ABEL DAMINA

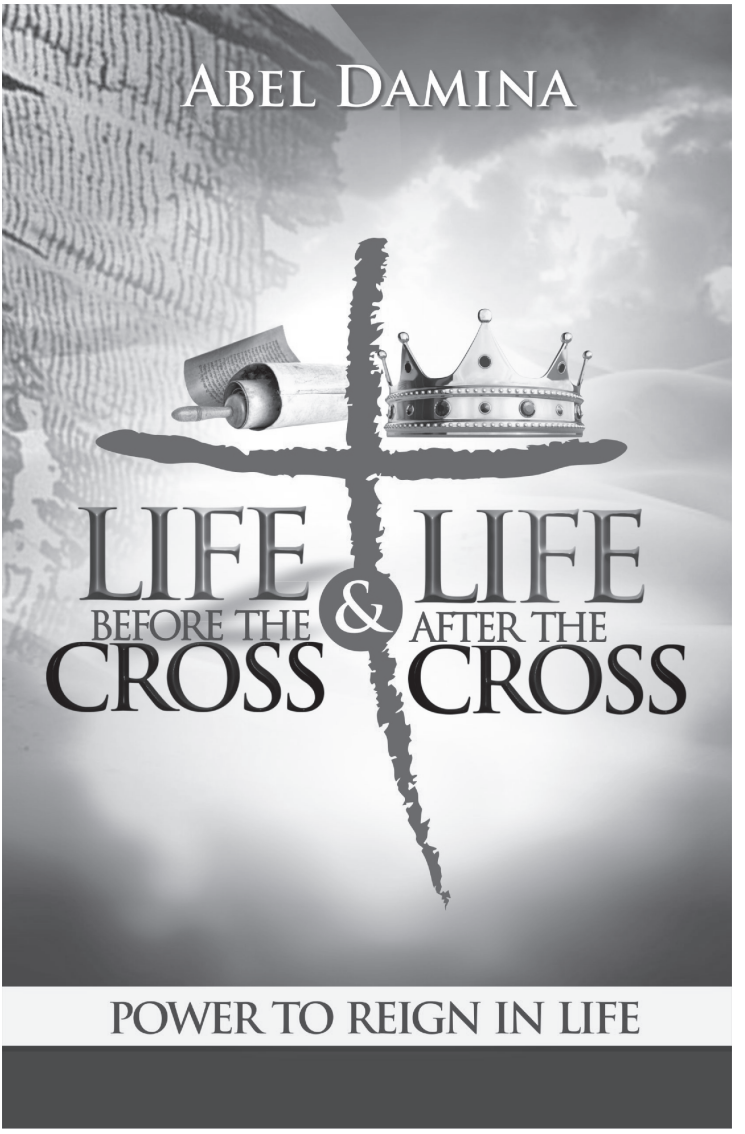


LIFE BEFORE THE CROSS & LIFE AFTER THE CROSS

POWER TO REIGN IN LIFE

ABEL DAMINA

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&
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Power to Reign in Life

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DEDICATION

This book is written in honour of the finished work of Christ. To everyone who sincerely desires the full and complete knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus.

To all who desire to use maximally, all the benefits of Jesus's death, burial and resurrection.

May the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ overshadow you as you read through this compendium.

Thanks to my wife, Rachel, who after almost thirty years of being together seems as though it were yesterday. If I had to choose again, it will still be you.

Jemima, Jesimiel and Jeiel, you three girls are a complete package, self-contained, in a world of your own. You bring treasures of joy, peace and fulfillment to us.

Power Citizens, the best congregation on the earth. You make it easy for me to blanket the world with God's word. Thanks for being such a supportive and forward-looking team.

FOREWORD

The undeniable weight of this fact stands out as usual; "the believer can never be more efficient in his Christian experience than he is in his understanding of the scriptures". Many believers have suffered and still suffer from muddling up concepts of the faith; many have painfully resorted to making only historical and religious relevance of salient truths.

A major victim is "the cross of Christ" spoken in prayers, sang in songs worn symbolically on necks, painted on buildings and printed on pages but hardly understood in the message of Faith. Without a doubt, it stands extremely necessary to clear up age long misconceptions; distinguishing salient facts of the scriptures from mythical reasoning. If they remain muddled up in any believers understanding, that surely would short circuit the believer's Christian experience and the benefits of his identification in Christ.

The epistles (the revelation of the scriptures) are clearest on the subject of the cross of Christ. Understood by both Jew and Gentile, the cross is without a doubt a historical object but it must now be understood from the wisdom of the word as seen through the eyes of revelation.

This and much more has been excellently done in this book: a study material for any bible student. This material demonstrates a teacher's heart as it beautifully captures a balanced presentation of the meaning of the cross. Its ability to interpret the relevance of the cross across the times and dispensations of the scriptures is a matter to heartily appreciate; this was gracefully done.

This again shows Dr. Damina's passion for simplifying and demystifying myths. His love for simplifying revelation is a gift the body of Christ must harness.

I'm thus privileged again with the honor to write this foreword.

Chris Segun Onayinka
Saints Community Church.

CHAPTER 1

THE REVELATION OF THE CROSS

A brand new spiritual atmosphere has been enforced on the earth after the resurrection of Christ. The cross of Jesus was designed to establish a new spiritual bench mark. It was pre-ordained from the foundation of the world as a means of escape from sin and its corruption.

There are resources and levels of relationship with God available to men after the Cross that was not there before the Cross. No man had the ability to stand before God without a sense of guilt, condemnation, inferiority complex and sin consciousness. But after the Cross, the basis of relationship with God changed and the born again man has access to God's unsearchable riches boldly.

Everything is now based on the unearned, undeserved, unmerited favour of God, and not our performance. When the death certificate of the testator was produced and the triumph of

His reign over death in resurrection was announced, Christ's riches, legacies, and redemption's treasures were transferred to us. We now reign along with Him. There are unimaginable levels of glory released for the dominion and comfort of the man in Christ. But due to ignorance of these realities, many believer's are still leaving their lives as if Jesus did not complete a perfect job in His death, burial, and resurrection as our substitutionary sacrifice.

But it is on record that, *"this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;…For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."* Heb. 10:12, 14. This is the announcement of a perfect job well done, and totally completed on man's behalf, for all time and all eternity.

The Difference between the Old and New Testament is the Cross

The cross of Jesus Christ changed everything as it relates to the manner of life that existed before the death of Jesus, and this is the crux of the matter in Christianity that many fail to realize. The difference between the Old and New Testament is the cross. *"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."* **Mathew 26:28 KJV**

The Cross is Satan's greatest nightmare but, mercifully, the believer's advantage. The message of grace is the message that reveals what the cross (the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus) had accomplished for us. *"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage*." **Hebrews 2:14-15**

Everything changed as a result of the cross. Satan practically lost everything by reason of the cross. His hope today is only kindled by the ignorance of believers and mere men. If the message of the cross and its power is hidden, man becomes a victim all over again. *"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."* **2 Corinthians 4:3-4**. *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."* **1 Cor. 1:18.**

The Cross reveals the depth of the nature of the love of God and his heart and mind towards man. We cannot appreciate God's nature or His

eternal purpose without a revelation of the Cross. Many people are going through life, missing out on God's best for them because they lack this understanding, due to their spiritual state.

The Cross was the hardest teaching of Jesus to be understood by His disciples. It was used by the Jews to show forth a person that was a societal reject, one who was denied. It was a punishment for first grade criminals like Barabbas.

> *"And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?"* **Matt. 27:16-17**

> *"Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. Then released he Barabbas unto them: and*

when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified." **Matt. 27:22-23, 25-26**

"Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber." **John 18:40**

This artefact of torture and pain was known to be for the criminal from the time of the Law of Moses;

"And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accused of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance."
Deuteronomy 21:22-23

It was a punishment for the person considered unfit to live, one viewed as accursed, and one that was viewed as defiling the land. We see exactly the same fulfilled concerning Jesus;

"The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies

> *should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away."* **John 19:31**

Jesus was not a criminal, but he was to die as written of him before time, the death of a criminal. The chief Priest during the year of his death also prophesied unknowingly about the same;

> *"And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad."* **John 11:49-52**

So, the death Jesus died was not for him but for men. It was His Cross but he bore it for mankind. When Jesus began to tell his disciples about how

the kingdom was to come, they could not understand because their minds were unable to comprehend what he was saying.

> *"From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee."* **Matt. 16:21-22**

Hence the response of Jesus to Peter in **verse 23**; *"But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."*

The word 'SAVOUREST' is used in the statement to show what was of interest to Peter. Jesus was not calling Peter the devil but was pointing to the interest of Satan in the material things of the world. Jesus therefore by his response, lets us know that the kingdom of God is not in things material, or the natural riches of this earth.

The disciples and all those that heard Jesus could not have understood him. They understood kingdom, authority and power in things; so, Jesus's preaching of the Cross was foolishness to them.

> *"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"* **Acts 1:6**

They could not understand until the understanding was given. All this while they thought Jesus was a physical political emperor, but when Jesus told them His kingdom was not physical, they were disappointed.

> *"Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?"* **John 6:60-62**

The background story here was about Jesus trying to communicate his mission on earth to

his followers, but all including the twelve (12) found it hard to understand. All they could hear from all he said was bread, body, blood. They all eventually left in anger and offended except the disciples.

So, the Cross will be that which Jesus will accomplish after his ministry on earth i.e. in his Death, Burial, and Resurrection. The Cross is a symbol of the believer's victory, by identification with Christ over sin and Satan.

The obvious fact from all the teachings of Jesus in the Gospels was that no man can bear the Cross; it was a burden only Jesus could bear. The Cross was for him alone to carry. Jesus explained the CROSS to His disciples from this perspective.

> *"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."* **Matt. 16:24**
>
> *"And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."* **Matt. 10:38** (Also see Mark 8:34, Luke 14:27)
>
> *"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny*

himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." **Luke 9:23**

The bearing of the cross is not literal but figurative of his work of salvation. What Jesus spoke about could only be seen and known in the spirit.

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." **John 6:63**

Jesus explains this in plain words to his disciples later when He said, *"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."* **John 16:12-13**

The word BEAR is used for lifting things physically, which in this context means to bear them up, to take up, and for conceptual facts i.e. to understand, to accept. Jesus said he could not speak of his death, burial, and resurrection because they cannot comprehend, or understand his words without the spirit. We see how people understood his words in the accusations levied against him and the railings on him;

> *"And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross."* **Matt. 27:40**

They could not understand his words. This was the event recorded in John 2.

> "*Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days. But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.*" **John 2:19-22**.

They took his word literally, and did not believe what he said. It was until after the resurrection of Jesus that they understood his words. The word SHEW is always used for declaring things by speech, to announce.

> *"From that time forth began Jesus to <u>shew unto</u> his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer*

> *many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."* **Matt. 16:21, 25-26**

So, the Holy Spirit will bring them into the understanding of that spoken about Jesus. The speaking will be in that which is already Jesus'; he will explain that which was testified of Jesus.

Conclusively, *The Cross* is a terminology used by Jesus to speak of his sacrificial work of salvation and what the believer gained as a result of his work. When we come into the Epistles, the apostles also used the word in the same light;

> *"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but*

unto us which are saved it is the power of God." **1 Cor. 1:17-18**

Paul lets us see why the disciples and all taught in the ministry of Jesus could not understand his words. It is not in human wisdom.

"Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." **1 Cor. 2:6-8**

It is the wisdom of God.

"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." **Phil 2:8**

"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." **Colossians 1:20**

> *"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."* **Hebrews 12:2**

Thus, the Cross is a generic term for Jesus's Death, Burial, Resurrection and Exaltation to the right hand of all authority. It is also used for the preaching of the gospel and work of the ministry.

> *"And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased."* **Galatians 5:11**

> *"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."* **Gal. 6:14**

> *"(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:"* **Phil. 3:18**

Therefore, it is Jesus' Cross. Only He could bear the pains of what the Cross represents. It was only after Jesus died and the Holy Spirit came

that the disciples began to understand the mystery of the Cross. The Holy Spirit is the only one who can open your heart and give you a revelation of Jesus; His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension.

The Gospel

The Gospel is good news, not bad news! That definitely limits what we mean by the word, "Gospel". Many things that are not good news have been promoted as "the gospel". Many people in the so called "Christian culture" associate the gospel with the teaching that says, "You are a sinner, if you don't repent, you are going to hell". Now, these are true statements; there is heaven and hell; God and Satan, and you will go to hell if you reject Jesus's sacrifice by not accepting the message. Even if all of that is true, it is not good news.

Many people have mistakenly thought that preaching on hell and scaring people out of it is the gospel. That is not what Paul taught. As a matter of fact, as we study on into this, you will see that it is the complete opposite of what he was really talking about. So, let us get into what the gospel is.

> *"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you <u>the gospel</u> which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and*

> *wherein ye stand;…For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:"* **1 Cor. 15: 1, 3-4**

The Gospel is the message of the Scriptures. The scriptures speak of Jesus's death, burial, and resurrection.

> "*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me*." **John 5:39**

The scriptures report concerning Christ. The scripture is Genesis to Malachi; that was spoken and written by the prophets of old.

> *"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"* **Luke 24:25**

The prophets have spoken about Christ's suffering and then the glory that should follow his suffering.

> "*And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.*" **Luke 24: 27**

Where is Moses and the prophets located?

> *"And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,"*
> **Luke 24:44-45**

Genesis to Malachi are the scriptures. The first five books of the Bible are the writings ascribed to Moses. Is it all they wrote? No.

> *"And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."* **Luke 24**: **46-47**

Specific things that should and must be fulfilled:

God's Perspective

One of the attributes that makes God different from his creation is his ability to foreknow. This is so because he does not exist in time like man or the things he created. This attribute makes it impossible for him to be caught unawares.

If God is not caught unawares, then the sin of Adam was not a shock to him; that would mean he foreknew that Adam will disobey. This also says that God by foreknowledge would have made contingencies for sin in humanity in his eternal plan before time began. We see this in his advice to Adam and his provision after the sin of Adam;

> *"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* **Genesis 2:17**

He told Adam what to receive; he told him to receive life.

> *"And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the*

> *tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?...And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."* **Gen. 3:11,15**

It was obvious he knew what had happened and knew the solution. God was not shocked neither did he react; rather he only gave a promise of victory in the seed of humanity. We see that his plan did not change because what he re-offered to mankind was life in the seed.

The answer to death is life. The answer to the darkness in Genesis was light that God spoke forth. His voice from the beginning is light and life. Paul spoke to the same intent;

> *"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light*

of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." **2 Cor. 4:3-6**

Paul says the light in Genesis was the message of Christ to Adam in the beginning. John says the same in his gospel;

> *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."* **John 1:1-5**

He said Jesus was that life source, the tree of Life. He says in that life is the light. The word "**Word**", in context, refers to the intent before the speech or action. Jesus is the life and the light in Genesis. He is the word; that is His office.

God does not react. He was not reacting at Adam's sin; life in Jesus was God's eternal plan for man. God's plan is before time and creation; this was the preeminent thought and idea.

The next question we should answer is when was the death of Jesus, and was Jesus slain before the foundation of the earth?

> *"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."* **Revelations 13:8**

The text above if read without regards to other similar statements in this very book, seems to support the idea that Jesus was slain from the foundation of the earth. This however negates the overwhelming evidence we have in the gospels and Epistles that says Jesus was hanged on a tree outside Jerusalem. Jerusalem is in time and dated. Therefore, we will need to look into the book for further inferences before we take a conclusion.

The word, **"BOOK OF LIFE**" is key to our proper understanding. We already saw that what God offered to Adam and humanity in him is Life.

> *"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."* **Rev. 3:5**

Now the way the book of life is used here; it will be best referred to as the book of the living i.e. living in Gods life, living to God. We see such thoughts in the Psalms of David;

> *"Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous."* **Psalm 69:28**

David calls it the Book of the Living. That means if a person's name is blotted out from the book, he has no life before God. We see this in how the Book of Life was later used in context;

> *"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."* **Rev. 20:13-15**

Men were judged by the books according to their deeds, but whosoever of these were not found in the Book of Life was to partake in the second and everlasting death. So, the Book of Life was a primary deciding factor, not works, hence, the use of the phrase 'confess before the father' in Revelation 3. It makes us see that there is an advocacy of Jesus involved in deciding the fate of men.

When the writer speaks of the **foundation of the world**, was it about the book or Jesus as the lamb?

> *"The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, <u>whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world</u>, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is."* **Rev. 17:8**

This is similar to **Rev. 13:8**. We see two pronouns and prepositions used;

- BEFORE
- FROM

The word **before** implies what precedes. While the word **from** simply means "since" i.e. either at the commencement or at any point after then. Thus, whether **before** or **from**, it refers to before Man was created. An important question will be how does anyone's name get into this book?

> *"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are*

written in the Lamb's book of life."
Rev. 21:27

The Book of the Lamb

That Lamb speaks of the work of Jesus for salvation. We have also seen that all we have seen in revelation is that names are blotted out and not that they are written or added to this book.

Paul said, *"I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow labourers, whose names are in the book of life."* **Phil. 4:3**

Paul makes us know that the believers name is written in the Book of Life. Putting all evidences together, we see that this Book speaks of the mediation and advocacy of Christ Jesus for men as pre-planned by God before the beginning, and is actionable by faith from the very commencement of Man in time.

Therefore, we have Paul put all together in a summary in **Titus 1:1-3.**

"Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the

> *acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;* ***In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;*** *But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;"* **Titus 1:1-3**

The Gospel is according to faith, which is God's election. It is faith in the life God spoke of, and is communicated today by preaching as a commission of Jesus. Before the foundation of the world, this gospel, which is the subject, will be in God as his intent, purpose and plan. And from the foundation will be at Genesis in his communication to Adam, a promise God himself will fulfil. The sin of Adam never changed his intent. The Cross was planned before the fall of man. It therefore was not a reaction, it was the plan.

Christ's Perspective

The enormity of that done by Jesus to save took all he is; his whole person. Man's sin cost Jesus everything.

> *"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:"* **Phil. 2:5-6**

How did Jesus not think it robbery? We have a better translation in the Amplified Version;

> *"Who, although He existed in the form and unchanging essence of God [as one with Him, possessing the fullness of all the divine attributes – the entire nature of Deity], did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped or asserted [as if He did not already possess it, or was afraid of losing it]; but emptied Himself [without renouncing or diminishing His deity, but only temporarily giving up the outward expression of divine equality and His rightful dignity]by assuming the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men [he became completely human but was without sin, being fully God and fully man]."* **Phil. 2:6-7** (AMP)

Paul makes us to understand that Jesus was fully man; he left all his glory as God and became a man as God intended. So, in Jesus, God showed us not only his own character but also showed us who Man truly is as his own son. We see clearly the dominion of man over all that God created in Jesus Christ.

The writer of Hebrews tells us as much also;

> *"Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."* **Heb. 2:8-10**

Therefore, Jesus was man; fully man without sin.

> *"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;"* **1 Timothy 2:5**

> *"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:"* **1 John 4:2**

The limitation of time and space was a valid restraint for Jesus. He was hungry, was tired, laboured etc. His incarnation from conception in the womb of Mary, the womb of a sinner, is the commencement of his sufferings. Then he had to take on our death, and he was horrified of Death.

> *"And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."*
> **Matt. 26:37-39**

We see his emotions here; this is another vital proof that he was human;

> *"And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt."*
> **Mark 14:36**

> *"And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."*
> **Luke 22:43-44.**

He prayed, expending energy, and was tired. Angels had to come to his aid to strengthen him. All scenes showed that he had left all attribute of the Godhead for the sake of Man. He is Man for us.

> *"Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;"* **Heb. 5:7**

Isaiah 53:3 calls him a man of sorrow. Jesus said his soul is sorrowful unto death. **What sort of death is this? What did he mean by 'My soul'?** The word, "**soul**" is used in context to mean either a part of the whole man or the existence of the Man himself. Was Jesus just referring to His mind or His person?

> *"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with*

grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." **Isaiah 53:3-6**

His sorrow and grief was actually ours. He was our substitute; he took our place in death. His life was given to us for our death. **How?**

"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his

> *grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand."* **Isaiah 53:7-10**

He was killed, yet it was him who willingly decided not to defend himself. He willingly offered himself to death and hades. The Grave of the wicked was not the tomb of Joseph Arimatheia; Joseph was a disciple who believed in Jesus.

> *"And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just: (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God."* **Luke 23:50-51**

Thus, his physical body was buried in the tomb, but his Spirit went to hades. Isaiah says his soul was made an offering for sin. Since we know

now that his body and spirit was definitely involved in this death, we can safely say Jesus died wholly as man. Jesus died, spirit, soul and body. He died paying for sin; the consequence of sin is death (**Gen. 2:15-17; 3:11-22**). He took our death on himself.

Peter explains Isaiah to us;

> *"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."* **1 Peter 2:24-25**

His death is our life. The sacrifice was his life for our life, his soul for our soul. It was a once and for all exchange and payment.

> *"Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself."* **Heb. 7:27**
>
> "*Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place,*

> *having obtained eternal redemption for us."* **Heb. 9:12**
>
> *"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:"* **1 Peter 3:18**

The death of Jesus paid for sins past, present, and future. This he did once. It is for all times because his sacrifice is once and exists forever; his payment of death serves forever because he resurrected to live forever **Heb. 7:23-25**

Jesus's victory over death puts sin out of power because the power and authority of sin is death. Mankind is free from the reign of sin forever. Sin and death no longer separate men from God; Jesus has bridged the gap by his life from the dead. Peter on the day Pentecost was fulfilled in Acts 2. Let us understand this in his first sermon.

> *"Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of*

Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." **Acts 2:26-27, 31**

"*For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."* **Heb. 9:26-28**

The **sins of many** in **Hebrews 9:28** is to show there is not a pre-selected beneficiary, rather, all in humanity. Individual men will have to believe in Christ to receive of his work. What Jesus did is in the past today, but valid and potent for all men to receive of it because Jesus lives forever. Therefore, His resurrection becomes the most potent of all he did. Without the resurrection, the hope of the cross is voided.

"And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in

this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." **1 Cor. 15:17-20**

The Power of the Message of the Cross

The revelation of the Cross will be seen in that which the spirit revealed concerning his death, Jesus's three days and nights in hades, his resurrection, ascension and exaltation to the right hand of the Father. As discussed already, the resurrection is the cap of perfection to all that Jesus accomplished. This is the show of God's almighty power to save alone.

The Cross reveals the desire of God, his intent and purpose, his wisdom and counsel. This power and wisdom of God is committed to preaching today.

> *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."* **Romans 1:16**

Men are persuaded to believe; the gospel preached is God's wisdom to save.

> *"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."* **1 Cor. 1:21**

The major difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament is the manifestation of God in human form called Christ. It was promised and prophesied about in the Old Testament;

> *"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."***Isaiah 7:14**

It was communicated and explained by the angel in due time;

> *"But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream,*

saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."
Matt. 1:20-23

The Angel lets us know that what happened in the womb of Mary was not a natural conception but supernatural, an incarnation. So, that which will be born of her is deity. Jesus is God in the beginning of creation, that is why, as we saw earlier, John called him the Word i.e. the superintendent thought.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life

> *was the light of men. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."*
> **John 1:1-4,14**

He is creator in the beginning. The word will refer to his office, God's plan and purpose. Paul summarizes the gospel to Timothy in the same light.

> *"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."* **1 Tim. 3:16**

The word Godliness here refers to the Godhead; great is the mystery of the Godhead. Jesus Christ is God who became man to save man. He is named Jesus for he shall save His People; his people will refer to the people of his mandate, the people of the world, particularly those that eventually believe in his finished work of salvation. With the manifestation of God for the first time in human form, it changed everything concerning man's relationship with God.

God Came to Man

> *"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."* **John 1:13-14, 16**

His grace is what he gives freely.

> *"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."* **John 1:18**

He is our revelation of God and his purpose and salvation. Man was reconciled to God, sin and death has been taken out of our way to God.

> *"But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."* **Rom. 4:24-25**

> *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."***Rom. 5:1-2**

Unworthiness is no longer the case in our relationship with God. We can now stand before God like Adam never sinned, like we never were dead in sin.

> *"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."* **2 Cor. 5:21**

We are now declared right in Christ Jesus. From the beginning of time, God had always wanted a family that He could fellowship with, so God created man- Adam and Eve- and gave them a choice. But in their choice, they rejected Christ.

> *"And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* **Gen. 2:16-17**

God told them there is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the tree of life. They could eat the tree of life freely, but the day they eat the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they will die. This is how it looks from Moses's presentation.

Did God offer life and death or was it Moses's presentation and understanding?

The Tree of Life will have the fruit of Life, it is this fruit that man is to eat of. So, the result of Man's obedience would be to partake of God's given life; by eating, Man will have that life in him. However, to reject to eat will be to exist without that life which God gave. Therefore, the existence of Man will now be the opposite of life i.e. death.

We can therefore deduce that the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil will be to disobey God's advice, to reject Gods plan and offer of Life. So, God's desire for Mankind was to exist in his given life. What God gave in Genesis was Life, not life and death.

> "*In him was life; and the life was the light of men."* **John 1:4**

The word of God is life to man but the result of Adam's disobedience or sin is death. Hence

Paul's submission that it was Adam who disobeyed;

> *"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."* **Rom. 5:19**

This disobedience is what Paul called sin; we do not see the word sin in Genesis because there was not a law to impute wrong doing until Moses.

> *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law."* **Rom. 5:12-13**

Then, death here is not physical but has to do with the spiritual. It could not have been physical because Adam lived long after this event;

> *"And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died."* **Gen. 5:5**

However, we see that death was never in God's plan in any form. Spiritual death, which is

separation from God made it possible for physical death to occur. We see the first expression of that separation from God in Adam's expression of fear. Fear is first found in death as a state of existence.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" **Genesis 3:6-9**

Verse 9 was a rhetorical question as God could not have been looking for Adam; rather it points man to us in a dead state. Death there was eternal separation from God, and Adam made the choice to be eternally separated from God. With that choice, came certain consequences.

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil as explained earlier is sin in the Epistles and not a literal tree, hence its use in Genesis was figurative.

> "*So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.*" **Gen. 3:24**

The word 'turn to' is the same word for repentance. **'Every way'** actually means to turn towards the tree of life. God put the cherubim's there in that vision so that from then henceforth, man's focus will be turned to the tree of life. This means God gave man a choice of life and man sinned and died. God's promise which is life will still have to be fulfilled and life will now come through resurrection. It will come by raising man from the dead. That life preceded the death of man.

> *"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast*

> *eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;"*
> **Gen. 3:16-17**

The use of the word serpent and what it means is found in the gospels and epistles.

> *"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it"* **John 8: 44**

Jesus speaks of the devil in this context.

> *"I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."* **2 Cor. 11:3**

The serpent was Satan, who was actually the devil.

> *"the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and*

> *Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."* **Rev. 12:9**

> *"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,"* **Rev. 20:2**

The serpent is the devil and he is referred to as the deceiver, one who corrupts the mind of a man not found in Christ. That means the fallen man went into captivity to the prince of the power of the air; a captive of the devil.

> *"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."* **2 Cor. 4:4**

The god of this world refers to the devil, and his authority is through the minds of them that believe not.

> *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power*

of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." **Ephesians 2:1-3**

Man was totally lost and did not have the wherewithal to save his life. To be quickened means to be made alive; that is, life is what a man dead in sin needs. Before a man receives life, he is referred to as a child of wrath, (that separation and death is what Paul calls wrath). That is, a man dead in sin is separated from God and is therefore found in the same state as Adam when he disobeyed or did not choose life.

Therefore verse 2 and 3 speaks of the state of a man that has not believed the Gospel and his mind is ruled by the god of this world, by the prince of the power of the air. When a man believes the Gospel, he is quickened or made alive. What life are we referring to?

"All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." **John 1:3-4**

In Christ, God's gift of life will come to man through Christ and it will come to man in his resurrection. Man did not have to die to live, he just had to choose and live. But since he chose death and he is dead in sin, Jesus will then have to die for man to live eternally.

The Epistles already explained that the ultimate price for sin is death and that was the reason for redemption.

> *"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."* **Rom. 5:8-10**

The cross of Jesus is the symbol of the believer's victory over sin, and the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus reunites fallen man with God. Jesus defeated Sin and Death by the Cross; the authority and fear of the grave was broken. The devil was able to rule men because of death, and the resurrection of Jesus destroyed his hold. The Cross is Satan's greatest mistake and the believer's advantage.

> *"Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."* **1 Cor. 2:8**

The word "**Princes**" means Rulers, that is Chief amongst men e.g. in the Academia, those who matter, those who are the intelligent etc.

'Had they known it'; the wisdom of God Paul speaks of is in the scriptures, written in black and white. They quoted from it, yet it was hidden from them. It preceded communication, education, even the spirit of man.

Why did they not know it? We read the post text.

> *"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."* **1 Cor. 2:9**

The princes of this world receive instructions by seeing something, hearing something or thinking something, and Paul says eyes cannot see it, ears cannot hear it, that is the imagination of a man cannot produce it. So, the knowledge spoken of here cannot be gotten via science. The issue was actually the understanding of man. Dead men were in darkness.

The Cross of Jesus is God's hidden revelation that restores man back into union with God. The Cross of Jesus establishes a turning point; Christ's riches and legacies transferred to the believer by his death, burial and resurrection.

Paul called it the Mystery revealed; the Grace of God.

> *"If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;"* **Eph. 3:2-5**

It could not have been known to earthly rulers because the knowledge could not be understood by the heart of dead men; men without that life of God. Redemption was not possible without the death of the redeemer.

> *"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the*

same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."
Heb. 2:14-15

The writer of Hebrews said there could not be a new testament without the death of the testator i.e. Gods will could not be ours without we being made sons first (Hebrews 9:16-18). The blood was the price.

The blood is eternal; the life in the son is eternal. Redeem means to buyback or buyoff. He buys us back and puts us in his family; placing us as sons. God bought us back with the value of his son; he treats us as sons. It may either speak of the freedom gained after redemption, or the price paid i.e. the act of freeing in the Epistles.

We were bought; Jesus purchased us to God with his blood. He had to have a higher amount to buy us back. We have a new owner and a new identity now. Everything changed as a result of the Cross; Satan practically lost everything at the Cross.

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."
1 Cor. 1:18

To them that perish?

Perish is a finite word; men could not be said to perish except they are dead without Christ. The word here should be better rendered '**to them perishing'** i.e. men who still are disobedient to the gospel of Christ, the unbelieving men. But then to those that are saved it is clearly seen and known as the power of God.

Therefore, Satan's only weapon today against mankind is the ignorance of man; he tries to keep the message of His death, burial, and resurrection hidden from men, from their minds where he has control.

The manifestation of the sons of God and the demonstration of power in the last days is tied to the message of His resurrection.

> *"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."* **2 Cor. 4:3-5**

"LOST" here is same word for perishing as

mentioned afore; not a permanent state because **the man can be saved when the message is preached to him.**

> *"And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."* **2 Cor. 3:13-18**

This is the Old Testament; it says until this day there is a veil covering their heart to understand. Those symbols blinded their heart, but when that man comes into Christ he begins to see the reality.

Until Christ came the word of God was not a mirror. It was vague, but the Holy Spirit came to unveil the truth to us. To see what's done for us, we see ourselves as in a mirror; it's a mirror because it reflects back to you.

A lot of believers live as if the death of Christ on the Cross did not matter, or as if Jesus didn't complete the job of redemption and triumph over sin, Satan and his cohorts. They live as if we are to help Him finish it.

We must therefore understand the difference between life before and after the cross. There are resources and revelation of God available to man after the Cross that was not there before the cross.

For example, in **Luke 9**, Jesus made that distinction to his disciples, pointing to them the resources that they would have after the cross which is different from what the prophets function with.

> *"And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.*

> *And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of."* **Luke 9: 51-55**

To rebuke here means to silence an opponent. He said to them, 'know ye not what manner of spirit ye are of,' this was very vital because they didn't know; hence it influenced their speaking. They were actually quoting from the bible and Jesus makes a distinction there between them and the prophets of the Old Testament.

This means a man should know who he is, he should know that he is born of the spirit of God. We would also see that prayer took on a new form after the Cross that was not there before the Cross.

> *"Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican."* **Luke 18:10**

Before the cross, men had to get to the temple to pray and make a request to God. However, Jesus

made a distinction in the four Gospel about the access in prayer.

> *"Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."* **John 4:21-24**

Jesus points our attention to the fact that a man saved after the cross has the spirit of God and can always speak to God in prayer any time. He need not go to a mountain or a temple.

> *"And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves."* **Mark 11:17**

His house shall be called a house of prayer; in the epistles, we see the believer has been called that house.

> *"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"* **1 Cor. 3:16**

> *"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."* **1 Cor. 6:19**

Our body is the temple of God, of the Holy spirit, therefore prayer had to take another form by the resurrection of Jesus. James further explains this to us; he points our attention to the character and nature of God.

> *"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."* **James 1:5**

'Liberally' means without complications, Give means generosity. He is a simple giver that is why praying is not as important as knowing God in prayer.

James was particular about the God we are asking of. That is ask the liberal fault-not-finding God.

> *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."* **James 1:17**

'Find fault' means to accuse or denounce. He gives without conditions. That is the God James wants us to see. When those words are used, they are used to describe him. He wants you to know the person you are conversing with in the place of prayer, for you to see the person you are relating with as God our father. That means God being called father is very important in our communication of God.

> *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:"* **Eph. 1:3**

That is how Paul introduces him, 'God and the father of our Lord Jesus Christ.' He says he has spoken well of us concerning unseen realities in Christ.

> *"Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; 17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom*

and revelation in the knowledge of him:" **Eph. 1:16**

He wants us to see him as father - an ancestor, progenitor.

"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," **Eph. 3:14**

Again, Paul calls him father; *"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children*;" **Eph. 5:1.** Followers of God, He uses the word children because he wants us to see God as our father. Our union with God is that he gave birth to us, we are born of him.

Lastly, Before the Cross, no man had the ability to stand before God without a sense of guilt and condemnation. But now, we have been made the righteousness of God in Christ. The basis for relating with God has changed. Everything is now based on what Christ has done.

"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)" **Rom. 5:17**

We have the gift of righteousness. Righteousness is a gift. God related with man before the death of Jesus and we have records of men who lived in faith, this means there has to be an understanding also of how faith was received and how men were called righteous in the Old Testament.

> *"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?"* **Isaiah 53:1**

The word *believed* in the Hebrew means *to support something* or *to agree with*. The first mention of the word *believed* in the Old Testament was **Gen. 15.**

> *"And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness."* **Gen. 15:6**

Abraham believed God and he was called righteous. The word *report* in the Hebrew word means *message*, so there is a message of all the prophets, a message in the Old Testament. Report, a message, so the word is a message. Who have believed our message, the message of who? The message of the prophets.

> *"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the*

gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." **Gal. 3:8**

Abraham Believed the Gospel

The word 'preached before the Gospel' is a compound word. One is before it happens- I'm telling you something, the other one means glad tidings, good news. So, Abraham believed the Gospel that was preached before the thing happened- he believed in what would happen. Today we have believed in that message by hearing the message,

"But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." **Rom. 10:16-17**

By hearing the message of Christ, the phrase 'the word of God' there is the message of Christ in the Greek. When the prophet said, who has believed? Believing cannot come from the law, believing can only come from what Christ has done or will do, which is the Gospel. Believing cannot come from the law or condemnation, believing can only come from the Gospel.

That means even in the Old Testament, the prophets were sent to preach the Gospel, and the first prophet in the Bible or the first referred

prophet in the Epistle is Noah because he was a preacher of righteousness, he preached Christ, that's what he was supposed to do.

> *"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;"* **1 Peter 3:18-19**

From the above scripture, looking at the post text in verse 20, Noah was the one who preached, not Jesus. Noah only used an ark to typify salvation in Christ, but the spirits disobeyed the gospel that was preached to them. So, they were thrown into prison. That's why they are called disobedient. Noah was the preacher of righteousness. He was the one who preached salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus using types and shadows (the ark, a type of Christ).

> *"Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us*

(not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:"
1 Peter 3:20-21

Noah's message was salvation in Christ.

Back to **Genesis 15:6**. What did Abraham believed? He believed the Gospel, he believed the report.

The first-place faith is found, we found justification and righteousness through faith. That is, faith in the old testament is for justification. You can't have faith without the Gospel. Faith is in the gospel.

The writer of Hebrews explained the faith in the Old Testament and that in the Epistles: both require a message to believe.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."
Heb. 11:1-3

‘Now’ means ‘therefore,’ or ‘on the other hand’. That is, “Therefore faith is.” Two things we are going to see are things hoped for and things not seen. Faith in the Old Testament would be the things not seen and things hoped for. That is not their conduct, not their money, not their possession.

What is the gospel in the Old Testament? It’s what they didn’t have.

The word ‘Substance’ is used for assurance, confidence or reality. It could also be used for a title deed, when you have a title document of a property. The property is not in your pocket, but that paper or document you have is something we can rely on to prove that the property belongs to you.

Therefore, before Christ was raised from the dead, there was faith as their substance, there was faith as their own evidence. That means they were justified of things they hoped for, things they had not seen. That's what faith does to them through the words of the prophet.

Verse 2 - The elders are the patriarchs of Israel. They obtained a good report by faith. That is, they were justified by faith. That's why none of them has his wrong deeds mentioned in the epistles.

Verse 3 - *Worlds* here refer to the Old Testament or those times. That is why he started explaining those times; he started with Abel, then Enoch, then Noah, and then Abraham. That is the 'worlds' he was talking about.

While the word '**Framed'** means to fix together or to prepare, it was used 13 times. Used in Hebrews 10:5; *"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me."* That is to make fitted together with another.

> *"Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."*
> **Heb. 13:21**

Same word to perfect, to put together. What does it mean? It means that through faith all those times were put together; that is Abel did not see Noah, Noah did not see Isaac, Isaac did not see Moses, but all those times were put together, they were fitted together by faith.

Framed together by the word; the word concerning Jesus, it makes everything similar from Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Joshua, Jacob,

Rahab, all of them were put together by the word. It is what makes them similar.

Therefore, faith is in Christ; they all had the same hope, they all had the same expectation. The word 'Evidence' means that which brings faith, the proof. Faith in Christ binds everyone together.

> *"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."* **Heb. 12:1-2**

Why are we to look unto Jesus? Because that is what they were looking forward to. Why did he say we should look unto Jesus?

> *"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."* **Hebrews 11:39**

They without us means they all died expecting what they were looking forward to. Their faith was hope, and they were expecting something will happen.

> *"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."* **Heb. 4:1-2**

He is saying that the gospel was preached then as well as now. That same Gospel (in hope) brought about righteousness even before the cross.

> *"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."* **Heb. 12:2**

Jesus is the author in the Old Testament, and the finisher today. Today he has accomplished the promise. That is why Hebrews 12:2 says author and finisher of faith (not of *our* faith). Faith for

them was hope, but faith for us is done by Jesus who sits at the right hand of God; which was their hope, that was their expectation. Faith for them then was future, faith for us now is past. Faith for them now is no longer future because it has been accomplished. Faith for them was in hope, faith for us is hope accomplished and promise fulfilled. When faith is spoken of in the Old Testament, it's in a promissory sense, we are the recipients.

Therefore, the faith spoken of in the Old Testament and preached today is faith in the cross, the death, the burial and the resurrection of Jesus.

CHAPTER 2

OVERVIEW OF LIFE BEFORE THE CROSS

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;"
Heb. 1:1-2 KJV

"God , having spoken to the fathers long ago in [the voices and writings of] the prophets in many separate revelations[each of which set forth a portion of the truth], and in many ways, has in these last days spoken[with finality] to us in [the person of One who is by his character and nature] his Son [namely Jesus], whom He appointed heir and lawful owner of all things, through whom also He created the universe [that is, the

universe as a space-time-matter continuum]" **Heb. 1:1-2 AMP**

The above text explains how God communicated in the Old Testament and how he spoke in the New Testament. When properly interpreted, it reads: *"At sundry times, in divers manners the prophets spoke in times past unto our fathers, God speaking in these last days has spoken in his son"*

God spoke just once. He spoke not by but in a person, it shows that the speaking was by revelation of a person. A prophet hears then says. Every time he refers to the prophet speaking, he didn't say *God* spoke but rather *they* spoke about what they knew and understood about God. The prophets spoke in verse 1, God spoke in verse 2. Therefore, God is not talking partially. Man received partially what God revealed, so all they said could never have been total and the way they said it was imperfect.

God however has spoken in his son. That speaking is to speak once, it shows finality. That is, the summary of all the prophets said was the Son. He is the arrival point, the summation of all they said. It was the prophets who spoke in different portions of truth and in different manners unto the fathers while God's revelation is the Son.

The Bible is a book of progressive revelation from Genesis, segmented into the Old and New Testament. The Old Testament is referred to as "the Scriptures" which refers to writings, a specific body of writings.

> *"And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."* **Luke 24:27**

> *"And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me."* **Luke 24:44**

> *"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures*" **Luke 24:45**

Jesus called the scriptures 'Moses and all the prophets'. This refers to Genesis to Malachi, bearing in mind that as at that time the synoptic (four) gospels have not been written. Furthermore, in describing the Old Testament Jesus used the term "mystery".

> *"He answered and said to them, Because it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,*

but to them it is not given." **Matt. 13:11**

"And he said to them, To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but to them that are without, all these things are done in parables:" **Mark 4:11**

The word mystery implies something hidden, a secret, something to be explained. Paul also describes the Old Testament as mysteries.

"Now to him that is able to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which hath been kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:"
Rom. 16:25-26

Notice the word "**Kept secret**". It shows that the scriptures concealed things. The scriptures require explanation.

"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages, and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:" **Col. 1:26**

So, the Old Testament books are described as Jesus concealed in types and shadows, prophesies and promises.

> *"Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Concerning which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come to you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."* **1 Peter 1:9-11**

Peter speaking concerning the prophets said they were investigating, they were seeking after, that is, they were asking questions in their utterances and prophecies. This means the explanation of all they said cannot be found in their writings i.e. the scriptures. The spirit in them did signify when it testified of Christ sufferings and the glory to follow. Therefore, in the scriptures Christ is hidden and concealed.

> *"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect."* **Heb. 10:1**

The writer of Hebrews describes the law as a shadow. The word 'shadow' means 'darkness, thick darkness,' there is no light in darkness and nothing can be seen in darkness. The law did not have the very image of things. This perfectly describes the Old Testament and its communication.

What was the perfect image?

> *"Then he said to them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."* **Luke 24:25-27**

When Jesus rose from the dead and met His disciples on the way to Emmaus, they couldn't identify him, hence they began to explain all the occurrences of the past few days to Jesus. Jesus said they were slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken because they didn't have the revelation of the cross.

All Jesus was to accomplish by his death, burial and resurrection were prophesied in the scriptures, however they were hidden. Jesus had to explain to them that the scriptures wrote about him, this however does not mean

everything written in scriptures was about him. Notice he expounded "the things" concerning himself. The things referred to specific things, not all things, but it means that he is the summary of all the prophet spoke.

Jesus carefully took them from Genesis to Malachi explaining to them the things said and written about him which were hidden in the prophecies, promises, types and shadows. Consequently, we see Jesus, the message of the scriptures, summarizing the message of Moses and the Prophets (major and minor prophets) concerning Him. Before his death, he had inferred to the writings of the scriptures about him to the Jews.

> *"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."* **John 5:39**

He said to them that the scriptures testify of Him i.e. they witness of him or speak of him. He is the message of the scriptures. Whether referred to as the scriptures or the Old Testament or the mystery, Jesus is concealed in types and shadows, the essence of it all is concerning Him. The Old Testament find clarity in him, he is the reason, essence, meaning and summation of the scripture. The scriptures were written for him.

When really did the Old Testament begin?

The Old Testament began in Exodus after the Jews left Egypt and crossed the red sea.

> *"For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith 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 continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord."* **Heb. 8:8-9**

The day He took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt started the Old Testament. The Old Testament began in the wilderness. So, the Old Testament is actually from Exodus to Malachi.

Genesis is therefore not the Old Testament as the Old Testament did not begin until they left Egypt and the law was given; which all were recorded in Exodus. Genesis was before the law was given. However, Jesus said the message in the Old Testament points to Him.

When did the New Testament begin?

Did the New Testament begin from Matthew?

No. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are referred to as the synoptic Gospels. They are eye witness account of the life of Jesus; from the incarnation to his death, burial and resurrection.

Historically, the four synoptic gospels were not written until after the epistles were written and they were written to give an eye witness account of the incarnation and life of Jesus.

> *"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them to us, who from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,"* **Luke 1:1-3**

Jesus also during his earthly walk taught on the New Testament.

> *"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sin."* **Matt. 26:28**

He taught that the New Testament is in His blood. Therefore, until the blood was shed, there was no New Testament.

When was the blood shed?

The blood was shed when Jesus died and rose from the dead. This was the ending part of the four gospels and as such the New Testament couldn't have begun until after this incidence. Hence, Matthew did not begin the New Testament, neither did any of the synoptic gospels, they are at best the closing phase of the Old Testament and transition into the New Testament.

Now, Jesus was born under the law as prophesied to redeem those under the law, that we may receive the adoption of sons.

> *"But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."* **Gal. 4:4-5**

What is adoption of sons? It means you are placed in a position of sons.

> *"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."* **Rom. 8:15**

We are in the family, we are not a covenant people; better than a covenant, we are the very

household of God. We are the descendants of our father, we came from him, we are born of him. What we have today weighs beyond doing things and not doing things, we are in the family of God our Father.

> *"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."* **Gal. 4:6-7**

We have seen that the Gospels were eye witness accounts of the incarnate Christ or God in human form. The gospels were also proof that He was a man, which gives legality to the work of redemption. You will see in the gospels that Jesus wept, was tired, slept- all to establish His humanity in identification with us.

Thus, when we refer to the New Testament, it actually started from the book of Acts which was also a record of the events after the ascension of Jesus, particularly how the beginning and spread of the church in the early days. These occurred after His resurrection and ascension; after the blood had been shed.

When we look at the term 'Old Testament': we use it so much yet we really do not realize that it was hardly used in the Bible.

Let us look at the word OLD. For example, you would not find the word Old Testament in the Old Testament. The word Old was used by Jesus and you'd see how he used it. It is the word which means former. You can see that the word old covenant means former. Let's change that word OLD to FORMER and see the import. Jesus used the word OLD in interesting ways.

> *"No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved."* **Matt. 9:16-17**

Here, Jesus is speaking against merging testaments in a parable, that you don't put an old cloth in a new one, it would be shred. Neither do you put old wine in new wine skins. This illustration again you'd find in;

> *"No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine*

doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles." **Mark 2:21-22**

"And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved."
Luke 5:36-38

In the epistles:

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." **Rom. 6:6**

Old would be what? Former.

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:" **1 Cor. 5:7**

Again it's used for the old man.

> "*Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."* **1 Cor. 5:8**

> *"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;"* **Eph. 4:22**

Only John used it to speak about the commandment to love, and he said, "*Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning."* **1 John 2:7**

So, the word old is used in the epistles for what we were before, what we had before. Now, Jesus used the word New Testament once, this is very vital. The term New Testament is also used carefully.

> *"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."* **Matt. 26:28**

Jesus says this is the blood of THE TESTAMENT. Luke says it like this: *"Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."* Luke 22:20. It

was not used at all in the book of Acts. Paul himself did not use the word New Testament beyond his letters to the Corinthian church in which he uses it twice, once in each letter.

> *"Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."* **2 Cor. 3:6**

Now, you will see that he mentioned it in 1 Corinthians 11 but it was strictly a reference to Luke's account, he was quoting from Luke.

> *"After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."* **1 Cor. 11:25**

This means the term New Testament was not a major concept in Paul's teaching. The writer of the book of Hebrews was the only one who used the term New Testament consistently and he used it in comparison to the Old Testament, every time it was used. However, the word NEW was used several times by Paul but not for covenant or testament, just like the word OLD was used several times by Paul but not for covenant. It was used for what we were and who we were. When we speak of the Old

Testament we need to also speak of the law

> *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."* **Matt. 5:17**

To ***fulfil*** means to accomplish a task, or to meet a requirement. We must find out what Jesus accomplished. Jesus was speaking about what he would accomplish, not we living by the letters of the law.

> *"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect."* **Heb. 10:1**

The law was a shadow. A shadow is a symbolic representation of an image or object.

> *"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:"* **Col. 2:16**

Talking about the ceremonies of the law which includes bread and wine that people use for Passover and call it communion.

> *"Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."* **Col. 2:17**

The word 'body' is the word 'reality'. This implies that when they took the Passover, the Passover lamb, the unleavened bread, that was a symbol. When they took the cup of wine, was that a symbol? A symbol of who? Christ's body and his blood. Today, we have the reality.

The day that the gospel was preached unto you, you received of the blood and the body of Jesus, and everything that is in that symbol. Jesus was communicating spiritual realities. The New Covenant has no symbol, it is a message of reality communicated by the word. Now look at some quick takeaways...

> *"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:"* **Hebrews 8:10**

He didn't tell them that, 'I would put the 10 commandments in their hearts,' he said, 'I will put my laws in their hearts.'

> *"Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men. Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."* **2 Cor. 3:1-6**

The New Testament deals with the spirit, that's why Jesus said, 'the words that I speak unto you are spirit and they are life.' The New Covenant is not a book, it is not another set of laws or code of conducts. Paul just told us it is not written with ink. The writer of Hebrews quoting from the Old testament said "write them in their hearts".

> *"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."* **Jer. 31:33**

The law of the spirit of life today is in Christ Jesus. This refers to abilities that we have in Christ; we don't have codes of conduct, we don't have obligations to meet or fulfil. What God gave us when Christ rose from the dead was His spirit. Paul wrote to the church in Galatia,

> *"This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"* **Gal. 3:2-3**

In other words, we started perfect. The New covenant gave us a nature, a life. That's why the writer of the book of Hebrews reports it again, what Jeremiah said;

> *"And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."* **Heb. 8:11**

That means in your spirit you know God. We walk in the reality as we feed on the word. Who are we? We are not covenant partners or associates with God, we are recipients of his spirit.

> *"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."* **Hebrews 9:15**

Jesus became the mediator of the New Testament by means of death.

> *"for where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."* **Heb. 9:16-17**

The New Testament was done on *your* behalf. It is made for you.

> *"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days. And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more*." **Heb. 10:16-17**

Again the writer quotes from Jeremiah.

> *"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."* **Jer. 31:33-34**

When Luke writes of the covenant, he changes the use of words to promise by revelation.

> *"and we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."* **Acts 13:32-33**

Paul differentiated the law of the old testament from the new testament. He differentiated by calling one *the law* and the other *promise*. Now in the law there is an obligation WHILE in the promise you just receive. Abraham had no performance attached to it. What he had was a promise, a commitment God made, which you have to respond by faith or by believing,

> *"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that*

hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." **Gal. 3:8-14**

"What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." **Rom. 4:1-3**

This shows that Genesis is not the Old Testament. What Abraham believed was the promise of Christ; the New Testament. Jesus called Genesis the beginning in Mathew 19:3-7. Genesis is the New Testament that was interrupted by the hardness of man's heart, which made Moses give them laws, which was an interruption of God's plan for man, which Jesus died to bring to fruition.

"And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. Wherefore

> *then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."* **Gal. 3:17-19**

God foreseeing, preached the gospel to Abraham. So the gospel was a promise to Abraham. Abraham was a prophet just like David.

> *"For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."* **Acts 2:25, 32**

David had foreseen this and prophesied about it. Jesus in John 8 referred to Abraham rejoicing to see His days.

> *"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad."* **John 8:56**

> *"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."* **Gal. 3:8**

'Preached before' implies to tell good news before it happens. God had spoken it to Abraham before it happened. What came to Abraham as a promise is to us a fulfilled thing. Abraham was fully convinced that what he had promised he was able to perform. For Abraham it was a promise, for us he has been raised from the dead, a fulfilled promise and we are beneficiaries.

> *"And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together."...And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.* **Gen. 22:8, 14**

We can only fully understand what he says when we read from the epistles

> *"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went".* **Heb. 11:8**

He that received the promised offered his only son. Isaac was not the only son but a figure, so he was talking of Jesus.

> *"Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead;*

from whence also he received him in a figure." **Heb. 11:19**

'Accounting that God was going to raise him up'; Who? Jesus, not Isaac.

Abraham believed the gospel. Abraham was never superior to us. He believed the same promise we have believed in. He believed it would happen, we believe it has happened.

What is available to us today?

"*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*." **Rom. 8:1**

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." **Rom. 8:14-15**

No Condemnation.

Notice Abraham had no condemnation. What we read in Hebrew 8 that "their sins will I remember no more", Abraham also enjoyed the same thing; he was declared righteous.

In Christ we received no condemnation, in Christ we have the law of the spirit of life. We

are sons of God today. Abraham was never called the son of God; he was a beneficiary of the promise by faith but he was not called a son because the promise was not yet fulfilled then.

> *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."*
> **Gal. 3:13-14**

We are not in a covenant with God, we are members of the family. To Abraham, the promise of the spirit was a promise, to us it is fulfilled.

> *"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,"*
> **Gal. 4:4**

We are in the family, we are sons, we are in Christ, we are in the spirit, God's promise and obligation has been fulfilled by Jesus. In the incarnation, Jesus is called the only begotten son, in the resurrection we are all sons. Today we stand before God just like Jesus his son. God made an obligation and Jesus fulfilled it in the

Old and New Testament. We may not be in covenant with any of them but we are a product of the covenant.

Therefore, the Old Testament was a conditional testament. Man had to meet certain conditions to get blessings. People in the Old Testament had a progressive revelation of God, hence didn't even know Satan that well. The Old Testament is the New Testament *concealed*, and the New Testament is the Old Testament *revealed*.

The New Testament came after the Cross. The Old Testament is a relationship between God and man based on man's performance and ability to meet certain standards he could not meet while The New Testament is a relationship between God and the man that has believed the gospel based on what Christ has done on man's behalf.

Understanding the difference between life before the cross and after the cross is a fundamental way to reign in life. Otherwise you will live a life that is neither here nor there, not sure if you have victory or have to fight for victory. Man has been given Jesus level authority after the cross that was not there before the cross. Before the cross, man's righteousness before God was considered as filthy rags before God. But after the cross, the man who accepts

Christ receives the gift of righteousness without works.

> "*But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,*"
> **Romans 4:5-6 KJV.**

The basis of reality with God has changed, previously it was based on man's effort. After the cross, it is based on what Jesus has done. Everything now is based on grace not our righteousness or performance.

THE CROSS JUDGED ALL SINS ON JESUS ON YOUR BEHALF.

> *"In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee."*
> **Isaiah 54:8-9 KJV.**

God is no more angry with you and He will not be angry with you, as He exhausted all His anger on Jesus. The death of Jesus shields us from God's wrath and judgment. Jesus took all the punishment for all your atrocities. *"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."* 2 Corinthians 5:21 KJV. "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."* John 5:24 KJV.
The cross was an overpayment for sin. *"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."* Hebrews 10:12-14 KJV.

It's called 'the unsearchable riches of Christ'. The cross took care of sin, past, present and future. From the cross, the price for sin travelled back to Adam and forward to eternity end. "*For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit*" 1 Peter 3:18-19 KJV.

"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:1-2 KJV.

Sin does not stand anywhere between the believer and God, only Jesus stands between man and God. *"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;"* 1 Timothy 2:5 KJV.

FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES BEFORE THE CROSS AND AFTER

- Before the cross, they prayed for the Holy Spirit to come, and begged that God should not take the Holy Spirit from them. After the cross, the Holy Spirit dwells in the believer forever. No need for believers in Christ to be waiting for the Holy Spirit to come again, he has already come and he will abide with the believer forever.

- Many are trying to amplify the presence of God today by utilizing prayer shawls and shofars, when Jesus changed and moved us from worshipping or seeing him through places and objects 2000 years ago. (You do not need anyone to take your prayer request to Jerusalem. There is nothing special about Jerusalem anymore for the believer. Jesus is everywhere). "*Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in*

Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship... But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." John 4:20-24 KJV. *"For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."* Philippians 3:3 KJV

- People are trying to create Jesus of the Jews (Judaism). After the cross, He is Jesus of the Jew and Gentile. The Jew and Gentiles are now collapsed in one new man. *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."* Galatians 3:28 KJV. *"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;"* Ephesians 2:15 KJV

- Christians are still fighting the devil and the flesh, as though Jesus did not do a complete work 2000 years ago. "*Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it*

to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Colossians 2:14-15 KJV

After the cross, believers only wrestle in maintaining, by our profession, what Jesus had obtained for us.

- People are asked to pay a price for sin, Jesus paid for all sin 2000 years ago on your behalf, and all the believer is required to do after the cross is to receive forgiveness as a gift. *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;"* Ephesians 1:7 KJV. "*Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."* 1 Peter 2:24 KJV.

CHAPTER 3

LIFE AFTER THE CROSS

The gospel is good news. It specifically refers to what Jesus did for us- His substitutionary sacrifice. It is based upon His performance, not on our good works or holiness. Those do not earn us salvation. We must get away from self-dependence. So much of what is called the gospel today is actually promoting self-trust rather than trust in Jesus.

Paul emphatically commended the church at Ephesus, He said in Ephesians 1:15*, "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your* ***faith in the Lord Jesus…****"* He prayed for the Christians in Colossae in Colossians 1:4, *"Since we heard of your* ***faith in Christ Jesus…****",* In Colossians 1:28, he confirmed, *"Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present* ***every man perfect in Christ Jesus:"*** The focus is on **faith in the Lord Jesus**, not **our efforts**.

Grace is the definition of true Christianity, apart from other religions in the world. Religion refuses to acknowledge Jesus Christ as the only way to salvation. Every false religion, even religious Christianity puts the burden of salvation upon the individual. They say "salvation" is based upon your performance. If you live holy enough, do enough good things, observe all these rituals and rules, then you might be able to be saved. The problem is, and the scriptures make it clear, that *none of us can live up to those standards*. We cannot save ourselves.

True Christianity is the only faith on earth that has a saviour. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. It is a very exciting reality– over-the-top good news. I know that to me, even to this day, the greatest wonder I have ever heard of is that God should justify me.

> *"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."* **Rom. 4:5**

Note the words, "Him that justifieth the ungodly." He makes just, those who are unjust. He forgives those who deserve no favour. It sounds surprising, does it not, that it should be possible for a holy God to justify an unholy man?

We stubbornly believe that there must be something in us in order to win the notice of God. God who sees through all deceptions, knows that there is no goodness, whatsoever in us. He says "there is none righteous, no not one"

> *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:"* **Rom. 3:10**

He knows that "*all our righteousness are as filthy rags*" (Isaiah 64:6) Therefore, the Lord Jesus did not come into the world to look after goodness and righteousness with man, but to bestow them upon persons who have none of them. He came not because we are just, but to make us so. He justifies the ungodly.

Grace versus the Law

The word grace is one that goes far beyond being a mere cliché instead it in itself describes the very character of God telling of who God is in reality. The word grace was translated from the Greek word "charis", which implies underserved favour, or unmerited favour. The grace of God describes the character of God in that He gave up His son to die, and the benefits of that death. We see Paul teach the grace of God as salvation,

> *"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up*

together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:" **Eph. 2:5-8**

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men," **Titus 2:11**

In these texts above Paul goes further to teach the grace of God as salvation. He also teaches grace as all the believer has received in Christ Jesus,

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;" **Rom. 3:24-25**

"To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;" **Eph. 1:6-7**

Everything we enjoy today as Children of God is based on the grace of God. In the Old Testament, the basis for God's blessings was dependent on the law. After the cross, the basis for God's blessing is faith in the finished work of Christ. The law says, you are accepted by God if you keep all the commandments and meets all its obligations. But grace says, God has accepted you, not because you kept the standard, but because Jesus has kept the standard for you.

-The law shouts, thou shalt, thou shalt, thou shalt!

-Grace declares, I will, I will, I will and it is done, it is done, it is done!

> *"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,"* **Rom. 4:13-16**

The moment you place the law of Moses between you and God, you are neglecting the finished work of Christ. It is actually an insult to the work of redemption. For if righteousness came through the law, then Christ died in vain.

When the Devil points to your feelings by the standard of the law, point him to the propitiation for your sins on the Cross. Jesus said:

> *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."*
> **Matt. 5:17**

> *"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."* **Gal. 4:4-5**

Christ has fulfilled the requirement of the law.

> *"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For*

> *all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:"* **Rom. 3:21-24.**

The law was Satan's greatest weapon against humanity, but Jesus has disarmed him by fulfilling all the demands of the law.

> *"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."* **Rom. 3:28**

The law always condemns and keeps men away from God.

> *"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."* **Gal. 2:21**

Some preachers preach law instead of grace. They say you are saved by grace but perfected by the law. It is either total grace, or total law.

> *"And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."* **Rom. 11:6**

The totality of the Christian life is purely lived from start to finish by grace.

> *"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."* **Col. 2:6-8**

How did you receive Christ, the Lord?

> *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:"* **Eph. 2:8**

You received him by grace through faith, so you walk in him by grace through faith.

> *"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be*

fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."
Rom. 8:3-4

Paul taught forgiveness of sins as the grace of God. So, the grace of God brings forgiveness of sins.

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:" **Rom. 3:24**

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:" **Rom. 5:1**
"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." **Rom. 5:2**

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." **Gal. 5:4**

He teaches justification as the grace of God to us.

"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall

reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." **Rom. 5:17-18**

*"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."***Gal. 2:21**

He teaches righteousness as the grace of God. Thus, we can safely affirm that the grace of God is seen in all that Christ did for humanity, bringing justification, righteousness, forgiveness of sins and therefore salvation to all men. All that Christ has done is embedded in the message of the gospel. This gospel is called the good news and here is that Good news that saves.

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our

sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:" **1 Cor. 15: 1-4**

The message of the gospel as we have seen in the earlier chapter is The Death, The Burial, The Resurrection and consequently the Ascension of Jesus to the Fathers Right Hand. It is worthy of note to observe that some historical records can tell you that he died. The people who saw him die for example in Israel knew he died they didn't need faith to believe this fact. There is therefore no faith involved in knowing he died neither is there faith involved in knowing that he was buried. What is paramount is that he rose from the dead.

"And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." **1 Cor. 15:14**

He didn't say if Christ did not die, he said if Christ be not risen.

"Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." **1 Cor. 15:15**

It is so crucial to realize that really the message of the gospel after the cross is in the resurrection of Jesus. This means that the good news of the gospel is not his death, but his resurrection. This must therefore be our focus in preaching.

> *"But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."* **Rom. 10:6, 8-10**

Paul speaking concerning salvation emphasizes on the word of faith, that is, the message that brings faith, which is the message of faith. This is that fact that Jesus rose from the dead and is alive. Therefore, our gospel is not that Christ died, our gospel is that he rose from the dead; that is where faith is found. The word of faith is clearly the resurrection of Christ.

Hence, not believing that Jesus died for your sins and that God raised him up from the dead, [that already includes his death for sins] is what makes a man condemned today.

> *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*
> **John 3:16**

Thus, the gospel after the cross is the gospel that speaks of the resurrection of Jesus, and faith of this gospel is faith in the resurrection. That is where salvation is; that God raised him from the dead is the word of faith.

It is worthy of note to observe also that the epistles speak more about Jesus' resurrection than his death, so the message really is his resurrection as He must have died to be resurrected. The only requirement for salvation is *if there is any is to believe*, not to work for it or pray for it.

> *"But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the*

> *dead, thou shalt be saved. You confess with your mouth and you believe in your heart and you will be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."* **Rom. 10:8-10**

The man confesses with his mouth what he believes in his heart, and this leads him to salvation. There is no other way to get saved than this. It therefore follows that the phrase 'Giving your life to Christ' as being descriptive of salvation is a wrong terminology, you do not give your life to Christ in salvation; God gives and you receive.

God gave his life to us by Jesus and we receive. We do not give to God to be saved but we receive what he has given. Many at the start of their Christian faith believe that they are giving God something. No, you are not. It is God that gave you his life, his Son and you are the one that receives. You receive from God and you are saved.

> *"For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever*

shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." **Rom. 10:11-13**

Whosever shall call upon the name of the lord shall be saved. So anywhere where anyone confesses with his mouth, they shall be saved because the bible says *whosoever*. There is no other requirement or way to be saved.

Also, there is no other thing you do in addition to this. Some folks think believe in your heart and confess with your mouth, then you confirm it with something. Nothing confirms beyond what you have already done.

"But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." **Rom. 10:16-17**

Faith comes by hearing and hearing the message of Christ, the phrase 'the word of God' there is the message of Christ. When the prophet said, who has believed? Believing cannot come from the law or condemnation, believing can only come from what Christ has done which is the Gospel. Now where does this lead us?

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:" **Eph. 2:8**

Salvation is the gift of God. You do not labour to get a gift, you receive a gift. The believer is the recipient of the gift of God. Salvation is not by works, by prayer, or by gifts, but by grace. It is the gift of God we have received. Salvation is received by faith in the resurrection of Jesus; you believe and then you are saved. Hence, all that Jesus did for humanity in that he died, was buried and rose again is the grace of God to us today.

This is the opposite of the law; the law demands performance. The accounts of Deuteronomy 27 and 28 are filled with dos and don'ts. There was always a consistent demand on conduct. This was because the law was given by Moses and not God

> *"And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."* **John 1:16-17**

Again, we see Jesus point to Moses as the one that accuses through the law

> *"Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust."* **John 5:45**

The intent of the law was to declare them guilty before God.

> *"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."* **Rom 3:19-20**

Moses' law brought condemnation while grace freely given brought justification and righteousness as seen earlier. Grace supplies the benefits of Jesus' performance on our behalf so that the man who has believed doesn't need to perform anymore. Moses' law despite its dos and don'ts could not bring justification, it was flawed and limited.

> *"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but,*

The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:"
Gal. 3:10-13

Peter referred to the law of Moses as a yoke;

"But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither

our fathers nor we were able to bear?" **Acts 15:5-10**

Why Was the Law Given?

"For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." **Heb. 7:18-19**

The first purpose of the law is to diagnose sin.

"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:" **Rom. 5:20**

The law has a tendency to make men rebel. There is something about human nature that resist the light of truth and develops the desire to continue an act just because it is prohibited. Does it mean that the law is responsible for rebellion? No.

"But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For

> *sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me."* **Rom. 7:8, 11**

The law is holy, just, and good. It is not faulty, but sin uses it as an occasion of offense, and rebels when it ought to obey.

Second purpose of the law is to reveal God's moral, righteous and holy standards.

> *"Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."*
> **Rom. 7:12-13**

Through the law, God revealed his standard, and in the light of God's standards, man sees his errors and see how ugly sin is and his inability to meet up with that standard, so that he can recognize his need for a saviour.

> *"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:"* **Rom. 5:20**

The third purpose of the law is to bring man to the knowledge of sin and recognize his need for a saviour.

Without the law, there will be no knowledge of sin.

> *"(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law."* **Rom. 5:13**

There was sin in the world long before the law came, from the fall of Adam. The law only made this fallen state more obvious to the sinner.

The fourth purpose of the law is to help men to see their inability to keep God's standards.

> *"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil*

which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." **Rom. 7:14-20**

Man is too weak to meet God's standards. The law is good. It reveals God's standards of holiness and righteousness, but the problem is man is sold under sin.

"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" **Rom. 7:21-23**

Even in Exodus, man broke the law, not because they didn't want to keep it but lack the wherewithal to keep it. The law was not designed to be kept by fallen man.

The fifth purpose of the law is to point people to Christ.

"But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto

Christ, that we might be justified by faith".
Gal. 3:23-24

The law was to expose man's helplessness, so it was made strict, such that man couldn't keep it. If you fail in one, you fail in all, over 600 laws. So the law came to show us how much we need Grace (Jesus) to be our substitute.

> *"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:"* **Rom. 5:20**

The law is not for believers!

> *"Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,"* **1 Tim. 1:9**

Therefore, the law was not given to believers, neither could the law bring justification to anyone. However, today because of the offering of Jesus, the law has been fulfilled.

> *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."* **Matt. 5:17**

> *"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."* **Rom. 8:3-4**

Grace has come unto all. All a man needs to do today is to receive by faith in the gospel of Jesus the very grace of God. We see that grace really is the unchanging character of God. It is very paramount to appreciate the fact that right from the onset, God had always dealt with man on the platform of grace.

The joy of a creator is to see his creation serve its purpose. What was man's purpose? In clear terms the sole reason for the creation of man was for him to receive life/sonship through Christ as seen in chapter 1.

> *"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."* **Col. 1:18**

> *"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,"* **Eph. 1:5**

The epistles expressly let us see that Christ is the purpose of creation. Christ is the logos of God. All things were created by Christ and for Christ. Man was created for Christ. Man, in Christ is God's plan for the world. God created all things for Christ.

Hebrews 11 gives us a list of men of who in time past discovered the grace of God even before it was physically revealed in the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ.

> *"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:"* **Heb. 11:39**

What they all had was the promise, and this included Moses the law-giver. All they did was believe the promise before it was fulfilled. **Note that they were never asked to perform, they only believed.**

> *"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."* **Heb. 11:40**

The use of the word 'better' in the book of Hebrews was hardly used for comparison rather it referred to that which is eternal or perfect.

Hebrews 11:40 means that today we all who have received Jesus either as a promise in time past or as a fulfilment have been made perfect.

''God having provided,'' this phrase again shows us God's role in the plan. His role had always been to provide. God had always been the performer. God made the promise and he performed his promise.

The life of the believer can be simply defined as a life of grace received.

> *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."* **Eph. 2:8-9**

Salvation is by grace and not by a man's works. Receiving simply entails believing.

> *"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."* **Rom. 10:9-10**

Remember that righteousness is received not by works but by grace.

> *"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for*

> *righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."*
> **Rom. 4:2-5**

Deserved Versus Undeserved Favour

What is this concept of righteousness by works? The law came out of a sense of unbelief and unworthiness consciousness, hence favour had to be deserved and conditions were attached to each blessing.

> *"And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God."* **Deut. 28:1-2**

Although many bibles today have the New Testament start with Matthew and end with Revelation, during the thirty-three and half years of Jesus (recorded in the 4 gospels), the

law was still the order of the day. The law was the governing principle in their worship and their conduct towards one another. For example, looking at the prayer of the Pharisee.

> *"Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."* **Luke 18:10-14**

The Pharisee was so confident about his compliance to the law of Moses, he was boastful about the fact that he had met all conditions and demands. Based on his actions he believed he merited God's favour but Jesus tells us the outcome: he was not justified. God never wanted man to merit his favour but simply to receive by faith.

> *"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets*;" **Rom 3:19-21**

Verse 21 reveals to us that the righteousness of God through faith was embedded in the book of the law and prophets. Little wonder Moses was included as one of the heroes of faith in the book of Hebrews. He obviously believed in righteousness without works.

> *"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."* **Rom. 3:22, 26**

> *"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For*

> *they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth…Paul reiterates that the law only brought man made righteouseness while the righteousness of God was unto any man that believeth.* **Rom. 10:1-8**

Believeth in what?

> *"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."* **Rom. 10:9-10**

Falling from Grace

> *"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."* **Gal. 5:4**

Falling from grace is going back to the law. When we seek to fulfil the law as our basis for justification, we indirectly say that Jesus work

on the cross is of no value. Jesus has fulfilled the law, so we are not obligated to keep the law.

> *"For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law."* **Gal. 5:3**

If you are circumcised, you are obliged to keep the whole law, and "*by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified..."* **Rom. 3:20.**

To meet God's standard for relationship, you have to rely on the finished work of Jesus, which produces faith, which is the basis for our justification.

> *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"* **Rom. 5:1**

- Not saved by works, saved to walk in the work.

> *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* **Eph. 2:8-10**

The believer has been saved not by works but to walk in the father's work. The father's work is salvation and we are expected to enjoy the fruits of salvation. One of the fruits of salvation is the preaching of the Good News.

- Not saved by works, but rewarded for works.

> *"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try severy man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."* **1 Cor. 3:11-15**

This scripture was written directly to believers. It shows that the believer's works would be rewarded. 'Everyman' in verse 13 is not referring to every man in the world but to believers. Whilst it is important to emphasize that the reward is not salvation as he had already been saved, it is also important to emphasize the need to ''walk in the work''.

The message of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection was majorly taught in the epistles by Paul.

> *"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,"* **Rom. 16:25**

> *"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."* **Gal. 1:11-12**

> *"How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace*

of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power." **Eph. 3:3-7**

In Paul's days, legalism was huge. Several years after Jesus had risen from the dead, the law was still in force in the minds of many Jews even up on to this day. He therefore consistently defended the message.

"Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain." **Gal. 2:1 -2**

"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? **Gal 3:1-3**

Paul's revelation of life after the cross is clearly salvation through grace and not of works.

CHAPTER 4

REIGNING IN LIFE

The Glory Revealed

> *"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"* **Luke 24:26**

Having seen through the previous chapters the plan, reason and essence of Jesus' sufferings for sins, we would then go on to examine an important concept that is explained in the glory revealed in Christ.

> *"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed"* **1Peter 5:1**

The fundamental reason for the cross was to make us one with God. Let us observe an important narrative that was recorded by John on Jesus' prayer at the Garden of Gethsemane:

> *"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;* ***That they all may be one****; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.* ***And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one;*** *and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me,* ***be with me where I am****; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."* **John 17:20-24**

The statements he made later in this prayer further explains what was being referred to. In verse 21, he says "*that they all may be ONE*", as thou father art in me and I in thee. He points first to his union with the father. He explained the glory which he has given them as: I IN THEM, AND THOU IN ME, THAT THEY MAY BE PERFECT IN ONE, and then in verse 24 he says "*that they may be with me where I am*"

A good understanding of the above statements by Jesus can be gotten by looking at John 14 where Jesus had spoken in the same light:

> *"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself;* ***that where I am, there ye may be also.*** *And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?* ***he that hath seen me hath seen the Father****; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that* ***I am in the Father, and the Father in me****? the words that I speak unto you I speak*

not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that ***I am in the Father, and the Father in me****: or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments.* ***And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;*** *Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.* ***At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.*** *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me:*

and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."
John 14:2-21.

Let us take note of the facts he explained. Jesus spoke of his FATHER'S HOUSE. The word "house" which was translated from a word which implies a dwelling place, where one stays. The consistent use of this word in the four gospels was to speak of a household, rather than a place. On another hand, the word "**mansions**" implies where an individual stays. The same word was used later in verse 23 and is critical to an explanation that we would see:

*"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our **abode** with him."*
John 14:23

The word "abode" was translated from the same word translated in verse 2 as mansions. Thus, when Jesus said in my father's house are many mansions, it meant "in my father's HOUSEHOLD are many dwelling places or places of abode. Observe that in verse 23 he explained that for the man that believes, I and the father will come to him and make our ABODE with him.

Take note of very salient facts that Jesus referred to in teaching here:

-He that has seen him has seen the father: Verse 9.

-He is IN the father and the father is IN him: Verse 10 and 11.
-The father will give you another COMFORTER that he may ABIDE IN YOU FOREVER: Verse 16.

-you shall know that I am in the father and the Father is in me, and I in you: Verse 20.

-we will come unto him, and make our abode with him: Verse 23.

Observe how what he taught was his union with the father, how the father is revealed in him and then how he that believes in him will be in union with him, and thus with the father. He explained that he (and the father, who are one) would come and make his abode in him.

In John 16:16, he says *"A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father".* Now, when they asked what he meant by that, he said because "I go to my father".

Recall that Jesus had said severally that he and the father are one, therefore we would have to properly understand what he meant by going to the father. In verse 20, he says*: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy."*

By this and seeing that he used the term "A LITTLE WHILE" mean he was speaking of something temporary, in essence speaking of what would happen to him in the three days and nights i.e. His sufferings. We should observe that Jesus spoke of going to the father even after he rose from the dead. This helps us place in full perspective what **"going to the Father"** implied.

> *"Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them,* ***I ascend unto my Father, and your Father;*** *and to my God, and your God."* John 20:17

This was after he was risen from the dead, so he was no longer discussing the resurrection, because he was already alive, rather this was to speak of his ASCENSION. Thus, his discuss on going to the father, sending another comforter in John 14, 15 and 16 was in reference to what would happen, consequent upon his resurrection from the dead.

This sets the tone for what he spoke of in John 17:"*He and the father coming to make an abode in he that believes*", *"I in the father and the father in me, and we will come and make our abode in him"* thus is in tandem with the COMFORTER (which is the spirit of truth, the Holy Ghost) that would abide in the believing one forever.

Back to John 17, when Jesus spoke of being glorified and said "the glory which you have given me I have given them that they may be one in us…" referred to the comforter (the Holy Ghost) who would abide in the one that believes. It thus speaks of the INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT and the believer's IDENTIFICATION in Christ Jesus. These are facts that are consequent upon the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

These facts i.e. the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, his exaltation at the right hand of the father, the fulfillment of the promise of the indwelling spirit, and his identification of the believer in Christ therefore speak of THE GLORY REVEALED! This is the New Creation; this refers to a specie or kind that had not existed prior to this time.

> *"Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no*

*more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a **new creature**: **old things** are passed away; behold, all things are become **new**.*"
2Cor 5:16-17

Paul speaking of the believer, the man in Christ explains that old things are passed away, and then says to behold all things are become NEW! He calls him a NEW CREATURE.

The word "new" implies that which had no existed previously, while the word "creature" which implies a kind or specie. Thus, the NEW CREATURE refers to one that had never existed before, a new being all together, has no past to refer to. This is explainable in the NEW BIRTH. This leads us to see how the new birth and the new creation were explained in the epistles:

"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his

death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." **Rom 6:1-11**

Paul explained that the believer is one that is dead to sin and then explains it based on the believer's identification in Christ. We that were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death. We were buried with him by baptism into death. As Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the father, we also should walk in the newness of life because as we were planted TOGETHER in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the LIKENESS of his resurrection. We died with Christ and shall also live with him.

So Paul explained how that the believer is identified with Christ in His DEATH, BURIAL, and RESURRECTION. So the believer is one that

was raised from death to life JUST AS CHRIST WAS! Paul explained similarly in his epistle to the Ephesians.

> *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:"* **Ephesians 2:1-6**

As in the book of Romans, he explained the state of an unsaved man as "dead in sins and trespasses", he described this state further in walking according to the course of this world, according to prince of the power of the air (the spirits) and calls them the "children of disobedience".

He goes on to state that while we were dead in sins and trespasses, God "quickened" us TOGETHER with him. The word "quickened" was translated from the Greek word "**zooipoieo**" which implies to bring to life, the term "quickened us together" was translated from one Greek word "**suzoopoieo**", and the prefix "**su**" implies what was done in consonance, together. Observe how it was also used subsequently for two other facts.

Thus He describes as quickened (made alive) together with Christ. He also showed how that we were RAISED together with him, and made to SIT together in heavenly in Christ.

> *"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:"* **Eph 1:19-21**

Thus his explanation in Chapter two is for us to see that the believer is identified with Christ in

his death, burial, resurrection and ascension at the right hand of the father. Thus the greatest display of God's power being described in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and his ascension also is what raises a man from spiritual death to life and set at the right hand of God IN CHRIST. The same thought is explained in Paul's epistle to the Colossians:

> *"**Buried with him** in baptism, wherein also ye are **risen with him** through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;"* **Col 2:12-13**

He explained that the believer is BURIED with him in baptism, RISEN with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

The GLORY REVEALED thus is seen in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and his ascension at the right hand of the father, much more; Paul teaches that the believer was raised from a state of spiritual death to life and sits in Christ at the right hand of the father.

Thus the new birth, the new creation in Christ and the believer's identification in Christ also point to the GLORY REVEALED. The reality of the new creation in Christ was such a vital explanation in the Pauline revelation. We thus are sons of God after (JUST LIKE) Jesus not based on the incarnation, but by the RESURRECTION.

As Jesus was raised from the dead, so every believer is raised from that state to LIFE! Jesus said in the four gospels that the one who has believed on him has passed from death to life.

> *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but IS PASSED FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE."* **John 5:24**

John in his first epistle let us into an important fact:

> *"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because AS HE IS, SO ARE WE IN THIS WORLD."* **1John 4:17**

The Right Hand of God

He speaks of the one who has believed and says that as Jesus is, so is the believer in this world. Let's examine Romans 5:17, *"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall **REIGN IN LIFE** by one, Jesus Christ.)"*

When Paul said "reign in life", what did he mean? The word "**reign**" was translated from the Greek word "**basileuo**" which means to rule, to exercise authority. We would examine this by first looking through a prophecy in the Old Testament books of the Bible.

> *"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."*
> **Psalm 110:1**

This prophecy of David in the book of Psalms is so important to understanding the glory that should follow. More so is the fact that it is one of the most referred texts of scripture in the four gospels and epistles. Let us pay a close attention to the terms: "Sit down at my right hand" and "until I make thine enemies thy foostool".

The term "**sit**" from the original Hebrew text can be rendered as "sit and continue to sit…" The term "**Right hand**" we have seen was translated

from Greek word that means 'regent'. A Regent is somebody that takes the place of a king in his absence. The only person not subject to the person is the king himself. Let's examine the texts where this prophecy was referred to directly or impliedly.

> "*Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?*"
> **Mat 22:42-45**

Jesus asked the Pharisees what they thought of Christ, whose son is he?, they said "he son of David", Jesus then by referring to Psalm 110:1 asking why David called him Lord. Thus, in asking whose son he was, he implied his HUMANITY, when he spoke of David calling him Lord, he implied his pre-existing David and this points us to the incarnation: God became a man, took on flesh.

Jesus quoted it in another instance in the four gospels after he had been arrested:

"But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." **Matthew 26:63-64**

"So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." **Mark 16:19**

"Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool." **Act 2:33-35**

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." **Act 5:31**

"But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand

of God, (56) And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." **Acts 7:55-56**

The writer of the book of Hebrew used this term (at the right hand of the father) expressly three times:

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on ***the right hand*** *of the Majesty on high;"* **Heb 1:3**

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on ***the right hand*** *of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;"* **Heb 8:1**

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on ***the right hand*** *of God;"* **Heb 10:12**

The term "**right hand**" was translated from a Greek word which implies regency, a position of authority. We can understand this from a historical precedence of Joseph's role in the land of Egypt:

> *"Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt."* **Gen 41:40-41**

Joseph was set over all the land of Egypt, only Pharaoh in the throne was greater than him. Paul explained similarly about Jesus:

> *"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."* **1Cor 15:25-28**

He explained Jesus' reign by referring to the same prophecy of Psalms 110:1: "…he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet" and then explains that he (God) is excepted which did put all things under his feet.

> *"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."* **Psalm 110:1**

Let's pay attention to the word "**Until**…" Note he says 'until I make your enemies your footstool'. We need to understand what 'until' means and we would examine how it was explained in the epistles. Does the word "until" here infer a passive waiting?

In explaining the word "**until**", we need to understand that there is an expectation on us by Jesus, following what He accomplished in His sufferings on our behalf. This expectation has to do with the kingdom of Jesus, which is a function of our reigning in life here on earth, and demonstrating the authority we have in Him, because He is seated.

> *"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;* ***From henceforth expecting*** *till his enemies be made his footstool."* Heb 10:12-13

In the Hebrew texts of the Bible, when a king wins a war, he would have to demonstrate that victory. It was literal under the Old Testament. Let's view some examples.

> *"And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them. And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the LORD do to all your enemies against whom ye fight."* **Jos 10:24-25**

After the capture of these kings, Joshua asked that they be brought and he said: "put your feet upon the necks of these kings." That is a display or demonstration of the victory.

> *"Thou knowest how that David my father could not build an house unto the name of the LORD his God for the wars which were about him on every side, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet."* **1Kings 5:3**

Thus the term "to make thy enemies your footstool" implies to literally exercise authority/dominion. Recall that the writer of the book of Hebrews says he is "expecting" his enemies to be made his footstool. Paul in his

first letter to the Corinthians explained this in clearer terms:

> *"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.* ***For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*** *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him."* **1Cor 15:24-27**

A vital explanation that Paul gives about Jesus' exaltation at the right hand of the father is that: "HE MUST **REIGN**, TILL HE HATH PUT ALL ENEMIES UNDER HIS FEET." This reign thus implies a demonstration or display of that authority! It is therefore not a passive waiting or expectation but an active demonstration of his dominion and authority.

Further to this we would see from the epistles how our identification with Christ in his death burial, resurrection and exaltation at the right hand of the father brings to bear the fact that the believer also is to REIGN IN LIFE THROUGH CHRIST. The authority and dominion of Jesus is

exercised through us. Thus the right hand of the father refers to a position of authority.

Let's also see how it was expressly implied in other texts in the epistles:

> *"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at* ***the right hand of God****, who also* ***maketh intercession*** *for us."* **Rom 8:34**

Paul points to Jesus at the right hand of the father and in this context explains the intercessory work of Christ which is based on his once for all sacrifice and the fact that he lives forever. The same concept was referred to in Paul's first prayer in his epistle to the Ephesians.

> *"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and* ***set him at his own right hand in the heavenly*** *places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:"* **Eph 1:19-21**

Observe how Christ being set at the right hand of the father was spoken of as consequent upon his being raised from the dead as is seen in other similar contexts.

> *"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore* ***God also hath highly exalted him,*** *and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;"*
> **Philip 2:8-10**

Also here, his exaltation is spoken of upon his resurrection from the dead.

> *"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing* ***he ever liveth to make intercession for them****. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and* ***made higher than the heavens;"***
> **Heb 7:25-26**

Jesus at the right hand of the father is explained by the writer of the Book of Hebrews using the term: "made higher than the heavens", and in this statement, he pointed out the priesthood of Jesus and his intercessory work, which are facts after he rose from the dead.

> *"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."* **Heb 12:1-2**

> *"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him."* **1Peter 3:21-22**

> *"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with*

the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."
1John 2:1-2

The term **"an advocate with the father**" is also explanatory of Jesus at the right hand of the father: in this case speaking of his intercessory work. Thus from all the above references, the concept of Jesus at the right hand of the father explained either the authority of Jesus upon his resurrection OR his intercessory work. We would see further that in examining each and all of these facts of Jesus' sufferings and the glory to follow, an important element that is explained in (and peculiar) to the Pauline revelation is the IDENTIFICATION of the believer in all that Christ accomplished.

Thus, we see that ascension of Christ Jesus (which was consequent upon his resurrection from the dead) speaks of The AUTHORITY IN CHRIST, and The priesthood of Christ and his intercessory work. The concept of the authority of the believer in Christ was also explained similarly in other epistles.

Peter in his epistle explained the fulfillment of a promise that God had made to the Israel. Let us examine this promise first.

A Kingdom of Priest - A Promise Fulfilled

> *"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me* ***a kingdom of priests****, and* ***an holy nation****. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel."* Exo 19:5-6

Here in this we see a promise to Israel: they shall be unto me: a KINGDOM OF PRIESTS, a HOLY NATION.
The term "kingdom of priests" implies two things that we should note:

-AUTHORITY (i.e. a Kingdom implies that authority would be exercised)

-a PRIESTHOOD.

Take note of the fact that at the point that this promise was made, the priesthood of Levi had not been instituted, it was God's plan that all of Israel would be priests unto him. However based on the fact that they did not believe and receive what God said, then the tribe of Levi was chosen to minister in the priest's office:

> *"And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons. And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty. And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office."* **Exo 28:1-3**

However, this was not God's plan for them. A priest is one who mediates between two parties. Thus God's plan was for all Israel to minister to him, however because they did not receive the promise, Aaron and his sons were chosen to minister in the priest's office.

Having seen this let us then examine what Peter explained in his epistle:

> *"Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore*

which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."
1Peter 2:6-10

Peter spoke initially of he that believes and how that unto such, Jesus is precious, made the cornerstone. In verse 9, he refers to the believer as: a CHOSEN GENERATION, a ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, a HOLY NATION, and PECULIAR PEOPLE.

The term "royal priesthood" describes two concepts: "authority" and "priesthood". Thus this speaks of a kingdom of priests; and this is a fulfillment of what the Israelites did not believe and receive.

Thus he refers to what has been done in the believer. Observe also the use of the term "priests" for believers by Peter in this fashion and we can understand by the other terms he used and what he explained: *"…to show forth the praises of him that has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light*"

Thus in the work of Christ we see this promise fulfilled. In contrast to those under the Old Testament who needed priests to mediate between them and God, the believer in Christ has access to God based on what Chris has done! The epistles are very equivocal on this fact.

> *"For through him* ***we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.*** *Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;"* **Eph 2:18-19**
>
> *"According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom* ***we have boldness and access*** *with confidence by the faith of him."*
> **Eph 3:11-12**

Paul explained our access to the father: we are no longer strangers, or foreigners bur fellow citizens and of the household of faith! He

explained that access as BOLDNESS and CONFIDENCE that we have by the faith of HIM. The believer thus is one who needs no intermediary in his relating with the father.

Thus, we see that the believer is one that is in an express relationship with the father, God. He is not in need of an intermediary, or one to bring him to the father, in Christ Jesus we have access unto the father!

Life and Immortality Brought to Light

> *"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)"* **Romans 5:17**

We have since seen what was fulfilled upon Jesus' resurrection and ascension at the right hand of the father. Further to this we saw that based on this there is a demonstration and display of that authority.

We would now look closely at what REIGNING IN LIFE entails. What would this dominion mean? What is the dominion exercised over? Let's begin from the next few chapters of the book of Romans to see what the believer is to exercise dominion in or over.

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." **Romans 6:12-14**

Further to explaining the identification of the believer in Christ's death, burial and resurrection, he says that the believer because he is dead to sin and alive to God should not let sin reign in his mortal body: BECAUSE SIN NO LONGER HAS DOMINION (rule, authority) OVER HIM; because he is no under the law but under grace.

Take note that the basis of what he says is the reality of being dead to sin and alive to God, thus when he asks if we shall continue in sin that grace may abound, he says "God forbid" i.e. CERTAINLY NOT. This is so because in Christ the believer has dominion over sin. In Chapter 8, Paul lets us into a vial fact of the believer's state. Before we examine this, recall that we had seen from 1 Corinthians 15 that in the exercise of the dominion in Christ, the last enemy that shall be destroyed is DEATH.

> *"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. THE LAST ENEMY THAT SHALL BE DESTROYED IS DEATH. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him."*
> **1Co 15:24-27**

He pointed this out in explaining the exercise of the authority and dominion in Christ. What did he mean by death being destroyed? Paul in his second letter to Timothy makes a statement about what Christ accomplished in this regard:

> *"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ,* ***who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and***

immortality to light through the gospel:" **2Ti 1:9-10**

Take cognizance of what he says he has abolished death; he has brought LIFE and IMMORALITY to light through the gospel.

We would pay attention to the term "immortality" to understand what Paul explained here. In saying that he abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, it implies that mortality was going to be changed to immortality, in this we see the destruction of death.

> *"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."*
> **Romans 8:11-13**

Examine the thought that Paul begins to build from the beginning of the chapter. He had spoken about the fact that every believer has the

spirit of Christ. In Verse 11, observe what he said.

The word '**quicken'** means to give life, to make alive, to quicken. It refers to giving life to something that is dead. Thus to quicken the mortal body will imply to take it from a state of being dead to a state of life.

The word 'MORTAL' used to refer to the body of the believer here means "subject to death", or that which can die. So he refers to the body of the believer as 'mortal' that is subject to death.

> *"As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For* ***this corruptible must***

> ***put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality****. So when* ***this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality****, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."* **1Cor 15:48-54**

The body of the believer is what is referred to as mortal, corruptible. He says it would put on immortality, incorruption. When he says that the corruptible will put on incorruption and the mortal will put on immorality, he explained what he had said earlier in verse 26 that "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" as he similarly explains in verse 58 that then shall COME TO PASS the saying, "*Death is swallowed up in victory*."

Paul used the term "heavenly" to describe the state that the physical body would be changed into in 1 Corinthians 15.

> *"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a*

natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. ***As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*** *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."* **1Cor 15:42-52**

So from what we see the effect of Jesus' redemptive sacrifice on the body of the believer

is that it has been paid for, thus the spirit of God dwells in the believer. This is called the earnest of our inheritance, a down-payment, a guarantee that the body would be changed, but that is put as a futuristic event in the epistles.

> *"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall* ***reign in life by one, Jesus Christ****."*
> **Rom 5:17**

Having seen the sufferings of Christ as God's eternal plan, not a reaction but the actual plan; In the earlier chapters we looked closely at the death of Christ: how this involved his entire being: spirit, soul and body and how that this paid for sins once and for all. We also examined how that this was possible by the incarnation: God became a man to save man and this changed everything concerning man's relationship with God.

In these, we see the revelation of what the sacrifice of Jesus accomplished, for this was to bring man in vital union with God! A fact that we have explained in detail as speaking of the indwelling of the spirit and our identification IN CHRIST.

Thus, AS HE IS SO ARE WE IN THIS WORLD: we are sons of God after Jesus i.e. as he is. We are sons of God after the resurrection from the dead; we were raised from the death to life as Jesus was. Also, we identified that we are of the same father, we followed after his birth: his resurrection. He is the prototype of the new creation, a new specie, kind that had never existed prior to his sacrifice for sins.

Thus, the revelation of REIGNING IN LIFE THROUGH CHRIST is a result of all that he accomplishes in his sufferings for us and the glory now revealed in him; and by identification: in the believer, in the church!

The promise God gave to the Israelites that he would make them a kingdom of priests unto him which they did not believe thus necessitating the priesthood of Levi.

The priesthood of Christ is different in nature, essence, function and result! For what had to be done daily and yearly and by different priests (who could not continue by the reason of death), and yet was not perfect, Christ has accomplished a ONCE FOR ALL SACRIFICE for sins in the Holiest of all in heaven. Upon this is predicated and explained the facts of his exaltation at the right hand of the father (and our identification in him) and his intercessory work. Then we see how the authority in Christ is

in and exercised through the church; which is his body.

> *"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."* **Eph 1:19-23**

Therefore we reign in life through Christ in the exercise of our authority over all that we are in dominion over: sin, sickness, the works of the devil and ultimately the last enemy that shall be destroyed is DEATH! For this mortality shall put on immortality and this corruption shall put on incorruption and death swallowed up in victory for Christ Jesus has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

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