

In
Search
of
Truth

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About the author:

Gerhard Barnardo was born a child of missionary parents and grew up in the Northern Free State. He became an electro-technical engineer after having studied at the University of Pretoria. Adding an Honors as well as a Masters Degree to his record, he worked as a senior lecturer at the University of Potchefstroom before he went to work for the (then) Armament Corporation of SA. A few years later, at the age of 31, he became a full professor in electrical engineering at the University of Potchefstroom. Shortly after this, he accepted a position in Armscor's management team which was to establish the Overberg Missile Test Range, and he and his family moved to the Western Cape town of Bredasdorp in 1985.

In 1989 the Lord called him into His fulltime service. For the next 18 years up to the present time the Lord then sustained both him and his family in what can only be described as a miraculous way. During all this time the Lord never allowed His servant to take up any form of employment again, thereby to provide for his family. This left the family with no personally generated income whatsoever. The Lord, however, during that same period, physically made true what He had said: "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' for after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Even for the studies of all four their children the Lord miraculously provided.

The main emphasis of what the Lord intended to do through His servant was reaffirmed time after time, and that was to teach God's word. "Feed My sheep." For this purpose the Lord gave him the opportunity and the command to 'study the Word'. This was to be done according to God's instructions, and not according to theological manuals - only as the Spirit directed and taught.

The content of this book represents the core of what the Lord, during these 18 years, has taught His servant.

Foreword:

When His disciples asked Jesus why He spoke in parables, His answer was: "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear."

Beloved reader, my prayer is that it has been given to you to understand the mysteries of the kingdom!

This book is intended for such who honestly seek the truth, because unto them it shall be fulfilled what Jesus said: "He who seeks shall find."

Unto those, however, who do not receive the love of the truth, because they only seek to reaffirm their own preconceived ideas and established interests, thereby rejecting anything contrary to these out of hand, it shall be fulfilled as it is written: "And for this reason, God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness".

The reader is therefore admonished in the love of Christ, to honestly study what is written in this book, doing what the Bereans did: 'Searching the Scriptures' from Genesis to Revelation, seeking the harmony and the symphony of God's word affirming and reaffirming itself from all sides.

Lastly, because constant referrals to Scriptures can become very tedious and tiresome, Scripture references as part of the text are rarely supplied. All relevant Scriptures will however be found in the Appendix at the back of the book. These will be arranged under every relevant heading in a sequential fashion. The interested reader is encouraged to seriously study these.

1 Introduction

1.1 Why this Book?

"For the time will come when they will not put up with sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables" 2 Tim 4:3-4

"But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, . . . fulfill your ministry." 2 Tim 4:5

"Beloved, . . . I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed . . ." Jude :3,4

"Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. And also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." Acts 20:28-32

"And do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Rom 12:2

1.2 More about Truth

Jesus said: "I AM the . . . Truth . . ."

And: "Your word is truth"

If the pursuit of 'truth' is dealt with in the manner of an academic, cognitive exercise, we remain at the place where God Himself confounds the wisdom of the wise and where the so-called 'truth' will lead to pride, judgment, the letter of the law, and death. However, by truly submitting to our Lord Jesus as the Life and the Way of our pursuit, we will find that the truth shall set us free.

Jesus and what He has taught us should be the compass and authority, and not the tradition of men. (See Mat. 15:6,9 and Mark 7:9,13). We MUST approach this venture prayerfully and humbly before our God, requesting Him to guide us into all truth, and in all honesty being willing to submit to the truth He shows us, rather than to our prejudice!

1.3 What does Jesus have to say concerning Theological Tradition?

"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in." Mat 23:13

"Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered." Luke 11:52

"But My people do not know the requirements of the Lord. How can you say, 'We are wise, for we have the law of the Lord,' when actually the lying pen of the scribes has handled it falsely? The wise will be put to shame; they will be dismayed and trapped. Since they have rejected the word of the Lord, what kind of wisdom do they have?" Jer 8:7-9

"O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and vain babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge - by professing it, some have strayed concerning the faith."
1 Tim 6:20,21

"All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition."

". . . making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do."

Mark 7:9, 13

MAY THE LORD DIRECT OUR HEARTS AND MINDS INTO THE TRUTH AND SET US FREE !

2 The Most Important Thing

The MOST important thing for any man or woman is TO BE RECONCILED TO GOD!

- And for this to happen, man must first of all discover that God IS - that He is the almighty, omnipotent, omnipresent Creator of all things!
- And Who His Son, Jesus, is - the Christ, the King of kings, and the Savior of the world!
- AND that He is GOOD and will NEVER show ANYBODY away who comes to Him in their need; faithfully trusting Him and putting their hope in Him! {FAITH}
- And THEN, knowing this, to willingly and eagerly decide to become a disciple of Jesus: to come to Him; to submit to Him as both Lord and Saviour; to receive new, eternal, spirit life and forgiveness of sins from Him; and to turn your back on your old life! {REPENTANCE}
- And THEN to ratify and formalize this covenant relationship with Jesus by being baptized in His name! {BAPTISM}
- And THEN to learn to do everything that He has commanded (and commands) us to do and to follow Him wherever He may lead! {RIGHTEOUSNESS}
- AND to live the rest of your life for Him and with Him, in His presence, as HIS exclusive property! He will henceforth ALWAYS be with you; He KNOWS those who are HIS! {HOLINESS}

BECAUSE:

- Man in his natural state is at enmity with God and does not know Him.
- Whereas God, in His mercy and grace, intends to save ALL the world and ALL of creation from their sin and misery, and from the bondage of death and corruption, when Jesus Christ will presently take over as the Ruler of the earth in the coming Kingdom of God!
- And He has invited some of us to inherit kingship together with Him, and to share His glory and His presence into all eternity!
- And in order to attain to that, including to attain to the resurrection from the dead and to receive a glorious resurrection body like Jesus, we NEED to do ALL the above with real purpose and dedication. We need to receive eternal life from the Lord Jesus by faith, and we need to live our lives in a manner that will cause us, at the end of it, to be deemed by the Lord to have 'overcome' - that is, to be counted worthy to inherit the Kingdom of God!
- Oh, how great is the mercy of God Who has made the way for us to be reconciled to Him through the death and resurrection of Jesus! And Who has destined us for eternal glory and grace! And Who has sent the Holy Spirit that we might be enabled to live the kind of life we are supposed to live in order to overcome!

It is the purpose of this book to expand on the above and to help us along our way to ultimate victory.

All honor and glory to God our Father and to our Lord, Jesus Christ!

3 The Kingdom of God

3.1 Introduction

The words in a popular song say: "The oldest dream is peace on earth. I know it's not too late . . ."

Yes, it most certainly is not too late! The Kingdom of God IS coming! For two thousand years all Christians have been praying, "Let Thy Kingdom come" and for two thousand years before that the nation of Israel's great prayer was for the Messiah to come. Certainly God has not only created these prayers in the hearts of His faithful, but He is surely going to answer them.

The Kingdom of God is at hand and when it has come the following will be the state of affairs:

- Jesus, who is the Christ, will reign supreme over planet Earth as God's Anointed King of the ages.
- Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end.
- The Overcomers of all ages will rule and reign with Him and together they will form the 'Government' of the universe into all eternity.
- These overcomers will be those who were counted worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead.
- Together with Jesus they will have received resurrected, spiritual, glorious bodies, endowed with super abilities. They shall be like Him.
- They shall be kings with Jesus, Who shall be the King of the kings.
- They shall rule as a heavenly 'super'government.
- On earth, as an earthly, natural government, the restored nation of Israel shall rule the earth as the world government.
- The earth shall be restored.
- There will be absolute peace on earth.
- Earth shall be a place of joy.
- The wolf shall dwell with the lamb.
- The lion shall eat straw like the ox.
- The child shall play by the cobra's hole, with no fear or danger.
- Righteousness shall prevail.
- Evildoers shall be cut off.
- The wicked shall be no more. In fact, you will look diligently for his place, but it shall be no more.
- Those who are blessed by Him shall have inherited the earth as an eternal inheritance, whilst those who are cursed by Him shall have been destroyed.
- The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord and of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.
- No one shall teach his neighbour, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all shall know Him, from the least of them to the greatest of them.
- Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father
- God's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.
- God's name shall be hallowed on earth as it is in heaven.

After 1000 years, Satan will be released from prison for a short period in which he will once again deceive the nations to rebel against God's instituted world government, namely the nation of Israel. They shall proceed to attack Israel, which, having no weapons at their disposal, shall be at the mercy of the masses attacking them. At this point God will intervene with fire from heaven and destroy all these rebels.

Having completed His plans and purposes on this earth, the present earth and heavens will be replaced by a New Earth and New Heavens. The new heavens will be populated by all remaining spirit beings, whilst the new earth will be populated by all remaining human, natural beings. God Himself, together with Jesus Christ and His Overcomers, will inhabit the New Jerusalem which will be established as the Capital of the New Earth. The new earth will in all reality be the power centre of the universe.

Thus the new earth will be populated by the following:

- The New Jerusalem, inhabited by God the Father, and the Lamb and His Bride (which is the overcomers).
- Israel, still being the World Government in the natural sphere.
- Everybody who have refused to rebel against Israel at the end of the Millennium.
- Animals and plants of all kinds.

On the New Earth man will procreate to 'thousands of generations'.

In addition to that, the following will be the case:

- No more death.
- Nor sorrow.
- Nor crying.
- No more pain.
- God will wipe away every tear.
- All things will be new.
- Satan, and all his angels (including the Antichrist, the False Prophet, Death, and Hades), and all his followers, as well as the 'cowardly,' the 'unbelieving,' the 'abominable,' 'murderers,' 'sexually immoral,' 'sorcerers,' 'idolaters,' and all 'liars' shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death, and thus shall do NO further harm or mischief.
- The nations of those who are saved shall walk in the light of the New Jerusalem, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honor into it.
- Out of the New Jerusalem shall flow a pure river of water of life, carrying leaves from the Tree of Life for the healing of the nations.

3.2 More about the GOOD NEWS of the Kingdom of God

God has determined that MAN shall reign on earth. However, when man fell into sin, he came under the power of Satan, which has ever since resulted in Satan effectively being the god of this world, and his kingdom of darkness effectively being the world rulers of the darkness of this age. This left man in misery. Because sin entered the world, so also did corruption, futility, sickness, pain and death. Evil forces run amuck and cause all manner of atrocities. Truth has fallen by the wayside. The bigger part of life, which inevitably ends in death and parting of loved ones, is trouble and sorrow. There seems to be no let up of wickedness and unrighteousness prevailing and, in fact, flourishing.

Who will save mankind from this wretchedness?

The answer is: THE MESSIAH! He will establish God's Kingdom on earth and save Israel from their enemies!

Jesus, the CHRIST, IS the promised MESSIAH who will save not only Israel, but also ALL THE WORLD! And this will be effected when He establishes His Kingdom on earth, known as the Kingdom of God, or alternatively, as the Kingdom of Heaven.

In order for this to be done correctly, the Messiah had to be a MAN, born from a woman. And this God perfected by His Son becoming a man, named Jesus, Who went ahead and defeated Satan in his wickedness and lies by His righteousness and truth. And, having been put to death illegally, He conquered death and rose from the dead in a new life which He will give to everyone He wants to, thereby granting life and immortality to all His loved ones. (Behold, old things have passed away; now all things have become new!).

But, even more than this, He has taken away Satan's power over mankind, and at the proper time He will, as a Man, take over the rule and reign of this earth. And then the WHOLE earth will be saved through Him, and EVERYBODY on earth will know Him and worship Him and be blessed by Him.

Furthermore, He never intended to rule and reign in the form of a one-man dictatorship! Therefore He has decreed that, 'those who overcome will sit with Him on His throne, just as He overcame and has sat down with His Father on His throne.' This, then, is the prize awaiting those who successfully complete the race and enters

through the narrow gate - co-regency as well as eternal fellowship and intimacy with Jesus Christ! As Paul puts it: "I count all things as rubbish, that I may gain Christ. Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." And: "... the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing".

3.3 The Gospel of the Kingdom of God

According to Scripture, there is but ONE gospel, and we will find that this is repeatedly called the 'Gospel of the Kingdom of God'. (e.g. Mat 3:1,2 ; 4:17 ; 4:23 ; 10:7 ; Mark 1:14,15 ; Luke 4:43 ; Acts 8:12 ; 20:24,25 ; 28:30,31)

In the great prayer Jesus taught us, we are called upon to pray that God be hallowed on this earth as in heaven; that His will be done on this earth as in heaven; that His Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. Clearly this is of the utmost importance to God. In fact, it is the CENTRE of His plans and purposes for mankind. This is THE GOSPEL - THE GOOD NEWS!

To underline the importance that this particular subject enjoys in Jesus' sight, we should also note that, after His resurrection, and during the forty days in which Jesus conferred with His disciples, He spoke to them of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

In search of truth we MUST therefore always keep in mind that the coming Kingdom is central to God's thinking and plans and purposes for mankind. That some people are 'going to heaven' is all part of God's goodness and mercy, but it is NOT the gospel. The Gospel is that the Kingdom of God is coming and that His Messiah (Christ) shall reign over all things and restore all things, and that all the world shall be saved through His governing authority. You, personally, may either be part of it, or you may foolishly choose to neglect so great a salvation.

3.4 Inheriting the Kingdom of God

3.4.1 God's Emphasis

There will be those who inherit the Kingdom of God, and there will be those who will not. This is God's emphasis, rather than 'some will go to heaven, and some to hell.'

3.4.2 Kingdom = Kingship

To better understand what it means to 'inherit' the Kingdom of God, we need to know that the Greek word translated mostly by the word 'kingdom', namely basileia, is in the Greek context a condition/state of affairs, and not a physical domain. For this reason, also, Jesus admonished His disciples to not look for a physical location reputedly representing the Kingdom of God; the kingdom is within them/in their midst. The word basileia can therefore be better understood by the western mind if it were translated as KINGSHIP.

Jesus told His disciples that He bestows upon them a kingship, just as the Father bestowed one upon Him, that they may eat and drink at His table in His kingdom/kingship, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

"Seek ye first the kingship of God, and His righteousness . . ."

We will therefore, hence, often use the term "Kingship of God" instead of "Kingdom of God."

3.4.3 Inheriting / Entering Into

And thus we can now understand that to inherit the Kingship of God would imply that I, also, receive a kingship with Jesus, thereby becoming one of the kings who will rule and reign eternally under the headship of Jesus Christ, the King of the kings!

In Scripture we also find the expression 'entering into the Kingship of God'. This would imply exactly the same as 'inheriting the Kingship'.

3.5 What is necessary in order to inherit the Kingdom of God?

3.5.1 The First Question: What is necessary to have eternal life?

Scripture gives only one prerequisite for this, namely: to be born again through faith in the completed work of Jesus.

- 'He who believes in the Son HAS everlasting life.'
- 'He who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me HAS everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but HAS passed from death into life.'
- 'Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.'
- 'And we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.'
- 'These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.'
- 'Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.'

Also note that the Bible always refers to eternal life as something I have already. It is not something yet to be attained.

(Please allow one remark at this point: True faith is not simply to be persuaded concerning the facts; it is absolute trust put into action. A 'faith' that does not change the whole course and destination and pattern of my life, is no faith at all.)

3.5.2 The Second Question: What is necessary to inherit the Kingship of God?

And now we find many more requirements over and above to be born again . . .

The essence of all these requirements will be to GROW SPIRITUALLY, to DENY SELF, and to CRUCIFY THE FLESH. However, let us list the requirements as we find them in Scripture, first noting that the following expressions are synonymous:

- ❖ Inheriting the kingship of God
- ❖ Entering into the kingship of God
- ❖ Entering through the narrow gate
- ❖ Overcoming
- ❖ The saving of the soul; or to be 'saved'

The very first and absolute requirement for inheriting the Kingdom of God, is to be born again, that is to have received new, eternal, spirit life from the Lord. (1 Cor 15:50; John3:3)

But it does not stop there! God will want to know what I did concerning this new life He had given me! (Luke 19:11-26). And so we find the following list of both qualifications and disqualifications in Scripture:

Disqualifications:

- Gal 5:19-21 ; Rev 22:15
 - Those who practice the works of the flesh will not inherit the kingdom of God.
- I Cor 3:1-3
 - Those who remain spiritual babes are carnal and will practice the works of the flesh.

- I Cor 6:9,10 ; Eph 5:5
 - The unrighteous, and those who practice wickedness, will not inherit the kingdom of God, even though they may be Christians.
- Mat 7:21-23
 - Those (even those who call Jesus their Lord) who do not DO the will of the Father, will not inherit the kingdom of God.
- Mat 5:20 ; Phil 3:9
 - Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.
- James 4:4 ; I John 2:15-17 ; Mat 16:26
 - Do not love the world or the things in the world!
- Mat 16:25 ; Mark 8:35 ; Luke 9:24 ; John 12:24,25 ; Luke 17:33 ; Mat 10:39
 - Lose your self-life (soul) for Jesus' sake.
- Mat 18:3
 - Unless you are converted and become like a little child, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.
- Mat 19:23,24
 - Love of money, and independence from God because of riches will keep many people out of the kingdom of God.
- Mark 10:15
 - Unless you receive the kingdom of God like/as a little child, you will by no means enter it.
- Luke 9:62
 - No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.
- John 3:3,5
 - Unless you are born again AND baptized, you cannot enter the kingdom of God.
 - If you are born again, but not baptized, you have eternal life, and will be able to see the kingdom, but will not be able to enter in. (Luke 13:23-29)
- Mat 25:14-30 ; Luke 19:11-27
 - Once you have received LIFE from Jesus, what do you DO with it? Is there growth? Then you will be awarded kingship with Christ. Or no growth at all? Then you will be cast out of the Kingdom and lose what could have been yours (i.e. the kingship, but not everlasting life).
- Mat 25:1-13 ; 24:45-51 ; Luk 12:35-46 ; Heb 9:28
 - Not being ready and waiting for Him when He comes, will disqualify you for the Kingdom.
- Mark 16:16
 - There is an "and" here. Only faith is required to have 'eternal life'. Baptism is required additionally to be 'saved'.

Qualifications:

- Mat 10:37,38; Mat 22:36-38
 - To love God above all else
- Mat 5:3
 - The poor in spirit will receive the kingdom of heaven.
- Mat 5:10
 - Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake will receive the kingdom of heaven.
- Acts 14:22
 - We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.
- 2 Pet 1:5-11
 - Adding to your faith: virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love.
- Rev 2:10 ; 17:14
 - Be faithful until death.
- Rev 3:10
 - Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.
- Rev 2:26
 - Keep His works until the end.
- Heb 12:1,2 ; I Cor 9:24-27 ; 2 Tim 4:6-8
 - Finish the race!

- 2 Tim 4:8
 - Love His appearing!
- Rev 20:4
 - Not worshipping the Beast and not receiving his mark.
- Rev 12:11
 - "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death".
- John 12:26 ; Mat 16:24 ; Luke 9:23 ; Mark 8:34
 - Deny your SELF daily, take up your cross and follow Jesus.

3.5.3 Summary

As can be seen, the list of requirements/disqualifications is quite extensive. The Kingdom is not cheap by any means.

Important to note, however, is the fact that none of the requirements asks my ability or special performance. What it does ask is my TOTAL COMMITMENT to Jesus which, in turn, requires the DENIAL of my old self with all its worldly interests and desire for control, recognition and licentiousness.

I am truly saved by the blood of the LAMB and not by my own ability or achievements. Still, having obtained new life in Christ: what do I do with it? Do I live the New Life and deny the Old? Or not? This I will be judged upon,

3.6 Receiving Eternal Life versus Inheriting the Kingdom of God

It is important to note that the requirements for inheriting the kingdom of God are substantially more stringent than that for receiving eternal life only. We also see that eternal life is always something I already have, which has been given to me, and never something I yet have to attain to. The kingdom on the other hand, in stark contrast, is something yet to be attained to in the future. We thus conclude that these are two quite different concepts! And in order to understand God's word we must take note of this fact!

Seeing that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, everyone who eventually inherits the Kingdom of God will also have eternal life! There will, however, be many Christians who will, in the final analysis, have eternal life, but who will NOT inherit the Kingship of God; who will NOT become kings with Christ. Eternal life is, namely, the immediate effect of true faith, whilst inheriting the Kingship is the result of the subsequent overcoming life of faith!

Birth versus Growth:

Whereas birth is a short process, growth is a lifelong process.

This very well explains the difference between receiving eternal life, which is the result of BIRTH (born again); while inheriting the Kingdom is the result of a LIFE dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ, resulting in spiritual GROWTH.

- Spiritual BIRTH, then, is assurance of eternal life.
- Spiritual MATURITY is the requirement for inheriting the Kingship of God. This is the result of a life of overcoming faith and endurance in the midst of trials and temptations.

The Importance of the Kingdom:

Also noteworthy are the MANY references to the Kingdom in Scripture. (159 times in the New Testament!) We MUST take note of the importance God attaches to the Kingdom. The FULNESS that Jesus wants to give

us is totally wrapped up in the Kingdom. THIS is 'that for which Christ Jesus has laid hold of (us) . . .' (Phil 3:12)

Those who inherit the Kingship will spend eternity in the closest proximity to Jesus Christ as His Bride, ruling and reigning with Him over all of creation for ever, abiding with God in the New Jerusalem, being Sons of God having come into their full inheritance. There IS NO HIGHER CALLING!

3.7 The Kingdom of God and this Present World

The first fact: "The Kingdom of God is NOT of this world" (John 18:36)

Secondly: Satan, NOT Jesus, is the god of this present world. The present 'rulers of the darkness of this age' are 'spiritual hosts of wickedness.' Jesus says, "the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me." Satan himself testifies that he has authority over 'all the kingdoms of the world and their glory' to give it to Jesus, should Jesus worship him. In I John 5:19 it is testified that 'the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one,' etc.

Thirdly: The church is NOT the Kingdom of God. Rather, the church is called upon to pray, "Let Thy Kingdom come!" The task of the true church is to sight, signal, support and celebrate the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Fourthly: The sons of the Kingdom find themselves 'ambassadors', 'strangers', 'pilgrims' and 'foreigners' in this present world. They are looking for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. They desire a better, that is a heavenly country. Their citizenship is in heaven from where they also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform their lowly bodies that it may be conformed to His glorious body.

Fifthly: All the wrong and bad things that happen on earth are NOT to be attributed to God. When God's Kingdom has come to this earth, there shall be NO more wars, or earthquakes, or droughts, or floods, or crime, or illness, or. . . ALL these are to be directly attributed to the present 'god of this world', namely Satan!

Finally: The Kingdom of God is a coming Kingdom! Then Jesus, and not Satan, WILL be the King of this world. And then everything will be right, for 'righteousness will be the scepter of His kingdom.' At the blowing of the Last Trumpet, the angels in heaven rejoice, pronouncing, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever!" And Satan's kingship over this earth shall be utterly and eternally shattered, and all of his followers shall, together with him, be cast into the Lake of Fire. In the meantime we keep on praying: "Let Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven!"

4 The Excellence of our King, the Lord Jesus Christ

Words cannot rightly describe the excellence of our Lord!

The best we can do is to quote Scripture, thereby attempting to convey the MAJESTY of our King, if only in part:

- He is called:
 - The Son of God
 - The King of kings
 - The Lord of lords
 - The Son of Man
 - The Messiah
 - The Christ

- The Beloved
 - The Son of God's love
 - The blessed and only Potentate
 - The Alpha and the Omega
 - The Beginning and the End
 - The First and the Last
 - The Amen
 - The Faithful and True Witness
 - The Lion of the tribe of Judah
 - The Root of David
 - The Lamb
 - THE Seed of Abraham
 - The Word of God
 - Jesus of Nazareth
 - The Prince of Peace
 - Wonderful Councilor
 - Mighty God
 - The Bright and Morning Star
 - The Firstborn from the dead
 - Faithful and True
 - The Beginning
 - . . . (and many more!) . . .
- In HIM we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.
 - He is the image of the invisible God.
 - He is the Firstborn over all creation.
 - By Him all things were created.
 - All things were created through Him and for Him.
 - He is before all things.
 - In Him all things consist.
 - He is the Head of the body, the church.
 - In all things He has the preeminence.
 - It pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell.
 - And by Him to reconcile all things to Himself.
 - He alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see.
 - To Him be honor and everlasting power.
 - He is the Firstborn among many brethren.
 - He was dead and came to life.
 - He has the sharp two-edged sword.
 - He has eyes like a flame of fire.
 - His feet is like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace.
 - His voice is as the sound of many waters.
 - His countenance is like the sun shining in its strength.
 - He has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars.
 - He is the Author and Finisher of our faith.
 - He is holy.
 - He is true.
 - He has the key of David.
 - He has the keys of Hades and of Death.
 - He opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens.
 - He is the Beginning of the creation of God.
 - ALL authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him.
 - In righteousness He judges and makes war.
 - The armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, follow Him on white horses.
 - He Himself will rule the nations with a rod of iron.
 - He Himself will tread the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.
 - He is the Judge of the living and the dead.

- He is Jesus, our Savior.
- The government shall be upon His shoulder.
- And of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end.
- ... (and many more!) ...

5 The Big Picture

5.1 Seven Thousand Years

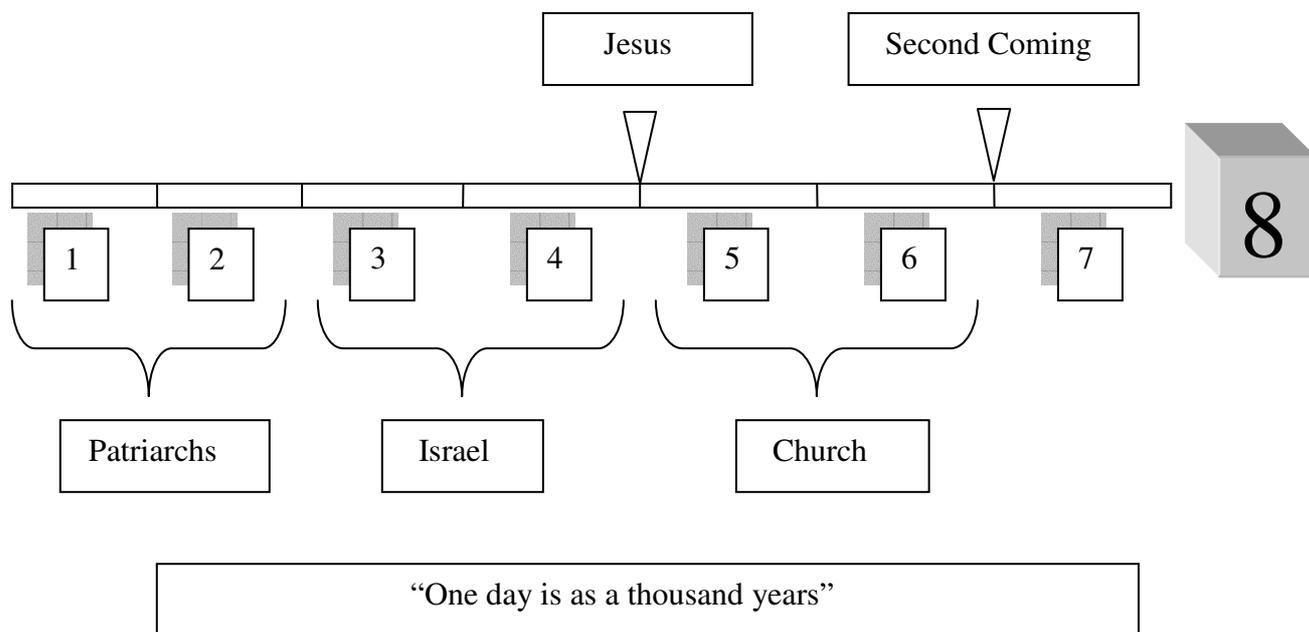


Figure 1

5.1.1 Introduction

According to what God made known to us in the Scriptures He gave us (the Bible), we have now come to the end of the first six thousand years of man on earth. Also according to the Scripture, we know that a thousand year period remains in which Jesus Christ Himself shall be King over all the earth; the Prince of Peace shall reign; wars shall cease and the deserts shall bloom. This is known as the Millennial reign of Christ. Adding these together, we have overwhelming proof that God has determined a total period of seven thousand years for mankind on this present earth. In the coming paragraphs we will elaborate on this theme.

Having come to the end of the first six thousand years, we stand at the threshold of the Millennium. The second coming of Christ is imminent. We have come to what is otherwise known as the end-times. What we have been seeing for some time already, and which is going to increase in intensity as the end approaches, are the following:

- Natural disasters like earthquakes, tidal waves, raging fires, volcanoes erupting, monster storms, etc.
- Pestilences (both in number and in intensity).
- Ethnic wars. (It is noteworthy that, up to roughly the middle of the twentieth century, wars were fought for the purposes of personal gain in resources or land area. From that time onwards, wars have mainly been fought on an ethnic basis.)

- False teaching. (Not only in the church, but also in the world in general will the very basis of morality and righteousness progressively crumble. Right will be wrong and wrong will be right. The whole fabric of society will be in tatters. Instead of God being honored, mere men and women will be idolised.)

And still, in these final moments before the door closes, and as He has been doing for the past six thousand years, God is calling for man to choose Him above their self-interests and to become one of His overcomers who will rule and reign and be with Him into the ages to come.

5.1.2 More Background

History, as God gave it to us in Scripture, shows that a period of roughly 1960 years (representing 40 Years of Jubilee) elapsed from the creation of man until Abraham was called to Canaan. This is called the Patriarchal Period.

After a transition period of roughly 80 years, the Period of Israel began and, likewise, lasted for roughly 1960 years, or 40 Jubilee years.

With the coming of Jesus, a transition period of (again) roughly 40 years then introduced the Church Period which, likewise, has now lasted for roughly 1960 years (another 40 Years of Jubilee).

All together this constitutes, broadly, three periods of 2000 years each, each representing two 1000-year days; and each at the same time representing the combination of 40 'God-years' (i.e. Jubilee-years), plus 40 'man-years'.

Looking at this overall picture, as well as looking at Biblical evidence, we see God's plan of 7000 years, or one week, for the present earth:

- The first four thousand years represents the first four days of the week.
- At the end of the fourth day, Jesus is crucified and conquers Satan, Sin and Death, thus bringing salvation and hope to mankind. {Refer to Ch. 18.3.10}
- The final two days are called 'the last days' in Scripture.
- The Second Coming of Christ occurs at the end of the sixth day.
- The seventh day is the Sabbath. This represents the coming Millennial Reign of Jesus, during which Jesus will restore all things and there will be peace on earth.
- The eighth 'day' represents the New Heaven and the New Earth, in which everything will be new and different. The concept of 'time' will probably also be quite different. {In Biblical numerology, 'eight' stands for 'new beginning' .}

5.2 Why seven thousand years?

5.2.1 Historic evidence

We know from Scripture that two thousand years have elapsed from Adam to Abraham. We likewise know from Scripture that a further two thousand years have elapsed from Abraham till Jesus. And we know that two thousand years have elapsed since Jesus. We also know that a thousand year period in which Christ will reign on earth together with His Overcomers is yet to come. This is known as the 'Millennium', or 'The Sabbath rest that remains.'

This, therefore, points to the 7x1000 year calendar for planet Earth. One God-week.

5.2.2 Seven is God's hallmark on creation

Looking at God's pattern for creation, we find the 'seven' pattern everywhere:

- Seven creation days in Genesis
- Gestation periods in animals are multiples of seven:
 - Mouse: three weeks

- Hare and rat: four weeks
- Cat: eight weeks
- Dog: nine weeks
- Lion: fourteen weeks
- Sheep: twenty-one weeks
- Incubation periods for birds are multiples of seven:
 - Small birds; two weeks
 - Chicken; three weeks
 - Ducks; four weeks
 - Geese; five weeks
 - Ostriches; six weeks
- Even the human pregnancy lasts for forty weeks.
- Etc.

Thus we see that seven is God's number of creation.

During His big seven 1 000 year days, or God-week, He creates a Bride for His Son as well as His government for the ages, amongst other things!

5.2.3 The Feast of Tabernacles

God has instituted eight yearly feasts to be commemorated by Israel. Together, these feasts portray God's macro-plan for mankind. While this will be dealt with in more detail in Ch. 18.3.5, we will deal shortly with the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles in this paragraph.

In this feast, Israel is to dwell in temporary booths outside of their real homes. This is to be for a duration of seven days. By comparing 1 Cor 10:11, 2 Cor 5:1 and 2 Pet 3:8 with the symbolism of this feast, we again have the indication that mankind will stay on this earth in a temporary capacity for seven 1000 year days, where after the New Heavens and the New Earth will come.

5.2.4 Fulfillment of Prophecy

Many evidences that we are presently entering the final moments of the present world system, exist. For the purposes of the present argument, these can, however, unfortunately not be dealt with here in any detail. A short list will have to suffice:

- Technology
 - The mark of the beast can, for the first time in history, effectively be introduced and enforced on a world-wide basis. (Implanted computer chip.)
 - Now is it possible for all the world's people to see the bodies of the two witnesses of Revelation 11 within the three days available. (Satellite and TV.)
 - Now (for the first time ever) is it possible to 'be in the field' and to actually see the 'abomination of desolation standing in the holy place' (Recent Cell-phone technology.)
- Nature
 - Increasing incidence of earthquakes.
 - Pestilences, like AIDS.
 - Temperatures, droughts, hurricanes, tidal waves, volcanic eruptions, tornadoes, etc. reaching all-time records.
- Sociological
 - Increasing incidence of ethnic wars.
 - Population explosion.
 - Lawlessness.
 - Falling apart of moral, family and spiritual values.
- Runaway trends
 - Should a graph of any number of parameters (e.g. world population, divorces, teenage pregnancies, earthquakes, ethnic wars, animal populations, natural resources, AIDS, technology, etc., etc.) be drawn over the past 2000 years, we find that just about everything starts running amuck over the past 100 to 200 years, reaching critical proportions as it reaches the present time.

- It is as though an invisible Hand is blocking the way forward, saying, "So far and NO further!"
- Increase of knowledge
 - We see this prophesy by Daniel being fulfilled before our eyes.

We recognize these signs and realize that the Second Coming of Christ is at hand, now, at the end of the sixth day. The seventh day will be the Millennium.

5.2.5 The Last Days

We find quite a number of hints and indications in Scripture, that there will be two days (or 2000 years) between the time that Jesus walked on earth and the time when He will restore all things. We list a few:

- When Israel crossed the Jordan to enter the Promised Land, the Ark of the Covenant went up ahead. (The Ark represents the Lord Jesus, our Forerunner). The people, however, were commanded to lag behind by 'about 2000 cubits'. This is a hint that the space between the resurrection of Jesus, the 'Firstfruits' and the resurrection of those who are His at His coming, will be about 2000 years. {Passing through the Jordan into the Promised Land is a symbolism for passing from this life into the kingdom of God}.
- In Luke 13:32,33 Jesus says, "Go, tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I am perfected.' Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem." In order to not become tedious on a matter that might just evoke unnecessary arguments, we leave it to the reader to see the subtleties of these references of Jesus. Those whose eyes have been opened by the Holy Spirit will, however, notice that neither of these two statements of Jesus was literally true. But both have hints of the greater reality where Jesus speaks as the Head of the Church which is His body, and where the days He refers to are to be understood as God-days of 1000 years each. The earth will be restored after 2000 years, and the New Jerusalem will come after the third day.
- In Hosea 6:1,2 we find the following word concerning Israel: "Come, and let us return to the Lord; for He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight." As will be shown in Ch. 15.3, Israel will be restored directly after the Second Coming of Christ. That will be the first time ever that they will again glorify the true Messiah after having been set aside temporarily at the start of the Church age. Realizing that, the meaning of these verses becomes clear. After the lapse of 2000 years (two God-days) Israel will be revived and restored. They will then be raised up as The Royal Nation on earth which lives without any further transgression in the sight of their Messiah, Jesus Christ.
- More indications of the same can be found in (e.g.) Ex 19:10,11 ; John 4:43 ; Luke 2:46 ; John 11:6 ; Judges 14:14 ; Jonah 1:17 ; Joshua 1:11 ; Acts 9:9 ; Acts 25:1 ; Gen 40:13,19 ; and more.
- We also find symbolic references to the four thousand years preceding Jesus' first coming in Acts 10:30 and John 11:17.
- Lastly we find many symbolic references to the total seven/six thousand year period of mankind on the present earth. (E.g. Mat 17:1 ; Mark 9:2 ; Luke 9:28 ; Ez 43:26,27 ; Joshua 6 ; Deut 16:8 ; Ex 24:16 ; Gen 8:10,12 ; Gen 7:10 ; Ex 29:37 ; and many more).

5.2.6 Stellar Ages

Let us first take note that God 'put lights in the firmament of the heavens', saying, 'let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years'. It is God who created the stellar constellations, who gave them their names, and who meant for them to be for signs and seasons. The fact that astrologers belonging to the Kingdom of Darkness use the stars for fortune telling, does not take away the truth of God, neither the signs and seasons He shows by this means.

The stellar ages each has a length of 2000 years.

Coinciding with the Age of the Patriarchs, was the stellar age of Taurus (The Bull). According to the Book of Enoch, the Patriarchs were allegorically depicted by bulls (whether white, red or black) - Cain, for example, is depicted as a black bull; Abel as a red bull, and Seth as a white bull. Likewise, Adam is also depicted as a white bull.

Coinciding with the Age of Israel, was the stellar age of Aries (The Ram). Also according to Enoch's allegory, Israel as a nation is depicted as sheep, while its leaders are depicted as rams (again either white or black). We furthermore find this referral to Israel, allegorically, as sheep, extensively in Scripture.

Coinciding with the Age of the Church, was the stellar age of Pisces (The Fish). We know that the church has been and is depicted by the sign of a fish.

Coinciding with the Millennial Era is the present stellar age of Aquarius (the Water Carrier). This age started around the turn of the present millennium. Scripture refers to a water carrier twice, thereby giving us an indication that this age will lead us into the Marriage Feast of the Lamb. (Mark 14:12-17 and Luke 22:8-14)

The fact that these stellar ages agree so accurately with the historic evidence of the Bible, can be no coincidence, thus further underlining the 7000 year period.

In this regard it is noteworthy that the total time for man on this earth, in stellar terms, is 'a time, times, and half a time'. Throughout Scripture, three and a half represents a period of refining. Jesus' ministry lasted for three and a half years. The coming great tribulation will also last for three and a half years.

Forty, on the other hand, is a 'desert' period of trial and testing; of probation. It is thus equally noteworthy to realize that the past 6000 years was a period of trial and testing, both spiritually and physically. (Simply note all the 'forties' in the various ages as explained in the beginning of this chapter.) All of creation are looking forward eagerly to the coming Kingdom of Christ when, at last, there shall rest.

5.2.7	120 years
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"And the Lord said, 'My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.'" Gen 6:3

This obviously does not imply that man would henceforth only reach the age of 120. That, quite simply, did not happen. And nowadays nobody even reaches the age of 120. What did God then say with this remark?

The answer is that He referred to 120 Jubilee years. This, again, would be made up of the three periods of 40 Jubilee Years each, which had been allocated to man to rule this earth before God 'takes over' in the person of Jesus Christ as King over all the earth. (Refer to paragraph 5.1.2). This adds up to roughly 6000 years.

5.3	God's Plan and Purposes
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"God has made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth - in Him, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance."

"For it pleased the Father that in Him (Jesus Christ) all the fullness should dwell, and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, through Him, whether the things on the earth or the things in the heavens".

First Question: When will this be consummated?

'In the dispensation of the fullness of the times.'

That is, in the 'dispensation', or 'management-model' that will apply after the 'times' have been fulfilled. Using Figure 1 at the start of this chapter, we understand that that will be after completion of the 'time, times and half a time', or seven thousand year period; thus in the dispensation of the New Heavens and the New Earth.

Second Question: What/who exactly will be gathered together in Christ?

The complete answer to this question will have to stand over until God Himself makes it known. Let us, however, elaborate on what has been revealed to us:

- Father God wants sons. ('That Jesus might be the firstborn among many brethren.') Those who have received life in Christ and who are in Him, shall receive sonship. The preceding 6000 year period was for this express purpose, to sift out the true sons of God.
- Father God wants a Bride for His Son. The marriage of the Lamb represents the culmination and climax of the preceding 6000 year period, and God's express purpose is/was to find a Bride for His Son during all the trials and tribulations, and amongst all the generations and nations on earth during these six thousand years.
- Israel will be saved, reconciled to God, and glorified in their Messiah. {See Ch 15.3-5}
- All spirit beings in the heavens, and all the human beings on the earth, who have freely submitted to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior will enter God's glory under the Kingship of the Christ.
- Even all of creation (plants and animals included) will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

5.4 An Inheritance in Christ

This is what it is all about!

Understanding God's plan and purpose, and also understanding that He invites YOU and ME to be part of that, we should focus our lives onto this ONE purpose for our lives: Jesus!

And to understand everything that happens in this present life within the context of God's bigger plan and purposes.

This is what life is about, and this is what this book is about: to help equip us in order to live the life the Lord intends for us and to grow to maturity so that we, also, may not only obtain an inheritance in Christ, but may retain it to the end. Paul, only at the end of his life, could exclaim, "Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness . . ." And in Rev 3:10 we find: "Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown."

6 Baptism

6.1 Baptism: Why? Is it important?

Our God is a covenant God; He works through covenants: The Noahic Covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant, the Old Covenant (Sinai), the New Covenant, etc.

Every covenant that God makes with man is eternal, and will only pass away whenever one of the parties involved does not exist any more. In this way, the Abrahamic covenant is still standing and valid for all the seed of Abraham. Should you, therefore, be of the seed of Abraham, you should be circumcised. Likewise, as long as there is an earth, it shall not be destroyed again by water, because God covenanted that, etc.

Now God made the most wonderful covenant of all with mankind, through Jesus!!

- This covenant includes that we may be born again as true children of God, into the family of God, receiving God-likeness and eternal life!
- It furthermore includes that all the sins of my flesh be done away with, being redeemed by the shed blood of Jesus.
- And it also includes that Jesus bought (redeemed) us from among men, a Bride unto Himself!

The two parties involved in this covenant is Jesus on the one hand and you/me on the other hand. Jesus already not only entered into the covenant with you/me, but Himself ALSO paid the FULL price (that is, He gave Himself as the sacrifice necessary to establish this covenant)!! What REMAINS, is for you/me to, of our own FREE WILL, decide whether we will likewise enter into the covenant from our side. This has a number of implications or steps:

- I, firstly, have to know that it is possible for me to enter into the covenant. (This is why Jesus told His disciples to go and tell . . . !)
- Secondly, I have to believe what I have been told, and put all my trust into this message, therefore into Jesus Christ as my personal Savior.
- True faith will result in a complete change in my life, in my thinking and in all that I do or not do any more - i.e. repentance. Becoming a disciple of Jesus.
- Finally, and of great importance, having done all the above, I have as yet still not entered into the covenant with Jesus. Doing all of the above; believing into Jesus, and repenting, is much like a woman meeting a man, receiving a marriage proposal from him and agreeing to it - yet still not being married to him! Something is lacking! - namely the wedding ceremony in which vows are exchanged and the marriage covenant is ratified! In the same way, what is absolutely necessary at this stage is that I have to, formally, in the prescribed way, enter into the covenant with Jesus! This way is BAPTISM! Do we now understand why Satan so furiously oppose and confuse the issue of baptism?!

Jesus in all reality went through death, burial and resurrection, thereby earning resurrection life for all those who would believe into Him. Now those who do believe should enter into the covenant in the same way, which is symbolic death, burial and resurrection into a new life. This is baptism! The act of being immersed depicts MY choice of laying down my old life unto death and being raised in a new life IN Jesus Christ: 'being buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him'.

Thus, when Jesus states, "He that believes AND is baptized, shall be saved," He actually means just that!

Also read I Pet 3:18-22.

Notably, ALL known believers in Scripture, since Pentecost, were baptized directly after having come to believe and repent.

Looking at the above, we can also understand that infant sprinkling (most erroneously called 'baptism) is of NO value whatsoever as a substitute for real baptism, which must be by my OWN choice of free will.

ANSWER: Yes, Baptism IS necessary and is of the UTMOST importancel!

6.2	Are there more symbolic meanings attached to the ceremony of Baptism?
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Yes, let us list a number of them:

1. The washing away of sin.
2. The washing of regeneration.
3. Being born again.
4. To be clothed with Christ.
5. To abandon myself completely into Him.
6. To be accepted completely by Him.
7. To change citizenship (from my old, earthly kingdom to the heavenly Kingdom of God).
8. To accept the Lordship of Christ over my life.
9. Death (of the old life) and resurrection (in the new life).
10. Burial.
11. A new beginning.
12. Into Christ.
13. Into the church (which is His body).
14. The breaking of the power of sin (Red Sea crossing, breaking the power of Egypt).

15. Prerequisite for entering the Promised Land (Jordan crossing).
16. Receiving a new name (The Name of the Family of God!).
17. Salvation (I Pet 3:20,21).

6.3	But I have been baptized as a baby. Why should I have to be baptized again?
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Two things are seriously wrong with infant 'baptism':

- a. To enter into a covenant, you have to do it knowingly and willingly. Neither is the case for infant 'baptism'.
- b. The Lord prescribes baptism and NOT sprinkling. ALL of the symbolism and meaning attached to the ceremony disappears in the wind in this way. If Naāman would have sprinkled himself a few times instead of immersing himself the full seven times, would he have been healed of his leprosy? . . . ?

Beloved, if you have been sprinkled as a baby, that does imply that your PARENTS promised God solemnly to rear you in the knowledge of His Name and love. It does NOT, however, imply that YOU ever entered into any promise/covenant/undertaking whatsoever with the Lord or, for that matter, with anybody. (You probably simply resisted and resented the whole business; maybe screaming blue murder most of the way through!)

ANSWER: Even having been sprinkled as a baby, you have NOT been baptized, and DO need to be baptized IF you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and DO want to enter into the New Covenant with Him.

6.4	But what about the 'great sin' of being baptized again? ("Wederdoop?")
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In Acts 19 God gave us a specific example of a whole group of believers being baptized 'again', and this occurred with Paul not only suggesting it, but strongly advising in favor of it!

This was even a repetition of a full immersion baptism, and not only the correction of real baptism in the place of infant sprinkling.

Looking at the whole meaning of baptism as explained in this Chapter, it would be equally innocuous to be baptized again, than it would be for a married couple to formally, by means of some ceremony, repeat their marriage vows. It IN NO SENSE disempowers or cancels the first baptism (or marriage), but rather reaffirms and strengthens it! As little as it is recommended for couples to all go ahead and have a repeat of their marriage vows, do we recommend that Christians should be rebaptized. But if, for whatever reason, they should find it necessary, there is no sin in that.

ANSWER: There is NO sin in being baptized again.

6.5	Why then do the theologians call it a sin to be baptized again?
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The REAL problem is that Satan does not want anybody to enter into this covenant with Jesus - the covenant that is based on his defeat, and which will ultimately lead to his demise in the Lake of Fire. This is the REAL reason why lies and confusion (which are the hallmarks of Satan) have literally become the corner stone of also this doctrine. Whereas, as far as the truth in Jesus is concerned, it is simple enough for a child to understand!

The argument (of confusion) that Satan introduced in this case, in order to discourage Christians to be baptized, is as follows:

- With your 'baptism' as a baby, you are included in the covenant of Abraham (??) and become part of God's people, because 'baptism has come in the place of circumcision'.

- Should you, later on, be baptized in the Name of Jesus, you declare your inclusion into the first covenant you entered (Abraham's) as void and become separated from all the rights and blessings under that covenant.

Now, beloved, this IS confusion from start to finish!

Firstly, WHO and for WHAT reason under the sun would ANYBODY choose to be included in Abraham's covenant when he/she can rather be united with Jesus in the NEW Covenant in HIS Name??

Secondly, since WHEN can just anybody choose to be included in the Abrahamic covenant?? From the start this was exclusively for Abraham's seed and servants.

Thirdly, since when did 'baptism' (sprinkling) come in the place of circumcision?? The (single) Scripture used to "prove" this, is Col 2:11, which, in the whole context of Col 2:11-14 simply shows how Jesus released us from the old man, together with its corruption and pending penalty, through the circumcision of Christ made without hands; and how baptism (immersion), through the symbolism of BURIAL and resurrection, symbolizes how Jesus 'circumcised' the old man off, and made me into a new man having been made alive from the dead.

Fourthly, WHY would any previous covenant in which I am be declared null and void should I enter a new covenant?? When Israel, years after the Abrahamic covenant, entered into the Sinai covenant, did that make Abraham's covenant, as far as they were concerned, null and void??

No, beloved, this is pure wind and confusion, and Satan's hand in this is clear to see.

ANSWER: The theology behind this foolish argument bears the hallmark of Satan, which is wind and confusion.

6.6 What happens to believers who have not been baptized?
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Firstly, being believers, they have eternal life and do not come into judgment, but have passed from death into life.

Secondly, however, they have not done the will of God, and will not inherit the Kingdom of God!

See how serious God is about this: No single Israelite could enter the Promised Land (this stands for the kingdom of God) without having passed through a symbolic baptism! When Jesus said: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved", He meant just that! All of Israel was baptized in the Red Sea (1 Cor 10:1,2). Subsequently they rebelled at the border of the Promised Land and had to wander around in the wilderness for the next forty years. A new generation was born who had not been baptized. Thus, the next time, before anybody could enter the Promised Land as an abiding inheritance, they had to first be baptized again; this time, symbolically, by the Jordan crossing!

So then, the believers who have not been baptized, will be like one of two groups:

- Like those who, having been set free from the slavery of sin (Egypt) by the blood of the Lamb, have started to leave Egypt under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (pillar of cloud). Having come to the Red Sea (baptism), they were, however, not willing to pass through it, because their theologians had told them that that would be some kind of sin. They were subsequently retaken as captives of Egypt (sin and the world).
- The other group is like Israelites who, having come to the banks of the Jordan (baptism), and seeing the Promised Land, were not willing to pass through the Jordan, having been told by their theologians that being baptized again would be a cardinal sin and the water will certainly wash them all away into the Dead Sea. Thus they never passed across, and by the time they wanted to, it was too late. Unto them the word is fulfilled that "the Pharisees have shut up the kingdom of heaven against them; for they (the Pharisees) neither go in themselves, nor do they allow those who are entering to go in." (Mat 23:13). Thus, although they have eternal life, they will never be able to enter into the Kingdom of God,

but will have to spend their time in the 'wilderness' where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (John 3:3 and 5 ; Luke 13:23-30)

ANSWER: They will not inherit the Kingdom of God

7 Born Again

7.1 Born again? What does it mean?

The term 'born again' stems from Nicodemus' nighttime visit to Jesus. At this time Jesus told Nicodemus that, in order to be saved, one must be born FROM ABOVE (if translated correctly). Nicodemus' answering question, born of his ignorance concerning this matter, is then that which gave impetus to the term born 'again': "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

The true meaning of this concept, however, is that man be born FROM ABOVE, or, to be more accurate, BORN OF GOD!

Whereas all men are born in flesh, of a woman; some are also born in spirit, of God. These are what is known in church tradition as the 'born again' saints of God.

7.2 How can I be 'born again'?

The answer is: Through faith

- "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the privilege to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."
- "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."

Important to also note, is that no-one can become born again, because this is something that has already occurred when Jesus rose from the dead!

- "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."
- "... having been born upwards, not from corruptible seed but incorruptible ..."
- "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has birthed us upwards through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to a living hope, to an inheritance imperishable and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Thus we find that, what is true in the spirit, cannot be understood by the fleshly mind.

The truth here is that we have been born again when Jesus rose from the dead. However, for and unto us this truth only becomes a reality once we come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world, and that, through faith, I may also receive life and salvation from Him. For without faith it is impossible to please God. I HAVE to put all my trust for both this life and the one to come into Him! And THEN I AM born of God, having become so two thousand years ago already!

7.3 What does it mean to believe that Jesus is the "Christ"?

"Christ" is a TITLE, NOT A NAME.

It is God's title for His anointed King of the Kingdom of God, King of the universe, the King of kings and the Lord of lords; the One unto Whom has been given ALL authority in heaven and on earth! This is the Name above all names!

The Christ is the Messiah who has come to save Israel from its enemies.

Furthermore, the Christ is the One Who has come to save the WORLD, which He will do when He comes again as the Prince of Peace, the King of the kingdom of God, to restore all things.!

And He has come AS A MAN in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, born of a virgin, TRUE Son of God, walked the earth for thirty three and a half years, doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil. Then He died by the unrighteous workings of Satan, rose from the dead, conquering Hades and Death, NEVER to die again, now sitting at the right hand of God, giving all who believe into Him eternal life in Him!!!

- Do I believe all this?
- Do I put ALL my trust in His completed work, done on my behalf also?
- Do I submit myself completely to His Lordship and Kingship in my life, confessing that I now belong to Him exclusively, confessing that my true citizenship is now in the heavens with Him and that I am henceforth a stranger and a pilgrim on this earth, eagerly waiting for His Kingdom to come?
- And will I keep on believing this and trusting Him through good times AND bad?

Beloved, we are not born again by our great and accurate knowledge, but by the blood of the Lamb, and by receiving His gift of life by faith. Yet, the born again man knows all of the above in spirit, and it is the right thing for us to also know it with our minds.

8 The New Life

Everyone who is born again, has received NEW LIFE from God - the very life of God!

8.1 Qualities of the new life

Certain things are true concerning this new life. It is:

- Eternal
- Without sin
- Perfect
- Holy
- Blameless
- Irreproachable in the sight of God.
- Seated in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.
- Clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Furthermore

- It is IN Christ and thus completely one with Christ.
- It bears the character of God .
- It cannot sin, because it is born of God.

- The fruit of its being is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

8.2 This New Life is also called:

- The New Man, versus the Old Man.
- The Inner Man, versus the Outer Man.
- The Spirit, versus the Flesh.
- Christ, versus Self ("I live no longer, Christ lives in me").

8.3 This life is in the Son, and the Son gives it to whom He wills

"As You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."

"For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will."

"And we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."

"And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son."

8.4 Who receives this Life?

It is abundantly clear in Scripture that, whoever puts his trust in the Lord Jesus for this, receives eternal life from Him.

"Jesus said, 'I AM the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.'"

It is equally clear that whoever refuses the Son, does not receive the life of God:

"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

8.5 What about aborted babies, or children dying young?

Jesus is the Judge of this.

But we know that Jesus can give life to whom He wills. And we know that Jesus is good and just and merciful and filled with love. Therefore we are convinced in our Lord that heaven will abound in the joy and life of, among other things, aborted, and abused children! What a joy!!

Beloved, we are not so much saved by the 'merit' of our wonderful faith; but we will certainly be condemned if we reject this great salvation, as so many, many do nowadays! A child, having died in innocence and not ever having rejected the love of God, will therefore most probably be the recipient of the life that Jesus gives in His love and power and authority.

9 Walk in Spirit

9.1 Now that I am born again, what is there left for me to do, if anything?

"Therefore, brethren, we are debtors - not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh."

"For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life."

"And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

"Run the race with endurance . . ."

"Fight the good fight of the faith!"

"Strive to enter through the narrow gate!"

These are all words given to BELIEVERS! We have to take them seriously!

Thus, what IS left for me to do, is to GROW to maturity by WALKING in spirit and putting AWAY the works of the flesh; in this way eventually also finishing my race with joy as an OVERCOMER.

9.2 IDENTIFY with the New Life (Christ) in you.

"Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin (the old life), and alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

"I live no longer, but Christ lives in me."

"Walk in spirit (and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh)."

"As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him."

"Set your minds on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God."

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."

"To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ IN you, the hope of glory!"

"Put ON the new man!"

9.3 And deny the Old Life the privilege to dictate your thoughts and actions

"Nobody can be My disciple", says Jesus, "unless he denies his self daily."

"Put OFF, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts."

"Those who practice the works of the flesh will NOT inherit the Kingdom of God."

"Therefore PUT TO DEATH your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry . . . But now you must also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where . . . Christ is all and in all."

9.4 Conclusion

These are clear instructions from our Lord.

And they are a most inherent part in the race we are running:

- a. The eye fixed on Jesus (IDENTIFICATION), and
- b. Laying aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us. (DENYING THE OLD MAN.)

Finally, this race has to be run with ENDURANCE.

It is a lifelong commitment!

Growing in the Lord should never cease!

Beloved, the Lord will never ever be impressed by my old man improving itself to look better or to do better. The flesh can never please God. In the same way will He never ever reject me because my old man does not do well enough, or because my old man has sinned. This is actually the only thing the old man can do well - sinning. No, what the Lord requires from me is not improving the old man, but denying the old man; it is not refining the deeds of the old man, but it is growth in the new man!

10 The Old Man versus the New Man : A Comparison

10.1 Qualities and Facts

The Old Man	The New Man
• SELF	• In CHRIST
• Situated on this earth	• Seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus
• External	• Internal
• Flesh (three dimensions)	• Spirit (higher dimensions)
• Temporary	• Eternal
• Shall die	• Shall never die
• Earthly, like fallen Adam	• Heavenly, like the risen Jesus
• Born of a woman	• Born of God
• Is sinful in its whole nature	• Is without sin, and cannot sin, because it is born of God
• Is a citizen of this world	• Is a citizen of the Kingdom of God
• Under the Law	• Not under the Law
• Is at enmity with God	• Is in eternal friendship with God
• Is Selfish in nature	• Is Loving in nature
• Is Covetous in nature	• Is Giving in nature
• Works of the Flesh	• Fruit of the Spirit

Because the Old Man of Flesh shall be with me until it dies one day, the nature of the present Christian walk in life is one of constant battle to live in the New Man and NOT in the Old; one of a Fight of the Faith to remain in the New and NOT to revert to the Old; to walk in Spirit and NOT in Flesh; NOT to give in to the insistence of the Old Man to have its own way. And because this transition back to the Old can occur easily and quickly, without me sometimes even realizing it, we present the following list of give-away actions and attitudes whereby the Old Man might be recognized, should it rear its ugly head. Praise the Lord that the old man shall not live forever, but that we shall shortly be set free from this man of sin, and shall then walk in the fullness of Christ!

10.2	Give-away attitudes and actions
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The Old Man	The New Man
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selfish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants things <u>his</u> way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gentle, yielding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forever competing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily angered; touchy; quick to react 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient; longsuffering
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forever comparing himself to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never comparing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self righteous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humble
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faultfinding in nature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forgiving in nature
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harsh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gentle
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obstinate; stubborn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willing to yield
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kind
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headstrong; self-willed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selfless
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discontent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joy and peace
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants all sorts of things for self 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves in love
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The flow is inward towards self 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The flow is outward towards others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loves the world and the things of the world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loves God and the things of God
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I must" (Constant striving) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Jesus did" (Constant victory)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is threatened by the coming of Christ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loves and longs for the coming of Christ
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has to win 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has won
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interests, joys, success, hope is down here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interests, joys, success, hope is up there
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well aware of own perception of own achievements, abilities and merit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well aware of Jesus' achievements, abilities and merit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boasts in own effort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boasts in God's grace
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinks and reasons in terms of failure versus success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living life in abundance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slave to the opinion of man 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free from the opinion of man
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lives in and for this kingdom (of the world) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lives in and for the Kingdom of God
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prays: "Let this kingdom be extended/improved" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prays: "Let Thy Kingdom come!"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always desires to better itself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always seeks the Lord
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driven by anger, ambition, or jealousy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living by love
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking pleasure: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bearing fruit :
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, drunkenness, revelries, idolatry, sorcery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control

10.3 Conclusion

Let us reiterate once more: He that practices the works of the flesh shall NOT inherit the Kingdom of God, even if he/she is born again!

In both Luke 19:11-27 and Matthew 25:14-30, the servant who did nothing with what Jesus gave him (the new life) was cast out of the Kingdom, whereas those who DID do something with it, regardless whether that was much or little, received a kingship within God's Kingdom!

It is therefore IMPERATIVE that we LIVE in the New Life that Jesus gave us, and to DENY the Old Life!!

11 Worldliness

"And do not be conformed to this world . . ."!

11.1 How it camouflages itself

In the end-time church of Laodicea (literally: "Democracy"), there is a serious problem. So much so, that Jesus threatens to 'spew them out of His mouth'. What really is that problem?

The problem is worldliness. Success in THIS world and according to the yardsticks of THIS world is sought after, and is used as the yardstick of 'spiritually' succeeding or not. These yardsticks are wealth, success (i.e. 'making it to the top', or 'winning'), good health and worldly possessions. For this reason the church of Laodicea thinks that all is well, because they are 'rich, have become wealthy and have need of nothing'. Jesus, on the other hand, says that they don't know that they are 'wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked'.

Why this drastic difference in opinion?

Because the Laodiceans have become worldly in their thinking and in their judgment, whilst not even realizing it. They have been tricked by Satan, thinking that more wealth and worldly possessions or success are sure signs that God blesses them! Forgetting that "those who live according to the flesh set their mind on the things of the flesh (this world), but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit".

Beloved, we HAVE to watch and pray always, being vigilant at all times, because Satan our adversary does walk about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Tricking us into covetousness or worldliness, whilst at the same time causing us to think that this is with God's blessing, is a favorite and quite successful ploy of his. Please do not fall for it!

11.2 What does God have to say about this?

"Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

"So he who lays up treasure for himself, is not rich toward God."

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

"Do NOT lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, . . . but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

"But woe to you who are rich . . ."

"Woe to you who are full . . ."

"Woe to you when all men speak well of you . . ."

"How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!"

"Let your conduct be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

"Do NOT love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life - is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever."

"Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."

"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame - who set their mind on earthly things."

11.3	What should I do?
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Firstly, I should make the clear choice of TRUSTING my Heavenly Father to care for me in the way He sees fit.

"Do NOT seek what you should eat or drink or wear. The Gentiles seek after all these things. But your Heavenly Father knows what you need. Therefore seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things SHALL be added unto you."

Secondly, I should realize and LIVE the fact that, whatever may have been mine in the past is not mine anymore. I hand it over to Jesus, my Lord (my Owner).

"So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake ALL that he has cannot be My disciple."

Thirdly, I should LIVE this attitude for the rest of my life.

"If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth."

11.4	Does God then want me to be poor?
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Beloved, NO! God cares for His children, and He does that in abundance! But God's vision will always be on your eternal inheritance at His side and in His Kingdom! And if your worldly wealth causes you to forget Him and to set your mind on this world, your wealth will become a stumbling block that will keep you out of the Kingdom.

Poverty can likewise keep you out of the Kingdom! If your heart becomes set on the idea of somehow just not being poor any more, and you set your heart and your mind on this world instead of on God's Kingdom, you will likewise be tripped up from entering God's Kingdom.

So what should I do?

Jesus says, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

We believe that our Lord, with this statement, provides us with the keys:

- Firstly, we should not *AMASS* wealth; laying it up and continually trying to increase it.
- Secondly, we should not lay it up for *OURSELVES*.
- Thirdly, we should never allow our earthly possessions to be our treasure; our inheritance in the Kingdom of God should at all times be our treasure.

Receive from God's hand what He provides you with; receive it in gratitude and in joy, always remembering that you are receiving it and not deserving it; and always remember and consider that everything you own are the Lord's and not your own!!

May the Lord help us to be good stewards of what He entrusts into our care. And to Him be the glory for all His goodness!

12 The Reality of the Supernatural Power of the Holy Spirit

12.1 Did not the miracle-working power of the Holy Spirit cease once the Bible was completed?

This is one of those strange theologies that go around. Another one, related to this, is that nowadays we don't have demons anymore . . . ; nor curses . . . (?!)

Beloved, there is *NO* Scriptural evidence for any of the above-mentioned fallacies! In fact, the opposite! When Jesus tells His disciples to go and heal the sick, drive out demons and raise the dead, He meant just that! And to this day we witness all of these by the hands of those believers who really believe every word that Jesus has spoken, and *DO* those things that He has commanded. *God does not change!*

- All of His works are miraculous!
- The Holy Spirit never did miracles in order to establish the Bible. Rather He did (and does) miracles because that is His nature, and because He loves His children and does all manner of things for and through them, and because He will every time manifest the victory of life over death; of good over evil; of God's Kingdom over the works of the kingdom of Darkness!
- Thus shall the supernatural working of the Holy Spirit increase rather than decrease in the years to come, as the darkness over this earth increases.

12.2 In what manner does the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit manifest?

One would be able to put together thick volumes with probably millions of real-life examples of the miracle-working power of the Holy Spirit. However, that is not the purpose of the present work; therefore we will limit ourselves to simply listing the various known ways in which the Holy Spirit manifests Himself:

- Through healing the sick and raising the dead!
 - Yes! Jesus are healing more sick and raising more dead in these days than He ever healed or raised from the dead while He walked on earth!
 - One of the gifts (literally: 'things of grace') of the Holy Spirit is to heal the sick, and in this way He endows certain individuals especially to be channels unto Him in healing the sick.
- Through workings of faith and miracles (like instantaneous calming of a storm).
- Through a word of wisdom (the answer or question that comes from God and instantly breaks down the barriers of the enemy).
- Through a word of knowledge (where God alone could have known that which He has just manifestly revealed to His servant).
- Through prophecy

- Prophecy is direct impartation of the words of God to and through a person thus used by the Holy Spirit.
- Prophecy is not merely preaching.
- Through speaking in tongues, which is similar to prophecy, but in a language which the one speaking does not understand.
 - In many cases some or other hearer, or sometimes the whole congregation can understand what is spoken, whilst the speaker himself does not understand a word of what he says.
 - In other cases, nobody present can understand what is being said, in which case the Holy Spirit will normally raise up one of those who are present, and give him/her the interpretation of the tongue.
- This then is another working of the Holy Spirit, namely the interpretation of tongues.
- Through discerning of spirits
 - Demons are as much of a reality as in the days of Jesus; only the rational man of these latter days reasons the existence of demons away by, for one, giving its manifestation some scientific name. In this manner they saddle the victim of demonic oppression with a diagnostic name for his illness, whilst at the same time leaving him as sick and as deserted into the hands of a demonic oppressor as ever!
 - No. demons have to be cast out in the Name of Jesus, and by the power of the Holy Spirit!
 - And for that this work of grace of the Holy Spirit, in supernaturally disclosing the presence and nature of demon spirits, is an absolute requirement.
- Through dreams
 - A dream given by God can be discerned from normal dreams in that it will not be a confusing mumble-jumble, and it will be clearly remembered. (It is highly recommended, though, to write down any dream that you discern is probably from God.)
- Through visions
 - A vision is like a dream you have while being wide awake.
 - Open visions, or trances (like Peter saw in the vision of the clean and unclean food) may also occur. This type of vision is so clear and real that it is not even like a dream. It appears to be total reality.
- Through the inner voice of guidance
 - Telling us of things to come.
 - Guiding us into all truth.
 - Convicting us of sin, righteousness and judgment.
 - Glorifying Jesus.
 - Declaring unto us the will of God.
 - Teaching us all things.
 - Bringing to our remembrance the things that Jesus had said.

12.3	Are all of these real?
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Yes, certainly!

Many, many Christians, including the writer, can witness, if not to all, then to most of these supernatural workings of the Holy Spirit on a first-hand basis; and if not first-hand, then by the mouth of a trustworthy witness.

The fact is that God will always allow a back door for unbelief to the one who will not believe, simply because God does not force anybody to do His will or to please Him; this has to be done of my own free will.

Thus, to them that believe, many things will be shown and imparted, but to those that refuse to believe, a reason for their unbelief will be supplied them, that "they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness".

13 The Kingdom of Light (i.e. of God) versus the Kingdom of Darkness

"... giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love ..." - Col. 1:12-13

"... I now send you to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me." - Acts 26:18

13.1 Two Kingdoms in the heavenly realms

The heavens are the abode of spiritual beings, and the earth is the abode of physical beings.

In the heavenlies, there are two kingdoms, namely the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of Darkness.

13.2 Some facts concerning the kingdom of Darkness

Having already said much concerning the kingdom of God, let us then list a number of facts concerning the kingdom of Darkness:

- It falls under the leadership of Satan.
- It is evil. In fact, in it we find the source of all evil.
- It is about to be destroyed utterly at the coming of Christ, who has already overcome Satan and the power of his kingdom through His death on the cross.
- When the sixth seal in Revelation is opened, 'the heaven (in which Satan and his angels will have resided until then) recedes like a scroll when it is rolled up', and 'the stars (angels) of the (i.e. of that) heaven falls to the earth'.
- The top echelon in this kingdom consists of the 'unholy' trinity:
 - Satan, who has forever tried to be the usurper of the position of God.
 - Antichrist, who is about to present himself to the world as the Christ of our age, trying to usurp the position of the true Christ of ALL ages, Jesus of Nazareth.
 - The False Prophet, who is already at work, masquerading as the Holy Spirit, with "all power, signs and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved."
- The rest of this kingdom in heaven, consists of all the heavenly beings who have followed Lucifer (Satan) in his rebellion against God. This includes all the fallen angels, which were about a third of all the angels.
- On the earth there are myriads of demon spirits causing all manner of mischief.
 - These have a craving for a human body, to dwell in one.
 - They have, from the time of the flood, and will until the time of the Second Coming, cause trouble and grief if given the chance to do so.
- At the coming of Christ, both Antichrist and the False Prophet will be cast into the Lake of Fire, 'prepared for the devil and his angels', whereas Satan will be bound in the Abyss for 1000 years.
- At the end of the 1000 years Satan will be let loose and will once again cause mischief all across the world, but will subsequently also be cast into the Lake of Fire.
- In the final act, both Death and Hades, two remaining angels of darkness, will be cast into the Lake of Fire. And with that is fulfilled that "the last enemy to be destroyed is Death."
- At this stage all of the kingdom of Darkness will have ceased to exist and will never again rise up to cause any trouble!

- In the meantime, the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. This means that the kingdom of Darkness is, at present, the Super Government of the world. And every scheme and plot to create, for example, a one world government in human terms, is instigated and designed at this headquarters.
- The Lord made known to us that, as his time gets short, Satan will be acting more and more in 'great wrath'. Thus will evil and unrighteousness increase as we near the end, and very difficult times will come. (However, please keep in mind that the ultimate victory of the kingdom of God is already assured!)
- In the final stage of the present age, the Antichrist will be the head of many nations, effectively ruling over a world government, and will persecute the saints for a period of three and a half years, before he is 'consumed with the breath of the Lord's mouth and destroyed with the brightness of His coming'.

13.3 What is our relationship to the kingdom of Darkness?

- As mentioned already, the whole world lies under the sway of this kingdom.
- And that will be the case until Jesus comes to establish His kingdom in the place of this present BAD one. This is the Gospel, the hope of our calling.
- Furthermore, ALL of us are born slaves to this kingdom!
- It is IMPOSSIBLE for us to free ourselves from our born slavehood, seeing that even should we try to escape from our state, that will only make us runaway slaves, but nonetheless still slaves in this kingdom.
- Only by the Blood of Jesus can we be BOUGHT FREE!
- And this is imparted to us by grace and not by our own works.
- By the redemptive power of the Blood of the Lamb, through faith in Him, can we be set free, be delivered from the power of darkness, and be translated into the kingdom of God, thereby changing citizenship and becoming 'slaves of righteousness'!
- From that point onwards, we then still live in this kingdom but it is now no longer ours. We find ourselves strangers and foreigners and ambassadors in this (bad) kingdom.
- And the citizens (especially the rulers) of this kingdom hate us: "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you", says Jesus.
- However, the rulers of this world do not have the authority to do unto us as they might wish to do, because our Lord protects us.
- Only right at the end (the final three and a half years), is it 'granted to the Antichrist to make war with the saints and to overcome them.' For this reason, 'there will then be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.'
- Thus has the earth been a type of battlefield between these two kingdoms from the beginning of time, with Jesus eventually clinching the victory and earning the Kingship of the earth ('Therefore know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.')
- All that remains now, is that the Lord still allows some time for His chosen to enter the Kingship of God and to become co-regents with Christ at His Coming.

14 The Authority of the Believer

14.1 What is the basis of the believer's authority

Jesus says, "As the Father has sent Me, I send you. Go in My Name. And whatever you ask the Father in My name, He will give you."

(Those who belong to Him, have received His name, have become citizens and ambassadors of the Kingdom of God and have been sent by Him, have this authority; and only they!)

Jesus is now sitting at the right hand of the Father in the heavens, and He has put us on earth as His representatives, to act in His name. And backing any legal command issued in the name of Jesus, is ALL the almighty power of God, together with all of His Kingship and authority.

This, then, is the whole basis of the authority I have: that I am the representative of Jesus Christ on earth and have received the right to act and speak in His name. In fact, I belong to Him completely, having been bought, not with gold and silver, but with the precious blood of the Lamb. Therefore, whatever I do IS done in His name! (This fact ought to bring every believer to attention!)

The important thing to also take note of is that, according to the above, I am NOT called to or allowed to do anything in my own name or for my own purposes!

14.2 What are the limitations to the believer's authority?

Unto Jesus has been given ALL authority in heaven and on earth. And we have been given authority in His Name. Therefore the scope of our authority is practically limitless!

Three particular things do however limit the level of authority that I may exercise in Jesus' name:

- Firstly, God does not go about enforcing His own will on anybody. He does act where He is asked to, but not otherwise. In this regard we may note that Jesus 'healed everybody who came to Him', but He healed nobody who did not come to Him in faith, trust and need. (The single exception to this is that Jesus raised the son of the widow of Nain from the dead without him being able to ask for it. In this case we have to assume that the widow asked, either directly or with imploring eyes). In exercising our authority we must therefore be very sensitive to this fact. God says, "Ask, and you will receive. For he who asks, receive".
- Secondly, I may never use my authority in my own interest, or to fulfill my own purposes. We must be very careful in only acting in the love of Christ; both our love for Him, and His love for whomever we are ministering to.
- Thirdly, I should never forget that the Holy Spirit has been given to guide me into all truth and to be my Helper in this life. Therefore, do nothing without consulting with Him within, and be guided by His wisdom as to what to do and what not.

14.3 What authority does the believer have, according to Scripture?

- To heal the sick.
- To cleanse lepers.
- To raise the dead.
- To cast out demons.
- To bless in His name.
- To bind and to loose spiritual ties.
- To annul curses.
- To forgive or to retain somebody's sins.
- To cast (spiritual or symbolic) mountains into the sea.
- To have whatever he says.
- To declare for example somebody to be blind for a period of time (Acts 13:6-12). (This needs clarification: The Christian will never rightly proclaim a curse or anything bad out of anger or self-interest. There may be cases, however, where the better interest of the situation is served by such drastic measures, and then the Christian should not hesitate to exercise his authority also in this way, in love.)
- To, as far as his own interests and needs are concerned, make it known unto Father God by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving.

14.4 How is the believer to exercise this authority?

The very first requirement is to understand the basis and legality of my authority, for without that I will have none!

Secondly I have to believe with complete trust that the powers of my heavenly kingdom will surely act in accordance with the commands given in the name of Jesus Christ, and will back up my words of authority with power from on high.

Lastly, and of great importance: True authority is not exercised by way of prayer or of request, but by means of a **SPOKEN COMMAND!** To pray beforehand and seek guidance and wisdom from God, and to give Him all the glory at all times, is the right thing to do. This, however, is NOT the way to exercise authority. This is done when a command which has to be obeyed, is spoken out loud! Also, this command is NEVER given to God, but IS given in the NAME of Jesus.

(It may be good to remark at this stage that Jesus, while on earth, did not heal anybody by praying to God. Rather, in all cases He gave some or other command! The case of Lazarus being raised from the dead gives us the clearest insight as to Jesus' modus operandi. In this case, for the sake of the bystanders, He did pray, but in a fashion that made it clear that He HAD ALREADY spoken to the Father, and HAD ALREADY obtained the assurance that His intended path of action is correct. He also made clear that the power behind what is about to happen, is that of the FATHER! Jesus never took glory for Himself! And then He went ahead and with GREAT authority, with a loud voice, **COMMANDED** Lazarus to come forth!)

14.5 What happens if the believer does not exercise his authority?

This is the sad part: that so many believers keep praying for the healing of the sick, or that demonic powers will depart, etc., but NEVER give a command in line with the will of God. And NOTHING happens! The sick remain sick, the oppressed remain oppressed -- and it can carry on like this for years!

Why do Christians not exercise their authority correctly? Simply because they have been led astray by Satan:

- Most do not even believe in miracles and in the power of the Holy Spirit any more.
- Many of those who do believe, do not believe that **THEY** may exercise such authority; thus in effect also not believing 'enough' to act in the appropriate manner.
- And many others of those who **DO** believe, do not **KNOW** that an authoritative command has to be given and therefore merely pray (fervently), but fail to issue the necessary command.
- And many more who do know the truth, are too concerned with their own reputation to dare take this step in faith.

The end result in all these cases is the same:

- The person is not healed/delivered, even though healing/deliverance IS available in the name of Jesus.
- Satan enjoys his victory and his cruelty.

15 End-Time Events

15.1 Israel: The Head of the Nations

At the end of days the nation of Israel shall be the Head of the nations. That means that from the beginning of the Millennium and onwards, Israel shall be the World Government - they shall be a nation of princes. {The name 'Israel' also happens to literally mean: 'Prince with God', or 'Rule with God'.}

"Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

(Take note that, prophetically, mountains refer to kingdoms; and hills to smaller kingdoms)

"You have made me the head of the nations; a people I have not known shall serve me. As soon as they hear of me they obey me; the foreigners submit to me."

"Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today (something that will specifically happen after the restoration of Israel: next chapter), that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. The Lord will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you. Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of you. And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath."

"For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was to Abraham and to his seed, not through the law, but through the righteousness of faith."

To Jacob is said: "Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, and let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be those who bless you!"

15.2 The King of Israel

In those days and forever after Israel shall be under the Kingship of the Messiah, Jesus the Christ.

"Behold the days are coming says the Lord, that I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name is called . . . Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

"And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

15.3 The Restoration of Israel

15.3.1 When will this be?

It will follow directly upon the Second Coming of Jesus Christ:

"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in heaven will be shaken. THEN they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. AND THEN He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven."

"It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people who are left. He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."

15.3.2 A Complete Restoration and Reformation!

Not only will Israel be gathered from all the countries where they have been scattered, but their sins and iniquities will be forgiven them AND they will be changed completely in the very real sense that SIN will PLUCKED OUT of them - they will never sin again - and they will finally be unto God the People they were always supposed to be. And because they will henceforth do all of God's commandments, will He bestow on them all His blessings that He had promised, should they keep His commandments. (e.g. Deut 28; Lev 26)

And furthermore, this will all be because God says 'I WILL', regardless of any merit or repentance or faith on the part of Israel. God made promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which He will most certainly fulfill to their full extent and implication!

- "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord God: "I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the Lord when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. I will deliver you from all your uncleanness."
- "Now therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: 'Behold, I will gather them out of all countries where I have driven them in My anger, in My fury, and in great wrath; I will bring them back to this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely. They shall be My people, and I will be their God; then I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me. Yes, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will assuredly plant them in this land, with all My heart and with all My soul.' For thus says the Lord: 'Just as I have brought all this great calamity on this people, so I will bring on them all the good that I have promised them.'"
- "Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord God: "I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.'" And they will go there, and they will take away all its detestable things and all its abominations from there. Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep my judgments and do them; and they shall be My people and I will be their God."
- "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah --- not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue

in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbour, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

Let the reader note the many "I WILL"- 's from God.

Please note also that there is not a single "IF".

God will do this because He will do this! Not because remnant Israel will be worthy. On the contrary!

15.3.3 Is the present State of Israel not the fulfillment of these prophecies?
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The answer to this question is a resounding, "NO!"

The reasons why such a definite answer can be given, are the following:

Firstly, none of the above prophecies either has been, or is being fulfilled in present-day Israel.

Secondly, Mark 13:24-27 quoted in (a) above, is quite clear about the timing of this event. Present-day Israel does not fulfill this prophecy.

Thirdly, the nature of the return of Israel will be very joyous. ("So the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away"). This is simply NOT the case for present-day Israel, where, through the years, Jews have come to a war-torn and strife-ridden country. Ever so often there were much, much more weeping than 'everlasting joy'.

Fourthly, when Israel is restored, it shall be times of PEACE and NOT WAR. (" I will bring them back to this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely."). Again, this is simply not the case for present-day Israel.

Fifthly, when Israel is restored, it shall be ALL the house of Israel, and NOT ONLY the Jews.

And lastly, when Israel is truly restored it will be under the Kingship of the Messiah, and they will ALL truly honour and worship Him! In present-day Israel, Jesus is DENIED!!

15.3.4 What about present-day Israel, then?

It is counterfeit.

The same way the Antichrist will come before Jesus comes again; the same way the Canaanites were in the Promised Land ahead of Israel; Ishmael came before Isaac; Esau came before Jacob; Cain came before Abel; Saul came before David, does the counterfeit precede the real.

At the same time we have to realize that God is and was involved in every counterfeit mentioned above, and none would have occurred without His cooperation. A great many miracles and fulfillment of prophecies are thus linked to the forming and survival of present-day Israel. One of the most important is that it represents the "budding of the fig tree", which is a clear indication that the time of the end is at hand. (Note that the fig tree, prophetically, stands for 'the house of Judah'; that is the 'Jews').

The truth remains, however, that the creation of the present state of Israel was both conceived, planned and executed by ungodly people and unholy organizations and is part and parcel of the New World Order program which is anti-Christian in all its nature and purpose.

15.3.5 How does God assure that all tribes of Israel will survive to the very end in order to be restored?

This is an important question. In the final phases of this age the trumpets of warning will blow, and bowls of wrath will be poured out on the earth. Few will survive these cataclysmic events. All Israel, or one or more of its tribes, might be wiped out in this process. Knowing this, the Lord acts in advance to assure the survival of all the tribes of Israel: In Revelation 7 we find that the four angels to whom it was given to harm the earth and the sea, was given the command not to harm anything before 12 000 of every tribe of Israel had been sealed on their foreheads. This will grant them supernatural protection and assure their survival in the times to come.

It is also notable that God does not require any particular merit or quality or action from these hundred and forty four thousand by which they would be qualified to be sealed. God does it unilaterally through reasons and choices of His own. This is a quite different group of hundred and forty four thousand from that of Revelation 14! (More about that later on.)

In Revelation 12 this group (the Remnant of Israel) is depicted as a woman being nourished and protected in the wilderness for a time and times and half a time, this being the duration of the Great Tribulation and subsequent Outpouring of Wrath on the earth.

15.3.6 What is the difference between Israel and the Church?

Firstly, the Church did NOT replace Israel.

Secondly, the promises made to Israel are all of a physical nature, and revolves around earthly blessings and the inheritance of the Land of Promise. The promises made to the Church are of a spiritual nature and revolves around heavenly blessings and the inheritance of the Kingdom of God.

And thirdly, where God refers to His relationship with Israel, it is as 'I will be their God and they shall be My people'. In the case of the Church, on the other hand, He refers to them as 'I will be their Father and they shall be My sons and daughters.'

Let us therefore list these differences:

<u>Israel</u>	<u>Church</u>
➤ Physical	➤ Spiritual
➤ People of God	➤ Children of God
➤ Collective	➤ Individual
➤ The Nation of God	➤ The Body of Christ
➤ Restoration	➤ Resurrection
➤ The Promised Land as inheritance	➤ The Kingdom of God as inheritance
➤ Born of man	➤ Born of God
➤ Circumcision	➤ Baptism
➤ No choice: A matter of birth	➤ Choice: Faith and repentance
➤ Final destination: The New Earth	➤ Final destination: The New Jerusalem

ANY Israelite may accept Jesus as his Messiah and Savior before it is too late, and make the transition into the Church, with its accompanying vastly higher calling in Christ, and where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, but Christ is all and in all!

15.4 The Antichrist

The Antichrist, a title used by the apostle John, is also called

- the man of sin
- the son of perdition
- the lawless one
- the beast
- the abomination of desolation

The term 'anti', in Greek, means 'in the place of', rather than the English connotation of 'against'. Certainly, the antichrist will be against Jesus Christ, but let us not forget that he will present and instate himself AS the Christ! He will usurp the position of Jesus as the Christ! That means that he will mislead almost everybody that he is the Christ for the present age; Jesus supposedly having been the Christ for a previous age and time, but not any more. In subtle ways will he manage to, at the same time, be accepted (amongst others) as the Messiah by the Jews and the Christ by the Christians.

Outwardly, he will look like a man. Spiritually, however, he will be the spirit of Antichrist, which seems to be the angel who is second-in-charge in Satan's kingdom of Darkness. He will be immensely charismatic and intelligent. Being supernaturally assisted by the remaining angel in Satan's top echelon (called the False Prophet in the book of Revelation), he will furthermore be able to do all sorts of miracles (powers, signs and lying wonders), thereby inducing the masses on earth to follow him and eventually to worship him.

He will be a great and super-successful political leader, who will come to power by means of a global crisis (probably financial) that would have hit the world. By presenting and implementing the solution, he will be recognized as a type of savior of the world. He will thus become one of the leaders, in fact the greatest leader, within the New World Order. All of Europe, as well as the Middle-East and Northern Africa will fall under his jurisdiction.

He will have his headquarters in Jerusalem.

He will manage to bring peace to the Middle-East, and sign a treaty with many nations, including Israel (who will accept him as the messiah). After three and a half years, he will break this treaty when he declares himself as god, presenting himself in the temple of God as god. From this point onwards, he will demand to be worshipped. He, together with the False Prophet, will also cause all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark of the beast.

Because God warned His children beforehand not to take the mark, and because to take the mark would have to be preceded by worshipping the beast and his image, all those Christians who honestly put the Lord Jesus Christ first in their lives, denying themselves in the process, will refuse to take the mark. This will herald the beginning of what is known, in Jesus' words, as 'the great tribulation'. For the next three and a half years, or 42 months, or 1260 days, the Beast will, with great fury, persecute everyone who has not received the mark. At the end of this period, the Rapture, together with the First Resurrection, will take place. (More about this later). At this point all of God's children who have persevered to the end will instantly receive resurrection bodies (like Jesus).

Then will God pour out His wrath on Satan's (and the Antichrist's) evil kingdom and destroy it from the face of the earth! The final phase will be the battle of Armageddon, when Jesus comes back to earth bodily, never to leave again! At this stage, both the Antichrist and the False Prophet is taken captive and cast into the Lake of Fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

Satan on the other hand, is cast into the Abyss and locked up for 1000 years. After the 1000 years he will be allowed one final time to again deceive the nations, and after that he too will be cast into the Lake of Fire where the Beast and the False Prophet already are.

Concerning Antichrist in his bodily form, this will be his end: The Lord will consume him with the breath of His mouth and destroy him with the brightness of His coming. ("And this shall be the plague with which the Lord will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet,

their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths."). This will then be the full and final end of Antichrist.

15.5 The First Resurrection, and the Second Resurrection

- In I Cor 15:22-24 we read: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order:
 - Christ the firstfruits,
 - afterwards those who are Christ's at His coming.
 - Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father.
- In Rev 20:4-6 we read: "And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."
- In John 5: 25 and 28,29 Jesus says: "Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth - those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation."
- In Acts 24:15,16 it states: "I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men."
- In Phil 3:7-11 Paul states that he considers all things that, previously, were important to him, as rubbish that he may gain Christ and be found in Him, "if , by any means, he may attain to the (out of) resurrection (out of) from (amongst) the dead."

From all this we make the clear distinction that, apart from Jesus' own resurrection (the Firstfruits from the dead), there will be two separate and quite different resurrections, namely the First and the Second.

The First Resurrection:

- The First Resurrection is also called the resurrection of life.
- Also called the resurrection of the just.
- It is the out-of resurrection, out-of from amongst the dead.
- Not anybody will attain to it, but only those who are worthy .
- Those who have part in the first resurrection are called 'blessed' and 'holy'.
- They will live and reign with Christ.
- They will inherit the kingdom of God.
- Over them the second death (Lake of Fire) has no power.
- They will be resurrected with glorious resurrection bodies, like Jesus.
- They are those who will be resurrected at Jesus' coming, which will precede the Millennial reign of Jesus Christ.
- They will be those who 'are Christ's at His coming'.
- This is the resurrection of the overcomers.
 - "He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death".
 - "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son".
 - "But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, . . . are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection".

We are admonished to 'press on, that we may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of us'; that we should 'forget those things which are behind and reach forward to those things which are ahead'; to 'press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus'; to 'strive to enter through the

narrow gate, for many will seek to enter and will not be able'; to 'run in such a way that we may obtain the prize.'

The Second Resurrection, on the other hand:

- Is called the resurrection of condemnation.
- Also called the resurrection of the unjust.
- It is a resurrection of the 'dead' (Rev 20:12,13). This means that all those who have never received life from Jesus will be 'delivered up' at this stage in order to be judged.
- They run the definite risk of being cast into the Lake of Fire.
- They have no reward.
- They do not receive resurrection bodies.
- They are brought before the throne of judgment at the end of the 1000 years millennial reign of Christ, in order to be judged according to what they had done while in their bodies.

15.6	The Great White Throne Judgment, versus The Judgment Seat of Christ
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These are two distinctly separate events.

Jesus will 'judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom' --- two separate events.

It is a fact that God the Father has given all judgment to the Son, therefore Jesus will be the One sitting on the Great White Throne one day, and He will also be the One before whose judgment seat the living will appear.

Comparing the two events, we discover concerning the Great White Throne judgment:

- It will occur 'at His kingdom'; that is, after the Millennial reign, when Jesus delivers the kingdom to God the Father. ("For He must reign till He (God the Father) has put all enemies under His feet"). This will be right at the end of the age when the old heaven and earth is to be replaced by the new heaven and earth.
- It is a judgment of the dead, not of the living. We must thus realize that no born again believer will appear before the Great White Throne:
 - "Most assuredly," Jesus says, "he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life."
 - Again He says: "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die."
 - Thus no born again believer is reckoned among the dead according to Scripture. For this reason the dead in Christ is often described as being 'asleep'.
- The nature of this judgment is condemnation, rather than reward.
- The very first to be judged is Satan himself (the Beast and the False Prophet having already been condemned and cast into the Lake of Fire one thousand years ago), and then his angels Death and Hades.
- We may safely assume that the remainder of Satan's kingdom of fallen angels and demons will be judged next.
 - At this point, let the reader take note that the Lake of Fire (everlasting fire) was specifically prepared for the devil and his angels.
 - It says that the devil, the beast, the false prophet, (and all of the rest of this evil kingdom) 'will be tormented in this fire day and night for ever and ever'.
 - Thus may the lie that has been perpetrated so very successfully that 'hell is made so that men and women can be tormented in it by the hand of Satan and his angels' be eradicated from the mind and judgment of the reader. Satan and his angels are in no position to torment in this Sea of Fire; rather, they are the chief inmates suffering torment themselves!
- Lastly, anyone not found written in the Book of Life is cast into the lake of fire.
 - Firstly, this includes ALL of the remainder of Satan's evil kingdom.

- Secondly, it will also include people who have rejected God's grace and mercy, and whose names have been erased from the Book of Life, or whose names possibly have never been written in the Book of Life.
- Concerning the Book of Life, Scripture teaches us:
 - That those whose names have not been written in the Book of Life, have not been written 'from the foundation of the world'.
 - This being so, those whose names have been written in it, have been written in it, also from the foundation of the world.
 - Thus we, as to be expected in light of the above, find NO single case of anybody's name ever being written into the Book of Life at any later stage (as tradition would try to teach us). Rather, we find several references or cases of someone's name to be blotted out of the Book of Life:
 - Rev 13:8 ; Ex 32:32,33 ; Rev 3:5 ; Ps 69:28 ; Phil 4:3 ; Luk 10:20 ; Rev 22:18,19
 - We must therefore realize that we are well-known to God from before the foundation of the world, and it is NOT as if we can deserve to be written into the Book of Life by what we do well. Rather, having received this grace, we have to hold fast what we have and not drift away and lose what could have been ours.
 - If there is any desire whatsoever in you to reach out to God, it is a sure thing that your name IS written in the Book of Life. Please respond accordingly with NO delay!

And we discover concerning 'The Judgment Seat of Christ':

- It will occur 'at His appearing', which is when He comes again at the end of the present age, and at the beginning of the Millennium.
- It will involve only the LIVING. That means that only born again believers will be judged here.
- Its main emphasis will be reward, rather than punishment.
 - "For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works."
 - "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts; and then each one's praise will come from God."
 - "Each one's work will become manifest; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."
 - In the parable of the talents (Mat 25) it is implied that, when Jesus returns to earth, He will render judgment concerning His servants; what they have done with what had been entrusted to them. This corresponds to the Judgment Seat of Christ. Again we see mainly reward. Yet we do see punishment, in that the unprofitable servant was cast out of the kingdom.
 - In the parable of the minas (Luke 19) we see the same thing. When Jesus comes back, He will immediately render judgment on His servants, according to what they have done with that which had been entrusted to them. Once again we see that the basic nature of the judgment is reward. And once again we see that the (totally) unprofitable servant loses what could have been his.
- There is, however, also the possibility of 'terror' involved in this judgment:
 - Paul says: "Therefore we make it our aim to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."
 - Jesus says: "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna."
 - It is at this judgment that some believers will be saved but, at the same time, will lose their souls (I Cor 3:15 ; Mat 16:24-27 ; 1 Cor 5:5).
 - More about 'The Saving of the Soul' at a later stage.

- All those who do not lose their soul, will receive reward from Jesus at this stage, which include receiving a resurrected body in the first resurrection, and inheriting the kingdom of God (becoming co-regents with Christ).

15.7	The Rapture
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In Revelation the final events are depicted as, first, the opening of seven seals.

The seventh seal then opens up into the blowing of seven trumpets. The first four of these are serious final warnings to mankind to make ready for the coming of the Lord. These come in the form of major global catastrophes. The final three trumpets are called 'Woes', implying that the nature of these is punishment, rather than warning. They herald the end of this present world system.

The final, which is the seventh or last trumpet, heralds the following events, which, certainly, are the most glorious and at the same time the most terrible events ever to occur in the history of mankind!

- First of all, we hear the voices of mighty angels in the heavens, heralding: "The kingdoms of this world have become that of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever!"
- Then the temple of God is opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant is seen in His temple.
- Then the First Resurrection takes place.
- And exactly coinciding with this, the Rapture takes place.
- After this, something like a sea of glass mingled with fire is seen in heaven. And those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, are seen standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb.
 - These are the overcomers coming through the Great Tribulation. They were either killed by Antichrist, in which case they were resurrected; or they survived to the end, in which case they were raptured.
- Then seven angels pour out seven bowls of wrath upon the earth, one by one. In these last plagues the wrath of God is complete. During this period the temple of God in heaven is inaccessible.
- At the end of this Jesus establishes His kingdom on earth.

All authority has been given to Jesus long ago. However, NOW the time has come for His kingdom to be proclaimed over the earth and for Satan and his kingdom to be destroyed!

But before the Lord pours out His wrath on the earth and its inhabitants, He first removes His own from there. This event is commonly known in Christian circles as the 'Rapture'.

And because God will not let either those who are asleep (have already died), nor those who are still living at this point in time to precede the other group, this translation from earthly bodies to heavenly bodies will occur simultaneously for both groups. Thus will the First Resurrection and the Rapture coincide.

Subsequent to this, we therefore see all of those who had part in either the First Resurrection or in the Rapture, standing with harps on the sea of glass in heaven.

The Rapture, thus,

- Will occur right at the end, right after the blowing of the last trumpet.
- Will be directly preceded by the great tribulation.
- Will coincide exactly with the First Resurrection.
- Will include all those who are alive and remain, who are Christ's at His coming.
 - These will be those who 'have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name'.
- Will be heralded with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God.

Those who partake in the Rapture

- Will receive new, glorious, resurrected bodies in 'a moment, in the twinkling of an eye'.

- Shall exchange corruption with incorruption, and mortality with immortality.
- Shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.
- Shall henceforth always be with the Lord.
- Shall be overcomers.
- Shall inherit the kingship of God.

15.8 The Harvest, the Reaping, the Threshing, the Gathering and the Burning

15.8.1 The Harvest

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

Never before in the history of mankind was there a harvest as great as at the present time. Over the past fifty to hundred years, the world population has literally exploded. How will everybody ever be reached with the good news of the Kingdom? How will this great harvest ever be brought in?

15.8.2 The Reaping

The greatest ingathering of souls ever in history is about to take place in what the Lord prophetically made known as the 'Final Revival'. This is the Reaping that is about to take place. It will be of a supernatural nature. Every nation, tribe, tongue, and people will hear the message of the kingdom of God. And everyone will see and understand that God is alive and powerful and involved in their lives. No one will be able to say, 'I did not know.'

15.8.3 The Threshing

After the reaping, a process of threshing has to follow to separate the chaff from the wheat. Now, in normal circumstances, the Lord brings that about in each of our lives in a gentle way which may take many years, and may require a variety of means.

The purpose of the 'threshing' is namely to rid us from the flesh, that the Spirit may remain: the new life, created according to God in true righteousness and godly character. Each of us, along the way, HAS to make a clear choice for Christ and against ourselves (that is, the interests and empowerment of the old life); denying our 'self', and following Jesus Christ, no matter what; loving Him MORE than myself!

The situation at the very end of the age is, however, such that no time remains for this threshing to occur at any leisurely pace. Thus will it have to be speeded up. And the way the Lord does that will be to allow the Antichrist to 'make war with the saints and to overcome them'. This is what Jesus called the 'Great Tribulation', and it will last for three and a half years. "Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time." "And the horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom."

During this tribulation, no one who does not worship the Beast and his image will be allowed to receive the mark with which to be able to buy or sell. This means that Christians who remain true to Jesus will ONLY be able to do so at the expense of denying themselves to the level of utter deprivation and quite possibly death - even being martyred in the process! He who perseveres to the end will truly be saved; will truly be an overcomer, as will everyone be who loses his life in the process!

This is the Threshing that is about to take place during the final three and a half years of this age, separating the wheat from the chaff.

15.8.4 The Gathering of the Wheat

John the Baptist witnesses concerning Jesus, that "His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

The 'gathering of His wheat into the barn' is the 'Rapture'.

By comparing I Thes 4:13-18 with I Cor 15:50-54, we see that, at the blowing of the Last Trumpet, the dead is raised at exactly the same instant in which those who are alive and remain are changed 'in the twinkling of an eye'. All those who are in Christ, whether 'asleep', or whether still alive, will at that moment receive glorious resurrection bodies, similar to that of Jesus after His resurrection. And then all of these together will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus they shall always be with the Lord!

This is the gathering of the wheat into the barn.

It corresponds with the "reaping of the earth's harvest" that we find in Rev 14:14-16.

15.8.5 The Burning of the Chaff

At the blowing of the Last (Seventh) Trumpet, we hear loud voices in heaven, joyfully proclaiming: "The kingdoms of this world have become that of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

Two thousand years before this event, ALL authority in heaven and on earth had already been given to Jesus Christ. For reasons known to Him, which includes that you and I living at this time still needed to come in, Jesus did not immediately cast the devil and his evil hordes into the lake of fire. No, He has patiently waited these two thousand years for the time to be right, before He will let His Kingdom come (as His people have been praying all these years). At the blowing of the Last Trumpet, presently, the time WILL be right! And THEN His Kingdom will come!

Now, the moment Jesus takes up the reins of this world, He will first of all cleanse it from all its filthiness! But before He does that, He will remove His own from the earth. That is the Rapture and the First Resurrection as described above. And once those who are His own are out of danger, He will pour out His wrath over this evil kingdom, in the form of the final seven Bowls of Wrath.

This is the Burning of the Chaff.

It corresponds with the "reaping of the Grapes of Wrath" in Rev 14:17-20.

No Christian, apart from those who have denied Jesus and have taken the mark of the beast, is left on earth at this stage.

The duration of this judgment is thought to be about ninety days. The nature of these plagues is so severe that, should it last much longer, no flesh would be saved. Be it as it may, these plagues cease at the battle of Armageddon where Jesus, at the head of the heavenly armies, vanquishes the Antichrist and his hordes.

15.8.6 The End, or rather, The Beginning

Subsequent to this, Jesus will set foot on the Mount of Olives, heralding the start of His reign of peace and prosperity on earth. He will set ALL things right and, at the conclusion of the thousand years, hand over the kingdom to God the Father.

Earth will be transformed into Paradise!

15.9 The Sheep and the Goats

In Matthew 25 we read: "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats."

15.9.1 When?

Clearly this occurs directly after the Second Coming.

15.9.2 Who will be with Jesus in glory?

Firstly, all His holy angels, as stated.

But, secondly, we must keep in mind that the saints of the First Resurrection and Rapture will 'always be with the Lord'. Thus they will also be with Jesus when He comes to sit on the throne of His glory. This is reaffirmed when Jesus, later on in this judgment, refers to 'one of the least of these My brethren'. Not angels, but born again, resurrected saints are 'brethren' of Jesus!

15.9.3 Who are the Nations?

These are the people who have survived the terrible times immediately preceding the present event. Few people on earth will have survived the Trumpet warnings and Woes, as well as the final seven Bowls of Wrath; probably less than ten percent of the original number.

Note, also, is that none of these are born again believers. These are all people who worshipped the beast and his image, and who took the mark. Believing Christians have already been removed from the earth, and are presently not before the throne, but behind the throne, with Jesus!

15.9.4 Who are the Sheep?

The sheep are those who have done something good to a Christian, albeit something quite small.

The description of the conditions in which these needy Christians were, fits the situation during the Great Tribulation when Christians would have been persecuted and would have been destitute. Thus the sheep had compassion on the needy Christians during the Tribulation.

Because of this, they are declared 'righteous' by Jesus and allowed into the Kingdom of God. They will henceforth repopulate the earth under the kingship of Jesus Christ. (The grace and mercy of God are amazing.)

Israel will be the ruling nation on earth. (Gathered together out of all the countries, and de-sinned, yet still being non-resurrected, human beings.) Meanwhile the true, heavenly rulership of the earth will reside with Jesus and His overcomers who will rule and reign with Him. These will have supernatural powers, and thus NO sin or transgression shall go unnoticed or unpunished. They will rule with a rod of iron. (Please remember that the sheep who will repopulate the earth have never been born again, and have not been de-sinned as Israel had. They will therefore need strong leadership in order to stay in line.)

15.9.5 Who are the Goats?

The goats are those individuals who, throughout the Tribulation period, had shown no compassion whatsoever to any Christian in need.

Because of this, Jesus sends them away into 'everlasting punishment.' That means, amongst other things, that they are destroyed bodily, because no body is 'everlasting'. This is reaffirmed when we look at the parable of

the minas (Luke 19), where 'those enemies of Jesus, who did not want Him to reign over them, were slain before Him.'

15.10	A Child is Born !
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15.10.1	Coming like a Thief
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Looking again at the Rapture, we note the following:

- It will occur directly after the Great Tribulation.
- The Tribulation will last for three and a half years, or 1260 days, or 42 months. (For no other event in Scripture does God provide us in advance with such a clear and well defined time span. The duration is even thrice reaffirmed in different measuring units! God is really serious to provide His people with this knowledge.)
- The beginning of the Tribulation will be when the 'Abomination of Desolation' (Antichrist) declares himself to be god, in the temple of God.
- Seeing the beginning as well as the duration of the Tribulation period will be well known, the timing of the Rapture will also be known in advance!
- The Rapture, however glorious it may be, will thus hardly be a surprise event!
- Furthermore, it will be heralded clearly and loudly with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God.

All of the above leads us to understand that the Rapture will NOT be where Jesus comes "like a thief". This will be ANOTHER event, PRIOR to the Tribulation!

Neither will the Rapture be the event concerning which Jesus states repeatedly that we should 'watch and pray', for we do not know when the time is, lest, 'coming suddenly', He finds us sleeping.

What, then, will this event be where Jesus comes suddenly, unexpectedly, like a thief??

The answer is that, before the beginning of the Tribulation, Jesus will come for those who are ready and waiting for Him; for those who are prepared for His coming and found worthy to go with Him!!

We find references to this in many places in Scripture:

- Luke 21:36 -- "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man."
- Rev 3:10 -- "Because you have kept the word of My patience, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth."
- Mat 25:10-13 -- "The Bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with Him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' But He answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming."
- Luke 12:37 -- "Blessed are those servants whom the Master, when He comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that He will gird Himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them."
- Rev 16:15 -- "Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."
- Heb 9:28 -- "To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time for salvation."
- I Thes 5:4,6,9 -- "But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ."

If there is one thing that the Lord wants us to take note of, it is this: To be ready and prepared; to watch and pray always, because He is coming suddenly and unexpectedly and only those who are ready and watching will

accompany Him! NO other message does Jesus in person give more clearly and more repeatedly than this one. From this we can deduct that Jesus really wants us to be ready!

15.10.2 The Child

In Revelation 12 we find the vision of the Woman, the Child and the Dragon:

The Woman, who is heavenly (spiritual) in nature, is about to give birth to a child. The Dragon, which is Satan, is ready to devour the child as soon as it is born. When the Child is born, he is caught up to God and to His throne. We now find that the woman has become earthbound and has to flee because the dragon persecutes her. She is, however, supernaturally protected for a period of 1260 days (the duration of the Tribulation). In the meantime war breaks out in heaven once the child arrives there. Satan and his angels are defeated, and cast down to the earth. Joy in heaven, but woe to the earth! The dragon, unable to harm the woman, and enraged with her, then turns upon the rest of her offspring, who 'keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.'

The meaning of this vision is as follows:

- The heavenly woman is the Church, which includes within it the origins of the church, namely Israel.
- The Dragon is Satan.
- The Child is the Overcoming Church, that is, those who are ready and watching at His coming when He comes to 'steal' them away. (More about this shortly.)
- The earthbound woman is the sealed ones of Israel (Rev 7). (The spiritual part having been taken away.)
- Those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, are the Christians remaining on earth after the child has been caught up to God. They will be the tribulation saints.

Time-wise, these events happen as follows:

- The woman having birth pangs, coincides with the prelude to the end-time events as described by Jesus in Mat 24:4-8.
- The birth of the child is roughly when 'sudden destruction' comes upon the earth (at a time when they say that there is 'Peace and Safety'). We believe it will be about ten years before Jesus finally sets foot on earth at His Second Coming.
- The point where Satan and his angels are cast down to earth, will probably be about seven years before the end.
- The point where the dragon turns in fury on the Christians, will be three and a half years before the end.

Even having given these time scales, we still have no idea as to when exactly the child will be born. Once the Child is born, we shall know where we stand, time wise, but in the meantime we HAVE to watch and pray and be prepared. It can be any moment now.

The birth of the child heralds the beginning of the final events of this age. For this reason we believe that the birth of the child is represented by the Feast of Trumpets, which is the next feast to be fulfilled. Quite possibly this event where Jesus will come secretly to take away the overcoming church, will occur during this feast one of these years.

15.10.3 Is this child not Jesus?

It is not uncommon for this child to be seen as being Jesus. This, however, cannot be, for the following reasons:

- a. The woman cannot be a picture of Mary by any stretch of the imagination.
- b. All of Revelation is given by Jesus, and He furthermore clarifies that it concerns things which 'must shortly take place', implying future events.
- c. Jesus never was caught up to God and to His throne directly after birth.

15.10.4 Why do we say that the child represents the overcoming church?

The answer to this is that the child is to 'rule all nations with a rod of iron'. This is true of only Jesus and the overcoming church! And they will do it as ONE.

In Rev 2:26,27 - Jesus says: "And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations. He shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the potter's vessels shall be broken to pieces' - as I also have received from My Father. And I will give him the morning star."

This reference to the morning star is a further indication that the child will be born before the Second Coming of Christ (the latter being like the rising of the sun).

15.10.5 He who now restrains

Another fact concerning this child is that it, specifically, is a MALE child.

In 2 Thes 2:7 we read: "For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way (Literally: 'until he is to become out of the midst'). And then the lawless one will be revealed."

In this case it very clearly is a male person having been removed; therefore it cannot be the church itself, because the church is feminine. Neither can it be the Spirit, because the Spirit is neuter.

Again looking at Rev 12, we see that Satan is cast to earth AFTER the child has been taken up to the throne of God.

From all this we deduct that what is presently retaining the lawless one (Antichrist) to make his entry and appearance on the world scene is the fact that this male child has not been born yet. God will not allow the Antichrist to be revealed before the child has been taken away!

15.10.6 The Child-Mother Relationship

As an unborn child develops, it progressively, more and more, becomes a separate entity from the mother. Even though it still is inside the mother, being part of her, and has come forth from her, yet it becomes separate from her more and more, day by day, until it is ready to be birthed and thus to be completely separated from her.

This might well be the experience of the Child at the present time, concerning his relationship to the mother church.

15.10.7 The Greatest Event!

The birth of the child is the greatest single event about to happen in the history of mankind, next to Jesus rising from the dead!

This explains why Jesus underlines the importance of nothing else as much as He does the fact that we **MUST** be ready, because He comes at an unexpected hour and day! He **WANTS** us to be part of this great event!

Beloved, LET us be ready!

15.10.8 Before the Throne of God

"And her Child was caught up to God and to His throne."

The next scene we have concerning the Child is found in Rev 14:1-5. This is before the throne of God, where we find 'the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.'

Again we see that the Child is the overcoming church, in that it is given to the Lamb, WITH the overcomers, to 'rule the nations with a rod of iron'. Jesus, of course, is and always will be the Head of the church.

Furthermore we discover that these have the Father's name written on their foreheads. This is further affirmation that they are overcomers, because we read concerning the overcomers that Jesus will 'write on them the name of His Father.' (Rev 3:12)

And then we have to take note that the symbolic number of one hundred and forty four thousand is the number of super-government, twelve being God's number for rulership. Twelve-times-twelve-times-a-thousand, then implies 'many, partaking in government of the government'. Also note the many twelves occurring in the dimensions of the New Jerusalem, which will be the capitol of the universe with the Lamb and His overcomers ruling and reigning over everything from here.

We may be reasonably certain of the fact that this is a purely symbolic number. If it were an exact number, it would imply that Jesus would possibly have to show some away on the grounds that there are no more 'vacancies' available. This is absolutely foreign to the ability, character and calling of God, who assures us that there are many mansions in the Father's house, and who encourages us all to run the race and to finish it with joy!

15.10.9 More about the Child

Let us jot down what we know about this Child:

- Born out of the church.
- Destined for rulership.
- United with the Lamb, being one with Him.
- Belonging to God the Father, doing everything in His name, having His name on their foreheads.
- Singing a new song before the throne, which no one could learn except the hundred and forty four thousand (This is probably the song of the Lamb, referred to in Rev 15:3, at which point the saints from the Rapture and First Resurrection have joined the Child before the throne, and together they sing the song of Moses AND the song of the Lamb.)
- Redeemed from the earth, implying that they were physically alive at the time of 'redemption'.
- Redeemed from among men, implying that others will be left behind, whilst they will be redeemed.
- Firstfruits to God and to the Lamb, implying that these will receive resurrected bodies (!!) even before the First Resurrection. In I Cor 15:23, Jesus in His resurrection is referred to as the 'Firstfruits'. Therefore, the 'firstfruits to God and to the Lamb' refers to a similar but subsequent event. Furthermore, flesh and blood cannot appear before the throne of God. Whilst these are redeemed from among men, they cannot simply be there spiritually, because all the redeemed who have died through the ages would then be included in their number, which, clearly, is not the case. The only way for them to appear before the throne of God, then, would be with resurrected bodies.
- They are without fault before the throne of God, which can be clearly understood within the context of the above.
- The following are required in order to be part of the child:
 - To follow the Lamb wherever He goes.
 - That no guile be found in your mouth.
 - To be a virgin, not being defiled with women.
 - This is to be understood in a spiritual sense:
 - × Firstly, seeing we cannot follow the Lamb physically, and the Lamb also is not a physical entity which I follow, we must understand this statement in a spiritual sense.
 - × This implies that we must then understand the statement concerning being defiled with women also in a spiritual sense.
 - × Secondly, there is nothing dirty about a woman; thus the statement should be understood spiritually.
 - × Thirdly, both men and women will be included in the number of the overcoming child; thus the statement should be understood spiritually.

- A woman which defiles, is a harlot.
- A spiritual harlot is a false religion, acting out of personal gain, asking money or other payment, gaining allegiance and even dedication in the place of Jesus.
- Thus the meaning of this is that we are not to give our allegiance, time, money, attention, etc. to any religion, but singly and devotedly to the person of our Lord Jesus Christ! (2 Cor 11:2-4) This process where religion steals our allegiance away from Jesus happens extremely subtly and has been set up by Satan over many centuries. In order to explain just one quick example of how it is manifested: If Jesus says, 'Be baptized', and the religion you are in says, 'That is not necessary. Just sprinkle your babies and call it baptism'; what do you do? To whom do you give your allegiance? This is spiritual harlotry!
- This does not mean that we must not worship together with other saints anymore. We should! But we must NOT worship the specific religion or church we are in by fornicating with it instead of giving our dedication solely and completely to the person of Jesus Christ. And, beloved, this stealing away of our dedication by the harlot happens very insidiously and subtly. Be careful!!

15.10.10 The Three Messages

In Rev 14:6-11 we read about three messages being pronounced to those who dwell on the earth - to every nation, tribe, tongue and people.

In most translations this is indicated as being angels that will give these messages. Well, this may be the case, but there might also be another possibility which we will explain here, and that is that it will actually be the hundred and forty four thousand (the Child) who will be the ones to proclaim these messages all over the world before the end will come.

- The Greek word 'angelos' actually means a 'messenger'.
- The Lord never designated angels to proclaim the gospel, but He DID send forth His disciples with that mission.
- In Mat 9:37,38 and also in Luke 10:2, Jesus states that 'the harvest is truly great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest'. And in both cases this is followed by Jesus sending out His disciples to go and proclaim His message of the kingdom of God (the gospel). Never will the harvest be as great as now, at the end of the age. We believe that the hundred and forty four thousand will be the laborers which will bring in the harvest.
- 'Flying in the midst of heaven' implies the speed with which this final task will be done, and also points out the supernatural way in which this will be accomplished.

The time for these messages to be proclaimed will come, and at that point in time all three will be totally understandable by everybody.

15.11 The Mark of the Beast

"And he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."

15.11.1 What will the Mark of the Beast be?

At this point in time, we know that it will be a computer chip, implanted under the skin.

Presently the movement is strongly and rapidly in the direction of electronic bank transfers, rather than the continued use of cash. What started off as a credit card trend, has now moved into the sphere of debit cards,

with which all of your financial transactions will soon be made. The debit card has an on-board computer chip with enough intelligence and memory to perform all necessary functions.

One small step away, will bring us to the point where ALL your information will be on one single card. This will include your ID, driver's license, passport, bank balance, etc.

The BIG problem, however, is that this card can be stolen, or can break, or can be lost. The solution to this is to implant the very same computer chip which is on the plastic card, under the skin of its owner.

This is a really viable and elegant solution, and it is presently being tested out all over the world by selected groups (often groups of employees of big banks).

It can be understood that, without this chip, or 'mark', you will be NOBODY: having no ID, no driver's license, no money, no nothing, and no ability to either buy or sell anything.

15.11.2 What will be necessary in order to get it?

You will have to worship the Beast and his image, thereby DENYING THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

This is the problem for the Christian; not really the technology behind the mark or chip.

15.11.3 What does Jesus have to say concerning this?

In this regard Jesus said: "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. Whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven."

He will also have the following message be proclaimed to everybody on earth: "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation."

15.11.4 What will happen to those who do not take the mark?

They will be destitute, not being able to buy or sell.

Furthermore, they will be persecuted, martyred and killed.

15.12 The Great Tribulation

Jesus describes this time directly following the event where Antichrist declares himself to be god, and institutes the mark as being compulsory, as 'great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.'

During this time the beast will be given authority to continue for forty-two months, and it will be granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.

Beloved, this will be a terrible time. You do NOT want to partake in it. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.

One consolation is that its duration has been limited by God to 1260 days, or 42 months, or three and a half years: a very well defined time period. The tribulation saints will be able to know when it will all end!

We also believe that the Lord will provide these saints with support during this terrible time; quite possibly through the ministry of the hundred and forty-four thousand throughout this time period.

15.13 The Seven Seals

The seven seals seal the scroll which is in the right hand of Him who sits on the throne.

Only one who is worthy may open these seals. {Wherever seals are used to declare the content of something to be exclusive in nature, only the designated, worthy person may open the seal(s)}

When seals are broken, they reveal something which has been hidden or concealed before.

What is being revealed has been there already, but is now revealed. No particular time sequence ought to be read into what is being revealed, apart from the fact that, in this case, the scroll is a legal document which, as it is finally fully opened, is proclaimed as binding and legal.

What IS proclaimed at the completion of the opening of the seventh seal, is the Kingdom of God coming to earth! And the Lamb slain certainly is the worthy Inheritor and King of this Kingdom! Thus, the scroll is the proclamation and title deed of the Kingdom, also containing the history of its establishment.

The seals, then, are part of God's plan for the redemption of mankind and the establishment of His kingdom on earth - for the redemption of all of His creation into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

And the seals reveal (for that is what they do), not only what has occurred in the past concerning the complete plan of redemption, but they also reveal the final climaxes of that plan.

What we present in the following paragraphs is done in humility and honesty, being what we have heard and understood from Father God. We fully realize how every second interpreter of Scripture tends to give his own conclusions, and then, sometimes, quite aggressively. May that not be the case here, but may the Holy Spirit guide us into all truth.

15.13.1 The White Horse

The popular interpretation here is that the rider on the white horse is the antichrist, seeing that his bow has no arrow. What God has revealed to us, however, is quite different to this.

The first seal is the beginning of redemption, and the last seal is the consummation of redemption. It starts out with the Prince of Peace setting out to conquer, and it is completed by the Son of God - the Prince of Peace - taking up the reins of authority over all the kingdoms of this world. And thus all the world shall be saved through Him. As it starts with the Son of God, so shall it also end with Him on the throne of His kingdom - unto all eternity.

Jesus' victory is complete! He does not go out to fight, but to conquer. He has conquered already, and thus will He also conquer. He wears the crown.

As a final climax and end time event, this horse and its rider represents the Victory Child of Rev 12, being victorious and going forth to victory - even to the extent that Satan and his followers are cast out of the heavens! This Child is ONE with Christ, and he does receive a crown, being destined to rule the nations.

A final thought in this regard is that the birth of the Child will thus herald the beginning of the final events - the final climaxes of God's plan of redemption.

15.13.2 The Red Horse

In the wake of the Son of God comes the Destroyer, yet being allowed to destroy peace from the face of the earth - but only for a season. For when the end comes, he will be cast into the Lake of Fire - even the antichrist, for it is he sitting on the red horse.

And even as the message of the Prince of Peace shall go forth across the length and breadth of the earth as never before; even so shall the Destroyer be allowed to take away peace from the face of the earth as never before. And in his wake shall be destructions until the end. Not for nothing does Jesus call him the Abomination of Desolation!

15.13.3 The Black Horse

This is famine sweeping the earth. And at the time of the end even more than ever before. The famine comes in the wake of the Destroyer having taken away peace from the earth.

But know then, that even as the Prince of Peace gives peace in the hearts of men; and even as the Destroyer destroys that peace in the hearts of men, rather than in the physical; even so is this famine not as much a famine in the physical, but a famine of true wheat and true barley; of true wine and true oil - of mature, spirit-filled children of God : inheritors of the Kingdom of God; followers of the Prince of Peace despite all obstacles, persevering unto the end; conquerors over the work and influence of the Destroyer.

Concerning the rider on the black horse: his name is Satan. For it has been given to him to test those on the earth; to accuse the brethren, to oppose the church; to mislead and to deceive. He is the author of this famine, for by his designs are good seed being destroyed, being eaten by the birds of the air; being made unfruitful by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life. It is by his designs that the children of men are deceived into serving religion rather than the Son of God. It is by his designs that the truth of the gospel is diluted into what suits men rather than what has been decreed by the King in fulfilling the designs and purposes of His kingdom. It is by his designs that Christians do not grow into maturity and that few will be ready to meet the Lord when He comes.

"And do not harm the oil and the wine".

The oil, we believe, refers to the hundred and forty-four thousand spirit-filled, overcoming Christians of Rev 12 and 14; whilst the wine refers to the hundred and forty-four thousand sealed ones of Israel (Rev 7, and the desert woman of Rev 12), which at present is but water, but who will be changed into wine at Jesus' coming. In the case of neither of these two groups will Satan be allowed to steal and to destroy!

15.13.4 The Pale Horse

This should first and foremost be understood spiritually rather than physically.

It has been decreed for all men to die; yet the Son of God has come that all may have life!
But this life is robbed from all but a few!

What is happening here is that people are drawn and forced into Death and Hades because they have not accepted the Rider on the White Horse. And that has been happening all along. Yet shall it reach vast proportions in the last time, through pestilences and famine and wild beasts and the sword - implying the spiritual designs that shall be used and have been used to destroy men.

'Wild beasts' are the spiritual hosts of wickedness, attacking, devouring, and destroying men who have no protection.

'Pestilence' is wrong teaching poisoning men's minds and hearts, and causing death on a large scale.

'The sword' is man attempting to attain to his own salvation, but being destroyed by his own efforts.

'Famine' is lack of teaching, lack of knowledge, lack of the true Word of God - eventually leading to death.

Concerning the 'fourth part of the earth': this can be seen as a physical reality in the end time, that a quarter of all people on earth shall die. However, this should, even so, not be seen in disproportion to what Death and Hades have been doing to those who could have received eternal life throughout the ages.

15.13.5 The Martyrs

The fifth seal concerns all those who, through the centuries, have received life (were born again) and, as far as this world is concerned, were rejected, abused and even put to death. Their number shall be completed during the coming Tribulation.

All of them receive white robes (resurrection bodies), signifying their status as overcomers.

15.13.6 Destruction of Satan's kingdom

The sixth seal concerns the consummation of all things, when the kingdom of Satan shall be finally destroyed and annihilated.

It starts where Satan and his entire kingdom is thrown out of the heavens, like stars falling to earth.

Then his previous abode in the heavens is cancelled ('rolled up like a scroll').

Finally, all his kingdoms, great and small, and all his people on earth, great and small, are 'moved out of their place' and forced to flee and to hide before the coming King, trying to hide from His wrath.

15.13.7 The Trumpets

The seventh seal reveals actual happenings acting as warnings right at the end, and culminating in the Son of God coming on the clouds to receive His own unto Himself. And then shall the end come.

15.14 The Seven Trumpets

The trumpets herald the imminent coming of the kingdom of God.

The first four trumpets are warnings.

The final three trumpets are called 'woes', because they are sent as punishment on an unrepentant world population.

These trumpet events are real and not symbolic, even if it is real in the spiritual realm, like, for example, the hordes of demons being let loose from the abyss.

15.14.1 A Comet strikes the Earth

The first four trumpets are separate events, probably a few days apart, but all stemming from the same source, namely a comet striking the earth.

The first trumpet is the tail striking some continent (probably Africa). The tail, consisting of many chunks of material, will cause a rain of fire and hail as it passes through the atmosphere. This will cause widespread death and destruction, especially to vegetation.

The second trumpet is the main body plunging into an ocean (probably the Pacific). This will manifest as something like a great mountain burning with fire that strikes the sea. This, then, will cause massive tidal waves, and the sheer shock of the impact will kill a great part of all living organisms in the sea around the area of the impact. Many ships will be destroyed, and many lives will be lost.

The third trumpet will be a broken-off secondary mass of the comet that will strike a water-rich area (probably the Amazon base). This will poison all the water around the area of the impact, and will, like the previous trumpets, cause widespread death.

The name of the comet will be Wormwood, or Bitter, or some other name related to this.

Subsequent to this, the resulting dust and root fall-out in the upper atmosphere will blank out the sun, moon and stars for the greater part of the day across large areas of the earth. This is the fourth trumpet. This will also be the fulfillment of the prophecy that the moon will become like blood, and the sun like a sackcloth of hair.

15.14.2 Woe! Woe! Woe!

The final three trumpets are called "woes", because their purpose is punishment and no longer simply a warning.

The beginning of these woes will be after Satan is thrown out of heaven to earth.

In the case of the fifth trumpet, the Spirit of Antichrist (here called the Destroyer, or Abaddon, or Apollyon) will lead a myriad of demons in an attack upon all those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. (In fact, at the time when this will happen, these men will probably already have the mark of the beast on their foreheads.) They will not harm any vegetation, neither will they kill anybody. But they will torment these men so badly that they will seek to rather die!

This will last for five months.

These demons would have been released from the bottomless pit by Satan,

The sixth trumpet is, probably, angels that are unleashed to kill a third of mankind.

Alternatively, it is a nuclear war in the Middle East. The fire, smoke and brimstone may refer to the killing power of nuclear weapons: the direct explosion, the resultant shockwaves and flying debris, and the nuclear fall-out. The breastplates of red, yellow and blue may refer to Russia, China and the UN (or USA).

Be it as it may, a third of mankind is killed by these plagues, and the rest did not repent.

This plague will last for thirteen months. (Prophetically a day constitutes a year, and an hour will constitute one twelfth of a day, being a month. The repetition of the time in Rev 9:15 is an affirmation of the duration of the plague.)

15.14.3 The Last Trumpet

The last trumpet heralds the destruction of Satan's kingdom and the entrance of the kingdom of God. Its conclusion is the Battle of Armageddon and the Return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The following chain of events takes place after the sounding of the seventh trumpet:

- At the final opening of the final seal, God's kingship over the earth is proclaimed.
- The First Resurrection and the Rapture take place. (God removes His people from the earth.)
- The temple of God in heaven is opened and the ark of His covenant will be seen in His temple. This means that He will now fulfill His covenant and bring all His promises to fulfillment.
- Seven angels pour out the seven last plagues on the earth, thereby bringing the wrath of God to completion. The final one of these plagues will be the battle of Armageddon.
- Jesus Christ comes to earth as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

15.15 The Final Countdown

We fully realize that, in trying to put a time scale to the final events, we enter the sphere of conjecture. Scripture says that we now know in part, but one day we shall know fully. We agree that we know only in part. One day when all these events are fulfilled, we shall know fully.

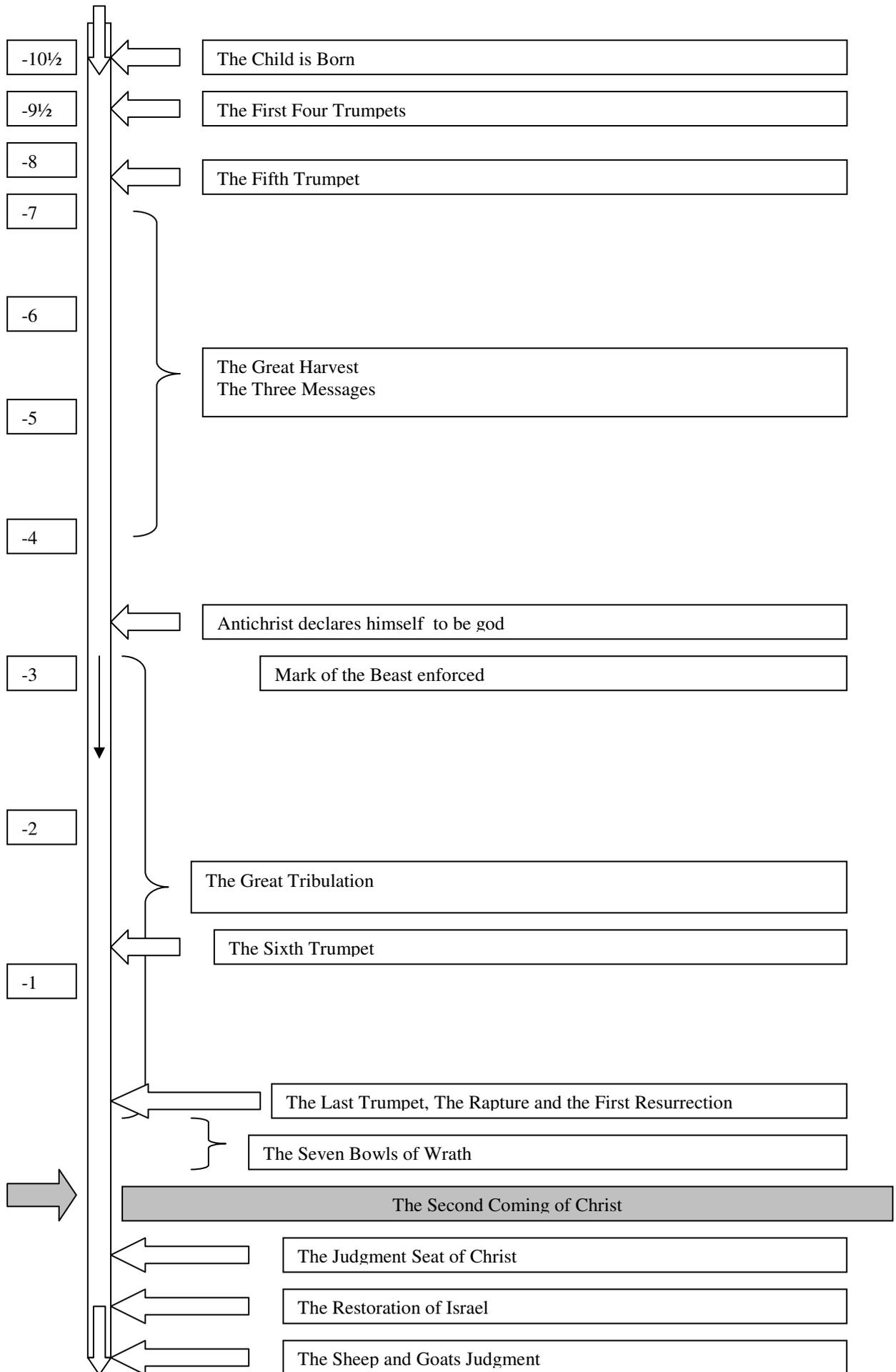
In Search of Truth

In the meantime, however, we present the light that we believe we have received and understood from the Lord in humility and in honesty. Time will show out any mistake or misconception, and as it is shown out, we will gladly correct the mistake.

We believe that, by presenting what we do, it will contribute to understanding what the Lord has provided us with.

Refer to next page: All time indications are taken backward from the actual Second Coming, and are measured in years. Thus '-8' means 'eight years before the Second Coming'. Etc.

We do NOT know the exact time of the first event on the final countdown calendar. Once we know that, all else will be able to be predicted accurately. Thus, once the 'Child is born' the remainder of the calendar will be known.



16 Two Trees in the Garden

Why did God allow the possibility of sin to man??

Why did He put the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden??

What is the meaning of the Tree of Life?

These are questions that we should ask, because God certainly knew ahead of time that man would fall into sin. And God certainly knew ahead of time that it would take the death of His Son on a cross to redeem man again! Why then did God even allow it to happen?

Because God requires from every man and every woman to, with his OWN free will, choose either for or against Him!! Because God chose, in this way, to obtain a Bride for His Son. A Bride who will willingly choose Him above herself, and who will count His will and interests higher than her own! Without the possibility to choose against Him, the choice for Him would be empty and without meaning. It would be void of love and meaning.

For God there is no room for both love and self-interest to co-exist. That is why He will forever force this issue. In the Great Tribulation, with the Mark of the Beast, He will again force this issue: Either love Him or love yourself; either deny Him, or deny self. He considered this worth His own humiliation and self-sacrifice unto death. He will once again force this issue at the end of the Millennium when He will release Satan from the Abyss and allow him to deceive the nations. All the many people born during the preceding 1000 years will also have to make this choice: For God or against God.

What an astounding fact! And at the same time how clear to understand. God, being who He is, and given the abilities that He has, never gets caught unawares or unprepared. Therefore it means that God, already knowing what the price for redemption would be, considered the end result of this plan of action worth the price it would take!! Thus we should never underestimate the level of importance that the Lord attaches to the exercise of my own free will in either choosing for Him or against Him, all through life's many decisions.

The Son was willing to pay this price for His Bride!

The Bride will be those who are willing to pay the same price for her Bridegroom! This also means that she will bear up joyfully under the trials and tribulations of this life, having her heart filled with love and hope and faith concerning her Bridegroom-to-be.

Where man chooses himself or his own advancement, it is the same as choosing the Tree of Knowledge.

Where man chooses the Lord Jesus and His interests and will above his own, it is the same as choosing the Tree of Life. {Jesus IS the Life.}

Jesus warns repeatedly that whoever seeks to find his soul shall lose it, and whoever loses his soul for the sake of Jesus shall find it! He who eats from the tree of knowledge shall die, but he who eats from the tree of life shall live.

Beloved, let us live the way Jesus admonished us to live: denying myself daily, taking up my cross and following Him wherever He may lead. And to persevere in this all my days until I can rejoice with Paul in saying that I also have finished my race, have kept the faith and am about to receive the crown of righteousness from the Lord.

Looking at all the suffering and woe in the world, we conclude that it is the result of man's sin; and as man sins more and more, even so the suffering and woe increase. Yet, at the same time, the suffering of this present age is the way in which and by means of which the Lord tests and refines our love and hope and faith in Him, that it may be found to praise, honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

And now for the good news of the gospel: the kingdom of God is coming, and then all unrighteousness, all sin, all suffering and all woes shall forever be something of the past. And God will abide with man on the New Earth forever more. And the Son and His overcomers (everyone who has made the correct choice and stuck to it, no matter what) shall forever be together with eternal joy, ruling and reigning over all of the universe. Hallelujah!

17 The Saving of the Soul

17.1 Introduction

Nowhere in the Bible do we find: "Only believe, and your soul shall be (or is) saved." Yet this seems to be what is being preached on a global scale ??

What DO we find in Scripture?

- "He who finds his soul will lose it, and he who loses his soul for My sake will find it." Matt. 10:39
- "For whoever desires to save his soul will lose it, but whoever loses his soul for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will man give in exchange for his soul?" Mark 8:35-37
- "For whoever desires to save his soul will lose it, but whoever loses his soul for My sake will save it. For what advantage is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?" Luke 9:24-25 (Also Mat. 16:25-27)
- "Whoever seeks to save his soul will lose it, and whoever loses his soul will preserve (lit. 'birth into life') it." Luke 17:33
- "He who loves his soul will lose it, and he who hates his soul in this world will keep it for eternal life." John. 12:25
- "... receiving the end (perfection, lacking nothing to completion) of your faith - the salvation of your souls." 1 Pet. 1:9
- "For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 'For yet a little while, and He Who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.' But we are not of those who draw back to being lost, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul." Heb. 10:36-39
- "In your patience possess (acquire as a personal possession) your souls." Luke 21:19
- "And they overcame . . . (because) they did not love their souls (lives) to the death." Rev 12:11

And so we see again and again that the soul is never saved already; rather, it will be saved (future tense) if I fulfill the necessary requirements. The words quoted above are almost exclusively addressed to Jesus' disciples. This means that Christians run the risk of losing their souls! Please take note, beloved! Jesus does love you, but He will not ever go back on His word, nor on the principles involved. In order to save your soul, you have to do at least two things, namely:

- 1) Lose your soul in this life for the sake of Jesus and the gospel.
- 2) Endure until the end, in the sense of persevering in living faith as well as in 'not loving your soul unto death'.

Further distinctions:

- God gives eternal life.
- You have to lose your soul in order that it may be saved.

- God invites the virgins to the wedding.
- They have to be ready with enough oil in their vessels.

- God provides spiritual birth.
- You have to do the growing up (which, spiritually, is done at the expense of the self-life, or soul).

17.2 What is the Soul?

The soul is the LIFE in the body, i.e. the 'self-life' as opposed to biological life.

It entails the character, the personality, your natural gifts and deficiencies, mental ability, decision making power, cognitive abilities, emotional content, willpower, etc., etc.

The soul is YOU. Your body is merely the vehicle, or the home, or tent wherein you dwell on earth.

If the soul leaves the body, the body is dead. (e.g. Gen 35:18)

Furthermore, the soul, upon leaving the body, seems to take with it the character and knowledge imbedded within it. (In post-death experiences, events and persons from earth can be recognized)

In the beginning God created man's body out of the dust of the earth, and then breathed life into it and 'it became a living soul'. God breathed the life of the soul into it.

In near-death or post-death experiences, man leaves his body and can somehow see the body staying behind whilst his soul departs.

Synonyms for the soul used in Scripture, is self and also life, although this life ('psyche') is not to be confused with the LIFE ('zoe') that Jesus gives us. The latter is of a very much higher nature than the soul life.

When sin entered man, it essentially entered his soul, causing it to become self-centered and therefore missing the entire purpose for man's creation, which was to be God-centered and not self-centered. Sinning means to 'miss the mark'. From the day of the fall and onwards, man's inherent tendency is to serve and even worship himself. In sin, God is either seen as the problem, or He is seen as being there to help ME and make ME prosperous. This is sin! And it resides in the soul of man. The truly righteous man will deny the demands of the soul to have its own way, and will honor the righteous requirement that God's will be done!

17.3 What is the difference between the soul and the spirit?

In many theological circles, the soul and the spirit is considered to be one and the same. That this certainly is not the case, is made clear by the following Scriptures:

- "But the soulish man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I Cor 2:14
- "There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies; but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another. So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown a soulish body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a soulish body, and there is a spiritual body." I Cor 15:40, 42, 44
- "And so it is written, 'The first man Adam became a living soul.' The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the soulish, and afterward the spiritual. The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven." I Cor 15:45-47
- "Now may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." I Thes 5:23
- "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit." Heb 4:12
- "This wisdom does not descend from above (spiritual), but is earthly, soulish, demonic." James 3:15
- "These are soulish persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit." Jude 19

Whereas the soul is the seat of sin, the spirit is the seat of righteousness.

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The soul is the life of man in the body.
The spirit is the life of God in man.

The soul is earthly.
The spirit is heavenly.

The soul seeks itself and its own interests. It is self-centered.
The spirit seeks the things of God. It is God-centered.

The soul is the life of the first birth. (Flesh begets flesh).
The spirit is the life of the second birth; the birth from above. (Spirit begets spirit).

The soul is born of man.
The spirit is born of God.

The soul is the life in the soulish body (which is perishable).
The spirit is the life in the spiritual body to come at the resurrection (which is imperishable).

The soul is life-consuming.
The spirit is life-giving.

The soulish comes first.
The spiritual comes afterwards.

The soul is to be saved.
The spirit is saved already.

The soul can die, perish, be lost.
The spirit is imperishable, like God is.

The soul carries the imprint and character of fallen man.
The spirit carries the imprint and character of God.

Certainly, the spirit and the soul is NOT one and the same!

17.4 What does it mean to 'lose' your soul?

Firstly, a remark: The reader should know that many translations render the Greek word 'psyche' as 'life' in English. The correct translation of this word, however, remains 'soul', because with 'life' we understand the concept of being alive, that is to breathe and move, etc. For this reason the translators of, for example, the New King James version of the Bible find it impossible to be consistent in translating 'psyche' as 'life' in Mat 16:25 and 26. The context of the Scripture forces them to change over to the correct translation of 'soul' in verse 26. In the original Greek, however, the same word ('psyche') is used consistently throughout. This is important to know, because the concept of 'losing your (physical) life in order to save it' makes no sense at all, and is for this reason largely ignored by Christians. In this way one of the MOST important principles that Jesus gave us is ignored!!

Jesus puts 'losing of the soul' opposite to the following concepts:

- Finding the soul. (Mat 10:39 and 16:25)
- Saving the soul. (Mark 8:35 and Luke 9:24)
- Preserving the soul. {Literally: To "bring forth alive", or to "give birth into 'zoe'-type life"} (Luke 17:33)
- Keeping the soul for eternal life. (John 12:25)
- Receiving the soul as a purchased possession. (Heb 10:39)

Jesus also makes the following statement: "In your patience possess your souls." (Luke 21:19) {Literally: 'Acquire as a personal possession'}

From the above it becomes quite clear that, should you lose your soul, it means that you will not have it in the life to come. It will be taken away from you and will no longer be yours. You will not have it even though you may have eternal life. You will be 'found naked'.

Eternal life is something received as a gift from the Lord. Saving the soul is something to be earned by denying yourself daily in favor of Jesus.

17.5	Is the soul immortal?
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Again, in the greater part of today's theological Christianity it is accepted as a given that the soul is immortal. It seems to be one of the untouchable tenets of the 'faith'. Yet, that assumption is not substantiated by Scripture at all! In fact, the opposite is true:

- Ez 18:4 -- "The soul who sins shall die."
- James 5:19,20 -- ". . . let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins."

Granted, the soul does not die with the body, or at the time the body dies. In fact, the instant the soul leaves the body, the body is dead. The day of judgment, however, is the time when souls shall be judged and possibly condemned. Many souls shall be lost, or shall be cast aside to perish. (Mat 10:28)

Again, we do not yet understand the mechanism of this; but we know that the soul that is 'lost' shall not enter eternal life and shall die.

17.6	Is the spirit immortal?
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The answer to this is a clear 'Yes'.

In fact, all spirit beings, including angels and even Satan, are immortal.

Those who have been born of God, that is in spirit, shall live eternally.

When Jesus say that, "I AM the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" - He certainly did not refer either to the body, or to the soul, because everybody has those whether they believe in Jesus or not! No, He referred to the new life of the spirit that He Himself earned and gave to those who believe into Him.

Therefore, whether we lose our soul or not, it still and forever remains true that "he who believes in Jesus shall never die," because the new life of the spirit that we receive from God is immortal. In this way will many Christians receive eternal life, having been born again, but they will lose their souls (and with it also an inheritance in the Kingdom of God), because they refrained from doing what Jesus commanded them to do: To lose their souls for His and the gospel's sake; to deny themselves daily and to follow Jesus wherever He may lead.

Note: There is also a downside to being immortal: there is no redemption possible if the spirit should sin. For this reason Satan and his angels will be punished forever in the Lake of Fire. This aspect is so serious that Paul, in I Cor 5, actually delivered somebody to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus! We also see that God very purposefully kept Adam and Eve away from the Tree of Life after they had sinned. Should they in this sinful state have received eternal life, no redemption would ever have been possible for them. Jesus had to come to give us new life in God, that is without sin. "He that is born

of God cannot sin, because he is born of God." The sinful flesh, on the other hand, will and must die, ridding us forever from sin!

17.7	What are the consequences if the soul is lost?
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Now, exactly what will happen to your soul once you have lost it, is unknown to us at present. It may simply be cast onto a spiritual garbage heap; it may perish and disappear altogether; or something else. But we do know that you will have lost it forever, and with it you will lose much, much more.

Jesus says, "Do not fear those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna." This points to the seriousness of losing the soul; the body will then be lost also. He who loses his soul shall also not receive a resurrection body.

In Rom 8:17 it says that we "are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ IF indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together." The essence of the suffering of Jesus is that He relinquished His own will and interests in favour of God the Father and for the sake of mankind. If we do not do likewise it would imply that we do not suffer with Him and will also not be co-heirs with Him.

Thus the first consequence of a lost soul is that he will NOT inherit all things with Christ. He will lose his inheritance!

In Rev 21:7 we read that, "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son."

Thus the second consequence of a lost soul is that that person will NOT be an overcomer. As a result of that all the following blessings are lost:

- Receiving sonship.
- Inheriting the kingdom of God.
- Receiving co-regency with Christ.
- Being accepted as Bride of Christ.
- Receiving access to the Tree of Life, or to the New Jerusalem.
- Receiving the name of God and of Christ.

The third consequence is that, should you lose your soul, you will also lose your resurrected body. You will not participate in the First Resurrection. Note the requirement of losing your soul in this life and thereby saving it for the one to come, in order to be counted worthy to attain to the 'out-of-resurrection, out of from amongst the dead'; this is the First Resurrection. (Phil 3:7-11). And should you not partake in the First Resurrection, you will also not receive a resurrected body, but will remain a spirit being forever instead of being preserved blameless, spirit and soul and body, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. You will be found naked. It is as though the soul is 'clothed' by the body, and the spirit is 'clothed' by the soul. Without the soul the spirit would be 'naked'; without the soul there would be no body; without the soul being saved into life, there would be no resurrected body.

These are such serious consequences that weeping and gnashing of the teeth will be the well-understood reaction of those who are cast aside, having lost their souls.

17.8	What is required for the soul to be saved?
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Jesus states again and again:

- "He who finds his soul will lose it, and he who loses his soul for My sake will find it."
- "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?"
- "For whoever desires to save his soul will lose it, but whoever loses his soul for My sake will save it."

- "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."

And Paul puts it this way:

- "But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. But indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him ..."
- We must live a life of self-denial where not I, but Christ is first and foremost in all my thoughts and actions!
- We must live a life where NOT this present world, but the one to come, is important to me.
- We must live a life in which I relinquish control over my own life in favour of Jesus' control of my life.
- We must live a life where I forsake what I could have been or could have become in this life, in favour of Jesus and what He wants to make of me both now and in the age to come.
- We must live a life where my present comfort, success and reputation counts to me as nothing, and the Lord Jesus counts as everything.

Jesus said that He came, "not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." That should be a guiding light unto our lives as well. In that way we shall lose our souls here, that we may keep it into eternal life.

17.9	How important is the saving of the soul?
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We believe this question has already been answered in the previous paragraphs. But, in order to put the proper perspective on this, let us note that Peter describes the salvation of the soul as 'the end (or final destination or purpose) of our faith.' This means that the race we are running, being a race of faith, has as its final reward, the salvation of the soul!

Paul puts it this way: "Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me."

Beloved, the saving of the soul is at the very heart of the race we are running, and of God's will and purposes for us on earth! Jesus valued the saving of the soul as higher even than gaining the whole world!

Somebody rightly said that God is more interested in our character than in our comfort. God is more interested in leading us to eternal victory, than in pampering us with earthly success and wealth. (Even so, He will never forsake us, and nothing will ever separate us from His love in Christ Jesus). And we should set our heart and the focus of our lives on that which is really important, and not on seeking my own will and purpose, but rather the Lord's.

17.10	Summary
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- There are Christians who are overcomers; and there are Christians who are not overcomers.
- There are Christians who do the will of God; and there are those who do not do the will of God.
- There are Christians who inherit the Kingdom of God; and there are those who do not inherit the Kingdom of God.
- There are Christians who are counted worthy to attain to the resurrection out of the dead; and there are those who will not be counted worthy.
- There are Christians who run the race with endurance; and there are those who do not do that.
- There are Christians who will receive a reward; and there are those who will be cast out as unprofitable servants.
- There are Christians who will enter the Kingship of God; and there are those who will be able to see it, yet not be able to enter it themselves.
- There are Christians who save their souls; and there are Christians who lose their souls.

18 Flee from Babylon!

"And I heard another voice from heaven saying, 'Come out of her, My people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.'" Rev 18:4,5

"Flee from the midst of Babylon, and every one save his life! Do not be cut off in her iniquity, for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; and He shall recompense her. Babylon was a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; therefore the nations are deranged." Jer 51:6,7

18.1 What or who is Babylon?

Babylon of old was a physical kingdom into which Israel was taken captive.

Babylon, prophetically, may be some future physical kingdom or city. However, seeing that we know already that we are very close to the end of the present prophetic calendar, we have to look for a kingdom or city which is on earth at this present time. We then have to admit that there is no single kingdom or country (apart from, possibly, the USA) that even remotely fulfills the prophecies. As far as a city is concerned, the city of New York does come close to fulfilling a number of the prophecies, and it seems quite possible that New York may, in the near future, be destroyed in some nuclear attack; causing ships to stay far away from the nuclear fall-out, when seeing the smoke of her destruction.

Looking at the overall picture of end-time Babylon as sketched in Scripture, however, we have to deduct that Babylon, prophetically, refers to something very much greater than, for example, the city of New York. It refers to some kingdom or system that holds the NATIONS captive, and with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication. This is some world-wide system! Not for nothing is it called Babylon the Great!

The simple answer is that **BABYLON THE GREAT IS THE ENTIRE RELIGIOUS SYSTEM ON EARTH!** We will explain this conclusion in the following paragraphs.

The book of Revelation is not called 'revelation' by our Lord for nothing, for it does reveal many things which would otherwise have remained mysteries. One of these is the meaning of spiritual Babylon.

In Rev 17 she is depicted as a harlot, and as the mother of harlots, who sits on many waters, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. This harlotry and fornication can **ONLY BE SPIRITUAL** of nature. And seeing that the true Church is to be presented to Jesus Christ as a chaste virgin, we find the Harlot to be the counter pole of the Bride of Christ.

- Babylon is rich, arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls.
- Through the centuries, she has been responsible for the death of many saints (for example during the Inquisition of the Middle Ages).
- She sells her services for money.
- She causes men to be unfaithful to Christ and to give allegiance to her instead.
- She herself is faithful only to herself and her own improvement.
- She commits fornication with the kings of the earth; meaning that she is in alliance with the political systems and governments of the earth. Both parties fornicate (lies and deceit) with one another for personal gain, power and pleasure.
- God will cause her to be made desolate and naked and burned with fire under the coming New World Order government. This will be done because 'she has made all nations drunk with the wine of the wrath of her fornication'.

In Rev 14 the hundred and forty-four thousand overcomers are the ones who were 'not defiled with women, for they are virgins'. The 'defilement' here would be with Babylon the Harlot. Therefore, beloved, if you are yet

caught up in the web of Babylon the Harlot, you will not be counted worthy to be one of them; you will not be counted worthy to escape all these things that are coming to pass and to stand before the Son of Man. For this reason we admonish: Flee from Babylon!

18.2	How am I to flee from Babylon?
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- Firstly, we have to be like chaste virgins to Christ.
- We should not move away from our single-hearted devotion and allegiance to Christ.
- We should not be led astray to seek our own advancement and/or pleasure, instead of seeking Christ and remaining pure unto Him.
- We should not belong to some denomination because it is the socially acceptable thing to do.
- We should not participate in a religious system for the purpose of any personal gain.
- If the 'church' I belong to asks for, or demands payment for services rendered, she is a harlot. Get out!
- We should NOT partake in practices or doctrines that find 'substantiation' in the Church system, but not in Christ and in His word.
- In our time, we should seriously ask the Lord whether we should remain official members of any organized church. Please, let the Lord Jesus Christ guide you in this. We will NOT make some law or instruction from this. Babylon is spiritual and not physical in nature. It is in the heart, rather than in the body; but where your body is, will reveal what is in your heart.

18.3	What Babylonian practices are there in today's church?
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The Lord does not call this end-time deception Babylon without good reason. Between two hundred and three hundred years after Christ, and especially when Constantine declared Christianity to be the official religion of Rome, there occurred a 'marriage' between the existing Babylonian (so-called) Mystery Religion, and Christianity. What happened, is that many Babylonian rites, symbols and practices were either directly incorporated into the Christian religion or, in camouflaged form, effectively usurped and replaced previously applied Christian practices.

In coming paragraphs we will deal with some of these.

The reader is earnestly admonished to flee from Babylon, and to not defile him- or herself with the Harlot.

The major problem is that these practices have become such an integral part of the recognized church system, that it seems like blasphemy even to question the legality of any of them! Yet we should!

- When asked concerning the end-times, Jesus' very first and distinct warning was to "take heed that no one deceives you".
- Again He says: "All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition." (Mark 7:9)
- In Jer 9:13-16 we read: "Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them, and have not obeyed My voice, nor walked according to it, but they have walked according to the imagination of their own heart and after the Baals, which their fathers taught them, therefore . . . I will send a sword after them until I have consumed them." {Baal here stands for Babylonian worship}
- In 1 Tim 4:1,2 we read: "Now the Spirit explicitly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron."
- And in 2 Tim 4:3 is stated: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. . ."

Beloved, we MUST take these warnings seriously! Please do not reject anything out of hand, simply because it clashes with your present believe system. Be humble, and ask God to open up the truth for you, whilst studying the Word and not accepting anything that is not clearly and unequivocally substantiated therein.

18.3.1 Infant sprinkling

This subject has already been dealt with in Chapter 6.

In conclusion we simply remark again that there is not a single example, nor any substantiation whatsoever in Scripture to warrant infant sprinkling as a substitute for the baptism of a believer. Yet by far the greater part of today's church IS practicing infant sprinkling. May the reader, by God's grace, receive some revelation of how far the rot of Babylonianism has in actual fact spread in the church!

Note: The roots of infant sprinkling can be found, firmly imbedded in the Babylonian Mystery Religion. It is, however, neither the purpose of this book, nor the calling of the author to dissect and study the lie, but rather to present the truth as from God. The interested reader is referred to "The Two Babylons" by Rev. Alexander Hislop.

And another remark: It is a very good thing for the parents of a young child to dedicate that child unto God. But to contaminate this with a Babylonian ritual is NOT good. Mary brought Jesus to the temple to present Him to the Lord (Luke 2:22,23). This was done long after His circumcision, and was expressly done to dedicate Him to the Lord. This is what believing parents should also do if that is what they want to do. God will not force you to do it, neither blame you if you do not. He knows our hearts; we cannot deceive Him.

18.3.2 Church steeples

It might come as a shock to many readers, but church steeples has NO foundation in Scripture. Never, not even once, is there the remotest inkling of a steeple in either the Tabernacle, or the Temple. And in church history as given to us by the Spirit in Scripture, there was not even a single building erected for the purpose of Christian religious meetings, much less a steeple. They assembled either in private homes, or in existing buildings.

So what is the purpose and origin of church steeples?

At the heart of Babylonian worship is worship of the Sun-god and the so-called Host of Heaven. Sexual promiscuity and a great emphasis on the sexuality of man was (and is) a major aspect of this worship system as well as its activities. (This assisted greatly in making it popular among the masses). Temple prostitutes (both male and female) were commonly found in Babylonian places of worship, like, for example, the Baal temples we read about in the Bible. Baal, for example, was the god of fertility, and was supposed to assure good harvests and good increase of stock. (This explains why God sent droughts and destroyed the harvests, every time the nation of Israel put their trust in Baal . . .).

Now, one of the major symbols of the Babylonian worship system, and therefore of Baal worship, was (and is) the phallic symbol of the male sex organ, which is presented in the form of an obelisk, or pole, or steeple, or turret. It is to be noted that, in total contrast to the complete absence of steeples/turrets/obelisks in the true worship of God, heathen worship proliferates with totem poles, or turrets, or steeples, or obelisks at or around the heart of their activity. In the Bible we read again and again about the 'sacred pillars' which were connected with Baal worship. (1 Ki 14:23,24 ; Deut 12:2-5 ; Lev 26:1 ; . . .)

"You shall not set up a sacred pillar, which the Lord your God hates." (Deut 16:22)

This, unfortunately, is the origin and meaning of every church steeple, big or small: It is a heathen, phallic symbol in honor of the sun-god and the host of heaven.

{A while ago, the wife of a reverend in South Africa received a revelation from the Lord, denouncing church steeples. She made this known in her own congregation. The reaction, country wide, was so vicious that, were we living in different times, she would have been either stoned or physically crucified, and that not by the hands of the world, or by the heathen, but by the members of her own denomination! Why??}

Note: The presence of the massive obelisks at the centre of the seats of power of both the United States Government and of the Roman Catholic Church, is further food for thought.

18.3.3 Nicolaitism

In Rev 2:6 and also in Rev 2: 15 the Lord states that He HATES the doctrine and deeds of the Nicolaitans. This is a serious statement. We need to understand what this doctrine is.

The key lies within the Greek word for Nicolaitism, which is the joining of two separate words, *nikao* and *laos*. The meaning of the first is to overcome or to exercise victory over. And the meaning of the second is, simply, the masses or the common people or, in religious language, the laity. In other words, the meaning of Nicolaitism is 'exercising victory over the laity', or in other words, 'domination of the laity by the clergy'.

Beloved, the whole set-up where the clergy are lifted up above the laity, and are considered to be the only ones who know and understand the mysteries, because they have been initiated into it (albeit by means of seven years of study), whilst the laity have not and therefore do not understand a thing, is NOT of the Lord! The Lord hates this!

During the Middle Ages this was taken to extremes; so much so that the laity was not even allowed to own a Bible. The first Christians who took it upon themselves to translate the Bible for use by the common man, were burned at the stake! Even the very clothes the clergy wears are in many cases designed to lift them up above the laity. In many denominations only the clergy are allowed on the pulpit! It is considered sacrilege should one of the laity get onto the pulpit and say something. Only the clergy are allowed to present any sermon or message at all. Any questions regarding Scriptural exposition may be answered by the clergy only. By this means deception can be maintained (or increased). The clergy, simply, is taught the lie by those whom they in their turn are induced to accept as the only ones in the know. They therefore accept the lie as being the truth and thus perpetuate the lie; yes, even strengthening it, because every repetition of the lie establishes it all the more firmly as being the 'truth'.

The Lord Himself will abolish and punish the Nicolaitans in His right time. However, beloved, please be not one of them when He comes!

18.3.4 Money-making in the name of religion

The Harlot is to be paid for her services!

And her success is measured in terms of how much money she makes, and in terms of how many clients she is able to amass! (This will then be the important figures quoted in the annual report.)

The Bride, on the other hand, gives herself to her Beloved without reservation, with joy and with gratitude, in love! She requires no payment and certainly will never measure her success in anything else but the quality of the relationship between her and her Beloved. And her Husband will meet all her needs with all the wisdom and all the ability at His disposal! She never renders services with the purpose of being recompensed or in order to get the husband to look after her. He will, because He loves her!

Any money-making scheme or project, including the weekly collections during worship services and the monthly collections taken up at the homes of members, carry the insignia of the Harlot.

The single instance where Jesus 'lost' His temper during His earthly walk, concerned money-making in the temple. We are the temple of God at present. Is the heart of the church filled with money-making efforts, or is it filled with love for the Lord, continuously praying unto Him and trusting Him for all our needs?

18.3.5 Christmas

God gave His people Israel one weekly and eight annual feasts to keep. These are:

- The weekly Sabbath
 - (looking back to Creation, as well as looking forward to Salvation and the Millennium)

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- **Passover**
 - (fulfilled in the death of Jesus, our Passover Lamb)
- **The Feast of Unleavened Bread**
 - (depicting the Christian walk of holiness)
- **The Feast of Firstfruits**
 - (fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus)
- **The Feast of Weeks**
 - (fulfilled in the giving of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost)
- **The Feast of Trumpets**
 - (to be fulfilled by the Second Coming of Christ)
- **The Day of Atonement**
 - (judgment and redemption: to be fulfilled, directly following the Second Coming of Christ. The Judgment Seat of Christ and the casting of Satan into the Abyss))
- **The Feast of Tabernacles**
 - (to be fulfilled by the coming Millennium)
- **The Last Great Day**
 - (to be fulfilled by the coming eternal New Heavens and New Earth)

The church today honours none of these, but instead chooses to keep the feasts of Christmas and Easter (neither of which finds any substantiation in Scripture) together with the world. Why??

Let us first ask a few more questions:

- Why do we celebrate Jesus' birth when He never gave us such a command? Instead, He instructed us to remember His death.
- Why, when the only two birthdays mentioned in Scripture are those of the Egyptian Pharaoh, and of king Herod (who beheaded John the Baptist), does the church opt to have a (drunken) birthday feast for Jesus?
- Why do we celebrate His birth in the middle of the northern winter, when we know that His real birth was at a time when the shepherds and their sheep were out in the field at night - something that is simply not done in the middle of winter?
- Why does Christmas coincide with the birth date of the Babylonian sun-god?
- What is the meaning of the Christmas tree, and its decorations, and Santa Claus, etc.?
- Why is Christmas participated in so whole-heartedly by the world and by non-Christians; yes, even by atheists and non-believing Jews?
- And quite a number more questions with disturbing answers . . .

Again, it is not the purpose or place of this book to dissect the lie, but rather to present the truth.

The truth in this case is that the celebration of the birth of Christ has been used as the camouflage to keep the Babylonian feast that commemorates the dying and the reincarnation of the sun-god. (That is: Christmas really commemorates the birth of the reincarnated sun god, and not Jesus at all!) This goes hand in hand with drunkenness and debauchery, and commercialism. The Yule logs burnt in the fire place overnight, together with the Christmas tree the following morning, depict the death and reincarnation of the sun-god; hence the presents. (Note: In SA these practices are not always adhered to that accurately). This means that the Christmas tree is a symbol in honor of the reincarnated sun-god. The bells, Santa Claus, the mistletoe and holly, etc., can all be related back to the Babylonian Mystery Religion. Christmas is a Babylonian feast, and should not be honoured by Christians.

Beloved, God's blessing does NOT rest on the celebration of Christmas. It is the time of the most suicides, murders, drunkenness, rapes, car-crashes, etc. of any time of the year. The whole spirit of drunkenness, debauchery and commercialism is absolutely foreign to our Lord. (X-mass is actually a better name for this season than Christmas). And the good things about it, like families getting together, may be the bait that leads you to swallow the hook that might cause you to become the willing partaker of heathenism. Would Jesus approve of this?

18.3.6 Easter

The name 'Easter' comes from the name of the goddess in whose honor this feast was religiously commemorated in Babylonian worship, namely Ishtar, the goddess of love and war in Babylon. Her Roman counterpart is Venus; and her Grecian counterpart is Diana. She supposedly came to earth in a giant egg which is now hollow, seeing she is no longer inside it. Furthermore, she is the mother of the sun-god (thus called 'mother-of-god'), and also called 'the Queen of Heaven'. The sun-god was reputedly born on the 25th December; conception occurring on 25th March. Therefore the Ishtar weekend feast was always held on a weekend as close as possible to the 25th March. The symbols used in this case either represent Ishtar (e.g. the Easter egg), or it represents symbols of fertility, like the Easter bunny.

By camouflaging this feast to supposedly be the Passover feast, it was officially incorporated into the church calendar. Nothing was, however, changed concerning the symbols used, or the Babylonian nature of the feast. Why, for example, the Monday holiday? Why Friday when Jesus was actually crucified on a Wednesday? (Refer to Chapter 18.3.10) Why always on a weekend from Friday till Monday, and not on the Passover Feast as still held by the Jews?

Beloved Christian, you should ask these questions. Be taught by the Holy Spirit and flee from Babylon before it is too late. Time is getting very short indeed!

18.3.7 The worship of Mary

Now where does this strange phenomenon come from: that a mere woman (who has long since been dead, in fact) be venerated and prayed to in a manner that, as far as certain religious groups are concerned, even seems to exceed the honour and trust endowed upon the Risen Lord Jesus Christ?

Again the answer is to be found in the Babylonian roots of 'Mary'. The 'Mary' that is worshipped is, in fact, not really the true mother of Jesus. She is the Queen of Heaven, or so-called Mother-of-god, whom we have come to learn of in the previous paragraph. (Interestingly enough, Mary was just recently officially declared the 'Queen of Heaven' by the Roman Catholic Church). In Babylonian worship, this makes her a higher deity than the sun-god who is her son.

The well-known Madonna-and-Child pair has its roots and true meaning in the Queen of Heaven and her Reincarnated (baby) Sun-god. The original pair, back at the very beginning of Babylonianism, directly following the Tower of Babel debacle, was Semiramis and Tammuz. Through the years and in various cultures the names were continually changed. (One of the characteristics of Babylonianism is chaos and confusion, or 'mystery' as they would want to call it.) In Egypt, for example, it was Siris and Osiris. In Israel it was Astarte and Baal. And as mentioned before: in Greece the Queen of Heaven was called Diana, and in Rome she was Venus.

Scriptural references to these heathen 'deities' can be found in Acts 19:24-35; Jer 7:18; Jer 44:17-25; Acts 7:42; 2 Ki 17:16; 2 Ki 21:1-7; 2 Ki 23:4,5; as well as all the many references to Baal, Ashtoreth, high places, etc.

At the point where Mystery Babylon and the Church 'united', as mentioned before, the Queen of Heaven was retained as a deity to be worshipped, by camouflaging her to look like Mary the mother of Jesus. She is, and remains, however, the Queen of Heaven; and worshipping her evokes the Lord's anger!

Again, dear Christian, we exhort you to flee from Babylon before it's too late!

18.3.8 The sign of the cross

To most Christians the sign of the cross, and the symbol of the cross, is most holy and good. The problem is that we are NOT taught by the Lord to hallow this symbol. It was never used in the early church (still uncontaminated by Babylon), and in the Bible all references to the cross refer to the manner of death of our Lord, and to the symbolism that we, also, should deny ourselves and 'die' to the world and follow Him. It is never presented as a symbol to be used, or worn, or displayed.

Let us once again ask a few questions:

- Where did the word 'cross' come from, seeing that the Greek word 'stauros' does not refer to a cross at all?
- Why would the Romans go to the trouble of fabricating a cross, when their only purpose was to nail a man to a tree and leave him to die?
- Why does the symbol or statue of Jesus on the cross find such prominence in some circles, when in fact He is RISEN in glory and is sitting at the right hand of God in the highest heavens, clothed with majesty?
- Why, in fact, in light of the above statement, do we continually find Jesus either nailed to a cross (in powerless humiliation), or as a baby in a manger (again in powerless humiliation); whilst in actual fact He is the risen King of Kings?
- Those with a sense of the mechanical should also be able to realize that, to manufacture a cross with a cross beam able to carry a man's weight, would require some form of strut supports, or else the whole cross beam will either break off or else at least be pulled skew. Firstly, why do we never see a symbol of such a real, workable cross? And secondly, why in the world would the Roman soldiers ever manufacture such an intricate structure when a simple stake would serve their purpose?
- Again, those with a sense of the mechanical should be able to understand that the spread-eagled posture of the arms will put unbearable forces to work on the palms or wrists of the crucified person. The nails will almost certainly tear out! Whilst with the hands nailed down directly above the head, the forces on the hands and wrists are reduced dramatically, and the nails will not tear out. The point is that the cross beam principle for this application does not work, whereas a simple stake with the hands nailed to it above the head, and the feet nailed at the bottom, does work. Why then would the Romans ever try to use a structure that simply does not work?

Beloved, the Greek word 'stauros' that, somehow, got to be translated as 'cross', implies a stake, or a pole. This much is clear without any contention. The Latin counterpart of this word is 'stauro', and the English word 'staff', likewise, is related to the same. The correct description would be 'an upright stake, especially a pointed one'. This totally agrees with the expression, often used in Scripture, that Jesus was 'hanged on a tree'.

Where then do the word 'cross', and the image of the cross beam structure come from?

The answer is that it had its origin in ancient Babylon, and was used as the symbol of the god Tammuz (already mentioned in a previous paragraph as being the original reincarnated sun god), the symbol of the cross being in the shape of the mystic Tau, the initial of his name. By the middle of the third century A.D. the churches had either departed from, or had travestied certain doctrines of the Christian faith. In order to increase the prestige of the apostate ecclesiastical system, pagans were received into the churches apart from regeneration by faith, and were permitted largely to retain their pagan signs and symbols. Hence the Tau, or T, in its most frequent form, with the cross-piece lowered, was adopted to stand for the "cross" of Christ.

Again Babylon masquerading as Christianity!

Beloved, if you love the Lord Jesus Christ, and now know what you know; may we lovingly admonish you:

- Do not wear the sign of the sun god on your person.
- Or on anything you own.
- Do not sell it.
- Do not bow to it, nor give any honour to it.
- Do not make the sign of the cross.

These things belong to Babylon the Harlot, and should not be found with the Bride of Christ.

18.3.9 Hallowing of the Sunday

This is another highly controversial subject, and much easier to just leave be than to address head on. However, Paul rightly says, 'Necessity is laid upon me . . .'

First of all: Many Christians, through many years, have hallowed the Sunday as the 'Lord's day', with hearts filled with love for the Lord Jesus. And they have done what they did out of love for Him, albeit in ignorance. And the Lord knows that and understands that and, we are certain, will honour that.

However, the origin and substance of the hallowing of the Sunday, is not to be found in Scripture. Instead, it is to be found in Babylonianism entering the Church. The Sunday is exactly what it says, namely the holy day of the lord SUN, that is the Sun god, being the chief deity in Babylonianism. It is the day declared 'holy' by the Harlot.

It is not that difficult to discover the history of how Constantine, in collaboration with the harlot church of his time, declared the Sunday to be the 'Resurrection day', and that it should be observed as a Sabbath, being 'holy'. (Take note that the Sunday has forever been hallowed by the Sun god worshippers). Shortly after this it was officially forbidden to keep the true Sabbath. At one stage, observing the Sabbath was punishable by death. As the years went by, the Sunday replaced the Sabbath as the 'holy' day of the week. The Harlot even boasts in official documents concerning her power and influence, seeing that she was able to actually change one of God's commandments.

God from the very beginning hallowed the seventh day. Later on He gave Israel command to keep it as a very integral part of the Covenant He made with them at Mount Sinai. And absolutely nowhere in Scripture did He ever change that fact. (We must agree that ONLY He who instituted the Sabbath has the authority to change it.) The reasoning by the Harlot that, because Jesus rose on the first day of the week, and because the Holy Spirit was poured out on a first day of the week implies that God 'changed His mind' concerning which day is to be the Sabbath, just does not have any substance. Looking at the Feasts of God (e.g. in Lev 23) the serious reader will note that both the resurrection of Jesus (the Feast of Firstfruits), as well as Pentecost were scheduled from the very beginning to occur on the 'day after the Sabbath'. This never caught God by surprise, so to speak, as if He then needed to change His commands and promises concerning the Sabbath to go over to the 'day after the Sabbath' !

As a final thought: Israel was given the Sabbath to be from 'evening until evening' (that is, from sunset till sunset). (Lev 23:32). Also note that Jesus' disciples hastened to get His body in the grave before sunset, seeing the next day was a Sabbath. The Harlot's holy day, on the other hand, is from midnight till midnight. (??)

No, beloved, declaring the First day of the week to be holy is a command given by the Harlot and not by God. Please take note of this fact.

The question now is: what are we to do concerning this?

- Firstly, we are not to prescribe laws to one another. By accepting or making any law unto ourselves, we will simply fall into pride and self-righteousness, looking down on everyone who does not believe or do as we do. Beloved, this is NOT the way to go!
- Secondly, remember that 'the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.'
- Thirdly, remember that 'Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath.'
- And, fourthly, please 'flee from Babylon.'

Within the context of the above, we suggest that you go to Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath, and ask Him for wisdom and guidance. He will answer you.

18.3.10	Good Friday
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a) Jesus was crucified on a Wednesday

Jesus states quite clearly that, "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Mat 12:40)

This implies that Jesus died and was buried at the close of the fourth day towards evening, and that He was raised from the dead before the onset of night, after the seventh day. (Remember again that God's days are from sunset till sunset.)

The day following the day of the crucifixion was a so-called High Sabbath; that is, it was a special Sabbath - one of the seven special Sabbaths which form part of God's yearly feasts He gave Israel to commemorate. This particular Sabbath was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and it follows directly upon the day the Passover lamb was sacrificed. The latter, again, was called the Day of Preparation.

Thus it was that:

- Jesus died at the exact time when the Passover lambs were slaughtered throughout Israel, which was the 'time of the evening sacrifice'. This was the ninth hour, or three o' clock in the afternoon according to modern time indications.
- This all happened on the day called the 'Day of Preparation' which, that year, fell on a Wednesday, that is, the fourth day of the week.
- The following day, which was a Thursday, was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This was a Sabbath, also called a 'High Sabbath'.
- When this Sabbath was past, the women went and bought spices on the Friday. (Remember that they had no time to do this directly after Jesus' death the Wednesday afternoon, seeing there was hardly enough time available to get His Body in the grave before the onset of the Sabbath at sunset). "Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices." (Mark 16:1)
- "Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment." (Luke 23:56). Thus, the women spent the Friday to not only buy the necessary spices, but also to prepare it. This took some time, seeing things were not pre-prepared in those days. They then rested on the Saturday which was the normal weekly Sabbath.
- Lastly, "on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb." (Luke 24:1,2) They could not come directly after the Sabbath the previous evening, because it would have been too dark to work, so they came very early the following morning, only to find that Jesus had already risen.

This all means that both the Thursday and the Saturday of that particular week were Sabbaths. The day in between (Friday) was utilized by the women to buy and prepare spices which they then hoped to put to use as early as possible on the Sunday morning. By this time Jesus had already risen. Seeing that He wasn't to be four nights in the grave, it means that His resurrection had already occurred the previous evening.

May the reader understand that God is not to be underestimated in His ability and intention to fulfill all His word and purpose exactly as He makes it known beforehand!

b) Why is the day of the crucifixion then generally known as Good Friday?

Good Friday, together with Easter Monday were introduced to accommodate the feast of Ishtar or Diana. By utilizing the feast of Passover, or the crucifixion of our Lord as an excuse to retain this Babylonian feast, it gave the latter an undeserved respectability among the Christians. In order for this to 'work', however, the crucifixion day had to be moved to Friday. And after this had been reiterated many times by corrupt church leaders, it was automatically believed to be the true crucifixion day.

c) The First of April

The result of a study which was done to try to determine the exact date of the crucifixion revealed the astounding answer of the First of April, 27 AD. Now, without even attempting to defend either the accuracy of the study or its result, let the reader please take note! And let the Holy Spirit guide you into all truth!

- Where did April Fool's Day originate?
- By whom?
- Can it be put past Satan to go as far as that in his hate against Jesus?

- If you love and worship the Lord Jesus Christ, should you have anything at all to do with this day?

We honestly suggest that you do not participate in this day at all; neither by action, nor by talk, nor by even laughing at April fools jokes.

18.3.11	Hell
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For selfish reasons of gain through the medium of fear, the Harlot has developed a doctrine involving hell and eternal punishment that is far removed from what God teaches us in the Bible.

Firstly, Satan and his hordes are NOT in charge of hell, dishing out the punishment. That is not taught in Scripture. Instead it is stated that "the everlasting fire is prepared for the devil and his angels." Satan and his angels will forever be the chief inmates of this spiritual 'prison'. They will be in NO position to dish out any punishment.

Secondly, there most certainly are various places of punishment. Because of the evil influence of the Harlot, however, these have come to all be translated as 'hell', and all to be equated to that same place where Satan rules supreme. Beloved, let us try to clear up the confusion. (Seeing Babel means 'confusion').

The different places the Bible tells us about, and which have all been translated to, or understood to be 'hell' at some point or other, are the following:

- The Lake of Fire :
 - This is the real place of punishment where not only Satan and his angels, but also everyone whose name is not found in the Book of Life will be cast into. Satan and his angels will be there forever. Whether those whose names were not found in the Book of Life will also be there for eternity, or only for a period of time, we simply do not know. We firmly believe that God will in all cases be the righteous Judge, who will render punishment in relation to the level of the transgression.
 - This will be a place of punishment and confinement for spirits. We know that Satan and his angels are all spirit beings. Bodies of men would not last a second in this place.
- Hades, or Sheol :
 - Hades is simply the Greek name for the same place which, in the Hebrew tradition, is called Sheol.
 - Hades is also the name of the (fallen) angel who is 'in charge' of this place. At the Great White Throne Judgment, he will be cast into the Lake of Fire.
 - Hades is the place of departed souls.
 - It is also often erroneously translated as 'grave'.
 - Before Jesus was crucified, the souls of all men descended into Hades; from the righteous Abraham and the righteous Lazarus, to the unrighteous rich man Jesus tells us about. However, the righteous and the unrighteous were not in the same part of Hades. A great chasm divided these two parts, with punishment (2 Pet 2:9) on the one side and peace and comfort on the other.
 - When Jesus died, His soul descended to Hades. But because neither Satan, nor Hades had any hold or authority over Him, He broke down the gates of Hades, took the keys, and took all His own people out of there and translated them to Paradise. Thus it is that, from that time onwards, everybody who belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ goes to Paradise after death, and no longer to Hades (including the murderer on the cross). The unrighteous, however, still go there, awaiting judgment at the end of time.
 - After the Great White Throne Judgment, Hades will be done away with.
- The Grave :
 - Strangely enough, this is also translated as 'hell' in certain translations.

- This, quite simply, is the physical location of the dead body, and has nothing to do with hell whatsoever.
- Gehenna :
 - Jesus refers to Gehenna a number of times.
 - However, He never teaches us that it is 'hell', or even that it is a special place of punishment. The simple fact is that, in Jesus' time, Gehenna was the actual name given to the place in the valley of Hinnom where all the refuse of the city of Jerusalem was accumulated. As is the case for a refuse heap, it is firstly the place where useless, discarded items are thrown, and, secondly, it is a place where fire burns or simmers continuously in order to prevent vermin to breed.
 - This is exactly what Jesus refers to metaphorically when He refers to Gehenna.
 - We already understand that the Lake of Fire will be a place of punishment and confinement for spirits. We also understand that Hades is a place for departed souls. And that the grave is the place for a dead body. Thus, when Jesus refers to both soul and body being destroyed, or thrown away in Gehenna, it shows that He is speaking metaphorically in a way that would be clearly understood by the people of His time who knew exactly what Gehenna meant. Gehenna can thus not be linked to either the grave, or Hades, or the lake of fire. But it still remains the refuse heap for that which is cast aside as being unfit for the kingdom.
- Tartarus :
 - This place is referred to by name once only in the Bible, namely in 2 Pet 2:4.
 - It is also referred to in Jude : 6, although not directly by name.
 - It is the place where the angels who sinned in one particular way are kept in custody, awaiting judgment.
 - These are a small number of angels who 'left their proper, or own, domain' and had intercourse with the daughters of men. The result of this major transgression was that giants were born, which was one of the important reasons why the Flood became necessary: to eradicate these giants. Because these giants were the combination of a woman of flesh and a spirit being, their spirits did not die when their bodies died in the flood, because spirits are eternal beings. Yet, these spirits crave a body to live in. Furthermore, these evil spirits were allowed to carry on and to cause mischief until their time comes. (Refer to Jesus' conversation with the evil spirits in the demoniac of Gadara : Mat 8:29 + Luke 8:31). This, then, is the origin of evil spirits, or 'demons'. (Note that a demon is a radically different being to an angel.)

This, then, is what we find in Scripture. The Lord does not elaborate on the nature or length or severity of the punishment to be meted out to transgressors. In fact, this matter is by and large basically just brushed over. What the Lord does elaborate on is His Kingdom, and how to live in order to not be cast aside, but to inherit the fullness He wants to give us.

Beloved, let us do the same and major on proclaiming the Gospel; not the punishment.

19 Discerning deceiving spirits and lying signs and wonders

- "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking misleading things, to draw away the disciples after themselves."
- " For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple."

In Search of Truth

- "... but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables."
- "By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words."
- "... ungodly men who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness ... "
- "... and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage."
- "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits."
- "Come to Me, and learn from Me, for I AM gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."
- "... that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

In the above we find the clues God gave us to discern the lying spirit:

- It will be self-seeking
 - Seeking own gain and wealth.
 - Seeking own fame and glory.
 - Seeking to make disciples unto itself.
- It will exploit
 - By flattering speech.
 - By its great eloquence.
 - By telling people what they want to hear (Popularity, and to be accepted and venerated by the crowd is much more important to it than the truth can ever be.)
 - By being entertaining; giving people what they want.
 - By catering to man's inherent covetousness.
 - 'Follow me and you will gain much.'
 - 'Give to me, and you will receive back even more.'
 - 'The more you give to me, the more you will receive back.'
- It will be hallmarked by arrogance and, if challenged, by harshness and insensitiveness.
 - Whereas Jesus was known by His gentleness and lowliness in heart.
- All signs and wonders will be flaunted and advertised as widely as possible for the purpose of gain.
 - Whereas Jesus NEVER sought any gain out of the miracles He did -- quite the opposite: He admonished people to not make known what had transpired.
- It will be 'flashy'
 - Whereas Jesus always maintained a humble stature; associating with the weak and the poor while He was on earth.
- From the outside it will look good and sound good. However, its fruits will be self-seeking, pride and harshness -- not the fruit of the Spirit of God.

Beloved, may you who read these words both understand and be willing to receive the love of the truth and to act upon it.

20 Tithes and Freewill offerings

20.1 Tithes

We have spoken about the Harlot who wants all of this - and more - for herself. But what does God teach us in His Word?

To understand this, we have to look at God's model that He gave us in the Old Testament, namely Israel.

First and foremost, God is the Giver of all things. And He insists that we both realize that and witness to it continually through the giving of our tithes to Him. To be exact, we are to give the first tenth of everything we receive out of His hand, back to Him, and we may then retain the remaining nine tenths for our own use.

Secondly, He has established the Priests and Levites to NOT receive any inheritance in the land, by which means they would have been able to generate their own income. Instead, they are to belong to the Lord God exclusively. He is to be their inheritance, and they are to work and live for Him for no income. They are then to receive the tithes from the hand of those who DO receive an income from the Lord, thereby to sustain themselves as well as their families. In this manner, God not only established the principle of tithing (and of giving), but He also established the way in which (that is, the people unto whom) the tithes are to be given. Please note that God commanded the people to give tithes to the Levites; He did not command them to give it to any organization. And where the people did bring it to the 'storehouse', that was merely the collection point for the further distribution between all the Levites at that particular location. (The Temple in Jerusalem being the prime example of such a location).

In this way God had established twelve tribes with their own means of creating income in the land; and He established one tribe with no such means. He then required from the twelve to give their tithes to the one (the Levites).

The Levites on their part, were also required to give tithes. They had to give it to the Priests.

(Please refer to the Appendix for Scripture references)

20.2 Freewill Offerings

What then about freewill offerings?

The answer is that these are exactly what it says, namely offerings given out of your own free choice. God does not command you to give it. And it is not in the place of tithes; it is over and above the tithes you already have to give. (Deut 12:6). Tithes are compulsory; freewill offerings are voluntary.

It is this that Paul refers to in 2 Cor 9:5-15.

20.3 But that was Old Testament. What about now? Do Tithes and Freewill Offerings still apply?

Let us answer that question with a few other questions:

- Did God change in the meantime?
- Did the reason for tithing change in the meantime?
- Did the fact that God is the Giver of all good things change in the meantime?
- Did God abolish the tithing command in the meantime?
- Does God no longer have His present-day 'Levites' who are in full-time ministry for the Lord?

- Did God change His command anywhere into 'give your tithes to some organization', rather than to the individual 'Levite'?
- Did freewill offerings replace tithes in the meantime?

Beloved, no, tithing and freewill offerings ARE as applicable as ever. God did NOT change, and never will. His principles remain forever the same. He still has present-day 'Levites'. And He still challenges us to give freewill offerings inasmuch as we are able and willing to. Freewill offerings have not replaced tithing in the meantime. And He still has not given the command or sanction that we are to give our tithes to an organization. This you may do with your freewill offerings if you want to, but your tithes should go to the 'Levite in your midst'. By praying and waiting on the Lord, you will always know to whom the Lord wants you to give your tithe on His behalf. (Remember that the tithe is never your property to do with as you want to. It is the Lord's to do with as He wants to!).

The Harlot will insist that you give everything to an organization (meaning herself!). But, beloved, if you are part of the one and only true church, the same one we find in Acts, then do not give what belongs to God to the Harlot! Pray to Him, and He will show you what He wants you to do with it.

20.4 Who are the present-day 'Levites'?

In this regard, please refer prayerfully to the following Scriptures, and let the Lord guide you in His truth: Acts 6:4 ; 2 Tim 2:3,4 ; Gal 6:6 ; Phil 4:10, 15-20 ; Rom 15:27 ; 1 Cor 9:1-14 ; Eph 4:11,12 + Deut 10:8,9 + 2 Chron 35:3 + Neh 8:7,8.

God still calls out some and appoints them in full-time ministry! They are the present-day Levites. And the rest of us are supposed to support them with our tithes.

True, many of them have to work part-time to support their families, but this is because those whom God had appointed to support them with tithes, neglect to do it by either keeping it for themselves, or giving it to the Harlot instead. (Neh 13:10-12)

Beloved, allow the Lord to open your eyes that you may know the truth; and that you may act upon it.

21 Special Thoughts

21.1 Faith

Faith :

- Is an ACT of COMMITMENT.
- Is based on the sure knowledge of God's existence, character and power.
- Is the exercise of absolute, reckless trust upon God's character and ability as made known to us by His word(s) to us.
- Must be put into action for it to be faith. Faith without works is dead.
- Leaves God in total control as to the manner or timing of the outcome.
- Is not presumptuous.
- Never thinks of putting God under an obligation to do something according to my timing or liking.
- Waits upon God in persevering trust. (Perseverance is the ongoing act of commitment.)

21.2 Thousands of Generations

We find this expression quite a number of times in Scripture. (Deut 7:9 ; Ps 105:8 ; 1 Chron 16:15 ; Ex 20:6 ; Deut 5:10)

And we tend to read right over it without realizing what it means. We somehow think that there certainly already have been thousands of generations, and there obviously will still be thousands of generations. Looking at the genealogy of Jesus in Luke 3 however, we need to reevaluate our thinking concerning this matter, because we find only seventy six generations from Adam to Jesus. (!). Should we take the minimum of twenty years per generation from that time onwards, we find that another, roughly, one hundred generations have come and gone in the meantime. That gives us less than two hundred generations from Adam until the second coming of Christ! Allowing another fifty generations during the coming millennium, we still fall far short of thousands of generations!!

Beloved, this reveals to us two things:

1. Concerning God's plan for man to procreate and fill the earth: we are as yet but at the very beginning of His plan, and NOT close to the end of it!
2. And it now becomes clear that, apart from the first, say, three hundred generations, all of the rest of the coming thousands of generations shall happen on the New Earth.

If we, furthermore, take note of the fact that 'those who took part in the resurrection from the dead, and attain to that age, having been counted worthy, neither marry, nor are given in marriage, for they are like the angels and are sons of God being sons of the resurrection', we also realize that the New Earth will be populated by 'normal' people who still procreate, and NOT only by those who have attained to the resurrection from the dead!

In fact, those who have been overcomers and have 'attained to that age', will spend eternity together with Christ, ruling and reigning with Him as His Bride, being clothed in the same glory as He is. Their 'place' will be the New Jerusalem, and they will not procreate any further. The rest of the New Earth, on the other hand, will be populated by 'people made new' who will procreate.

The exact nature of these men and women who will populate the New Earth is not perfectly clear, but we may assume at least the following:

- Sin would have been taken out of them, the same way sin was taken out of Israel at the beginning of the millennium already, otherwise death would not be the vanquished enemy it is at this stage. (Death had been destroyed as the 'last enemy' at the end of the Millennium.)
- They will be like Adam and Eve before the Fall, only better (Rom 5:15, 17, 20 : 'much more'.)
- The New Earth will be like a giant Garden of Eden, only better.
- The possibility to become sick will exist, but so also will the remedy for all sickness be available at all times. (Rev 22:2)
- The nature of their surroundings will be righteousness, peace and joy in the Kingdom of God, forever.

Beloved, may this help us to see God's wonderful plan of salvation in a new light!

21.3 Why Jesus Himself never baptized anybody

In John 4:2 we read that Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples did. Why so?

The answer lies in the fact that, through baptism, we are united with Christ in His death and resurrection. This is an eternal bond and covenant, sealed with His blood, between Him and man (the one having been baptized). And the best reality of this bond is found in the marriage covenant between Christ and His Bride which is the Church.

The simple truth is that the Bridegroom does NOT officiate in the marriage ceremony! He is one of the two parties who exchange vows and are being united in an eternal covenant of love and care, and of henceforth doing everything together. Thus, He is a participating party in the ceremony, and NOT the one conducting it.

21.4 Differing genealogies for Jesus?

We find a genealogy for Jesus in Luke 3, and we find one that is substantially different from this one in Matthew 1. How come?

The answer is that the genealogy of Matthew is that of Joseph, the legal father of Jesus, whereas the one in Luke is that of Mary, the physical mother of Jesus.

Matthew gives the legal genealogy of Jesus the King of Israel; The Lion of the tribe of Judah.

Luke gives the physical genealogy of Jesus the Son of Man.

Legally:

- Legally, Jesus is the Son of Abraham, and therefore the Seed of Abraham and the Inheritor of all the promises made to Abraham.
- Legally, Jesus is also the Son of David, and therefore the Recipient of the promises of perpetual kingship promised to David and his posterity. "The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David."
- Legally, this genealogy also proves that Jesus is in the Royal Line and, had things not been obscured by the dispersion of Israel and by the oppression of the Romans, He would have been the true King of the Jews.
- Lastly, this legal genealogy of Jesus starts with Abraham, which is where Israel starts and where the Kingship takes on reality.

Physically:

- In the case of Jesus' physical genealogy, it is taken back all the way to Adam, who is called the 'son of God'. It therefore starts with God Himself at creation, and shows the lineage of Jesus being true and perfect from start to finish: the first Adam to the last Adam; of pure blood. A Lamb without blemish!

21.5 "Let Thy Kingdom come" , or "Let Thy Kingdom be extended" ??

Jesus taught us to pray: "Let Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven", and yet we so very often hear prayers that "Thy kingdom may be extended . . ." What is the meaning of this?

Beloved, such a prayer may be made in ignorance; following the example of many others who pray the same thing. However, the meaning of such a prayer would indicate the belief that the Kingdom had come already, and now needs to increase. This can only imply the belief that the church IS the kingdom of God or, to be more specific, that my church 'is' the kingdom of God. This, beloved, is utter heresy!

Unfortunately, this is the general belief. The greater part of the modern church either does not understand, or refuse to understand that God's plan is to bring His Kingdom to earth and to bring ALL things in subjection to Himself. And then peace and righteousness shall prevail; God's will shall be done, and God's name shall be hallowed on earth as it is in heaven!

Instead, most (albeit unwittingly) believe that the church is the kingdom of God on earth. But if that had been the case, how very senseless would the prayer "Let Thy kingdom come!" be? Obviously the church is here

already; why would one still pray for it to come? So the prayer is changed into the sense that the church might grow, rather than that the Kingdom might come. And then, mostly, it is meant that MY church might grow.

Beloved, we must move on from this man-centered and self-centered religion, and start praying according to God's own heart, where we are no longer concerned with our needs, or with the church, or with my church first and foremost, but where we honestly seek His Kingdom and His righteousness and TRUST Him to provide us with what we need! God-centered; NOT self-centered!

22 Slaves of Jesus Christ

Every single New Testament author (apart from the Gospels, where the authors did not introduce themselves), identifies himself to be 'a slave of Jesus Christ.'

Many translations steer away from the word 'slave', seeing that it has become an unpopular word, replacing it with 'servant'. Nonetheless, the correct translation for the Greek word 'doulos' is most definitely slave, and not servant (where servant would imply to be paid for services rendered, but also to care for himself in terms of housing, clothing, etc.)

A slave belongs to his master, 'lock, stock and barrel'. He has no say in the course of his life, he owns nothing, and he can receive no glory or payment. His true and only payment is the satisfaction of his master, and the love and care and acknowledgement he receives from his master. On the other hand, he can trust his master to provide him with food and clothing and medical assistance and protection and a place to stay, etc. In short, he lives for his master, and his master cares for him.

In the case of our Lord, Jesus Christ, His relationship towards us is not one of fear and threats and punishment, but it is one of love and gentleness. NO better Master can be found! And He will always care for us, not only because we are His property to be protected and cared for for that reason, but because He truly loves us, and therefore cares for us for THAT reason as well!

This is our true relationship with our Lord while we are in this present life.

- He is our Lord, meaning He owns us.
- We have been bought at a price! We should not become slaves of men.
- We have been redeemed to God by His blood.
- The covenant meal is a continuous reminder that we have been bought by the blood of the Lamb. We are His.
- Our sole purpose is to please HIM. To us there is absolutely no other payment or prize to work for.
- And He will always care for us in all things.

And in the life to come, we will share in His glory and will no longer be slaves, but will rule with Him. "If we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him."

23 Suffering

The question is often asked in Christian circles: 'Why need there be suffering on earth, and why does it continue on and on?' Non-Christians, and unfortunately sometimes even Christians, go as far as to blame God for this state of affairs. What is the truth concerning suffering on earth?

Well, first of all, let us state once again what God intends to do concerning suffering: At the right time His Kingdom will come to this earth and then ALL suffering shall cease when His will is truly done on this earth as it is done in heaven!

In the meantime, however, suffering shall continue as long as sin continues. God advised man from the start what to do; man chose to not listen to God's advice. And because of this, sin and suffering became part of life on this earth. Even so, for those who love God and have made Him Lord and Master of their lives and circumstances, there is relief! Firstly God will always protect His own, and even though we are not exempt from trials and tribulations, nothing can happen to God's property apart from His ability to have prevented it had He so decided. And because God is good and loves us, whatever He then does allow to happen to us shall be good in the long run even though we may not understand it just now! {The very unfortunate truth is also that those who choose to run away from God and to consider Him to be the enemy, do not have His protection, and sometimes suffer horribly at the hand of Satan and of those who are in his service. For this reason we should pray all the more earnestly: Let Thy Kingdom come!!}

Let us quote to you a few words from the Lord:

- "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."
- "Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."
- "And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope."
- "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing."
- "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."
- "And lo, I AM with you always, even to the end of the age."
- "For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' So we may boldly say: 'The Lord is my Helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?'"
- "You are living in an imperfect world, My child, and in an imperfect state. Because sin entered the world, so also did corruption, futility, pain and death. And none of My children on earth are freed from these in the body and in their being and their circumstances. But then, also, I have decreed that the way My children bear up under these adverse circumstances shall determine their special reward from Me. Know then assuredly that even adverse circumstances I allow in your life, is not from lack of love, but is, on the contrary, based on My righteousness, and expresses My love. In the finite terms of your mind this is incomprehensible, My child. Do not expect it to be differently. But in the spirit it is known to bear an eternal fruit of glory."

Beloved, the Lord sees things with very different eyes than we do. We tend to think only in terms of this world and of the affairs and values of this life. The Lord looks at the life to come - a life that will not pass away - whilst NOT neglecting our needs in the present time. Our Lord is not an insensitive monster. No, He is the most caring and loving being there is. However, His priorities are not mixed up the way ours tend to be. And for this reason He is much more interested in our character than in our comfort. And this attitude of His is simply filled with His love and righteousness!

Beloved, let us TRUST our Lord, and never doubt His presence and His love, neither His infinite power and creativity which is always working in our behalf, no matter what our limited and confused minds may think or understand!

And, lastly, let us proclaim the Good News once again:

The Kingdom of God is coming!! And when our Lord and King had come and Satan and his evil kingdom had been destroyed, suffering will end once and for all !!!!

"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

24 Prosperity

Prosperity is my portion!

Look at the following Scriptures:

- "Let the Lord be magnified who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant."
- "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus"
- "The Lord is my Shepherd. I shall not want."
- "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life."

The Lord most certainly has our prosperity in mind, BUT He has eternity in mind. The present time is much like the workshop in which we are being made into objects of glory that will for ever after adorn the majesty of the King's palace. The workshop is NOT the place of prosperity, neither is it the place of glory or comfort. All of that will follow in the King's palace. No, the workshop is a place of trial and testing; of hammering and melting and refining and forcing into shape. If we insist on comfort and prosperity in the workshop stage, we will unfortunately not be able to qualify for a position of glory in the King's palace.

Just listen to the Lord expressing His heart in the following:

- "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus."
- "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power towards us who believe."
- "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation."
- "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

It is thus quite clear that He has prosperity in mind for us, but that this is to be in His coming Kingdom, rather than in this present life.

A three year old child knows exactly what he wants or likes, but he certainly does not know what is good for him. In the same way, but only much more so, are we in this present life not equipped to know what is "good", or what is true prosperity; we only know what we would want or like for the moment.

Yes, if we put our faith in Him and walk in obedience, we shall also prosper in this life. But the way in which we shall prosper shall not be according to the ways of the world, but according to God's ways for us. We shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper. It shall be that the Lord shall be my Shepherd who shall make me

to lie down in green pastures, but also guide and protect me all the way through the valley of the shadow of death. He shall prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies and anoint my head with oil. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

The Lord always links up my prosperity to His coming Kingdom of which there will be no end. He will never forfeit my eternal inheritance for the sake of the passing pleasure or comfort of the moment. But, unfortunately, I can do that, like Esau did.

"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame - who set their mind on earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body."

Let us set our minds on things above, not on things of the earth. Let us lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, and not on earth. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, set their minds on the things of the Spirit. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Beloved, there seems to be many Christians nowadays who, even like the prodigal son, wants their inheritance NOW. And they are equally certain to lose their inheritance by wasting it away in this life!

O, let us trust our Lord to have His way with us, even though that way may lead through difficult times. He will never forsake us nor forget about us! And let Him prosper us both in this life and in the coming in the way that He knows best. And always know that He has our prosperity in mind. He is not a vengeful, hateful God. He is a good God, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness; One who relents from doing harm!

25 Conditions for Overcoming: A Summary

Much has already been said about this aspect, so what follows here is simply a summary of that.

The following concepts are basically the same:

- Overcoming.
- Inheriting, or entering the Kingdom of God.
- Saving of the soul.
- Entering through the narrow gate.
- Attaining to the first resurrection.

The conditions we find in the Bible are:

- Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.
- Born again.
- Baptized.
- Self-denial (even unto death, if need be).
- NOT self-seeking, nor self-promoting.
- Losing your soul (self-life) in this life in favour of Jesus.
- Running the race of faith with endurance, and finishing it.
- Becoming like a little child.
- Walking in Spirit and NOT in the flesh.
- Attaining to spiritual maturity in the Lord, as will be manifested by the fruit of the Spirit in my life.
- Watching and praying always.
- Expecting the coming of the Lord; being ready and waiting; joyfully looking forward to it.
- My heart and life filled with the Lord Jesus and not with self.
- Knowing my absolute dependence on God (poor in spirit).
- NOT practicing the works of the flesh.
- Doing the will of God.

- Loving God above all else.
- NOT loving this present world.
- NOT laying up for myself treasures on this earth.
- NOT looking and longing back, once I have set my hand to the plough.
- Being persecuted for righteousness' sake.
- Keeping His works until the end.
- Joyfully bearing up under tribulations.
- NOT worshipping the Beast and not taking his mark.
- Counting all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.
- Following the Lamb wherever He goes.
- Being undefiled with Babylon the Harlot.
- No guile found in my mouth.

In summary:

1. Give yourself totally and without reservation to Jesus as your Bridegroom, and
2. Remain faithful, loyal and true to Him all the days of your life.

26 Self-denial versus Self-seeking

We believe that this is at the heart of our walk with God.

It was at the heart of the choice that man had to make in the Garden of Eden. It is at the heart of what Jesus requires from us, to 'deny ourselves daily and to take up our cross and to follow Him.' It is at the heart of walking in flesh, or walking in Spirit. It is a central requirement in overcoming. ("And they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and because they did not love their lives unto death.")

The concepts of unrighteousness, iniquity and lawlessness are related, and all of them point to self-seeking instead of self-denial. At the heart of the fall of man into sin, lies the fact that he chose himself above God, and instantly changed from a God-seeking being to a self-seeking being. And therein lies the root of all sin!

In this end-time the Antichrist will be the epitome of self-seeking arrogance. He is called 'the man of sin', and 'the lawless one', and is linked to iniquity and unrighteousness. We believe that the deception of the end-time will show itself out when measured against this yardstick: self-seeking, or self-denial? Who is at the centre of our (or their) thinking and preaching and planning: Jesus Christ, or Self?

27 A question of control

Another way of looking at self-denial and self-seeking, is in terms of control.

Inherent in man is the desire to control, even absolutely control, his own life and circumstances. This lay at the root of the wrong decision man made in the garden of Eden in choosing to eat from the tree of knowledge. This would supposedly give him control even over God's influence in his life. To this day the insistence of man to control his own life is a major source of sin in his relationship with God. God, namely, wants us to live from the tree of life - He is Life, and He knows that the best thing for us is His control over our lives.

In his life on earth Jesus exercised this principle to the full, which is the essential reason in His overcoming in all aspects. When Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, the essence of those temptations was to get Jesus to take control over His own life and circumstances. It is stated concerning Jesus that He has come to do the Father's will. (Heb 10:9) In John 6:38 Jesus states: "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own

will, but the will of Him who sent Me." Throughout His life Jesus never did 'His own thing', but in all things through prayer He sought the will of the Father in order to do that. This culminated in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus pleaded with the Father "to take away this cup from Me", yet persevered with His life's principle: "Yet not My will, but Thine be done". In this Jesus' complete victory over sin was consummated.

When Jesus states that He who seeks to save His soul, to keep his soul, will lose it; whereas he who loses his own soul in favour of Jesus will keep it into eternal life, it actually implies that he who retains control over His own life will lose it, whereas he who relinquishes control in favour of Jesus will be given it into eternal life. This is a very essential principle in overcoming. Through the wrong application of this principle man fell into sin. Through the correct application Jesus conquered over sin.

Even baptism symbolizes the willing transition from my old life under my own control (which is considered dead and buried) into the new life in Jesus and under His control.

Beloved, lose your own soul (self-life, control over your own life and circumstances) in favour of Jesus Christ as your Lord and Master and please never again take back own control.

May the Lord open our eyes to see and to understand and to follow the Truth.

Grace to you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Appendix A: Scripture References

{Arranged per Paragraph number}

Foreword: Mat 13:11-17; Mat 7:8; 2 Thes 2:10-12; Acts 17:10-12

Additional reading: Mark 4:11-12; Luke 8:10

1

1.1 Additional Reading: Mat 24:3-5,11,14; 2 Pet 2:1-3; 2 Thes 2:3; Mat 7:15-16; 2 Cor 11:2-4

1.2 John 14:6, John 17:7; 1 Cor 3:19; 2 Cor 3:6; John 8:31-32,36

1.3 Additional Reading: 1 Tim 6:3-5

2 2 Cor 5:20; Rev 14:6-7; John 6:37; Mat 28:18-20; Rom 8:7-8; Rom 8:19-21; Rom 8:16-18;
Luke 20:34-36; Col 1:19-23

3

3.1 Mat 6:9-10; Is 9:6-7; Rev 2:26-27, Rev 3:21, Rev 20:4-6; Luke 20:35-36; Phil 3:20-21;
1 Cor 15:51-53; 1 John 3:2; Rev 19:16; Deut 28:1; Is 49:8, Is 2:4, Is 49:12-13, 51:11; Is 11:6;
Is 11:7; Is 11:8; Heb 1:8; Ps 37:9-11, 37:10, 37:22; Hab 2:14; Is 11:9; Num 14:21; Jer 31:34;
Phil 2:9-11; Luke 11:2; Rev 20:7-9; Ez 38:7-12, 21-23; Rev 21:1; Ps 115:16; Rev 21:3;
Rev 21:22, 22:3-5, 3:12, 14:1; Deut 7:9; Rev 21:4, 21:5; Rev 20:10, 21:8, 21:24; Rev 22:1-2
Additional Reading: Ps 145:1-13, 22:27-28, 18:43-44; Is 11:1-10, 12:1-6, 40:3-11, 65:17-25;
Ez 36:21-28, 28:25-26; Dan 7:8-14, 23-27; Acts 3:19-21; Ps 47, 72, 110; Jer 33:14-18;
Hos 14:4-8; Joel 2:18-27, 3:18-21; Amos 9:11-15; Ob: 17, 18, 21; Micah 4:1-8;
Zech 2:10-12, 14:8-9, 14:16-20; Mal 4:1-3; Rev 2:26-27, 3:21, 21:1-5 + 22-27, 22:1-5

3.2 John 14:30; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 6:12; Rom 8:3-4; Acts 2:22-24; 1 Cor 2:6-8; John 3:16-17;
Acts 3:19-21; Rev 3:21; Phil 3:7-14; 2 Tim 4:6-8

Additional Reading: Rev 2:26-27; 2 Tim 2:12; Dan 7:27

3.3 Mat 6:9-10; Acts 1:3; Heb 2:1-8

Additional Reading: Luke 16:16; Mat 13:10-11, 19, 24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47; Mark 14:25; Mat 6:33;

Mat 9:35; Luke 4:43 + 4:18; Luke 8:1; Luke 9:11; Mat 24:14; Mat 28:18-19; Luke 9:1-2;

Luke 23:51; Luke 10:10-11; Luke 9:60; Acts 19:8; Rom 1:16; Gal 1:8-9; 1 Thes 2:12; 2 Thes 1:5;

2 Pet 1:10-11; 1 Pet 1:13; Col 1:23

3.4 Luke 22:28-30; Mat 6:33

3.5

3.5.1 John 3:36; John 5:24; 1 John 5:1, 20, 13; John 6:47

3.5.2

3.5.3 Additional Reading: Reward according to works in the New Testament: Mat 5:12, 46;

Mat 6:1-6, 16, 18; Mat 10:41, 42; Mat 16:27; Mat 25:14-30; Mark 9:41; Luke 6:23, 35;

- Luke 14:14; Luke 19:11-27; 1 Cor 3:8, 14; 1 Cor 9:17; Rom 2:6; 2 Cor 5:9-11; 2 John :8;
2 Tim 4:14; Rev 11:18; Rev 22:12
- 3.6 1 Cor 15:50; Luke 13:28
- 3.7 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 6:12; John 14:30; Mat 4:8-9; Luke 11:2; 2 Cor 5:20; Heb 11:13; 1 Pet 2:11;
2 Pet 3:13; Heb 11:16; Phil 3:20-21; Heb 1:8; Rev 11:15; Luk 21:31
- 4 John 1:18; Rev 19:16; Luke 6:5; Mat 16:16; Eph 1:6; Col 1:13; 1 Tim 6:15; Rev 22:13; Rev 3:14;
Rev 5:5; Rev 5:6; Gal 3:16; Rev 19:13; Acts 3:6; Is 9:6; Rev 22:16; Col 1:18; Rev 19:11;
Col 1:14-20; 1 Tim 6:16; Rom 8:29; Rev 1:13-16; Rev 3:1; Heb 12:2; Rev 3:7; Rev 1:18; Rev 3:14;
Mat 28:18; Rev 19:11; Rev 19:14; Rev 19:15; 2 Tim 4:1; Mat 1:21; Is 9:6; Is 9:7
- 5
- 5.1 2 Pet 3:8; Ex 20:11
- 5.1.1 Mat 24:3-13
- 5.2
- 5.2.1 Heb 4:4-9
- 5.2.2 Lev 23; Lev 23:41-42; 1 Cor 10:11; 2 Cor 5:1; 2 Pet 3:8
- 5.2.3 Rev 13:16-17; Rev 11:7-12; Mat 24:15-18; Mat 24:6-8; 2 Thes 2:3; 1 Tim 6:14-15; Dan 12:4
- 5.2.4 Josh 3:3-4; 1 Cor 15:20-23
- 5.2.5 Gen 1:14; Job 9:8-9, 38:31-33; Amos 5:8; Ps 148:1-6; Jer 31:35; Ez 34:30-31; Ps 100:3;
Ps 79:13; Ps 74:1; Mat 4:18-19; Mat 13:47-48; Heb 4:3-9; Rom 8:19-21
- 5.3 Eph 1:9-11; Col 1:19-20; Heb 2:10; Rom 8:29; John 1:12-13; Rev 21:7; Eph 5:22-32; Rev 21:2,
21:9-11, 19:7-9; Mat 22:1-14; Rom 8:19-25
- 5.4 Rom 8:16-17; Acts 26:18; Col 1:12; Eph 1:18; Phil 3:7-14; 2 Tim 4:8
- 6
- 6.1 Col 2:12; Rom 6:2-3; Mark 16:16
- 6.2 Acts 22:16; Titus 3:5; John 3:3,5; Gal 3:27 Rom 6:3-4; Col 2:12; Gal 3:27; 1 Cor 12:13;
Mat 28:19; 1 Pet 3:20-21
- 6.3 Acts 8:37; Mat 28:19; Acts 8:38-39
- 6.4 Acts 19:1-7
- 6.5
- 6.6 John 5:24; Mat 7:21-23; Mark 7:7, 9, 13; Luke 11:52; Mat 23:13; Mark 16:16
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- 7.1 John 3:1-10; John 1:12-13
- 7.2 John 1:12-13; 1 John 5:1; Eph 2:4-6; 1 Pet 1:23; 1 Pet 1:3-5; Heb 11:6
- 7.3 Mat 28:18; Eph 1:20-22; John 3:17; Acts 10:38; Rom 6:9; Acts 2:34-36; John 5:21, 17:2;
1 John 5:1,4-5
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- 8.1 John 5:24; 1 John 5:18; 1 Pet 1:16; Mat 5:48; Col 1:22; Eph 1:4; Eph 2:6; 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Cor 1:30;
Phil 3:9; 1 John 3:9; Gal 5:22-23

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- 8.2 Eph 4:22-24; 2 Cor 4:16; Gal 5:16-23; Rom 8:12-14; Gal 2:20
- 8.3 John 17:2-3; John 5:21; 1 John 5:20; 1 John 5:11
Additional Reading: Rom 8:10; John 3:35; John 11:25-26; John 14:6
- 8.4 John 11:25-26; John 3:18-19
- 8.5 Heb 2:3; John 3:18-20
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- 9.1 Rom 8:12; Rom 8:13-14; Gal 6:7-8; Mat 25:30; Heb 12:1; 1 Tim 6:12; Luke 13:24
- 9.2 Rom 6:11; Gal 2:20; Gal 5:16; Col 2:6; Col 3:2-3; 2 Cor 5:17; Col 1:27; Eph 4:24
Additional Reading: Gal 2:20; Rom 6:4
- 9.3 Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23; Eph 4:22; Gal 5:19-21; Col 3:5,8-11
Additional Reading: Rom 6:12-13
- 9.4 Heb 12:1-3
- 10
- 10.1 1 John 5:11; Eph 2:6; 2 Cor 4:16; Rom 8:13; 2 Cor 4:16; John 11:26; 1 Cor 15:47-49; John 1:12-13;
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- 10.2
- 10.3 Gal 5:21; Mat 7:21-23; Luke 13:24-28
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- 11.1 Rom 12:2
- 11.1 Rev 3:16; Rev 3:17-19; Rom 8:5; 1 Pet 5:8-9; 2 Cor 2:11
- 11.2 Luke 12:15; Luke 12:21; Mat 6:21; Mat 6:19-20; Luke 6:24-26; Luke 18:24; Heb 13:5;
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- 11.3 Mat 6:30-33; Luke 14:33; Gal 2:19-20; Luk 9: 23; 1 Cor 15:31; Col 3:1-2; 2 Tim 4:6-8;
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- 11.4 Eph 3:20; 2 Cor 9:8; Phil 4:19; Mat 6:19-21 ; Phil 3:20 - 4:1
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- 12.1 John 14:12
- 12.2 1 Cor 12:4-11; Job 33:14-16; Acts 10:9-16; John 16:13; John 16:7-11; John 16:14; John 15:26;
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- 12.3 2 Thes 2:12
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- 13.1 Col 1:12-13; Acts 26:17-18
- 13.1 Ps 115:16
- 13.2 Col 2:15; Rev 6:13-14; 2 Thes 2:9-10; Rev 12:4; Rev 19:20; Mat 25:41; Rev 20:1-3; Rev 20:7-10;
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- 13.3 1 Joh 5:19; Col 1:23; Col 1:13-14; Rom 6:17-18; Heb 11:9,13; Phil 3:20; 2 Cor 5:20; John 15:19;
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- 14.1 Luk 10:19-20; Mat 18:18; John 20:21, 16:23; Acts 3:16; Acts 2:38; Mat 28:19; Gal 3:26-29 (27);
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- 14.2 Mat 28:18-19; Mark 16:15-17; Luke 10:19; Mat 12:15; Acts 5:16; Luke 4:40; (Mark 6:5-6);
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- 14.3 Mat 10:8; 1 Pet 3:9; Mat 18:18; Gal 3:13; Luke 10:19-20; John 20:21-23 + Mat 9:1-8; Mat 21:21;
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- 14.4 Mark 11:23; Prov 18:21; John 11:40-44
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- 15.1 Is 2:2-4; Ps 18:43-44; Deut 28:1,9-10,13; Rom 4:13; Gen 27:29
- 15.2 Jer 23:5-6; Is 9:6-7; Luke 1:31-33; Micah 4:6-8; Ps 2; Is 24:23
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- 15.3.1 Mark 13:24-27; Is 11:11-12
- 15.3.2 Ex 6:24; Ez 36:22-29; Jer 32:36-42; Ez 11:14-21; Heb 8:8-12
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- 15.3.3 Is 51:11; Is 35:10; Jer 32:37; Ez 28:25-26
- 15.3.4 Luke 21:29-33; Mat 24:32-35
- 15.3.5 Rev 7:1-8; Rev 12:6,13-17
- 15.3.6 Rom 8:9-10; Heb 8:10 + Rom 8:16; John 5:24; Deut 7:6 + Eph 1:22-23; Ez 11:17-20 +
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- 15.4 2 Thes 2:3; 2 Thes 2:9; Rev 13:1-9; Mat 24:15; Dan 9:27; Rev 13:11-17; 2 Thes 2:9-12;
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- 15.5 John 5:29; Acts 24:15; Phil 3:11; Luke 20:35; Rev 20:6; Rev 2:4; 1 Cor 15:50-54; Rev 20:6;
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- 15.6 2 Tim 4:1; 1 Cor 15:24-26; John 5:22,24; Acts 10:42; John 11:25-26; 1 Thes 4:13-18;
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- 15.7 Rev 11:15; Rev 11:19; 1 Thes 4:16-17 + 1 Cor 15:51-54; Rev 15:1-4; Rev 15:5 to 16:21; 1 Thes 4:17;
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- 15.8.1 Mat 9:37-38; Mat 24:14
- 15.8.2 Mat 24:14; Rev 14:6-7, 14-16, 17-20
- 15.8.3 Rev 13:7; Dan 7:25; Dan 7:21-22; Rev 13:15-17; Mat 24:13; Rev 20:4-6
- 15.8.4 Mat 3:11-12; 1 Thes 4:13-17

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- 15.8.5 Rev 11:15; Mat 24:22
- 15.8.6 Zach 14:4; Acts 3:19-21; 1 Cor 15:24; Hab 2:14
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 - 15.9.2 1 Thes 4:17; Zech 14:5; Mat 25:40-45
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 - 15.10.2 1 Thes 5:2-4
 - 15.10.3 Rev 1:1
 - 15.10.4 Rev 12:5
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 - 15.13.1 Rev 6:1-2; Rev 12:5
 - 15.13.2 Rev 6:3-4; Rev 13:4-10; Dan 9:26-27; Mat 24:15
 - 15.13.3 Rev 6:5-6; John 10:10
 - 15.13.4 Rev 6:7-8; Ez 5:17; Ez 14:21-23
 - 15.13.5 Rev 6:9-11
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 - 15.14.1 Rev 8:7-12; Joel 2:31; Rev 6:12
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 - 15.14.2 Rev 8:13 to 9:12; Rev 12:7-9,12; Rev 9:13-21
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- 18.3 Mat 24:4-5,11
- 18.3.5 Lev 23; Jer 10:1-4
- 18.3.9 Mark 2:27; Mark 2:28
- 18.3.11 Rev 19:20, 20:10, 20:14; Luke 16:19-31; 2 Pet 2:9 + Is 24:22
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- 19 Acts 20:30; Rom 16:18; 2 Tim 4:3-4; 2 Pet 2:3; Jude 4; Jude 16; Mat 7:15-16; Mat 11:28-29;
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- 20.1 Prov 3:9-10; Lev 27:30-33; Ez 44:29-30; Deut 10:8-9; Num 18:20; Deut 14:27; Deut 26:12-13;
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- 20.2 Deut 12:17-19; Num 15:3; 29:39; Lev 22:18-19; etc.
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- 21.2 Luk 20:34-36
- 21.4 Luk 3:23-38; Mat 1:1-17; Luke 1:32
- 22 Rom 1:1; Phil 1:1; James 1:1; 2 Pet 1:1; Jude 1:1; Rev 1:1; 2 Tim 2:11-12; Rom 8:17
- 23 Rom 8:28; 2 Cor 4:16-18; Rom 5:3-4; James 1:2-4; 1 Cor 10:13; Mat 28:20; Heb 13:5-6; Rev 21:4
- 24 Ps 35:27; Phil 4:19; Ps 23:1; Ps 23:6; Eph 2:4-7; Eph 1:17-19; Luke 6:20-24; Mat 6:19-21; Ps 1:3;
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- 25 Mat 16:24 + John 12:26 + Rev 12:11; Rom 2:8; Mat 16:25; Luke 9:23 + Gal 5:24; Rev 14:4;
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