foolishness to most people who operate in the wisdom of the world, which as we saw earlier comes from the devil. It is a mystery to most people. However, God reveals His mysteries to those who love and obey Him.³ One of the mysteries that even most Christians do not understand is that we can be perfected in Christ BEFORE we die. As we mentioned before, God actually *expects* this of us! It is well understood by the Christian community that if we receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior, if we confess this with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead, then we will be saved. Then in the event of our death, Jesus will raise us again in the first resurrection.⁴ This salvation is by God's grace, (*i.e.*, in this case unmerited favor), through faith, (*i.e.*, by believing God) so that no one can brag that they did it on their own. There is no way that we can *work* our way into salvation. However after we have received it, we MUST '*work out*' our salvation.⁵ This means that after we get saved, we must do good works from the motivation that the Holy Spirit puts in our heart. This must be done despite much suffering in the cursed world in

¹ THB, Genesis chapters 1-2 and Luke 10:18

² THB, Psalm chapter 8, Daniel 12:1-3, Romans chapters 1-8, Hebrews chapter 2, John 1:12-13 and chapters 11-12, I Corinthians 15:50-58, II Peter chapters 2-3 and Revelation chapter 20

³ THB, Psalm 25:14, Daniel Chapter 2, Amos 3:7, Matthew chapter 13, John 14:15, 15:14, Luke 8:1-21, Romans 16:25-26, I Corinthians 1:18-31, 2:14, 3:18-23 and 4:1-5 and II Corinthians 4:3-4

⁴ THB, Romans 10:9-12 and Revelation 20:4-6

⁵ THB, Romans 11:6, Ephesians 2:1-10 and Philippians 2:12-16

which we live. We cannot just *say* that we believe in Jesus in order to be saved. We must also *do* as Jesus did. Faith toward God through Jesus, without good deeds as motivated by the Holy Spirit, is ‘dead’ faith.⁶ Good works will not get us into the kingdom of heaven, but they will increase our heavenly reward, if they are done at God’s direction. ‘Good works’ that come from our own motivation are not helpful, because they are generally coming from a heart of self-promotion.⁷ If we truly follow the leading the Holy Spirit, then we will be intrinsically compelled do good things, just as Jesus did. The devil has spent much time and effort creating confusion, chaos and disorder in the earth. *It was the job of Jesus to restore order. This is our job as well.* Truly destroying the works of the devil involves setting things in order, whether it is healing people, helping them in times of need, showing kindness to those who are down, picking up trash in public places or just taking a shopping cart with us into the store. This is what God expects of us after we get saved. We must practice righteousness by *obeying God in everything*.⁸

Most people believe that no human is perfect. Even most Christians believe that only Jesus was perfect and that no one else can achieve this status. If we believe this, then we will not even try to get to the place of perfection. This state of mind pervades even the Church of Jesus Christ today. However, this is not what either Jesus or the apostles taught! They taught that perfection IS achievable and even *expected* of us by God. *Jesus will not come back until enough people are perfected.*⁹ The Bible calls the Church of Jesus Christ ‘the bride’ or the body of Christ, with Jesus as the bridegroom or head of the body. When Jesus comes back there will be a ‘marriage supper’. Only those people who have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior will partake in this wedding feast.¹⁰ Though most people do not know it, this is why we have weddings here on earth, because it is symbolic of the future event of Christ’s return. That is also why the devil wants to pervert the true form of wedding that is representative of the return of Christ, by having gay and lesbian marriages, corruption surrounding the ceremony with premarital sex, bachelor and bachelorette parties, etc.

The bride in the human wedding typically wears white, because it represents obedience to God, (*i.e.*, the righteous acts of the saints, also known as Christians). This is why the bride is supposed to be a virgin. If the bride is not a virgin and wears white at her wedding, it is an affront to God. The devil wants us to believe it does not matter to God, but it does matter. These disorderly and deceptive things offend God. Sexual intercourse between a man and woman within a marriage represents Christ coming for the church.¹¹ This is why the devil works so hard to destroy this type of relationship with divorce, pornography, gay/lesbian relationships and sex outside marriage. No one who has sex outside of marriage, commits adultery, is involved in pornography, or gay/lesbian relationships will make it into the kingdom of God.¹² Again most people do not know these things, as it is a mystery. No wedding begins until the bride has prepared herself

⁶ THB, Matthew 5:43-48, Romans 8:18-30 and James 2:14-26

⁷ THB, Isaiah 64:6, Matthew 6:19-21, Luke 12:22-34, John 8:28 and I Corinthians 3:5-23

⁸ THB, John 5:24-47, Acts 10:32 and I John 3:7-8

⁹ THB, Matthew 5:48, Ephesians 4:13, Colossians 1:28, 4:12 and Hebrews 6:1a

¹⁰ THB, Matthew 9:14-15, 22:1-14, Mark 2:18-19, Romans 7:4, 12:3-8, I Corinthians 10:16-17, 12:12-27, II Corinthians 11:2, Ephesians 4:11-16 and Revelation 19:7-9

¹¹ THB, Ephesians 5:22-33

¹² THB, I Corinthians 6:9-11 and Ephesians 5:1-7

with the help of the bridesmaid and comes down the isle. The Holy Spirit is the ‘bridesmaid’ of the church.¹³ In order to fulfill the scriptures which state that the bride of Christ, (*i.e.*, the church) will be without spot or wrinkle, that she has made herself ready, and she is given to wear fine linen, clean and bright, which again represents the obedient acts of true Christians, (*i.e.*, the saints) we true Christians must become perfected BEFORE Jesus comes back for us.¹⁴

One of the common teachings in the modern Christian church is the concept of a ‘pre-tribulation rapture’. The word ‘rapture’ is not found in the English Bible, but is from a Latin translation. The ‘rapture’ is a modern, 19th century concept and was not taught by Jesus or the apostles. This teaching states that all Christians will be ‘raptured’ or taken out of the earth before a time of great tribulation comes on the earth at the hands of Satan. The events of the tribulation and great tribulation will occur in the end times primarily through someone the Bible calls the ‘Antichrist’.¹⁵ Unfortunately for those who believe in a ‘pre-tribulation rapture’, it is not Biblical. In fact, the Bible as a whole does not support the concept of a pre-tribulation rapture. It is one of the greatest lies that Satan has ever propagated in the Church of Jesus Christ! It reportedly originated with a 15-year-old girl in the 1800’s who purportedly had a ‘vision’ of Jesus coming back before the tribulation in order to take His people to heaven in advance of the trouble. The problem here is that this ‘vision’ does not line up with what the Bible says in the book of Revelation, the books of the prophets or what Jesus and the apostles taught as recorded in the gospels and the epistles.¹⁶ In the 1800’s some church leaders accepted this false teaching of a pre-tribulation rapture as being from God, without really confirming it in the scriptures. Once it became part of the church teaching, it spread and is now part of the teachings of many Christian churches around the world. Even a series of best-selling books and movies, (the ‘Left Behind’ series) have come from this false teaching and have deceived millions of people. However, Jesus Himself predicted that many false prophets would arise and many would come in His name and these people would deceive MANY others.¹⁷ The people who subscribe to false teachings, such as this one, and those who help spread them, will be held accountable.

End-time false prophets will even operate in spiritual power. However, those who know the Bible and God will not be deceived.¹⁸ *The tribulation and great tribulation are for the Christian church.* That is why the man through whom the events of the tribulation will be perpetrated is called the *Antichrist*. God will judge His people through the works of Satan and the Antichrist BEFORE God himself brings judgment to the rest of the world during the Day of the Lord.¹⁹

¹³ THB, Revelation 22:12-17

¹⁴ THB, I Timothy 6:14, Ephesians 4:7-16, 5:25-27 and Revelation 19:7

¹⁵ THB, Matthew 24:22-23, I John 2:18 and Revelation 7:14 and 12:7-12

¹⁶ THB, Daniel chapter 7, especially v. 25, 8:23-26, esp. v. 24, 9:20-27, 11:20-45, and chapter 12, Matthew chapter 24, Mark chapter 13, Luke 21:7-36, I Corinthians 15:50-58, I Thessalonians 5:1-11, II Thessalonians 2:1-12 and Revelation chapters 19-20

¹⁷ THB, Matthew 24:4-5 and v. 11 and Mark 13:6

¹⁸ THB, Matthew 24:24

¹⁹ THB, Isaiah chapters 2, 13 and 34, Jeremiah 46:1-13, Ezekiel chapter 13, Joel chapters 1-3, Book of Amos, Book of Obadiah, Book of Zephaniah, Malachi chapter 4, Matthew 24:9 and 21, Acts 2:16-21, I Thessalonians 5:1-11, I Peter 4:17 and II Peter chapter 3

It is through trials and tribulation that we become perfected. That is why the tribulation and great tribulation are for the modern Christian church, because they are so ill prepared for the return of Christ. The concept that *suffering is the main driving force in our perfection process* is one of the mysteries that was known and taught by Jesus and the leaders of the early church, but has been downplayed through the ages since. The modern Church of Jesus Christ is more interested in how to receive the *physical blessings* of God than how to become perfected in Christ. It is not a very popular teaching that says being a Christian involves suffering. However, we need to change our perspective. We need to understand the plan of God for humans.

It is in God's wisdom and His mercy that He made us mortal and weak, so that He could destroy us if we became stubbornly rebellious. God cannot destroy the devil and his fallen angels, since they are immortal. He can only control them. After the return of Christ and the thousand-year reign of Jesus and His people, the devil, his unclean spirits and followers will be thrown into the lake of fire where they will live in torment forever.²⁰ However, all rebellious *humans* will be *permanently destroyed* in the lake of fire after the second resurrection. They will cease to exist. Those rebellious people who die before Judgment Day will live in torment in hell until the time of the second resurrection.²¹ With the help of God, we are supposed to overcome the inclination to rebel against Him. The only way we can accomplish this is to follow in the ways of Jesus. Even Jesus learned obedience through His suffering.²²

We must understand that *suffering is the key to obedience to God.* God wants us to suffer now and get over the desire to be rebellious, so that we can live forever in His presence in obedience to Him. Then we will not make the same mistake that Lucifer and his fallen angels made. We will *forever appreciate* what God the Father, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and all of God's holy angels have done for us. After suffering at the hands of the devil and his unclean spirits, as well as under the hand of God's judgment, we will be well trained to obey God forever.²³

People who receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior also receive through Him the perfection required to enter the kingdom of heaven, in the event they die.²⁴ However, we are expected to *live* according to the principles that Jesus laid out. We do this, not in our own strength, but through 'abiding in Jesus' by the power of the Holy Spirit, (*i.e.*, 'walking in the Spirit'). The power of the Holy Spirit is also called the 'anointing' or the 'grace' of God.²⁵ Grace is not only the unmerited favor of God for salvation, but it is also the *power of God* through the Holy Spirit that helps us get through this soul maturation process and helps us to do the will of the Father.²⁶

²⁰ THB, Revelation 20:10

²¹ THB, Revelation 20:11-15

²² THB, Hebrews 2:10 and 5:8-9

²³ THB, Isaiah 30:18-26 and 48:10 and Romans 8:31-39

²⁴ THB, Hebrews 10:14

²⁵ THB, Isaiah 10:27, Zechariah 4:6, Romans 3:21-26, 6:22-23, 8:1-17, Galatians 5:16-26, Philippians 3:3 and I John 2:20 and v. 27

²⁶ THB, I Corinthians 1:4-9, 3:10, 15:10, II Corinthians 1:12, Ephesians 3:1-7, Titus 2:11-15 and Hebrews 2:9

There are two ways to be perfected, either - 1) die in Christ, or 2) live in Christ. If we live a perfected life in Jesus, then even death has no power over us.²⁷ The first way to salvation and perfection is the most common way people go, as the Christian church at large only teaches this way. Jesus said that if anyone *believes* in Him, though they die, they shall live again. This is called the ‘resurrection’. Jesus also said in the same place that anyone who *LIVES and BELIEVES* in Him SHALL NEVER DIE. This second way we call the ‘life in Christ’. The first way is the Alpha and the second way is the Omega, the first is the beginning and the second is the end of Christian maturity. The resurrection is *good*, but the life in Christ is *better*. Both are developed by faith, but the life in Christ is much more involved and difficult. Very few people attain perfection in this life.²⁸

If one studies out the word ‘faith’ in the Bible, they will see that the word occurs two times in the Old Testament and 243 times in the New Testament. Therefore, faith is a New Testament word. However, the word translated as faith in one place in the Old Testament is from the Hebrew word *emuwn*, (pronounced ‘ay-moon’). Here they would see that faith is *truth*. Therefore, faith is Jesus, who is the truth and God. God is *love*. Thus, faith is simply *believing* God and *obeying* Him, (with His help through Jesus and the Holy Spirit). This is how we show our *love* for God.²⁹

Faith ultimately comes through Jesus from the Holy Spirit, (*i.e.*, the Spirit of Truth). Every Christian is given a ‘measure’ of faith when they receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior. When they are thus ‘saved’ and ‘born again from above’ through the Holy Spirit, they are ‘sealed’ by the Holy Spirit. They can build on that faith by growing in Christ and learning to hear from God. Once they learn to hear from God, then when God tells them something and they do it, great things happen. This in turn increases their faith. This is what it means that ‘faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God’. When people learn to hear from God, they act on what He tells them and God does big things in their lives and the lives of others. This increases their faith, so that the next time He tells them something, they will continue in obedience, great works, more faith, and so on. They KNOW that it is God speaking to them if they know the Word of God, so they are not tricked by the devil.

Some people receive the ‘gift’ of faith from the Holy Spirit. Thus faith becomes perfected in the action of obeying God.³⁰ It is through tribulation that we develop right character and become mature in our soul, learning to obey God.³¹ When we suffer, we appreciate God more and more as He delivers us out of the suffering.³² If we suffer and

²⁷ THB, II Kings 2:1-18, John 11:25-26 and Hebrews 11:5-6

²⁸ THB, Matthew 7:14 and Revelation 1:8 and 11, 21:6 and 23:13

²⁹ *emuwn* - ‘ay-moon’; from 539; established, i.e. (fig.) trusty; also (abstr.) trustworthiness:— **faith** (-ful), **truth**, from James Strong, New Strong’s dictionary of Hebrew and Greek words [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1996. THB, Habakkuk 2:4, Matthew 26:63-64, John 14:6 and Vv. 15-29 and chapter 15, Romans 1:16-17, II Corinthians 5:7, Galatians 2:16-21, Philippians 3:7-11 and I John 4:7-21, esp. Vv. 8 and 16

³⁰ THB, John 3:1-21, 14:17, 15:26 and 16:13, Romans 10:17 (King James Version) and 12:3, I Corinthians 12:9, James 2:14-26 and I John 4:6

³¹ THB, Romans 5:1-5

³² THB, Exodus 3:7-10, Deuteronomy chapter 8, Job 5:17-22, Psalm chapters 18, 31, 33, 34, especially Vv. 17-19, 37, 41:1-4, 50:15, chapters 70-71, 72:12-14, chapters 79, 91, 109, 116, 119:153 and 170, chapters 120 and 140 - 144, Proverbs 11:6, 12:6, Isaiah 46:4, Jeremiah 1:7-8 and 17-19, 15:19-21, 39:15-18, 42:11, Ezekiel chapter 9, 13:20-23, 14:12-23, 34:7-16, 36:22-38, 37:18-28, Daniel chapters 3 and 6, Jonah 4:5-11,

God delivers us out of the suffering, then our faith in God and *patience* will grow. When we suffer trials and tribulation, even when we do the right thing, God counts it in our favor. We get extra credit for suffering for doing the right thing. However, there are two types of suffering. The first is suffering for doing the wrong thing. We get no credit for this, but it will still benefit us, because we may cease from doing the wrong thing that led to the suffering.³³

The second type of suffering is being persecuted for doing the right thing. We DO get extra credit from God for this type of suffering. We will reveal why this is the case later. All true people of God have suffered this way from the time of Adam. Adam and Eve's son Cain was a 'son of the devil' and killed his righteous brother Abel.³⁴ The same way Cain hated Abel, the world hates true Christians. For no reason, the world hated Jesus and what He taught. The reason is that the world at large operates in satanic, worldly wisdom. Most of the people of the world refuse to obey God. Even most so-called Christians refuse to truly obey God. This is why God will allow Satan and the Antichrist to wreak havoc on the earth through the tribulation in the latter days, (which is already near). This attack of Satan will separate the true Christians from the false ones.

Perfected Christians will be able to *REJOICE* during their suffering. Though this seems to be a paradox, this is really what God wants from us. If one studies the book of Job, they will find that Job, (though he did not 'sin' when God allowed Satan to destroy his family, all his possessions and make him sick with boils) fell short of what God wanted of him, because he complained rather than rejoicing during his suffering. Though he recognized that the suffering came from God, Job tried to justify his own righteousness in the sight of God. Apart from Jesus, there is no way that we are justified before God. Without Jesus, we all fall short of God's mark of perfection. However, in order for God to view us as 'perfect', we need to be able to know that even times of suffering will end up for good for us in the long run and therefore we must rejoice during the times of trials and tribulation.³⁵

So we see that suffering is the key to obedience and obedience is the key to righteousness and perfection in Christ. Thus suffering is what guides us down the path to perfection.

Matthew 6:13, Luke 11:4, Acts chapter 12, 16:16-40, 27:1-28:10, Romans 7:24-25, II Corinthians 11:22-12:10, Galatians 1:3-5, II Timothy 4:16-18, II Peter 2:9 and Revelation 7:1-8

³³ THB, Hebrews 12:5-13 and I Peter 4:1

³⁴ THB, Genesis chapter 4 and I John 3:10-15

³⁵ THB, Deuteronomy chapter 8, book of Job, Matthew 5:10-12, John chapter 15, Acts chapter 5 and 9:1-31, Romans 3:23 and chapter 8, esp. Vv. 12-17 and 28, Philippians 1:27-30, 4:4 and Vv. 12-13, I Thessalonians 5:16, II Thessalonians 1:3 - 2:17, James 1:2-4 and I Peter chapters 1-5

Chapter 8

Why should we want to be perfect?

If people believe that no one is perfect and that it is not possible to be perfect, then they will not even try to achieve this status. However, once we believe that it *is* possible, the next question is why should we even want to achieve perfection? The answer is that there are rewards for being perfect. Every step closer to perfection brings its own set of improvements in our lives. There are also negative consequences for moving away from perfection, or making no progress at all.¹

We have seen previously that becoming a Christian carries with it increased responsibility and suffering. Suffering is designed to drive us closer to God. The closer we get to God, the more He gives us. However this is also a double-edged sword, since the more things God gives us, the more He expects of us.² If we have little it is generally because we are not operating in the principle that God teaches us about giving. If we give generously, then we will have more. This is not only applicable to material things, but to spiritual as well. If we hold on to what we have and are tight fisted, then we will not receive anything because we are operating against the principle of ‘seedtime and harvest’.³ If we plant a garden by using seeds, the more seeds we plant, the more plants we will grow. This principle operates in every area of life. If we need money, then we must give money away. Whatever we sow that is what we will reap, multiplied. We will especially be rewarded if we do this with a cheerful heart. This is why Jesus said that it is more blessed to give than to receive, because with everything we give we will receive in like kind back to us, but it will be multiplied, though sometimes we may reap physical blessings for sowing spiritual seeds. Therefore, it is not just more blessed to give because it makes us feel better, but it will bring us more of whatever we give away. God will make this happen as it is according to His Word.⁴ Therefore, people who are poor generally do not give, but hold on to what little they have. In this way, they keep themselves from ever prospering because they refuse to see past what little they have. In this shortsightedness they cut themselves off from the blessings that go with giving. They in effect handcuff God from blessing them, as He cannot go against His Word. People who have much, often give more generously so that they get even more. In this way the rich keep getting richer and the poor get poorer. People who are faithful in small amounts of money will be trusted with more, but if they cheat in small amounts, they will be unfaithful with larger amounts of money. Christians are often less adept at dealing with finances than non-believers. God will hold Christians to a higher standard since they will potentially receive eternal life. Non-believers will have as their reward the things in this life, so they will often have more material blessings than Christians. However, non-

¹ THB, Deuteronomy chapters 28 and 30 and Matthew 25:14-46

² THB, Luke 12:35-48

³ THB, Genesis 8:22

⁴ THB, Proverbs 11:25, Acts 20:17-38, I Corinthians chapter 9, II Corinthians 9:6-15, Galatians 6:7 and Luke 6:38

believers have more problems related to their wealth and their riches cannot save them from death or help them on the Day of eternal judgment.⁵

Receiving material blessings from God is not the only reason to obey Him, but it certainly makes life easier. True blessings from God bring increase in finances without adding any trouble.⁶ When we are obedient to God He does not give us money, but rather He shows us ways and gives us the ability or power to create wealth. However, before He gives us this ability, He first leads us through a time of suffering so that we will appreciate it when we are prosperous. Then we will give God all the glory and take no credit for ourselves.⁷ It is a natural tendency to get into pride when God prospers us. We think that it is by *our* ability that we gain the wealth. Then we think we can do whatever we please and the wealth will continue. However, this is the error that Lucifer walked into that led to his demise as one of God's leaders. When Lucifer decided that he could do God's job, it was because of all the things that God had given to him.⁸ Since we are to replace Lucifer and his fallen angels, God wants us to have these issues worked out BEFORE we are granted eternal life. It should be the goal of people who call themselves Christian to overcome the natural tendency toward pride. We can only do this with God's help through Jesus Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit.⁹

Pride can be defined as stealing God's glory. God *will* share His glory with His people. It is a false teaching in the Christian church that says that God will share His glory with no man. The truth is God will not share His glory with other gods or people other than His people. *The truth is that we must receive the glory of God from Jesus in order for us to become perfected in Him.*¹⁰ However, we must never take God's glory without His permission. This is what Lucifer did and it cost him his eternity. It will cost us the same unless we avoid making the same prideful mistake. The desire to do this usually comes when people are prosperous. They then think they do not need God and go their own way. This will ultimately lead to their demise. It will be God who brings on this destruction, even if it comes to them at the hands of the devil.¹¹

If by the grace of God we can overcome the tendency to walk in pride, and if we will humble ourselves and seek the will of God in our lives, then we can draw close to Him. If we do this, then He will draw close to us and exalt us. If we try to promote ourselves and exalt ourselves, then God will see to it that we are brought low.¹² If we can overcome the tendency to walk in pride, then we can truly come into alignment with the good plans God created for us.¹³

⁵ THB, Psalm 37:16-20, 39:6, 49:6-20, chapter 52, Proverbs 10:15, 11:4, 24 and 28, 13:7, 23:4-5, 28:6, 28:20, Ecclesiastes 5:13-17, 6:2, Matthew 25:14-30, Mark 10:23-31, Luke 16:1-13, 19:31 and II Corinthians 8:1-15

⁶ THB, Proverbs 10:22

⁷ THB, Deuteronomy chapter 8

⁸ THB, Isaiah 14:12-23 and Ezekiel 28:11-19

⁹ THB, Zechariah 5:6, John 15:5, Philippians 1:6 and I Thessalonians 5:23-24

¹⁰ THB, Isaiah 42:1-9 and 48:1-18 and John chapter 17

¹¹ THB, Leviticus chapter 26, II Chronicles 32:24-26, Proverbs 11:2, 13:10, 16:18, 29:23, 30:7-9, Ezekiel 16:49, Amos 6:8-14, Obadiah 3:3-4, Mark 7:1-23, I Timothy 3:1-7 and I John 2:15-17

¹² THB, Psalm 75:6-7, Isaiah 2:6-23, Ezekiel 21:25, Luke 3:1-6 and James 4:7-10

¹³ THB, Exodus 6:6-8, Leviticus 26:1-13, Isaiah 46:3-13, Jeremiah 7:21-23, 11:1-17, 29:10-14, 30:1-31:14 and Ezekiel chapter 36

As we mentioned, God created man to replace the fallen angels. However, not all people will be allowed to enter God's kingdom. Only those people who accept and follow Jesus Christ, and who obey God will enter the Kingdom of God. Unfortunately compared to the earth's population, those who receive salvation and remain obedient to Jesus will be few in number.¹⁴ The only certain way for someone to enter into God's kingdom and live forever in His presence is to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and walk in obedience to the Holy Spirit for the rest of their life.¹⁵ The devil does not want anyone to enter the kingdom of God. Those who do make it will be his replacements and he hates that idea. Satan will do anything to pervert this plan of God and prevent people from receiving Jesus, let alone going the distance and reaching perfection in this life. The devil knows that it is possible for people to become perfected. He also knows that God will reward and protect these people more and more along the way. Satan also knows that God will punish those who disobey. That is why he goes to such great lengths to cause people to fail and disobey God.¹⁶

We see then that pride and ill gotten gain lead to destruction, but humility and obedience to God bring the blessing of the Lord with which comes wealth, but with no trouble attached. Moving into perfection will automatically bring the latter. Those who operate in worldly, satanic wisdom may achieve great material wealth, but they will live in misery and will NOT inherit eternal life from God, unless they repent. Those who operate in Godly principles and are obedient to the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ will not only be rewarded in this life, but also the next with eternal life. However, they must finish the race in order to receive the prize.¹⁷

¹⁴ THB, Matthew 7:13-14, 22:1-14 and John 6:35-40 and 14:6; Apocrypha of the Old Testament, II Esdras chapters 1-12

¹⁵ THB, Acts chapter 2 and Romans chapters 5-8

¹⁶ THB, Deuteronomy chapter 28, Psalms chapters 34 and 91, Job chapters 1, 2, 32-37, Isaiah 3:10-11, and 42, Luke 12:8-9 and Revelation 3:7-13 and 7:1-8

¹⁷ THB, Ezekiel 18:19-32 and Matthew 10:22 and 24:13, I Corinthians 9:24-27 and Hebrews 3:14

Chapter 9

How do we run the race toward perfection?

It becomes apparent to us as we live from day to day that life is a race. Just like a marathon, we must pace ourselves. Jesus told us that we must not worry about tomorrow because each day has enough issues with which to be concerned. If we focus on the things to come, then we will not be able to properly take care of the things of today.¹ God wants us to keep our focus on each day because He knows that we will have enough on our plates with the day's problems. If we look ahead, then we may start to get 'lifted up'. We may begin to think of lofty things and get into pride. It was this line of thinking that led Lucifer astray. He did not stay focused on the things that he was supposed to be concerned with. Instead he began to think about things that he should not have been thinking about. Then he was led astray by his own imagination.² The same process can lead us into sin. If we start letting our imagination run, then we may be tempted by our own evil desires. Then when the evil desire is conceived, it gives birth to sin. When the sin is fully grown, it brings eternal death into our future.³ That is why we must not let evil thoughts come to fruition. They must be cut off in the name of Jesus when they first come into our heads. We must keep our focus on the things of God, and be satisfied with whatever God gives us. Then we will be able to do anything God wants us to do.⁴

Most of the evil thoughts we have come from either our own evil fleshly desires, (*i.e.*, the 'sin nature') or they may come directly from the satanic realm. Unclean spirits can put thoughts into our heads, or even 'whisper' into our ears. If a person becomes involved with witchcraft, Ouija boards, Satanism, or in other ways receive demonic spirits, then the devils may even speak out loud to the person. Even worse, if a person becomes possessed by a devil or devils, then that person will be totally controlled by the dark side. God has allowed Satan to control the airwaves. He therefore controls the audiovisual media. Although God has the ultimate say in what goes out over the airwaves, He has allowed the devil to be the 'prince of the power of the air'.⁵ The devil was responsible for speaking to Mohammad who started Islam. The Koran is a satanic writing. It came from what the Bible refers to as an 'angel of light'.⁶ An angel of light is an unclean spirit who presents itself as an angel from God. For someone who does not know the Bible or God, these satanic spirits will easily deceive him or her. When people stubbornly refuse to admit the error of their ways, then God gives them over to what the Bible calls a debased mind. They will continue to live in darkness.⁷

Mohammad was 'searching' for spiritual enlightenment. He had no relationship with God. He was a wicked man. Therefore, he was visited by an unclean spirit pretending to be an angel of God. The evil spirit dictated the Koran to him. Mohammed followed these spiritual writings, as have many others, without even knowing whether or not they were

¹ THB, Matthew 6:25-34

² THB, Isaiah 14:12-15

³ THB, James 1:12-15

⁴ THB, II Corinthians 10:3-6 and Philippians 4:8-13

⁵ THB, Op cit 3, Ephesians 2:2

⁶ THB, II Corinthians 11:13-15

⁷ THB, Romans 1:18-32

from God. Any person having the Holy Spirit operating in their lives who tries to read the Koran will find it completely confusing. The Koran's teachings make no sense. They are therefore obviously from the author of confusion, the devil. These writings have led many astray. One does not have to go far into the religion of Islam to know they are lost. They claim that Jesus Christ was a prophet. However, Jesus said He was the Son of God. That is why the Jews of the day had Jesus crucified, since they said He was committing blasphemy by claiming to be the Son of God.⁸ Since the Muslims deny that God has a Son, then Jesus, whom they call a prophet, would by definition be a *false* prophet. Therefore, Muslim teachings are contradictory and Islam as a religion is operating by the antichrist spirit.⁹

The battle between the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness in the earth is over human souls. The human soul is the mind, will and emotions. In other words the soul is the personality. The soul is what makes each of us unique. The devil knows that if he can convince someone by deception to believe his lies and go against God of their own free will, he has won that person's soul. That person is then destined for hell and ultimately the lake of fire. This is Satan's goal, since humans are his replacements and he is jealous of them. God allows people to be deceived because they stubbornly refuse to obey His Word. When a person goes against God in this way, they will eventually be destroyed in their life. When this happens, then God will welcome them back as prodigals, if they repent and stop going down the path of destruction. However, if they continue to operate in darkness, then they will be destroyed. People who receive Jesus and begin to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, and turn back to deliberate sin cannot be restored again to repentance, since there is no longer a sacrifice for them. They will end up in the lake of fire, since they have trampled on Jesus, hung Him again on the cross to open shame, treated His shed blood as common, and thus insulted the Holy Spirit. This is why when we receive Jesus Christ as the sacrifice for our sins, we must hold that sacrifice as precious and holy, since it is the only way to enter the kingdom of God.¹⁰

We must therefore guard our minds and hearts against the lies of the devil. He will constantly try to get in. He comes in like a flood, but the Holy Spirit will help us by raising a righteous standard against the onslaught of the enemy, through Jesus, who is the Word of God. Thus we do not have to worry if we are in Christ, but we must pray to God regarding everything. Our battle is not against other humans, but against the wiles of the devil, even though he works through humans. However through Jesus, God will give us the ability to overcome the enemy.¹¹

God requires us to treat other humans with proper respect, as they are made in His image. We must show love for everyone, even our enemies. If we can show love and respect for our enemies, then we will be like God, since He sends rain for both good and evil. If we can truly love our enemies, then we will have made it to the place of perfection. The reason we need to love our enemies is that God still loves Lucifer and the other angels who followed him in rebellion. If we want to be like God, then we must also love

⁸ THB, Matthew 26:63-67

⁹ THB, I John 2:22, 4:1-6 and II John 7

¹⁰ THB, Luke 15:11-32, Galatians 1:6-9, Hebrews 6:4-8 and 10:26-39 and Revelation 3:11

¹¹ THB, Proverbs 4:23, Isaiah 59:19, Luke 10:18-20, John 1:1-3, Ephesians 6:10-18, Philippians 4:6-7 and Revelation 19:13

everyone made in God's image, even our enemies.¹² However, most people struggle to show proper respect and love for even those to whom they are closest, such as their spouses, children and relatives. Most families have bitterness and rivalry amongst their members. This must not happen with the children of God. Christians must fear God and obey Him. It is by our obedience to Him that we show our love for God. God has commanded us through Jesus Christ to love even our enemies. This is not a suggestion, but a command. God expects us to obey this command, as with all the other commands He has given us. The good news is that He will empower us to do these things. All we have to do is decide to walk in love and then pray to God continuously in the name of Jesus that He help us. He will then have the Holy Spirit help us to do the right thing.¹³

Therefore, every day we must run the race toward perfection by doing the same things. We must get up every morning, spend our time with God in prayer, get into His Word and read, take communion, (see below) and pray over our bodies for healing and health. We should then walk out the rest of the day with the help of the Holy Spirit. If we fail, we need to repent quickly and ask God to help us not to fail in those areas again. Each day is a new day to try to move into a closer relationship with God and other people. We will be able to improve each day if we will only *abide* in Jesus Christ. If we continue down this path we *will* reach perfection.

¹² THB, Matthew 5:43-48

¹³ THB, John 14:15-31 and I John 3:10-15

Chapter 10

How do we abide in Jesus Christ?

If God expects us to become perfected, then He should have made a way for us to reach that perfected state. This is exactly what He did by sending His Son Jesus as the Christ or Deliverer. He also arranged that when Jesus died for our sins and was resurrected to return to the glorified state that He had from the beginning, God the Father would send to earth the Holy Spirit to help people to stay ‘connected’ to Jesus. By remaining connected to Jesus, Christians would thereby remain connected to the Father through Him. This connection needs to be maintained on a regular basis, because Jesus is the ‘Bread of life’. He is our daily bread. Each day we must practice obedience or righteousness toward God through Jesus. Therefore, the ‘abiding’ in Jesus must be a DAILY affair.¹

To abide implies dwelling or living with or in something. It is by obeying God through the power of the Holy Spirit that we abide in Jesus.² However, Jesus established a tradition for us to follow that would help us to stay connected to Him. This tradition is known as communion or the ‘Lord’s Supper’. We partake in communion by taking bread and breaking it, asking God’s blessing on it then eating the bread. Then red wine, (not grape juice) is blessed and taken as well. These two symbols represent Jesus’ body and blood respectively. In essence we *eat* Jesus’ ‘flesh’ and drink His ‘blood’.³ In this way we can symbolically counteract the sin that came into the world by Eve and Adam *eating* the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.⁴ Communion with God through Jesus must be done as often as possible, with the goal of taking it every day. However, we need to realize that if we take the Lord’s Supper with a wrong attitude or heart, then we will be bringing God’s judgment on ourselves. God holds this tradition as something precious and He does not take it lightly when we abuse it. If someone takes communion with a wrong heart, then God will make them sick or they may even die!⁵

Most Christians do not know this fact. That is why many Christians are sick and die before their time, because this concept is not generally taught, especially for example in the Catholic Church. Catholics take communion on a regular basis without knowing that they need to have a good attitude when they do. Many of them are probably eating and drinking judgment on themselves and do not have a clue, since they are not told this by the leaders and they do not read the Bible. Many other churches do the same thing. The leaders of these churches will be held accountable for such misdirection of God’s people.⁶

Virtually everything that God does in the earth is symbolic. Communion symbolically counteracts the sin nature that exists in our flesh. Taking the Lord’s Supper is in effect ‘preventative medicine’ for the human body. It keeps the sin nature at bay. Each day that we live is a new day in God’s eyes. We sleep at night as a symbolic death and awaken in

¹ THB, Matthew 6:11, John chapter 17 and I John 1:5-10, 3:10-24, 2:1-11 and 4:7-5:5

² THB, John 15:1-17 and Philipians 2:12-16

³ THB, Luke 22:14-23

⁴ THB, Genesis chapter 3

⁵ THB, Psalm 6:1-2, chapter 38, I Corinthians 11:17-26, Hebrews 12:7-11 and Revelation 3:19

⁶ THB, Isaiah 3:12 and 56:9-12, Ezekiel chapter 34 and Hosea 6:4-9

the morning as a symbolic resurrection. Our outward man is fading away and our inward man is renewed every day.⁷

Food does not defile a person's soul. Evil thoughts that lead to evil deeds defile a person's soul. So even though what food we eat does not defile our inward man, the forbidden fruit that Eve and Adam ate brought sin into the fleshly outward man and with it came death.⁸ The 'day' that Adam ate the forbidden fruit, he died. For to God a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years is as a day. Adam died at the age of 930 years. Therefore Adam died on the 'day', (*i.e.*, within the first one thousand years) that he ate the fruit.⁹ Since we have to live in our fleshly bodies until we either die or Jesus comes back, then we must maintain them. Taking communion helps us to maintain our bodies and keep sin at bay. If Cain had learned from his parents' mistake and abided in the Lord as Abel did, then he would have ruled over sin instead of sin ruling over him.¹⁰

Taking communion daily and abiding in Jesus by praying and obeying God with the aid of the Holy Spirit, helps us to rule over the sin nature of the flesh and allows us to 'walk in the Spirit'. When we learn to operate in the fruit of the Holy Spirit, (*i.e.*, love, joy, peace, patience or long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control) there is no law against us. Therefore abiding in Jesus can lead us into the *life in Christ* and perfection. Then we do *not* need to be sick or even die.¹¹

⁷ THB, II Corinthians 4:16-5:8

⁸ THB, Genesis 2:17, Matthew 15:1-20 and Romans 6:23

⁹ THB, Genesis 5:5 and II Peter 3:8

¹⁰ THB, Genesis 4:6-8

¹¹ THB, John 11:25-26 and Galatians 5:16-26

Chapter 11

What is the Life in Christ?

We have seen above that God expects us to become perfected in one of two ways. We must either ‘die in Christ’ or ‘live in Christ’. The first way into perfection is salvation through *death in Christ and resurrection*. The second way is salvation through a *perfected life in Christ before death*.¹ There is no other way to eternal life with God than one of these two ways. Being a Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Jehovah’s Witness or belonging to any other religion will not allow a person to enter the kingdom of God. Atheists and agnostics will also not make it into God’s kingdom. Denying the existence of hell and the lake of fire will not make them go away. People who deny Jesus Christ as the Son of the Most High God will believe in hell when they get there, only then it will be too late! Most Christian churches only teach the first way into perfection, which is salvation and entering the kingdom of God by dying in Christ. However, there is another aspect of Jesus that most Christians overlook, or choose to ignore since they do not understand it. Some flatly refuse to accept it. That is what we call the *life in Christ*. *The life in Christ is simply a way of life in which we put Jesus first in every aspect of our lives*. People who find the place we call the life in Christ will have many troubles from the devil, the people of the world and even other Christians. However, they will have some perks that no one else will have. They will have God’s utmost honor and respect and all that comes with them. The troubles will not compare to the rewards that God will have for those who love and obey Him. Also, things will *always* turn out favorably in the long run for people who chose to obey God. For those who reach the life in Christ, God will see to it that they are well cared for.²

We also saw previously that in order to abide in Jesus we need to obey God in everything and we need to take the Lord’s Supper or communion on a regular basis, preferably every day. However, we must NOT take the Lord’s Supper with a wrong attitude. Therefore, if there is any strife in our life that causes us to remain upset, then we must not take communion, or God may make us sick or even kill us. This may seem harsh. However, it is nonetheless the reality of the situation and we must accept it, because that is how God designed things. Who are we to question God?³ This is also a reality that few understand. God uses sickness, disease and disasters to reprimand His people, as well as to deal with those who disobey Him, (*i.e.*, His enemies).⁴ Once we understand this, then we can move away from sickness, disease and disasters and into the fullness of why God created us. The life in Christ is the ‘secret place’ where God dwells. It is a ‘prayed up’ and ‘fasted’ lifestyle of absolute faith in God in which He will hear our prayers and answer quickly. It will give us power over every satanic work of darkness. In this place, NO evil will befall us!⁵

¹ THB, Luke 16:19-31, John 11:25-26 and I Thessalonians 4:13-18

² THB, Matthew 6:25-34, Romans 8:18 and 28, I Corinthians 2:9-10 and II Corinthians 4:1-5:10

³ THB, Job chapter 9, Isaiah 45:9-12 and I Corinthians 11:23-34

⁴ THB, Deuteronomy chapter 28, Job 33:19-30, Psalm chapter 38, Daniel 9:3-19, Lamentations chapter 3, John 15:14 and Hebrews 12:3-13

⁵ THB, Psalm chapter 91, Isaiah 54:14-17 and chapter 58 and Matthew 17:14-21

The path from *salvation through resurrection* to *salvation through perfection before death* is narrow and difficult to find. It is also difficult to stay on the narrow path of the life in Christ.⁶ The devil wants to cause us to go astray from this path because he knows that if we stray we may end up in the lake of fire, which is exactly what he wants.⁷ The more we move down this path to perfection, the more God offers us in terms of reward and protection. People who get close to the point of perfection do not need to get sick or have disastrous things happen to them, as they have learned to obey God voluntarily. If a person reaches perfection in Jesus, then they do not even have to die.⁸

The life in Christ is a place in Jesus that only a few will find, by comparison to all who have become Christians. In the end of times as we know it and just before Jesus returns, only 144,000 out of the billions of people on earth will be recognized by God and others to have come to this place before the time called the *great tribulation*.⁹ During the tribulation, only these 144,000 will escape the entire time of trouble. It is likely that the 144,000 who have reached perfection are men, not counting women and children. The reason that this is likely the case is that in the Bible only the men are ever counted, not women and children.¹⁰ These 144,000 of God's most righteous people will lead the other Christians out of harm's way as they come out of the tribulation and into the life in Christ.¹¹ We are very close to these times. It is the first time in history that all the things that are written about in the book of Revelation and the books of the prophets can happen.¹²

The reason that there will only be 144,000 is that it fits with the mathematics of God. Essentially every number has symbolic meaning to God and His people. Even birth dates have meaning in a person's life. This is why the devil perverts this concept with astrology. He knows that the stars represent both angels and God's people. Sometimes God reveals secrets through the stars.¹³ However, we are not supposed to worship the heavenly bodies, only admire God's power to create and control them.¹⁴ The number 144,000 has a symbolic meaning for God's people and the end times.

The number 12 represents government. Twelve also represents the number of 'days', (or thousands of years) that God will allow the current earth to exist before He sends Jesus back to deal with the corruption in the earth. There were 12 tribes of Israel, God's people, and 12 disciples of Jesus. There will be 12,000 people spared from each tribe of Israel, (12 x 12,000 = 144,000) though the tribe of Dan is left out probably due to sin they

⁶ THB, Matthew 7:13-14 and Luke 13:24-30

⁷ THB, Revelation 20:11-15

⁸ THB, Op cit 1, Psalms. 34:7, chapter 91 and Hebrews 11:5-6

⁹ THB, Revelation 3:7-13, 7:1-8 and 14:1-5

¹⁰ THB, Genesis 46:1-26, Numbers 1:2, 4:1-3 and 21-23, chapter 26, II Samuel 24:1-9, Mark 6:35-44 and Acts 4:4

¹¹ THB, Isaiah 66:18-21 and Revelation 7:9-17

¹² THB, Daniel chapters 7-12, Matthew chapter 24, Mark chapter 13, Luke 21:5-36 and Revelation chapters 5-18

¹³ THB, Matthew 2:1-12

¹⁴ THB, Genesis 15:4-7, 22:15-18, 26:2-5, 37:5-11, Exodus 32:9-14, Deuteronomy 4:15-20, 10:17-22, II Chronicles 33:1-13, Nehemiah chapter 9, Job 9:5-10, chapters 38, Psalms chapter 8, 33:6-9, 136:4-9, 147:4, 148:1-6, Isaiah 40:25-26, 45:11-12, 51:12-16, Jeremiah 10:1-16, 31:35-37, 33:19-22, Daniel 12:1-4, Amos 5:8-9, Zephaniah 1:2-18, Acts 7:39-43, Romans 4:18-19, I Corinthians 15:40-44, Hebrews 11:11-12, Jude 8-16 and Revelation 1:17-20 and chapter 12

have committed since Old Testament times. Modern day Denmark represents the remnant of Dan and today's Danish are a decadent society.¹⁵ The tribe of Manasseh is represented with those who will be spared the tribulation. However, Manasseh was actually one of two sons of Joseph and so was a grandson of Israel. Joseph's other son, Ephraim, is not listed among the 12 tribes who will be spared. This is also probably because of sins committed by the people of Ephraim. However some of the people of Ephraim may come out of the tribulation after they have been chastised enough.¹⁶

Today it will be difficult to know where the twelve tribes listed in Revelation chapter 7 are located in the earth. There are some indications, for example as we mentioned the remnant of the tribe of Dan exists as today's Denmark. However, the only other tribe that is easily identified by name is the tribe of Judah, which would be who we call the Jews. However, the Jews are actually a combination of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and some of the Levites. God separated the other 10 tribes of Israel after the death of Solomon and later became known as the northern tribes. Due to their sin and disobedience to God, these ten tribes went into captivity to Assyria in 722 B.C. and then were scattered throughout the earth.¹⁷ Therefore those who will be spared the tribulation may be from anywhere in the world. Besides this, anyone who has received Jesus Christ as their Lord and savior become heirs to the promises God gave to the Israelites through their forefather Abraham.¹⁸

The main thing to understand regarding these things is that *if someone has not reached perfection in Christ, then they will most likely go through some or all of the great tribulation that we will call World War III*. Many Christians will be killed during that time. Despite what false doctrines are currently held and taught by modern Christian leaders, *God designed the tribulation for the refining of the Christian church*. It will be the 'final exam' for the people of earth, including most Christians. Unless someone has an 'A' going into the final exam, they will not be able to skip this test. Everyone who has not followed the commands of Jesus to the tee will be subjected to the trials of the tribulation. Tribulation and suffering, even for doing the right thing, is how God builds eternal character into His people.¹⁹ Anyone who has reached the life in Christ may be allowed to come out of harm's way and go into a place of safety called the wilderness.²⁰

This tribulation, though it will be propagated by the devil, is a judgment from God, initially for His people, but then also for the rest of the world.²¹ The number 9 is symbolic of God's judgment. Again, one of the reasons that 144,000 people, (probably men, not

¹⁵ THB, Genesis 35:21-26, chapter 49, Exodus 24:4, Judges 5:17, Matthew 10:1-4 and Revelation 7:1-8

¹⁶ THB, Judges chapter 19, II Chronicles 28:5-8, Isaiah 7:3-9, Jeremiah chapter 31 and Hosea 4:17, 8:9-10 and 7:1

¹⁷ THB, I Kings 12:1-24, II Kings 15:17-chapter 17, I Chronicles chapter 5, Jeremiah 30:1-11, 50:17, Ezekiel chapter 6, esp. Vv. 8-10, chapters 34 and 36, Joel 3:2, Zechariah chapter 7, esp. v. 14, Matthew 10:5-15, 15:24 and James 1:1

¹⁸ THB, Galatians 3:26-29

¹⁹ THB, Deuteronomy chapter 8, Isaiah 48:10, Daniel 11:33-35, 12:9-10, Zechariah 13:7-9, Job chapters 1-2 and 42:10-16, John 16:31-33, Romans 5:3-5, II Thessalonians 1:3-12, James 1:2-4, Hebrews 11:32-40, I Peter 1:3-9, 4:12-19 and Revelation 13:9-10, 14:12-13 and 20:4-6

²⁰ THB, Isaiah 26:20-21 and chapters 32, 35, 41, 43, 51, Ezekiel chapters 20, 34 and Revelation 3:10, 7:1-8, chapter 12 and 14:1-5

²¹ THB, I Peter 4:17-19

counting women and children) will be sealed by God and taken out of harm's way to the place of safety in the 'wilderness' just before the tribulation is that it fits God's mathematics. The number 144,000 represents the LACK of judgment. These people have already made themselves pure by following God's instructions exactly, just as Noah did. Therefore, they do not need to take the 'final exam' that God is bringing into the earth to test those who dwell here.²² The number 144,000 represents the amount of judgment that these people will undergo. $1+4+4 = 9$, which is judgment, but they will receive 0 from the Father, 0 from Jesus and 0 from the Holy Spirit. Thus, the number 144,000 is symbolic of NO judgment from God for those people who have reached the perfected state of the 'life in Christ'.

Therefore, we see that the life in Christ is a perfected state of abiding in the love of God through Jesus, by following the leading of the Holy Spirit, and *walking in strict, immediate obedience to everything that God tells a person to do*. This perfected state-of-being carries with it many rewards, both in this life and the next. However, it comes at a great cost. People who want the life in Christ must give up *everything* that this world has to offer as a reward and be totally sold out to God through Jesus Christ.²³

²² THB, Genesis 6:9 and 22, Hebrews 11:7 and Revelation 3:10

²³ THB, Matthew 19:29, Mark 10:29-30 and Luke 14:2-35

Chapter 12

What does it take to be one of the 144,000 chosen people?

We saw in the previous chapter that there will be 144,000 people of God who will be 'sealed' by God's angels, taken out of harm's way and sent into the wilderness to a place that God has prepared for them. God will do this in order to keep them safe from a time of terrible trouble that will soon come upon the earth. This time of trouble will occur just before Jesus returns and is called the tribulation and great tribulation. The time of tribulation is soon to occur, because it comes just after the 'beginning of sorrows'. The beginning of sorrows is a time when there will be an increase in four things - false Christian churches and doctrines, wars and rumors of wars, famine and pestilence. These are the first four seals of end time events, also known as the 'four horsemen of the Apocalypse'. *These beginning of sorrows have already begun!* Therefore the fifth seal, which is the persecution of the Christian Church, will escalate just after the beginning of sorrows. During the time of persecution of Christians, called the great tribulation, many Christians will fall away from the faith. They will do this because of the persecution of the tribulation. This is one way that God will separate true from false Christians.

This tribulation will escalate to become the great tribulation, (*i.e.*, World War 3) and lead to a desecration of God's holy place, which is when the Antichrist goes onto the temple mount, (*i.e.*, *Mount Moriah*) and declares that *he* is God. He will stop the daily sacrifices. This is called the abomination of desolation by the prophet Daniel.¹ This means that possibly the Jewish Temple will be rebuilt and sacrifices re-instituted. There are plans for building a third Jewish temple and indeed the alter has already been rebuilt and the priests trained for doing the sacrifices.² The problem is that currently there is an Islamic mosque and another Islamic building on the temple mount. There is great resistance from the world and especially Islam to prevent the Israelis from building the third temple. The other possibility for fulfillment of scriptures about this event is that the Antichrist will go onto Mount Moriah, possibly into the mosque that is currently there and stop the Jews from their daily prayer sacrifices, which have replaced the animal sacrifices.³ The reason this second option could fulfill scripture is because it is the land that the temple was built on that is the 'holy place', not the temple itself. And even in 2 Thessalonians verse 4 where Paul speaks of the Antichrist going into the temple to bring about the abomination of desecration that Jesus spoke of in Matthew 24 verse 15, Jesus referred to it as a 'holy place' but Paul used a word that meant sanctuary or temple, though not necessarily the Jewish temple. This means that the scripture can be fulfilled even without the Jewish temple being rebuilt and I believe that will likely be the case. Time will tell how it will work out, but the truly faithful, obedient Christians, (*i.e.*, the 144,000 and their families) will be taken out of harm's way even before this event of

¹ THB, Daniel 11:31 and 12:11

² <http://www.breakingisraelnews.com/32009/altar-jewish-holy-temple-rebuilt-jewish-world/#ejPJ3rhfXeva8bzG.97>

³ <http://www.uwyo.edu/religionet/er/judaism/jrlife.htm>

desecration occurs. This time of *great tribulation* will last about three and one half years.⁴ What will it take to be part of this elite group of Christians?

There is much speculation as to who these 144,000 people of God are that will be sealed and get to escape the tribulation. Probably the most common teaching is that they are Jews who are left on earth after Christians are ‘raptured’ out of the earth before the great tribulation. Unfortunately, this concept of a ‘pre-tribulation rapture’ of Christians out of the earth and into heaven is a nice thought, but it is *not* going to happen. This concept does not line up with the whole Bible. Therefore, it cannot happen. It would be nice if everyone who calls themselves a Christian would be taken out of the earth before these hard times come upon the earth. However, this will not be the case. As we saw earlier, it is through trials and tribulation that we learn to grow in our faith toward God. It is also through tribulation that we learn obedience to God. *Suffering is the key to obedience* to God, and *obedience is the key to righteousness*. If we love God, we will express that love by obeying Him.⁵ God will only take 144,000 of His most obedient people out of harm’s way before the tribulation. This is because these 144,000 have learned the ultimate lesson - to walk in love; love towards God and love towards other people, who are made in His image. This is the true message of the cross. This love will be expressed even towards the enemies of those people. That is one thing that will confirm that love has been perfected in them.⁶ Further, the 144,000 are only partly made up of Jewish people, (two tribes of Israel - Judah and Benjamin). All the others are ‘Israelites’, but are not Jews. Thus the 144,000 are not wholly comprised of Jews. The 144,000 will be descendants of Israelites, and/or people who are ‘Israelites’ through Christ.⁷

The Jehovah’s Witnesses teach that these 144,000 are people of their faith. However, their teachings are not true according God’s word, the Holy Bible. Therefore, the 144,000 will not be Jehovah’s Witnesses. The religion of Jehovah’s Witnesses is a false religion that is just as much from the devil as Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism or any other false teachings. Anyone who believes in these false religions will just as surely end up in hell, as Satanists.⁸

Some Christians claim that these 144,000 are members of the Philadelphia Church that Jesus discussed in Revelation chapter 3. This IS true.⁹ However, one cannot just *choose* to be a member of the Philadelphia Church. Rather, *God must call a person* into this church. Jesus instructed us to watch and pray always that we be counted worthy to escape the tribulation and to stand before Him. Therefore, it is only up to God who these 144,000 people will be. They are ‘chosen’ by God and not by any person.¹⁰ Is it possible to vie for a position in this elite group? The answer is yes! However, how do we try for membership in the 144,000?

⁴ THB, Daniel 11:21-chapter 12, Matthew 24:4-29, II Thessalonians 2:1-12 and Revelation chapter 6 and 13:1-10

⁵ THB, John 14:15

⁶ THB, Matthew 5:43-48 and 22:35-40

⁷ THB, Galatians 3:24-29

⁸ <http://christiscoming777.com/2012/07/25/testimony-of-heaven-hell-the-condition-of-todays-church-by-rodolfo-acevedo/>

⁹ THB, Revelation 3:10

¹⁰ THB, Luke 21:36 and Revelation 14:1-5

The only way for someone to become a member of the 144,000 is for God to invite them. Most of the 144,000 will probably not even know that they are called to be members of this group until the time just before the tribulation. God will probably send someone to tell them what to do and where to go in order to escape into the wilderness. Then they will know that they are members of the 'Philadelphia church'. Some of the 144,000 will have a 'heads up' from God that they are being called into the 144,000 *before* the time of the tribulation, but even then that word from God will be *conditional* on persistent obedience and perfection in Christ. If the people who are notified by God that they are members of the Philadelphia Church do not persevere and stay with the program, abide in Jesus and live the life in Christ, they will NOT be taken out of harm's way. They must hold tightly to the offering of membership in the Philadelphia Church, or else someone will take their place. Anyone who says they are members of the 144,000 before they escape into the wilderness does not know the scriptures.¹¹

What if a person tries to get to that place in Jesus where they are considered worthy of escaping the tribulation, but ultimately they fall short? This circumstance is not the end, as long as they do not leave the path of obedience to God. They will be subjected to at least some of the tribulation, but may be taken out of the trouble if they get 'clean' during that time.¹² This will be the case for most Christians who live during those times. Many Christians, even leaders in the church, will be put in prison and even killed during the great tribulation. As long as they do not deny Jesus as their Lord and Savior, they will still make it into the kingdom of God.¹³

Persecution happened even to the early church of Jesus Christ. The apostles and early Christians were persecuted, but not to the extent that will happen in the end of the age as we know it.¹⁴ Christians who die during the tribulation will die by various means, but often it will be death by beheading. This is Satan's preferred way to kill followers of Jesus, because it is symbolic of separating Jesus, who is the head, from the church, which is the body of Christ. That is why Muslims like to behead people, as they are *the* antichrist religion. This is also why John the Baptist was beheaded when he was placed in prison. John the Baptist lost his faith in Jesus, because he was put in prison for doing God's work. He began to doubt, became double-minded and sent his disciples to ask Jesus if He was the Messiah, though John the Baptist was the one that God anointed and sent to identify Jesus as the Messiah!¹⁵ If we also waver in our faith, then God may allow us to suffer more than we have to, or even allow us to die.

So we see that it *is* possible to try for a spot in the 144,000 who will avoid the persecution of the great tribulation. However, even if people fail to get into that elite group and have to go through the great tribulation, they can still make it into the kingdom

¹¹ THB, Ezekiel 33:10-20 and Revelation 3:11

¹² THB, Revelation 7:9-17

¹³ THB, Daniel 11:33-35, 12:10 and Revelation 2:8-11, 13:10 and 14:12-13

¹⁴ THB, Matthew 24:9-22, Acts 8:1, 11:19, 13:50, Galatians 5:11, 6:12, II Thessalonians 1:4 and II Timothy 3:10-12

¹⁵ THB, Matthew 11:2-6, 14:1-13, John 1:29-36, I Corinthians 12:12-30, Ephesians 1:22-23 and 4:9-16, Colossians 1:18 and 24, 2:19, I John 2:18-23, 4:1-6 and Revelation 20:4

of God, if they simply do not deny Jesus as their Lord and savior or get the mark of the beast.¹⁶

¹⁶ THB, Matthew 10:22, 24:13, Mark 13:13, Romans 10:13 and Revelation 14:9-13

Chapter 13

What will happen to the 144,000?

We have seen that in the end of time as we know it and just before Jesus comes back, there will be a time of severe tribulation in which many Christians will fall away from their faith and many others will be imprisoned and even put to death. This tribulation will be perpetrated by the devil. He will work primarily through the main antichrist religion in the earth, which is Islam. Muslims hate Christians and Jews. This is because they are deceived by Satan to believe that they are the chosen people of God rather than Christians and Jews. This deception has been propagated since the time of the false prophet Mohammed. The descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abraham through his handmaiden Hagar in the Old Testament, have always carried animosity toward the true descendants of promise through Abraham's son Isaac. Mohammed, who is considered the father of Islam, was an Arab and thereby a descendant of Ishmael. Everyone who follows the false religion of Islam will end up in the lake of fire, as they refuse to receive Jesus as the Christ and the Son of the living God. They will by definition be considered by God to be antichrists and children of the devil. All true Christians become heirs to the promises that God made to Abraham through their faith in Jesus Christ, as He was a Jew and a blood heir to those promises.¹

Since the time of Abraham, Ishmael and his descendants, who as mentioned are the Arabs, have been at odds with Isaac and his descendants, who are the Israelites, (and the Christians who become 'Israelites' through Jesus). Though God did give promises to the Ishmaelites, they were not the same as the promises that God made to Abraham through his 'son of promise', Isaac. This is because God promised salvation through Christ, who would be of Isaac's offspring. There is no salvation through the descendants of Ishmael. Therefore, neither Mohammed nor his teachings can save people from the lake of fire.² Abraham, whose name means 'father of a multitude', is symbolic of God the Father. Isaac, whose name means 'laughter', represents Jesus who is our strength, just as the joy of the Lord is also our strength. Abraham's grandson Jacob, whose name God changed to Israel, (meaning prince or *power* of God) represents the Holy Spirit, who is everywhere and provides us with power.³ Since Christians are heirs to the promises of Abraham through Isaac, the devil has convinced the Muslims that they need to destroy everyone who does not believe in Islam. Satan has convinced Muslims to hate Christians and Jews, since this promise of salvation through Isaac's descendants will ultimately end in Satan's demise in the lake of fire. Because Muslims reject Christ as the Son of God, Lord and Savior, God will reject them. Anyone one who denies that Jesus is the Son of God and refuses to accept Him as their Lord and Savior will receive their reward on Judgment Day in the lake of fire with eternal destruction.⁴

However even before Judgment Day, which will come after the second resurrection at the end of the thousand year reign of Jesus and the saints following Jesus' second coming,

¹ THB, Genesis 12:1-3, 13:14-17 and chapters 16-22, 26:1-5, 28:10-17, 35:9-15, 48:3-6, 48:15-22, 49:1-28, Matthew 24:3-31, Mark 13:3-26, Luke 21:7-36, Galatians 3:24-29 and I John chapters 3-4

² THB, Op cit 1, Genesis 21:1-14 and Galatians 4:28-31

³ THB, Genesis 32:12, Nehemiah 8:10 and Acts 1:4-8

⁴ THB, John 12:44-50, I Peter 2:7-8 and Revelation 20:10 and 21:8

there will be a ‘day’ of reckoning for the people of the earth. This preliminary judgment will come to the Christian church first, at the hands of the devil working primarily through Muslims. The purpose of this judgment is to drive God’s people toward perfection in Christ and to drive away from the faith those who are hypocrites. Though most Christian leaders teach that he will be from Europe, the Antichrist will likely have some connection with Islam, though in name only. This is because there is a principle of God, which comes through understanding His Word, in that the symbolism of the Old Testament reveals the hidden mysteries of the New Testament. Following this principle, as stated above, Isaac represents Jesus Christ. This means that Ishmael was symbolic of the Antichrist. Islam is therefore the antichrist religion of the devil. When the Muslims come to the fullness of their anger over what they perceive to be injustice in the Middle East by America and their allies, they will break out into terrorist attacks around the world which will help lead to World War III. The attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 was only a prelude to this assault on America and the world. China and the oriental countries, which are the ‘dragon’ and therefore represent the devil, will be the war machine behind this assault on the United States and the ‘Babylonian’ economic system that America perpetuates.⁵

The United States and the world’s economic system of banking that is headquartered in New York City, is symbolically called Mystery Babylon in the Bible. The prostitute in Revelation chapters 17 through 18 represents mystery Babylon. The approach to life in which things are purchased on credit was developed by the Babylonians during the time of Hammurabi in about the 18th century B.C.⁶ This type of lifestyle where people decide to have something today and pay for it tomorrow goes against the principles of God. Buying on credit is the epitome of impatience. *Patience*, on the other hand, is the first and most important characteristic of love. Since God is love, then living a ‘Babylonian’ lifestyle flies in the face of everything that God is about. Perfection for true Christians means that love has been perfected through the work of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in their lives. This is what will keep them out of the lake of fire on Judgment Day.⁷

God considers buying on credit and chasing after material things in a worldly way to be ‘prostitution’, ‘fornication’ or committing ‘adultery’ against Him. If someone is a friend of the world and its way of living in debt, they become an enemy of God.⁸ This is why God had the United States invade Iraq, which is the geographic location of Babylon. That way every scripture that pertains to God’s judgment of Babylon will then apply to the United States and its allies. They will NOT be able to leave Iraq, no matter how much they may want to do so, until every unfulfilled prophetic scripture regarding Babylon is fulfilled. *Therefore God will judge anyone, including Christians, who have debt to the world’s banking system, along with ‘Babylon’, (i.e., the United States and its followers), unless they repent and get out of debt and stay out of debt.* Also, anyone who hears from God to leave the United States and the life of living in debt should heed that warning, because God is going to judge America and all who live there, as well as their allies. This

⁵ THB, Daniel chapters 8-12, Matthew 24:9-28, Mark 13:9-23, Luke 21:12-24, II Thessalonians 2:1-12, I Peter 4:17-19, I John 4:1-6 and Revelation 12:13-17, chapter 13, 14:6-13, chapters 17-18 and 19:17-20:15

⁶ *History of Banking*, <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ac19>

⁷ THB, I Corinthians 13:4-8 and I John 4:8 and 16-21

⁸ THB, Isaiah 23:17-18, James 4:1-10 and Revelation 14:8, 17:1-6 and 18:9

judgment will be in the form of war, famine, disease and natural disasters. Only a few will heed this warning and escape. These will eventually, provided they become perfected in Jesus, join the rest of the 144,000 and escape into the wilderness, either before or during the great tribulation, (*a.k.a.*, World War 3).⁹

The *great tribulation* will last about three and one half years and will be perpetrated by the devil working through a man who will likely be superficially connected to Islam. However, this Antichrist will really only be interested in advancing his own agenda, which will be making war against Christians and Jews, and ruling the world. Muslims at large have a desire to take over the world. The Antichrist will work with a false prophet, (who will be 'superficially' a Christian) and will together cause people to receive something the Bible calls the 'mark of the beast'. This mark will be placed either on or in the forehead or right hand of those who submit to the Antichrist and false prophet. This 'mark' will have in its makeup the numbers 666. Some people believe that this 'mark' will most likely be is an implantable computer chip which will contain all of the person's identity details, including banking information. This computer chip will be able to be scanned by machines to extract the person's information and carry out banking transactions. These chips already exist and are commercially available *now*. Some people have already had them implanted. Every bar code has a pattern consistent with 666. The implantable computer chip works on similar technology. Without the implanted computer chip, no one will be able to buy or sell during the great tribulation. This will be a part of the cashless society and the means by which everyone who receives the chip will be tracked. If the 'mark' is a computer chip, that could be why there is currently an increase in identity theft and kidnapping of children around the world, in order to encourage people to want to receive the computer chip as a way to protect their identity, and to have the chip placed into their children so they can be tracked by the satellite Global Positioning System, (or GPS) in the event they are abducted. Also, the world's economy is going into the tank, so that all people of the earth will be tempted to join in with this 'one world' economy. Most bank cards today already have a version of this chip imbedded in them.

Other people believe that the mark of the beast will be an actual mark on the hand or forehead, because Satan is a 'copy cat' and God actually marks His people when they leave the earth and go to heaven.¹⁰ In any case, the problem is that if anyone receives the mark of the beast, they will eventually end up in the lake of fire. *Therefore, it is imperative that anyone who wants to enter the kingdom of God must refuse to receive this 'mark', no matter the consequences.* The number 666 comes into play as it represents the devil in human form, as well as double judgment. Six is the number of a man, since man was created on the sixth day. Seven is the number of God and represents His completeness, as He rested on the seventh day after He had refurbished the earth. Therefore, the number 777 represents God in His fullness in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Thus, the number 666 represents a man claiming to be God. Nine is the number of judgment. Therefore 18, (6+6+6 = 18) is the number of *double judgment*. That is why

⁹ THB, Psalm 137:8-9, Isaiah chapters 13-14, 21:9-10, 43:14, chapter 47, 48:14 and 20-22, Jeremiah chapters 50-51, Ezekiel chapter 19, Micah chapter 4, Zechariah chapter 2 and Revelation 14:8, 16:19 and chapters 17-18

¹⁰ THB, Revelation 3:12 and 14:1

Revelation chapter 18 speaks about the double judgment of God on Babylon. When the Antichrist goes onto the temple mount in Jerusalem and sets himself up as god, then the final events of the tribulation will come to pass. Again, this is called the 'abomination of desolation' that was spoken of by Daniel the prophet. When this happens, the evil forces and their plans to destroy Christians and Jews will come to its climax. This will be one of the worst times of war and mass murder that the world has ever seen. It will be the final stage of World War III and the fullness of the great tribulation. The Antichrist is likely preparing for these things even now. He will become readily identifiable by those who know the Bible and are 'tuned in' to God's frequency. He will be connected to Islam and have his eye on the Middle East, (he will not be from Europe as most teach) and will be of Greek descent, since the book of Daniel refers to him as the 'prince of Greece'. The angel Gabriel is currently restraining the satanic, antichrist spirit who will work through the Antichrist, or Beast. Gabriel will restrain him until the time appointed by God for him to be revealed. Then Gabriel will step out of the way and allow the Antichrist to become known in the earth. The antichrist spirit has been working in the earth since the time of Adam. At any given time there is an 'antichrist' operating in the earth. Hitler was a good example of this concept. These 'antichrists' always try to kill God's true people. Daniel chapter 11 refers to the Antichrist as the king of the North, so currently Vladimir Putin is a candidate for the Antichrist, since he fits many of the characteristics put forth in the scriptures, but time will tell.¹¹

World War III and the great tribulation will be God's judgment of His disobedient people through the workings of the devil and the Antichrist. Though these events will be the worst of times that the modern world has ever seen, the great tribulation will be nothing compared to what will happen afterward when God will step in Himself to 'shake' both heaven and earth. This 'shaking' from God will follow immediately after the three and one half years of the tribulation and will begin what the Bible calls the *Day of the Lord*. The great tribulation will be the *wrath of Satan*. Therefore, the tribulation will have an effect on, and *is intended for*, Christians. That is why they will NOT be 'raptured' out of the earth first. The Day of the Lord is God's direct judgment for all those who refuse to repent and accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for their sins, (*i.e.*, all non-Christians). During the Day of the Lord, (which also *may* be about three and one half years in length) all *non-Christians* will be affected by God's wrath on the earth. *True Christians are NOT appointed to this wrath of God*. The Christians will have either been killed by the followers of the Antichrist, or they will have been taken out of harm's way to a place of safety in the wilderness during the three and one half years of the great tribulation *before* the Day of the Lord.

The Day of the Lord will begin with a great earthquake which will likely cause the eruption of one or more of the dozen or so 'super volcanoes' which exist in the earth today. The most likely one will be the super volcano under Yellowstone National Park in the western United States. Experts say it is ready to erupt at any time. The prelude to this event is already in the works, as the ground over this volcano has shifted and heated up to the point that park officials have cordoned off part of the park from public access. Even animals have left or been found dead due to the environmental changes from this volcanic

¹¹ THB, Genesis 1:26-2:3, Daniel 2:41-43 and chapters 7-12, Matthew 16:24-27 and 24:9-29, II Thessalonians 2:1-12, I John 2:18-23 and Revelation chapter 13, 14:6-13, 15:2, 16:2, 19:20 and 20:4-6

activity. When the eruption of the super volcano occurs it will wipe out everything within about a 1,000-mile radius and the earth's atmosphere will change drastically. The sun and moon will be blotted out and something called a volcanic winter will ensue. The earth's temperature will drop several degrees and what is left from the aftereffects of the nuclear impact of the third World War will be devastated in a way that the modern world has never known. However, this is just the beginning of God's wrath. Then there will be asteroid/meteor strikes on the earth that will be extremely devastating. Much of the population of the earth will be wiped out. Those remaining people around the world will run for cover in whatever crevice of whatever rock they can find. They will know that God's wrath through Jesus has come upon the earth.¹²

The remaining events of the Day of the Lord will be even more devastating.¹³ For the faint of heart it will be better if they die before this time comes.¹⁴ For the rest of true Christians, beginning with the 144,000, there will be a place of safety in the wilderness, where God will supernaturally protect them during the tribulation and the Day of the Lord, but *only* if they have become perfected in Christ before or during the tribulation. Initially only the 144,000 will be taken out of harm's way before the great tribulation.¹⁵ This is because this small number of men will be the only ones who will have fully acted on a message like the one in this book. All the other people on the planet will have missed the boat and the chance to escape the trouble that lies just ahead. Also, the Christians who have believed the lie that has been preached repeatedly by many church leaders, that no one is perfect and that God does not expect anyone but Jesus to be perfect, will miss out on the *one and only* chance to escape ALL of the great tribulation. They will have to go through part or all of the tribulation in order to come 'clean' in the Lord. Many will be put in prison and many will die, often by beheading. As we mentioned, beheading is the way that the antichrist spirit likes to kill Christians. This is because it represents separating Jesus, who is the head, from the body of Christ, which is the Church. Some Christians will come out of the tribulation and into the place of safety as they begin to become perfectly obedient to God because of their sufferings. In either case, as long as the person does not deny Jesus as their Lord and Savior, they will be able to partake in the first resurrection and gain immortality through Christ. Some people are allotted to escape, and some are allotted for suffering. Usually it will be to them according to the way they have lived their lives and how obedient they have been to God. In any case, each person has his or her appointed destiny and if they will not deny Jesus, then He will not deny immortality to them.¹⁶

The 144,000 will escape all of the trouble that lies just ahead for the people of the earth. They will be called out of harm's way and into the wilderness to a place of safety, which God Himself has prepared for them. They will have great 'hidden' wealth, as God will bestow upon some of them what has become known as the 'Cyrus anointing'. In this,

¹² THB, Isaiah 2:19-21, 13:13, Joel 3:16, Haggai 2:6-7 and 20-23, Matthew 24:29, Mark 13:24-25, Luke 21:25-26, I Thessalonians 5:9, Hebrews 12:25-29 and Revelation 6:12-17, 7:1-8, 12:6 and Vv. 14-17 and 14:1-5

¹³ THB, Revelation chapters 8, 9 and 16

¹⁴ THB, Revelation 14:13

¹⁵ THB, Revelation 3:10, 7:1-8, 12:6 and Vv. 13-17 and 14:1-5

¹⁶ THB, Jeremiah chapter 15, Matthew 10:32-33, Luke 12:8-12, Ephesians 4:11-16 and Revelation 2:10, 7:9-17, 13:9-10 and 20:4-6

some of the 144,000 will have the gift of being able to acquire wealth in ways that the other members of the Christian church will not be able to do. The Bible says that ‘the wealth of the sinner has been stored up for the righteous’. It also says that ‘though the lot falls into the lap, its every decision is of the Lord’. This means that ALL wicked stores of wealth in the world are being kept for the obedient people of God and God Himself decides every lottery. In other words, there is no such thing as luck. The word ‘luck’ will not be in the vocabulary of the 144,000. They will not refuse to receive ANY legitimate source of wealth from God, including lotteries, casino monies, gifts from evil people when there are no ‘strings’ attached, etc. God will open up to them many sources of ‘hidden’ wealth throughout the earth. They will use this money to propagate the gospel in the end-times, as well as take care of the other obedient people of God and the poor.

The devil will try to stop the 144,000 from escaping into the wilderness by sending an army after them. However, God will cause the earth to protect His perfected people by opening up and swallowing the ‘flood’ of evil people, (probably the army of the Antichrist) that Satan sends to kill them.¹⁷ God has yet to reveal the location of this place of safety in the wilderness. However, there are some clues in the Bible and the Apocrypha of the Old Testament, which point to its location. I have an idea of where it may be, but will not reveal it in this writing. The Bible says in Isaiah that it will be like Eden. In fact the whole process of end-time judgment from God, saving the ‘remnant’ of His people who will escape this judgment and the description of the place of safety in the wilderness is found throughout the book of Isaiah. In the book of II Esdras in the Apocrypha of the Old Testament, a description of the escape of God’s people from spiritual ‘Babylon’ and the tribulation says that they will cross the river Euphrates in a fashion similar to the way the Israelites crossed the Red Sea. God will divide the river Euphrates into seven streams and the 144,000 will easily walk across. God will even give them water from the rock, just as He did for the Israelites in Moses’ day. This puts the place of safety somewhere near modern day Turkey or Iraq. The original Garden of Eden was at the north end of the Euphrates River, probably in the area of modern day Turkey.¹⁸

When the 144,000 chosen Christians or ‘Israelites’, whom God calls ‘Zion’ and who represent the remnant of God’s people that are called out of spiritual ‘Babylon’, leave their worldly homes, jobs and even families, they will go into the wilderness, which is represented in God’s Word by the term ‘Mount Zion’. In fact, the word ‘Zion’ means ‘wilderness’. Zion also refers to Jerusalem, or the ‘city of David’. Jerusalem is the heart of the earth, though the Zion that refers to the place of safety in the wilderness is probably *not* geographically near Jerusalem.¹⁹ Being the heart of the earth is why people fight so much over Jerusalem. It is symbolic of how the devil fights God over the hearts, or souls, of humans. As we saw earlier, since Adam was formed from the earth, the earth is ultimately representative of Jesus and therefore God. The heart of the Christian is where God’s law is written and they keep God’s Word, which is Jesus. Thus, the

¹⁷ THB, Proverbs 13:22 and 16:33, Isaiah 45:1-10, chapters 60-61 and Revelation 12:6 and 13-16

¹⁸ THB, Genesis 2:10-14, Exodus chapters 13-15 and 17:1-7, Numbers 20:7-11 and the book of Isaiah, especially 11:15-16, 23:15-18, 48:20-21 and 51:3. Apocrypha of the Old Testament, II Esdras chapter 13

¹⁹ THB, Matthew 12:40

Christian's connection with God occurs through Jesus in the Christian's heart.²⁰ God gives His people a 'heart transplant' when they accept Jesus into their lives. He replaces their unbelieving heart of stone with a soft, believing heart of 'flesh'. He also puts in them His Holy Spirit so they can obey Him. God will also give the earth a heart transplant in the form of the New Jerusalem.²¹ Therefore, any scripture referring to Zion or Mount Zion refers to the heart of the earth and by extension the heart of Jesus' true followers. These terms regarding 'Zion' then may thus be referring to the wilderness, the 144,000 and/or those who learn obedience to God through the tribulation. Spiritually speaking, the only people who can 'go up onto' Mount Zion where God dwells are those who have pure hearts, clean hands and tongues that speak no deceit. These are members of the 'Philadelphia Church' or the 144,000 perfected men and their obedient loved ones, who will be protected from *all* of God's judgment through the great tribulation and the Day of the Lord. They have chosen to be judged and to learn to walk in love, being perfected in Christ *now*, before the tribulation.²²

Becoming perfected in Christ *now* is the best we can do through Jesus. It is not for everyone. Only those who truly find the life of perfection in Christ will get to join the 144,000 chosen ones and skip out on the 'final exam' for the earth, which will be the great tribulation and Day of the Lord. Again, even if someone cannot get to the life in Christ, they must do their best, with the help of the Holy Spirit through Jesus, to bring glory to God and pray each day that they may be counted worthy to escape all these things and stand before Jesus on Mount Zion.²³

²⁰ THB, Psalm 40:8 and 119:11, Romans 5:5 and 8:16, II Corinthians 1:21-22, Galatians 4:6 and Ephesians chapter 2, 3:17 and 5:8 and 19, Colossians 3:15-16, Hebrews 8:10 and 10:16, James 1:21, II Peter 1:19, I John 1:10, 2:14, 5:21 and II John 2

²¹ THB, Ezekiel 11:19-20, 36:22-27, Romans 10:9-10 and Revelation 21:2-3

²² THB, Psalm chapter 15, 24:1-6 and chapter 91 and Revelation 3:10, 7:1-8 and 14:1-5

²³ THB, Luke 21:34-36 and Philippians 3:12-16

Chapter 14

How do we bring glory to God?

If we want to know what it is that God wants us to do, we must look in His Word. As we discussed earlier, God created us for a purpose. Since He wants us to become part of His family, then He obviously has work that He wants us to do as humans. God expects us to obey Him. This is how we show our love for Him. The only thing we can give God that He does not already have is our love. He commanded us to love one another, and even show love for our enemies. One of the ways that we know we are near, or at perfection, is that we will love even those who hate us.¹ However, most people cannot even show love to the members of their family. In today's society, spousal abuse, child abuse and family feuds are more the rule than the exception, not to mention the violent acts of hatred that people perpetrate on strangers, who are also made in the image of God. *This is not how it should be.* Even among most Christians, there is no *true* love. People, who call themselves Christians, lie to each other, are hypocrites and refuse even to obey simple commands from God. The church leaders are, for the most part, doing their own thing and not truly what God would have them do. These so-called Christians meet in church and sing about bringing glory to God, while at the same time they refuse to do His will. This has been a problem since the time God 'chose' a people.²

God wants His people to live and 'look' exactly like His Son Jesus. Because Jesus is back in heaven, the only 'Jesus' that non-believers will see in the earth today is true Christians, because they are the 'body' of Christ. The word Christian means 'little Christ'. *True Christians will love one another, as Jesus loves them.* This is the only way that anyone will know that they are Christians and that God sent Jesus.³ In order for us to 'look like' Jesus, as we saw earlier, we must 'grow up' in our soul. This means learning to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit in order to 'walk in the Spirit', instead of following the sinful flesh and doing what the devil wants us to do. When we learn to walk in the spirit, then we can be of use to God. Prior to this time, we will not be very much help to the Lord, because we *cannot* do the right thing. If we can be mature in our soul, then we can do the will of God. ***It is doing the will of God that brings glory to Him.***

God sent each one of us to earth for a reason. If we do not accomplish the purpose that God sent us here to do, then we will NOT bring glory to God. Following the principle of seedtime and harvest, God will give His glory to His people, but He expects a return on His investment. He expects His people to do His will and by this they will bring glory to God, but they will multiply it by working in the lives of other people. Jesus said that He glorified the Father by finishing the work that God sent Him to earth to do.⁴ *We must follow this example and glorify God by finishing the work that God sent us here to do.* The Christian Church is supposed to help its individual members to grow up in the Spirit and get busy doing the work that God sent them here to do. The problem is that the church leaders have lost this knowledge over the years and have failed to do exactly what

¹ THB, Matthew 5:43-48

² THB, Isaiah chapter 58, Ezekiel chapter 34, Zechariah chapter 7 and I Corinthians 6:1-11

³ THB, John 12:44-50, 12:12-20, 13:34-35, 17:20-26, Romans 1:16-32, 12:2, II Corinthians 3:7-18, I Thessalonians 4:9, I John 2:7-11, 3:11-24, 4:7-21 and II John 5-11

⁴ THB, John 17:4

God wants them to do. Therefore, the modern Christian Church as a whole also does not do what God wants them to do and thus is not really glorifying God. However, God is currently in the process of rectifying this situation.⁵

Every person that God creates, who has the potential to enter His kingdom, has a gift or gifts from Jesus that will help him or her perform the job that God sent them here to earth to do. These gifts are not just for them, but are for the whole Church of God. God the Father and the Holy Spirit also gave gifts to the church. With all these gifts, Christians are supposed to be well equipped to overcome the devil and ‘build’ the Church of God the way He designed it to be built.

The *ministry gifts* that Jesus gave to the church are those of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher. These are referred to as the ‘five-fold ministry gifts’. They are given before birth to each individual. Every Christian has at least one of these gifts. It is the job of the leaders of the church to identify these gifts in each individual, shortly after they are saved and come into the body of Christ. The church leaders are supposed to help the members of their respective congregations to ‘grow up’ in their gifting(s) so they will operate to the benefit of all in the church. These ministry gifts are designed by Jesus to operate individually and together in order to help the members of the body of Christ to grow up into Jesus, Who is the Head. They are then supposed to be used to do the work of God to both spread the gospel of Jesus Christ and to help all who come into the Church of God to enter into perfection in Christ. This is how the first resurrection of the saints, (*a.k.a.*, the ‘rapture’) will actually occur when Jesus returns.⁶ The problem is that the church at large does not know this, even though it is very plain in the scriptures. Therefore, the pattern that Jesus and the apostles established in the first century church has not been followed down through the years since Jesus walked the earth. Now is the time to bring these gifts back to the forefront of the body of Christ and get busy doing the work God sent us here to do. In this way we will truly glorify God. The sooner we do this and reach perfection, the sooner Jesus will come back. The reason that knows one knows the day or the hour that Jesus will come back, except the Father, is because it depends on us! No wedding starts until the bride comes into the service and so it will be with the wedding feast of Jesus. When the church is ready and the Father sees what He wants to see, then He will dispatch His Son to take His bride and not a minute before. The Holy Spirit is the ‘bridesmaid’ Who will help the bride prepare herself.⁷

The most important thing to God in the earth is the restoration of *order* from the destruction that came from the fall of Satan when he and his rebellious angels were cast out of heaven and down to the earth.⁸ The reason that Jesus came to the earth was to destroy the works of the devil and thereby restore order. This is the reason we are here as well. Everything we do should be designed to bring order into both the earth and the lives of people, even our enemies. The two kingdoms operating in the earth are the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness. We are supposed to only be working on behalf of the kingdom of light. However, it is the job of the devil to try to trick us into following his

⁵ THB, Ezekiel chapter 34

⁶ THB, Jeremiah 1:4-5, I Corinthians 15:51-57, Ephesians 4:11-16, I Thessalonians 4:14-17 and Revelation 20:4-6

⁷ THB, Matthew 24:36-44, Mark 13:32-37 and Revelation 19:6-10 and 22:17

⁸ THB, Genesis 1:1-5, Luke 10:18 and Revelation 12:3-5 and Vv. 7-9

lead and going against God. The devil is very adept at doing his work. Most of the world has gone after the devil. One of the reasons is that the Christians are not really obeying God and leading people in the right direction. Thus even many people who call themselves Christians may be unknowingly working for the kingdom of darkness.

These two kingdoms are symbolized in the earth in two basic groups of people, those who obey God and follow the ways of Jesus and everyone else. The major group of opponents of the kingdom of light in the world is called 'BABYLON'. Those who operate in the principles set forth by the 'Babylonians' work for the kingdom of darkness. The people who operate in the principles that God set forth to the Israelites, and later expanded through His Son Jesus, work for the kingdom of light. There are many people who are somewhere in between. However, by definition if they do not follow the ways of Jesus, then they operate for the kingdom of darkness and follow the antichrist spirit.⁹ The line between these two kingdoms is being further defined in these last days. It is imperative that we learn all that we can about Babylon and the works of the devil through this 'kingdom', so we can defeat him.¹⁰

⁹ THB, I John chapter 4

¹⁰ THB, Matthew 10:16, Luke 10:19 and Revelation 12:10-12

Chapter 15

Which kingdom do we want to belong to?

When God re-established order in the earth after the fall of Lucifer, He separated the kingdom of light from the kingdom of darkness and so they remain to this day.¹ Initially, the kingdom of light in the earth consisted of Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the two thirds remaining good angels. The kingdom of darkness consisted of the devil and the one third fallen angels.² This restoration of order in the spirit realm preceded the restoration of order in the natural. Once God had confirmed the separation of the two kingdoms in the spirit, He set about re-creating the surface of the earth, the atmosphere, and the living organisms to populate the planet. Once this was completed, God rested from His work of creation and restoration.³

There are differing opinions on whether the ‘creation week’ was actually a week or another time interval. The Bible says that to God a day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as a day.⁴ This means that there is no time dimension as far as God is concerned. He can change time to suit His needs. This is something that is hard for us to comprehend, but it is the case nonetheless.⁵ Thus it is entirely possible that the six days of creation was indeed six thousand years that God ‘compressed’ into six days when He was finished, much like we compress a large file into a zip file on a computer. That way, the seventh day on which God rested could have actually been one thousand years as well. This would mean that the Sabbath rest for God was a ‘day’ for Him, but one thousand years for the earth and mankind. That meant that the first ‘day’ of *rest* for God was the first ‘day’ of *work* for man. This way when God told Adam that on the ‘day’ that he ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil that he would surely die, God knew that this ‘day’ would actually be one thousand years. Then when Adam did eat the fruit that he was instructed not to eat and he died at the age of 930 years, then indeed he died on the ‘day’ that he ate the fruit.⁶ This would also mean that the return of Christ near the end of six thousand years of mankind since Adam would initiate a thousand years of rest, or another ‘Sabbath rest’. But this time, the ‘day’ of rest would be for humans, especially God’s people, since Satan will be locked up for those one thousand years.⁷

To further this concept, the ‘day’ *after* the thousand-year reign of Christ and the saints, would be the first ‘day’ of the rest of eternity. This ‘day’ would be the day that God would set up His eternal kingdom on the earth. It would then be the eighth ‘day’, (or thousand years) since Adam. Eight is the number of new beginnings and if the number eight is turned on its side, it becomes the symbol for infinity, (∞). That way it would have been that when Jesus came the first time, He literally split time for mankind. He would have come essentially in the middle of the eight thousand years of mankind, and therefore His visitation on the earth would have sent a ripple effect through time as we know it,

¹ THB, Genesis 1:1-5,

² THB, Revelation 12:3-4 and 7-9

³ THB, Genesis 1:6-2:4

⁴ THB, II Peter 3:8

⁵ THB, Joshua 10:12-15

⁶ THB, Genesis 2:15-17 and 5:5

⁷ THB, Revelation 19:11-20:6

touching every human since Adam and every person to the end of time in the other direction.⁸

God created humans with a free will, and He expects them to *choose* life or death, blessing or cursing. Each person will be a product of his or her choices in life.⁹ During the time of modern man from Adam on, God had a plan to separate those who would ultimately obey Him from those who would rebel. It would be through this process of separation that He would develop the ‘replacements’ for the fallen angels. During their time on earth, each person would ‘prove’ themselves to God whether or not they would obey Him. If people accepted the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for their sins and continued to be obedient to God, then they would be included in the family of God, be granted eternal life and live forever in His presence. If they disobeyed and denied or trampled on the blood sacrifice of Jesus, then they would ultimately be destroyed in the lake of fire. Prior to Judgment Day, the rebels would spend time in hell to ‘pay’ for their sins. The obedient ones who died would spend their time peacefully waiting for the ‘seventh day’ Sabbath rest upon the return of Jesus Christ and the first resurrection, which will take place about 6,000 years from Adam. The obedient souls would live during this time of waiting in a place called paradise or ‘Abraham’s bosom’. When Jesus returned with them, they would be resurrected to new immortal bodies. Those in hell would not be brought out and judged until *after* the thousand-year ‘Sabbath’ reign of Jesus and the saints. This is the second resurrection that is for the disobedient souls. The second resurrection will take place approximately 7,000 years since Adam. The disobedient souls will be judged according to their works, under the Old Testament Law of Moses. Then those found short of perfection will be thrown into the lake of fire and thus destroyed forever. This is the second death.¹⁰

So we see that there are two kingdoms in operation in the spirit realm on earth - *the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness*. It is up to each person to *choose* which kingdom they wish to serve, but they *must* serve one or the other. If people refuse to choose Jesus and obedience to God, they by default choose to serve Satan and the kingdom of darkness. Because He gave us a free will, God will honor whichever choice each person makes. However, it is His desire that none be lost to the kingdom of darkness but that all should repent, receive Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior, be saved and born again. This is why Jesus is waiting to return until everyone has had this chance. If people choose to serve God, repent and accept the sacrifice of Jesus for their sins, and if they continue to move toward perfection in Christ, then they will receive the crown of life from God and live forever in the New Jerusalem. This will be their heaven on earth.¹¹ If people choose NOT to repent and receive the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for their sins, and therefore they *deny* the plan of God for salvation, then these people will by become members of the kingdom of darkness and will eventually end up in the lake of fire, along with the devil and his followers. Even those who receive Jesus initially, but fall away

⁸ THB, Joshua chapter 3, Isaiah 49:8, Romans 5:6, II Corinthians 6:2, Galatians 4:3-7, Ephesians 1:9-14, I Timothy 6:15-16, Titus 1:1-3, I Peter 3:18-22 and Revelation 20:1-22:21

⁹ THB, Genesis 4:1-15 and Deuteronomy chapters 28-30

¹⁰ THB, Luke 16:19-31, 23:39-43, II Corinthians 12:1-10, Hebrews 6:1-8 and 10:26-39, and Revelation 2:7, 20:11-15 and 21:7-8

¹¹ THB, John 3:3-21, Romans chapters 2, 5 and 14, II Corinthians 5:9-11, Hebrews 9:23-28, James 1:12-18, II Peter 3:9 and Revelation 2:8-11

from the faith, or willfully sin after they receive Christ, will end up in the lake of fire. Anyone who practices anything that God finds offensive will end up in the lake of fire. This includes the cowardly, unbelievers, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, (such as gays, people who have sex outside of marriage and people who commit adultery, even if it is only in their hearts and they never act on it) and thieves, rebellious people, people who operate in other forms of witchcraft, ‘psychics’, mediums, ‘spiritists’, stubborn people and other idolaters, and *all* liars. These people will NOT enter the kingdom of God.¹² Even people who are agnostics and claim ignorance of God will have no excuse. ***Anyone who rejects Jesus will end up in the lake of fire.***¹³

Thus, we see that if people choose to serve God and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and walk even as Jesus walked, then they become part of the kingdom of light and will receive the crown of life and live forever with God. If they reject this certain way to salvation, then they will join the kingdom of darkness and eventually end up in hell and then the lake of fire. Which kingdom should we belong to and serve? It seems that the choice is obvious, but unfortunately most people will make the wrong choice. If they reject Jesus’ sacrifice for their sins and rebel against god, then they *choose* to belong to the kingdom of darkness by default.

¹² THB, Leviticus 19:31 and 20:6-7, I Samuel 15:22-23, II Kings chapter 21, II Chronicles chapter 33, Isaiah 8:19-22, Romans 1:18-32, I Corinthians 6:9-11, Hebrews 6:1-8 and 10:19-39 and Revelation 19:17-21:8 and 22:14-15

¹³ THB, John 15:18-25, Romans 1:18-32

Chapter 16

What are the characteristics of the two spiritual kingdoms?

It is imperative that the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness be defined for those who do not know the difference. For those who *do* know the difference it is still helpful to have the two further delineated. Most Christians have only a vague understanding of these two spiritual kingdoms. The kingdom of light in the earth, as we saw earlier, consists of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the remaining two thirds of the good angels. God the Father is part of this kingdom, since He is connected to Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the Father is another witness in the earth through the teachings, miracles and blood of Jesus.¹ Also, all those who truly are people of God through Jesus will be part of this kingdom. The kingdom of darkness consists of the devil, his unclean spirits and those who refuse to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior or disobey God. This is the main difference between the two kingdoms.²

God's kingdom of light was established before time, as we know it, began. Jesus Christ, who is also known as the Word, was there with God in the beginning. Jesus *is* God, since He is the Father's Son. It was through Jesus that the world and everything in it was created.³ Lucifer, who was an arch- or leader angel, and one third of the other angels were originally members of the kingdom of light, but fell from grace due to the sin of pride, since they tried to steal God's glory. When these rebellious spirits were cast out of heaven and down to the earth, it destroyed the surface of the earth. God called the kingdom of light into action in the earth after this fall of Satan. He separated the two kingdoms. Then He began restoring the earth. Everything that is good in the earth is part of the kingdom of light and from God. Everything that is evil in the earth is of the kingdom of darkness and the devil.⁴ Although the love of money, not money itself, is the root of all kinds of evil, pride, (stealing God's glory) is the root of *every* evil. God hates pride and will destroy anyone who walks in pride.⁵

Before the flood of Noah, there was a common language and people were of the same skin color. After the flood of Noah, God separated people by confusing their language and changing their physical characteristics. The reason that God did this was because the people were trying to build a building with the capability of reaching to heaven where God dwells. The structure came to be known as the tower of Babel. Babel means confusion. Some believe this structure to have been a pyramid. As the people were separated and scattered throughout the world, they continued to build these pyramids and use them in their false religious practices, including human sacrifice.⁶

The original city of Babel, that later came to be known as Babylon, was started by a man named Nimrod. Nimrod was the great grandson of Noah through his son Ham. Ham had 'seen' his father Noah naked when Noah was in a drunken state after the flood.

¹ THB, John 5:34-38 and I John 5:6-10

² THB, John 1:1-14, Romans chapter 8, Ephesians chapter 2 and 5:1-21, I Peter chapter 1, II Peter chapter 2 and I John chapter 3

³ THB, John 1:1-5

⁴ FHB, Genesis 1:1-5, Isaiah 14:3-23, Ezekiel 28:1-19, James 1:12-27 and Revelation 12:3-4 and 7-9

⁵ THB, Isaiah chapter 2, I Timothy 6:3-10, James 4:6 and I Peter 5:5

⁶ THB, Genesis 11:1-9

Because of this event Noah cursed Ham and all the descendents who would come from this disobedient son. Noah's curse stated that the descendents of Ham would be servants of the descendents of the other two sons, Shem and Japheth. Shem was the forefather of Abraham and therefore Jesus. From Shem came what we know today as the Caucasian race. From the line of Japheth came all the oriental races. Ham was the forefather of the dark races. The curse that Noah placed on Ham is still in existence today, just as much as the curse of sin that God placed on Adam still operates today.⁷ *The only way that these curses can be broken is through Jesus.* Anywhere in the world that these three races exist together, the effects of the curse of Noah can be seen. People of the dark races serve the people of the Caucasian and oriental races. Only when people of any of the races become Christian and obey the commandments of God can they come out from under this curse. However, even then it takes time and effort on the part of the individual to overcome the effects of this curse, just as it does to overcome the curse of the sin nature that everyone since Adam carries within them.⁸

Nimrod was the forefather of the main false religion of the world. This religion has come to be known as 'Mystery Babylon'. Satan used Nimrod, who was a mighty hunter and a powerful man in the natural, to operate and build for the kingdom of darkness. As is often the case, people who have great natural physical skills and abilities tend to rely on their own strength rather than relying upon God. God's strength is made perfect in our weaknesses.⁹ Nimrod was responsible for developing several cities, including Babel. He was, by Jewish tradition, a tyrant who led people to become rebellious toward God.¹⁰ Nimrod is also historically given credit as a leader of the false religion of Mystery Babylon.¹¹ Although there are some variations on the history of the initiation of this mystery religion, most sources give similar details. Nimrod married a woman named Semiramis. Together they led perverted religious practices that were an abomination to God. When Nimrod died, Queen Semiramis began a rumor that he had become the sun god. He later became known in other cultures by various names such as Baal, Baalim, Bel, Molech, the Great Life Giver, the god of fire, etc. Semiramis then had an illegitimate child out of wedlock and named him Tammuz. She began the rumor that she had become impregnated supernaturally and not by a human. Some sources say that Semiramis also said that Tammuz was the reincarnation of Nimrod or Baal, and the savior of the world that God had promised to Adam.¹² Semiramis also spread the rumor that she herself was a goddess, fallen from heaven and landing in the Euphrates River in an egg. She therefore became known as the goddess of fertility.

Tammuz and Semiramis were worshiped as a god and goddess. The 'reincarnated' Nimrod was worshiped as the god of the sun and the father of creation. Semiramis was worshiped as the goddess of the moon and fertility, etc. As the people scattered from Babel with their different languages, they used different names for Nimrod, (see above paragraph) Tammuz and Semiramis. Some called Semiramis the Mother Goddess or

⁷ THB, Genesis 3:9-21 and chapters 9-11

⁸ THB, Galatians 3:13-14

⁹ THB, II Corinthians 12:9

¹⁰ The Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. 9, p. 309

¹¹ Ralph Woodrow, *Babylon Mystery Religion* (Riverside, California: Ralph Woodrow Evangelistic Assn., 1966), p. 9; and Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, (New York: Loizeaux Brothers)

¹² THB, Genesis 3:15

Ishtar (originally pronounced 'Easter'). In other lands, she was called Eostre, Astarte, Ostera, and Eastre. Other names for Semiramis, the Mother Goddess includes: Wife of Baal, Ashtaroth or Ashtoreth, and Queen of Heaven. Semiramis was most commonly worshipped as the goddess of fertility, Mother Nature and goddess of spring, sexual love and birth. She was also worshipped as a mediator between god and man. Sexual orgies and temple prostitutes were often used in her worship and in attempting to gain her favor. This is why sex outside marriage and propagation of children out of wedlock is so common in the culture of the dark races and accepted as the 'norm', since it was considered the right thing to do for this false goddess. These people literally worship sexuality as a god! Today, this 'sexual revolution' has permeated EVERY society and race. Essentially every evil idolatrous practice ever carried out in the world originated in Babel with Nimrod, Semiramis and Tammuz.

According to tradition, Tammuz was said to be especially fond of rabbits. He became a hunter like Nimrod. One day a wild pig killed Tammuz. Semiramis spread the rumor that when his blood fell on the stump of an evergreen tree, the tree grew overnight into a fully mature tree. Thus the evergreen tree became a sacred symbol in the mystery religion of Babel, made 'holy' by the blood of Tammuz. Semiramis proclaimed a 40-day time of sorrow in honor of Tammuz to be held each year in the spring. During that time there was to be no meat eaten. Also during this time, people were taught to make the sign of a 'T' in front of their hearts as they worshipped Tammuz and Baal. They also were to make and eat 'sacred cakes' with a 'T' formed on the top. Each year on the first Sunday after the first full moon of the spring equinox, Semiramis commanded that people hold a religious holiday to worship her and the departed Tammuz and Nimrod. Since Tammuz was fond of rabbits and they represented fertility along with eggs, these became religious symbols during this holiday. Also, since a pig killed Tammuz, then Semiramis commanded that a pig must be eaten on this holiday. Eventually the perversion of this religion led to all kinds of twisted acts in the name of the gods that these people worshiped. It even led to extreme practices such as human sacrifice.

Thus, the main religion of the kingdom of darkness was, and still is, that of Mystery Babylon. It is fully operational even today. All religions outside that of the Judeo-Christian religions, (including Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism) are offshoots of the Babylonian religion started by Nimrod and Semiramis. All practices by the dark races that include witchcraft, voodoo and 'traditional' incantations and spells are rooted in the Babylonian religion. This is why there is so much sex outside marriage and violence prevalent in these societies. Unfortunately, as can be seen in the statements above, some of the practices of this pagan religion have crept in and been incorporated into some of the modern Christian traditions. This is, and always has been, an abomination to God. Most Christians are unaware of this and partake in these satanic rituals, because the leaders of the church are out of order and are involved in them as well. These leaders will be held accountable to God because of leading His people astray.

The different cultures, races and languages are ONLY SYMBOLIC of the confusion resulting from sin and the operation of the kingdom of darkness in the earth. God did this to show us our shortcomings as humans. ***ALL races have failed God!*** It is not a matter of race, but of attitude, that will allow *any* of us to come into the kingdom of God. ***It is only through accepting Jesus and walking in His footsteps that ANY of us, regardless of***

race and background, can become clean in God's eyes. God does not care about race. Anyone who truly wants to please God and operate only for the kingdom of light will not partake in any holiday such as Easter, Christmas or Halloween. Halloween is one of the most important satanic high days. Just because false Christians have added the name of Jesus to Easter and Christmas does not make them acceptable in the eyes of God. *Nowhere* in the Bible are we told to keep these days in honor of God. They are rooted and grounded in pagan traditions. On the contrary, we are told explicitly in the Bible *NOT* to have anything to do with pagan traditions.¹³

One of the reasons that people all over the world suffer as they do, (especially from poverty and sickness) is because of the traditions relating to Mystery Babylon. Mystery Babylon is the official religion and societal format of the kingdom of darkness and of Satan. God will punish anyone who takes part in these traditions and practices, even if they call themselves Christian. He will eventually deal with any society that accepts and practices pagan traditions, witchcraft, psychic activity, calling up spirits and the dead, having sex outside of marriage, homosexuality, worshipping any other god but the one true God through Jesus Christ, (including Allah, which is an unclean spirit). *They will all end up in the lake of fire, unless they repent and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, and they change their ways through the power of the Holy Spirit.*¹⁴ Unfortunately, even when people become Christian they still often hold on to the traditions and practices of their ancestors that relate to and stem from the Babylonian religion of the kingdom of darkness. This will not sit well with God and He will destroy people who do not change their ways, even if they call themselves Christian.¹⁵

The kingdom of light is the opposite of the kingdom of darkness. Everything that is true, noble, pure, lovely, good, virtuous, righteous, just and praiseworthy is of the kingdom of light. These are the things that those who operate for the kingdom of light meditate on and walk in, by the power of the Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ.¹⁶

¹³ THB, Deuteronomy 12:29-32, 13:12-18, 18:9-14, 23:17-18 and 27:14-15, Psalm 14:1-3, 53:1-3, Ezekiel chapters 8 and 34, Matthew 10:18, Romans 3:10-12 and I Corinthians 10:14-22

¹⁴ THB, I Corinthians 6:9-20, I Peter 4:17-18 and Revelation 20:13-15 and 21:8

¹⁵ THB, Isaiah chapter 1, Hosea 4:6, Matthew 7:13-27, 25:31-46 and Jude 3-16

¹⁶ THB, Philippians 4:8-9

Chapter 17

How do we overcome the kingdom of darkness?

Many people worship some form of god. It is in the human make up to need to worship. The one true God, who created us, put into all of us the desire to worship. *We are supposed to desire to worship the true God.* However, if people refuse to worship God and choose to worship other gods or things instead, then God will give them over to a debased mind. As mentioned earlier, people have no excuse not to know the true God, as He has revealed Himself even in nature. It is imperative that we worship only Him. If people stubbornly refuse to do that, then God will destroy them.¹

People around the world are mostly unaware of how they are supposed to worship God. If they do not know the true God, then as mentioned they will worship other gods or even things. This will ultimately not do them any good and will lead eventually to their destruction, no matter how dedicated that worship may be. Anyone who denies the deity of Jesus Christ as God will eventually end up in the lake of fire. These deceived people will stop off in hell, if they die before Judgment Day, and they do not repent and accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior before they die. People who die in Christ will enter Paradise and then be resurrected to eternal life in the first resurrection of the dead when Jesus returns. Jesus is the *only* way that anyone can enter eternal life in the kingdom of God.²

People who deny that Jesus is God and who also deny that He is the Son of God, who came in the flesh to die for our sins, operate by the satanic, *antichrist* spirit. This is how we know that they are not of the true God and do not have eternal life in them. This would include all non-Christians, such as Hindus, Muslims, Jews and even Jehovah's Witnesses, who think they are saved but deny that Jesus is God, so they are deceived and will end up in hell if they do not repent of their false beliefs.³ It is a little-known fact that *MOST* people will *NOT* make it into the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is for only a few of the people who have lived on earth.⁴ The reason that God did this is that, as stated earlier, He wanted to prove these people in advance whether or not they would obey Him, *BEFORE* He granted them eternal life. This is also the reason that people cannot simply say that they are Christians and not obey God. These false Christians will also be destroyed. Only those who truly receive Jesus into their lives and stick with God's program through Him will be saved and enter into eternal life with God. These people will *intrinsically know* how to worship the true God by the direction of the Holy Spirit

¹ THB, Deuteronomy 8:19-20, 11:16-17, 12:29-32, 30:15-20, Exodus 20:1-6, Matthew 4:8-11, John 4:1-26, Acts 7:37-53, Romans 1:18-32, II Thessalonians chapter 2 and Revelation 9:13-21, 14:6-13 and 20:11-15

² THB, Deuteronomy 32:1-43, Psalm 9:15-20, 55:9-15, Proverbs 9:13-18, 15:24, 23:13-14, Isaiah 14:3-23, Ezekiel chapters 31 and 32, Matthew 5:21-30, 10:28, 18:6-9, 19:16-30, chapter 23, 25:31-46, Mark 9:38-50, 10:17-31, Luke 12:4-5, 16:19-31, 23:39-43, John 3:1-21, 5:31-47, 6:41-71, 10:22-39, 11:25-26, 12:20-26, 14:6, 17:1-5, Acts 4:8-12, 13:13-52, Romans 2:1-16, chapter 5, 6:15-23, I Corinthians 6:9-11, 15:50-58, I Thessalonians 4:13-18, I Timothy chapter 6, Titus 3:1-8, II Peter chapter 2, I John 1:1-4, chapter 5 and Revelation chapters 19-22; Apocrypha of the Old Testament, II Esdras 7:75-101

³ THB, John 1:1-5 and I John 4:1-6

⁴ THB, Matthew 7:13-14, Matthew 20:1-16 and 22:1-14; Apocrypha of the Old Testament, II Esdras 7:45-61

through Jesus, (*i.e.*, in spirit and truth). They will be set apart by, sealed for the day of salvation, guided by and be able to obey God through the power of the Holy Spirit, in Jesus Christ.⁵

Satan wants us to worship him and not God.⁶ If the devil can get us distracted by the things and cares of the world, then we will not have the time or inclination to worship or spend time with God.⁷ It is in our prayer time and worship of God, through Jesus and the Holy Spirit that we become like God and overcome the devil.⁸ As we saw earlier, if we draw close to God then He will draw close to us. True worship involves the lifestyle we lead. Worshiping God is not just getting on our knees or even becoming prostrate before Him. True worship is how we live our day-to-day lives, and whether or not we walk in the principles that God laid out for us in His Word. *It is this type of worship that will open the doors for us to live under the wing of God's protection and overcome the devil and his kingdom of darkness.* If we become perfected in obedience to God, which is true worship, then we will have the ultimate in God's protection and favor from the kingdom of light.⁹

God made humans mortal and weaker than the devil and fallen angels. He did this for a purpose. God allowed the devil and his fallen angels to continue to operate in the earth as sort of 'personal trainers' of the chosen people of God. In this way the unclean spirits would 'drive' the true people of God toward perfection and away from the lake of fire. *Obedience to God is the only way that we will be able to overcome the devil and the kingdom of darkness.* Unfortunately, we do not have the ability in and of ourselves to obey God. We are powerless in our flesh against the greater power of the kingdom of darkness. It is only through obedience to God and acceptance of Jesus as Lord and Savior that we gain access to the power of God through the Holy Spirit. It is then only by this power that we can overcome Satan and the kingdom of darkness.¹⁰ Only Christians will receive the power of God through the Holy Spirit. The power of the Holy Spirit is greater than all the power that Satan and his evil spirits can muster.¹¹ It is through the power of the Holy Spirit that God created the universe. This power, and the authority to use it through Jesus, is necessary for us to overcome the sin-nature that God put in us through Adam, and to overcome the kingdom of darkness. Without the power of the Holy Spirit we can do neither of these things.¹² With the power of God through the Holy Spirit, we can overcome the devil and his kingdom of darkness, walk in obedience to God and thus worship Him in Spirit and truth through Christ.

⁵ THB, Luke 1:39-45 and Vv. 67-79, Luke 2:25-32, 4:1-8, 11:9-13, John 4:1-26, 7:37-39, 14:26, 20:19-23, Acts chapters 1-2, 4:5-37, chapters 6 and 9-28, Romans 5:5, 14:16-18, 15:13-21, I Corinthians 2:12-13, 6:17-20, 12:3, Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:25-32, Philippians 1:3-11, I Thessalonians 4:1-8, II Timothy 1:13-14, Titus 3:1-11, Hebrews chapter 2, 6:4-8, chapters 10 and 12, James 2:14-26 and Jude 20-25

⁶ THB, Matthew 4:8-10

⁷ THB, Matthew 13:1-23

⁸ THB, Ephesians 6:13-18

⁹ THB, Psalms chapters 1, 84, 91, 95 and 117 and Isaiah chapters 58 and 66

¹⁰ THB, Luke 10:19, Acts 1:4-8 and 5:32, Ephesians 6:10-12 and James 4:7

¹¹ THB, Luke 11:14-23, I John 4:4 and 5:1-5

¹² THB, Matthew 16:19, 18:18-20 and 28:18-20, John 14:12-18, 15:9-17 and 16:16-33

Chapter 18

How do we gain access to the power of God?

God created humans lower than the angels, but with the potential through Jesus Christ to become like the angels.¹ God knew that we would be unable to obey Him without help. Adam and Eve did not have that help. God *allowed* the devil to tempt Eve then Adam through her. They had a choice to believe God and obey Him, but they chose to believe the devil and the lie instead. God told Adam that in the day that he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that he would surely die.² As we saw earlier that death came within the first ‘day’, (*i.e.*, the first thousand years) of Adam’s life, since to God a day is as a thousand years. Because Adam sinned, he could not live beyond 1,000 years, so he died at the age of 930 years.³ The devil invited Eve to question and doubt God. Satan was able to bring doubt into Eve by questioning whether or not God actually said she would die if she ate the forbidden fruit. She had never heard that from God, only from her husband Adam, (who had heard it from God). She therefore failed to submit to her husband and believed the lies of the enemy. God cursed Eve and women have struggled to submit to their husbands ever since.⁴

Satan offered Eve the temptation to eat the forbidden fruit in such a way as to draw on three areas of weakness in the human being, *the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life*.⁵ The fruit looked inviting, (lust of the eyes) and surely it would taste good, (lust of the flesh) and most of all it would make the human become like God, (the pride of life). In addition to doubting her husband, this is how the devil got Eve to take and eat the fruit.⁶ It is by the same deceit and through casting doubt and the same three weaknesses that the enemy works today to cause humans to choose to sin. Sin is doing something that we know from God that we are not supposed to do. It is also NOT doing something that we know God wants us to do. Satan also knows that when he can get someone to doubt God, they become double-minded and are completely cut off from receiving anything from God! That is the power of the words...’what if?’ Doubt and unbelief are among the best weapons Satan uses to defeat humans.⁷

Order is God’s most important priority. It was the restoration of order that God embarked upon during the ‘re-creation’ of the earth after the fall of Satan and his evil angels. Jesus came to earth in order to destroy the works of the devil. The works of the devil are confusion and chaos. This is why Jesus went about healing and delivering people, because sickness and satanic activity are the results of disorder in people’s lives.⁸ The reason that God forbade Adam and Eve to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is that it was out of order. Wisdom is the first and most important thing for humans to get from God. Understanding and knowledge must come *after* the

¹ THB, Psalm chapter 8, Matthew 22:23-33, Mark 12:18-27 and Hebrews chapter 2

² THB, Genesis 2:15-17

³ THB, Genesis 5:5

⁴ THB, Genesis 3:16

⁵ THB, I John 2:16

⁶ THB, Genesis 3:1-8

⁷ THB, Matthew 21:28-32, Romans 14:23 and James 1:5-8

⁸ THB, Matthew 4:23-25, I Corinthians 14:33 and I John 3:8

acquisition of God's wisdom.⁹ Adam and Eve had not yet received God's wisdom when they ate the forbidden fruit that gave them knowledge for which they were not prepared. Therefore, it was out of order for them to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because they did not have the wisdom or understanding to use the knowledge properly.

Though God gave us a free will, He did not give us the power in and of ourselves to actually obey Him. This creates a Catch 22 in that though we intrinsically *want* to do the right thing, we have an inherent *inability* to carry through. This is why God decided to send His Son Jesus to come and save us from ourselves.¹⁰ It was in the plan from the beginning for God to send Jesus at just the right time to die for the sins of the world.¹¹ This is because God has a fourteen thousand year plan for the earth and mankind, (*i.e.*, seven thousand for Jesus and seven thousand for the Holy Spirit). Seven is God's number of completeness. The earth is God's footstool.¹² Since God has two feet, the number two represents God's work in the earth, through Jesus and the Holy Spirit. For this reason God usually does things in the earth *twice*. That is why there is an Old and New Testament, first and second covenant, Jesus coming first to save people then He will come again to judge people, everything on earth is established out of the mouths of at least two witnesses, two ways to become perfected in Christ, etc.¹³ Seven times two equals fourteen. This is why God made a fourteen thousand year plan for the earth. He restored the world in six 'days', but this was actually six thousand years. Then He compressed those six thousand years into six days. This left eight thousand years for mankind. That is why Jesus came when He did, as it was about 4,000 years from Adam. The first coming of Jesus 'split' time for the eight thousand years of modern man. The ripple effect went back to Adam and forward to the first thousand years of the rest of eternity, which will be the first thousand years after the thousand year reign of Christ and the saints.

Six is the number of a man, since man was created on the sixth day. Therefore, when Jesus returns within the next few years, it will have been approximately six thousand years from Adam, and that will have given humans six 'days' to show that they cannot obtain perfection apart from God. The seventh 'day' from Adam will be the thousand years after Jesus comes back. This will be a time of 'Sabbath rest' for those who are saved and take part in the first resurrection of the saints. The reign of Christ will then be initiated and further restoration of order will have begun. During this thousand year time, Satan will be locked up in the bottomless pit. After the thousand years of Christ and the saints ruling in the earth, (*i.e.*, the 'seventh day' since Adam) the devil will be released to bring deception one final time, in order to separate true believers from non-believers. Then Satan and his evil spirit beings, as well as all disobedient people, will be cast into the lake of fire on Judgment Day. This follows the second resurrection. The old heaven and earth will be burned up. Then there will be a new heaven and new earth and all the

⁹ THB, Proverbs 3:19-20, 4:7, 9:10, 21:11 and 24:3-4

¹⁰ THB, Romans 7:13-25

¹¹ THB, Romans 5:6

¹² THB, Isaiah 66:1 and Matthew 5:35

¹³ THB, Deuteronomy 17:6, 19:15, Matthew 18:16 and 20, I Corinthians 14:29, II Corinthians 13:1, I Timothy 5:19 and Hebrews 10:28

obedient people of God through Jesus will live forever within the New Jerusalem.¹⁴ As we saw earlier in chapter 15, the number eight represents newness or new beginnings. This is why the final thousand years, or eighth 'day' from Adam, will be the first thousand years, or 'day', of the rest of eternity. Again, when the number 8 is placed on its side, it forms the symbol for infinity, (∞). This will complete the fourteen thousand year plan of God for the earth since the restoration from the fall of Satan and begin the rest of eternity of God's people dwelling with God in the New Jerusalem.

In the meantime, we must work toward this end. God made a way through Jesus for some humans to become perfected and join the family of God. As we saw earlier, there are two ways to become perfected, either die in Christ or live in Him. However, we need help in this endeavor. God planned the help we need to come in the form of the Holy Spirit. As we also mentioned earlier, the Holy Spirit comes to us from something called the 'baptism of the Holy Spirit'. As long as Jesus was on the earth in human form, He could only be in one place at a time. The Holy Spirit is able to encompass the earth and help everyone who needs it, anywhere and at any time since there are actually *seven Spirits of God*.¹⁵ This is why we need to access the Holy Spirit, so that we can have this universal help. Also as mentioned previously, the Holy Spirit is the member of the Godhead who wields the power of God. In order for us to have power, we must get it from the Holy Spirit. This power will help accomplish all that God put us here to do. This power is also known as *grace*. God gives this grace, or power, as He sees fit. However, we can pray to God and ask for more *grace* when we need it.

Jesus Himself established the pattern that we are to follow. Just before Jesus started His ministry, John the Baptist baptized Him in the water of the Jordan River. When Jesus came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove. This second 'baptism' was the baptism of the Holy Spirit. These two baptisms are required for all Christians who wish to truly accomplish what God has planned for them in their lives and ministries. The first baptism in water into Jesus Christ symbolizes the death of the 'old man' of sinful flesh. When the baptized person comes out of the water, then they are considered a new creation. Sin and death no longer have any power over the individual. In this way if they will no longer do the things they once did, whether those things are lying, stealing, committing adultery, fornication, addiction, etc., then they will no longer struggle with these sins. *However, if they do go back to the ways of the past, then they will have an even more difficult time to overcome these former sins.* This is why when we get saved and are born again, (*i.e.*, accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior) and are baptized in water, (fully submersed and not just sprinkled) we are freed from the former sin and will no longer struggle with these issues as long as we *choose* NOT to go back to them. The reason that we need water baptism is that we were not around when God baptized and washed away the sin of the world with the flood of Noah. Submersion water baptism is symbolic of this 'baptism' of the earth that cleansed it of human sin the first time.¹⁶

Once we have been saved and water baptized, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit so that if we do not walk away from it, we will be secure until the day of salvation when

¹⁴ THB, Genesis 1:26-31, Joshua 3:14-17, Hebrews chapters 3-4, I Peter 3:18-22, II Peter chapter 3 and Revelation 13:18, 20:4-6 and chapters 21-22

¹⁵ THB, Revelation 1:4, 3:1, 4:5 and 5:6

¹⁶ THB, Genesis chapters 9-10, Romans chapter 6, Colossians 2:12 and I Peter 3:20-21

Jesus returns.¹⁷ However, then we need to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit that is also a *baptism of fire*. This baptism comes directly from God, through Jesus. Usually it comes as a result of a ‘Spirit-filled’ person laying hands on the one who is to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. However, since this baptism comes directly from Jesus, it does not require someone else to intervene.

Though there are variations, it often results with the person baptized in the Holy Spirit speaking in tongues. Speaking in tongues is when someone speaks with a heavenly language that is not understandable by most humans. If someone has the gift of interpretation of tongues, then they may understand what the person is saying. Even though someone speaks in tongues when they are baptized in the Holy Spirit, it does not necessarily mean that they will be able to do so thereafter, unless they receive the *gift* of speaking in tongues from the Holy Spirit.¹⁸ A wrong doctrine that is taught in some churches is that if someone does not speak in tongues, they have not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. However, there is no Biblical foundation for this doctrine and it is NOT true. Speaking in tongues is *sufficient*, but not *necessary*, in order to confirm the baptism of the Holy Spirit. There is no evidence in the Bible that Jesus spoke in tongues when He was baptized in the Holy Spirit. A better confirmation for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and continuing in that ‘anointing’, is a positive change in character. There are many disobedient ‘tongue talking’ Christians in the world. There are also some Christians who have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit who did and do not speak in tongues. It is more important for a person to walk in love than to speak in tongues.¹⁹

The reason that we need the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire is at least threefold. The first reason is that we have no real power against the devil if we have not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Most churches do not teach about the baptism of the Holy Spirit, therefore most Christians have *not* received this baptism and thus have *no power* in their lives. The devil rules and reigns in these peoples’ lives and they are NOT able to truly accomplish the things that God wants them to do.

The second reason that we need the baptism of the Holy Spirit is that it is a baptism of fire that will burn up the ‘garbage’ that is in our hearts and minds. This is important because if we do not allow God to do this work in our lives, then we will not be able to truly obey and serve God and may ultimately give up our salvation. This is especially true during times of tribulation, as many Christians do not get truly rooted in Jesus without the baptism of the Holy Spirit. These weak Christians then lose their faith during difficult times. If people lose faith, then they become unbelievers. All unbelievers will end up in the lake of fire.²⁰ Therefore, it is necessary for the fire of the Holy Spirit to burn up the evil within us, in order to ultimately keep us out of the lake of fire.

Another reason that we need to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit is that without this baptism we cannot understand the deeper mysteries of God. True revelation comes through the Holy Spirit. Without this revelation it is *impossible* to understand the Bible in

¹⁷ THB, Ephesians 1:12-14

¹⁸ THB, Isaiah 28:11, Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:8, 16:14-18, Luke 3:16, John 1:33-34, Acts 1:4-5, 2:1-15, 10:44-48, 19:5-6 and I Corinthians chapters 12 and 14

¹⁹ THB, Matthew 3:17, Mark 1:9-10, Luke 3:21-22, John 1:30-34, Acts 9:17-31 and I Corinthians chapter 13

²⁰ THB, Revelation 21:8

its fullness.²¹ This is why so many Christians have been led astray by false doctrines, because they are following people who interpret God's Word with human wisdom. This human wisdom will ultimately cause people to be confused about parts of God's Word that are hard to comprehend by the human mind, without Holy Spirit inspired revelation, because human wisdom ultimately comes from the devil.²²

Even if the church does not teach about the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the individual believer has a responsibility to seek out this gift from God. If they do not get the baptism within their church, individual believers need to go directly to God and request this baptism from Jesus. *We can only receive this baptism and be continually re-filled with the Holy Spirit if we are obedient to God.* Therefore, we must make up our minds that we will obey God. Then we can request the baptism of the Holy Spirit from Jesus. When we receive this baptism it is only the *beginning* of our Christian walk. The next step in this walk will be entering the 'wilderness'. Just as the Spirit of God sent Jesus into the wilderness after He was baptized in the Holy Spirit, each Christian must also spend time in the 'spiritual wilderness' after they receive this baptism. And like Jesus, it is only *after* we come out of the wilderness that we receive and are able to operate in the true power of the Lord.²³

²¹ THB, John 16:12-15 and I John 2:27

²² THB, James 3:13-18

²³ THB, Matthew 4:1, Luke 4:14 and Acts 5:32

Chapter 19

What is the purpose of the spiritual wilderness experience?

After John the Baptist water baptized Jesus in the river Jordan, God then baptized Him in the Holy Spirit. Immediately thereafter, the Spirit of God led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Jesus was in the wilderness for forty days and nights during which time He fasted, or did without food, for the entire duration of His wilderness experience. Jesus spent this time drawing close to God and being prepared for His ministry. Toward the end of His wilderness experience, the devil came to Jesus and tempted Him in the same three areas that he always tempts humans, the lust of the eyes; the lust of the flesh and the pride of life.¹

The reason that Jesus had to stay in the wilderness for 40 days and nights is that *forty is the number of testing*. The number four represents the earth, as there are four points on the compass and these are referred to as the four corners of the earth.² Ten represents the body of Christ or the Christian church. In the Old Testament of the Bible the people of God were known as Israelites. Virtually everything in the Old Testament is physically symbolic of spiritual things in the New Testament, especially those spiritual things occurring after Christ's resurrection and the fullness of the coming of the Holy Spirit.³ The Old Testament people of Israel were thus symbolic of God's people in the New Testament, (*i.e.*, Christians). During the times of the Old Testament, God separated the Israelites into ten tribes that continued to be known as the *kingdom of Israel*, and two tribes, (Judah and Benjamin, plus some of the Levites of the priesthood tribe), which formed the *kingdom of Judah*. He did this after King Solomon's death. Since Jesus came from the tribe of Judah, (*i.e.*, was a Jew) and He is the King of kings, then the Jews, (*i.e.*, the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and some of the Levites = 3) represent the head of the Israelites or the government of the triune God. Jesus is the head of the body of Christ, which is the Christian Church. Therefore, the ten tribes of the kingdom of Israel were symbolic of the 'body' of God's people, (*i.e.*, the Church of Christ).⁴ Thus, the number four, which represents the earth, when multiplied times ten, (the body of Christ) equals forty. This is why every time of testing in the Bible was of duration of some period of time, (*i.e.*, days, years, etc.) numbering forty. The body of Christ will also be tested in the earth through trials and tribulation that will often be of some duration of time totaling forty.⁵ The minimum time in the spiritual wilderness will be forty days and nights. However, some Christians are NEVER allowed to leave the spiritual wilderness because they refuse to give up the sins of the flesh and complain. This is just like the Israelites who died in the wilderness after forty years, since they would not obey God and continuously complained against Him.⁶

The reason that God wants us to go into the 'wilderness' and be tempted by the devil, (though for us it is a spiritual and not an actual physical wilderness) is that we learn to

¹ THB, Matthew 3:13-4:1

² THB, Isaiah 11:12, Revelation 7:1 and 20:8

³ THB, Acts chapters 1-2

⁴ THB, I Kings chapter 12 and Matthew 25:1-13 and Revelation 19:11-16

⁵ THB, Isaiah 48:10

⁶ THB, Numbers chapters 13-14, I Corinthians 10:1-13 and Galatians 5:16-25

depend on God during these times and learn to obey Him. Under the direction of Moses, God led the Israelites through the wilderness where they had to rely on God for everything. He did this in order to test them and prove whether or not they would obey Him from their hearts. God knew it would do them good in the end.⁷ The same holds true for us. Jesus said that the servant would not be greater than the master.⁸ Therefore, if Jesus developed this pattern and followed it, then we will have to do the same.

As we saw earlier, it is through suffering that we learn obedience to God. He wants us to learn to totally and completely rely on Him for everything in our lives and to learn to obey Him, especially in the face of adversity. Again, this is the purpose for the spiritual wilderness experience. In this way we become just like little children in our faith relationship with God. Also, God wants us to be grateful and acknowledge Him for all that He does for us. Though many people do not realize it, we cannot do anything without the help of Jesus.⁹ Therefore, God wants us to completely surrender to Him so that He can take care of us like a father does with his children. We have a choice in everything we do. This is the free will that God placed into us. God wants us to CHOOSE to obey Him and submit to His authority in our lives, even in the small and seemingly insignificant things. He knows that if we are faithful in small things, then He will be able to trust us with greater things. If we completely obey Him in this life, (which is *living faith*), then God can be assured that we will continue to obey Him forever, in the next life.¹⁰

Lucifer, who later came to be called Satan, failed as an archangel of God. The reason, as was pointed out earlier, was pride. As we also stated, pride can be defined as stealing God's glory. If God wants to share His glory with us, that is fine. And again, it is necessary to receive God's glory through Jesus, in order for us to become perfected in *this* life. However, we must not take credit for things that God does for us. This is pride and idolatry, because we are literally worshiping ourselves. *Pride is the root of every sin.* God wants to make absolutely certain that we will, of our own free will, *choose* to obey Him and not go the way of the devil. This is what the wilderness experience is all about. If we are suffering and cannot of our own capacity deal with it, then we will hopefully turn to God and ask for His help. This is God's deepest desire. Once we understand this principle, then we can rejoice during our times of suffering, as we know it will be good for us in the long run.¹¹

The wilderness experience is somewhat like 'medicine' for our souls. Like most medicines, it may not be to our liking, but it will do us good in the end. As we mentioned, the soul is the personality of an individual, including the free will. The soul is separate from the spirit. The spirit and soul, which have eternal potential, are what God is most interested in developing for eternal perfection. Each person who receives Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, and who are obedient to God, will receive an eternal body to replace their earthly, mortal bodies. This will happen upon the return of Jesus and at the

⁷ THB, Deuteronomy chapter 8

⁸ THB, John 13:16 and 15:20

⁹ THB, Psalm 50: 23 and 69:30-31, Matthew 18:1-4 and John 15:5

¹⁰ THB, Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 16:1-14, Romans 8:12-17 and James chapter 2

¹¹ THB, John 17:20-23, James 1:2-4 and I Peter chapters 1-2

first resurrection of the saints.¹² Therefore, God wants mostly to work on our soul. This is where the battle between humans and Satan takes place, in the mind or ‘heart’, where the human soul resides. The devil wants to steal our souls, or our minds and hearts, from the intended goal that God created us to achieve, which is to walk in the Spirit and in love. Because Satan failed God and we are his replacements, the devil hates us and wants us to fail. It is imperative that we learn to overcome the wiles of the devil. We learn to do this in the wilderness.

The wilderness is a spiritual ‘boot camp’ for Christians. We must go through this boot camp for training in dealing with the evil spirits who oppose us. It will prepare us for battle. We do not fight a natural war with flesh and blood, but we fight against the devil and his demons that work through people. Fallen angels and demons have greater power than we do, unless we learn to operate by the strength of the Holy Spirit, in the name of Jesus and according to God’s Word. It is in the wilderness that we learn to do this.

The Holy Spirit has far greater power than the devil and his followers.¹³ However, the Holy Spirit is restricted from helping us, unless we accept Jesus into our lives, get baptized in water and receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit from Jesus. We must then go through the wilderness and when we come out we must go about doing the will of God, preaching the gospel about the only way to salvation through Jesus the Christ. Then we will get miracle working power through the Holy Spirit. Jesus will instruct the good angels to help us as well. When we get into this place of operation, which is called *walking in the Spirit* and not according to fleshly desires, then the devil can have no real power over us. We will use this power to restore order in the world and in peoples’ lives by helping them to be healed and delivered from the chaotic bondage of the devil, just as Jesus and the apostles did.¹⁴

God also provides us with ‘spiritual armor’ that will help us to stand against the devil in our times of tribulation. This armor consists of the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, shoes of the gospel, or good news of peace with God through Jesus, most importantly the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation through Jesus and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. *The main battle is in prayer.* Our enemy, the devil, wants to keep us busy so we will not spend time in prayer. If we spend time with God in prayer and studying His Word, then we will become close to God. This is what God wants and exactly what the devil does not want. Therefore, Satan will do anything to keep us from prayer and spending time with God. We must then be determined to pray always and stay in the Word of God.¹⁵

When we obey God and follow after Jesus by walking the narrow, difficult path that leads to eternal life, then the kingdom of darkness goes into full swing to try to stop us. If people are disobedient and move away from God, the devil becomes their friend. He will encourage them to go down the wide, easy path of disobedience to God that leads to destruction in the lake of fire, because that is where he will end up. *Unfortunately, most people who walk the face of the earth will end up in the lake of fire.* When they die, they

¹² THB, I Corinthians 15:35-58, II Corinthians 5:1-10 and Revelation 20:4-6

¹³ THB, I John 4:4

¹⁴ THB, Matthew 10:32-33, Mark 16:14-20, Luke 12:8-12, John 14:12, Acts 8:4-8, 10:34-43, 19:11, Romans 8:1-17, Galatians 5:16-26, James 4:7-10 and I John 3:8

¹⁵ THB, Ephesians 6:10-18

will stop off in hell first and wait there until Judgment Day. If we want to stay out of hell and ultimately avoid the lake of fire, then we must do *exactly* what God tells us to do. The Holy Spirit will help us obey God, but only if we receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and DAILY stay close to God through prayer, spending time with God and studying of the Word of God. If we stray from the narrow path of obedience to God, then we will most likely be giving up our chance of eternal life in the presence of God. *This is why we must hold as precious the thing that Jesus did when He suffered and died for our sins, because there is no other sacrifice acceptable to God.* There is no other way into the kingdom of God. If people miss out on or abuse this sacrifice, then they will be lost forever. Even though people may choose not to believe these things, they remain true nonetheless.¹⁶

God designed the wilderness walk in order to lead us into the narrow gate, (*i.e.*, Jesus) which leads to life. The Christian church at large and many of its leaders do not understand this pattern that was established by Jesus and therefore *most* people who call themselves Christian are at risk of going down the wide path of selfishness that leads to hell and eternal destruction in the lake of fire. The very church leaders that they trust and revere often lead them there. Both the leaders and followers have no real power over the devil, because they refuse to truly submit to God and walk in love. God will hold the leaders accountable for their inability to truly represent God to the people. However, each person will be responsible for his or her own salvation and everyone will answer to God on Judgment Day. Therefore, there will be no excuse for anyone who rejects Jesus as the sacrifice for their sins, or anyone who receives it but then willfully sins after they do.¹⁷ If we trust God completely, then He will get us through the wilderness, so that we can come out in power, just as Jesus did. Then we will be able to overcome the devil, as God has planned for us to be able to do. Also, we will be able to handle the blessings that God puts in our lives, receiving them with humility and without stumbling in pride as Lucifer did when God gave him so many things.¹⁸

So we see that the wilderness experience comes immediately after we get baptized in the Holy Spirit. It is a spiritual experience for us, but most people are not aware of how this works, since as we mentioned, many of the Christian church leaders do not understand it and therefore do not teach about the process. The wilderness experience involves many trials and tribulations, as we are persecuted by the devil. The best way to get out of the wilderness as quickly as possible, (minimum stay forty days and nights) is to watch what we say. The devil wants us to doubt God and complain when we experience the tribulations associated with the wilderness experience. If we fall into his trap, then we will stay in the wilderness until we learn to stop complaining. If we praise God, thank Him, and rejoice during these times of tribulation that we are destined to experience, (knowing that this suffering will do us good in the end), it will help us to develop patience and learn to walk in love. This walk will lead us toward perfection in Jesus.¹⁹ The power and fire of the Holy Spirit, as well as the angels, will help us in this

¹⁶ THB, Proverbs 10:16, 11:19, and 19:23, Isaiah chapter 53, Matthew 7:13-14, 20:1-16, 22:1-14 and 13:44-46, Luke 16:19-31 and Hebrews 6:4-8 and 10:26-31

¹⁷ THB, Ezekiel chapter 34, Matthew 12:31-37, 15:12-14, 18:1-9 and 23:1-36, Luke 17:1-2, John 15:18-25, Romans 1:18-32, Philippians 2:12-18 and James 3:1-2 and 4:7-8

¹⁸ THB, Isaiah 14:12-23, Ezekiel 28:11-19 and Matthew 16:22-27

¹⁹ THB, James 1:2-4 and I Peter 4:1-6

endeavor. God has made a way, the only thing we have to do is choose to obey God and stick to the program until we complete the process.²⁰ Then we can move on to perfection in Christ.

²⁰ THB, Deuteronomy 30:15-30

Chapter 20

What happens after the spiritual wilderness?

The pattern established by Jesus for ALL Christians to follow is that after repentance for sin and acceptance of Jesus Christ as the sacrifice for their sins, (though Jesus did not need to repent, as He was without sin), putting their faith in God through Jesus for salvation, every Christian needed to be baptized in water to symbolize death with Jesus, an end of the old sinful person and resurrection as a new creation. The reason for submersion water baptism, as mentioned before, is that it is symbolic of the first time God washed the sin from the earth with the flood of Noah.¹ Then they needed to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit from Jesus. This baptism would usually come through some Spirit-filled Christian laying hands on the new convert, in order to transfer the Holy Spirit. However, some people would receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit directly from Jesus.² This baptism of the Holy Spirit is usually, though not always, indicated by speaking in unknown tongues.³

Following these steps, the Holy Spirit would lead the new Christian into the ‘spiritual wilderness’ to be tempted by the devil. This wilderness experience would last at least forty days, as noted above, forty is the number of testing. If that person, with the help of Jesus through prayer, could keep control of their tongue and rejoice, praising God though what they were suffering at the hands of the devil, then they would come out of the wilderness in the shortest time possible, (*i.e.*, six weeks). If they would not rejoice as the Bible instructs us, but rather complained about the suffering, then they would continue in the wilderness as long as necessary for them to understand and operate in this important Biblical principle. After coming out of the wilderness, they would be prepared by this ‘boot camp’ experience to fight the good fight of faith and defeat the devil with the blood of the Lamb, (*i.e.*, Jesus) and the word of their testimony. Also, they would begin to operate in the power of God. By submitting to Him and preaching the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ, they would be able to heal the sick, cast out demons from people and restore order in the earth until Jesus comes back. These Christians would not be afraid of the devil. On the contrary, Satan would be afraid of them.⁴

Unfortunately, even though it is very apparent in the scriptures, MOST Christians, including leaders of the church, do not understand this pattern established by Jesus and the principles behind them. Therefore, they never get to the fullness of what God put them in the earth to do and thus do not glorify God. If we do not accomplish the things that God put us here on earth to do, then we cannot please God. It is only by finishing the work that God sent us here to do that we truly glorify God.⁵ Though many people call themselves Christian, MOST are at risk of giving up their salvation because they live in disobedience to God and His Word. They think that because they use the name of Jesus that they will make it into heaven. However, if people do not *do* what God tells them to do, then they will be considered unbelievers and their hearts become hardened against

¹ THB, Genesis chapters 6-10, Romans 6:1-14 and I Peter 3:18-22

² THB, Acts 2:1-4 and 19:5-6 and Hebrews 6:1-2

³ THB, Isaiah 28:7-13, Mark 16:17, Acts 2:1-12, 10:44-48 and 19:1-7

⁴ THB, Acts 19:11-20, I Timothy 6:11-16, James 4:7 and Revelation 12:11

⁵ THB, John 17:4

God because of that unbelief. This is the state of *many* so-called Christians. If people say that they love God and cannot treat other human beings with the proper respect and even be good to their enemies, then they become liars because the love of God is not in them. These people WILL end up in the lake of fire with all the other unbelievers, liars and hypocrites.⁶

The modern Christian church is full of hypocrites. These people say that they love God and they go through the motions to look good in the eyes of others, but in the eyes of God they are evil. It is very common for people, even those who claim to be Christians, to tell someone something and then do another. Even if people tell someone that they will meet them at such and such a place at such and such a time and come late, they have established themselves as liars. People cheat on their spouses, break the law with impunity and then go to church and sing ‘praises’ to God. The Bible clearly states to obey the laws of the land, unless they violate the laws of God. God has put all authority on the earth in place. Therefore, if we break the laws of the land without direction from God or due cause, then we break the laws that God has established. Most Christians disrespect authority and walk in subtle, or sometimes open, rebellion. Though they take this sort of thing lightly and shrug it off, they will give an account to God for this evil behavior. Instead of rebellion, they should walk in honor and always endeavor to do what is right according to the Bible and God’s Law of love, even if the legal restrictions oppose these greater laws. This may be a difficult road to walk, but it is the narrow way that Jesus spoke of. It is a pity that many people think they are safe, that they can lie and carry on in this way and that they are still going to get into the kingdom of heaven. However, they have another thing coming to them and it will be wailing, gnashing of teeth and eternal destruction.⁷

In order to avoid the lake of fire, we must become like Jesus. No other approach to life will do us any good in the long run. If people receive the gift of eternal life from God through faith in Jesus Christ, and then trample on Jesus and consider His blood as common by willfully sinning and disobeying God, then there is no hope for them. They will be destroyed with eternal destruction. The debate as to whether or not people will ‘live’ in the lake of fire or they will be destroyed is moot. Either case will be horrible, though the latter is the obvious choice of a merciful God and agrees with what the Bible teaches. Eternal destruction is just that.⁸ Anyone who is in his or her right mind should want to avoid this end. However, as time will show, most people will end up in the lake of fire because they refuse to obey God. God will not fill His kingdom with a bunch of disobedient people, even if they do call themselves Christians.

The caveat in this whole matter is that we do not have the power within us to obey God. That is why God established the plan for people to be saved through His Son Jesus and from that point to receive help from the Holy Spirit to obey God and move toward perfection in Christ. The only thing we must do is CHOOSE to obey God, ask Jesus and

⁶ THB, Matthew 5:43-48, 7:12-14 and Vv. 21-23, 22:1-14, 25:14-46, I John 2:3-11, 4:20-21 and 5:10 and Revelation 21:8

⁷ THB, Matthew 7:13-14, 8:5-13, 13:24-33 and Vv. 47-50, Luke 13:22-30, Romans 13:1-7, Galatians 5:16-26 and I Peter 2:13-17

⁸ THB, Psalm 92:7, Philippians 3:17-18, Hebrews 6:1-8, 10:26-31 and Revelation 17:8

then He will help us through the Holy Spirit to complete the work God sent us here to do.⁹

Therefore, after the spiritual wilderness, the true children of God will move forward in the power of the Holy Spirit and embark on the jobs that God put them here on earth to do. They will begin to utilize the talents that God gave them so they could work for the kingdom of God. Each person has different *gifts from the Father* in different forms that will help them accomplish the tasks that God has called them to do. God the Father gives each of His children certain gifts such as prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, leading and mercy. He gives each person one or more of these gifts and the grace, or ability to use them, in order to be able to walk in love.¹⁰

The Holy Spirit gives gifts to Christians as is fitting as well. These *spiritual gifts* are outlined in the Bible as follows: the word of wisdom, word of knowledge, gift of faith, gift of healings, working of miracles, the gift of prophecy, discerning of spirits, speaking in different tongues, the interpretation of tongues, the gifts of helps and of administration. God gives these gifts through the Holy Spirit in order for the church members to minister to one another and grow up in the Word of God. These gifts are given to the individuals, but they are for the *whole* of the church. Not everyone gets the same gifts and true Christians will not be jealous of the gifts of others, as they are for the greater good of the whole church or body of Christ. These gifts are important, but the more important thing is walking in love. Even if people operate in the most powerful gifts of the Holy Spirit, but cannot obey God and be good to other people, then the gifts will not profit them. Also, these gifts must be used in the proper order within the church. They must be used to create order and not confusion.¹¹

Jesus also gives each Christian one or more *ministry gifts* from before birth. These gifts are what make the person behave in the way they do. He gives these gifts for some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers. These gifts are for the purpose of equipping the saints, or Christians, for the work of the ministry of preaching the gospel and growing the body of Christ, or Christian church, to maturity. These gifts are for the edifying of the body of Christ until we ALL come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of Jesus to *perfection*, or maturity in Jesus. Just like the gifts from the Father and the Holy Spirit, these gifts are for all the members of the body of Christ, so that they will fit together perfectly and grow up into Jesus, who is the head.¹² This is how the return of Jesus will occur and the church will join with Him in what most people call the 'rapture'. As discussed previously, this event will occur AFTER the great tribulation, which is an end-time event soon to come on the earth. The tribulation will be the ultimate test for these gifts and the church of Jesus Christ. Only those few who have become perfected *prior to* the tribulation will escape the entire event. ALL other Christians will go *through* the great tribulation in order to become perfected, either by death in Jesus, or by learning to walk in perfect love in Him. The latter is called the life in Christ.¹³

⁹ THB, John 14:15-31 and 15:5

¹⁰ THB, Romans 11:29 and chapter 12

¹¹ THB, I Corinthians chapter 12-14

¹² THB, Jeremiah 1:4-5 and Ephesians chapter 4

¹³ THB, Daniel 11:32-35, 12:8-13, Matthew 24:9-28, Revelation 3:10, 7:1-8 and 14:1-5

The ministry gifts that Jesus gives His people are a ‘seed’ of GLORY from the Father. Jesus shares this glory with us from before our birth. We must use these gifts to glorify God by doing the work that the gifts allow us to do. This work of the ministry is also how we build up our eternal reward that Jesus will bring to us when He returns. One can consider it our ‘eternal paycheck’ from Jesus. When we do the work Jesus has called us to do for the kingdom of God, then it glorifies the Father. We sow the seed of ‘glory’ that we receive from Jesus and God will multiply if back to us and to Himself.¹⁴

We can often identify the ministry gifts from Jesus in people by the way they act and what they do in society. People with the gift of an *apostle* tend to be builders, and usually have managerial skills. They do not like to deal with details, but can see the overall picture. They are overseers. In the natural world they will be found in supervisory positions. It is their job in the kingdom of God to be ‘master builders’ of the church of God. The church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ as the chief cornerstone. However, just as in Jesus’ day, the leaders of the church of today have rejected the ways of Christ. They have instead adopted their own way of thinking and doing things. That is why the church is in such a state of disarray.¹⁵

Prophets are an unusual group. They are ‘hardwired’ to hear from God. They have an inborn desire to speak the word of God. They usually need to have the last word and are often very severe in their judgment of others that fall short of their expectations. They struggle with patience. In society, they are loners and have few close friends. They will usually be found in jobs that require solo work. They do not mind being alone; in fact they often prefer solitude. Their job in the church of Christ is to hear from God and give edification and direction to the church through leadership. God does not do anything in the earth without first revealing it to His prophets.¹⁶ The problem is that most churches have no prophets! Even in churches that have ‘prophets’, the leaders do not encourage these prophets to hear the pure Word of God or follow what they say. Also, there are many false prophets in the church. Most Christians, including many leaders, do not truly know the Word of God, especially with the depth of understanding that the Holy Spirit provides. Therefore, they cannot identify a false prophet when they see one. However, false prophets can be identified by the way they live their lives. If they live according to the things Jesus taught, and speak prophecies that come true and are not contrary to the Word of God, then they are true prophets. Otherwise, we are not supposed to listen to them. God sends false prophets among His people in order to test them and see if these evil people will lead them astray, or if His people will remain faithful to His Word. There is almost always a ‘Judas’ among every group of Christians. Today, God is busy stirring up strong prophetic gifts in people and the anointing of God in the area of prophecy is increasing throughout the earth.¹⁷

Evangelists are salespeople for Jesus. It is their job in the kingdom to bring in the new converts. They will typically be found in sales positions in the natural. A person with an

¹⁴ THB, Matthew 16:27, John 17:4 and Vv. 20-23 and Revelation 22:12

¹⁵ THB, Psalm 188:22, Matthew 21:42-44, Acts 4:11-12, I Corinthians 3:9-17, Ephesians 2:19-22 and I Peter 2:6-8

¹⁶ THB, Amos 3:7

¹⁷ THB, Deuteronomy 13:1-5, Matthew 7:15-20, 24:11 and 24 and 26:14 Luke 6:26, 22:3-6, John 6:71, II Peter chapter 2 and I John 4:1-6

evangelical gift is typically outgoing and very gregarious. They love to talk, whether it is on the phone or in person. They are typically impatient. Their depth of understanding of the Bible is usually somewhat limited, but they have a heart to get people saved and enjoy ministering to large groups of people. They will often have the gift of healing and miracles, since this is the ‘flame’ that will draw the ‘moths’, (*i.e.*, new converts).¹⁸

Pastors are ‘shepherds’ who like to pay attention to the individual needs of the ‘sheep’, which are the members of the Christian church. A person with a pastoral gift will have copious amounts of patience. They like to pay attention to detail. They do not mind working to put even small and seemingly insignificant things in order. They will be found in society doing jobs that require attention to detail, such as accounting/bookkeeping, cleaning/housekeeping, daycare, etc. Unfortunately, pastors do not typically have the ability to see the big picture and will be unable to lead the church in the same way that an apostle can. This is another reason that the modern Christian church at large is in such a state of lethargy, as most churches are led by pastors and not by apostles and prophets, according to the plan of God.

Finally, *teachers* are just what the name implies. This ministry gift from Jesus allows these people to understand the Word of God and break it down in order to ‘feed’ it to others. In society these people will be found in teaching jobs, whether they are elementary, fully advanced levels or all points in between. A person with the gift of a teacher will have patience, but also they will have a deep desire to see people ‘grow up’ in the Word of God. They will have an ability to write teachings and books. Teachers will also have an ardent hunger for understanding the Word of God. They will not mind spending hours and hours studying the Bible and related writings. It is important to have teachers in the church of God in order to bring understanding of the Bible to the members of the body of Christ. Once again however, the church leaders have ‘kicked out’ the teachers, and therefore have lost the main source of understanding the Word of God. It will be impossible for Christians to become perfected without teachers.

Each Christian will have some, or occasionally all, the gifts from God, the Holy Spirit and Jesus. Even if someone has more than one of the five ministry gifts from Jesus, usually one will dominate. It is the job of the church leaders to identify these gifts in people and help them learn how to operate in their gifts. It is through the use and administration of these gifts that the church will come together in the unity of the Spirit and grow up into Jesus, learning to walk in perfect love. *This is the plan of God for the church of Jesus Christ.* However, the modern church has lost this understanding. They are therefore not doing what they should in this area, even if they *do* acknowledge these gifts, they are not fully utilizing them in the way they should.

As outlined above, once people have repented of their sins, received Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, and put their faith toward God, they must be water baptized in order to cleanse away the sins in their lives and to break the power of sin over them. Then they need to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit from Jesus, in order to receive the power of God to overcome the devil. Following this, they will be led into the spiritual wilderness by the Holy Spirit to be tested by the devil and his fallen angels and demons in order to be trained to overcome this evil kingdom of darkness. If they can, with the

¹⁸ THB, John 2:23, chapters 9-12 and Acts chapters 3-4 and 8-9

help of God, control their tongues and praise God through the rough times in the wilderness and not complain, then they will come out of the wilderness in a short time and God will give them true power.

After the time in the spiritual wilderness, true Christians will begin to use the gifts from the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit to grow up in Jesus and move toward perfection in Him. The gifts from God are necessary to get this job done. It is through finishing the work that God sent us here to do that we truly glorify God. God will share His glory with us in order for us to move toward perfection in Jesus. God's glory is *necessary* for us to become perfected in Christ. Once we become perfected, *even death will have no power over us*. However, since God sows His glory into our lives, according to the principle of seedtime and harvest, He expects us to produce fruit, (*i.e.*, God directed good deeds), multiply and return His glory to Him. He wants a return on His investment. God wants us to preach the gospel, which is the good news of repentance and salvation through Jesus Christ, to help people to come out of the bondage of sickness, poverty, loneliness, separation from God and His other people, and general disorder in their lives. It is through this ministry and delivery of souls from the kingdom of darkness and bondage, bringing them into the Christian way of life in Jesus and the kingdom of God and light, that we glorify God. Thus, one of the main jobs of Christians is destroying of the works of the devil and restoring order in the earth.

Obedying the commandments of God, especially by showing love for others, is how we fulfill the purposes that God has put us in the earth to accomplish. This is the example that Jesus set for us. The Holy Spirit will help us every step of the way. There will be resistance from the devil. If we do not suffer persecution from Satan for obeying God, then we can be relatively certain that we are not being effective for God.¹⁹ The closer we get to perfection, the more pressure the devil will put on us. However, once we reach perfection in Jesus, the promises of God for protection kick into high gear and we may be taken out of harm's way. Even in the interim, many obedient people of God will receive 'graduated' protection from the enemy's devices. In other words, the more obedient we are, the more protection we receive.²⁰

The Christian walk toward perfection in Jesus, once the spiritual wilderness experience is over, will consist of *learning to hear perfectly from God and becoming perfectly obedient to Him*. As we said, Satan will resist this walk every step of the way. However, this resistance will only serve as confirmation for the obedient Christian that they are moving in the right direction. If the devil does not resist someone, then they are no threat to him. The more they threaten the kingdom of darkness, the more the devil will persecute and try to kill the obedient Christians. Just as physical exercise does good to strengthen the natural body; it is through this resistance from the devil that we become spiritually strong in the Lord. From the time of salvation to the point of perfection, there will be a series of life experiences which will shape the character of the individual Christian to give them wisdom, understanding and knowledge from God, in order to mold

¹⁹ THB, Genesis 8:22, II Kings 2:9-12, Mark 10:29-31, John 3:14-21 and 36, 4:13 and 34-38, 5:1-47, 6:22-70, 8:51-52, 10:10, 11:21-27, 12:25-36 and 50, 13:31-35, 14:6 and 19-20, chapters 15-17, 21:20-25, Acts 14:21-22, Romans 8:35-39 and Hebrews 11:5-6

²⁰ THB, Psalm chapter 91, Matthew 6:10-13, John 17:15, II Corinthians 12:7-10, II Thessalonians 3:3, II Timothy 3:10-13, I John 5:18 and Revelation 12:13-14

their soul in preparation for the rest of eternity. When the persecuted Christian needs rest, they may be sent back into the ‘wilderness’, which is where they can rest, relying entirely on the provision of God.²¹

Through trials and persecutions we come to rely on the Lord more and more. This is a continuous process which may take as long as a person’s life to come to the place of perfection in Jesus. Most people will not make it to the place of perfection in Christ, (*i.e.*, the life in Christ) before they die. If they have truly received Jesus, then they pass into perfection in Jesus by dying in Him. This is salvation and the ‘resurrection’, or the ‘alpha’. It is the *beginning* in Jesus. The perfected state that we call the ‘life in Christ’ is the ‘omega’, or the end, *mature* state in Jesus. The alpha, (or the resurrection) is good, but the life in Christ, (or the omega) is better.²² The great majority of Christians do not even know that the place of perfection in this life exists. Even if they are made aware of the possibility of perfection in this life, most do not understand the process and the importance of the wilderness experience in preparing them to move into that place of perfection. If these things are revealed to someone and they receive this truth and follow the pattern that Jesus established for them, then they can get to the place that God wants them to ultimately achieve. Jesus lived and taught the *path to perfection*. We must follow this path if we wish to make it to the perfected state that God made a way for us through Jesus to have.

²¹ THB, Deuteronomy chapter 8, Proverbs 3:19-20, 24:3-4, Matthew 14:13-21, 15:32-39, Mark 1:35 and Luke 5:16

²² THB, Luke 13:32, John 11:25-26, Revelation 1:8 and 11, 21:6 and 22:13

Chapter 21

What is the path to perfection?

Jesus was perfect in God's eyes. Anyone who truly believes in Jesus as the Christ will also believe in His deity as the Son of God. Since Jesus was the Son of God who came in the flesh, He was born from above and was not of this world. Therefore, He naturally had the advantage of God's power through the Holy Spirit who conceived Him, to overcome the evil of this world in order to live the perfect, sin-free life. Most people believe that it is impossible for humans to reach the same state of perfection that Jesus achieved. Truly, it *is* impossible for a human, in and of him or herself, to reach the perfected state apart from Jesus and the Holy Spirit. However, if we live *in Jesus*, then we *can* achieve this perfected, sin-free state. This is what is called the *life in Christ*. God made a way for this process in humans to take place through His Son Jesus and by the power of the same Holy Spirit who helped Jesus. Before Jesus came to the earth in human form, the perfected state was *not* generally possible, since there was not enough help from God for most people to carry it out. However, once Jesus came and lived the perfect life, suffered and died for the sins of the world, then this opened the door for many to find their way into the perfected state, either through death in Him, or *in this life by living and abiding in Jesus*. Jesus outlined the path to perfection in the Bible. If we want to reach the perfected state, then we must believe that it exists and follow the path to perfection that Jesus outlined in God's Word.¹

When Jesus gave what Biblical scholars call the *Sermon on the Mount*, He actually revealed to us the *path to perfection*. During this sermon Jesus said that there would be blessings for those people who have certain characteristics which are: poor in spirit, who mourn, who are gentle and lowly, who are hungry and thirsty for justice, who are merciful, whose hearts are pure, who make peace and who are persecuted because they live for God. These types of people will receive their blessings when Jesus returns and begins to set up the kingdom of God here on earth. The poor, or humble in spirit, who know their need to rely on God through Jesus will inherit the kingdom of God. People who mourn now will be comforted once they truly learn to abide in Christ. Those who are gentle and lowly, as Jesus demonstrated for us, will inherit the earth, both in this life and the next. People who desire but do not see justice being carried out now will see it in its fullness when Jesus comes back and sets up His righteous kingdom here on earth. But even before Jesus comes back, God's true people will be able to live in peace and safety in the wilderness. Those who sow mercy now will reap mercy from God. People who allow God to purify their hearts through Jesus and the Holy Spirit will see God face to face. Those who work to keep the peace now will be called the children of God. Those who are persecuted for the name of Jesus will inherit the kingdom of God and receive a great reward from Jesus.²

Following these things, Jesus pointed out that His followers are the 'salt of the earth'. Salt is used to make food taste good and be desirable. Christians are supposed to live in

¹ THB, Matthew 17:20, 19:26, Mark 10:27, Luke 1:37, 18:27, John 3:1-21, 11:25-26, 15:5, Romans 8:1-17, Galatians 3:11, I John 2:1, 3:6 and 9 and 5:18-21

² THB, Genesis 8:22, Matthew 5:1-12, I Corinthians 13:12 and Romans 12:18

such a way as to make Jesus desirable to others. Jesus is the bread of life. Even nice bread has salt as a flavoring. Salt is symbolic of the unity of Christians with Jesus in the life in Christ. Salt is also a preservative and antiseptic. God will judge all of us and we will be cleansed by suffering and persecution, so that we can learn to completely rely on and obey Him. Thus, when we praise God through Jesus and give of ourselves to others in obedience to God, which is our sacrifice to God, then that praise and obedient work will be found worthy. If the salt, (*i.e.*, the Christian) has lost its flavor, then it is useless and will be discarded, (*i.e.*, cast into the lake of fire). This means a couple of things. First, salt is composed of the combining of one sodium atom, (chemical symbol Na⁺) and one chloride atom, (chemical symbol Cl⁻) in order to form one sodium chloride molecule, (chemical symbol NaCl). This is symbolic of the unity of God with Christians, through Jesus, as well as the unity of one Christian with another. If the atoms of a NaCl molecule are separated into sodium metal and chloride gas, then they do not have the flavor of the two combined, are useless for consumption and are even poisonous! Thus, if we become separated from Jesus and thereby from God, or from other true Christians, then we cannot be effective for God, are useless to Him and become toxic because of our sin nature causing trouble. *Apart from Jesus, we can do nothing.*

The whole purpose for us to be here on earth in human form is to produce fruit by doing God's work in the earth and thereby glorifying God. This work we must do for God is the preaching of the gospel or good news of repentance of sins through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and through Him reconciliation to God after the fall of Adam. Through the preaching of the gospel, we are to set things on the earth in order by delivering people from the bondage of Satan, such as poverty, sickness and satanic oppression and demonic possession.³

Finally, if salt is used too much, then it can lose its flavor or become overbearing and distasteful. This is indicative of Christians being too pushy with their outward 'religion' and being 'out of balance'. In Jesus' day the Pharisees were the religious leaders and they were guilty of this. Like them, if Christians go overboard with rules and regulations, trying to *look* good to others and fail to work for God from the drive of the Holy Spirit within, then they will be out of balance and risk hypocrisy. Hypocrites do things for the wrong reasons and they can actually drive people *away* from God. However, Jesus said that we are the light of the world and that we should not cover up our good works. This light is the glory of God that Jesus gave us in our ministry gifts. This means that we need to do good, God-directed works from the heart because we love God and want to please Him. Thus if we do good works for this right reason, then people will notice and give glory to God. This will be a return on His investment when He shared His glory with us through Jesus Christ. It is God's glory through the right use of ministry gifts that is the necessary element for us to become perfected in Christ.⁴

Once Jesus had established our need to stay connected to God through Him, He set about pointing out the relationship between the first covenant God made with His people, as outlined in the Law of Moses, and the new covenant He was about to make with them

³ THB, Hosea 14:2, Matthew 5:13, Mark 9:49-50 and 16:15-20, Luke 14:34-35, John 6:32-58, 15:1-17, Romans chapter 5 and 15:15-16, Philippians 4:18, II Timothy 3:12, Hebrews 13:15-16 and I John 2:1-6 and 4:10

⁴ THB, Matthew 5:14-16, 15:1-20, 23:1-36, Luke 11:37-52 and John 17:20-26

through His Son Jesus, who is the Christ or the Messiah. In the law of the old or first covenant that God made with Israel, He made certain restrictions and guidelines for people to live by in order to be able to come into paradise, (*a.k.a.*, Abraham's bosom) when they died. If they failed and persistently rebelled, then they would not enter into this 'rest' and they would by default go to hell to wait for Judgment Day at the end of mortal human existence on the earth. God found fault with that old covenant. Therefore, He decided to make a *new* covenant through His Son Jesus. The new covenant would be readily accessible to more people, even non-Israelites known as Gentiles. The problem with the old covenant was that few were given enough help from the Holy Spirit to actually succeed in the balance of things and enter into paradise. God only chose a select few people to whom He released His Spirit, in order for them to be able to live by the Law of Moses and actually do enough things correctly to be accepted into paradise. Paradise is the opposite of hell and is a place of rest for the souls who were obedient to God during their earthly lifetime. They will partake in the first resurrection when Jesus returns and they will become immortal at that time. Then they will live with God forever in the New Jerusalem. In the days of the Old Testament, it was impossible for anyone to keep the whole law.⁵

So as we mentioned, God made a new plan through His Son Jesus to have that old law fulfilled by Him and superseded by a new, higher law. Jesus made it clear though that the old law would not be done away with, despite the inaction of the new law. This made the way for two levels of living under God's laws. And again, unlike the old law which was essentially impossible to keep, this new law would be freely accessible to *anyone* who would accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and be 'born again' through Him. Once they received Jesus into their lives, then God would freely give His Holy Spirit to them in order to *help them stay on the path* that leads to paradise, and from there the New Jerusalem.

This new covenant would actually require a more dedicated approach that would mandate a change from the *inside out*. In other words, the person would need to be *more* righteous than even the most righteous people of the old covenant! This meant that even the *motivation* for sin would have to be dealt with. The good news though, would be that Jesus and the Holy Spirit would work together with each person who would receive Him, in order to accomplish the task of living under this *new law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*. This new law would set people free from the old law of sin and death, but it would require them to live on a higher spiritual plane. Under this new law, people would have to become perfected like God the Father and they would be required to fully love God and everyone, even their enemies! The old law would still be in existence for all people who would reject the sacrifice of Jesus for their sins, or who would abuse that sacrifice by continuing to willfully sin after receiving it, (*i.e.*, 'fall' from grace). Therefore, even if a Christian does not live by the new law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, then they will by default be placed under the old law of sin and death. The new law or covenant would be better than the old one, if the person would 'walk in the Spirit'. However, a person

⁵ THB, Exodus chapters 19-40, the book of Leviticus, Deuteronomy chapters 5-6, 13-33, Psalm 9:17, 55:15, 139:8, Proverbs 5:, 7:27, 9:18, 15:11 and 24, 23:14, 27:20, Isaiah 14:9, Ezekiel 31:15-18, Amos 9:2, Matthew 10:28, 18:9, 23:15 and 33, Mark 9:42-50, Luke 12:5, 16:19-31, Hebrews chapters 4-5, James 3:6, II Peter 2:4-11 and Revelation 20:4-15

could still fail if they decided to go against God and live according to the sinful nature of the flesh. Jesus even went into the prison of hell and preached this gospel or good news to those spirits since Adam who would receive it. Thus, Jesus even redeemed some of them as well.⁶

Under the new covenant Jesus pointed out several aspects of how the new rules would apply to a person's thoughts and actions. For example, the old law said that we are not to murder someone. However, under the new law we are not even supposed to be angry enough to commit that act. We cannot even call someone a bad name, such as 'idiot', or we will be in danger of God's judgment, since every human is made in the image of God. Therefore, if we dishonor any other human, we are showing disrespect for God and His creation. Anything that we have at odds with someone should be settled quickly. Fits of anger are fleshly acts and not of the Spirit of God. It is anger that leads to murder. Jesus showed us that the new covenant requires that the inner issues, such as anger, need to be dealt with, in order to prevent the sinful actions that emanate from the evil thoughts and emotions.

Another example along these lines is lust. God is love, but the devil wants us to follow the emotion of lust. Lust for sex is a major way that Satan uses to defeat humans. The act of intercourse between a husband and wife within a Godly marriage is symbolic of Jesus coming for His bride, the Christian church. When Jesus comes back for His people, the next stop for the devil is the bottomless pit for a thousand years, then soon after that the lake of fire forever. Therefore, Satan does not want people to obey God for any reason, but especially honoring a proper marriage between a man and woman/women. This is why the devil works so hard to pervert the normal relationship between husband and wife with pornography, adultery, sex outside of marriage, and gay and lesbian relationships. In his twisted mind, Satan thinks that if he gets enough people to become perverted, then he can delay or abort the return of Jesus that will bring about the devil's ultimate demise. If a man looks at a woman who is not his wife, with the thought of having sex with her, then by God's new covenant standards, the man would be guilty of adultery in his heart. This would also be true for the woman lusting for a man other than her husband. The point here is that wrong thinking is what leads people astray. Adultery is symbolic of wanting the things of the world more than the things of God. This was the line of thinking that led Lucifer astray. Our desire for God and His ways more than the things of the world, especially money, is the most important characteristic that we must develop in order for God to consider us worthy of eternal life. We will be 'married' to Jesus when He returns. Once we get married to Him, then we will not be able to be 'divorced'. This is why God wants us to stay married to the person that He chooses for us. This will show God our ability to stay committed to Him and His ways and to overcome selfishness. If WE choose someone on our own to marry, it is likely that we will get it wrong. Jesus said that what God brings together, man should not separate. However, most people who get married do not do so through God's direction. Divorce is not the unpardonable sin, but God hates divorce. It shows a lack of commitment. Outside of adultery, God does not want us to find reasons to divorce. It must be pointed out here that MOST people are

⁶ THB, Joshua 3:14-17, Matthew 5:17-20, Romans 2:25-29 and chapters 6-8, Galatians chapters 3-5, Ephesians 4:17-32, Philippians chapter 3, Colossians 2:11-14, Hebrews 6:4-8 and chapters 8-10 and I Peter 3:8-4:6

guilty of ‘adultery’ by God’s definition under the new covenant, (*i.e.*, lusting after the things of the world or people other than one’s spouse). The Israelites got so extreme in this area that they would divorce their wives for *any* reason. True Christians should never separate from their spouse or get divorced. We have to be committed to God for an eternity. If we cannot even commit to a marriage relationship for a few years here on earth, then we will not be able to commit to God in His kingdom forever. If we cheat in small matters, then we will not be faithful in the bigger things. Lucifer and the rebellious angels left their given domain and that is why they are headed for the lake of fire and no place is found for them in heaven anymore.⁷

We also need to be careful of what we say. Jesus said that we should not swear for *any* reason. Our speech is to be straightforward and honest. We must not add or take away from the truth. Anything else is a lie and comes from the devil. Jesus told us that on Judgment Day we would give an account for every idle word that we speak. If we say something foolish, then we should repent quickly, get it off of our account and ask Jesus to help us speak properly, so that things do not build up for Judgment Day.

We can be forgiven for everything we speak or do, except when someone speaks blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of God or does something in that same vein. This *is* the ‘unpardonable sin’. The blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is when the Holy Spirit does powerful and miraculous things through someone and someone else says that it is not God doing the miracles, but the devil. It is also when God confirms His will for someone through miracles and then that person turns away from the path God places them on. Through their rebellious actions, this says that they did not believe the miracles came from God. More people are in danger of this eternal judgment than would likely be suspected, especially leaders in the Christian church.

What we say comes from the heart. The things that people say will often embarrass them, and they may try to cover it up by laughing it off or saying that it was a joke. However, even hurtful things come from the heart. The attempt to cover it up by saying that it was just a joke is a *lie*. If a person speaks evil things, it shows an evil heart. If a person speaks good things, then it shows a good heart. Wise people are careful about what they say. Fools carry on speaking without thought and divulge the foolishness in their hearts. Because God made us in His image and gave us power in our tongues, whatever we say gives power to either the kingdom of light or the kingdom of darkness. God spoke the universe into existence. We also have similar power through Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Most people abuse the power of the tongue and use it for evil. No human can control the tongue. However, through Jesus and the Holy Spirit, God *can* control someone’s tongue. It is by purification of the heart through Jesus that we can learn and gain the ability to speak the truth in love. We must speak the truth in love, by the direction of the wisdom of the Word of God through the Holy Spirit, in order to become clean in our lives.⁸

⁷ THB, Malachi 2:16, Matthew 5:21-32 and 19:1-7, Luke 16:10-12, I Corinthians 6:12-20 and chapter 7, II Corinthians 11:2-3, Ephesians 4:17-32 and 5:31-32, Colossians 3:5-11, James 1:12-18 and 4:1-10, I John 4:8 and v. 16 and Revelation 19:7-9, 20:1-3, Vv. 7-10 and chapter 21

⁸ THB, Genesis chapter 1, Proverbs 10:19, 18:21 and 26:18-19, Matthew 5:33-37 and 12:22-37 and James chapter 3

Jesus also instructed in the new covenant that revenge or justice in like kind would not be acceptable for true Christians. He explained that we must *not* think in terms of an ‘eye for an eye’ and a ‘tooth for a tooth’, even though this was part of the Law of Moses and the old covenant. He explained that rather than exacting justice or revenge in this manner, we must ‘turn the other cheek’ and accept injury or loss from others. We must give *more* than what is asked of us. Jesus instructed us that we are expected to become perfect, even as God the Father is perfect. This perfection requires that we treat even our enemies with proper respect. We must *love our enemies* and treat them kindly. We must NOT repay evil with evil, but we must *overcome evil* by repaying evil with good. We do not get credit for suffering for doing the wrong thing. However, we *do* get extra credit from God when we suffer for doing the right thing. It is easy to love those who love us back. God wants us to be like Him and give good things of ourselves even to those who hate us. Giving of ourselves to others, even our enemies, is the perfect expression of love. Why do we have to love our enemies in order to become like God? The answer is that God still loves Lucifer and all the fallen angels. He remembers them as His created children. Even though He cannot change what happened to them, He still loves them as His own, though they will end up in the lake of fire.⁹

Next in the path to perfection, Jesus tackled the issue of hypocrisy, especially with regard to His people. During the days of Jesus there was a great deal of hypocrisy. It is no different today. Modern day leaders in the church are every bit as hypocritical as the Jewish synagogue leaders of Jesus’ day. They love their places of honor and to see themselves on television, to be praised by people, etc. They write books about Jesus and Christianity and even make movies loosely based on scripture. God does not direct much of what some of these people do. Rather their desire to be recognized as ‘authority figures’ in the church and to be recognized by the world is what drives them. These people have learned to make money from these things and many have become wealthy in the process. Meanwhile God’s people continue to struggle, get sick and die.

There is too much human wisdom in many current Christian teachings. Human wisdom comes ultimately from the devil and brings with it confusion and every evil thing. This is why the Christian church of today is in such a confused and disorderly state. God will hold these leaders accountable. We are not supposed to do our charitable deeds in the open. We are supposed to try to remain anonymous when we do good deeds, then God Himself will reward us openly. If people do good deeds so that others give them praise, then that will be their only reward. When we pray we are not supposed to do so in a way that others will really take notice. Hypocrites pray so that everyone will think they are very spiritual. It is common for people to even change the way they speak when they preach or pray. Unless it is because of the Holy Spirit, it is fake and because they like for people to take notice. However, God does not like this. Christians are supposed to follow the example prayer that Jesus outlined, which has come to be known as ‘The Lord’s Prayer’. *We are supposed to remain humble at all costs. If we lose humility, then all will be lost.* God wants us to humble ourselves before Him and then *He* will lift us up. God humbles the proud and exalts the humble. He humbles proud people by bringing disaster

⁹ THB, Leviticus 24:17-22, Proverbs 25:21-22, Matthew 5:38-48, Romans 8:12-39 and 12:9-31, I Thessalonians 5:15, II Corinthians 1:3-11, Philippians 1:3-2:18, and 4:8-20, I Thessalonians chapter 3, II Thessalonians chapter 1, II Timothy 3:10, I Peter 2:4-25, 3:8-22 and 4:12-19 and Revelation 2:10

into their lives, whether the disasters are sickness, poverty, or other calamity, God designs these things in order to encourage people to repent and become humbled. *Humility is the root of love and truth. Pride is the root of everything evil.* Hypocrisy comes as a result of pride and loving money, prestige and the things of the world, more than the things of God. True Christians will not parade their religion in any way. They will instead do what God asks so that most people will simply not even notice. When we obey God, we show our love for Him. We are supposed to love God *more than anything*, especially money and things. People who are more concerned with money and the things of this world, rather than the things of God, will do all kinds of evil things and justify them in their minds, in order to ‘get ahead’ in this life. If they do this, then they will miss out on eternity and the kingdom of God, because they will have proven to God that they are just like Lucifer, who gave up his eternity for things. If we put our trust in God, then He will bountifully supply *all* our needs. When we obey God, then we will also build up a treasure in heaven that will last an eternity. This is much more important than anything we can have here on earth. However, if we will simply put the kingdom of God and His priorities first in our lives, then all that we need will be abundantly provided to us.¹⁰

Jesus also instructed those who wish to follow the path to perfection not to judge others, if they do not want God to judge them with the same measure. It is better to resist the temptation of being critical of others, than to risk having God judge us in our shortcomings. Whatever we sow is what we will reap. If we sow mercy and forgiveness in other peoples’ lives, then we will reap mercy and forgiveness from God in our life. Even when we are right in any given matter, until we are perfected, we are likely to fall short in God’s eyes somewhere in our lives. This is why it is safer *not* to judge others. Also, it is hypocritical to judge someone else when the person doing the judging has more issues than the one being judged! The person should first clean up their own life, and *then* they will be able to help the other person with their faults. Obedient Christians *can* help judge matters within the Christian church, but they should not judge non-believers. That is God’s job. Jesus also said that we should not take the holy wisdom of God and offer it to people who do not want it, (referred to as ‘dogs’ or ‘swine’), as they will only trample on it and then turn on the person who tries to offer God’s wisdom. People who do not want the things of God will generally go back to the things of the world, as a washed pig returning to the mire, or a dog returning to its vomit.¹¹

We are then told that we should ask for what we want or need and we will receive it, if it is in God’s will. We have to ask in the name of Jesus, as He is our portal to God the Father. Jesus is the narrow gate that leads to eternal life. Most people are going down the wide path that leads to destruction and the lake of fire. The wide gate that leads to destruction is at the end of the broad path of pride and selfishness. The narrow gate through Jesus that leads to life eternal with God in His kingdom is at the end of a path of giving, obedience and sacrifice to God. The narrow gate is difficult to find and the path that leads to it is difficult to stay on. Jesus is the *only* way to eternal life. There is no other

¹⁰ THB, II Chronicles 7:13-14, Job 8:11-19, 13:16, 17:8, 20:4-7, 27:8 and 36:13, Psalm 9:12, 10:17-18, 18:27, 25:9, 147:6 and 149:4, Proverbs 3:34, 11:2 and 9, 16:19 and 29:23, Isaiah 1:18-19, 29:19, 33:14-16 and 57:15-21, Ezekiel 21:24-27, Amos 5:18-27, Zephaniah 3:11-13, Matthew chapter 6, 15:1-20, 16:1-4 and 23:1-36, Luke 11:37-54 and 12:1-3, John 10:10 and 14:15, I Timothy 4:1-11, James 3:13-18 and 4:6-10 and I Peter 5:5-7

¹¹ THB, Proverbs 26:11, Matthew chapter 7:1-6, I Corinthians 5:1-6:7 and II Peter 2:20-22

way that we can receive eternal life, except by receiving Jesus as our Lord and Savior. This earthly, mortal life is a right of passage into the next. We must overcome the things that God has created in this life to challenge us, in order to make it into the kingdom of God. If we prove to God that we will obey Him, then we can live forever in His presence. One of those acts of obedience is to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior. If people prove otherwise, that they *will not* obey God, then He will do away with them *permanently*. Many people may not like this fact, but it does not change the reality of this truth. This is why it is imperative that we obey God at all costs! The whole of God's laws and words of His prophets is summarized in the concept called the 'golden rule'. This rule states that *we must treat other humans just as we want to be treated*. If we can do this, then we will have accomplished *all* that God has developed for us to receive here is this life. Loving God with all our being and loving our neighbor as ourselves IS the message of the cross. But Jesus actually gave us a new command that goes beyond even loving our neighbors as ourselves and that is the command to love the obedient brethren with HIS love. True love that comes from God is for giving back to God and for giving to others. Therefore, true love from God is for giving but it is also FORGIVING.¹²

Finally, Jesus warns us to beware of false prophets. He tells us that these people will look like Christians, but will be evil inside. They will be motivated by self-interest and will be identified by the way they act, but even more importantly by what they say, (*i.e.*, the 'fruit of the tree'). True Christians will produce good 'fruit' as a result of obeying God. False Christians will *fake* good works in order to look good to others, but will involve themselves in hidden evil things. They will not be able to stay away from sin. On Judgment Day these secretly evil people will try to present themselves to Jesus as Christians. They will tell Him that they did many things in His name. However, Jesus will tell them that He never knew them as His people, since everything they did was unauthorized by God. They therefore will have operated lawlessly. These false Christians will end up in the lake of fire. Jesus advised us that if we would listen to the things that He taught and *do* them, then He would liken us to someone who built their house on a rock, (which represents Christ and God's wisdom) and when the storm, (which represents persecution, especially the great tribulation) comes into our lives, that it would beat on the house, but the house would not fall. On the other hand if people *do not* do what Jesus instructed, then He likened them to a person who built a house on the sand, (which represents human, satanic wisdom) and when the storm comes it would beat on the house and the house would fall, and great would be the fall. In other words, people who are rooted and grounded in Jesus will be able to withstand anything the devil sends their way and will not draw back from God. People who do not obey Jesus will *not* be able to withstand the devil; they will draw back and will end up in eternal destruction.¹³

If real Christians receive this truth and wish to follow the path to perfection that Jesus established for us, then they must also know what the key to the state of perfection in Christ really is.

¹² THB, Genesis 8:22, Matthew 7:7-14, 19:16-30 and 25:31-46, Mark 10:17-31, Luke 10:25-37 and 18:18-30, John 3:1-21, chapter 5, 6:22-71, 10:22-39, 12:20-26, 13:34-35, 14:1-6 and Vv. 12-14, 16:23-27 and chapter 17, Galatians 6:7, I John 4:7-21 and 5:14-15 and Revelation 21:1-8; The Apocrypha of the Old Testament, II Esdras 6:38-8:63

¹³ THB, Proverbs 13:2, 18:20-21, Matthew 7:15-27, Luke 6:20-49 and 12:1-12 and Hebrews 10:19-39

Chapter 22

What is the key to perfection?

Jesus outlined the *path to perfection* in Matthew chapters 5-7. However, in order to be able to move down this path, we need help. God has revealed the key to success in this endeavor. As outlined previously, Jesus established certain patterns that we need to follow in order to accomplish what God has sent us here to do. Every Christian needs to know the details of this plan in order to complete the path to perfection.

When God created Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, He told Adam not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God also told Adam that on the day they ate of that fruit they would surely die. As pointed out previously, since a 'day' is as a thousand years to God, then when Eve, then Adam, ate of the forbidden fruit, indeed they died that 'day'. Adam died at the age of 930 years.¹ As we also saw previously, the reason that the fruit was forbidden is that it would impart knowledge that Adam and Eve were unprepared and unable to use properly. Thus, it was out of God's order for them to eat that fruit, until they had enough wisdom and understanding to use the knowledge properly.

God put the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden in order to test Adam and Eve to see if they would try to take the short cut that Lucifer did when he rebelled against God and attempted to take over heaven. When Lucifer rebelled, he stole God's glory. That was the epitome of pride. If God wants to give us His glory then that is fine. Again, it is MANDATORY for us to receive the glory of God in order to become perfected in Jesus. However, we cannot take it without His permission, as Lucifer did. That is what caused him to be cast out of heaven.² In order to avoid making the same mistake as Lucifer, we must follow the pattern established by Jesus so that we can come to the state of perfection in Christ. This perfection is NOT optional if we want to be spared the great tribulation that is soon to come upon the earth, (*a.k.a.*, World War 3). The only people who will escape ALL of the tribulation are those who are perfected in Christ and can claim the promises of God's divine protection. In order to be among this elite group of Christians, it is necessary to become as much like Jesus as we can BEFORE the trouble begins. This will allow us to overcome the weakness of the flesh and the wiles of Satan.³

We said earlier that there were three things by which God created the heavens and earth and made them work. These things are *wisdom*, *understanding* and *knowledge*. It is by these same three things that all Christians should endeavor to build the house of God, which is the church. The wisdom of God seems like foolishness to most humans. The wisdom of the world is foolishness to God, because it ultimately comes from the devil and stems from bitterness and self-seeking in the heart. Wherever this human-satanic wisdom of the world operates there are confusion and every evil thing. Thus, if someone is confused about something, then they are not hearing from God, since He is not the author of confusion. The wisdom of God is pure, peaceable, gentle, willing to yield and

¹ THB, Genesis 2:15, chapter 3 and 5:1-5 and II Peter 3:8

² THB, Luke 10:18 and Revelation 12:7-11

³ THB, Psalm chapter 91, Proverbs chapter 2, Romans chapter 6 and Revelation 3:10

full of mercy and good fruits. It is without partiality or hypocrisy. It is sown in peace by those who want to make peace.⁴

Wisdom represents Jesus, understanding represents the Holy Spirit and knowledge represents God the Father. The order of obtaining these three attributes is wisdom first, then understanding and finally knowledge. If someone does not have Jesus, or wisdom, then they cannot receive the Holy Spirit who will impart proper understanding. Without Jesus, there is NO access to God the Father. Without Jesus, people can be led astray by Satan. We must receive Jesus into our lives as our Lord and Savior BEFORE we can receive the Holy Spirit. It is Jesus who baptizes us in the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is necessary for us to receive in order to grow in Christ and have any power over Satan. The Holy Spirit will lead us and guide us into all truth. This is how we obtain an understanding of what God is doing in our lives and in the earth. The knowledge of God IS understanding. Therefore, these three attributes of God are ultimately indivisible if they are going to operate properly in our lives. Even as there are two types of wisdom in the world, there are also two types of understanding and two types of knowledge. One type of each comes from God and one type of each comes from Satan. Most people on the earth operate in the wisdom, understanding and knowledge of the world that ultimately come from the devil. Unfortunately, these characteristics from Satan also permeate the Church of Christ! However, Jesus and the apostles set the example for us and we should follow in their footsteps. That is truly how the church is supposed to be built. The wisdom, understanding and knowledge that come from God will lead people through Christ into eternal life. The wisdom, understanding and knowledge that come from Satan will lead people down the wide path to eternal destruction.⁵

One of the problems with many leaders of the modern Christian church and most of its members is that they follow the same pattern established by Adam and Eve. They try to obtain the knowledge of God by studying the Bible and related subjects in the power of the human mind. This is out of order with God and exactly what Satan wants them to do, since then he will then be in control of the lives of these unsuspecting people. If people try to understand God from a human perspective, then they will fail miserably and eventually incur God's wrath, because this wisdom will lead them into unbelief and sin. It will cause people to replace the commandments and direction of God with the traditions of men.⁶ As we saw earlier, it is important to receive Jesus as Lord and savior, get baptized in water and then receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit from Him before endeavoring to truly seek after the things of God. Then wisdom, understanding and knowledge can be sought from God in the proper sequence and will be more likely to succeed in producing the fruit of righteousness through obedience to God.

Knowledge is the ultimate goal in this walk with Jesus. Wisdom is the first and foundational character, then understanding and finally the knowledge of God. With these attributes we can build the house of God and fill it properly with obedient Christians. This is the way it is supposed to work. However, most 'Christians' are doing their own

⁴ THB, Proverbs 3:19-20 and 24:3-4, Isaiah 29:13-14, I Corinthians chapters 1-3, 14:33 and James 3:13-18

⁵ THB, Proverbs 9:10, Matthew 3:11 and 7:13-14, Mark 1:7-8, Luke 3:16, John 1:33, 14:6 and 16:13, Acts 1:4-8, I Corinthians 1:24, the book of Ephesians and I John chapter 5

⁶ THB, Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25, Matthew 13:53-58, Mark 6:1-6 and 16:14, Romans chapter 11 and Hebrews chapter 3

thing and NOT doing what God put them here to do. They are operating in human wisdom and as we said, have replaced the commandments of God with the traditions of men.⁷ *God is NOT going to reveal His knowledge unless a person has first built a foundation of wisdom in Jesus and understanding through the Holy Spirit, in Christ.*

Wisdom is obtained by asking God for it and believing through Jesus that we have it. However, the only way that God will impart His wisdom to someone is if they fear and obey Him. Again, this discounts the majority of ‘Christians’ since most are doing their own thing and not truly obeying God. *Understanding* comes from God through the Holy Spirit, who we also gain access to through Jesus. Thus, we must receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit from Jesus, and then get filled each day by spending time with God. Understanding is the key to our eternity with God, since it will give us an overall perspective to God’s plan in the earth and for humans, thus helping us to *willingly* cooperate with God in this endeavor. *Knowledge* from God comes by spending time in prayer and studying God’s Word under the direction of the Holy Spirit. *Then God the Father will impart revelation to us so that we can understand the deeper mysteries of His Word, as well as His plan for our lives in the earth and for eternity.*⁸

Jesus said that He would share the glory of God the Father with us and that this would help us to become perfect in Him, and also through Him, to become one with the Father. This is the perfection and unity that the Christian church worldwide must achieve before Jesus will come back.⁹ Since most people have believed the lies from Satan that ‘no one is perfect’ and that ‘no one expects us to be perfect’, the Christian church has become lazy and people do not even try to reach this state in Christ. ***This book is a wake up call to this fact and God has directed it to be a guide for those true Christians who want to be ‘sold out’ to God and escape the tribulation that lies just ahead.*** Since most of the leaders of the modern Christian church at large are NOT teaching that perfection is possible, or indeed expected of us, God is calling untrained individuals to reach out for this goal. We must believe Jesus and receive the glory of God in order to obtain perfection in Jesus. However, what is this glory and how do we obtain it? The answer is simple but is hidden and only comes through God’s revelation and by studying the original Hebrew and Chaldean words of the Old Testament, along with the names of God. However, it can also be confirmed in the Greek of the New Testament and even in modern English.

When Moses asked God whom he should say was sending him to deliver the Israelites from Egypt, God called Himself ‘I AM’. Jesus also called Himself ‘I AM’ in the Garden of Gethsemane, (the word ‘He’ is added in the modern translations as signified by the fact that it is in italics, but was not in the original Greek).¹⁰ The original Hebrew name for God most often used in the Old Testament is *YHWH*. This name is pronounced and sometimes written as *Yahweh*. The word AM in His name in the Hebrew is recorded as the word *hayah*, (pronounced *haw-yaw*), which is designated with the number 1961 in

⁷ THB, Isaiah 29:13 and Matthew 15:1-20

⁸ THB, Psalm 11:10, Romans 16:25-27 and James 1:5-8

⁹ THB, John 17:20-26, Ephesians chapter 4 and Revelation 19:7-8

¹⁰ THB, Exodus 3:14 and John 18:4-8

Strong's Concordance.¹¹ A study of this word and a series of related words, (esp. Strong's numbers - 1921 through 1935) reveals that this word implies the essence of God's existence and His *power* and *glory*. The short version of Yahweh is *Yah* or *Jah*. A study of these Hebrew words and those related, (esp. Strong's numbers - 3027-29, 3034, 3045-46, 3050 and 3061-69) indicate that this name refers also to the *knowledge* of God. Through this we begin to see that the *glory* of God is in one sense the same as the *knowledge* of God. This is also seen by studying the Greek and modern English. In the Greek, one of the words used for knowledge is *epignosis*, (Strong's number - 1922). This word is also translated as the word *acknowledge* which can be synonymous with *glorify*. The word *acknowledgement* can be synonymous with *glory*. Further study of the word *knowledge* in the modern English will reveal from some resources that it is synonymous with *enlightenment* which is also synonymous with *glory*.¹²

Thus, we see that the GLORY of the Father that Jesus said He would share with us in order to bring us into perfection in Him is really the power-endued, revelatory KNOWLEDGE of God. The knowledge of God that is built on a proper foundation of the wisdom and understanding from Jesus and the Holy Spirit will open the door to perfection. *Thus, the revelatory knowledge of God the Father, with the mind of Christ, IS the 'key' to perfection in Christ, since it comes with the power, (i.e., grace) through the Holy Spirit to actually DO what God tells us.* As we grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus, God will begin to speak directly to us. This will bring revelation and enlightenment into our hearts and minds, thus giving us the power and ability to truly obey God. This glorified and perfected state in Christ that we call the *life in Christ* will come at a high cost. Anyone who follows this path will suffer greatly, especially from Satan. However, this suffering is designed to help us become obedient to God. Also, receiving the powerful knowledge of God is a spiritual matter, as these things can only be imparted by the Holy Spirit and received directly by our spirit. This is how the revelation that knowledge is the key to perfection came. That is why people who try to achieve the state of perfection apart from the pattern established by Jesus will fail, as their minds are veiled to spiritual matters. They may learn and learn, but will never come to the knowledge of the truth, since they are seeking the knowledge for selfish reasons. This is the state of most 'Christians' in the earth today, including many of the leaders of the church. They study and study the Word of God, but NEVER get the deeper revelations, since they never humbly ask God to show them. Then even if they DO ask and God tries to show them, they reject those truths because they do not line up with what they WANT to believe, which is usually rooted in human traditions handed down in the church. If people do not understand or agree with the truths contained in this book, then they have not had the revelation and enlightenment from God that will be necessary for perfection in Christ. Those who have the enlightened knowledge from God the Father WILL understand and agree with these things, since these truths come directly from God and line up with His Word.

¹¹James Strong, *New Strong's dictionary of Hebrew and Greek words [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1996.

¹² glory, Synonym Collection v1.1, Copyright © 2008 by Lexico Publishing Group, LLC. and Encarta® World English Dictionary [North American Edition] © & (P)2007 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Developed for Microsoft by Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

Human understanding, apart from the understanding that comes through Christ and the Holy Spirit, will lead only to confusion and divisions, which is exactly the state of the Christian Church worldwide today. Unknowingly, MOST 'Christians' are working for Satan in the 'name' of Jesus. They will be quite surprised when they come before Jesus one day and have to try to explain why they did things their way rather than God's way. People who have the revelatory knowledge of God will be able to 'see' these things and truly obey God in Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. They will be the only ones who will be able to survive the great tribulation and enter the kingdom of God.¹³ The knowledge of God will direct us into obedience to Him and thereby righteousness. As our righteousness grows in Christ, we will move toward maturity and perfection in Him. This will entitle us to the divine protection of God. *There is no other way to achieve that divine protection!*

However, knowledge is a double-edged sword. Knowledge, without the wisdom of Jesus and the understanding from the Holy Spirit, will likely lead someone into pride. This is what happened to Lucifer. Knowledge usually allows someone to obtain prosperity and acclaim in the natural world. The more knowledge someone gains in a given area, typically the more money they will earn and the more recognition, or glory, from society they will receive. This is true even in the Christian church, especially for those who obtain the knowledge of God from a human perspective. Without help from God, this can lead to self-conceit and deception. God wants the opposite for us. Since Lucifer was created perfect and moved into pride as a result of his great wisdom and financial aptitude, God wants us to avoid this situation. That is why He wants us to GROW into Godly knowledge so that we will be UNLIKELY to follow the same path that caused Lucifer to fall from grace. We must GROW into the image of Christ from GLORY to GLORY. This glorified growth comes from increasing our God empowered knowledge of Christ that comes from the Father by the direction, inspiration and revelation of the Holy Spirit. As we abide in Jesus, God will give us the mind of Christ. *With this divine, revelation-empowered enlightenment we will not only know what it is that God wants us to do, but with a proper foundation in Christ and with the power of the Holy Spirit, we will actually be able to truly obey God.* This will make us right with Him through Jesus. Again, obedience of this nature only comes as a result of suffering at the hands of the devil, or as direct correction from God. Then we will put away our earthly desires and follow after what God wants, doing only His will. Once we do this, we will have all that God wants for us. The glory or *illuminating* knowledge of God will lead us into perfection in Christ, which will also prepare us for protection from the end-time events that will soon be upon us. If people reject the knowledge of God, then God will reject them and ultimately they will be destroyed.¹⁴

So we see that the knowledge of God brings revelation and enlightenment. This 'light' from Jesus and the Holy Spirit will open our spiritual eyes to the mysteries of God. Then we will be able to see in the spirit how God has set things up to complete His plan in the

¹³ THB, Psalm 25:14, Proverbs 29:18, Matthew 7:13-27, Luke 2:25-40, II Corinthians 3:1-7:1, Galatians 1:11-12, Ephesians 1:15-23 and 3:1-7, Colossians 1:9-4:6, II Timothy chapter 3, I John 4:6 and Revelation 1:1-3

¹⁴ THB, Isaiah 14:12-15, Ezekiel 28:11-19, Hosea 4:6, Matthew 6:33 and 16:24-28, Luke 14:25-33, John 15:5, I Corinthians chapter 2 and 8:1, II Corinthians chapter 3, Ephesians 1:15-23, Hebrews 6:1-8 and 10:26-39, II Peter chapter 3 and Revelation 1:4-6 and 20:6

earth. It will allow us to understand the deeper things of God and will help us cooperate with God to accomplish all that He still needs to get done here before Jesus comes back. The things that formerly did not make sense to us will suddenly make perfect sense.

A good example of revelation from the glorious knowledge that comes from the Father is that God showed me that the glory which Jesus spoke of giving us in John 17 is the five-fold ministry gifts that we discussed earlier in chapter 14. Just as God gives us each a measure of faith, He gives us each a measure of His glory from before birth in the form of these ministry gifts. God revealed to me that these gifts are the same as the talents that Jesus spoke of in the parable in Matthew 25. Everyone has at least one and some people have two or more, up to all five. Those gifts are the ones that we must use to bring us into perfection in Christ, as described in Ephesians 4. However, MOST Christians are either unaware of this ‘seed’ of glory that they possess, (*i.e.*, their talent/s is/are buried) or they do not know how to use them properly. This again comes back to the leaders of the church who do not know these things because they have not had them revealed from God. Ezekiel chapter 34 tells us that God has issues with His shepherds, (*i.e.*, church leaders) because they do not properly care for the sheep and even muddy the waters that the sheep drink. This represents human wisdom being mixed into the pure water of the Word of God. Unless we discover this seed of glory and get busy multiplying it, God will hold us accountable and may not allow us into His kingdom! Again, we glorify God by finishing the work of the ministry that God created us to do by using the *glory seed*, (*i.e.*, five-fold ministry gifts) to help bring ourselves and the whole body of Christ into perfection to grow up into Jesus, who is the head. This is how the return of Christi will occur.¹⁵

Another example of revelation and enlightenment from the glory of God is the issue of polygamy, (or really polygyny – one man having multiple wives, which has become synonymous with polygamy and we will do thus here). Most people do not understand polygamy; why God allowed it, and why He still does not have a problem with it. Most simply reject it by using a few scriptures that would seemingly stand against it without taking into account the WHOLE Bible and especially those concerning end-time events. Those who reject polygamy will not understand, without divine inspiration, what the scriptures mean in Isaiah chapter 4 that refer to a yet future situation that will force polygamy to become a reality worldwide. Most people have an issue with polygamy because they do not understand the true symbolic meaning of the marital relationship. God is going to do away with marriage when Jesus returns. So for now, marriage is symbolic of Christ coming for the church, which is His bride. After Jesus comes back, we will not be married to each other, rather we will be ‘married’ to Jesus in the kingdom of God. Jesus will have a bride composed of both Israelites and Gentiles. Thus, He will actually have more than one ‘bride’. This is why the scriptures tell us both in the Old and New Testaments that the concept of polygamy should be a non-issue.

In the end before Jesus comes back, there will be many more women than men on the earth due to World Wars and famine. This will be the situation that will ‘force’ polygamy on the earth. It is symbolically in the plan of God for this to take place, since sin came into the world through one woman and one man, and God repays seven times to the enemy for what he messes up. Therefore in the end, there will be seven righteous wives

¹⁵ THB, Jeremiah 1:4-5, Ezekiel chapter 34, Matthew 25:14-30, John 17:4 and v. 22, Romans 12:3, Ephesians 4:11-16 and 5:26

for every righteous man as a pay back to Satan. This is the ‘new thing’ that God speaks of in Isaiah 43, since the number 8 is for newness. People who are willing to accept this ‘new thing’ must forget about the former ways as God instructs in Isaiah 43. What most people do not understand is that when PROPER polygamy comes to pass, the women who ‘sow’ the sharing of their husband with other obedient, Holy Spirit-filled Christian ‘sister wives’ will reap a harvest of a deeper relationship with Christ. This is because they will be GIVING up their selfish, jealous human line of thinking and acting in order to fulfill the prophetic Word of God. God will reward them by multiplying back to these obedient, giving women, MORE of Jesus. Since the husband represents Christ, they will be sowing Jesus into the lives of the other wives in that family, and will thus reap MORE of Jesus! Only people who have revelation from the Holy Spirit will understand these types of things. Without the revelatory knowledge of God, people will be destroyed. This will become obvious during the upcoming months to years as the troubles on the earth increase dramatically. Only those who receive the deep knowledge of God and prepare by becoming perfected in Christ will escape these troubles.¹⁶

Now that we know that the glory or knowledge of the Father is the key to perfection, then we must also learn the characteristics of perfection. We need to know how those characteristics will manifest in our lives, so that we will know when we have arrived at the state of perfection in Christ.

¹⁶ THB, Genesis 4:15, Leviticus 26:14-46, Psalm 45:9, especially the NLT, Proverbs 6:30-31, 11:8 and 22:3, Isaiah chapter 4, especially the NLT and 43:16-19, Hosea 4:6, Matthew 25:1-13, Luke 24:45 and Ephesians 5:22-33; Apocrypha of the Old Testament, II Esdras 16:18-78

Chapter 23

How do we know we have reached perfection?

Trials and tribulations are what help *obedient* Christians come to rely on God for delivery from them, through the working of Jesus, the Holy Spirit and good angels. It is the process of suffering that leads this minority of people onto the path that leads to eternal life through the ‘narrow gate’ of Jesus. Unfortunately, the majority of the human population in the earth, (including many so-called Christians) is disobedient to God and headed for the ‘wide gate’ that leads to hell, and eventually eternal destruction in the lake of fire. This is the eternal, second death. Even Jesus learned obedience to God through His sufferings and these things led Him into perfection while He was in the flesh. Therefore, this same process will work for us as well. In fact it is the *only* way to get into the kingdom of heaven. No Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Jehovah’s Witness, atheist, agnostic or any other person who denies that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, (*i.e.*, God come to earth in the flesh) or anyone calling him or herself Christian but who refuses to obey God, will by any means enter into the kingdom of heaven, no matter what they believe to the contrary.¹

God chose the path that Jesus made for His people so that they would suffer *in advance* of immortality and would not make the same mistake as Lucifer, who fell from his perfection through pride. Pride, which is stealing God’s glory, is the root of *every* evil on earth. God wants His true people to be humble, which is the opposite of pride. Humility is not weakness, but rather it is *power under God’s control*. He also wants His people to learn to walk in love. Like Jesus, Christians will also suffer rejection by ungodly people. The reason that God set things up this way is so that we could experience the same feeling of rejection that God felt when Lucifer rebelled. God gave Lucifer everything, but he was still ungrateful. We need to *know* what it feels like to be *hated without a cause*. When we experience this, then we will be less likely to perpetrate such actions against God or others, as His own people rejected even Jesus. This is why Christians will suffer for doing the right thing and will get extra credit from God because of this unwarranted persecution.

Today many people who call themselves Christians reject the *true* Word of God, the way of God and especially those who preach and try to live the life in Christ. These ‘Christians’ refuse to truly obey God’s Word, especially if it says something that goes against their desires, the way of ‘mainstream’ Christianity or the way of society. We show our love for God by obeying Him, *no matter what*. We show our love for our fellow man by treating him with the respect with which we would like to be treated. As we mentioned earlier, this is the message of the cross on which Jesus died. The vertical component represents our loving relationship with God. The horizontal component represents our loving relationship with other human beings. There is no support for the horizontal component without the vertical component. That is to say, we cannot walk in love toward other human beings until we receive the love of God and learn to obey Him.

¹ THB, Psalm 34:19, Proverbs 11:8-9, 12:13, and 21, 18:10 and 24:15-16, Matthew 7:13-14, Luke 13:22-30, John 14:6, I Corinthians 6:9-11, Galatians 5:16-26, Ephesians 5:1-21, Hebrews 5:7-11, James 1:2-4, I and II Peter, I John 4:1-6 and Revelation 20:4-15 and 21:7-8

It is only through Jesus and the Holy Spirit operating in our lives that we can receive and give the love of God the Father. It is *impossible* to give away something that one does not possess. That is why it is essential to receive the love of God through Jesus *before* someone can give it away. This means that anyone who is not a *true* Christian is *incapable* of operating in the love of God toward others. Everyone will know *true* Christians by their love for one another. This is the ‘new commandment’ from Jesus, but it is a commandment of old. And this commandment is actually a calling to a *higher form of love than that of loving one’s neighbor as one’s self*. We show the love of God mostly by giving of our time and resources, especially to other true Christians. We are called to lay down our lives for *true* Christians, not *false* Christians or other non-Christians. We are actually instructed in the Bible not to share a meal with or even greet someone who calls him or herself Christian, but are deliberately disobedient to God. However, even evil people are made in the image of God and must be shown proper respect. We need the help of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in order to express true love for our fellow human beings. Therefore, the cross represents love and summarizes the entire Word of God, because *God is love*. The cross, which represents love, is the ‘*key of David*’, since King David was a man after God’s own heart. It was through King David’s bloodline that Jesus came into the earth.²

The ‘key of David’, which is true, unconditional, Godly love, as represented by the cross on which Jesus died, is the *master key*. It will unlock any ‘door’ that we need opened, and it will lock any ‘door’ that we need to lock on the devil. Satan will not be able to open the door locked with the key of David, nor will he be able to close any door opened with it, since he cannot operate in truth or love. Only those who are faithful, obedient, truthful children of God will be able to use the key of David. The 144,000, or the ‘Philadelphia Church’, will truly have the key of David and will thereby be able to get to the place that God wants them to be. As we saw earlier, these are the only people who will make it to the place of perfection in Jesus before the soon coming great tribulation. *The beginning of sorrows has already begun*. The tribulation comes *after* the beginning of sorrows and *before* the great and terrible Day of the Lord. The great tribulation will last for about three and one half years, during which time the true Christians, who are the called the Philadelphia Church, (which is the symbolic name for the 144,000) will be protected from the devil incarnate, who is the Antichrist or ‘Beast’. Even before the *great tribulation*, there will be a time of tribulation for Christians in which they will be persecuted by Muslims and all those who follow them. We do not know how long this time of tribulation will last, but it may have already begun and will probably soon escalate into the ‘great tribulation’. Christians are being persecuted and killed in greater numbers today than at any time in history, especially in Muslim oriented countries such as Nigeria.

Because of the tribulation and the great tribulation, there will be a great ‘falling away’ from the Christian faith. This is because lukewarm Christians, (which are most ‘Christians’) will not be able to tolerate such persecution. This is also why it will be a

² THB, Psalm 7:5 and 118:22, Isaiah chapter 14, 22:20-25, Ezekiel 28:11-19, Matthew 5:10-12 and Vv. 43-48, 7:12, 21:42-44 and 22:35-40, Mark 8:31, Luke 2:33-34, 7:30, 9:21-27, 17:25 and 20:17-18, John 13:34-35 and chapter 15, Acts 3:12-26, 4:11-12, 13:22-23 and Vv. 46-52 and 19:8-10, Romans 11:15, I Corinthians 5:9-13, I Peter 2:4-12 and Vv. 18-25, I John 2:3-11, 3:16 and 4:7-21, II John 4:9-10 and Revelation 3:7

'great' falling away from the Christian faith. Those who fall away will even give up their friends and family to the persecutors, in order to save their own lives. However in the long run, these self-centered cowards they will *lose their eternal lives*. This great falling away from the Christian faith will be the prelude to the great tribulation, which will be followed by the 'Day of the Lord'. Only those who have discovered the path to perfection, and are far down this path, will be taken out of harm's way before the great tribulation. Everyone who follows the Beast, or Antichrist, and the false prophet will receive the 'mark of the beast', which is likely a computer chip implanted in either the forehead or right hand. It may also be linked to a 'vaccine', or other injection, which will change a person's DNA. This 'mark' will be touted to give a form of immortality apart from Jesus. That is why God will reject those people, because they rejected the Son of God and accepted the lie for a technological solution to sickness and death. All the people who receive the mark of the beast will eventually end up in the lake of fire, which is the second or permanent death. All true Christians who die in the tribulation will rest in paradise until the first resurrection at Jesus' return, and then they will be granted immortality. ***It is therefore imperative that all true Christians refuse to receive the mark of the beast, (including any so-called 'vaccines') even if it means they will be imprisoned, tortured or killed, otherwise they too will end up in the lake of fire.***³

As we saw previously, Jesus outlined the path to perfection in Matthew chapters 5-7. It is necessary that we learn the characteristics of true Christians and how to discern whether or not they have made it to the place of perfection. The most important characteristic of someone who has achieved perfection is *obedience* to God. When someone is perfectly obedient to God, then they will walk just as Jesus walked. These true Christians will *suffer* in order to learn this obedience. As we mentioned, even Jesus suffered in order to reach perfection. It is by obedience to God, through Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit, that we become righteous or right with God. People who reach perfection in Christ will *always* do the right thing. They will do whatever Jesus tells them to do, that is to say, they will 'follow the Lamb wherever He goes'.⁴

Perfected Christians will be *patient*. Patience is the first and most important characteristic of love. Since God is love, then someone who has been perfected in Christ will have all the characteristics of love, such as patience or *long suffering*. Also, they will be *kind* even while they are being patient. They will *persevere* because they will have suffered throughout their lives at the hands of the antichrist spirit and from the direct rebukes of God. They will have learned from these sufferings to *obey* God. The power endowed knowledge of God, (*i.e.*, glory) along with the wisdom of Jesus and understanding from the Holy Spirit, will guide them successfully in ways that others with apparently similar knowledge are unable to achieve. Perfected Christians will patiently wait on God for deliverance. They will not be jealous, envious or parade themselves in front of others. They will not be proud or puffed up from their superior knowledge of God, but rather will be humbly submitted to God. They will not behave rudely or seek to have their own way. Perfected Christians will not be touchy or easily provoked. They will

³ THB, Psalm chapter 91, Daniel 12:11-12, Joel chapters 1-3, Matthew 10:16-42, 16:24-28 and 24:3-29, Luke 9:23-27 and 17:20-37, John 20:25-26, II Thessalonians 2:3-12, I John 2:18, Revelation 3:7-22, 12:6, chapter 13, 14:9-13, chapters 15-16, chapter 20 and 21:7-8

⁴ THB, Psalm chapter 15 and 24:3-5, Matthew chapter 5-7, John 14:15 and 15:9-17, Romans 6:16, II Timothy 3:12, I Peter 2:19-25, Hebrews 5:8-9, I John 1:3-11 and 4:7-21 and Revelation 3:10 and 14:4

think no evil and will not rejoice in iniquity, but will rejoice in the truth. They will bear all things, believe all things from God, hope all things and endure all things. They will never fail before God, even if they do not appear successful in the natural realm. These characteristics are developed through trials, tribulations and sufferings, even for doing the right thing. Perfected Christians will be full of the joy of the Lord through Jesus and unlike Job, *will rejoice in ALL situations*, whether any given situation appears to go in their favor or not. They will know that eventually God will work ALL things out in their eternal favor. *Because of their patient perseverance, Jesus will spare perfected Christians from the great tribulation.*⁵

Perfected Christians will *always speak the truth*. However, they will do so in a loving way. This does not mean that they will speak with a ‘wimpy’ voice. They will speak in their normal voice. Usually, they will speak gently, but not always. For example, if a child is running into the street and is about to be hit by a car, the loving parent who sees this will likely scream at the top of their voice for that child to get out of the street. Sometimes we need to be stern with those we love. Perfected Christians will ALWAYS keep their word *even if it hurts them to do so*. They will never speak an evil word against another human, especially in the form of a ‘joke’. This does not mean they will never hurt or offend someone, especially when they are attempting to correct or rebuke someone who is out of order. They will rebuke people who are out of God’s order because they love them. It will be their pleasure to speak about the things of God. They will not shy away from sharing with others what Jesus has done for them and what they have learned from Him. They will not fear what others will think of them when they speak the Word of God. They will know that death and life are in the power of the tongue and they will endeavor only to give power to the kingdom of light with what they say and eliminate wrong sayings or idle words from their speech.⁶

Perfected Christians will *give* without any second thought. They will know that *true love* is shown by sacrificial GIVING. They will know the law of ‘seedtime and harvest’ and that anything we sow will be multiplied back to us as a harvest. Though sometimes this varies, the harvest will usually be every seed after its kind, (e.g., time for time, money for money, forgiveness for forgiveness, mercy for mercy, etc.). This is why it is more blessed to give than to receive, because God will *always multiply* the seed we sow back to us. Perfected Christians will give of their time, knowledge, material belongings and money to others, even to their enemies, but especially to other obedient Christians. They will do this because of a deep internal desire to obey and serve God. This is *living faith* shown by their acts or ‘works’ of love. *Giving and treating other people, as we would like to be treated is how we show true, Godly love*. Perfected Christians will be justified in God’s eyes because of this faith-filled lifestyle of giving. They will give even to their enemies and pay them proper respect. In other words, perfected Christians will *love their enemies*. Perfected Christians will even lend their enemies money and will *not*

⁵ THB, Job chapters 1-2, Psalm chapters 27, 37 and 144, Habakkuk chapter 2, Matthew 5:11-12, Luke 6:22-23, John 15:11, Romans 8:18-39 and 15:1-4, I Corinthians 13:4-8, II Corinthians 6:3-10, Philippians 4:4, Colossians 1:24, I Thessalonians 5:16, I Timothy 1:3-17, II Timothy 4:6-18, James 1:2-3 and v. 12 and 5:7-12, I Peter 1:3-16, 2:18-25, 4:1-3 and Vv. 12-19, I John 1:4, Revelation 2:3, 3:10 and 9-10

⁶ THB, Psalm 15:2-4, Proverbs 18:21 and 26:18-19, Matthew 10:32-33 and 12:33-37, Luke 12:8-12, I Corinthians 13:6, II Corinthians 4:2, Ephesians 4:15 and 5:4, I Timothy 2:7, James 3:1-2 and Revelation 3:19

expect repayment! Though they will not flaunt the fact that they live a life of giving or tell people about their good deeds, they will not be ashamed to have their deeds exposed, since the actions of these 'born again' Christians will only be motivated from a heart of love. They will likely dedicate *all* that they earn and *all* their finances to God, not just ten percent. They will have no debt. As they will know that borrowing from 'Babylon' is the opposite of patience and love. Again, they will often be able to acquire wealth from all kinds of hidden sources, (such as casinos and lotteries, etc.) which other Christians will have no part in, due to their poor understanding of scripture and God's ways. Perfected Christians will know that the way to be truly great in the kingdom of God is to become a servant, and even a slave, to everyone. They will never repay evil for evil, but will overcome evil with good.⁷

Perfected Christians will be *solid in the Lord*. They will not be double-minded and flip back and forth like a wave of the ocean tossed by the wind. Their yes will be yes and their no will be no, because they will be able to make up their minds and then stick with their decision, unless God tells them otherwise. *Again, if they say something, they will do it, even if it hurts them.* They will be reliable and willing to sacrifice of themselves and their desires to put the needs of others ahead of their own. *Perfected Christians will not complain about anything.* With the help of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, they will have complete control of their tongues. Everything they say will come from a pure heart. They will have *the mind of Christ*, always operating in *Godly wisdom*. They will never operate with the satanic wisdom of the world, which stems from bitter envy and selfishness. They will also only operate in the understanding and knowledge of God. They will not care to be rich, though some will be.

Perfected Christians will be content with whatever God gives them at any given time. Money and this world's trappings will be irrelevant to them, since they will view money as only a tool that is necessary to do the work of God. *They will not worry about anything.* God will always provide for them, since they will be focused on the kingdom of heaven rather than the material things of this world. Perfected Christians will ALWAYS be thankful, even if things do not go their way, since they will know that God will eventually turn things in their favor, if they are patient. They will not mind the fiery trials that God tests them with. They will wait patiently on the Lord, praying, proclaiming and believing for their circumstances to change. They will be *holy*, because God their true Father is holy. They will be *peacemakers* and gentle but firm in their approach to teaching the Word of God.

With perfected Christians, there will be *no compromise* concerning the Word of God. Though they operate in this world, they will keep themselves unspotted from the world. God will protect them from Satan, because they abide in Jesus and obey His every command. Jesus said that He would make them pillars in the temple of God, which is the Christian church. Therefore, they will become the leaders of the end-time Church of God, because *God* will place them in their position, not because they are popular among people.

⁷ THB, Genesis 1:12 and 8:22, Job 4:8, Proverbs 19:17 and 22:8, Isaiah 23:17-18, Hosea 10:12, Habakkuk 2:4, Matthew 5:7 and Vv. 43-48, 18:1-5, 19:16-30, 20:20-28 and chapter 23, Mark 9:35 and 10:17-31, Luke 6:27-38, John 3:1-21 and 15:12-14, Acts 20:35, Romans 1:16-17 and 12:9-21, I Corinthians chapter 13, II Corinthians 9:6, Galatians 3:11 and 6:6-10, I Timothy chapter 5, Hebrews 10:32-39, James 2:14-26 and I John 3:14-20

In fact their teachings will go *against* the mainstream of Christianity and will be UNPOPULAR among many the people.

Perfected Christians will know what their spiritual and ministry gifts are and will know how to operate in these gifts in order to glorify God by doing the work He created them to do. When they ask God for something in Jesus name, then God will give it to them, if it is according to His will. They will never be disappointed if God decides against their request, since they know God *always* knows best. They will know the principle that God is a God of *inconsistency*, and that ‘intermittent positive reinforcement’ is the most powerful tool in God’s arsenal to shape the behavior of His children. Even modern psychologists have discovered this human trait. Therefore, they will NOT expect a reward every time they are obedient to God. Perfected Christians will always submit their will to the will of God. Every day will be the same for them. Every day will be a ‘Sabbath’ to them, because they will give up their way in order to follow the path of righteousness in Christ and will have entered into the ‘rest’ of God. They will always choose to do God’s ‘thing’ instead of their own. They will know that *faith is truth* and that *living faith* is shown by believing the truth of God and *acting* according to that truth.⁸

Perfected Christians will *never get sick*, though they may have overcome many illnesses on their path to perfection. They will know the *truth about healing* is that all sickness comes from God as a means of chastisement of His beloved children that God uses to try to get His people who are out of order to come to Him and move away from evil. God brings blessings as a reward for obedience and curses, including sickness, for punishment of rebellion. They will know that the most important thing to God in the earth is the restoration of *order*. Living according to the complete order of God is what separates the children of God from the children of the devil. This order is the manifestation of God’s love in the earth by living in Jesus Christ. Sickness is a natural sign that something is out of order in that person’s life. Since they will live according to the perfect order of God, perfected Christians will be exempt from sickness and even death. They will know that *suffering is the key to obedience* to God. They will rejoice in the midst of suffering, since they know that God will turn their sorrow into joy and their tears into laughter, as they overcome the devil. They will know that our strength comes in the joy of the Lord, through Jesus. They will know that the order in the kingdom of God is first *righteousness*, through obedience in Christ, then *peace* from Jesus and finally strength in the *joy* of the Lord, as a result of the first two. In this regard, once they have given thanks and God has blessed it, they will eat or drink anything they want in moderation, knowing by faith in God’s Word, that there is nothing that will harm them. Though they will suffer for doing the right thing, they will know that this process is part of God’s plan. Often that persecution will come from relatives and friends. This is why Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus. Again, it is important to God that ALL of His children know the feeling of being hated without a cause, as this is because that is what God experienced when Lucifer perpetrated his great evil in the rebellion against God. Once we

⁸ THB, Psalm 24:3-4, chapters 34, 37, 73 and 91, Isaiah 40:27-30 and chapter 58, Matthew 5:8-12 and Vv. 33-37, 6:10 and Vv. 13 and 25-34, 7:24-27, 19:16-22 and 26:36-42, Luke 11:2, 12:22-34 and 17:5-10, John 13:31-38 and chapters 14-17, Romans 1:16-17 and 8:28, I Corinthians chapter 12, 13:11-12, Galatians 2:20 and 3:11, Ephesians 4:11-16, Philippians 2:1-16 and 4:3-20, I Thessalonians 5:12-22, II Thessalonians 3:3, II Timothy chapter 2, Hebrews 10:28, James 1:5-8 and Vv. 19-27 and chapter 3, I Peter 1:3-25 and 3:8-22, I John 5:13-15 and Revelation 3:12

experience this feeling, then we will be unwilling to want to do the same thing that Lucifer did, because he did not appreciate all that God had done for him. When we have developed this understanding and appreciation, then God can change our circumstances into more favorable ones, as we will be unlikely to rebel when we receive our reward.⁹

Perfected Christians will always *choose* to forgive people. They will know the *power of forgiveness*. If we forgive people, then God will forgive us. Not only that but the process of CHOOSING to forgive everyone who comes against us, even our enemies, will set us free. Holding on to bitterness and unforgiveness is probably the number one root of chronic illness in the world. Forgiving someone for ANY wrong will open the door for us to become like God, since He chose to forgive us through Jesus. If we do not forgive, then our prayers will not be answered. If we DO choose to forgive, then God will send power into our lives.¹⁰

Perfected Christians will understand and operate within the *order of the government of God*. They will *know* their place in the kingdom and *they will stay in the place that God established them*, which is contrary to what Lucifer did. They will know the symbolism of everything in the earth. They will understand that the family order is symbolic of the order of God's kingdom. This is why it is important for husbands to love their wives as Christ loves the church. This is because the husband is symbolic of Christ regarding the church. The husband is the head of the wife, just as Christ is the head of the church, which is the body of Christ. The wife must submit to the husband and be subject to him in *everything*, and if she does not do this, then she is going against the order of God and will suffer accordingly. If the husband lords it over the wife, then God will chasten him. Perfected Christians will understand this principle and will obey the commandments of God willingly and without complaint. They will bring up their children in the ordinances of God and will teach them from birth the order of God. Perfect Christians will understand the sanctity of marriage and that it is only *symbolic* of the joining of Christ with the church. That is why sexual intercourse is reserved for husband and wife/wives within the confines of marriage, since it represents Christ coming for His bride, the church. This is also why the devil wants to pervert sex. Therefore, perfected Christians will not partake in, or find acceptable, adultery, fornication, gay and lesbian relationships, or pornography. They will understand that it is sometimes better *not* to be married or even desirable for a husband to have a wife and a woman to have one husband. However, they will also understand through the scriptures that God has shown it acceptable and even part of God's end-time plan for His church for one man to have more than one wife *at the same time*. This form of 'polygamy' is *directed by God Himself*, as it symbolizes the love of *one Christ* for *different peoples*. It also is a prelude to the end-time events in which so many men will be killed in the upcoming worldwide wars, that there will be many more women than men. It will then become necessary for one man to have multiple wives, in particular at least *seven righteous wives for every one righteous man*. This will

⁹ THB, Deuteronomy chapter 28 and 32:39, Nehemiah 8:10, Esther 9:20-22, Job chapter 42, Psalm chapters 30, 38, 39, 43 and 55, Proverbs 3:7-8, Isaiah chapter 61, Jeremiah 31:7-14, Lamentations chapter 3, Micah chapter 6, Matthew 9:1-8, Mark 16:17-18, John 11:25-26, 15:18-27 and 16:19-33, Acts 10:9-16, Romans 14:14-23, I Corinthians 11:12, Colossians 2:6-23, I Timothy 4:1-11, Hebrews 11:5-6 and 12:5-13 and I John chapter 3

¹⁰ THB, Matthew 5:43-48 and 18:21-35, Mark 11:22-25, Luke 23:33-34 and John 5:1-15, chapter 9 and 20:21-22

not be born out of the lustful desire on the part of men, which is against the order of God, but will come about, by the design of God in order to symbolically repay the devil seven times over for bringing sin into the world through one woman. This will be the *'new thing'* that God speaks of bringing into the earth in the end of days. As we mentioned previously, eight is the number of new things or newness, thus seven women plus one man is eight, which is the *'new thing'* that God spoke of through the prophet Isaiah. The perfected Christian will accept this as being part of the plan of God and will understand that the end-time move of God in the earth will be spearheaded by women and that this polygamous arrangement is *necessary* for this move to take place. However, these obedient women of God will *not* operate in the Jezebel spirit of control, which is out of order to the government of God. They will be completely submissive to their husband and to one another in the love of God. The entire family will walk according to God's commands. There will be no jealousy between wives or children. There will be no discord, but all will live in peace. This is why there is currently such a controversy over polygamy in the earth, especially in developed countries. Satan knows that this too is a part of the end-time plan of God and will do *anything* to pervert and prevent it from coming to fruition. *Even the major Christian leaders around the world do not understand this mystery of God.* However, perfected Christians will not only understand and accept this principle as the truth, but they will willingly receive it as *necessary* in order to complete the work of God in the earth before Christ can return! This particular truth will be one of several things that will offend Christians who are NOT going to make it to the place of perfection. These offended people will deny that this is the truth of God that only comes through revelatory knowledge from the Father and will NOT escape the great tribulation that is soon to come upon the entire earth.

However, perfected Christians will also honor and obey all authority that God has placed into their lives, especially the governing laws of the land in which they live, unless it conflicts with God's directives. Perfected Christians will NOT disobey the laws of the land, unless those laws come against the order and commands of God, or there is no harm in doing so, knowing that those laws are made for disobedient people. They will accept into the Church of God any man who has multiple wives and wishes to receive Christ. Perfected Christians will allow these men to keep their families intact and will not endeavor to destroy them for the sake of a false gospel. It must be made clear once again that the end-time event of polygamy prophesied in Isaiah will come about in its fullness as a result of major changes in the earth from apocalyptic destruction and will be accepted by the women who wish to serve Jesus and love according to His new commandment.¹¹

¹¹ THB, Genesis 4:15 and V. 24, 25:1-18, Genesis 32:22, Leviticus 4:13-21, 8:10-11, chapters 14 and 16, 18:18 and 26:14-46, Numbers 19:4, Joshua chapter 6, II Samuel 5:13-16 and 20:3, I Kings 11:1-4, II Kings chapter 5, I Chronicles 2:18-55 and 5:1-2, II Chronicles 11:20-23, Psalm 12:6, 45:6-9, especially the NLT and 119:164, Proverbs 6:30-31, 22:6 and 24:15-16, Song of Solomon 6:8-9, Isaiah chapter 4, especially the NLT, 30:18-33 and 43:14-28, esp. V. 19, Matthew 18:21-22, Luke 17:1-4, John 13:34, Romans 12:9-21 and chapter 13, I Corinthians chapter 7, 11:1-16 and 14:26-40, Ephesians 4:15-1 and chapters 5-6, Colossians 1:15-23, 2:19 and 3:18-25, I Timothy 1:6-11 and 3:1-13, especially the NLT, Titus chapters 2-3, James 5:13-18, I Peter chapters 2-3 and 5:1-11, II Peter chapter 2 and Jude; Apocrypha of the Old Testament, II Esdras 16:18-34

Perfected Christians will be highly efficient and will endeavor not to waste anything. Though they may not have a great deal of power from God, they will use *everything* God gives them wisely. Even when it *appears* that they do not have enough, God will supernaturally supply *more* than enough for them to be successful and feed God's people in *any* situation.¹²

Finally, perfected Christians will have *no fear* of anything or anyone, except the *fear of the Lord*. They will know the authority that they walk in, through Jesus and the Holy Spirit. No devil will be able to stand against them, because these perfected people will be humbly submitted to God. They will not be afraid of the devil, he will be afraid of them. These perfected people will walk in power. They will be able to get people healed, delivered from the bondage of the enemy and will lack nothing. They will be able to teach people how to *get out* and *stay out of trouble* as well. They will be able to teach people the path to perfection, since they themselves have successfully walked this narrow path that leads to life everlasting in the kingdom of God. Whatever God calls them to do, they will be empowered by Him to accomplish. ***Just like Jesus, perfected Christians will bring glory to God by finishing the work He sent them here to earth to do.***¹³

¹² THB, I Kings 17:1-7 and Matthew 14:14-21 and 15:29-39

¹³ THB, Job 28:28, Psalm 19:9 and 111:10, Proverbs 1:7, 9:10, 10:27, 14:26-27, 15:16 and V. 33, 16:6, 19:23, 22:4, 23:17, Isaiah 11:1-5, 33:6, Matthew 10:7-8 and V. 28, Mark 16:15-20, Luke 10:19, John 17:4, Acts 5:12-16 and 9:31 and James 4:7-10

Chapter 24

What is the bottom line?

The bottom line is that God created humans so that some of them could be developed into replacements for the one third of angels He lost from His heavenly family as a result of Lucifer's rebellion. There is a heaven where God dwells and there is a hell where the fallen Lucifer, now known as Satan, rules. Those people who truly receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior will eventually be granted immortality. Then they will be changed to become like the angels when Jesus comes back, at the time of the first resurrection, (a.k.a., the 'rapture'). All those who reject this way into God's kingdom, which is the *only* certain way to enter, will end up in hell when they die and will eventually be cast into the lake of fire. These rebellious people will be destroyed *permanently*, following the second resurrection and the great white throne judgment, (*i.e.*, Judgment Day) at the end of the thousand-year reign of Jesus and His saints after His return. Though many people mock this truth, it is reality and *will* come to pass just as God has said and there is nothing they can do to stop it, as it is God's plan.¹

Between now and the imminent return of Jesus within the next few years, it will be necessary for true Christians to become 'perfected' in Jesus in order to escape the great tribulation, which will come at the hands of the Antichrist, and the judgment of God that follows during the Day of the Lord. The Antichrist will essentially be the devil incarnate. He will outwardly be somehow connected with Islam, though he may even claim to be Christian, but will really only want his own agenda and will care nothing for any god. He will become aligned with China, Russia and Islamic people around the world in order to add to his military power. He will be aided by a false prophet who will profess Christianity, but will *not* be a Christian, but who will lead many Christians who are unaware of this prophecy astray. This conglomerate 'beast' will attack the United States and most likely all other American allies, especially Israel. When these things happen, the Christian church at large will be persecuted in a way that has never been seen until then, and never will be again. This will be the great tribulation and it is going to happen soon.

There will be great changes in the natural environment which will take a large toll in human life as well. But, before all these things take place though, the price of provisions will come down and then go up again, (which appears to have already happened) and there will be many more conglomerate changes in the world's economy to force everyone who wants to buy or sell to receive the implanted computer chip or injection in either their right hand or forehead, which is the 'mark of the beast'. Just when people think that there will be peace, then natural disasters, wars, famines and plagues will suddenly increase dramatically to the point that few will survive. Only perfected Christians will be exempted and protected. There will be 144,000 men, (not counting women and children) taken out of harm's way initially, then later multitudes will follow. Following the great tribulation, there will be dynamic natural disasters and meteor strikes to the earth that will

¹ THB, Isaiah 14:12-15, Luke 10:18 and 16:19-31, John 14:6, Jude and Revelation 12:3-4, 7-9 and 20:7-15

wipe out much of the earth's population. When God's judgment on the earth from the 'Day of the Lord' is complete, Jesus will come back.²

All true Christians who die between now and the return of Christ will rest in paradise until He comes back. *Dying in Christ will perfect them.* They will then be raised in the first resurrection and granted immortality. *Those who do not want to die or suffer needlessly during the great tribulation need to become perfected in Christ before then.* This perfection is *not* optional. God expects it of us and will require it before Jesus can come back. It will be through suffering persecution that Christians will learn obedience to God. It is then through perfect obedience to God that they will become right with God, through Jesus. Jesus set the example for this perfected state. Through Jesus, God tells us that He *expects* us to be perfect, even as He is perfect. He will accept nothing less. As the end of time as we know it draws near, moving into the place of perfection in Christ Jesus is not only *desirable* so that we can gain eternal life, but will be *necessary for survival during the soon coming great tribulation.* God *requires* perfection and He made a way for it through His Son Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit and His glorious, revelatory knowledge and He has already given at least a 'glory seed' in the form of ministry gifts to His children, so they can use them properly to do His will and to glorify Him. Now is the time for us to lay hold of perfection in this life, before it is too late. There is a difference between being saved and being spared the great tribulation. Amen.³

² THB, Daniel chapters 7-12, Matthew chapter 24, Mark chapter 13, Luke chapter 21 and Revelation chapters 6-22; Apocrypha of the Old Testament, the book of II Esdras, esp. chapter 16

³ THB, Luke 13:32 and 23:43, John 11:25, Romans 8:35-39, II Corinthians 12:2-4, Ephesians chapter 4 and 5:27, Hebrews 5:8-9 and 10:11-18, James 5:7-12, I Peter 2:18-25, I John 2:5 and 4:12-21 and Revelation 3:10, 6:9-11, 14:13, 19:7-16 and 20:1-6

Appendix A

About the author and this book

Dr. Raymond D. Mossie is an American Board Certified *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon* and a born again Christian teacher of the Bible. Though God called and saved him as a child, he initially resisted God and became the ‘prodigal son’. After spending much of his life in error regarding the things of God, he was captured again by Jesus several years ago. Since that time, he was baptized in the Holy Spirit and God began to raise him up in His Word. God has revealed many things directly to Dr. Mossie and commanded that this book be written for this ‘end-of-the-age’ generation. This book contains the essence of many of the teachings that God has given directly to Dr. Mossie down through the years. Though Dr. Mossie has learned many things from other Christian teachers, he has in recent years been led by the Holy Spirit in a direction that is away from mainstream Christianity. God did this in order to correct errors in the doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ at large. Anyone who wishes to escape the troubles that lie just ahead for those who dwell on the Earth would do well to heed the words in this book. Dr. Mossie also has a series of teachings from the Lord which contain further detailed practical information to help true Christians grow into perfection in Christ and are freely available from the website or upon request.



You are hereby authorized to freely use this complete book for any Christian teaching, but may not alter it in any format. May you be blessed as you read these revelations of God. Amen!

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