MIRROR STUDY BIBLE

THE ROMANCE OF THE AGES



Endorsed by Desmond Tutu

A selection of New Testament texts paraphrased from the Greek
by Francois du Toit

αποκαλυψις ιησου χριστου αποκαλυψις ιησου χριστου αποκαλυψις ιησου

The incarnation is the most accurate and articulate translation.

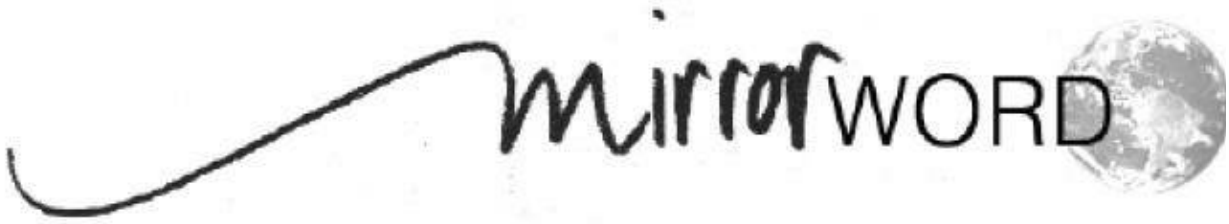
Any sincere student of classical music would sensitively seek to capture and interpret the piece, so as not to distract from the original sound of the composition.

To form a conclusion in the study of our origin would involve a peering over the Creator's shoulder as it were, in order to gaze through his eyes and marvel at his anticipation. His invisible image and likeness is about to be unveiled in human form!

The incarnation celebrates the fact that the destiny of the Word was not the page but tangible human life! The word of truth preserves God's original idea in the resonance of our hearts.

2 Corinthians 3:2 Instead of an impressive certificate framed on my wall I have you framed in my heart! You are our Epistle written within us, an open letter speaking a global language; one that everyone can 1read and recognize as their mother tongue! (The word 1anaginosko, from ana, upward and ginosko, to know upward; thus to draw knowledge from a higher source; from above; to recognize; to read with recognition.)

2 Corinthians 3:3 The fact that you are a Christ-Epistle shines as bright as day! This is what our ministry is all about. The Spirit of God is the living ink. Every trace of the Spirit's influence on the heart is what gives permanence to this conversation. We are not talking law-language here; this is more dynamic and permanent than letters chiseled in stone. This conversation is embroidered in your inner consciousness. (It is the life of your design that grace echoes within you!)



Behold how beautiful

how valuable

how loved

you are!

THE MIRROR BIBLE is translated from the original text and paraphrased in contemporary speech with commentary.

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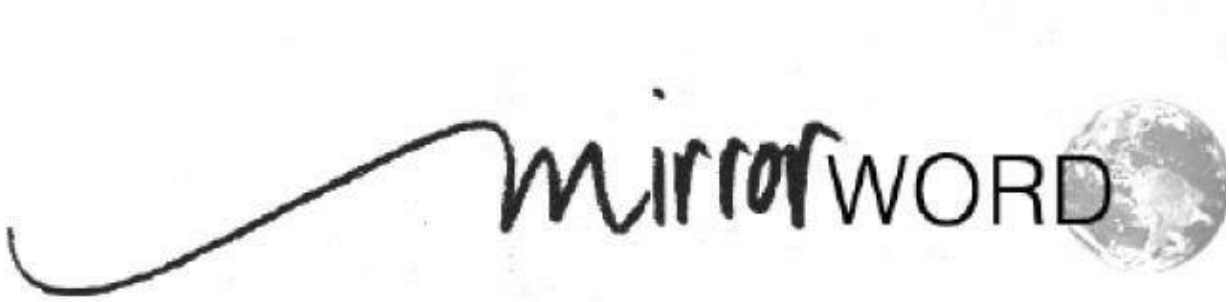
In the Mirror,

Bible language becomes heart to heart

whispers of grace!

A work in progress

This is the seventh edition - June 2017



THE MIRROR

The Mirror is a paraphrased translation from the Greek text. While strictly following the literal meaning of the original, sentences have been constructed so that the larger meaning is continually emphasized by means of an expanded text.

Some clarifying notes are included in italics. This is a paraphrased study rather than a literal translation. While the detailed shades of meaning of every Greek word have been closely studied, this is done taking into account the consistent context of the entire chapter within the wider epistle, and bearing in mind the full context of Jesus and his finished work, which is what the message of the Bible is all about

To assist the reader in their study, I have numerically superscripted the Greek word and corresponded it with the closest English word in the italicized commentary that follows. This is to create a direct comparison of words between the two languages.

I translated several Pauline epistles in the mid eighties called the Ruach Translation which was never published. In 2006 I started with the Mirror Bible. This is an ongoing process and will eventually include the entire New Testament as well as select portions of the Old Testament.

Completed books as of May 2017 are:

John's Gospel, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians,

Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians,

1 Thessalonians, 2 Timothy, Titus, Hebrews, James, 1 John

In Progress: 1 Peter 1,2; 2 Peter 1; Revelation 1-5

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Jesus is God's language and message to mankind.

He is the context of Scripture.

To add anything to his completed work in revealing and redeeming the image of God in human form, or take anything away from what God spoke to us in him, is to depart from the essence of the Gospel.

There is no perfect translation, there is only a perfect Word: the Logic of God.

The Bible is all about Jesus.

What makes the book irresistibly relevant, is the fact that

Jesus is all about you!

God has found a face in you that portrays him more beautifully than the best theology!

Your features, your touch, the cadence of your voice,

the compassion in your gaze, the lines of your smile,

the warmth of your person and presence unveil him!

To my darling Lydia and our amazing children and grandchildren,

Renaldo, Christo, Stefan,

Tehilla and Pieter and their children,

Nicola & Christiaan

In this fresh Paraphrase, Francois du Toit has opened the curtain for readers of any age, culture or language to enjoy amazing insights into the heartbeat of Agape - where everyone feels equally loved, included and valued in the eyes of the Father - and fully redeemed in the union we come from! The Mirror underlines the fact that humanity did not merely begin in their mother's womb; we are the invention and idea of God!

To have this work now also available in Xhosa will mark a new era for young and old to rediscover the Bible afresh.

Archbishop DESMOND TUTU - Legacy Foundation

The Mirror Bible is a transforming paraphrased translation that is simplistic, accurate, detailed and comprehensive, captivating and at the same time exuding intriguing spiritual revelation; it is divinely insightful and contemporary.

It's a must read, a befitting guide and manual for all age groups for; Bible study, meditation, devotion, worship, teaching, instruction and scholarship.

Jesus Christ is the epicenter of the entire text.

Believers will not miss the centrality of the translation as there is a finite and delicate thread directing to the revealing and redeeming Christ.

Unbelievers will derive unrivaled comfort from the text as they get captivated by the reality and close proximity of Christ.

This is definitely a life giving and transforming translation. I am humbly convinced that Francois is chosen by God to serve this generation and the next with undiluted truth in the midst of incomprehensible compromises of worldly, heretical and traditional doctrinal interpretations and practices (religion) that have diverted humanity from the truth.

The Mirror Bible is a welcome revelatory and revolutionary development that is divinely sanctioned, inspired and directed. This translation is by no doubt a compelling grounding expository of our century.

To God be the Glory.

Rev. ANOUYA ANDREW MUCHECHETERE, MBA, MA,

Former Secretary General of the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ).

History will know, I believe, the greatest export from South Africa is not its diamonds, not its Kruger Rands not even its great Pinotage wines. History will know the great export from South Africa as the Mirror Bible!

The Mirror Translation is astonishingly beautiful. The union theme is outstanding. The gospel is not the news that we can receive Jesus into our lives; the gospel is the news that Jesus has received us into His.

The early followers of Jesus knew that he was the center of all creation, the plan from the beginning, the alpha and the omega, the author and finisher of faith. They wrestled deeply with these questions and the staggering implications of Jesus's very identity. They handed down clear and powerful and very relevant insights and answers. Francois has met the Jesus of the apostles, and through his wrestling with their light, is providing for us all a paraphrase of their work that is as thrilling as it is beautiful and true.

My imagination ignites reading your translation of 1 John and feeling mirrored! What a beautiful, breathtaking translation my brother. This is brilliant, and destined to relieve and liberate many. You sing John's heart, my brother. May the Holy Spirit continue to use the Mirror to reveal Jesus and his Father and us all around this world! I love it.

DR. C. BAXTER KRUGER - Author of "The Great Dance" and "The Shack Revisited"

I have been asked at times why God didn't make the Bible easier to understand. If He is able to inspire the writings of Scripture, couldn't He provide a key for unlocking its treasures for us? The Mirror Translation you hold in your hand opens the treasure-chest of understanding with that Key. The key to properly understanding the Bible is Jesus Christ. He is the source and subject of its pages. For years I have been asked why there isn't

a Bible translation that presents the Scriptures from a pure grace orientation.

Drawing not only from the literal meaning, but also the historical nuances of the Greek language, Francois Du Toit presents this translation in a way that will enrich your love for our Triune God and ground you in the grace expressed to us all through Jesus Christ. This is a translation you will read again and again. It is one you will share with your friends. I predict that The Mirror Translation will be widely accepted by those who are hungry to understand the Bible through the template of the lens of God's grace.

DR. STEVE McVEY - Founder of Grace Walk Ministries, Tampa Bay, Florida

The Bible is God's amazing conversation with mankind. Here we engage with God's words that crescendo in the revelation of his Son, Jesus Christ. The greatest joy is to discover and realize that you as an individual are included in this conversation. The Bible is all about Jesus, but everything about Jesus is about us. The message of the Bible reveals how God determined and succeeded to redeem his image and likeness in human form. By inclining our ear to this message we find the life that flows from it and discover the favorable opinion of God towards mankind.

Thank God for the many translations of the Bible that we have available today, as each one brings a dimension of God's communication in a specific way. However, some translations make it difficult for the reader to truly discover the heart of the Father. It was the mission of Jesus to reveal the Father; studying scripture outside of the context of the finished work of Christ on mankind's behalf causes one to miss out on understanding and appreciating the Father's loving intention with humanity.

The Mirror Translation brings a dimension in which this revelation is facilitated in a way that makes it not only easy to understand, but also life changing in its powerful impact as the revelation dawns in one's heart.

The Mirror Translation of these key books and chapters of the Bible is in all probability one of the greatest contributions in the last few years to the broader church. It is imperative that every Christ follower discovers their

true identity declared in Christ Jesus. The most liberating revelation is the fact that we have not only died together with Christ, but that we were also raised with Him in resurrection life. Even going beyond this is to discover that we are seated with Him in a new position in heavenly places, where we function from a position of authority and influence within this world. The premise of the good news of the Gospel is that we are not required to strive to attain something through personal achievement, but rather to discover who we already are and what we already have in Christ, as revealed in the glorious Scriptures.

May The Mirror Translation impact your life as much as it has mine, and may it facilitate your spiritual journey to truly relocate your mind, living from the new vantage point of this glorious life in Christ.

ALAN PLATT

One day I had the pleasure of taking a famous photographer on a scenic boat trip in the bay of our hometown, Hermanus South Africa. I could tell by the size of his camera lenses and equipment that he was not your average tourist.

He explained to me that he needed to sell only two photographs a year to cover his budget! I was impressed to say the least and felt privileged and delighted to watch the artist at work. With fluent skill he would exchange lenses and film and go about his work.

After about two hours with the wonderful Southern Right whales we were on our way back to the harbor when we witnessed a flock of a few hundred Cape Cormorants.

The next moment they all took off in flight; the rhythm and unison of their wings were like a ballet reflecting on the water.

Our photographer friend was happily clicking away when suddenly he shouted, “I’ve got it! I’ve got it!”

It was amazing to witness the joy in the man’s face. He knew that he had captured a moment that would be worth more than all the equipment in the boat. He immediately proceeded to pack away his expensive gear and carefully zipped up the waterproof bags. I then watched him relax and sit back, glowing with delight.

I couldn’t help but reflect on what must have been the greatest moment when for the first time in the history of the universe the invisible Creator witnessed his image and likeness on display in fragile, tangible human form. And God saw everything that he had made and said, “Behold, it is very good.” And God entered into his rest.

The Sabbath was a celebration of perfection rather than a break from a busy schedule to observe a religious ritual (Gen 1:31).

I became absorbed with the thought of photography; magic moments of light, shape, color and movement arrested and stored on film or in memory

to be reproduced in a million glossy magazines or framed in art galleries. These exhibitions would be appreciated in any culture or language for countless years to come. I imagined how the artist would document these gems in a way that no virus would flaw the original detail, regardless of what would happen to the prints, whether they be framed, forgotten or destroyed—like words storing images of rare beauty to be repeated at any time in any language or thought.

In one of her classic novels, Gentian Hill, Elizabeth Goudge paints the picture of little Stella listening to her stepfather reading from the Bible:

"All through the Book, even in the dreadful parts, the language would now and then suddenly affect her like an enchantment. The peculiarities of Father Sprigg's delivery worried her not at all. It was as though his gruff voice tossed the words roughly in the air separate particles of no great value, and immediately they fell again transmuted, like the music of a peal of bells or raindrops shot through with sunshine and vista beyond vista of incomparable beauty opened before the mind. It was a mystery to Stella that mere words could make this happen. She supposed the makers of these phrases had fashioned them to hold their visions as one makes a box to hold one's treasure, and Father Sprigg's voice was the key grating in the lock, so that the box could open and set them free. That transmutation in the air still remained as unexplainable as the sudden change in herself, when at the moment of the magical fall her dull mind became suddenly sparkling with wonder and her spirit leaped up inside her like a bird ... ."

I am fascinated with words; language intrigues me. Mankind is in essence a communicator and an interpreter of thoughts and meaning. We live in the amazing age of a global communication explosion. Age-old traditions, interpretations and philosophies are "Googled" and questioned with deliberate scrutiny.

One wonders why Deity did not delay the spectacular event of the incarnation with two thousand years. Imagine our technology recording the Messiah on high definition mega pixel cameras and evidence his life, parables, miracles, love, his crucifixion and dramatic resurrection.

No technology yet to be invented in the far future could possibly match the enormity of human life. Consider the capacity and wonder of a single DNA strand with its three billion individual characters mirror repeated seventy five trillion times in the cells of one person. Just to count the individual characters in a single DNA strand at one character per second would take 96 years. This dwarfs any terabyte into insignificance.

Their inaudible voice resonates the light of life.

The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the Lord has made them both (Proverbs 20:12). Mankind is the god-kind, designed to live by the complete word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard; yet their sound transmits through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tent for the sun, which comes forth like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and like a strong man runs his course with joy. Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them; and there is nothing hid from its heat (Ps 19:1-6 RSV).

All flesh shall see it together. Flesh was designed to exhibit the glory of God.

A voice cries: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God (Isa 40:3 RSV).

Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; every crooked place shall be made straight, and the rough places smooth (Isa 40:4).

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken (Isa 40:5 RSV).

In the incarnation God deleted every definition of distance; every possible excuse mankind could have to feel separated or even neglected by God was removed in one day, through one sacrifice, once and for all.

Life documented in the Rock of ages is now inscribed on hearts of flesh. Hear the echo, feel the resonance. Christ is all and in all.

You are living Epistles, known and read by all.

More than two thousand years ago the conversation that had begun before time was recorded—sustained in fragments of thought throughout the ages, whispered in prophetic language, chiseled in stone and inscribed in human conscience and memory—became a man. Beyond the tablet of stone, the papyrus scroll or parchment roll, human life has become the articulate voice of God. Jesus is the crescendo of God's conversation with humankind; he gives context and content to the authentic thought. Everything that God had in mind for mankind is voiced in him. Jesus is God's language. His name declares his mission. As Savior of the world he truly redeemed the image and likeness of the invisible God and made him apparent again in human form (Heb 1:1-3).

The destiny of the logos was not the printed page, but you! A mirror can only reflect the object; likewise, the purpose of the page was only to reflect the message which is "Christ in you." He completes the deepest longing of every human heart. The incarnation is the ultimate translation.

In the words of the song of Moses, "Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. May my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, as the gentle rain upon the tender grass, and as the showers upon the herb. For I will proclaim the name of the Lord, ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock, his work is perfect ... ." (Deut 32:1-4 RSV).

Mankind has forgotten their Maker and in the process, their identity. You were unmindful of the Rock that begot you, and you forgot the God who gave you birth (Deut 32:18 RSV).

The mission of Jesus was not to begin the Christian religion. His mandate was to reveal and redeem the image and likeness of God in human form.

While none of Jesus' brothers believed in him during the three years of his ministry, his brother, James, discovers his own true identity when Jesus

appears to him after the resurrection (Jn 7:5, 1 Cor 15:4-7). James gives testimony to this life-changing discovery: We did not begin in our mother's womb! "It was God's delightful resolve to give birth to us; we were conceived by the word of truth." The incarnation reveals the logic of humanity's origin (Jas 1:18).

James continues in 1:23-25, "By being a mere spectator in the audience you underestimate yourself (you come to an inferior conclusion of who you really are). You are God's poem. The difference between a mere spectator and a participator is that both of them hear the same voice and perceive in its message the face of their own genesis reflected as in a mirror; they realize that they are looking at themselves, but for the one it seems just too good to be true, he departs (back to his old way of seeing himself) never giving another thought to the person he saw there in the mirror.

"The other one is mesmerized by what he sees; he is captivated by the effect of a law that frees mankind from the obligation to the old written code that restricted them to their own efforts and willpower. No distraction or contradiction can dim the impact of what he sees in that mirror concerning the law of perfect liberty (the law of faith) that now frees one to get on with the act of living the life (of their original design). This person finds a new spontaneous lifestyle, the poetry of practical living.

"The law of perfect liberty is the image and likeness of God revealed in Christ, now redeemed in mankind as in a mirror. Look deep enough into that law of faith that you may see there in its perfection a portrait that so resembles the original that he becomes distinctly visible in the spirit of your mind and in the face of everyone you behold."

Let us briefly consider these two words that James uses here, parakupto and parameno. I translated the word parakupto as "mesmerized" from para, a preposition which indicates close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and kupto, to bend, stoop down to view at close scrutiny; parameno, to remain under the influence. The word often translated as freedom, eleutheria, means without obligation.

A word in any language can be most fascinating. A seed stores the life energy and the genetic detail of a plant species in much the same way as thoughts and concepts are concealed in words and language. Individual words can greatly influence the meaning and interpretation of any conversation.

For many years deliberate as well as oblivious errors in translations were repeated and have empowered the religious institutions of the day to influence, manipulate and even abuse masses of people.

Consider the word metanoia, consisting of two components, meta, together with, and nous, mind, suggesting a radical mind shift. This word has been translated regularly as "repentance," which is an old English word borrowed from the Latin, which means penance. Then they added the "re" to get even more mileage out of sin consciousness. Re-penance. This gross deception led to the perverted doctrines of indulgences, where naive, ignorant people were led to believe that they needed to purchase favor from an angry god. Most cathedrals as well as many ministries were funded with this guilt money.

English translations do little to help us understand what repentance truly is. Until Jerome's Latin Vulgate translation, the word metanoia was commonly used. For instance, Tertullian wrote in ١٩٨ A.D., "In Greek, metanoia is not a confession of sins but a change of mind." But despite this the Latin fathers begin to translate the word as "do penance" following the Roman Catholic teaching on doing penance in order to win God's favor.

In 1430, Lorenzo Valla, a Catholic theologian, began a critical study of Jerome's Latin Vulgate and Valla pointed out many mistakes that Jerome had made. Sadly, the "Vulgate-Only" crowd of Valla's day forced him to renounce many of the changes that he noted needed changing in the Vulgate including the poor translation of metanoia.

The business of religion desperately needs paying and returning customers. The entire system that trapped multitudes in their hierarchy of sin-consciousness was challenged and condemned by Jesus. In the genius of God, the Lamb of God took the sin of the world out of the equation!

Isaiah 55:8-11 gives meaning to metanoia: “your thoughts were distanced from God’s thoughts as the heavens are higher than the earth, but just like the rain and the snow would cancel that distance and saturate the soil to awaken its seed, so shall my word be that proceeds from my mouth.”

The Greek preposition meta, together with, implies another influence. This is where the Good News becomes so relevant since it appeals to our conscience to reason together with the Engineer of our original design where the authentic thought, the mind of God is realized again. The distance caused by Adam’s fall, compared to the distance between heaven and earth, is cancelled in the incarnation. Metanoia suggests a co-knowing with God! It is an intertwining of thought; it is to agree with God about me.

Adopted meanings to words have over time formed many popular doctrines and have often distracted completely from the original logic of God’s prophetic communication culminating in the incarnation! Over the years, the study of the original Greek or Hebrew words have always been a great source of inspiration and enlightenment to me! You do not need to be a Greek scholar to access the root meanings; most Greek words are compound words and with the help of Greek dictionaries like Strongs and Thayers and its numerical system, you can do your own study and highlight the individual components of the word. Do not be distracted though by extended meanings you will find in Dictionaries! See my rendering of the word parousia in 1 Thess 2:19 “We expect nothing less in the context of the gospel than you enjoying a face to face encounter in the immediate presence of our Lord Jesus Christ! This is our delight and wreath of honor!” (Commentary note: Face to face encounter, The word G1715 ἔμπροσθεν, emprosthen; from G1722, “in” and G4314 pros; in front of - in place [literally or figuratively] or time): - face to face, before. See John 1:1)

The word parousia speaks of the immediate presence of the Lord! And not about the Second Coming as in most popular translations! From para, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and eimi, I am! There is not even a hint of a second coming or of judgment in this word! And yet Strongs

render it, “G3952 parousia from the present participle of G3918; a being near, that is, advent; often, return; specifically of Christ to punish Jerusalem, or finally the wicked.”!!?? This is ridiculous!

Now look up the number G3918, πάρειμι, pareimi, from G3844, para - close proximity and G1510 eimi, I am - that is to be near, to be here, present.

In Mark 11:22, Jesus says, “Have the faith of God.” Unfortunately, most translations say, “Have faith in God.” There is a massive difference between our beliefs and philosophies about God and God’s persuasion about us! God’s belief in you gives substance to your faith. Jesus is what God believes about you. Your belief in God does not define him; his faith in what he knows to be true about you defines you.

If our point of reference is not God’s faith in the finished work of Christ we have no valid gospel to preach. If our faith is not sourced and sustained in him as the mirror image of God revealed and redeemed in us we are deceiving ourselves with yet another religious disguise called Christianity.

There are countless “errors” bound in expensive leather books, sold over many years under the notion of being “the authentic word of God.” The book is not the word of God; but the message it contains certainly is. And in spite of the errors in text and translation millions of lives have been ignited, transformed and blessed by the Bible.

I salute the effort and contribution of the multitude of people who have painstakingly preserved, documented, gathered fragments of, scrutinized, compiled, copied and translated texts over the centuries; also those who translated and lost their lives in order to introduce the text in a language that ordinary people could understand.

The Mirror Bible does not replace any translation; it is simply a study tool that will assist both the casual reader as well as the student of scripture to gain highlighted insight into the promise and the Person documented and revealed in the Bible as the mirror image of the invisible God redeemed in human form.

Jesus blows our definitions and doctrines apart with one statement: “No-one knows the Father except the Son.” Can you imagine how this shocked the Jews? They thought that they had copyright on God! Then he says, “If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.” Whatever we thought that we knew about God that is unlike Jesus, is not God! (Mt 11:27, Jn 14:9, Lk 15.)

“If you have seen me you have seen the Father.” This was his purpose, to resonate and redeem the Abba echo in every human heart.

“You have your heads in your Bibles constantly because you think you’ll find eternal life there. But you miss the forest for the trees. These Scriptures are all about me!” (Jn ٥:٣٩, The Message. See also Lk 24:27, 44, 45.)

Jesus is what the Bible is all about, and you are what Jesus is all about. (John 5:39)

Every invention begins with an original thought. You are God’s original thought. You are his initiative, the fruit of his creative inspiration, his intimate design and love-dream. The first Hebrew word in the Bible, bereshet, from berosh, literally means “in the head.” God had you in mind from the beginning. You are his work of art; his poem, says Paul in the Greek text of Ephesians 2:10.

Every human life is equally valued and represented in Christ. He gives context and reference to our being as in a mirror; not as an example for us, but of us. The ugly duckling saw reflected in the water the truth that freed the swan.

Psalm 23 says, “He leads me beside still waters, and restores my soul” or “by the waters of reflection my soul remembers who I am.” Psalm 22:27 says, “The ends of the earth shall remember and return to the Lord.”

“He has come to introduce us to ourselves again, so that we may know, even as we have always been known.” (Jer 1:5, 1 Cor 13:12)

Even when illiterate Peter learns to write, he declares, “we were born anew by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.” (1 Pet 1:3)

I love his motivation. In 2 Peter 1:13, he says, “I make it my business to thoroughly arouse you until these truths become permanently molded in your memory.” He continues (vs 16-19): “We are not con-artists, fabricating fictions and fables to add weight to our account of his majestic appearance; with our own eyes we witnessed the powerful display of the illuminate presence of Jesus the Master of the Christ life.” (His face shone like the sun, even his raiment were radiant white. [Mt 17:2])

“He was spectacularly endorsed by God the Father in the highest honor and glory. God’s majestic voice announced, ‘This is the son of my delight; he has my total approval.’”

“For John, James and me the prophetic word is fulfilled beyond doubt; we heard this voice loud and clear from the heavenly realm while we were with Jesus in that sacred moment on the mountain.“

“For us the appearing of the Messiah is no longer a future promise, but a fulfilled reality. Now it is your turn to have more than a second hand, hearsay testimony; take my word as one would take a lamp at night; the day is about to dawn for you in your own understanding. When the morning star appears, you no longer need the lamp; this will happen shortly on the horizon of your own hearts.” (2 Peter 1:16-19).

Now we all with new understanding see ourselves in him as in a mirror; thus we are changed from an inferior mindset to the revealed opinion of our true Origin. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

By beholding the glory of the Lord as in a mirror you cannot but discover that you are his glory!

May this translation ignite many hearts with the light of life.

Francois du Toit ~ May 2012

The Incarnation Code

The Bible is a dangerous book! It has confused and divided more people than any other document. Yet its profound and simple message continues to appeal, overwhelm and transform the lives of multitudes of men and women of any age or culture. It is still the best seller on the planet.

Scriptures have been used to justify some of the greatest atrocities in human history. People were tortured, burned at the stake and multitudes murdered based on somebody's understanding of the scriptures! Jesus, Paul and believers throughout the ages faced their greatest opposition from those who knew the scriptures.

If it is such a dangerous document, how does one approach the book? What is the key that unlocks its mystery message?

The romance of the ages is revealed here. The heart of the Lover, our Maker is hidden in Scripture and uncovered in the pages of this book. He says in Isaiah 65:1, "I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me. I said, 'Here am I, here am I.'" (RSV) This sounds like mirror-language! Here I am echoes within us: "Here I am!"

What would it be that attracts God to engage with mankind?

Man began in God. You are the greatest idea that God has ever had!

It is not our brief history on planet Earth that introduces us to God. He has always known us. We are not the invention of our parents! Maybe your arrival was a big surprise to them, but according to Jeremiah 1:5, God knew you before he formed you in your mother's womb!

The Bible records how the invisible engineer of the universe found expression of his image and likeness in visible form in human life!

When God imagined you, he imagined a being whose intimate friendship would intrigue him for eternity. Mankind would be partner in God's triune oneness! His image and likeness would be unmasked in human life.

Jesus says in John 10:30, “I and the Father are one.” None of the other disciples better captured the conclusion of the mission of Christ than John in John 14:20: “In that day you will know that I am in the Father and you in me and I in you.” (RSV)

God has found us in Christ before he lost us in Adam. He associated us in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4). He has always known us; now in Christ he invites us to know ourselves even as we have always been known (1 Cor 13:12)!

Jesus Christ is the context and meaning of Scripture; his work of redeeming the image and likeness of God in human form is what the Bible is all about (Col 1:13-15).

Christ reveals that there is no place in the universe where God would rather be; the fullness of Deity physically resides in him. Jesus proves that human life is tailor-made for God. He mirrors our completeness. (While the expanse cannot measure or define God, his exact likeness is displayed in human form. The human body frames the most complete space for Deity to dwell in.)

The entire Bible is about Jesus, and Jesus is all about you. This makes the Bible the most relevant book. Jesus is God’s mind made up about “you-manity”! The meaning of his name declares our salvation. In him, God rescued his image and likeness in us.

The prophetic shadow of the Old Testament introduces us to the Promise and the Promise points to the Person. He is the Messiah-Christ, the Incarnate Word. He represents the entire human race. In the economy of God, Jesus mirrors humanity. The heart dream of God realized in the redemption of mankind; in one man, through one act of righteousness, in a single sacrifice, he rescued the human race!

The conclusion is clear. It took just one offense to condemn mankind; one act of righteousness declares the same mankind innocent. The disobedience of the one exhibits humanity as sinners; the obedience of another exhibits humanity as righteous (Rom 5:18, 19 The Mirror).

We see then, that as one act of sin exposed the whole race of mankind to judgment and condemnation, so one act of perfect righteousness presents all mankind freely acquitted in the sight of God (Rom 5:19 J.B. Phillips). God has shown me that I should not call anyone common or unclean (Acts 10:28 RSV).

When Jesus joins the two confused disciples on their way back from Jerusalem, he introduces himself to them through the eyes of Scripture: "And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27 RSV). Then in Luke 24:44, he does the same when he appears to his disciples: "He said to them, 'These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled.'" (RSV) Luke 24:45 says, "Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures."(RSV)

Philip joins the chariot of the chief treasurer and asks him, "Sir, do you understand what you are reading?" (Phillip knew that it is possible to read the right book but get the wrong message!) The passage of the scripture which he was reading was from Isaiah 53:7, "As a sheep led to the slaughter or a lamb before its shearer is dumb, so he opens not his mouth." And beginning with this Scripture Phillip told him the good news of Jesus! (Acts 8:35) Jesus is the context of Scripture. (Isa 53:4, 5)

The destiny of the Logos was not to be caged in a book or a doctrine but to be documented and unveiled in human life! Human life is the most articulate voice of Scripture. Jesus is God's language; mankind is his audience (Heb 1:1-3).

Diligent research and study is not the key to understanding the Scriptures; Jesus says, "You study and search the Scriptures thinking that in them you will find eternal life, but if you miss me, you miss the point."

The Message translation reads, "You have your heads in your Bibles constantly because you think you'll find eternal life there. But you miss the forest for the trees. These Scriptures are all about me"(John 5:39)!

The mission of Jesus was not to begin the Christian religion or to win protest votes against Moses, Mohammed, or Buddha. His mandate was twofold; first to reveal and then to redeem the blueprint image and likeness of the invisible God in human form. Instead of an instruction manual, the Bible is a mirror revealing our redeemed identity.

We are not window-shopping the promises; we gaze into the mirror of our true likeness and discover the integrity of our redeemed innocence.

Any form of striving to become more like Jesus through personal devotion and diligence, no matter how sincere, bears the same fruit of failure and guilt. Jesus did not come to condemn the world but to free the world. Religion has majored on guilt- and willpower-driven sentiment, which engaged mankind in futile efforts to save or improve themselves.

The Bible was never meant to be a manual; its message is all about Emmanuel! God with us! Every definition of distance is cancelled in Christ (Isa 40:4, 5). When Scripture is interpreted as a mere instruction manual for moral behavior its message is veiled. 2 Corinthians 3:15 says, "Whenever Moses is read the veil remains."

In John 1:17, "Moses represents the law; Jesus reveals grace and truth." It is only in the mirror where the miracle transformation takes place and the blueprint image of our Maker is again realized in us (2 Cor 3:18)!

Jesus did not come as an example for us, but of us. Beholding Jesus in any other way, sentimentally or religiously, will bring no lasting change. Now in Christ we may know ourselves, even as we have always been known (1 Cor 13:12).

This is the truth that frees us to live the life of our design (John 8:32).

John writes that "this is not a new message; it is the word that was from the beginning. Yet it is new, for that which is true in him, is equally true in you" (1 Jn 2:7, 8).

We know that the son of God has come, and he has given us understanding to know him who is true; and this is the understanding, that we are in him

who is true! (1 Jn 5:20).

Paul brands his gospel with the words grace and peace in order to distinguish the message of the revelation of the finished work of Christ from the law of Moses. It is a matter of grace vs. reward and peace vs. striving, guilt and condemnation. Grace and peace express the sum total of every beneficial purpose of God towards us realized in Christ.

To discover yourself in the mirror is the key that unlocks the door to divine encounter. Tangible beyond touch the genesis of our being is unveiled. Our most intimate and urgent quest is satisfied here.

The days of window-shopping the Bible are over. “And we all, with new understanding, see ourselves in him as in a mirror; thus we are changed from an inferior mind-set to the revealed opinion of our true Origin” (2 Cor 3:18).

As much as the world of science depends upon the senses to perceive, measure and calculate the facts to then form reliable conclusion, faith perceives the reality of God and extends the evidence to reason. Faith is to the spirit what your senses are to your body, while the senses engage in the fragile and fading, faith celebrates perfection. Faith is not wishful thinking; Jesus Christ is the substance of faith. He is both the author and conclusion of our faith. He is the accurate measure of the blueprint of our design.

The gift of Christ gives dimension to grace and defines our individual value. Grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of the gift of Christ (Eph 4:7).This is the mystery that was hidden for ages and generations; it is Christ in you (Col 1:27). He is not hiding in history or in outer space, or in the future! He is I am in you! Anticipate the revelation of Christ within you. There is no greater motivation for studying Scripture!

Jesus did not point to the sky when he gave the address of the kingdom of God; he said, “The kingdom of God is within you” (Lk 17:21).

In Matthew 13:44, he says, “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in an agricultural field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.” “He saw the joy

of his image and likeness redeemed in mankind when he braved the cross and despised the shame of it." (Heb 12:2)

There is so more to the field than what meets the eye. Jesus has come to unveil the real value of the field. Human life can never again be underestimated. The treasure exceeds any agricultural value that any harvest could possibly yield. The treasure defines the authentic value of the field.

Paul says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." (2 Cor 4:7 RSV). Yet our own unbelief veils our minds to keep us from recognizing the image of God, revealed in Christ, as the authentic reflection of our original identity (2 Cor 4:4).

We are not designed to live by bread alone. Bread represents the harvest of our own labor. Jesus invites us to look away from our own labor and to lift up our eyes and to see a harvest that is already ripe. A harvest is only ripe when the seed in the fruit matches the seed that was sown.

The single grain of wheat did not abide alone. (Jn 12: 24, Jn 4:35, Jn 2:19-21, Hos 6:2, Eph 2:5).

The destiny of the word was not the book but the living epistle. Human life as revealed and redeemed in Christ is God's voice; humanity is his audience. "You yourselves are all the endorsement we need. Your very lives are a letter that anyone can read by just looking at you. Christ himself wrote it—not with ink, but with God's living Spirit; not chiselled into stone, but carved into human lives—and we publish it." 2 Cor 3:2-3 —The Message

The Mirror Translation of 2 Corinthians 3:3 reads, "The fact that you are a Christ-Epistle shines as bright as day. This is what our ministry is all about. The Spirit of God is the living ink. Every trace of the Spirit's influence on the heart is what gives permanence to this conversation. We are not talking law-language here; this is more dynamic and permanent than letters chiseled in stone; this conversation is embroidered in your inner consciousness." (It is the life of your design that grace echoes within you.)

Any sincere student of classical music would sensitively seek to so capture and interpret the piece, so as not to distract from the original sound of the

composition. To form an accurate conclusion in the study of our origin would involve a peering over the Creator's shoulder as it were, in order to gaze through his eyes and marvel at his anticipation. His invisible image and likeness is about to be unveiled in human form.

Personal opinion or traditional belief holds no ground against the fountain freshness of his thoughts. The word of truth accurately preserves his original idea in the resonance of our hearts.

My philosophy in doing the Mirror Bible is reflected in the following example: I do not read music, but have often witnessed our son, Stefan tackling a new piece. His eyes see so much more than mere marks scribbled on a page; he hears the music. His trained mind engages even the subtleties and the nuances of the original composition, and is able to repeat the authentic sound, knowing that the destiny of the music would never be reduced to the page; but is always in the next moment, where the same intended beauty is heard, and repeated again!

The best translation would always be the incarnation - the Word made flesh in you!

I deal daily with ancient text - thoughts buried in time- and am so often overwhelmed and awed, yet again, of eternity captured in little time capsules as it were! Opening vistas of beauty beyond our imagination- face to face with the same face to faceness of the Logos and God and us - conceived in their dream!

And irresistibly intrigued by the invitation to come and drink - to taste and see - from the source - and to hear a saint reminiscing and reminding himself of the utterance of another earth dweller-brother, David, who wrote a song 3000 years ago, "Return to your rest oh my soul! For the Lord has dealt bountifully with you!

I believe and so I speak!" And with fresh wounds bleeding from the many angry blows he was dealt with, Paul writes, "We have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, 'I believe and so I speak!' We too believe and so we speak!"

John

JOHN'S ENCOUNTER OF JESUS

Sixty years after he last saw Jesus in the flesh, John, now in his nineties, reflects on the mystery that was revealed which transformed his life from an illiterate fisherman to a saint. He spent most of the latter part of his life *(*about 30 years*)* living in Asia Minor and more specifically at Ephesus; much of Paul's emphasis in teaching therefore reflects in John's writing. This he did both from Ephesus as well as from the Isle of Patmos where he spent some years in exile. *(Compare Colossians 1:15-17, John 1:1-3,16-17, 1 John 5:20, "He has given us understanding to know him who is true and we are in him who is true!")*

None of the other disciples better captured the conclusion of the mission of Christ than John, *"In that day you will know that just as I am in my Father, you are in me and I am in you!" John 14:20*

He has no desire to outwit the others in giving an even more accurate historic account of Christ! The life that was manifest within his sacred gaze and now tangible embrace is a fellowship of the highest order! He must write; he must extend this reality to his immediate audience as well as the next generations! "I am writing this to complete your joy!" 1 John 1:4

Unlike Matthew and Luke who wrote 30 years prior to him, John did not bother to locate Jesus in the setting of his natural lineage. Instead he declares, "In the beginning was the Word!" Before history was ever recorded the Word was!

Mankind pre-existed in the Logic of God! He understands that the Word was both the eternal source and destiny of all things and that nothing could ever reduce or confine the Word to an isolated island experience, neither could the Word be trapped in human doctrine or tradition. No inferior translation or interpretation could compromise God's original intent. The authentic integrity of God's thought would forever be preserved and celebrated in the incarnation; human life would be the uninterrupted future of the Word.

Notice how often John uses the word, ***egeneto,*** from ***ginomai,*** meaning birth or origin in the first chapter: "In the beginning was the Word, and the

Word was face to face towards God, and the Word was God. All things came into being *(**ginomai**, from **genos**, to give birth to)* through him; and nothing has any authentic existence outside of their origin *(**ginomai**)* in him.

In him was life and the life was the light of men. The light shone in the darkness, and the darkness could not comprehend it *(**kata**+**lambano,** to seize upon, to grasp)*. The true light that enlightens everyone has come into the world. The world was made *(**ginomai**)* through him, yet the world knew him not; he came to his own, and his own received him not *(**para**+**lambano**, to grasp, associate with)*.
But in everyone who by faith comprehends him to be their true origin *(**lambano**, comprehend, grasp, identify with),* in them he sanctions the integrity of their sonship *(**didomi**, in this case to give something to someone that already belongs to them, thus to return)*, the fact that they already are his own, born from above, they have their beginning and their being in him *(**eksousia**, integrity, legality, authority, legal grounds)*! Jesus has come to reveal mankind's true sonship; he vindicated our origin and design.

"And the Word became *(**ginomai**)* flesh and now tabernacles in (**en**) us!" Not 'amongst us' as many translations would suggest! John 1:1-14.

1 John 2:7 My beloved family, I know that the words I write to you here may not immediately remind you of the [1]precepts of Moses; this does not mean that it is a new [1]doctrine, it is the ancient [1]conversation that [2]echoes God's voice prophetically! It is indeed the very [1]conclusion of the word, which you have heard from the beginning! *(The word [1]**entole** is often translated commandment or precept; this word has two components: **en**, in and **telos**, from **tello**, to set out for a definite point or goal; properly the point aimed at as a limit, that is, by implication, the conclusion of an act or state, the result; the ultimate or prophetic purpose. Strong's 5056. The word, [2]**echo**, to hold, like sound is held in an echo; to resonate.)*
1 John 2:8 And yet it is a glorious [1]new [2]message that I am writing to you! You may ask, "How can that which is old, also be new?" Herein is the secret of its newness: **whatever is true of Jesus is equally true of you!** The days of the [3]dominance of darkness as a reference to human life, are

over! The true light surely shines with [4]bold certainty and illuminates your life, as it is unveiled in Christ. *(The word [1]**kainos** means, fresh, recent, unused, unworn, of a new kind, unprecedented, novel, uncommon. The freshness of this encounter is celebrated in a fellowship of exactly the same oneness enjoyed between the Father and the Son! Again the word [2]**entole** is used, precept or teaching. The word [3]**parago** from para, close proximity and **agoo**, to lead; thus darkness will no longer lead you into its sway. The word [4]**ede**, even now: - already, by this time; from **ē** [pronounced ay] an adverb of confirmation; assuredly: - surely; and **dē** [pronounced day] which is a particle of emphasis or explicitness; now, then, etc.: - also, and, doubtless, now, therefore.)*

As he is so are we in this world! 1 John 4:17.

In him we discover our genesis in God, beyond our natural conception! This is not about our blood lineage or whether we were a wanted- or unwanted-child; this is about our God-begotteness. John 1:13. We are his dream come true and not the invention of our parents. You are indeed the greatest idea that God has ever had! God said to Jeremiah, "I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb." *(See Jeremiah 1:5; 29:11 & John 3:2-7)* The eternal, invisible Word, the Spirit-thought of God's face to face union, became flesh *(**ginomai**, be born)*. James says: "Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth ... if anyone hears this word, he sees the face of his birth as in a mirror." James 1:17, 18, 23 RSV. Now we may know even as we have always been known. 1 Corinthians 13:12.

God never compromised his original thought. "The word became flesh and took up residence *(tabernacled)* in us, and we gazed with wonder and amazement upon the mystery of our inclusion in him (***theaomai***, *to gaze upon, to perceive)*. We saw his glory *(**doxa**, the display of his opinion);* the glory as of the original, authentic begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." *(The original mind, or opinion of God, preserved and now revealed in Christ. He is both the "only begotten," **monogenes**, as in the authentic original mold, as well as the first born from the dead. Colossians 1:18, 1Peter 1:3.)*
He is the revelation of our completeness. "Of his fullness have we all

received, grace mirrored in grace" ***(garin anti garitos)***. "For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. He who is in the bosom of the Father, the only *(original, authentic)* begotten of the Father, he is our guide who accurately declares and interprets the invisible God within us." John 1:1-5, 9-14,16-18.

1 John 1:1 The Logos is the source; everything commences in him. The initial reports concerning him that have reached our ears, and which we indeed bore witness to with our own eyes - to the point that we became irresistibly attracted - now captivates our gaze. In him we witnessed tangible life in its most articulate form. *(To touch, **psallo**, to touch the string of a musical instrument; thus to be deeply touched as in resonance.)*
1 John 1:2 The same life that was face to face with the Father from the beginning, has now dawned on us! The infinite life of the Father became visible before our eyes in a human person! (In the beginning "was" the Word; ***eimi***, timeless existence, "I am". The preposition ***pros*** says so much more than 'with,' it suggests towards; face to face. See John 1:1&2. Also John 1:14 "Suddenly the invisible eternal Word takes on visible form! The Incarnation! In him, and now confirmed in us! The most accurate tangible display of God's eternal thought finds expression in human life! The Word became a human being; we are his address; he resides in us! He captivates our gaze! The glory we see there is not a religious replica; he is the authentic begotten Son. The glory (that Adam lost sight of) is now fully unveiled! Only grace can communicate truth in such complete context!" Also John 1:18 "Until this moment God remained invisible to mankind; now the authentic begotten Son, the blueprint of mankind's design who represents the innermost being of God, the Son who is in the bosom of the Father, brings him into full view! He is the official authority qualified to announce God! He is our guide who accurately declares and interprets the invisible God within us.")

1 John 1:3 We include you in this conversation; you are the immediate audience of the logic of God! This is the Word that always was; we saw him incarnate and witnessed his language as defining our lives. In the incarnation Jesus includes mankind in the eternal friendship of the Father and the Son! This life now finds expression in an unreserved union. (We do not invent fellowship; we are invited into the fellowship of the Father and

the Son!)

1 John 1:4 What we enjoy equally belongs to you! I am writing this for your reference, so that joy may be yours in its most complete measure. (In all these years since the ascension of Jesus, John, now ninety years old, continues to enjoy unhindered friendship with God and desires to extend this same fellowship to everyone through this writing.)

1 John 1:5 My conversation with you flows from the same source which illuminates this fellowship of union with the Father and the Son. This, then, is the essence of the message: God is radiant light and in him there exists not even a trace of obscurity or darkness at all. (See James 1:17, "Without exception God's gifts are only good, their perfection cannot be improved upon. They come from above, [where we originate from] proceeding like light rays from the source, the Father of lights, with whom there is no distortion or even a shadow of shifting to obstruct or intercept the light; no hint of a hidden agenda. The word, anouthen, means, from above. John 3:3, 13. Mankind is not the product of their mother's womb; man began in God.")

John 3:7 Don't be so surprised when I say to you[manity] (plural!) You couldn't get here in the flesh unless you got here from above! (See John 1:13 These are the ones who discover their genesis in God beyond their natural conception! This is not about our blood lineage or whether we were a wanted or an unwanted child - this is about our God-begotteness; we are his dream come true! We are not the invention of our parents! [You are the greatest idea God has ever had!])

John 3:13 No one can fully engage in heaven's perspective, unless one's heavenly origin is realized! The Son of man declares mankind's co-genesis from above!

Another pivotal reference John records is when Jesus defended his message when he declared, to the disgust of the religious leaders, "My Father and I are one!" (John 10:30) Jesus then quoted Psalm 82:6, "I say you are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you!"

In John 14:20 Jesus declares the conclusion of his mission where in his death and resurrection every possible definition of separation will be cancelled: “In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me and I in you!” *(It is not our knowing that positions Jesus in the Father or us in them! Our knowing simply awakens us to the reality of our redeemed union!)*

Chapter 1

1 To go back to the very [1]beginning, is to find the [2]Word already [3]present there; [4]face to face with God. The Word is [3]I am; God’s [2]eloquence echoes and [4]concludes in him. The Word equals God. *(In the beginning, [1]**arche,** to be first in order, time, place or rank. The Word, [2]**logos**, was ”with” God; here and again in verse 2 John uses the Greek preposition [4]**pros**, towards; face-to-face.*
*Three times in this sentence John uses the active indicative imperfect form of the verb [3]**eimi,** namely **aen [ἦν]** to be, [in the beginning ‘was’ the Word etc...] which conveys no idea of origin for God or for the Logos, but simply continuous existence, “I am.” Quite a different verb **egeneto,** “became,” appears in John 1:14 for the beginning of the Incarnation of the Logos. The Word ‘became’ flesh. The incarnation is not the origin of Jesus. See the distinction sharply drawn in John 8:58, “before Abraham was [born, **genesthai** from **ginomai**] I am.” The word **eimi**, I am; the essence of being, suggesting timeless existence. See my commentary note on 1 Pet 1:16)*

2 The beginning mirrors the Word face to face with God. *(Nothing that is witnessed in the Word distracts from who God is. ”If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.” [John 14:9] The Word that was from the beginning was not yet written nor spoken; it was simply face to face with God! The beginning declares the destiny of the Word, it would always only be who God is and conclude in God.)*

3 The Logos is the source; everything commences in him. He remains the exclusive Parent reference to their existence. There is nothing original, except the Word! The Logic of God defines the only possible place where mankind can trace their origin. *(All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. KJV See Colossians 1:16.)*

4 His life is the light that defines our lives. *(In his life mankind discovers the light of life.)*

5 The darkness was pierced and could not comprehend or diminish this light. *(Darkness represents mankind's ignorance of his redeemed identity and innocence [Isa 9:2-4, Isa 60:1-3, Eph 4:18, Col 1:13-15].)*

6 Then there was this man John *(Jesus' cousin)* **commissioned by God;**

7 his mission was to draw attention to the light of their lives so that what they witnessed in him would cause them to believe *(in their original life redeemed again).*

8 His ministry was not to distract from the light, as if he himself was the light but rather to point out the light Source.

9 A new day for mankind has come. The authentic light of life that illuminates everyone was about to dawn in the world! *(This day would begin our calendar and record the fact that human history would forever be divided into before and after Christ. The incarnation would make the image of God visible in human form. In him who is the blueprint of our lives there is more than enough light to displace the darkness in every human life. He is the true light that enlightens everyone! [Col 1:15; 2:9, 10; 2 Cor 4:6])*

10 Although no one took any notice of him, he was no stranger to the world; he always was there and is himself the author of all things.

11 It was not as though he arrived on a foreign planet; he came to his own, yet his own did not [1]recognize him. *(The Jews should have been the first to recognize him! Revelation 19:12. Also Ps 24:1, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell in it [RSV]." The word, [1]**paralambano**, comes from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **lambano**, to comprehend, grasp, to identify with.)*

12 Everyone who [1]realizes their association in him, [6]convinced that he is their [2]original life and that [7]his name defines them, God [5]gives the assurance that they are indeed his [4]offspring, [2]begotten of him; he [3]sanctions the legitimacy of their sonship. *(The word often translated, to receive, [1]**lambano**, means to take in hand, to comprehend, to grasp, to identify with. This word suggests that even though he came to his own, there are those who do not [1]identify with their true [2]origin revealed in him, and like the many Pharisees they behave like children of a foreign father, the father of lies [John 8: 44]. Neither God's legitimate fatherhood of mankind nor his ownership is in question; mankind's indifference to their true [2]origin is the problem. This is what the Gospel addresses with utmost clarity in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus has come to introduce mankind to themselves again; mankind has forgotten what manner of person they are by design! [James 1:24, Deuteronomy 32:18, Psalm 22:27].*
*The word, [2]**genesthai**, from **ginomai**, means to generate; to become; John employs this verb in the Aorist Infinitive tense, which indicates prior completion of an action in relationship to a point in time. Greek infinitives could have either a present or Aorist form. The contrast between the two forms has more to do with aspect than with time. The present Infinitive is used to express progressive or imperfective aspect. It pictures the action expressed by the verb as being in progress. The Aorist Infinitive however*

*does not express progressive aspect. It presents the action expressed by the verb as a completed unit with a beginning and end. This is an important point since many translations of this verse suggests that God's ability to make us his sons can only be in response to something we must first do in order to trigger God into action! Our grasping [**lambano**] is simply the awakening to the fact that our genesis is already completed in the **Logos**. [See John 1:3] The **Logos** is the source; everything commences in him. He remains the exclusive Parent reference to their genesis. There is nothing original, except the Word. We are his offspring. [see also Acts 17:28]. "He has come to give us understanding to know him who is true and to realize that we are in him who is true." [1 John 5:20].)*

*The word, [3]**exousia**, often translated "power;" as in, he gave "power" to [2]become children of God, is a compound word; from **ek**, always denoting origin or source and **eimi**, I am; thus, out of I am! This gives [3]legitimacy and authority to our sonship; [4]**teknon**, translated as offspring, child.*

*"He has given," [5]**didomi**, in this case to give something to someone that already belongs to them; thus, to return. The fact that they already are his own, born from above and that they have their [2]beginning and their being in him is now confirmed in their realizing it! Convinced, [6]**pisteo**; [7]his name **onoma**, is mankind's family name. [see Eph 3:15].*

"He made to be their true selves, their child-of-God selves." — The Message)

13 These are the ones who discover their genesis in God, beyond their natural conception! This is not about our blood lineage or whether we were a wanted- or unwanted-child; this is about our God-begotteness. We are his dream come true and not the invention of our parents. You are indeed the greatest idea that God has ever had! *(See Jeremiah 1:5; 29:11 & John 3:2-7)*

14 Suddenly the invisible, eternal Word takes on [1]visible form - the Incarnation, on display in a flesh and blood Person, as in a mirror! In him, and now confirmed in us! The most accurate tangible exhibit of God's eternal thought finds expression in human life! The Word

became a human being; we are his address; he resides in us! He [2]captivates our gaze! The glory we see there is not a religious replica; he is the [3]authentic begotten Son. The [4]glory *(that we lost in Adam)* **returns in fullness! Only [5]grace can communicate truth in such complete context!** *(In him we discover that we are not here by chance or accident or by the desire of an earthly parent, neither are we the product of a mere physical conception; we exist by the expression of God's desire to reveal himself in the flesh. His eternal invisible Word, his Spirit-thought, [1]became flesh, [1]**ginomai**, as in be born and [2]**theaomai**, meaning to gaze upon, to perceive. We saw his glory, [4]**doxa**, the display of his opinion, the glory as of the original, authentic begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. He is the "only begotten," [3]**monogenes**; begotten only by the Father and not of the flesh; in him we recognize our true beginning, as in the authentic original mold. He is also the "first born from the dead", declaring our new birth. [Colossians 1:18, 1 Peter 1:3]. He is the revelation of our completeness.*
*And out of [**ek**] his fullness have we all received! The preposition, **ek** always points to source/origin. Grace mirrored in grace, [5]**garin anti garitos**. For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. He who is in the bosom of the Father, the only original, authentic begotten of the Father; he is our guide who accurately declares and interprets the invisible God within us. Interesting that the revelation of the Incarnation in verse 14 doesn't follow verse 2 or 3, but verse 12 and 13! Genesis 1:26 is redeemed! See 2 Corinthians 3:17,18.)*

15 John the Baptist raised his voice to announce emphatically that Jesus was what his ministry and prophetic message were all about. He declared that Jesus, though younger than him, since he [1]witnessed his [2]birth, ranks above him in prominence and in his Messianic mission - because in his I-am-ness, he always [3]was preeminent. *(He was [2]born [2]in front of my eyes - I witnessed his birth, meaning he is younger than I; [1]**emprosthen mou [2]gegonen** [from **ginomai**] **oti protos mou [3]ean [eimi]** - but he [3]was before I was [2]born - Later Jesus reminds us that before Abraham was born, [**ginomai**] I am! [**eimi**]")*

16 He is the [1]source of our completeness. Everyone may now realize their own completeness as evidenced in him. This is [2]grace mirrored in grace! *(It reminds of Col 2:9,10 The fullness of the Godhead embodied in Christ, reflects our own completeness! Out of [[1]ek] his fullness have we all received! The preposition,* ***ek*** *always points to source/origin. His fullness is the source of all that grace communicates as our portion. Grace mirrored in grace -* ***[2]garin anti garitos****. The word* ***anti*** *means over against - thus, mirored in.)*

17 The law was given through Moses; grace and truth have their genesis in Jesus Christ. Against the stark backdrop of the law, with Moses representing the condemned state of mankind, Jesus Christ unveils grace and truth! *(Moses represents the system of performance as basis to one's standing before God; Jesus Christ is incarnate grace and truth! He is the life of our design on display in human form, as in a mirror.)*

18 Until this moment God remained invisible; now the [1]authentic, incarnate begotten Son, the blueprint of our design who represents the innermost being of God, the Son who is in the bosom of the Father, brings him into full view! He is the [2]official authority qualified to announce God! He is our guide who accurately declares and interprets the invisible God within us. *(Begotten only of God,* ***[1]monogenes****. Official guide,* ***[2]eksegesato****, from* ***ek,*** *preposition denoting source, and* ***hegeomai,*** *the strengthened form of* ***ago****, to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep; thus* ***hegeomai*** *means to be officially appointed in a position of authority.)*

19 The Jews sent a delegation of priests and Levites from Jerusalem to question John the Baptist; this is how he responded to them when asked, "So who are you really?"

20 Without hesitation he made it clear to them that he was not to be confused with the Christ.

21 "Could you possibly be the re-incarnate Elijah?" To which he answered, "No, I am certainly not!" Then you must be The Prophet Moses said would come? "No!" He said, "I am not." *[Deut 18:15; John 6:14; Acts 3:22]*

22 So who are you then? How shall we respond to those who sent us? What would you say about yourself.

23 I echo the prophetic voice of Isaiah, crying with urgency in the wilderness, "At once! Level the highway of the Lord! His appearance is apparent, without delay!"

24 These priests and Levites sent to question John were all of the Pharisee Party.

25 "So if you are not the Messiah, neither Elijah, nor that Prophet, what is the purpose and significance of your baptism then?"

26 John replied, "I baptize in water; but you do not even recognize him who is standing in your midst!

27 My baptism is preparing the way for this one coming after me; I am not here to distract from him in any way, or to make a name for myself! I do not even qualify to be the slave that unties his sandals!

28 This conversation was in Bethania, beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 The next day John saw Jesus approaching him, and declared: "Behold the Lamb of God; this is the one who would [1]lift the sin of the [2]cosmos like an anchor from the sea floor, for mankind to sail free!" *(This is unheard of! It is not about a revengeful god demanding a sacrifice; this is your Father and Creator providing himself as sacrifice. The ultimate sacrifice for sins would never be something we did, or brought to God to appeal to him; the shocking scandal of the cross, is the fact that mankind is confronted with the extravagant, embarrassing proportions of the love of their Maker; Father Son and Spirit would go to the most ridiculous extreme to finally convince us of their heart towards us! In order to persuade us of our worth, God speaks the most severe scapegoat language: "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away [**airo** - lifts up] the sins of the world!" This completely disarms religion! Suddenly there is nothing that we can do to persuade God about our sincere intentions; this is God persuading us of their eternal love dream! The word* ***αἴρω - [1]airo****, a primary verb; to lift up; by implication to take up or away; specifically to raise the anchor to sail away. See John 12:32 When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all judgment to me! Also John 19:15 - Lift him up! Lift him up! Crucify him!" The word, [2]**kosmos** in the NT refers to the entire human family and their social structures.)*

30 Jesus is what my ministry and prophetic message are all about. Though younger than I, he ranks above me, since he always was! *(See John 1:15)*

31 I am not here to [1]introduce him merely as my cousin from a human point of view; my baptism in water is to publicly declare him to Israel as the Messiah whom their Prophets have proclaimed! *([1]I do not know him; meaning my knowledge of him is not reduced to my opinion according to the flesh - I too only know him by revelation, according to the prophetic word. Even though John grew up within the dramatic context of his own supernatural birth, he didn't claim that his knowledge of himself or his cousin Jesus was anything he merely learnt by human opinion or instruction. See Luke 1:5-80.)*

32 Then John made this emphatic statement, "I [1]gazed with wonder and saw the Spirit descending [2]out of the heavenlies and resting upon him like a [3]dove, [4]endorsing her [5]abiding anointing on him, thereby uniting heaven and earth in the incarnate Christ!" *(John uses the word, [1]**theaomai**, to view attentively, to contemplate, to learn by looking; it suggests a gazing with wonder. See 1 John 4:13,14. The preposition [2]**ek** always denotes source or origin. The word for dove in the Greek, [3]**peristeran** is feminine. The preposition [4]epi suggests a continuous influence upon; to superimpose, to have charge of; thus to endorse! The word [5]**meno** means to continue to be present in a seamless union; to abide. It is not as though the Spirit was absent in Jesus' life until now; this coming upon him was the prophetic moment of the Spirit's endorsing of his ministry; uniting heaven and earth in the incarnate Christ.)*

33 I did not merely take into account what I knew about Jesus as my cousin according to the flesh, but he who authorized me to immerse people in water clearly instructed me saying, the one upon whom you see the Spirit descends and abides, he is the one who [1]immerses in holy Spirit. *(John's baptism announces the incarnation; yet it communicates a mere prophetic picture of what Jesus' spirit baptism will fully interpret of mankind's co-inclusion and joint immersion into his death, resurrection and ascension. In the incarnation we have the prophetic word on exhibit, intercepting human history by assuming human form; thus we see divinity immersed into our mankind and declaring that there would be no stopping him from entering into our hell and deepest darkness. In dying our death, God would bring closure to every destructive mindset and futile fruit we inherited from Adam's fall. Just as he was raised out of the water in his baptism, we would be co-elevated together with him in his resurrection into newness of life! Hosea 6:2; Ephesians 2:5. The word [1]**baptizo** from **bapto**, to immerse, to overwhelm.)*

34 Having witnessed this exactly as I have told you, I confidently declare that Jesus is indeed the Son of God!

35 The following day John was standing with two of his students,

36 while gazing intently at Jesus, he announced, "See for yourselves, the Lamb of God!"

37 These two students of John listened intently and were obviously intrigued by his words, thus they immediately[1]joined Jesus on his way. *(John uses the word **akoloutheō** from **a**, as particle of union plus **keleuthos**, a road, thus to join someone on the same road, to accompany.)*

38 Jesus turned around and looked them in the eyes and asked, "What is it that you are really looking for?" They answered him, Rabbi, which means, my Teacher, where do you [1]abide? *(John uses the word [1]**meno** more than anyone else in the New Testament. Meno means to continue to be present in a seamless union; to abide. This word points to so much more than a mere geographic location or physical address. It is a word key to John's understanding of the revelation of the incarnation; it locates us in that place where he has restored us to, so that we may be where he is, in the bosom of the Father; also that we may know, that just as he is in the Father, so we too are in him and he in us! John 1:18 and John 14:2,3,10 &20. See also 1 John 5:20 This is what has become distinctly clear to us: the coming of the Son of God is God's mission accomplished! He is the incarnate Christ. The moment all of Scripture pointed to, has arrived! The Son is present! In him God has given us the greatest gift, a mind whereby we may know him who is true; and in the same knowing, to find ourselves there in him who is true! Mankind is fully included and located in him, in his Son Jesus Christ; this means that whatever Jesus is as Son, we are. This is the true God; this is the life of the ages!)*

39 He replied, "Come along and [1]see for yourselves." They came, saw where he was [2]lodging, and ended up [2]remaining with him for the day. It was late afternoon when this happened. *(John uses the word ὅψεσθε - [1]**opsesthe** from **oraoo**, you will see [perceive] for yourselves. Again the word [2]**meno** is used. Not long after this Jesus might have been homeless because of his public and controversial cleansing of the temple. See Mathew 8:20, "Foxes have dens and the birds have nests..." also Mathew 12:46, While Jesus was still speaking to the crowds, his mother, brothers and sisters stood outside requesting to talk with him.)*

40 Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two.

41 He immediately fetched his own brother Simon, telling him, "We've found the Messiah" which in Greek means, "the Christ." *(Aramaic was the spoken language and Greek the academic language in which the New Testament was written.)*

42 When he introduced him to Jesus, he gazed intently at him and said, you are Simon the son of [1]Jonah; you will be [2]known as Mr [3]Rock. *(The Hebrew word **yona**, means dove. The word [2]**kaleo** means to surname, to identify by name. **Kefas** is the Aramaic for [3]**Petros**, a stone or chip of rock - a chip of the old block! See Mathew 16:13 - 18.*
This conversation beautifully reminds of the Song of Songs in chapter 2:14 "Oh my dove [yona], in the clefts of the rock, in the crevice of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and your face is comely. The crevice of the cliff is the address and home of the rock pigeon! The birds have nests!)

43 The next day Jesus intentionally departed from there and went to Galilee. There he met Phillip along the way and asked him to accompany him.

44 Phillip was from Bethsaida, the hometown of Andrew and Peter. *(The word **koloutheō** is again used; from **a**, as particle of union and **keleuthos**, a road, thus to join someone on the same road, to accompany.)*

45 Phillip immediately went looking for Nathaniel and told him the news! We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Torah and he whom the Prophets announced when they spoke about Jesus, *[the Savior]* **the son of Joseph from Nazareth.** *(See Deuteronomy 18:15, "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among you, from your brethren, him you shall heed. Deut 18:18 I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. Genesis 49:10, The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and you shall call his name Emmanuel. Also Isaiah 53:1-12; Isaiah 9:6,7 For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this. Daniel 9:24-27; Jeremiah 23:5-6. See also Joh 5:39,40 You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. John 5:46, 47 If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?")*

46 To which Nathaniel answered, "How does Nazareth fit into the picture of God's promised goodness? Phillip said to him, "Come and see for yourself!" *(The τι αγαθον, 'what good thing?' of Nathaniel refers to Scriptures like Jeremiah 33:14 & 15 Behold, the days come, says the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised. In those*

days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring forth for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. Also Micah 5:2 But you, Oh Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are the least among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Nathanael's question seems to imply, that not Nazareth, but Bethlehem, was to be the birth-place of the Messiah.)

47 When Jesus saw Nathaniel approach him, he made the following observation, "Now here is a man of Israel, in whom there is no guile!" *(Note the wisdom of Jesus, instead of engaging Nathaniel in a doctrinal debate around the Scriptures, he endorses him!)*

48 Nathaniel was surprised! How can you possibly know me if we have never met? Jesus answered him, "Long before Phillip spoke to you, I saw you under the fig tree!"

49 Nathaniel exclaimed, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the king of Israel!"

50 Jesus said, "So you believe because I said that I saw you sitting under the fig tree? You haven't seen anything yet! *(By this Jesus does not mean the many miracles he is yet to witness, but rather, that his mission was to introduce us to ourselves again, so that we may know even as we have always been known! We have forgotten what manner of people we are! He knew us before he formed us in our mother's womb! James 1:17, 18, 23-25. Jer 1:5; 1 Cor 13:12.)*

51 Truly I say unto you *[singular]***, because of who I am, you** *[plural - You-manity - all the families in heaven and on earth]* **will surely see this communication between the heavenly sphere and earth thrown wide [1]open, and the Angelic shepherd-messengers of God ascending and descending upon the incarnate son of man. heaven and earth meet in**

the incarnate one! *(In him every definition of separation and distance is cancelled! Isaiah 55:10,11 "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not there without saturating the earth [all flesh], so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it. The prophetic word was destined to become flesh; every nook and cranny of human life is saturated in the incarnation! The word* [1]***aneogota****, Perfect Active Participle Accusative Masculine Singular, 2nd Conjugation-form; the one who has led us upwards - from* ***anoigō, ana****, upwards and* ***agoo****, to lead! Jesus reminds Nathaniel of Genesis 28:12-14, "And Jacob dreamt that there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold, the Angelic shepherd-messengers of God were ascending and descending on it! And Jahweh said to him, I am Elohim of Abraham, your seed shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and your descendants have all the families of the earth been blessed!" See Ephesians 3:15 and Ephesians 1:3 Let's celebrate God! He lavished every blessing heaven has upon us in Christ! Also Ephesians 4:8-10,* **Scripture confirms that he led us as trophies in his triumphant procession on high; he repossessed his gift** *(likeness)* **in human form.** *(See Ephesians 2:6, We are also elevated in his ascension to be equally welcome in the throne room of the heavenly realm where we are now seated together with him in his authority. Quote from the Hebrew text, Ps 68:18,* ***lakachta mattanoth baadam****, thou hast taken gifts in human form, in Adam. [The gifts which Jesus Christ distributes to us he has received in us, in and by virtue of his incarnation. Commentary by Adam Clarke.]*

Ephesians 4:9 **The fact that he ascended confirms his victorious descent into the deepest pits of human despair.** *(See John 3:13, "No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, even the son of man." All mankind originate from above; we are anouthen, from above. [See James 1:17, 18])*

Ephesians 4:10 **He now occupies the ultimate rank of authority from the lowest regions where he stooped down to rescue us to the highest authority in the heavens, having executed his mission to the full.** *(Fallen mankind is fully restored to the authority of the authentic life of their design. [Psa 139:7,8 Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, thou art there! If I make my*

bed in Sheol, thou art there!])
"Jesus has united heaven and earth, the life of God and human life in himself. Just as it was planned before the time of the ages." Baxter Kruger.)

Chapter 2

1 Three days later there was a wedding in Cana, a village in Galilee which Jesus' mother attended.

2 Jesus and his followers were also invited.

3 When Mary learned that they had run out of wine, she informed Jesus.

4 He responded with, "Well Ma'am, that's their problem - or do you want me to steal the show here at somebody else's wedding, when my hour of fulfilling my mission has not yet come? *(Religion has run out of wine – Jesus lived aware of his mission which was to redeem and restore the joyous celebration of the union and Romance of the ages – marrying mankind and divinity! While he is the true joy and wine of the party, he fully understood what it would cost him to drink the cup of mankind's injustice and violence on the cross! See John 12:27 "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, for this purpose I have come to this hour.)*

5 Mary proceeded to line up the waiters to assist Jesus, "Do whatever he tells you to!"

6 Now there were six empty stone water pots used for the ceremonial cleansing of the Jews. They could hold approximately twenty gallons

each.

7 Jesus asked the waiters to fill these stone jars with water, to the brim. *(Nothing would be left untouched by the effect of the incarnate Word impacting human life entirely - every nook and cranny - spirit soul and body! See Mirror note in John 1:51; also 1 John 5:18.)*

8 And then instructed them to immediately draw from the containers and present it to the governor of the feast; which they did without hesitation.

9 The host of the event tasted the water that has now become wine, but had no clue as to its vintage or origin. The servants didn't tell him a word, so he called the bridegroom. *(According to tradition, the bridegroom provides the wine for the wedding - Jesus prophetically fulfills the role of the bridegroom here!)*

10 "Why would you keep the best wine for last?" Everybody serves the better wine first, so that by the time the cheaper wine is served, no-one can tell the difference - and here you surprise us all by bringing this excellent wine from your storehouse. Even though we already had much to drink, it is impossible not to tell its superiority! *(Even minds intoxicated with inferior religious jargon can immediately tell the difference when the Holy Spirit transforms ordinary conversation into the wonderful, blissful wine of revelation and the merry celebration of life!)*

11 In this first of the signs which Jesus performed at a wedding in Cana of Galilee, he gave everyone a foretaste of the beauty and intention of his mission. And his disciples believed in him. *(The word [1]**doxa** often translated glory, from **dokeo**, to form an opinion, a view, an idea or intention - ideas become our eyes -the way we see things. [Baxter Kruger]*
If Jesus could do this to water - imagine how he can transform ordinary

routine days into the invigorating adventure of living the life of our design! His 'FIRST' miraculous sign was a change within a vessel! A jar of stone. External washing has been upgraded to internal transformation of inner thought processes. Completely transformed to the "brim"! And, it wasn't even drinking water, but "the kind used for ceremonial washing!" There is nothing Jesus intended to leave out of this transformation. And, although it wasn't time for Jesus to give his wine that night at Cana. I believe it was no accident that it was the first miracle - Could there have been a more profound picture of his ministry and what his Wine would do in the lives of ordinary vessels? He thus revealed his Glory! E Meaney.
"They have no wine." That's all Mary says to Jesus after noticing the newlyweds' embarrassment. Could she be more indirect? Yet he knows what she wants, and he's not feeling ready. He tells her it's not time to reveal his glory and suffer the consequences. The wine he could make would be free to the guests but cost him plenty. Mary marches right over to the serving table as if he'd said "no problem" instead of "no way." She once said a costly yes; she's not about to take no for an answer from him. Because they have no wine. It's human history she's talking about, life's disappointed guests milling around with empty glasses from time immemorial. She's waited long enough for the mighty to fall, for the poor to dance at the wedding, for the kingdom's elixir to flow. Three Persian potentates once bent their knees to him. Why is he still constructing cabinets in Nazareth? She wants him out of the house. He gives in and produces liquid heaven in preposterous quantities. He squanders it on us, the undeserving who can't distinguish rotgut from Rothschild. He becomes the wastrel we need him to be. - Thank you, Mary." Prayer; When we are reluctant to act on our callings, Oh God, send Mary to remind us, "They have no wine." Get us out of the house. M Luti.)

12 After this he joined his family and followers to go down to Capernaum and remained there for several days.

13 Jesus then went up to Jerusalem in time for the Jewish Passover.

14 When Jesus went into the temple he was shocked to find scores of traders selling their sacrificial items, cattle, sheep and doves. Even their money brokers were comfortably set up in the sanctuary. *(The business of sin-consciousness has taken over the mindset of religion - until Jesus arrives.)*

15 Then with a whip that he plaited of small [1]strands, he drove everyone with their sheep and oxen out of the temple and overturned the tables of the money brokers so that their money went flying all over the place. *(Jesus dramatically reveals that his Father has no delight in our religious sacrificial systems and its sin-conscious currencies. [1]**σχοῖνος - schoinos** perhaps from **skenos**, tabernacle or skin - leather thongs - a profound prophetic picture of his own broken skin that would become the whip to drive out sin-consciousness from our minds - the ultimate cleansing of the temple - the sanctuary of God within us! 1 Peter 1:18,19.)*

16 He also drove the dove traders out with, "How dare you turn my Father's house into a shopping mall?"

17 This incident reminded his disciples of the Scripture, "I am consumed with zeal for my Father's house!" *(Psalm 69:9. God is ablaze with zeal for you! You are the temple of God - his address - his dwelling!)*

18 The Jews demanded to know from Jesus how, what he has just done in the temple, could possibly point to the significance of his Messianic mission. "Show us a sign!"

19 To which Jesus responded, "The temple will be completely demolished by you and in three days I will raise it up!" *(The word [1]**lusate**, to undo, demolish, is in the Aorist, Passive, imperative case; the distinction between the Aorist imperative and the present imperative is one of aspect, not necessarily tense. Thus, to get something over and done with! See Matthew 12:39,40 But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous*

generation seeks for a sign; but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the Prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so will the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.
"Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But you would not, therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isaiah 7:11-14. "For unto us a child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end." Isaiah 9:6,7.
In his resurrection on the third day, God would co-quicken mankind and co-raise us together with him! Hosea 6:2, Ephesians 2:5. Human life will again be the tabernacle of God! "On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, opposite the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne inside the palace opposite the entrance to the palace; and when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she found favor in his sight and he held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther approached and touched the top of the scepter." Esther 5:1,2
"And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Luke 24:27 "They said to each other, did not our hearts ignite within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" Luke 24:32 "Then he said to them, these are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead" Luke 24:44-46; See also Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53.
Matthew 16:21 From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.)

20 The Jews responded with, "This temple was under construction for forty six years and you will rebuild it in just three days? Haha!"

21 They did not understand that the temple Jesus was pointing to, was the human body. *(In him, the only true address of God was to be redeemed in human life in his resurrection! See Hosea 6:2 "After two days he will revive us, on the third day he will raise us up!" Also Ephesians 2:5 and 1 Peter 1:3; Acts 7:47-50 But it was Solomon who built a house for him. Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; as the Prophet says, 'heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool. What house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? Did not my hand make all these things?'*
The word ***hieros*** *speaks of the greater temple building with all its outer courts etc. whereas the word Jesus uses here is* ***naos****, referring to the inner sanctuary - this is also the word Paul uses in 1 Corinthians 6:19 "Do you not realize that your body by design is the sacred shrine of the Spirit of God!" This is the most sacred place in the universe! There is nowhere in eternity that can match this! See John 1:14 "And the Word became flesh and now resides within us! And 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you!")*

22 These words of Jesus as well as their significant prophetic connection with Scripture gave such clear context to the disciples when they later, after his resurrection, recalled all these things.

23 Now during the Passover feast in Jerusalem, many believed in his Name - surely the signs he did confirmed his mission as the Messiah-Savior of the world?

24 Jesus however did not make much of their apparent support - he wouldn't entrust himself to them since he knew all things. *(He knew how their own faith would fail them in the end. He did not endorse their excitement about the signs they saw as a valid basis to their belief. Signs are not the source of faith - signs follow faith! Jesus' belief in the integrity*

of our inner being is what saves us from the lies that we believed about ourselves.)

25 He knew that their brief belief was simply based on the surface hype of the moment and not upon that which he was about to redeem in their innermost [1]being. He knew them better than what they knew themselves! He had no need for anyone's theory about the [2]human species to confirm what he always knew to be true about them. *(Literal translation - "He had no need that any should testify concerning human life - he indeed knew what [1]was in the human being." [1]**eimi**, I am; our very beingness! Which was exactly why he came, not as an example for us but of us! So that we may know even as we have always been known! Matthew 13:44, 2 Corinthians 4:7. The word for the [2]human species, male or female is **anthropos**, from **ana**, upwards, and **tropos**, manner of life; character; in like manner. See John 1:51.*

Chapter 3

1 Now amongst them there was a man who was a prominent leader among the Jews, a Pharisee named Nicodemus.

2 He came to see Jesus under the cover of the night and said to him, "Rabbi, it is [1]clear for all of us to see that you [2]come from God as a Teacher - the signs you perform are proof that God is [6]with you! [3]No one is [4]able to do these signs you do [5]if they are not in [6]union with God. *(The thoughts from the following 6 words are repeated in the answer Jesus gives Nicodemus: [1]**oidamen**, from **eido**, to perceive, to see; to discern. [2]**eleluthas,** from **erchomai**, to come from; [3]**oudeis**, no one; [4]**dunamis,** to be*

capable; able; to have the power to accomplish. [5]***ean me,*** *unless; if not;* [6]***meta****, together with; to be included in; to be in union with.)*

3 Jesus answered him emphatically; no one would even be able to recognize anything as coming from God's domain unless they are born from above to begin with! The very fact that it is possible to perceive that I am in union with God, as a human being, reveals mankind's genesis from above! *(Notice from the previous verse how Jesus employs a play of words from the question of Nicodemus. Here Jesus uses the word* ***anouthen*** *meaning from above - see James 1:17, every good and perfect gift comes* ***anouthen*** *[from above])*

4 Nicodemus did not understand this answer at all and said to him, "How can a person be born if they are already grown-up? Surely one cannot re-enter your mother's womb and be born a second time? *(Nicodemus looks at the subject merely from the physical side. His "second time" is not the same as Jesus' "from above." As Godet remarks, "he does not understand the difference between a second beginning and a different beginning.")*

5 Jesus answered, you have to get this, unless someone is born out of water *(the womb)* **and Spirit, there would be no possible connection with the realm of God!**

6 Whatever originates out of flesh is flesh; but what is sourced in Spirit is spirit! *(The Message says, when you look at a baby, it's just that: a body you can look at and touch. But the person who takes shape within is formed by something you can't see and touch--the Spirit)*

7 Don't be so surprised when I say to you*[manity - plural!]* **You couldn't get here in the flesh unless you got here from above!** *(See John 1:13 These are the ones who discover their genesis in God beyond their natural conception! This is not about our blood lineage or whether we were*

a wanted or an unwanted child - this is about our God-begotteness; we are his dream come true! We are not the invention of our parents! [You are the greatest idea God has ever had!])

8 We can observe the effect the wind has and hear its sound whenever it touches objects - yet those objects do not define the wind; it comes and goes of its own accord - if life was not born out of spirit in the first place, it would not be possible to detect spirit influence at all! We are spirit-compatible by design! *(Spirit is our origin! Not our mother's womb! See 2 Corinthians 3:3 The fact that you are a Christ-Epistle shines as bright as day! This is what our ministry is all about. The Spirit of God is the living ink. Every trace of the Spirit's influence on the heart is what gives permanence to this conversation. We are not talking law-language here; this is more dynamic and permanent than letters chiseled in stone. This conversation is embroidered in your inner consciousness. [It is the life of your design that grace echoes within you!])*

9 To which Nicodemus responded, "How is this possible? What kind of birth can this be?

10 You are the teacher of Israel yet you do not know these things?

11 Nicodemus, hear me, *[amen, amen,]* **our conversation stems from what we, mankind, have always borne witness to; we endorse what we have observed; how is it that your religious perspectives keep you so blinded to this?** *(See Paul's reference in Romans 1:3 The Son of God has his natural lineage from the seed of David; 1:4 however, his powerful resurrection from the dead by the Holy Spirit, locates and confirms his being and sonship in God. Then he says in verse 18 that we can suppress the truth through our own stubborn unbelief, yet 1:19 God is not a stranger to anyone; whatever can be known of God is evident in every human life. 1:20 God is on display in creation; the very fabric of visible cosmos appeals to reason. It clearly bears witness to the ever present sustaining power and intelligence of the invisible God, leaving mankind without any*

valid excuse to ignore him. See also Galatians 1:15 God's eternal love dream separated me from my mother's womb; his grace became my identity. 1:16 This is the heart of the gospel that I proclaim; it began with an unveiling of sonship in me; freeing me to announce the same sonship in the masses of non-Jewish people. I felt no immediate urgency to compare notes with those who were familiar with Christ from a mere historic point of view.)

12 If I speak incarnate language to you *[Plural - you Jewish law-based-religious leaders)* **and you are not persuaded about our common origin, how will you be persuaded about heavenly things?** *(Here we are person to person - face to face - the prophetic word incarnate!)*

13 No one can fully engage in heaven's perspective, unless one's heavenly origin is realized! The Son of man declares mankind's co-genesis from above!

14 *(This is my mission: See the prophetic relevance - this is how the veil will be removed!)* **Remember how Moses lifted up the [1]serpent in the wilderness even so the son of man will be lifted up!** *(John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; John 12:32 and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all judgment unto me." John 12:33 He said this to show by what death he was to die. Revelation 12:9. John 3:13 and 14 are most significant since they point to the very essence of the Mission of Jesus - the co-begotteness of the human race now redeemed in our co-crucifixion and co-resurrection on the third day into newness of life! 1 Peter 1:3. The word serpent in the Greek is [1]**ophis**. See Extended Notes on **Ophis**, the old Serpent at the end of Revelation chapter 12.)*

15 In the same prophetic pattern, I will be lifted up for all to see and be equally persuaded in the echo of the life of the ages now redeemed within them!

16 The entire [5]cosmos is the object of God's affection! And he is not about to [1]abandon his creation - the [2]gift of his Son is for mankind to realize their origin in him who mirrors their [3]authentic birth - begotten not of flesh but of the Father! *[See John 1:13]* **In this [4]persuasion the life of the ages [4]echoes within the individual and announces that the days of regret and sense of [1]lost-ness are over!** *(The KJV reads, Whoever [4]believes in him shall not [1]perish but have eternal life. The same word translated in the KJV to perish is translated in Luke 15 to be lost. In order to underline the value of the individual, Jesus tells the famous three parables in Luke 15 of the lost sheep, coin and son; now all found, safe and sound! In everyone he repeats the word [1]lost,* ***apollumi****, to lose, to emphasize the fact that you cannot be lost unless you belong - to begin with! The word [1]****apollumi****, also suggests a sense of uselessness; that which comes to ruin and amounts to nothing! The word [2]****didomi****, to give, in this case to give something to someone that already belongs to them; thus, to return. The fact that they already are his own, born from above, they have their beginning and their being in him is now confirmed in their realizing it! He is the "only begotten," [3]****monogenes****; begotten only by the Father and not of the flesh; in him we recognize our true beginning* **-** *as in the authentic original mold. See my commentary note to John 1:12. The word [4]****echo****, to hold, or embrace, as in echo. The word, [5]****kosmos*** *in the NT refers to the entire human family.)*

17 God has no intention to condemn anyone - he sent his Son, not to be the Judge but the Savior of the world.

18 Faith and not flesh defines you! In the persuasion of your authentic sonship there is no [1]separation or rejection! For someone to prefer not to embrace this is to remain under their own judgment sustained by their futile efforts to define themselves through personal performance. In their stubborn unbelief they [1]reject what is revealed and redeemed in the Name of the Son, begotten only of the Father and not the flesh.

*(The word [1]**krino**, means to separate; to reject; to judge; to condemn. In naming his Son Jesus, the Father openly announces his resolve, which has always been to rescue and redeem his image and likeness in incarnate sonship. As Paul says in Ephesians 3:15 Every family in heaven and on earth originates in him; his is mankind's family name and he remains the authentic identity of every nation. Also in Titus 2:11 The grace of God shines as bright as day making the salvation of mankind undeniably visible. Galatians 1:16 This is the heart of the gospel that I proclaim; it began with an unveiling of sonship in me, freeing me to announce the same sonship in the masses of non-Jewish people. I felt no immediate urgency to compare notes with those who were familiar with Christ from a mere historic and human point of view. See also Hebrews 1:1-3.)*

19 And this is the [1]crisis: the light is here right now, yet people are so addicted to their own darkness that they prefer a life of [2]labors, annoyances and hardships! *(The word [1]**krisis**, is often translated judgment. The word for evil, [2]**poneros**, translates, full of hardships annoyances and labors.)*

20 When someone is engaged in something [1]worthless, they often fear exposure and feel threatened by the light! *(The word, [1]**phaulos** means worthless; also used in James 3:16, all kinds of worthless pursuits)*

21 *(But I have good news for you Nicodemus! You won't ever need to hide in darkness again!)* **He who discovers the [1]poetry of truth, faces the light unashamedly - his lifestyle boldly displays the workmanship of union with God! His works speak for themselves -"Made in heaven - wrought in God!"** *(Like Nicodemus there are many following at a "comfortable" distance, hidden in disguise - they too are invited to turn and face the redeeming light of the love of God!)*

22 From there Jesus and his followers went to the region of Judea and spend some [1]bonding-time together - [2]immersed in conversation. *(The*

*word [1]**diatribo** carries the idea of a road well travelled; tarrying together - the text says and there he baptized - yet in chapter 4:2 John comments that Jesus himself did not baptize anyone. The word [2]**baptitso** means to immerse; for what it is worth, I thought to reflect on the bonding and cleansing that takes place in conversation, "You are already made clean by the word which I have spoken to you." Jn 15:3. I'm not disputing the fact that water baptism as a cleansing ritual is the context here; but Jesus' baptism shifts the emphasis from the prophetic water symbol to a baptism into words and spirit thoughts. He knows and communicates that his baptism into mankind's death, as the Lamb of God, is what John's prophetic baptism pointed to in the first place.)*

23 John and his disciples were not far from there at the Place of Springs, Aenon near Salim, which made it a popular location for baptism.

24 This was shortly before John landed up in jail.

25 Some of the disciples of John were disputing with a Jew, who was probably baptized by the disciples of Jesus. They debated about the meaning of these purifying rituals - comparing notes as to which baptism would be the most significant between Jesus and John's. *(See Hebrews* **6:2 All the Jewish teachings about ceremonial washings** *(baptisms)***, the laying on of hands** *(in order to identify with the slain animal as sacrifice)***, and all teachings pertaining to a sin consciousness, including the final resurrection of the dead in order to face judgment, are no longer relevant.** *(All of these types and shadows were concluded and fulfilled in Christ, their living substance. His resurrection bears testimony to the judgment that he faced on mankind's behalf and the freedom from an obstructive consciousness of sin that he now proclaims. [Rom 4:25; Acts 17:31; Jn 12:31-33] Jesus said, "and when I am lifted up on the cross, I will draw all judgment unto me!" [Heb 9:28])*

26 They anxiously informed John that the one who was with him beyond the Jordan, whose life and mission he endorsed and bore witness to, is now attracting everyone to him - his baptism could put them out of business!

27 To which John responded, well, he obviously has heaven's backing, so let's not be jealous; everything we have is a gift!

28 You heard me when I said that I am not the Messiah - my mission was to introduce the Christ, not to compete with him!

29 The Bridegroom's best man does not compete for attention - he is appointed to support the groom and to greatly rejoice when he hears his voice! This is my joy - this is what I have come for!

30 The significance of my prophetic mission was simply to elevate him! *(See 1:15 John the Baptist raised his voice to announce emphatically that Jesus was what his ministry and prophetic message were all about. He declared that Jesus, though younger than him, ranks above him and was "born" before him, since he always was!)*

31 We are dealing with two dimensions here, the one coming from above presides over all - while the reasoning from a mere earthly perspective is confined to communicate from an earthly point of view. The conversation realized as originating in heaven has the final say. *(See John 3:13 No one can fully engage in heaven's perspective, unless one's heavenly origin is realized! The Son of man declares mankind's co-genesis from above!)*

32 Even though I have seen and heard heavenly things, it seems to me that no one embraces what I have borne witness to! By trying to protect a fading prophetic perspective, you are missing the entire point! The shadow is eclipsed by the substance, not the other way around!

33 Whoever lays a hold of this testimony has the evidence of God's truth embossed like the impression of a signet ring resonating in their inner consciousness.

34 For the one sent from God communicates God's gift language from the limitless resource of the Spirit.

35 The theme of this conversation celebrates the extravagant love the Father has for the Son - and in him every gift of God is revealed - his hand extends God's touch; he is God's embrace of the human race!

36 To be persuaded about sonship as unveiled in the Son is to fully participate in the life of the ages! To be unpersuaded about sonship is to remain in blindfold mode to life itself in the here and now and to exchange fellowship with the Author of the life of our design for a fearful image of a vengeful, merciless god - quite the opposite of the loving Father the Son reveals!

Chapter 4

1 Jesus heard the rumors that were spreading amongst the Pharisees, supposing that he was baptizing more people than John.

2 The fact was, he didn't baptize anyone himself, his disciples were.

3 He then decided to leave the area and go back to Galilee.

4 This meant that he had to travel through Samaria. *(At the time the land of Palestine was divided into three parts: Galilee on the north; Samaria in the middle; and Judea on the south.)*

5 En-route they approached Sychar, a Samaritan village bordering the field which Joseph inherited from his father Jacob.

6 The well which Jacob dug was still in operation. Since it was already midday and Jesus felt exhausted and thirsty from their day and a half walk, *[40 miles from Aenon]* **he decided to wait at the well while his disciples would go into the village to buy food.** *(Having left the Place of Springs, Aenon early the previous morning, one can just imagine how Jesus' mind drifted to the fountain theme!)*

7 When a local Samaritan woman finally arrived to draw water, Jesus immediately asked her for a drink.

8 There was still no sign of the disciples.

9 The woman obviously anticipated this request and was ready with her response, "You are a Jew, aren't you? So why would you expect to get anything for free from a Samaritan woman?" Within the politics of the day, Jews looked down upon the Samaritans and had no dealings with them. *(She knew very well how strategically en-route this precious well was and what political leverage it gave her over weary Jewish travellers!)*

10 *(Jesus was not at all intimidated or embarrassed by her political stance; he didn't allow his awareness of his weariness and desperate thirst, as well as an obvious opportunity to negotiate for a quick fix-drink, to distract from his Person and mission - instead of associating himself with the Jews as a mere Jew and endorsing the Samaritan's 'inferior' political identity, he immediately engaged her with a far superior conversation. He*

escaped the temptation to see himself or the lady reduced to a lesser identity. He knew who he was and what his mission was all about as the Messiah of mankind - by seeing himself he was able to see her in the same light. What he had to offer was not for sale!) **He looked her in the eye and said, "If you could see the generosity of God's grace gift, you would perceive who I am!** *(I am so much more than a Jewish man and you are so much more than a Samaritan woman!)* **So here I am asking you for a drink when you should be asking me and I would give you the water of life for free!**

11 *(Just like Nicodemus in the previous chapter, she struggles to determine which source Jesus was pointing to!)* **Sir, you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep! How would you reach this living water?**

12 Whoever you are, [1]you are certainly not greater than our father Jacob who left us this well and its legacy as our inheritance? He bought this land and dug the well; he drank from it himself and it sustained his family and their livestock for centuries. How can you compete with that? *([1]**me su meitzon** - The interrogative particle, **me** indicates that a negative answer is expected: Surely you are not superior... The **σὺ**, you, first in the sentence, is emphatic, and possibly with a shade of contempt.)*

13 Jesus answered her, "This well cannot quench the thirst that I am talking about. Anyone drinking from it will thirst again!" *(In her encounter with Jesus her familiar religious and historic identity is dramatically challenged. Everyone who drinks from the wells of religion and politics will thirst again! The business of religion desperately needs paying and returning customers! They crucified Jesus for this reason; their entire system of keeping people dependent on their hierarchy was challenged and condemned! So many sincere Christian ministries today fall into the same snare.)*

14 Whoever drinks from the source of this water that I shall give will never thirst again; because the water that I give becomes an artesian

well bursting from within, [1]defining the life of the ages! *(The preposition [1]**eis**, into, indicating the point reached; conclusion; a defining moment. Unlike a man-made hole dug in the ground to access seepage water, Jesus speaks of a spring of water, an artesian well! In a later chapter this thought is reinforced when Jesus declares, "To drink from me is to be persuaded that I am what the Scriptures are all about [then you will discover that you are what I am all about] and rivers of living water will gush out of your innermost being!" John 7:37,38 Now this is economic and most effective ministry! In John 16:7 Jesus says, "It is to your advantage that I go!" This is what Paul knew when he wrote "Not only in my presence, but much more in my absence, discover the full extent of salvation in your own heart!" Philippians 2:12. There is something more beneficial to the individual than Paul's next epistle or even his next visit! It is discovering the fountain within your innermost being! The unveiling of Christ in you exceeds your every expectation! Col 1:27. Also Col 2:5 My physical absence does not distance me from you spiritually.*

15 *(Again she did not understand!)* **Sir, then this is what I want! It will save me the trouble to return here again and again to bail out water for my thirst!**

16 Jesus said to her, *(you are missing the point! I am not talking about a thirst that water can quench!)* **Picture yourself back at home, you have discussed this with your husband, and before long you** *(you - singular)* **will be right back here, drawing water again from the same old well!**

17 The woman answered, "But I have no husband!" Jesus responded with, "This is an honest answer and confirms my point!"

18 Marriage does not define you. You could have failed five times and this time you're not sure about committing yourself to the guy you're living with!

19 She was shocked! "Sir! Now I know, you are a Prophet!"

20 I'm also religious! Our forefathers worshiped here in this mountain; yet you Jews insist that everyone should worship in Jerusalem! *(Maybe feeling a bit vulnerable about her domestic life she tries to change the subject to again emphasize the religious tension between the Jews and Samaritans.)*

21 Jesus said unto her, "Believe me lady, the moment everyone was waiting for has come! From now on worship is no longer about a geographic holy mountain - or a sacred city in Israel experience! *(It is not whether you are a Jew in Jerusalem or a Gentile in Japan! The days of prophetic pictures are over!)*

22 You have been worshiping in ignorance all along while the Jews continue to anticipate the Messiah in their devotion, knowing that the promise pointing to the Savior of the world would be emerging from within. *(The Samaritans were a mixed race and only received the five books of Moses while they rejected the Prophets. 2Kings 17:28-34)*

23 The end of an era has arrived - the future is here! Whatever prophetic values were expressed in external devotional forms and rituals are now eclipsed in true spirit worship from within, [1]face to face with the Father - acknowledging our genesis in him - this is his delight! The Father's desire is the [1]worshipper more than the worship! *(The word often translated worship, [1]**proskuneo**, from **pros**, face to face and **kuneo**, which I would like to believe to be a derivation of **koinonia**, joint-participation; rather than **kuon** which means dog. I know, some tried to connect the idea of a dog licking its master's hand, which then became a possibility of kissing. I prefer a divine face to face koinonia encounter to define true worship! Although, I do believe that dogs, often referred to as man's best friend because of the very nature of their devotion to their master, has its Greek root connected - **koinonia** is a friendship word to*

begin with and in it is therefore possible to see its etymological link. This is the only reference to the noun [2]***proskunētēs****, worshipper, in the New Testament. See Extended Commentary at the end of the Mirror.)*

24 God is Spirit and not a holy mountain or a sacred city with man-made shrines! Return to your Source - the Father is our true fountainhead! *(You are not defined by your physical birth, your domestic life, your history, your culture or your religion!)*

25 The women then said, "I know the Messiah is coming, the one who is called the Christ and when he arrives he will declare everything to us from heaven's perspective!"

26 Jesus responded to her, "So here I am, speaking to you! I am the One you were longing for."

27 Just then his disciples arrived; they were quite surprised that he was in such deep conversation with a woman, but made no remarks.

28 Leaving her water pot behind she hurried back to the city to tell the people what happened at the well. *(No water pot can compete with a fountain bursting from within! Suddenly she understood that all people indeed share the same origin. The fountain of living water was not distant from her, beyond her reach, but waiting to awaken within her. Not any of her previous five marriages or even her religious tradition could quench her thirst. Not because she failed to meet 'Mr. Perfect' or the men in her life failed to meet her expectation, but simply because of the fact that nothing external was ever meant to define or complete her life.*
The life of our design is defined in Jesus Christ as in a mirror. Here, there remains no partner, politics or past experience to blame or compete with, only a new life within you to discover, explore, enjoy - and share. Your source will sustain you. "By the waters of reflection, my soul remembers who I am." Ps 23

Truth therapy does not attempt to untangle the complicated emotional hurts and traumas of the past; instead truth reveals the integrity of our original life redeemed in Christ. He is the fountainhead of our genesis. Paul did not say, "Behold the old! He said, "Behold all things are new!" 2 Cor 5:17
The end of an era has arrived! Return to your Source. "He is the Author and conclusion of faith." Heb 12:2.)

29 "Come quickly! I met a man who told me everything about my life! [1]Could this possibly be the Messiah?" *(With a woman's intuition she avoided* ***ouk*** *and uses [1]**mēti**, whether, at all, perchance. She does not take sides, but piques their curiosity. - Robertson's Word Pictures.)*

30 She arose their interest enough for them to leave the city at once to go meet this man for themselves.

31 Meanwhile his disciples were urging him to take some food.

32 But he said, "I am feasting on food you cannot see!"

33 His disciples were baffled, "Who brought him anything to eat?"

34 Jesus told them, "My food is to fulfil the desire of him who commissioned me and to leave no detail undone!"

35 The bread you labor for takes four months from the day you sow the seed until it ripens in the ear, doesn't it? This is not the food that I am talking about. The fruit of your own toil and performance will never satisfy permanently; from now on, lift up your eyes! Look at yourselves and everyone else differently; see them through your Father's eyes and you will know that they too are ripe and ready to discover how fully included they are in my finished work. They are perfectly mirrored in me! *(A harvest is ripe when the seed in the ear*

matches the seed that was sown! My mission is to reveal and redeem the image and likeness of God in human form!)

36 This harvest reveals how both he who sows and he who reaps participate in the same joy of the life of the ages!

37 Just as the proverb says, "One sows and another reaps!"

38 I commissioned you to reap that which you did not labor for! Others labored and you tapped into the fruit of their toil!

39 Intrigued by the woman's testimony many of the Samaritans from that city believed! *(They were the first non-pure Jews who tasted the fruit of God's prophetic purpose revealed in Abraham and Israel's history wherein all the nations of the world would be equally included in the blessing of sonship!)*

40 They then approached Jesus and entreated him to remain with them longer, so he stayed over for two days.

41 When they heard him speak, many more believed.

42 They said to the woman, now we believe not just because of your word but we have heard for ourselves and can clearly see that this man is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world!

43 After the two days with them Jesus left for Galilee.

44 Explaining why he was heading north to Galilee, John remembers how Jesus repeated the saying that a Prophet is not honored in his own native land.

45 The Galileans welcomed him with open arms; they immediately recognized him for the spectacular things he did in Jerusalem where they too had been for the Passover feast.

46 So Jesus again visited Cana where he turned the water into wine and there met a man of the royal family whose son was sick in Capernaum.

47 This man heard the rumor that Jesus has returned from Judaea and was back in Galilee so he went looking for him. When he found him in Cana he entreated Jesus to urgently come with him to Capernaum to heal his son since he was at the point of death.

48 Jesus responded with "If your belief in me is merely based on the signs and miracles you can see, you miss the entire point of my mission!" *(See John 2:23-25 and my note on 2:24...Signs are not the source of faith - signs follow faith! Jesus' belief in the integrity of our inner being is what saves us from the lies that we believed about ourselves.)*

49 The nobleman urged him to come with him at once before it was too late!

50 Jesus then instructed him to return home on his own and said, "your son will live!" And the man believed the word that Jesus spoke and left. *(Here Jesus demonstrates that he didn't come to be restricted to his own human body and physical presence, but as the Word incarnate, his Word will continue to be as he is for all time and everyone! Jesus knows how a father would want to see his son return from the brink of death!)*

51 The man was still on his journey home when his servants met him to tell him the Good News that his son lives!

52 He immediately asked them about the time that his son was healed and they told him it happened at the seventh hour the previous day! *(That is 1pm)*

53 The father knew that it was the very hour when Jesus declared his son alive! He and his entire household came to faith that day!

54 This Jesus did again as a second sign to mark the significance of his ministry beyond Judaea into Gallilee.

Chapter 5

1 After these events there was another feast of the Jews in Jerusalem. Jesus determined to be there. *(Pentecost - 50 days after Easter)*

2 At the Sheep-gate in Jerusalem there was a pool called Bethesda; in Hebrew it means home of grace and kindness - it had five porches. *(Nehemiah 3:1 - the sheep gate would lead to the market where sheep would be sold for sacrifices - no wonder Jesus was attracted to go there - fifty days ago he was there whip in hand driving out the traders from the temple! [John 2:15] The pool of water reminds of the baptism theme so relevant in John's gospel. Multitudes are still waiting at the religious pools of mercy and kindness for some unpredictable, unmerited sign of favor to come their way! Sitting in the shade of their ideas of the 5 porches [or five-steps to receive blessings from God- ministries] waiting for another "flutter" or "move" of God! Jesus is not just another "move" of God! He is the Father made manifest in our human skin! He has come to awaken us out of our slumber!)*

3 Many ailing people were lying in the shade of these porches; blind, cripple and withered, waiting for the stirring of the water.

4 An shepherd-messenger would go down into the pool occasionally to stir the water; the first person to then enter the pool would be healed of whatever it was they were suffering from.

5 There was also a man who had an infirmity for thirty eight years.

6 Jesus saw this man and realized that he had been there for a very long time; he asked him, "Do you [1]really desire to be made well?" *([1]**Theleis** from **thelo** - to resolve, desire - not merely, do you wish, but are you in earnest?)*

7 The man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to help me get into the pool when the water is stirred; by the time I get there someone else has already gotten there before me!"

8 Jesus said to him, "[1]Awaken! Arise and pick up your bed and walk!" *([1]**egeirō** - to awaken from sleep.")*

9 And at once the man became whole and picked up his bed and began to walk! Now this was on the Sabbath day.

10 The Jews were immediately offended and rebuked the man for picking up his bed on a day where no work was allowed according to their law! *(Grace offends the legalistic mindset. See Romans 3:27)*

11 He answered them, "The man who healed me told me to pick up my bed and walk!"

12 They were very keen to know who this man was.

13 But the man didn't know who it was who healed him since Jesus already left unnoticed and there were throngs of people around.

14 Then a little later Jesus found him in the synagogue and said, "[1]See! You have become whole! Do not continue in your old [2]distorted mindset; then nothing worse can happen to you!" *(It is so important to [1]see your wholeness and not your distortedness! You reflect what you behold. To see yourself through God's eyes is the only way to escape the distortion of contradiction! The word [1]**ide** from **horao** means to see, to discern, to perceive. The word translated sin, is the word [1]**hamartia**, from*

***ha**, negative and **meros**, portion or form, thus to be without your allotted portion or without form, pointing to a disorientated, distorted identity; the word **meros**, is the stem of **morphe**, as in 2 Corinthians 3:18 the word **metamorphe**, with form, is the opposite of **hamartia** - without form. Sin is to live out of context with the blueprint of one's design; to behave out of tune with God's original harmony. Hamartia suggests anything that could possibly distract from the awareness of our likeness. See Deuteronomy 32:18, "You have forgotten the Rock that begot you and have gotten out of step with the God who danced with you!" Hebrew, **khul** or **kheel**, to dance. Many commentators have used this verse to conclude that God punishes people's sin with sickness! This is not the Father whom Jesus reveals! A few verses later [v 22) Jesus emphatically declares that The Father judges no-one! The religious mind has for so long connected God's judgment with disease and sickness! Jesus introduces us to the God who would rather become our distortions and diseases on the cross and go into our darkness and hell to deliver us from its claim, than to send sickness to us and send us to hell! In John 9:2 the followers of Jesus asks "Rabbi, who sinned: this man or his parents, causing him to be born blind?" And Jesus answered, "You're asking the wrong question. You're looking for someone to blame." [Message] Neither this man nor his parents were guilty! Then Knox translates the next sentence to read, "it was so that God's action might declare itself in him!" This has nothing to do with judgment! See also 9:34 for the typical opinion of the Pharisees! "You were born in utter sin - now you try to teach us!" Nothing makes a Pharisee more nervous and mad than when their sin- and judgment-paradigm gets taken out of the equation!)*

15 The man left and told the Jews that it was Jesus who healed him. *(Don't go testify in the wrong place at the wrong time to the wrong audience! That would be like casting pearls before swine!)*

16 Unwittingly, this man's testimony confirmed their suspicion and gave the Jews exactly what they wanted, a trigger to launch their persecution of Jesus! They were furious and immediately began to make plans to murder him! Their interpretation of a "Holy Day" was deeply offended! *(Reminds of many sincere Sabbath - keepers today!)*

17 Jesus replied, "My Father is working [1]until [2]now, and so am I!"
(This is not what the Jews wanted to hear! But Jesus is speaking about a different Sabbath! Just like John reminds us in chapter 2 that he had a different temple in mind; one that he would rebuild in 3 days! And in the next chapter with Nicodemus he points to a different birth; not his mother's womb, but our joint-genesis from above! Then the Samaritan woman in chapter 4 discovers a different well; one that bursts forth from within! So here in chapter 5 Jesus sees a different Sabbath to Jewish sentiment! The Sabbath of God points to his perfect work of both revealing and redeeming his image and likeness in human form. Every Sabbath continues to celebrate the perfection of our Father's work - [1]until [2]now! So when Jesus heals people on the Sabbath he is not contradicting it, but endorsing it! Jesus is what the Sabbath is all about! He is the substance of every prophetic shadow! In restoring someone's wholeness, the idea of the original Sabbath is reinforced and not compromised! When God introduced the Sabbath it was always meant to be a prophetic opportunity to celebrate his rest, which was him seeing his perfect work unveiled in us! He continues to invite us to enter into his Rest where we cease from our own works! The announcement, "You shall do NO WORK!" was to remind us again and again that his work is perfect, and we cannot improve on it! You cannot improve on you! You are his workmanship - his masterpiece! The deadly fruit of the "I am not Tree - system" had to be thoroughly uprooted! Hebrews 4:4 [Read the entire chapter 4 in the Mirror] Scripture records the seventh day to be the prophetic celebration of God's perfect work. What God saw satisfied his scrutiny. (Behold, it is very good, and God rested from all his work. [Gen 1:31, 2:2] God saw more than his perfect image in Adam, he also saw the Lamb and his perfect work of redemption! "The Lamb having been slain from the foundation of the world." [Rev 13:8] "That which has been is now; that which is to be, already has been" [Ecc 3:15] Also 2 Tim 1:9) Hebrews 4:10 God's rest celebrates his finished work; whoever enters into God's rest immediately abandons his own efforts to compliment what God has already perfected. (The language of the law is "do;" the language of grace is "done.")
Faith is God's language; God calls things which are not (visible yet) as though they were.

*The word [1]**heous** is a conjunction linking God's work and intent in synchrony with the word [2]**arti**, which already suggests a continuation of a moment "until now!" [See note on **arti** in 1 Corinthians 13:12,13])*

18 This was fuel for the fire of Jewish zeal in their determination to execute Jesus! Not only did he break their Sabbath, but now he has gone beyond all extremes! He calls God his own Father - who does he think he is - God's equal?

19 Jesus explained to them with utmost certainty that whatever they see the Son does, mirrors the Father - he does not act independent of his Father - the Son's gaze is fixed in order to accurately interpret and repeat what he sees his Father does! The one reveals the other without compromise or distraction! *(The incarnation does not interrupt what the Word was from the beginning - face to face with God!)*

20 For the Father and the Son are [1]best of friends! They have no secrets; the Father gladly lets his Son in on everything he does and will continue to show him works of most significant proportions, which will astound you! *(The Father loves [[1]**phileo**] the Son with fondness.)*

21 For just as the Father awakens people from their death-sleep and revitalizes them with Zoe-life, even so it pleases the Son to awaken people to life!

22 For the Father judges no-one but has given all judgment to the Son!

23 The Father's desire is that all may value the Son with the same honor wherewith they esteem him - there is no distinction - to dishonor the Son is to dishonor the Father.

24 Most certainly do I say unto you that this is the vital transition from dead religion into the very life of the ages - embrace the Son's word with the same persuasion as you would the Father's and you will not know any judgment - the Son gives voice to the Father! *(He is the Father's word made flesh.)*

25 Oh how I desire for you to get this! The prophetic hour has come! This is the moment for the dead to hear the voice of the Son of God - C'mon! Hear and live!

26 The [1]very self existence within the Father is what he has bestowed upon the Son in order for the Son to [2]radiate the same zoe-life. *(The word [1]**hosper** from **hos**, in that manner; and **per** , an enclitic particle significant of abundance [thoroughness], that is, emphasis; much, very or ever. The word [2]**echo**, to have possession of, reminds of the English word echo; thus to resonate, radiate.)*

27 The Father has also given the Son of man [1]authentic authority to execute judgment on mankind's behalf! *(The word [1]**exousia**, often translated authority has two components, **ek**, out of, source and **eimi**, I am!)*

28 Do not be alarmed by this, but the hour is coming when those in the [1]graves will hear his voice! *(No-one who ever lived will escape the extent of his righteous judgment! Those who have [1]forgotten who they are will hear his incarnate voice! The word for grave, [1]**mnēmeion**, memory, suggests a remembrance! Like David prophesies in Psalm 22 when he sees the cross-crisis [**krisis** - judgment] a thousand years before it happens! His conclusion in verse 27 sums up the triumph of God's resolve! "All the ends of the earth shall [1]remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him!" See 1 Corinthians 15:21,22 The same mankind who died in a man was raised again in a man. In Adam all died; in Christ all are made alive.)*

29 And they will come forth out of their graves - for those who have engaged themselves with that which is beneficial, it will be a resurrection to life - and for those who have done that which is worthless, it will be a resurrection unto [1]judgment. *(In the context of John 6:28 and 29 the work that is required is not a duty to be performed but a gift to be embraced - If our own good behavior could earn us salvation then there would be no point in Jesus dying our death! - This would be in conflict with the essence and crux of the gospel! It reminds of 2 Corinthians 5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body!" Now read this verse in the Mirror - 2 Corinthians 5:10 For we have all been [1]thoroughly scrutinized in the [2]judgment of Jesus. We are [3]taken care of and restored to the life of our design, regardless of what happened to us in our individual lives, whatever amazing or meaningless things we encountered in the body. (See 5:14,16. We are mirrored in his life; his life reflects ours, not as an example for us but of us. See 2 Corinthians 3:18. The word, [1]**phaneroo**, means to render apparent, to openly declare, to manifest. Paul uses the Aorist Passive Infinitive tense **phanerothenai**, not referring to a future event. The Aorist Infinitive presents the action expressed by the verb as a completed unit with a beginning and end. The word, **bematos**, comes from [2]**bayma**, means footprint, also referring to a raised place mounted by steps, or a tribunal, the official seat of a judge The word, [3]**komitzo**, comes from **kolumbos**, meaning to tend, to take care of, to provide for, to carry off from harm. Paul's reference was not about how much abuse and affliction he suffered, neither was it the many good times he remembered that defined him; "I am what I am by the grace of God!" If we are still to be judged for good or bad deeds that we performed in the body, then the judgment that Jesus faced on mankind's behalf was irrelevant. Galatians 2:21 I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing! NIV [See also 2 Cor 5:14,16. We are mirrored in his life; his life reflects ours, not as an example for us but of us. As well as 2 Corinthians 3:18 The days of window-shopping are over! Now, with unveiled faces we are gazing at the glory of the Lord as in a mirror and metaporhe happens - image and*

likeness awakens within us!])
*See **Extended Commentary Notes** after the final chapter of the Mirror-Thoughts on Judgment and Resurrection.)*

30 The dynamic of my doing is in my union with my Father; my intimate acquaintance with his voice is what inspires me - as I hear, I discern and my judgment is just; there is no conflicting interest here - my Father's commission is my mission in life! *(Proverbs 20:12 The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the LORD has made them both. See Hebrews 5:8* **Acquainted with sonship he was in the habit of hearing from above; what he heard distanced him from the effect of what he had suffered.** *(The word often translated as obedience is the word, **upoakuo**, under the influence of hearing, or hearing from above. "By" the things he suffered, **apo**, away from, distanced. "Then I said, I read in your book what you wrote about me; so here I am, I have come to fulfill your will." [Heb 10:7]) Heb 5:9* **By his perfect hearing he forever freed mankind to hear what he had heard.** *[He now makes it possible for us to hear in such a way that we may participate again in the full release of our original identity; the logos finding voice in the incarnation in us.])*

31 If this was just about me trying to make a name for myself then you can certainly reject my testimony as phony!

32 Yet there is someone else who endorses who I am and I recognize his testimony of me as absolutely true.

33 You cross examined John and he too gave testimony to the truth of who I am.

34 I do not draw my inspiration from your applause; I'm not here to win a few votes for a noble cause - I am on a rescue mission!

35 John was a man on fire, a bright beaming light and for a brief moment you were jumping with joy in his radiance.

36 My testimony exceeds John's since the work which my Father has ordained me to finish gives ultimate context to my mission.

37 The Father himself who has sent me continues to bear witness to me; yet you are not familiar with his voice and did not discern his prophetic utterance throughout ancient times and therefore you could not recognize his image nor do you realize his appearance at this present time *[in the incarnate word.]*

38 Your doubting him whom the Father has sent shows that you have not taken his word to its full conclusion.

39 You scrutinize the Scriptures tirelessly, assuming that in them you [1]embrace the life of the ages - yet I am what the Scriptures are all about! *([1]**Echo**, to hold, embrace, resonate)*

40 Still you refuse to resort to me as the very source of the life you seek. *(I echo the life of the ages within you!)*

41 I am not anchoring my belief in people's opinion.

42 But what I observe about you, is that God's love does not resonate within you! *(You're so obsessed with the rule book that all you see in it is a god of judgment and wrath and miss out on God's love!)*

43 Here I am representing my Father and you have a problem with that; yet someone completely unknown to anyone would come in his own name and you will give him your full support. *(How strikingly has*

this been verified in the history of the Jews! From the time of Jesus Christ to our time, sixty-four false Christs have been reckoned by whom they have been deceived. [Bengel].)

44 How is it possible for you to even venture into the dimensions of faith, if you already have your minds made up to go with popular opinion within your own ranks, while you show no desire to esteem him who proceeds directly from God?

45 No, I am not the one to accuse you before the Father - you stand condemned before your trusted friend Moses!

46 Had you discerned my Father's voice in Moses you would have been persuaded about me in his writings. *(The significance of the Scriptures is not in themselves but in who they point to! Genesis 3:15; Genesis 12:3 "in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed!" Compare John 8:56 & 58; Genesis 49:10; also Deuteronomy 18:15. "For he wrote of me" -* ***peri gar emou ekeinos egrapsen****. Deuteronomy 18:18 is quoted by Peter in Acts 3:22 as a prophecy of Christ and also by Stephen in Acts 7:37. See also John 3:14 about the brazen serpent and John 8:56 about Abraham foreseeing Christ's day. Moses most certainly wrote concerning him.)*

47 If you already doubt his words to begin with, my conversation will be irrelevant to you.

Chapter 6

1 In the course of [1]time Jesus went from Jerusalem across the sea of Galilee which was also called Tiberias. *(With this...* ***meta tauta****, is John's*

favorite general note of the order of events; not necessarily in chronological order. [1]*In the context and sequence of time, this would be the following year after the events described in the 1st 5 chapters.)*

2 By now a great multitude was following him because of the spectacular healings he performed.

3 Jesus went into the hills to be alone with his disciples.

4 This was again near the annual Passover. *(Here John reminds us of the economy of Jesus' ministry he knew very well the pivotal significance of his appointment with the ultimate Passover where he would lay down his life as the Lamb of God to be slaughtered by his own creation for their salvation.)*

5 There was no getting away from the crowds though; when Jesus saw the multitude arrive he said to Phillip, "How do you think we are going to feed all these people?"

6 This wasn't a trick question, but simply to engage their faith; he already knew exactly what he was going to do! *(Jesus was not about to be distracted by the enormity of his mission where his body would be broken at the highest price in order to feed the multitudes of mankind with the true bread from heaven! Just like in Chapter 24 of Luke - the picture of a meal always translates into incarnation language - bread becomes flesh!)*

7 Phillip immediately concluded that this was impossible to do and far beyond a budget of any reasonable calculation; two hundred days wages could never buy enough for each person in the crowd to even get a little morsel of bread! *(Mankind cannot redeem themselves! Again, Jesus leads the conversation into a different dimension - like with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman - he points to a different source; not related to*

external reasoning or challenges to be met with personal contributions of our own toil or labor to define or defend ourselves but simply accessing the Father's limitless resources within. He has come to free our minds from the restrictions of a dimension that could never truly define us! He dramatically and very intentionally disengages us with every effort of our own to save ourselves! Our salvation is beyond our budget! BUT WAIT!! What about the little lad!? For unto us a child is born remember!)

8 Then one of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter

9 pointed to a little boy who had five small loaves of inexpensive barley bread and two small fishes and remarked how insignificant they appeared amongst such a multitude of hungry people!

10 Jesus asked his disciples to get everybody seated - the place was ideal for a picnic since it was spring and the grass was lush and green! Thousands of people gathered! *(In the Jewish custom where only the men were counted there happened to be 5000 of them let alone the multitudes of ladies and children!)*

11 Jesus took the bread and fish and thanked God for it, then distributed it amongst the people; everyone was free to take as much as they wanted!

12 When the crowd had eaten their fill Jesus said to his disciples to gather up all the broken pieces to make sure that nothing is lost. *(Every fragment and detail of God's masterful work of redeeming mankind in Christ is most significant!)*

13 So they did and filled twelve baskets with fragments after everybody had as much as they could eat!

14 The people who witnessed these signs [1]began to be more and more convinced that Jesus must truly be that Prophet, the one whom their Scriptures pointed to. *(Deuteronomy 18:15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among you, from your brethren-- him you shall heed-- The word [1]**elegon** is an inchoative imperfect form of the verb; thus, they began to say; the inchoative verb, sometimes called an inceptive verb, shows a process of beginning or becoming.)*

15 They were now ready to forcefully grab him and crown him as their King, but when Jesus saw their enthusiasm he slipped away and went higher into the mountain to be by himself.

16 In the evening his disciples went down to the sea;

17 they were hoping that Jesus would join them and waited until dark but then finally embarked the ship and proceeded to sail across to Capernaum.

18 En-route a massive storm hit them with huge swells and strong winds.

19 They were now about halfway across the six mile stretch of water, struggling with their oars against the wind and raging waters when they suddenly noticed Jesus coming towards them, walking on the stormy seas! They were horrified!

20 He spoke to them and said, Here I am - you have no reason to fear! *(**ἐγώ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε** - His I amness is closer to you than any sense you could ever have of his absence!)*

21 They were very happy to take him on board and then miraculously reached their destination in no time!

22 The crowd that was left behind saw that there was only one boat and also noticed that Jesus did not leave with his disciples.

23 The next day other boats from Tiberias arrived near the area where they ate that bread which the Lord blessed.

24 When they realized that neither Jesus nor any of his disciples were around, they got into the boats to go to Capernaum hoping to find Jesus there.

25 They found him on the other side and wanted to know how he got there?

26 Jesus responded with, Surely the reason why you are so drawn to me is not because of the signs you've seen, but the contentment you felt within you when you ate the bread. *(The destiny of Jesus was not to merely engage people with the miraculous signs - as much as he desired to communicate the essence of his mission - which was to celebrate the incarnation! The bold exhibit of the image and likeness of our invisible Father in us in human form! Every meal is a celebration of the incarnation. In Luke's interview with the two followers on their way back to Emmaus, he finally records the climax of their encounter with the "stranger" when he broke the bread and their eyes were opened and they recognized him! The revelation of the incarnation is the point, not another ten miracles!)*

27 Living from meal to meal can keep you busy - there is so much more to life than survival - toiling merely for that which perishes is such a waste! The life of the ages requires a different kind of labor! This labor is not the kind which rewards you for something you have done but blesses you with the gift from mankind's Son - this gift of sonship celebrates the authentic life which God the Father has endorsed from the beginning.

28 They immediately wanted the recipe! Tell us then what we must do in order to accomplish God's work?

29 This is the work of God; your belief in the One whom he has sent! *(Even your ability to believe is God's work! Realizing your authentic sonship on exhibit in Jesus is God's gift to you and cannot be earned! How can your labor compete with what God's rest celebrates as complete!)*

30 So Jesus, if it is your job to get us to believe, we need to see more signs!

31 How do you compete with Moses? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness - as it is written - He gave them bread from heaven to eat. *(The rabbis quoted Psalm 72:16 to prove that the Messiah, when he comes, will outdo Moses with manna from heaven. Robertson's Word Pictures.*
Ps 72:16 "There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like the cedars of Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. KJV [A handful of corn - five loaves here and in the following year's Passover Jesus' own body would be the bread broken on the mount of Golgotha!]
*Deuteronomy 8:3 And he [1]treated you gently in the wilderness of your unbelief and fed your hunger there with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know; that he might make you know that mankind does not live by the bread of their own labor, but that the life of our design hungers to be completely sustained by [2]that Word which proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD. [Some translations say, "[1]humbled you" but in 2 Samuel 22:36 the word [1] הנע**Anah** is translated, "Thou hast given me the shield of thy salvation, and thy [1]gentleness made me great."*
The Hebrew word **לֹכ** ***Kohl*** *from* **ללכ** ***Kalal****, often translated, "every" actually means the word in its most complete context = the INCARNATION!] He divorced them from that which does not satisfy!*
You freed us from our slavery and led us gently like a shepherd through the

wilderness of our own unbelief and made known to us our authentic hunger not for the bread we labor for but for the word which mirrors our joint-genesis and eternal oneness!)

32 Jesus reminded them that it wasn't Moses who gave them the bread from heaven - My Father is the one who gives the real bread from heaven! *(The manna was a prophetic pointer to the Messiah!)*

33 For the bread from God that comes down from heaven is that which gives life to the entire world! *(Mankind is designed, not to define life by the bread-harvest of their own labor, but by daily feasting on* ***every Word*** *that proceeds from God's mouth, mirrored in its most complete language, the Incarnation. The Hebrew word translated,* ***every****, is the word,* ***כֹּל·Kohl*** *from* ***כָּלַל Kalal*** *which means complete - thus, the word in its most complete context, which is the Incarnation, the Word that is face to face before God from before time was, is now made flesh, radiating the invisible Father's character and image in human form, as in a mirror! The incarnation is the global language of the Planet! Paul says in 2 Cor 3:2,3, The living Epistle is known and read by all mankind in their mother-tongue language.)*

34 They said, Oh Lord, this is the bread we crave! Give us this bread!

35 Jesus said, I am the bread of life! He that comes face to face with me shall never hunger and he who finds his faith resting in me shall never thirst!

36 But even though you have seen me, you are not persuaded. *(You might be happy with the healings and be entertained by the signs, but still you fail to understand who I am! I'm not here to impress you with me! I'm here to persuade you about you! Your sonship is what I am all about! And the only way that I can persuade you about you is to take you with me into your death and darkness and overcome your fear and hell and birth you again into newness of life in my resurrection!)*

37 Everyone whom the Father has given me will come [1]face to face with me! And here, mirrored in me they will see that I am not the Judge! I will not cast anyone out! *(The preposition **pros**, is used here again as in John 1:1.)*

38 For I have stepped down out of heaven, not to make a name for myself! I did not come to become a mere historic hero! I have come to communicate the resolve of him who sent me! *(I am here to demonstrate to you how persuaded my Father is about you!)*

39 My Sender's desire is for me to rescue every single individual - [1]this is his gift to me - that I will lose [2]no detail of mankind's original identity mirrored in me! My rescuing mission will conclude in their joint-resurrection! This is the [3]completeness of time! *(This is his gift to me, [1]**ho dedoke moi**. The phrase, [2]**hina pan apoleso ex auto**, meaning, that I should lose nothing out of it. In the conclusion/fullness of time - [3]**te eschate hemera** - This phrase occurs only in John - John 6:39, 6:40, 6:44, 6:54. See John 4:23 The end of an era has arrived - the future is here! Whatever prophetic values were expressed in external devotional forms and rituals are now eclipsed in true spirit worship from within - face to face with the Father - acknowledging our genesis in him - this is his delight! The Father's desire is the worshiper more than the worship!)*

40 And this is the desire of my Father, that everyone who [1]sees the Son, through his eyes, and finds the conclusion of *(eis)* **their persuasion in him, will resonate** *(echo)* **the life of the ages! And I will [2]raise him up in the [3]final day!** *(Jesus speaks here of mankind's joint resurrection in his resurrection as the final day! The word [1]**theōreo** means to gaze attentively. See Hosea 6:2 After two days he will revive us; [2]on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him. The word [3]**eschatos** means extreme; last in time or in space; the uttermost part, the final conclusion.*

What God said about 'you-manity' in their co-resurrection in Jesus, defines eschatology! Heb 1:1-3; Eph 2:5,6. See Rev 20:5 on ***the First Resurrection****.)*

41 The religious Jews were no longer paying any attention - they were shocked and offended at the idea that he said he was the bread from heaven!

42 They reasoned that since they knew his parents to be Joseph and Mary, he had no valid claim to any heavenly Source!

43 Then Jesus addressed them saying, Your murmuring and reasoning amongst yourselves will continue to veil me from you. *(Knowing me from a human point of view will not satisfy your quest.)*

44 No one is forcing you to believe - it is the Father who sent me who draws you to see me [1]face to face - only once you've seen how in the mystery of God I mirror you, will you understand that I will co-raise you in the grand-finale of my mission! *(The word [1]**pros** is used again, face to face.)*

45 It is written in the Prophets that every single individual will be taught of God. To hear the Father's instruction concerning me, is to come [1]face to face with me. *(The word [1]**pros** is used again. See Isaiah 54:13; Jeremiah 31:34 And no longer shall each man teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."; Mica 4:1-4)*

46 No one has [2]seen the Father except the one who [1]proceeds from him; he is most intimately [2]acquainted with the Father! *(The word [1]**para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a*

sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence; intimate connection; the word [2]***horaō*** *means to gaze; to see with the mind; to perceive; know; to become acquainted with by experience.)*

47 Of [1]absolute certainty do I declare to you that anyone whose faith [2]ultimately rests in who I really am, in this one the life of the ages resonates. *(In repeating the words,* [1]*amen amen - Jesus speaks mirror language in order to emphasize the radiance and resonance of certainty between himself and his audience - from faith to faith. The preposition* [2]***eis*** *suggests a point reached in conclusion.)*

48 I am the bread of life!

49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and died there in the wilderness. *(The manna didn't kill them, their unbelief in themselves did. See Numbers 13:33 and Hebrews 4:2-6. The manna was a mere prophetic shadow of me.)*

50 This, what you have here in me standing face to face with you, is the very sustenance of your life; the bread descending out of the heavenly sphere for everyone to eat their fill and not die.

51 I am the living bread, I stepped out of the heavenly realm into this earth suit, in the incarnation, so that everyone may feast on the idea of their true incarnate identity mirrored in me and discover the life of the ages incarnate in them! The bread that I will give is my own flesh; it will translate into life for the entire cosmos! *(The word,* ***kosmos*** *in the NT refers to the entire human family.)*

52 This brought about a war of words among the Jews! How can this man give us human flesh to eat? *(Just like Nicodemus and the Samaritan*

woman at the well they again got it all wrong! Jesus was pointing to a different womb, well and meal!)

53 *(Instead of softening the blow by explaining to them what he really meant, Jesus made it a hundred times worse for their religious reasoning, by saying the following!)* **Amen amen, I say unto you that you have** *(echo)* **no real life in yourselves until you consume the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood.** *(The very core of our beingness is founded in our co-association with Jesus, the son of man; it is only in realizing and fully assimilating our oneness in flesh-incarnate context as the son of man, that we discover the truth of our oneness in our joint-genesis as sons of Deity. He is about to take mankind with him into their death, grave and hell and then victoriously co-quicken them and co-raise them into newness of life!)*

54 Your [1]every meal is a celebration of the incarnation; to eat my flesh and drink my blood is to digest me like your body is designed to digest food and it becomes flesh; this echoes the life of the ages and communicates the fact that you are co-risen with me in the final conclusion of my work of redemption. *(The words [1]**ho trōgōn**, are the Present Active Participle form of the verb to emphasize a continual or habitual eating.)*

55 My flesh is food in its truest form and my blood is drink in its truest form.

56 The eating of my flesh and drinking of my blood is the celebration of our seamless union - you in me and I in you - because you won't find you until you find me! *(Thoughts eat words like your mouth eats food - both become flesh!)*

57 As the living Father has sent me and also sustains me so will I sustain the one eating me. I live through my Father - just like my daily

food sustains me, so his life permanently resides in me - now you may also continually and habitually feast on me and live through me!

58 This is the bread that stepped down out of the heavenly sphere - there is no comparison with the manna your fathers received from heaven *[which was merely a prophetic shadow pointing to me];* **they ate and they died** *[without completing their destiny]* **- now feast on me and celebrate the life of the ages.** *(Eating and drinking is most significant - every meal is both a reminder and celebration of the incarnation! Every time we face food we are reminded of our beingness in flesh and our seamless oneness with our Maker and one another. See 1 Corinthians 11:26 Your every meal makes the mandate of his coming [1]relevant and communicates the meaning of the new covenant. [Whether you eat or drink, you are declaring your joint inclusion in his death and resurrection, confirming your redeemed innocence. Some translations read, "until I come..." The word translated until is, [1]**achri**, from **akmen**, which means extremity, conclusion, the present time; Jesus is the conclusion of prophetic time! The word **erchomai**, to come is in the Aorist tense, **elthe** - pointing to that which has already happened!]*
The prophetic picture of the table was very strategic in the tent tabernacle in the wilderness - the priests had to daily place fresh bread on the table in the sanctuary. It was called Showbread, **לחם מינפה *lechem haPānīm*,** *literally: Face-bread or Bread of the Presence. The Hebrew word for presence means face to face! While Jesus spoke to the two on their way to Emmaus in Luk 24, they did not recognize him, even though their hearts ignited while he was explaining the prophetic promise of mankind's redemption in all of Scripture, from Moses through the Psalms and the Prophets. In Luke's interview, he pressed them for the detail, he wanted to know exactly at what point in their meeting with Jesus did they recognize him in person! He writes in verse 28, "So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He appeared to be going further..." Wow! Should Jesus not at this point have given them an opportunity to make a commitment or at least say a "sinners prayer"? Not even the best Rabbi could take them any further, Luk 24:29 But they constrained him, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. Luk 24:30 When he was at table with them, he*

took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them.
Luk 24:31 And their eyes were opened and they recognized him; and he vanished out of their sight.
He vanished from their sight because Jesus can no longer be any more present in his person than what he is present in the Word incarnate in us!
The moment we discover Jesus in Scripture as in a mirror, our hearts ignite and our very next meal becomes a celebration of our incarnate union! "Every time you eat or drink, remember me!" Every meal celebrates the temple! Your body is God's address on planet earth! He does not dwell in buildings made by human hands. You will never again need to employ your willpower to diet and get into shape! Willpower is the language of the law! Love and value-consciousness ignites belief. The revelation of the truth sets you free to be free indeed! The days of fast food and junk-food are over! The Table is sacred and celebrates your body as the sanctuary of your redeemed life, the life of your authentic design! Sitting around the table is a feast of friendship and delightful conversation. Eat food that blesses the temple! Most diseases are diet-related! Study nutrition! We have this treasure in earthen vessels! The vessel takes its value from the treasure it holds! Feast your mind on likeness realities - make Deity your diet - digest me! Face your Father!)

59 Jesus said these things in a synagogue while teaching in Capernaum.

60 Many of his followers said, this teaching is to tough to chew on!

61 Jesus perceived what they were murmuring about and said, So you take offence at this?

62 What if you see [1]humanity's Son *[representing the human race]* **ascending to where he [2]was before?** *(The word for the [1]human species, male or female is* ***anthropos****, from* ***ana****, upwards, and* ***tropos****, manner of life; character; in like manner. See John 1:51. John 3:13: "No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, even mankind's*

Son." In the beginning [2]was the Word [[2]I am] and the word [2]was [[2]I am] face to face with God.)

63 It is the Spirit that quickens the poetry of life - the flesh *(muscle and willpower)* **is useless without the spirit. The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and life! I communicate from a different dimension and perspective giving voice and substance to every prophetic shadow and purpose.**

64 I notice that there are those among you who are not persuaded about me. It was clear from the start that even amongst Jesus' close followers there were signs of unbelief and treason. *(And who it was that should betray him - **kai tis estin ho paradōsōn**. Same use of **estin** and note article and future active Participle of **paradidōmi**, to hand over, to betray. John does not say here that Jesus knew that Judas would betray him when he chose him as one of the twelve, least of all that he chose him for that purpose. What he does say is that Jesus was not taken by surprise and soon saw signs of treason in Judas. The same verb is used of John's arrest in Matt 4:12. Judas was given his opportunity. He did not have to betray Jesus. Robertson's Word Pictures)*

65 I was addressing your hesitance to believe in me when I said to you that no one is forcing you to see yourself [1]mirrored in me - you do not need to go into make-believe-mode or fake your faith - it is the Father's gift to you! *(When you hear the words that I communicate with your heart you will encounter life-quickening faith. To try and decipher my words with your religious reasoning in your head is to miss the entire point of my mission and message. The preposition [1]**pros** - face to face, is translated here as mirrored in me.)*

66 Because of this conversation many of his followers went back to their old ways and would no longer be associated with Jesus.

67 So Jesus said to the twelve, “Don’t feel obliged to stay - you are also free to go if you wish!”

68 Simon Peter said, Lord, who is there to go back to - which mirror should we gaze into? Your words resonate the life of the ages!

69 We believe and know without a doubt that you are the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of the living God!

70 I have [1]pointed all twelve of you to your source and yet one of you remains trapped in the fallen mindset! *(The word **eklego** has traditionally been translated to mean election - I would prefer to emphasize the fact that **ek** is a preposition always pointing to origin or source and the verb **lego**, is associated with its noun **logos** as in the context of John 1:1 The original conversation! See Hebrews 1:1-3)*

71 He spoke of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon who was a man of Kerioth. *(He was not Galilean like the rest of the disciples and seemed to have struggled more than any of them to see the significance of the mirror likeness of Jesus as defining his true sonship.)*

Chapter 7

1 Jesus concentrated most of his ministry activity in Galilee since the Jewish leaders in Judea wanted to kill him.

2 This was now about six months later when the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was at hand.

3 His own brothers prompted him to go to Judea so that his followers there might again have the opportunity to witness his signs and teaching, they reasoned.

4 They figured that someone of his public importance and stature should not operate in secret! He should show himself off to the world and make a name for himself!

5 Yet none of his immediate family believed that he really was the Christ. *(It was only after his resurrection when Jesus also appeared to James that his brother's eyes were opened, 1 Corinthians 15:7 Galatians 1:19. This prompted James to write about seeing the face of your birth when you hear the authentic word of our co-begotteness by the Father of lights. James 1:17,23.)*

6 Jesus replied, "My [1]agenda is different from yours! You go ahead and feast with your Jewish friends! *([1]**kairos**, a fixed and definite time, the decisive epoch waited for.)*

7 It is me they hate not you! My testimony exposes their religious rituals and works of self-righteousness as [1]incompetent. *(The word often translated evil, [1]**poneros** suggests, to be full of labors annoyances and hardships! This word is associated with the system of works righteousness versus faith righteousness.)*

8 You go to this feast - I will go when its my time!"

9 So his family went to Jerusalem and left him behind in Galilee.

10 Then after they were gone he went there unnoticed and kept a low profile.

11 The Jews were looking out for him; constantly enquiring about his whereabouts.

12 Jesus was the topic of conversation among the people - everyone had an opinion about him. Some said that he was a good man - others thought him to be deceiving the crowds with trickery.

13 This was all hush-hush since no-one was prepared to openly oppose Jewish-sentiment.

14 Then Jesus surprised them all by showing up midway through the eight-day feast, teaching openly in their temple.

15 What amazed the Jews most was his knowledge of Scripture while he never attended any of their schools.

16 To which Jesus replied, "My teaching is not the product of my own invention or human perception but by my Divine connection - my mission explains my Sender's purpose.

17 Anyone who has a desire to engage with God's heart dream will know without a doubt that what I teach is [1]sourced in God and not merely [2]my own ideas. *(The preposition [1]**ek** always points to the source or origin; whereas the preposition [2]**apo** points away from - both are translated "from" in English. See 2 Corinthians 3:18 and Romans 1:17 See also the use of **para** in verse 29; which is also translated "from.")*

18 He who communicates "[1]away from" his true self pursues his own [2]fame based upon popular opinion - but the one seeking the glory of his Sender *[Source]* **finds truth unveiled in their individual I-am-ness and**

their true righteousness. In this person there is no trace of [3]disharmony! *(Again the preposition [1]**apo** is used. The word [2]**doxa** means glory or opinion, here translated fame.The word [3]**adikia** refers to the system of unrighteousness; which is a system based upon self-righteousness according to personal pursuit and performance as opposed to the righteousness of our redeemed design. The two components of this word are, **a**, negative and **dike** meaning two parties finding likeness in each other; this is the stem word for righteousness, **dikaiosune**.)*

19 Did not Moses give you the law whereby you could measure your performance, yet not one of you get it right! I mean what about the "Thou shalt not kill" - part? And here you are devising ways on how you can murder me!"

20 The people responded with, "You talk like a madman! No one's trying to kill you! You sound like someone with a demon -connection rather than a divine one!"

21 Jesus answered them, I represent one single poetic expression of the sum total of God's work - compared to the multitudes of rules Moses left you with! And you are astounded at that! *(And still you want to confuse and compare me with Moses! See chapter 6:28-31)*

22 Lets take one of those rules: Moses represents circumcision as the tradition of the fathers and you are okay with performing the cut on the Sabbath;

23 now in order not to disappoint Moses you have made your circumcision rule superior to the Sabbath; when a boy is eight days old you have no problem with performing circumcision even when it coincides with the Sabbath and here I am making a man's entire body well on the Sabbath and you're ready to kill me and break another one

of the ten commandments! *(See Genesis 17:12, "He that is eight days old among you shall be circumcised.")*

24 Do not cloud righteous judgment with your biased opinions and traditions."

25 The residents in Jerusalem were surprised that Jesus showed up publicly since it was common knowledge that the Jewish leaders sought opportunity to kill him.

26 Here he is as outspoken as ever and they are silent! Perhaps they too know deep inside that he is truly the Christ.

27 "But then again we know him and his family and are of the opinion that the origin of the Christ was supposed to be a mystery."

28 This provoked Jesus to raise his voice passionately while he was teaching in the temple, "You claim to know me and where I come from, yet you fail to recognize that I am not here on my own mission; you clearly show that you do not know him who sent me.

29 But I know him for I am his close companion and kinsman; he is the one who sent me." *(Again a different word to the English word "from" See verse 17 -* ***para****, is a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection - Jesus introduces the Holy Spirit in the same capacity:* ***parakletos****, meaning close companion, kinsman [John 14:16] - here it is used with* ***kletos*** *from* ***kaleo****, to surname - thus sharing the same family name.)*

30 This made them even more determined to seize him yet no one was able to touch him since his hour had not yet come.

31 Many in the crowds believed on him and reasoned that no Christ still to come could possibly begin to match the miracles which he already performed.

32 The Pharisees were extremely worried when they realized his popularity amongst the people, so with the support of their chief priests they ordered the temple police to arrest him.

33 Jesus then said to them, "I will only briefly remain with you where you can see me, then I will be on my way again, [1]sinking out of sight, to be [2]face to face with my Sender. *(The word [1]**upago** suggests a leading "under" as in under cover. Again John employs the preposition [2]**pros**.)*

34 You will search for me but not find me and where I am your religion cannot take you."

35 The Jews couldn't imagine where he would go where they wouldn't find him. Maybe he would join the dispersed Jews and go teach the Gentiles.

36 What would he mean by saying that we would seek him and not find him and "where I am you are powerless?"

37 On the final day, the crescendo of the eight-day Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus, knowing that he is the completeness of every prophetic picture and promise, cried out with a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come and stand [1]face-to-face with me and drink!

*(John again employs the word [1]**pros** in order to emphasize the face-to-face fellowship we are invited into.)*

38 In your realizing that I am what the Scriptures are all about, [1]you will discover uniquely for yourself, face to face with me, that I am what you are all about and rivers of living waters will gush out of your innermost being!" *(Jesus addresses the individual; [1]you singular. Here John records how Jesus witnessed the eighth day, the great and final day of the Feast of Tabernacles, when, according to custom, the High Priest would draw water from the Pool of Siloam with a golden jar, mix the water with wine, and then pour it over the altar while the people would sing with great joy from Psalm 118:25-26, See also the entire Psalm 118 which was obviously what Jesus reminded himself of and also Isaiah 12:3; "Therefore with joy shall we draw water from the wells of salvation!" Then, Jesus, knowing that he is the completeness of every prophetic picture and promise, cried out with a loud voice: "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink! If you believe that I am what the Scriptures are all about, you will discover that you are what I am all about, and rivers of living waters will gush from your innermost being!" The Siloam tunnel is a winding tunnel carved into the rock, leading from the spring of Gihon to the Pool of Siloam. Dating from the time of Hezekiah [800 BC] or earlier, it was an aqueduct that effectively replaced the Middle Bronze Age channel. Gihon derives from the Hebrew Giha which means "gushing forth"!*
When Jesus speaks of waters gushing forth out of your innermost being, he says that you are the city! You are the bride! God's redeemed society! Rev 21:2 And I saw her, in spotless magnificence, the holy city, the new Jerusalem, descending out of the heavens; having been fully prepared as a bride and beautifully adorned for her husband. (In total contrast to the symbolic religious Prostitute city of Babylon.))

39 Jesus spoke about the Spirit whom those who would believe that he is the conclusion of Scripture were about to [1]grasp since who Jesus was in all of his majestic splendor was not yet fully acknowledged and thus the Spirit was not yet evident. *(The word often translated, to receive,*

*[1]**lambano**, means to comprehend, grasp, to identify with. Note, Holy Spirit is an outpouring not an in-pouring!)*

40 Many lifted their voices from within the throngs of people and declared that this is indeed the Prophet.

41 Others openly announced that he is truly the Christ! Some said, "No this cannot be since he comes from Galilee!

42 Scripture clearly states that the Christ is of the seed of David and would be born in David's home town Bethlehem!" *(Micah 5:2; 1 Samuel 16:1)*

43 The difference of opinions in the crowd was loaded with tension and divided them.

44 Some were eager to arrest him yet no one could touch him.

45 At this point the temple police returned to the chief priests and Pharisees who were surprised that they came back empty handed, "Why did you not arrest him?"

46 The police officers answered, "We have never heard anyone speak like this before!"

47 The Pharisees were shocked, "Are you also deceived?

48 Surely we, your leaders should be your informed gauge to what you believe and none of our priests or any of the Pharisees believe in him!

49 But these ignorant crowds have no knowledge of the law and are accursed!" *(See Deuteronomy 27:26 "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, and do them.")*

50 Then one of them, Nicodemus, who secretly came to see Jesus earlier, interposed,

51 "Does our law condemn someone without first giving them a proper hearing or acquainting ourselves thoroughly with his conduct?

52 They sneered at him, "So are you also a Galilean? Search the Scriptures and see for yourself that their is no mention of any future Prophet emerging out of Galilee!" *(Jonah, Hosea, Nahum, possibly also Elijah, Elisha and Amos were from Galilee.)*
Verses 53 and 8:1-11 are not in some of the oldest manuscripts - the reason could probably be that some copyists didn't feel comfortable with this dramatic account - we have no original MSS of the Bible - but thank God for the original authentic Logos and Spirit of Christ resonating in our hearts in the unveiling of Christ in us!

53 Everyone went to their homes,

Chapter 8

1 while Jesus proceeded to the mount of Olives.

2 Early dawn he was back at the temple where many people sought to be near him to hear him teach - he sat down and taught.

3 Meanwhile the scribes and pharisees led a woman to him who was forcefully seized in the act of adultery and made her stand in the middle of the throng of people where everyone could stare at her.

4 They said unto him, "Teacher, this woman was caught committing adultery.

5 Now Moses commanded us in the law that adulterers should be stoned! What would you say?

6 They obviously had a clear agenda to snare him in their efforts to build a case of lawlessness against him. Jesus bent down and began to write with his finger on the ground, distracting attention from the girl.

7 They continued to interrogate him, then he stood up and looked them in the eyes, *(pros)* **and said, "He who is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her!"**

8 And he again bent down and continued writing on the ground.

9 They began to walk away one after the other beginning with the oldest. Until Jesus was left alone with the girl, still standing where here accusers dumped her. *("Being convicted by their own conscience" is probably an addition made by some copyist to explain the meaning, which is quite clear without it.)*

10 When Jesus stood up again, there was no-one there except the woman. So Jesus asked her, "Where are they? Has no-one condemned you?" *(Where are they, your accusers - your accusers was added by later copyists.)*

11 She answered, "No-one Lord!" And Jesus said to her, "Neither am I condemning you - go and sin no more - never again believe a lie about yourself!" *(The word translated sin,* ***hamartia*** *from* ***ha****, negative or without, and* ***meros****, portion or form; thus distorted pattern - the root of sin is to believe a lie about yourself. See Romans 6:14* **Sin was your master while the law was your measure; now grace rules.** *[The law revealed your slavery to sin; grace reveals your freedom from it. Jesus didn't say to the lady, "Go and sin less," he said to her "Go and sin no more!" Jesus knew something about the life of our design that we had lost sight of! What he revealed, he also redeemed! Sin –consciousness is what empowers religion. It always amazes me how Simon could not receive the gift of the miraculous abundant catch that Jesus blessed him with; he felt more comfortable with the fact that he caught nothing the previous night because "I am a sinful man!" He accepted his fate as his due because his mind was educated under the law of blessings and curses! [Deuteronomy 28.] When he witnessed the word and the miracle of the catch, he slotted back into his familiar mode! "Depart from me Jesus! I am a sinful man! I am not worthy!" Luke 5:8.])*

12 And Jesus continued to say, "I am the light of the world - whoever journeys with me shall not walk in darknes but will [1]radiate the light of life!" *(The word [1]****echo****, to hold; resonate; in this case, radiate.)*

13 The Pharisees took offence at this and responded with, "You assume things about yourself; how can you expect us to believe your record to be true?"

14 Jesus answered, "Whatever I declare concerning myself is absolutely true because I know where I am from and where I am going. You have no clue where I come from and therefore cannot discern my destiny.

15 You form your own judgment according to the flesh; I judge no-one.

16 And even if I do make a judgment, it is true since I am not making it up in my imagination or on my own accord, my reference reflects the testimony of the Father who sent me.

17 That should settle it for you since it is written in your law that the testimony of two, is true! *(This combined witness of two is not true just because they agree, unless true in fact separately. But if they disagree, the testimony falls to the ground. Deuteronomy 17:6; and 19:15. - Robertson. See Heb 6:13-20 and Rev 11:3.)*

18 I am witness to who I am and my Father himself also bears witness to me.

19 Then they said to him, "So where is your Father?" And Jesus answered, "My Father is just as invisible to you as I am - if you perceived me you would have also seen my Father!"

20 Jesus spoke these words in the temple treasury; yet no-one arrested him since his time was still not due.

21 And again Jesus said unto them, "I will go on my way and [1]disappear from your view and you will still seek me, yet die in your [2]sin; your belief-system keeps you trapped in blindfold-mode to make it impossible for you to reach me where I am - your religion is a cul-de-sac!" *(The word [1]**upago**, to lead under, as in a sinking out of sight, to disappear. The word for sin, [2]**hamartia** is in the singular, suggesting not sinful acts but rather a condition of a distorted mindset - from **ha**, negative and **meros**, portion or form, thus to be without your allotted portion or without form, pointing to a disorientated, distorted identity; the word **meros**, is the stem of the word **morphe**, as in 2 Corinthians 3:18 where the word **metamorphe**, with form, [transform] is the opposite of **hamartia** -*

without form. Sin is to live out of context with the blueprint of one's design; to behave out of tune with God's original harmony.)

22 The Jews reasoned that maybe he would kill himself in order to go to a different world because he said, "You cannot come with me."

23 Jesus said to them, "You draw your conclusions from the sense ruled world here below - my source points to a different dimension, a realm which is above the horizon of the senses. *(See Colossians 3:1-4)*

24 That is why I said that you will die in your sins because you are not convinced about who I am, you wouldn't know who you are! Your unbelief in my I-am-ness will keep you trapped in this death-ruled dimension, the very dimension that I have come to deliver you from!"

25 They asked him again, "Then who are you really?" He answered, "I have told you from the beginning who I am!

26 I have many things to say to you and conclude about you in my personal capacity but since you do not believe in me it will mean nothing to you; but he who sent me is true, above your suspicious scrutiny. I speak to the world those things which I have heard from my close companionship with him.

27 They just could not make the connection - Jesus' claims about the Father made no sense to their reasoning at all.

28 "When you have lifted up the Son of man, *[on the cross of your judgment]* **then you will know and understand that I am and that my I-am-ness is demonstrated in my doing; nothing that I do [1]distracts from that; my doing mirrors exactly what my Father has taught me even as my speech reflects his word.** *([1]**apo**, away from, and **emautou** myself. He*

constantly reminds them of the conclusion of his mission, see 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up.)

29 And he who sent me on my mission also accompanies me; the Father has never [1]abandoned me for a moment! It is my delight to always do that which [2]pleases him. *([1]**aphieimi** - a word also used for a husband divorcing his wife. The word [2]**arestos** to please; it suggests to accommodate one's self to the opinions desires and interests of others.)*

30 Whilst listening to him, many were persuaded that he was indeed the Christ.

31 Jesus then said to those Jews who were believing in him, "To take my word to its complete conclusion and then to abide in seamless union with its logic is to truly be my disciples. *(Here, he is not referring to some future "red-letter-edition Bible" highlighting his "words"; Jesus is speaking about the Logos defining his "I-am-ness", face to face with God before time was, then documented in prophetic language in ancient Scripture and now unveiled in incarnate human form, as in a mirror.)*

32 In this abiding you will fully know the truth about who you are and this knowing will be your freedom.

33 They answered him, "We are the seed of Abraham; we have never been anybody's slaves! Why do you suggest that we are not free?"

34 Jesus answered and said, "I say unto you with absolute certainty that everyone engaging in the distorted mindset of sin is a slave to it!" *(Sin is not about things you do or don't do - sin is missing out on sonship! Their failing to see Jesus as their Messiah, and him as the mirror image Redeemer of their true sonship, is their sin. Religion is enslaved to the fruit*

of the wrong tree. The sin-system is governed by the idea of justification by personal effort, performance and pretense; which is the typical fruit of the 'I am-not-mindset' which Peter refers to as the futile ways we inherited from our fathers. 1 Peter 1:18)

35 The difference between the slave and the son is that the slave only works there; for the son the father's house is home!

36 With the freedom found in sonship there is [1]no pretense! *(Free indeed! The word, [1]**ontoos**, indeed is the opposite to what is pretended.)*

37 I know you are the seed of Abraham, yet you are seeking opportunity to kill me because my word finds no [1]resonance in you! *(The word **χορός - choros** relates to a [1]**chorus**, harmony in song or dance; the word could also derive from **χώρα - choora**, which refers to space between limits.)*

38 I observe my Father's voice with close attention; this inspires my every expression. You hear a different father's voice and behave accordingly!

39 They immediately responded with, "But Abraham is our father!" To which Jesus replied, "If you were conceived by Abraham's faith, you would mirror his persuasion! *(Jesus said in John 6:29 This is the work of God; your belief in the One whom he has sent!)*

40 But here you are, desiring to destroy me because I declare to you the truth which I heard from a place of intimate acquaintance with God; this certainly does not reflect Abraham's faith!

41 Your actions clearly show who your father is!" They said unto him, "We are not conceived in fornication, God is our only Father!"

42 Jesus said, "If you were convinced that God was your Father, you would love me. Look, here I am! I did not arrive here by my own doing; I proceeded from him who sent me!

43 You do not understand my [1]language because you do not hear my logic! *(My dialect seems foreign to you because you are not familiar with the Logic of God. You might be acquainted with the letter of the law in Scripture but you are not acquainted with the Word! See John 5:39,40 also John 8:31. The word [1]**lalia** means dialect or language.)*

44 You are the offspring of a [1]fallen mindset and you desire to prove its diabolic parenthood in your willingness to execute its cravings. This "cast down" mindset is what kills the [2]anthropos since the beginning - *[it violently opposes the idea of the image and likeness of God in human form.]* **The diabolos mindset cannot abide the truth. There is no connection with truth - lying is its [3]language; in fact, the diabolos is the father of lies!** *(The word, [1]**diabolos**, Devil, has two components, **dia**, because of or through, and **ballo**, to cast down; thus referring to the cast down condition mankind suffered in association with Adam's fall. The diabolos is a man-slayer, [2]**anthrōpoktonos** from **anthropos** and **kteinoo** to kill. The word for the human species, male or female is **anthropos**, from **ana**, upwards, and **tropos**, manner of life; character; in like manner. See John 1:51, 2:25. The word [3]**lalia** means dialect or language.)*

45 And here I am communicating that which is absolutely true but you are not at all convinced!

46 Is there anyone amongst you who can prove me guilty of sin? So if I am telling you the truth, why would you not believe me?

47 Whoever realizes their origin in God immediately recognizes the language of God; you do not make that connection since you don't realize your true origin in God!

48 The Jews snapped back at him, "We were right all along! You are a Samaritan dog and demon possessed!"

49 Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon and I honor my Father while you insult me!

50 I am not here to defend my own opinion; God is the judge of my glory.

51 Truly truly do I say unto you, that anyone who treasures my word will not consider death to be of any relevance beyond this age!

52 The Jews replied, "Now we are more convinced than ever, that you do have a demon! Abraham and the Prophets died and you say that if someone treasures your word death will be of no relevance to them unto the age!

53 Are you greater than our father Abraham who is dead and the Prophets who are dead? Who do you think you are?"

54 Jesus said, "If I honour myself, my honor means nothing; actually it is my Father who honors me, the one you claim to be your God!

55 You have never really known him; I know him personally and would lie if I'd say that I haven't seen him! I am not lying like you; I have seen him and treasure his logos! *(Deception is born in the "I am-not" idea)*

56 Your father Abraham was leaping with joy to see my day! What he saw made him exceedingly glad!

57 Then the Jews said, "Ha! You're not even fifty years old and you claim to have seen Abraham!"

58 "Most certainly do I say unto you that before Abraham was born, I am!" *(See note on John 1:1 Three times in this sentence John uses the imperfect of* ***eimi,*** *namely* ***ane,*** *to be, which conveys no idea of origin for God or for the Logos, but simply continuous existence, "I am." Quite a different verb* ***egeneto,*** *"became," appears in John 1:14 for the beginning of the Incarnation of the Logos. The incarnation is not the origin of Jesus, neither of us!. See the distinction sharply drawn in John 8:58, "before Abraham was [born,* ***genesthai*** *from* ***ginomai****] I am." The word* ***eimi****, I am; the essence of being, suggesting timeless existence. See 1 Pet 1:16.)*

59 By now they were ready to stone him, but he slipped out of their sight and left the temple area.

Chapter 9

1 On his way Jesus noticed a man who was born blind.

2 And his followers asked him, "Master, whose sin is responsible for this man's condition; is he punished for his own sins, or perhaps for his parent's sins? Why was he born blind?"

3 Jesus answered emphatically, "His condition has absolutely nothing to do with any sins committed either by himself or his parents! Neither him nor his parents were guilty of sin, this is an opportunity for God's action *(in Christ)* **to be unveiled in him!** *(Jesus again disarms the Karma-principle that religion hinges on!)*

4 [1]We together must occupy ourselves to accomplish the work of him who sent me - you must take sides with me! *(The best texts read [1]ἡμᾶς, us, instead of ἐμὲ, me. We cannot pull in two opposite directions in the same team! Grace and Karma do not go hand in hand!)*

5 The [1]repeated presence of my "I-am-ness" in the world is the light of the world! I am the light of the [2]cosmos!" *(See my commentary on this word in Colossians 3:4, The word, [1]**hotan**, often translated as "when" is better translated to read "every time." Thus, "Every time Christ is revealed we are being co-revealed in his glory." According to Walter Bauer Lexicon, **otan** is often used of an action that is repeated. The word, **kosmos** in the NT refers to the entire human family.)*

6 Having said that, he spat on the ground and made clay with the spittle; then he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. *(The clay reminds of the Genesis 2 account of the creation of the earthen vessel of flesh - fafter the "fall", flesh represents the blindfold-mode, now to be washed off in the waters of spirit dimension.)*

7 And said unto him, "Go, and wash in the pool of Siloam. The Hebrew word means outflow. The man went there and washed and returned seeing! *(An outflow of waters [Vincent's Word Studies] which reminds of Jesus' urgent announcment at the pool of Siloam on the great day of the feast of tabernacles, "Rivers of living waters will flow out of your innermost being!")*

8 The people in the neighbourhood and those who knew him before said, "Is this not the blind beggar?"

9 Some agreed while others doubted but the he said, "Yes, I am!"

10 Then they asked him, "How did it happen that you received your sight?"

11 He answered, "A man named Jesus made clay and smeared it over my eyes and said to me to go to Siloam and wash, so I went there and washed and [1]looked up!" *([l]**ἀνέβλεψα** - aneblepsa means to look up, as in Matthew 14:19 and Mark 16:4)*

12 They wanted to know where Jesus was, but the man did not know.

13 Then they took him to the Pharisees,

14 since it was Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. *(They knew that the Pharisees would have something to say about their Sabbatical laws that were disregarded by this man Jesus!)*

15 The Pharisees demanded to know exactly how it happened that he received his sight. He said, "He put clay on my eyes and I washed and now I see."

16 The Pharisees were divided in their opinion; some of them immediately said, "This man cannot be closely associated with God at all since he does not honor the Sabbath. Others were questioning this with, "How can someone who is an obvious sinner according to our law, do such miracles?"

17 They then asked the blind man, “So what do you say about this man who opened your eyes?” He said that he thinks Jesus is a Prophet.

18 The Jews then began to doubt whether he was blind after all, so they addressed the parents.

19 “Is this your son who you say was born blind? How is it that he now sees?”

20 The parents said, “Of course we know that this is our son and that he was indeed born blind.

21 But how it is that he now sees and who it is who opened his eyes, we have no idea! He is a grown boy, why don’t you ask him to speak for himself?”

22 They chose their words carefully for fear of offending the Jews since it was rumored that the Jewish leadership agreed to ban anyone from the synagogue should they confess Jesus to be the Christ.

23 For this reason the parents didn’t want to commit themselves to an opinion but shifted the attention back to the boy himself, saying that he is of age and should be able to speak for himself.

24 Then they again called the man that was blind and said to him, “Give God the glory and agree with us that this man is a Sabbath breaker and sinner.

25 He said, “I cannot say whether he is a sinner or not, but one thing I do know is that once I was blind but now I see!”

26 They wanted to hear it again and asked him, “So what did he do to you, how did he open your eyes?”

27 He said, “But I have already told you and you are not hearing me; why would you want to hear it again, are you perhaps also desiring to become his followers?”

28 They scorned him and accused him to be a Jesus-disciple! “We are disciples of Moses!

29 We know that God communicated with Moses but who can tell where this fellow is from?”

30 The man answered them, “I am amazed that you just cannot see this; how can you not perceive where he is from? I mean, hello! He opened my eyes!

31 Are we not supposed to know that sinners don’t dictate to God - but those who worship God and desires to perform his delight has a “hot-line” to heaven.

32 Since the beginning of time no one has ever heard of anyone who opened the eyes of a man born blind!

33 If this is not proof of this man’s close acquaintance with God, then what is - he would be powerless to perform anything on his own.”

34 They replied, “You were born in utter sin and here you are trying to teach the Saints!” And they cast him out.

35 Jesus heard that they cast him out and went looking for him; when he found him, he asked him, “Do you believe in the Son of God?”

36 He answered, “Then who is he Sir, that I may believe in him?”

37 Jesus said, “You have seen him, and he is speaking to you!”

38 And he said, “Lord, I believe. And he worshiped him.”

39 I have come to judge the world’s blindness - so that they who are blind may see and those who think that they see may become blind.

40 Some of the Pharisees overheard him and said, “So, are we also blind?”

41 Jesus said, “If you were blind you would have no sin, but now you say you see and your sin continues!”

Chapter 10

1 “I want to make this very clear to you, someone whose agenda is to steal and to plunder the sheep will not come through the gate of the sheepfold; they would climb over the wall or use some other obscure way.

2 The Shepherd of the sheep enters by the door. *(In the context of Jesus’ conversation he emphasises that the sheep wouldn’t expect the shepherd-Messiah to come from anywhere else but from the Father.)*

3 The gate warden lets him in and the sheep recognize his voice; he calls his sheep by name and leads them out. *(He leads them out of the prophetic enclosure - the fold of safety - into life - where my soul is restored in green pastures! By the waters of reflection my soul remembers who I am - and even if I go through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil - Psalm 23!)*

4 And when he leads them out, he goes before them and the sheep follow him; for they are familiar with his voice.

5 They will never follow the stranger but flee from him since they do not know his voice."

6 Jesus told his disciples this illustration but they did not understand what he meant by it.

7 "Let me say it like this then,"Jesus continued, "I am the doorway of the sheep.

8 The so-called Shepherds and saviors who preceded me are the thieves and plunderers but the sheep did not recognize their voices.

9 I am the door and the sheep who enter because of who I am is safe to roam freely and find pasture.

10 The thief "shepherd" has no other agenda but to steal, kill and he couldn't care less if he [1]lost some sheep. I have come with the sole purpose for you to have life in its most complete form. *The word [1]apolumi, to lose, is often translated to perish - see Luke 15.*

11 I am the shepherd, the good one who lays down his life for the sheep. *(Ez 34:23)*

12 In contrast, the hireling who is not the shepherd and owner of the sheep, sees the wolf approach and leaves the sheep unattended and flees for his life while the wolf kills and scatters the sheep at will!

13 The hireling is doing the job merely for the wage and not because of any affection for the sheep.

14 I am the shepherd, the good one who knows what is mine and they know me!

15 My knowledge of the Father is anchored in his knowledge of me. Because I know my father's heart I lay down my life for the sheep.

16 I also have other sheep that are not from this fold; I must lead them too for them to hear my voice and so there will be one flock and one shepherd. *(Second Aorist active Infinitive of agō with dei expressing the urgency of his mission.)*

17 My Father's love is the compelling urgency of my mission which is to lay down my life and receive it again in my resurrection.

18 No one takes my life from me, I know who I am when lay it down and from that same place of my I-am-ness, I take it up again. This is the [2]conclusion of my Father's prophetic purpose which is what I am all about. *(The word often translated authority or power is the word* ***exousia****, from* ***ek*** *+* ***eimi****, out of I am. The word* [2]***entole****, which is often translated commandment or precept, has two components:* ***en****, in and* ***telos****, from* ***tello****, to set out for a definite point or goal; properly the point aimed at*

as a limit, that is, by implication, the conclusion of an act or state, the result; the ultimate or prophetic purpose. Strong's 5056 See 1 John 2:3 Mirror Bible)

19 These words brought more division in their ranks.

20 Many of them said that he had a demon and was mad; so, "Why waste your time listening to him?"

21 Others said, "These words are definitely not the words of someone with a demon; also, demons do not open the eyes of the blind!"

22 Now in Jerusalem they were celebrating the feast of The [1]Renewal of the temple - which was in winter. *(The feast of Renewal, or new beginnings - ἐγκαίνια - egkainia, [1]**en** + **kainos** - also known as the Feast of Dedication or the Feast of Lights - which was 3 months after the Feast of Tabernacles - today Hanukkah - meaning to understand, to teach - lasting eight days from the 25th day of Kislev (in December) and commemorating the rededication of the temple in 165 BC by the Maccabees after its desecration by the Syrians. It is marked by the successive kindling of eight lights. It was instituted by Judas Maccabeus, his brothers, and the elders of the congregation of Israel in commemoration of the reconsecration of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem, and especially of the altar of burnt offerings, after they had been desecrated during the persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes (168 BC). This happened on the day, 3 years after the destruction of the temple. The significant happenings of the festival were the illumination of houses and synagogues, and the singing of Psalm 30.*
Jesus lived and communicated from his awareness of the prophetic significance of his life's mission in laying down his life and in co-raising fallen mankind together with him in his resurrection - Hosea 6:2/ Ephesians 2:5. See John 2:19 To which Jesus responded, "The temple will be completely demolished by you and in three days I will raise it up!" See also my commentary note in Mirror Bible.
It is also interesting to note that the numerical value of the name Jesus, is

888 - The name of Jesus in Greek is spelled ***Ἰησοῦς*** *(iota, eta, sigma, omicron, upsilon, sigma). Substituting in the Greek numeral system the equivalent numerical values to each letter in the name of Jesus and adding them up, the total is 888. The values of each letter are: iota, 10; eta, 8; sigma, 200; omicron, 70; upsilon, 400; sigma, 200. The sum of 10 + 8 + 200 + 70 + 400 + 200 is 888.)*

23 Jesus was wandering around in the temple in Solomon's porch. *(A covered colonnade on the eastern side of the outer court of the temple - a relic of Solomon's days, which had remained intact in the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar. Very much in the forefront of Jesus' mind must have been the knowing that at the next Jewish festival - 4 months later - he would fulfil John 1:29 and 2:19 as the Lamb of God to be slaughtered by his own people - for his Father to raise him up on the 3rd day and for mankind to be rebooted into newness of life! En kainos!)*

24 Suddenly the Jews closed in on him and demanded to know, "How long will you keep our soul suspended in mid-air? If you are the Christ then tell us plainly!"

25 Jesus answered them, "I have told you and you would not believe; all I do is endorsed by my Father and in his name and these works confirm my words."

26 Your unbelief shows that you are from a different shepherd's flock, as I've said before. *(You have made deception your shepherd. John 8:38,43,44. John 8:43 You do not understand my language because you do not hear my logic! [My dialect seems foreign to you because you are not familiar with the Logic of God. You might be acquainted with the letter of the law in Scripture but you are not acquainted with the Word! See John 5:39,40 also John 8:31. The word* ***lalia*** *means dialect or language.])*

27 My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me.

28 And I give them the life of the ages and they shall never be lost neither shall anyone wrestle them out of my hand.

29 As for my Father, what he has given me is most precious and no-one can snatch them out of his hand! *(See Westcott and Hort text [which is more reliable and uses older manuscripts than the Textus Receptus]* ὁ *πατήρ μου* ὃ *δέδωκέν μοι πάντων μεῖζόν ἐστιν. That which my Father has given me is greater than all. The greatness of the value of the flock, is the ground of their safety. See also Weymouth NT "What my Father has given me is more precious than all besides; and no one is able to wrest anything from my Father's hand.")*

30 My Father and I are one!"

31 This filled the Jews with renewed rage and they picked up stones to stone him.

32 Then Jesus questioned them saying, "I have openly shown you many good works confirming my union with my Father; for which one of these works do you stone me?"

33 They said, "We are not stoning you for something that you have done but for what you have just said! You blasphemed God! You are a mere man and you make yourself equal with God? *(The penalty for blasphemy was death by stoning - Leviticus 24:16)*

34 Jesus said, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said you are gods?' *(Psalm 82:6)*

35 And if he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and Scripture cannot be dissolved;

36 dare you say of him whom the Father has consecrated and commissioned into the world, "You blaspheme!" because I said that I am the Son of God? *(Sonship implies union with the Father. See Heb 1:1-3. Rev 12:7.)*

37 If I was not doing my Father's works then you would have reason not to believe me;

38 But if I do, then even if you do not believe me believe the works; then you will understand and be convinced that the Father is in me and I am in him!"

39 And again they sought to seize him as they had tried repeatedly in the past, but he escaped out of their hands.

40 Meanwhile he went back across the Jordan into the region called Peroea to the place where John first baptized, and remained there.

41 Many people followed him saying, "John didn't do any miracles, but everything he said about him is true!"

42 And many in that region believed in him.

Chapter 11

1 Now the brother of Martha and Mary from Bethany was sick.

2 This was the same Mary who anointed the Lord with perfumed oil and dried his feet with her hair. *(John looks back from the end of the century as he writes this commentary - even though the anointing is only recorded in chapter 12)*

3 So the sisters sent someone to tell Jesus, "Lord, your dear friend Lazarus is sick."

4 His sickness is not to face death but to face the glory of God triumph over and above death! And the Son of God will be glorified because of that. *(The preposiotion,* ***pros****, face to face; and* ***uper****, over and above.)*

5 Jesus loved Martha, her sister and Lazarus.

6 After he heard of Lazarus' sickness he did not go immediately but remained where he was for another two days. *(In his deliberate delay here, again, his mind must have been occupied with his mission - knowing that soon he would enter mankind's death for two days and face the horror of their judgment)*

7 Then he said to his disciples, "Let's go into Judea again."

8 His disciples were surprised, "But Master we've just come from there and the Jews wanted to stone you! Now you want to go there again?"

9 Jesus replied, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? To walk in the light of day is to walk freely without obstruction.

10 But someone who walks in the night would stumble because there is no enlightenment in him.

11 Having said this he added, “Our friend Lazarus is not dead but sleeps and I am going to wake him up out of his sleep.”

12 His disciples responded with, “But Lord if he is only sleeping he should be okay?”

13 Yet Jesus meant that his death was nothing more than being asleep but they thought that he meant that he was just taking a rest in a deep sleep.

14 So Jesus said it plainly, “Lazarus is dead.

15 And for your sakes I am glad that I wasn’t there so that you may believe; nevertheless let’s go to him.”

16 Then Thomas said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go so that we may die with him!” *[Aramaic te’oma meaning twin, or didumos in Greek]*

17 When Jesus arrived Lazarus was already in the tomb for four days.

18 Now Bethany was only about two miles from Jerusalem.

19 Many Jews came to comfort the two sisters.

20 Martha immediately went out to meet Jesus when she heard of his arrival, while Mary was waiting in the house.

21 Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you’d been here earlier my brother would not have died.

22 But I know that even now whatsoever you would ask of God he will give it to you.

23 Jesus said to her, “Your brother shall rise again.”

24 Martha said, “Yes I know that he shall rise again in the conclusion of time.”

25 Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life - he that believes in me shall live even though he died.

26 And whoever is alive in the life that I am, shall never die. Do you believe this?”

27 Yes Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was destined to come into the world.

28 Martha then called Mary secretly away from the attention of the mourners, saying, “The Lord is here and he wants to tell you something.”

29 Mary immediately jumped up and went out quickly to meet him.

30 Jesus was not yet in the town where they lived but waited in the place where Martha met with him.

31 The Jews who had come from Jerusalem to console her, saw her getting up quickly to leave the house; they thought that she was going to weep at the grave so they followed her.

32 When Mary came to the place where Jesus was waiting for her, she fell down at his feet saying to him, "Lord if only you were here, my brother wouldn't have died!"

33 When Jesus saw her weeping and also the Jews mourning with her, he groaned in his spirit and was deeply moved.

34 He asked, "Where is the tomb?" They said, "Lord come and we'll show you."

35 Jesus wept.

36 The Jews remarked, "He really loved him very much!"

37 Some of them reasoned, "Why could this man, who opened the blind eyes of a stranger, not prevent his friend's death?"

38 Jesus again groaned in himself as he arrived at the grave; it was a cave with a stone upon it's opening.

39 Then Jesus asked for the stone to be taken away. Martha warned that by this time there would be a stench since it was already four days since he passed away.

40 Jesus answered, "Did I not tell you that in your believing you see the glory of God - *[not in your doubting!] (Believing opens the horizon of your spirit to see beyond the immediate!)*

41 Then they removed the stone from the cave where the dead was laid. Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father I thank you that you have heard me.

42 I am persuaded that you always hear me; but I am saying this for the sake of those who are standing by so that they too may come to believe that you sent me."

43 And after he spoke these words, he raised his voice and hollered, "Lazurus! Come out!"

44 And the dead man appeared with his hands and feet swathed in linen cloths also his face was covered in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unwrap him and so that he can move around freely."

45 Then many of the Jews who accompanied Mary to the grave believed in him when they witnessed what he just did.

46 But some of them went and reported what had happened to the Pharisees.

47 The chief priests and Pharisees immediately called a council meeting. "What do we do now? For this man is doing many miracles.

48 If we let him alone everyone will believe in him. Then the Romans will come and dispossess us from our land and our national heritage!

(Feeling threatened rather than endorsed in their core identity - thus missing the entire point of the Messiah's mission!)

49 And one of them, Caiaphas who was the High Priest at the time, said, "You don't know what you're talking about.

50 If you merely reasoned about this you would have known that it is to our advantage that one should die instead of an entire nation."

51 This he said without realizing that in the office of the High Priest he was prophesying Jesus' sacrificial death as the scapegoat of the entire nation.

52 And this was not for Israel only but in Jesus laying down his life as the true shepherd of mankind, he would lead together into one family all the children of God from wherever they have been scattered *(into places and circumstances where they have lost their true identity. His death would bring closure to every lie that mankind believed about themselves.)*

53 Then from that day they took counsel together to put him to death.

54 And so Jesus no longer moved about publicly in Jewish circles. He withdrew into the hill country bordering the desert where he remained with his disciples in the village of Ephraim. *(Near Bethel)*

55 The Jewish Passover was coming up and many people were making their way to Jerusalem to participate in the ceremonial purification before the Easter celebrations.

56 Jesus was the topic of conversation among the people in the temple courts. Everyone was curious about his whereabouts and wondered whether he would show up during Passover.

57 The Chief priests and Pharisees *[the Sanhedrin]* **decreed that anyone with information must disclose it so that they can arrest Jesus.** *(They were seeking Jesus six months before at the feast of tabernacles [John 7:11], but now they were ready to kill him.)*

Chapter 12

1 Six days before Passover Jesus arrived at Bethany where Lazarus whom he raised for the dead lived.

2 There they prepared supper for him. Lazarus joined him at the table while Martha was serving them.

3 In the meantime Mary took a pound of very expensive spikenard oil and massaged Jesus' feet and wiped it with her hair. The entire house was filled with the fragrance.

4 One of his disciples Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him, was shocked at this and said,

5 "Why this waste! The perfume could have been sold for a years wages and the money given to the poor!"

6 He couldn't care less about the poor! He was a thief and while he was entrusted with the money bag, he would help himself to it!

7 Then Jesus said, "Do not hinder her! She has preserved this for the preparation of my burial.

8 You will always have the poor to minister to with you but you will not always have me with you.

9 A large crowd of Jews heard that Jesus was in Bethany and went there not only to see Jesus but Lazarus who was raised from the dead.

10 So the chief priests determined to kill Lazarus as well.

11 They knew that because of him many were leaving their faith to join Jesus.

12 The following day many people were flocking to the feast because they learned that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

13 They gathered palm branches and went to meet him while continually shouting, Jahshana - salvation now! Well spoken of is the king of Israel who comes in the name of the Lord!" *(connected with the Feast of Tabernacles. eulogeō. Quotation from Psa 118:25., written, some think, for the dedication of the second temple, or, as others think, for the feast of tabernacles after the return (Ezr 3:1.). It was sung in the processional recitation then as a welcome to the worshippers. Here the words are addressed to the Messiah as is made plain by the addition of the words, "even the king of Israel")*

14 Having found a young colt, Jesus sat on it and fulfilled that which was written prophetically about him in Scripture.

15 Fear not daughter of Sion; rejoice exceedingly! Pay attention! Your king is coming, humbly riding a donkey, a mere colt of a donkey. *(Zec 9:9)*

16 The disciples did not immediately realize the profound significance of this moment; it was only after he was glorified that the full impact of what was written of him and what they did to him dawned on them.

17 The people who witnessed the raising of Lazarus from the dead gave testimony to what they have encountered.

18 This was also part of the reason why so many people came out to meet him since they too have heard about the miracle.

19 The Pharisees were perplexed about this and said, "Look, we are gaining no ground against him! The entire world is running after him!"

20 There were also a number of Greeks who came to worship at the feast because of the rumors they have heard.

21 They approached Phillip who was from Bethsaida in Galilee and asked him, "Sir, we would be delighted to see Jesus. Is there perhaps any chance that you could introduce us to him?" *(He had a Greek name and the Greeks may have seen Philip in Galilee where there were many Greeks)*

22 Phillip went and told Andrew and the two of them told Jesus.

23 Jesus, immediately understanding the prophetic significance of the moment, knew that he, the Messiah, was who all the nations were longing for and answered, "The hour is here for the Son of man to be

glorified! *[Jesus studied Scripture as in a mirror - he knew that "in the book, it is written about me!" Haggai 2:7 and the desire of the nations shall come…See Col 1:27.]*

24 Most certainly shall the single grain of wheat fall into the earth and die - if it doesn't die it remains alone - but in its death it produces much fruit.

25 To hold on desperately to a mere life defined by the soul realm is to lose it; but to abandon the soul substitute for the real deal is to observe your spiritual life which is the life of the ages.

26 Whoever continues to minister to me, let him keep on following me; where I go you will share unhindered companionship with me. This shared union is what Father greatly values. *(Note,* ***ean*** *with present active subjunctive of* ***diakoneō****, keep on serving with dative* ***emoi****; let him keep on following" - present active imperative of* ***akoloutheō****. Literally,* ***eimi egoo ... ho emos estai,*** *to be where I am - see John 14:20, in that day you will know that I am in my Father and you are in me and I am in you!)*

27 My soul is exceedingly perplexed right now! What shall I say, "Father! Rescue me [1]out of the clutches of this hour!" No! This hour is the very culmination of my destiny! *(Greek preposition, [1]****ek****, out of; source; origin.)*

28 "Father! Glorify your name!" And immediately there came a voice out of the heavenly realm saying, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again!"

29 The crowd heard the voice and said that it had thundered; others thought it was the voice of an shepherd-messenger.

30 Jesus replied, "This voice was not for my sake but for yours! *(Signs are for unbelievers. 1 Corinthians 14:22)*

31 Now is the judgment of this world; this is the moment where the ruler of the world-system is [1]conclusively cast out! *(The serpent's head is about to be crushed! Genesis 3:15; Colossians 2:14,15. This is what the Holy Spirit will convince the world of! John 16:11. John uses a double-barrel word here,* ***ekballo ekso*** *- completely thrown out!)*

32 When I am [1]lifted up from the earth, I will draw [2]all unto me! *([1]He would be lifted up on a cross, descend into the depths of our hell, then, according to the prophetic word in Hosea 6:2, after two days be lifted up as representative of the human race, out of the lowest parts of the earth and elevated to the highest heavens! Ephesians 4:8,9; see also Ephesians 2:5,6 and Colossians 3:1-3. [2]All things include all of mankind and their judgment. The subject of the sentence, as from the previous verse, is the judgment of the world - thus the primary thought here is that in his death, Jesus would draw all judgment upon himself and thereby forever redeem mankind's innocence! John 3:14; John 8:28; Act 2:33. 1 John 3:5 We have witnessed with our own eyes how, in the unveiling of the prophetic word, when he was lifted up upon the cross as the Lamb of God, he [1]lifted up our sins and broke its dominion and rule over us! [John 1:29 "Behold, the Lamb of God, who [1]takes away [****airo****] the sin of the world! The word [1]****airo*** *means to lift up.])*

33 This he said to point to the way in which he would die. *(See John 19:15 - Lift him up! Lift him up! Crucify him!")*

34 The people answered him, "We understood from the law *[the Scriptures]* **that the Christ remains forever. On what basis would you say then, that the Son of man would be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?"**

35 Then Jesus said, "Yet a little while the light is in your midst; walk in accordance with the light that you have, *(resonate with; echo)* **then you will not be overtaken by darkness. For the one who walks in darkness has no idea where to go.**

36 So long as you have *(echo; resonate)* **the light, live persuaded [1]in the conclusion of light; oh that you [2]might realize your authentic origin as the sons of light!** *(The preposition [1]**eis** points to conclusion; a point reached. The word [2]**genesthe** from **ginomai**, to be born, to become is in the Aorist Subjunctive Mood, which is similar to the Optative expressing a wish. The Mood of the Greek verb expresses the mode in which the idea of the verb is employed. This wish is consistent with the theme of John's conversation in this book, see John chapter 1. See also 2 Peter 1:19 For us the appearing of the Messiah is no longer a future promise but a fulfilled reality. Now it is your turn to have more than a second-hand, hear-say testimony. Take my word as one would take a lamp at night; the day is about to dawn for you in your own understanding. When the Morning Star appears, you no longer need the lamp; this will happen shortly on the horizon of your own hearts.*
To walk in the light as he is in the light means to see your life and everything that concerns you, exclusively from your Father's point of view. You are indeed the focus of your Father's attention and affection. To be convinced of your origin in God and Father's initiative in redeeming your mind from all the lies you believed about yourself, is the vital energy of the law of liberty. To reflect the opinion of God in your attitude and conversation makes your life irresistibly attractive.)

37 Even though he had done so many miracles in front of their eyes they were still not persuaded about him.

38 Their persistent unbelief reminds of what Isaiah said, "Lord, who has believed our report? To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed! Who understands how God has reached into our world?

39 They were incapable of faith since Isaiah also said,

40 "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart so they cannot see with the eyes nor perceive with the heart and be transformed where I shall heal them." *(See Romans 9:17-33; also 11:7 The very thing Israel sought to obtain through their diligent labor they failed to get; yet those who embraced grace as God's original intent hit the bull's eye every time, leaving the rest groping around in the dark like blindfolded archers.*
Romans 11:8 Isaiah said that God has given them a spirit of slumber, causing their eyes and ears not to function. This drowsiness seems to prevail even to this day. [Unbelief and religious ritual are blindfolds. "And the Lord said, this people draw near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips but remove their hearts and minds far from me, and their fear and reverence for me are a commandment of men that is learned by repetition ... ." Isa 29:10 - 24])

41 Isaiah said these things when he saw the beauty of God on exhibit in the Messiah. *(And he could not understand that the people of Israel wouldn't see this for themselves!)*

42 Many of the chief rulers believed that Jesus was the Messiah but because of the Pharisees they would not openly confess him since they knew that they would be thrown out of the assembly.

43 They loved the [1]opinion and recognition of people more than the opinion of God. *(The word often translated, glory, [1]**doxa** from **dokeo**, to form an opinion.)*

44 Jesus cried out and said, "To believe in me is not proof that I won your vote; it proves your belief in the one who sent me!

45 To see me is to see him who sent me.

46 I have come to enlighten the world so that anyone who believes in me should no longer abide in darkness.

47 If any one hears my words and rejects them, I do not judge that person; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world!

48 The one who rejects me and my words has one who judges him, the very Word that I have spoken to him is the final judge. No-one will escape the ultimate scrutiny of the Word!

49 I have not conjured up what I have spoken to you but the Father who sent me has given me specific instruction to say what I do in the way that I do it.

50 And I know that this instruction is the life of the ages - the detail of what I say echoes exactly what I've heard my Father say.

Chapter 13

1 Now Jesus having known, before the feast of the Passover, that this was his hour; he knew very well that he would step out of this world into his Father's embrace. *[**pros** - face to face.]* **He drew much love-energy from his own who would remain still in the world after his departure; He loved them completely.**

2 It was supper time and the [1]diabolos already had the heart of Judas Iscariot in sync with his own, which was to betray Jesus. *(During supper - **deipnou ginomenou**, which is the correct text, present middle Participle*

*of **ginomai** - [not **genomenou**, second Aorist middle Participle, "being ended"] The [1]devil, **dia** because of and **ballo**, cast down; because of the fall; referring to the fallen mindset - the one that will be crushed by the Seed of the woman - 'put into the heart of Judas, '**ballo eis kardia**'... thus Judas' heart was in sync with the fallen mindset.)*

3 Jesus was fully aware of the fact that his Father has given all things into his hands; he knew that he came from God and that his destiny was to return face to face with God. *(As the incarnate word he knew that he is the exhibit of the thoughts of God in human form; he knew that he fulfilled what Isaiah saw when he spoke about the thoughts of God that would come down from heaven like rain and snow to saturate the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread for food, before it returns again to heaven. "So shall my word be, that proceeds from my mouth, it shall not return to me empty but prosper in my purpose!" He has come to mirror God's mind towards mankind.)*

4 So he got up from the table and took off his outer garments and wrapped a towel around him.

5 He then poured water into a basin and began to wash the feet of his disciples and dried them with the towel around his waist.

6 When he came to Simon Peter, he protested saying, "Lord do you want to wash my feet?"

7 Jesus answered, "You might not appreciate it now but afterward you will understand the significance of what I am doing!"

8 Peter refused and said, "I will never allow you to wash my feet!" And Jesus replied, "If I do not wash you then you have no participation with me."

9 Then Peter said, “Lord, not only my feet but also my hands and head!”

10 But Jesus answered, “He that has already taken a bath only needs to wash his feet for he is completely clean. And you are already clean, yet not everyone of you.”

11 For Jesus knew who would betray him - that is why he said, “you are not all equally clean.” *(Not all of you have given the word the same opportunity to wash your minds! According to custom the guest was supposed to bathe (**louō**) before coming to a feast and so only the feet had to be washed (**niptō**) on removing the sandals.)*

12 So when he was done he put his robe back on again and reclined at the table and asked them, “Do you understand what I just did?

13 You call me your Instructor and Lord and its good, for so I am;

14 If I, your teacher and Lord have washed your feet; you too ought to wash one another’s feet!

15 For I have demonstrated an example for you to mirror.

16 For I would want you to know most certainly that the servant is not greater than his Lord and the one sent is not greater than the one who sent him.

17 To know these things is to find your joy in expressing them in your lifestyle.

18 I am not talking about all of you; I have chosen you and know that one of you will kick me like a horse, just as it is written, 'Even my trusted friend, who ate bread with me has turned his heel against me.' *(Psalm 41:9 In Greek literature the metaphor is of one administering a kick. Thus Plutarch, describing the robber Sciron, who was accustomed "out of insolence and wantonness to stretch forth his feet to strangers, commanding them to wash them, and then, when they did it, with a kick to send them down the rock into the sea!")*

19 I'm telling you this in advance so when it happens you may be persuaded about me.

20 I also assure you that whoever can [1]identify with your mission, identifies with me and therefore identifies with him who he sent me." *(The word [1]**lambano**, means to take to oneself, to comprehend, grasp, to identify with.)*

21 Having said this Jesus was again deeply disturbed in his spirit and said, "I am telling you now that one you is about to betray me!"

22 The disciples were confused, looking at one another and wondering who this person could possibly be.

23 One of the disciples was leaning against the bosom of Jesus, cuddled up in his love;

24 Simon Peter prompted him to ask Jesus who it was.

25 So he did, "Jesus, who is it?"

26 Jesus relied, "It is the one I'll give the morsel of bread to once I have dipped into the broth." He then dipped the morsel and handed it to Judas Iscariot, Simon's son.

27 Wrapped up in that morsel was the opportunity for Satan to now fully engage the mind of Judas. Then Jesus said to Judas, "Do what you've got to do and get it over and done with ." *(Literally, [1]**meta**, together with the morsel...)*

28 Even now the other disciples did not suspect Judas in the least. *(Amazing how Jesus never treated Judas any differently even though he knew that he was stealing money from them.)*

29 Some thought that since Judas was their treasurer Jesus asked him to go and buy necessities for the feast, or perhaps to go and give some money to the poor.

30 With that, Judas left immediately; and it was night.

31 Then, with Judas gone, Jesus said, "This seals the glorification of the Son of man, as well as God's glorification in him.

32 In this joint glorification God is glorified in himself - In God glorifying mankind in himself, his personal glory is not diminished at all, but fully endorsed! This is happening immediately and seamlessly! *(Whatever God accomplished in Jesus the incarnate Christ is of immediate consequence to the human race.)*

33 Little children, I am with you for a very little while, then you will seek me, but as I said to the Jews, where I go you cannot join me; so now I say to you,

34 I give you a new commandment, keep on loving one another just as I have loved you - my love for you is the source of your love for one another. *(The word entole, which is often translated commandment or precept, has two components: en, in and telos, from tello, to set out for a definite point or goal; properly the point aimed at as a limit, that is, by implication, the conclusion of an act or state, the result; the ultimate or prophetic purpose. Strong's 5056)*

35 In this environment of your love for one another everyone will come to know your discipleship unto me.

36 Simon Peter then asked him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered, "Where I am about to go, you are not able to accompany me right now, but you will afterwards. *(See 14:1 I go to prepare a place for you that where I am you may be also!)*

37 Peter said, "But Lord, why cannot I follow you right now? I will give my life for you!"

38 Jesus said, "Will you give your life for me? I say to you now, most certainly will you have contradicted me three times before the cock crows."

Chapter 14

1 Set your troubled hearts at ease by letting your belief [1]conclude in God as you rest your confidence in me. *(The preposition [1]**eis**, means a point reached in conclusion.)*

2 What makes my Father's house home, is your place in it! If this was not the ultimate conclusion of my mission why would I even bother to do what I am about to do if it was not to prepare a place for you? I have come to persuade you of a place of seamless union where you belong. *(See John 8:35 The difference between the slave and the son is that the slave only works there; for the son the father's house is home! 8:36 With the freedom found in sonship there is [1]no pretense! [Free indeed! The word, [1]**ontoos**, indeed is the opposite to what is pretended.] What Jesus is about to accomplish in his death and resurrection will forever shift the idea of religious works and pretense and performance from the typical slave-mentality to the freedom and reality of sonship!)*

3 The proportions of what I will accomplish are astonishing! I will [1]prepare a highway for you, just as in the Oriental custom, where people would go before a king to level the roads to make it possible for royalty to journey with ease and comfort. By [2]fully identifying myself with you I would fully identify you with me so that you may be completely at home where I am! *(Jesus sees the full scope of his work: by submitting himself to our judgment and hellish fury, he would enter our death and gloom and thereby strip every principality and dominion of its judgment and power-play over the human race. Colossians 2:14,15. The word [1]**hetoimazō** suggests a levelling of the road to make it passable for kings! [Isaiah 40:3-5] The word [2]**paralambano**, carries two components, **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **lambano**, to comprehend, grasp, to identify with. He would lead us in his triumphant procession on high out of our darkness into his marvellous light, where we may now participate in the union of the ages - "and take you to myself so that you may be where I am, face to face with the Father! " Hosea 6:2; Ephesians 4:8; Colossians 1:13. John 1:1,2. See John 1:18 Until this moment God remained invisible to mankind; now the authentic, incarnate*

begotten Son, the blueprint of our design who represents the innermost being of God, the Son who is in the bosom of the father, brings him into full view! He is the official authority qualified to announce God! He is our guide who accurately declares and interprets the invisible God within us.)

4 In fact, you [1]have always known this way and where all this is leading me and where I am taking you. *(The word,* ***οιδατε oidate****, is the prefect active tense of* ***eido****, to see; to perceive. The Perfect tense denotes an action which is completed in the past, but the effects of which are regarded as continuing into the present. Jesus here appeals to the a different level of knowing - not a mere academic knowing but a deep inner knowing, a remembering like in Psalm 22:27.)*

5 Thomas said, "No, we don't get it; we have no idea where you are going with this - how could we possibly have known the way?"

6 Jesus said, "My I-am-ness *[mirrored in you]* **is your way; this is your truth and also your life! Every single person can now come face to face with the Father entirely because of my doing."**

7 If you had known me for who I really am, you would have immediately recognized my Father in me. Now, with me bringing you back face to face with the Father, you will certainly know him and [1]become fully acquainted with him. *(The word [1]****horao*** *implies encounter.)*

8 Phillip said to him, "Lord, [1]show us the Father, then we will be satisfied." *([1]Aorist imperative - denoting aspect, not tense; once and for all.)*

9 "Phillip, I have been with you for a long time, and yet you haven't really known me? To see me is to see the Father! How can you still say, "Show us the Father?" *(Phillip was the one who introduced Nathaniel to*

Jesus in the beginning of their walk with him. "We have found him of whom Moses and the Prophets wrote!" John 1:46. The Father cannot appear in any more visible or tangible manner than what he did in Jesus, the incarnate Word. Any idea one could possibly have about God that is unlike Jesus, is not the Father! He is the radiant and flawless expression of the person of God. He exemplifies the character and every attribute of God in human form. Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:15.)

10 Are you not convinced that I am in the Father and that the Father is in me? We are in seamless union. The words that I speak to you are not my independent opinion or ideas; the Father in me addresses you; this conversation then translates into the Father's action unveiled in my doing.

11 The fact that the Father seems distant or invisible to you does not mean that he is absent. In me he is very present with you! You cannot claim to know me while you ignore him - we are inseparable. Mankind, I dare you *[plural]* **to believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me - if it seems far fetched, then believe me because of what I have done and what I am about to do. It is the Father in me who defines me. My works exhibit his resolve.** *(Jesus did not come to persuade the Father about us, he came to persuade us about the Father. There is nothing in the incarnate Word that is in conflict with who God is! John 1:1-3 If you underestimate me, you underestimate my Father - and you underestimate you!)*

12 I want you to be fully convinced about this, anyone whose belief concludes in who I am, will also do the works that I do. And because of my [1]relocation to continue to be [2]face to face with my Father, the works that the believer will do, will be of greater proportion and of global influence; the Father is as present in you as he is in me. *(The word, [1]**poreuomai**, to transfer, relocate, to travel. Again the word, [2]**pros**, face to face. Jesus is multiplied in us.)*

13 And whatever you desire in my name, that will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son. Your sonship is endorsed in my sonship. *(The first occurrence of the phrase, In my name,* ***en tōi onomati mou.*** *See also John 14:26; 15:16; 16:23, 16:24, 16:26. "If this name, Jesus Christ is in the believer's consciousness, the element in which the prayerful activity moves; so that thus that Name, embracing the whole revelation of redemption, is that which specifically measures and defines the disposition, feeling, object, and contents of prayer. The express use of the name of Jesus therein is no specific token; the question is of the spirit and mind of him who prays" Meyer)*

14 If you ask me anything, in knowing what my name entitles you to, that will I perform. *(The use of 'me' here is supported by Aleph B 33 and the Vulgate Syriac Peshitta manuscripts. Aleph is the famous Sinaiticus, the great discovery of Constantine von Tischendorf, the only surviving complete copy of the New Testament written prior to the ninth century; [4th century])*

15 In your loving me you will greatly value and treasure [1]the prophetic conclusion of my ministry. *(The word [1]**entole**, which is often translated commandment or precept, or assignment, has two components,* ***en****, in and* ***telos****, from* ***tello****, to set out for a definite point or goal; properly the point aimed at as a limit, that is, by implication, the conclusion of an act or state, the result; the ultimate or prophetic purpose. Strong's 5056. See 1 John 2:3)*

16 And there, in my face to face agreement with the Father, he will give you [1]another [2]close companion to be with you - in such an intimate way that my immediate presence will be fully perceived by you within the timeless zone of the ages! *(The Greek words [1]**allos** and **heteros** are both usually translated as "another" in English. Yet **allos** means "another of the same kind" and **heteros** means "another of a different type". The word, [2]**parakaleo,** alongside, closest possible proximity of nearness; and **kaleo**, to identify by name, to surname. See notes on **parakletos**: Romans 1:12 And so we will be mutually refreshed in the participation and*

reflection of our common faith. [The word, ***sumparakaleo****, comes from* ***sum****, together;* ***para****, is a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection, and* ***kaleo****, meaning to identify by name, to surname; thus, alongside, closest possible proximity of nearness. Jesus introduces the Holy Spirit in the same capacity,* ***parakletos,*** *meaning close companion, kinsman. Romans 12:8 or to just be there alongside someone to remind them of their true identity; always let faith set the pace. You are intertwined with your gift, wrapped up in the same parcel. Lead with passion; minister mercy cheerfully. [****parakaleo,*** *alongside, closest possible proximity of nearness];* ***metadidomi*** *[see note on Romans 1:11], and* ***haplous*** *from* ***ha****, a particle of union and* ***pleko****, to plait, braid or weave together. See You cannot distance yourself from your giving! What God now has in us is gift wrapped to the world [Eph 4:11]. 2 Corinthians 1:4 There is no contradiction of any proportion that we can possibly face that has what it takes to exasperate us or distance us from God. Our consciousness of his inseparable nearness immediately reinforces us to extend the same tangible closeness to you in your difficult times, and together we snuggle up in the comfort of his intimate embrace! [Paul uses the word,* ***parakaleo****, which comes from* ***para****, close proximity, and* ***kaleo****, to identify by name; often translated, to comfort.] Philippians 2:1 In Christ our association is most intimate; we articulate his love story; entwined in spirit communion and tender affections. [The word* ***paramuthion****, is from* ***para*** *+* ***muthos****, a myth or tale, a story of instruction, told in heart to heart language.] Philippians 2:2 Your Christ mindedness completes my delight! You co-echo the same agape; we are soul mates, resonating the same thoughts. 1 Thessalonians 4:10 I know your affection for your fellow family throughout Macedonia. From this place of our close union in our common origin we anticipate the ever increasing impact of love's irresistible impression. [Our common origin,* ***parakaleo****.] 1 Thessalonians 5:11 Continue, as you so eloquently do, to edify one another by cultivating the environment of your close association in your joint-genesis. [The word* ***parakaleo*** *is here translated as our joint-genesis])*

17 Your eternal companion is the Spirit of truth who cannot be grasped by the world since their visual horizon is veiled and they are not able to understand what they cannot see. But you know because you are already acquainted with the Spirit in me and this same Spirit will reside within you. *(Spirit dimension is not a foreign place neither is the Spirit a foreign person to you!)*

18 At no time will you be orphaned or abandoned by me; I come to abide [1]face to face with you. *(I come to be no less face to face with you than what I've always been face to face with the Father from the beginning for all eternity. The Holy Spirit does not replace but reinforces the presence of Jesus and the closeness of the Father. Again John uses the word [1]**pros**, face to face. See John 1:1)*

19 In yet a little while and the world will no longer see me but I will be tangibly visible to you in the very life we share together.

20 In that day you will know that we are in seamless union with one another! I am in my Father, you are in me and I am in you! *(The incarnation does not divide the Trinity; the incarnation celebrates the redeemed inclusion of humanity! Picture 4 circles with the one fitting into the other - The outer circle is the Father, then Jesus in the Father, then us in Jesus and the Holy Spirit in us! This spells inseparable, intimate oneness! Note that it is not our knowing that positions Jesus in the Father or us in them or the Spirit of Christ in us! Our knowing simply awakens us to the reality of our redeemed oneness! Gold does not become gold when it is discovered but it certainly becomes currency!)*

21 Whoever [1]resonates and [2]treasures the [3]completeness of my prophetic purpose cannot but fall in love with me and also find themselves to be fully participating in my Father's love and I will love this one and make myself distinctly known and real to each one individually. In this embrace of inseparable union love rules! *(Intimacy is not the result of suspicious scrutiny but the inevitable fruit of trust!*

*[1]**Echo**, to have; to hold; to resonate. The word, [2]**tereo**, means to treasure ; to safeguard. The word [3]**entole**, which is often translated commandment or precept, or assignment, has two components, **en**, in and **telos**, from **tello**, to set out for a definite point or goal; properly the point aimed at as a limit, that is, by implication, the conclusion of an act or state, the result; the ultimate or prophetic purpose. Strong's 5056.)*

22 Judas, not Iscariot, said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will make yourself visible to us and not to the world?" *(This is the fourth interruption of the talk of Jesus: by Peter, 13:36; by Thomas, 14:5; by Philip, 14:8; and now by Judas.)*

23 Jesus answered, "This is so much more than a mere casual, suspicious or indifferent observation, whoever loves me will treasure my words and know my Father's love and we will come face to face with this one and make our abode with *[para]* **each one individually."** *(We will make our abode, [1]**mone**, the same Greek word that is rendered mansions in the KJV in the former part of this chapter. God doesn't dwell in buildings made by human hands - God has no other address but 'you'-man life!)*

24 To be indifferent to me and my words is to be equally indifferent to my Father's word; and I am commissioned by him.

25 This has been my constant conversation with you in our time together.

26 The Holy Spirit is about to become your close companion, sent by my Father in my name to represent me, to teach you all things and remind you of everything that I have spoken to you. Thus my word will continue to find a voice in you.

27 Peace be with you! I give you my own peace - this is not the kind the world gives - this is peace in the midst of troubled times; therefore you have nothing to fear! Let not your hearts be timid.

28 You have heard me say that I go away to come to be face to face with you; now if you're in love with me you would not be threatened by the idea of my departure, but you would rejoice since I'll be going to the Father and my Father is greater than me. From now on we will be present in a much closer capacity to you than what I could ever be while I am with you in the flesh!

29 What I now tell you is to prepare you for what is about to happen, so that when it happens, you will not be shaken in your belief but stand strong.

30 In my going *[into your judgment,]* **my silence should not disturb you;** *[like a lamb led to slaughter, he opened not his mouth]* **the ruler of this world-order comes but this "voice" has nothing in common with mine - there is no [1]resemblance or resonance!** *(The word [1]**echo**, to have, to hold, to resonate.)*

31 Thus the world will understand my love for my Father and it will be clear to them that I have accomplished his [1]prophetic purpose. Arise, let's go! *(See note in 14:15 for [1]**entelomai**. They rose from the table, left the city, and went towards the garden of Olives, or garden of Gethsemane, on the road to which, a part of the following discourse was delivered. It was now about midnight, and the moon was almost full, it being the 14th day of her age, about the time in which the Jewish Passover was to be slain. Adam Clark)*

Chapter 15

1 I am the authentic [1]vine! My Father is the farmer. *(The word [1]**ampelos**, grapevine; from **amphi**, around and **halōn**, from the base of **heilissō**, to roll up or together; thus a vine coiling about a support. "On the Maccabean coinage Israel was represented by a vine". Jesus is the genuine Messianic vine. Robertson. Not the empty vine Hosea 10:1 mentions. See also Mathew 21:33)*

2 Every offshoot in me that does not bear fruit, he [1]lifts up from the ground and fastens it to the stake and every fruit bearing part he [2]dresses in order to maximize its yield. *(The words [1]**airei** and [2]**kathairei** are employed to suggest the lifting of the branches as well as the dressing process which includes pruning. **Airei**, from **airoo**, **to elevate,** to lift up, to air; **katharei**, from **kata**, in this case signifying intensity, and again **airoo.** Lifting up to manage a grape vine's canopy which will influence not only the potential yield of the crop but also the quality of the grapes due to the access of air and sunlight needed for the grapes to ripen fully and for preventing various grape diseases. When the Greeks began to colonize southern Italy in the 8th century BC, they called the land Oenotria which could be interpreted as "staked" or land of staked vines, growing upwardly. The grapevine is attached to stakes, or posts, thus making sure the branches grow upwardly. They are also dressed and pruned to be positioned in such a way that their fruit would be easily accessible. **Hina karpon pleiona pherēi**, purpose clause with **hina** and present active subjunctive of **pherō,** "that it may keep on bearing more fruit" (more and more). The Father's vineyard tool is his Word, incarnated in sonship; as in Hebrews 1:1-3 and Heb 4:12. Hebrews 1:1 Throughout ancient times God spoke in many fragments and glimpses of prophetic thought to our fathers. Heb 1:2 Now, the sum total of this conversation with us, has finally culminated in a Son. In his sonship, God declares him heir of all things. He is, after all, the author of the ages. Heb 1:3 Jesus is the crescendo of God's conversation with mankind; he gives context and content to the authentic thought. Everything that God had in mind for mankind is voiced in him. Jesus is God's language. Jesus is the radiant and flawless expression of the person*

of God. He makes the glorious intent of God visible and mirrors the character and every attribute of God in human form. Heb 4:12 The message God spoke to us in Christ, is the most life giving and dynamic influence in us, cutting like a surgeon's scalpel, sharper than a soldier's sword, piercing to the deepest core of human conscience, to the dividing of soul and spirit; ending the dominance of the sense realm and its neutralizing effect upon the human spirit. In this way mankind's spirit is freed to become the ruling influence again in the thoughts and intentions of the heart. The scrutiny of this word detects every possible disease, discerning the body's deepest secrets where joint and bone-marrow meet. (The moment we cease from our own efforts to justify ourselves, by yielding to the integrity of the message that announces the success of the Cross, God's word is triggered into action. What God spoke to us in sonship (the incarnation), radiates his image and likeness in our redeemed innocence.) [Heb 1:1-3] This word powerfully penetrates and impacts our whole being; body, soul and spirit.)

3 Your personal pruning and dressing already happened in our conversation; The word made flesh in my person and language is how the Father prepares and sets you up for fruit bearing.

4 Our seamless union, you in me and I in you, is pictured in the vine: the shoot cannot bear fruit outside of this union. In its abiding in the vine, fruit happens naturally - as with your abiding in me.

5 I am the vine and you are the branches; it is the one who understands this mutual union that naturally bears much fruit - which is impossible to happen apart from me.

6 [1]Every area of human life that does not continue to be entwined in this place of seamlessness in me, [2]was already cast forth where it has [3]withered away and is gathered to be burned as [4]firewood. *(The word [1]**tis** is an enclitic indefinite pronoun; some or any person or object. So, instead of 'everyone' I chose to see **tis** here as referring to everything, meaning every area of your life. As mentioned in verse 2, the 'dressing' or*

'pruning' is not in judgment but in order to maximize the yield! God's faith sees mankind fully associated, included and represented in the incarnation. He called things which were not yet visible as though they were, because they are! Romans 4:17! "When God changed Abram's name to Abraham, he made a public statement that he would be the father of all nations. (Genesis 17:5) Here we see Abraham faced with God's faith; the kind of faith that resurrects the dead and calls things which are not (visible yet) as though they were." Human failure in every tense and sense of the word was dealt with in Jesus death, burial and resurrection. The Aorist Passive tense, [2]***eblethe****, denoting a momentary act in the past tense, indicates that it was cast forth. The next verb is also in the Aorist Passive,* [3]***exeranthe****, it was withered away, from* ***xerainoo****, to wither. The incarnate Christ is about to enter into mankind's judgment and hell and bear the ultimate victorious fruit in co-raising us together with him. The single grain of wheat did not abide alone but bore much fruit! John 12:24. See also 12:31 and 32, This is the judgment of this world; it is the moment where the authority of the world-system is cast out! [The serpent's head is about to be crushed! Genesis 3:15; Colossians 2:14,15] See Colossians 3:1 Engage your thoughts with your co-crucifixion and co-resurrection and co-seatedness in Christ! And 12:32 When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all judgment unto me!* [4]*From living fruit-bearing branches to firewood, which becomes recycled energy again! See Extended Commentary Notes after the final chapter of the Mirror - Thoughts on Judgment and Resurrection.)*

7 My words find voice in you. With your abiding in me and my words abiding in you a conversation is inspired where you will request that which arises in your desire from our union and it shall come to pass for you!

8 These union-inspired desires bear the very fruit that endorses the Father's glory! This is where true discipleship is born. *(The Aorist tense; was glorified. As in Joh 15:6, marking the point when the Father's glory was realized in the perfect union of the believer's will with Christ's.)*

9 The love of the Father for me is my love for you - abide in my love for you!

10 By [1]treasuring the [2]Prophetic conclusion of my life you will remain constantly engulfed in my love even as I treasure the completeness of my Father's prophetic purpose and abide in his love embrace. *([1]**tereo**, to treasure, to guard; **entole**, see note in 14:15.)*

11 I have spoken these things unto you so that my joy will continuously infuse you - you don't have to invent your own if you can tap into mine! This is the ultimate bliss!

12 I [1]advise you to discover your love for one another mirrored in my love for you; this is the [1]conclusion of my mission. *(The word often translated assignment or commandment, [1]**entole**, from **en** in and **telo**, complete. See note in 14:15)*

13 There is no greater expression of love than the love that leads someone to lay down his life for his friends. *("Self-sacrifice is the high-water mark of love." Dods)*

14 Our friendship is endorsed in your continual engagement with [1]the conclusion of my mission. *(Again the word [1]**entole**, assignment or conclusion.)*

15 I do not communicate with you on a slave - boss basis; slaves have no clue what their Master is about to do. I talk to you as my friends telling you everything that I have heard in my conversation and [1]intimate association with my Father. This I explain to you in the [2]clearest possible terms. *(The preposition [1]**para** is used here, pointing to*

*close companionship; the word [2]**gnoritso** means to have thorough knowledge of.)*

16 I did not begin in you; you began in me! I am not your idea; you are mine! I have strategically positioned you in order that you may abound in much fruit bearing, wherever life leads you - fruit that would ceaselessly continue this same incarnate life of union with me! From within this place, anything you desire has already been granted you by my Father. *(The word, [1]**eklegomai**, traditionally associated with the idea of election, has two components, **ek**, a preposition that indicates source or origin and **lego**, meaning to communicate ideas; thus, the original blueprint-word, the **logos**; see John 1:1-3 and 12. The word becomes flesh in the fruit you eat! The many are called, [kaleo] but few are "chosen" eklegomai thus, The masses are defined by my name but few realize their origin in me!)*

17 All these things are the conclusion of my assignment to you and find their context in your love for one another.

18 Know that the world-system hated me first whenever you encounter their resistance against you.

19 If your lives were the product of the world-system you would enjoy their [1]applause and friendship; but they can't stand you because their mold no longer has any hold on you, now that you have discovered your authentic identity in my [2]declaration of who you are by design. *([1]**Phileo**, friendship. Again the word [2]**eklegomai** is used. See 3:31 We are dealing with two dimensions here, the one coming from above presides over all - while the reasoning from a mere earthly perspective is confined to communicate from an earthly point of view. The conversation realized as originating in heaven has the final say. Also 3:13 No one can fully engage in heaven's perspective, unless one's heavenly origin is realized! The Son of man declares mankind's co-genesis from above!)*

20 Remember that I told you that within the environment and association of servant and Master, what happens to the Master happens also to the servant - the servant is not treated any differently - if they hunted me down, they will hunt you down; if they treasured my word they would also treasure yours.

21 They will do all these things unto you because of your association with me, since they have no regard for him who sent me.

22 My arrival and my conversation, *[the logos becoming flesh]* **removed any possible excuse of ignorance they could have had to continue in a distorted pattern of life. In my absence they would have had no sin, but now they have no valid excuse.**

23 To dishonor me is to dishonor my Father.

24 If I had not accomplished in them the works which nobody else has ever performed they would have had reason to remain trapped in their distorted pattern of life; yet, inspite of what they have witnessed with their own eyes, they continue to despise my Father and I.

25 Their hatred for me fulfils the word of their own law. *(As recorded in Psalm 69:4, They that hate me without a cause and in Psalm 35:19 Let not those rejoice over me who are wrongfully my foes, and let not those wink the eye who hate me without cause.)*

26 But when the close Companion comes, who I shall send to you from the immediate presence of the Father, the Spirit of the truth who originates and proceeds out of the Father, this One will confirm everything about me.

27 You also will confirm everything about me since you are with me from the beginning. *(You now know your joint I-am-ness together with me from the beginning.)*

Chapter 16

1 I have communicated these things to you so you will not be embarrassed about your scandalous association with me.

2 You will be kicked out of their synagogues and there will be times where those who kill you will think that they have done God a favor!

3 They will do these things because they know neither the Father nor me.

4 I have told you all this in advance so that when it happens you will remember this conversation. While I was with you there was no need for me to tell you about these things.

5 But now I am going away to be face to face with him who sent me! And here you are not even asking me to explain to you what I am about to do,

6 since you are so worried about your own future!

7 Now listen up! Hear me, my departure is not to disadvantage you; everything that is about to happen, brings conclusion and bears together what the Prophets pointed to! This will be to your absolute

advantage! If I do not go away, your [1]Companion cannot come to you, but if I go I will send to you One to be [2]face to face with you defining your very being. *([1]**Parakletos**, from **para** and **kaleo**; redefining our original being in the closest possible association and kindred companionship; closer to you than your breath! Again the word [2]**pros** is used!)*

8 In this capacity of close companionship with you, Holy Spirit comes to convince the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment:

9 Holy Spirit in you will persuade them concerning their sin, which boils down to a bankrupt, distorted identity due to their indifference to me. *(The world's unbelief and indifference to Jesus is the very cause of their bankruptcy! The word for sin, [1]**hamartia** from **ha**, negative and **meros**, portion or form, thus to be without your allotted portion or without form, pointing to a disorientated, distorted or bankrupt identity; the word **meros**, is the stem of the word **morphe**, as in 2 Corinthians 3:18 where the word **metamorphe**, with form, [transform] is the opposite of **hamartia** - without form. Sin is to live out of context with the blueprint of one's design; to behave out of tune with God's original harmony.)*

10 In this union with you, the great Companion will also convince the world of righteousness because in my disappearing out of sight, to be face to face with the Father, the Spirit of truth will interpret the conclusion of my mission which is mankind's association in me and their redeemed innocence! The intimate union with my Father that I displayed while present with you in my physical body will now be made visible in you!

11 Then the world will be convinced that the judgment that was their due was accomplished when the ruler of this world system was judged. *(In Jesus dying mankind's death, closure was brought to the system of the law of works and performance as dictating and defining human life. In*

mankind's co-crucifixion and joint-descent in Jesus into their hell and in their co-resurrection and co-elevation to be seated together with him in heavenly places! See John 5:21,22; John 12:31-33; Hosea 6:2, Ephesians 2:5,6; Colossians 3:1-3; Romans 4:25; Acts 17:29-31; 1 Peter 1:10,11; Hebrews 1:1-3.)

12 I have so much more to tell you but you would not be able to handle it now.

13 But when she [5]is come, the Spirit of truth, she will [1]take you by the hand and guide you into the path of all truth. She will not draw attention to herself but will communicate and [1]unveil everything she hears and discerns [2]from a heavenly perspective about the things that is [4]about to happen [3]within you. *(While spirit is in the neuter gender, truth is feminine. In Hebrew, the word for spirit is* **חור** *ruach which is Feminine. The word [1]**οδηγησει**, from **odos**, the pathway and **hegeomai**, the strengthened for of **agoo**, to lead, thus officially appointed Guide. The word [2]**anangellei**, from **ana**, upwards, above and **angello**, often translated shepherd-messenger or messenger; it has two components, **ago** to lead as a shepherd leads and **agele** a herd of cattle or company. The word [3]**umin**, is the personal pronoun, you in the Dative case, also pointing to location "in." The things about to happen, [4]**erchomena**, the Present Participle describes an action thought of as simultaneous with the action of the main verb, [5]**elthay**, is come, When she, the Spirit of truth, is come [**hotan elthēi ekeinos, to pneuma tēs alētheias**]. Indefinite relative clause, **hotan** and the second Aorist active subjunctive of **erchomai**, "whenever she comes." The Mood of the Greek verb, in this case the subjunctive, expresses the mode in which the idea of the verb is employed. See commentary note to Hebrews 10:14 in the Mirror Bible.)*

14 Holy Spirit will endorse my [1]opinion of you by taking that which is mine and [2]interpreting it [3]in you. *(The word often translated glory, [1]**doxa** from **dokeo**, to form an opinion. The word [2]**anangello**, from **ana**, upwards*

*and **angello** to announce or declare. The preposition **ana** always points upwards to the things that are above the earth's perspective. [3]**Umin**, personal pronoun, you in the Dative case, also pointing to location "in.")*

15 The Father and I enjoy all things in common - even to the finest detail - because this is so, I said that the Close Companion esteems my glory and [2]lays a hold of that which is within me and declares it within you from [1]heavens point of view. *([1]**Ana**, upwards; The best texts read [2]**lambanei** λαμβάνει, takes, instead of λήψεται, **lempsetai**, shall take. The relation between the Son and the Spirit is present and constant. Vincent's Word Studies.)*

16 For a brief while I will be absent from your [1]view; then in another brief while you [2]will see and know me. *([1]Ye shall not see - **ou** [negative] **theorete** - the present tense: "you behold me no more." - [**theōreō - English, theorize**] Then again you will [2]see me, **opsesthe,** Future, middle Deponent Indicative of the verb **horao**. A different verb for seeing is used here. [1]**Theoreo**, emphasizes the act of vision, [2]**horao**, the result. **Theoreo** a derivative of **theaomai**, denotes deliberate contemplation conjoined with mental or spiritual interest. "The vision of wondering contemplation, in which they observed little by little the outward manifestation of the Lord, was changed and transfigured into sight, **horao**, in which they seized at once, intuitively, all that Christ was. As long as his earthly presence was the object on which their eyes were fixed, their view was necessarily imperfect. His glorified presence showed him in his true nature." - Westcott.*
Paul beautifully prays that the eyes of our understanding be flooded with light so that we may know the full conclusion of his death and resurrection and how fully included we are in it.
The best texts omit, "Because I go unto the Father." Although it is present in the next verse.)

17 Some of his disciples said to each other, "What does he mean? He tells us that in a little while we won't see him. Then he tells us that in a

little while we will see him again and then he would return to be face to face with the Father."

18 What does he mean by a little while? This just doesn't make sense to us at all.

19 Jesus perceived that they were confused about this and asked them, "Are you still trying to figure out what I mean by this brief time where you will no longer see me and then the next moment you will really see me?"

20 During this brief time of my apparent absence you will mourn and grieve but while the religious world rejoices, your pain will give birth to joy!

21 The anguish a woman suffers when her hour has come to give birth, is soon forgotten and replaced with delight when another [1]human life is born! *(The word for the human species, male or female is [1]**anthropos**, from **ana**, upwards, and **tropos**, manner of life; character; in like manner.)*

22 Just like with childbirth where joy eclipses the labor pains, so your present sorrow will be vanquished and your hearts will erupt in joy when you realize how you captivate my [1]gaze! And no one will be able to take this joy away from you! *(Again the word [1]**οψομαι** is used, from **horaoo**, to look at something with wide open eyes as in gazing at something remarkable! In the mirror reflection of his gaze, we see ourselves and now we know even as we have always been known!)*

23 In that day of your awakening to our inseparable union, you shall ask me no more [1]questions; instead you should certainly [2]ask the Father directly in my name, knowing that my name represents the extent of all the Father has already accomplished on mankind's behalf

and he will happily grant you your requests and take all questions of possible doubt or uncertainty out of the equation. *(To question is the primary meaning of the verb* [1]***erotao****. Another verb for ask occurs in the following sentence,* [2]***aiteo****, to make a request.)*

24 Until now you have not required anything in my name - when you realize what is yours in my name, then make your requests and lay a hold of that so that your joy may burst its banks!

25 I have used [1]examples to illustrate these things in figurative speech but the hour comes when the illustrations will be replaced with [2]unreserved utterance and I will [3]declare to you openly, heavenly things about the father. *([1]**Paroimiais**, from **para** and **oiomai**, to make like ("The kingdom of heaven is like a treaure hidden in an agricutural field...), that is, imagine: - suppose, think; parable or illustration. The word [2]**parrhēsia**, openly, frankly, without concealment. The word [3]**anangello**, from **ana**, upwards and **angello** to announce or declare. The preposition **ana** always points upwards to the things that are above the earth's perspective.)*

26 In that day you will make your [1]requests in my name without a middleman - there will be no need for me to [2]question the Father on your behalf. *(Again, as in verse 23, the words [1]**aiteo**, to make a request and [2]**erotao**, to question are used.)*

27 The Father himself is so fond of you and is pleased with your affection for me and your belief that I proceeded from his [1]immediate presence. *(The preposition [1]**para**, indicates close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection.)*

28 I have indeed proceeded from the [1]immediate and intimate presence of the Father to come to the world and return again to be [2]face to face with the Father. *(Again John beautifully uses the words [1]**para** and [2]**pros** to communicate the level of intimacy within the Trinity.)*

29 The disciples said to him, "You are coming through loud and clear without the aid of a parable.

30 Now we see what you have seen all along! To be persuaded that you indeed proceeded from the Father brings an end to all our speculations and uncertainties!"

31 To this Jesus responded with, "Just when you think you now finally believe that I am who I claim to be,

32 then suddenly you will all scramble and run for your lives and abandon me! But I am never forsaken because my Father is always with me!

33 I have spoken these things to you that in me you will know the sweet and assured resonance of my peace! In the world you encounter extreme and stressful times, but be of good courage, [1]I have conquered the world-order!" *(Rev 3:21 And everyone's personal triumph will be celebrated together with me, by being jointly seated together in my Kingship! On exactly the same basis of [1]my victory celebration and my joint seatedness with my Father in his throne! A.T. Roberston comments, [1]**hōs kagō enikēsa** is the first Aorist active indicative of **nikaō**, to conquer; looking back on the victory as over in the past. In John before the Cross Jesus says **egō nenikēka ton kosmon** which is in the perfect active tense, emphasizing the abiding effect of the victory! See Heb 1:3 Having made purification for sins, he sat down! His throne celebrates mankind's redeemed innocence!)*

Chapter 17

1 Having said these things Jesus lifted up his eyes into the [1]heavenly sphere and spoke, "Father, the hour has come; this is the culmination of time! Glorify your Son; endorse your opinion of your Son so that the Son may mirror his opinion of you and cause your dignity and worth to be made renowned and rendered illustrious in order to become manifest and acknowledged throughout! *(The word [1]**ouranos**, heavenly sphere; from **oros**, mountain, from **airō**, to raise, elevate, to lift up. Here there exists no conflict of interest - only glory repeated in the other! And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together! Isa 40:5.)*

2 Within the [1]mirror reflection of glory you co-[2]echo [3]every nook and cranny of flesh on exhibit in the Son's [4]authentic 'I-am-ness'! In order that every detailed aspect of what it takes to live life in the flesh may be be [5]endued with the life of the ages. *(The word, [1]**kathos**, from **kata**, downward impression and **hōs**, as, like, even as, the same as; **kathos** follows on the previous thought of the co-exhibition of glory; the original image and likeness in the glory of the Father is again repeated and impressed in sonship. The word [2]**echo**, to have in hand, to echo, resonate; the word [3]**pas**, suggests each and every detail of all things; the whole, everyone, all things, everything. The word [4]**exousia**, often translated authority, from **ek**, out of, source, and **eimi**, I am. The word [5]**didomi**, to give, to endue, to return something to someone that already belongs to them. See John 1:14.)*

3 This life of the ages, invites them to engage in the [1]inexhaustible adventure of knowing you, the only true God and Jesus as the Christ

whom you have commissioned! *(The word, [1]**ginōskōsin**, to learn to know, to perceive, to understand; in the Present Active Subjunctive form with **hina** [subject clause], "should keep on knowing.")*

4 I have caused your dignity and worth to be made renowned and rendered illustrious in order to become manifest and acknowledged throughout the earth by accomplishing the work which you have given me to do.

5 And now, o Father, bestow the most intimate closeness of your own person upon me with the glory that I shared in your immediate presence even before the world was.

6 I have displayed your name and exactly who you are with distinction to those whom you have given me; they were yours in the first place then you gave them to me; they are also those who have treasured your word *[incarnated in me].*

7 Now they too have come to know that everything you have given me originate in their own I-am-ness in you! *(Man began in God!)*

8 I have given them the very [1]words which you have given me in our conversation, which words they have embraced and have come to know that surely I also proceeded from you and are commissioned by you! *(Here the word **rhemata** [plural] is used and not **logos** like in verse 14 and most other references in John - **rhema** refers to the spoken word in conversation as such.)*

9 I pray specifically for them - those who know that they are yours to begin with and that you gave them to me. I'm not here to debate with those who still see themselves defined by the world-system!

10 I am greatly esteemed in our shared friendship with every individual person - all those who are mine are also yours and what is yours is mine.

11 I am no longer in the world but they are - I am proceeding to be face to face with you holy Father; I ask for the protection of those whom you have given me in your name that they also may be one even as we are.

12 While I was with them in the world I guarded over the ones you have given me in your name and did not lose any, except the lost son who fulfilled what was written prophetically.

13 And now I come to be face to face with you Father; I speak these things while I am still in the world that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

14 I have given them your Logos and now the world hates them because they have lost their manipulative, performance-based hold over them - these now know that they did not originate in the [1]cosmos but in the logos, even as I did not begin in the cosmos! *(The word [1]kosmos here refers to the natural order of things as evident in human tradition and philosophy.)*

15 I do not request that you take them out of the world but that you keep them from the [1]evil performance-based system of hardships, labors and annoyances! *(The [1]**poneros**-system is the system that is referenced in the Tree of the knowledge of good and evil (**poneros**) which is a system based on performance as the defining reference to human life - Jesus came to reveal and redeem our authentic value, identity and innocence as defining our lives.)*

16 They are not defined by the cosmos-system even as I am not defined thereby.

17 [1]Define them in your truth - your logos is the unveiled truth. *(The word [1]**hagiazo** speaks of a sanctification, a setting apart as in a defining moment.)*

18 Just as you have commissioned me into the world so I send them on their mission into the world!

19 For their sakes do I sanctify myself to be high above the cosmos-sytem so that their true set apart-ness *[from the performance based systems of the world]* **will be mirrored in me.**

20 I do not pray for them exclusively but also for those who would come to believe in me because of their word.

21 That they all may be one, exactly as you Father are mirrored in me and I in you, that they also will be exactly mirrored to be one in us - then the entire world will believe and be persuaded about your mission upon my life!

22 And I, *[the Incarnate word]* **have endued them with the same glorious esteem that you have given me so that their oneness may mirror ours.**

23 I am in them as you are in me, and on this basis their seamless oneness may be entirely concluded. Thus the world will acknowledge your commission upon my life and know that my love for them mirrors your love for me.

24 Father I desire that [1]what you have given me in them may cause them to be where I am so that they may see what I see and gaze attentively upon the splendor of my glory which you have given me *[in them]* **because you loved me before the [2]fall of the world. Thus the world will be persuaded that your love for them was never compromised because of the fall - you continued to love them the same!**
*(The best texts read, [1]**ho** not **hous** - that which. The word, [2]**kataballo**, means "to fall away, to put in a lower place," instead of **themelios**, meaning "foundation" [see Ephesians 2:20]; thus, translated "the fall of the world," instead of "the foundation of the world." The entire "Fall" was a falling away in our minds from our true identity as image and likeness bearers of Elohim. Just like Eve, were we all deceived to believe a lie about ourselves, which is the fruit of the "I-am-not-tree ". We all, like sheep have gone astray. [Isa 53:6])*

25 Father of righteousness, while the world has not known you, I have known you and these here have come to know that you sent me.

26 And I have made the essence of your being known to them so that they may know you by name; and I will also give them understanding to know that the same love wherewith you have loved me is in them even as I am in them!

Chapter 18

1 When Jesus concluded his prayer he and his disciples crossed over the brook Cedron into a garden.

2 Judas, who betrayed him was familiar with this place since Jesus often gathered there with his disciples.

3 Judas was given a Roman military cohort of about 600 soldiers to accompany him; they came together with temple officers from the chief priests and Pharisees with torches, lanterns and their weapons.

4 Jesus, fully aware of everything that was coming upon him, went forward to meet them and said, “Who are you seeking?”

5 They said to him, “Jesus the Nazarene.” Jesus answered, “Here I am.” And there Judas was, standing with them.

6 Just when Jesus said, “I am,” they stumbled backwards and fell to the ground!

7 He asked them again, “Who are you looking for?” They said, “Jesus of Nazareth,”

8 Jesus said, “I already told you who I am; if its me you are after then let the others go.”

9 He said this to confirm to his disciples that he would protect them so that none of them would be implicated.

10 Simon Peter thought that it was a good idea to defend themselves and drew his sword and struck at the high priest’s servant, Malchus’ head, who ducked away and lucky for him only lost an ear.

11 Jesus told Peter to put away the sword and said, “Do you think that I am not going to drink this cup the Father gave me?”

12 Then the soldiers under their captain's command together with the Jewish police arrested Jesus and tied him up.

13 They first took him to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was the High Priest that year.

14 It was Caiaphas who advised the Jews that in order to save the entire nation, it was inevitable that one person should die.

15 Peter and another disciple followed Jesus; the High Priest knew the one disciple and he was allowed to enter the courtyard.

16 Peter remained outside at the entrance. Then the other disciple who knew the High Priest went to speak to the lady at the door and asked permission for Peter to join him inside.

17 The lady who guarded the door said to Peter, "Are you not also one of this man's disciples?" He said, "No I am not." *(She obviously recognized John as a disciple.)*

18 The slaves and temple police were huddled around a coal fire to warm themselves; Peter also joined them to get out of the cold.

19 The High Priest then began to question Jesus about his disciples and his teaching.

20 Jesus replied, "I have spoken openly to the world and frequently taught in the synagogue and temple to a Jewish audience and have said nothing in secret.

21 Why would you question me? Talk to my audience if you wish to find out about my teaching; they are familiar with what I teach."

22 When he said this one of the temple police slapped him in the face and scolded, "How dare you speak to the High Priest in this manner?"

23 Jesus answered, "If I said anything evil then tell me; but if I have spoken only that which is beautiful, why do you strike me?"

24 Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas, the High Priest. *(The proper place of this verse is immediately after the 13th.)*

25 In the mean time Peter was still warming himself at the fire when he was asked again if he was not one of the disciples of Jesus. He emphatically objected and said that he was not.

26 Then a relative of Malchus whose ear Peter chopped off also recognized him and said, "Did I not see you with him in the garden?"

27 Again Peter disclaimed it and just then, the cock crowed!

28 Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas into the the praetorium, the Roman governor's judgment hall - it was still early in the day so the Jews didn't go into the court room for fear of contracting some impurity, which would have obliged them to separate themselves from eating the Passover.

29 Then Pilate went outside to face them and asked, "What accusation do you bring against this man?"

30 They answered, “If he wasn’t an evildoer we wouldn’t have wasted your time with this court case in the first place.

31 Then Pilate said, “Take him and judge him according to your law.” They said, “Our law does not allow a death sentence.”

32 This was also to confirm what Jesus said about his manner of death. *("I would be lifted up" - crucifixion was Roman and not a Jewish punishment; the Jews considered it a curse for a man to hang on a tree. 1 John 3:5 We have witnessed with our own eyes how, in the unveiling of the prophetic word, when he was lifted up upon the cross as the Lamb of God, he lifted up our sins and broke its dominion and rule over us! John 1:29 Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away [airo] the sin of the world! The word airo means to lift up. John 3:14 (This is my mission: See the prophetic relevance - this is how the veil will be removed!) Remember how Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness even so the Son of man will be lifted up! See John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; John 12:32 and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all judgment unto me. John 12:33 He said this to show by what death he was to die. John 3:13 and 14 are most significant since they point to the very essence of the mission of Jesus - the co-begotteness of the human race now redeemed in our co-crucifixion and co-resurrection on the third day into newness of life! 1 Peter 1:3. John 3:15 In the same prophetic pattern, I will be lifted up for all to see and be equally persuaded in the echo of the life of the ages now redeemed within them!)*

33 Than Pilate went back into the court room and summoned Jesus to him and asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

34 Jesus responded, “Are these your own thoughts or did others suggest this about me?”

35 Pilate replied, "Am I a Jew, why would I bother to speculate about you? Your own people and priests handed you over to me. What have you done to make them do this?

36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom has nothing in common with the political or religious systems of this world; it does not originate out of their structures. If it did my subordinates would fight for me and resist my handover to the Jews."

37 Pilate then said, "So you are a king?" Jesus replied, "You say that I am a king. My destiny was to be born in the flesh and for this purpose have I come into the world to bear testimony to the truth. Everyone who recognizes their true origin, hears my voice." *(The truth about mankind's authentic sonship and the image and likeness of the invisible Father of the human race is evidenced in me and confirmed in my work of redeeming the human race from the futile ways they inherited from their fathers.)*

38 Pilate then asked him, "What is truth?" Without giving him a chance to respond, he went outside again to face the Sanhedrin and said to them, "I find no cause for any accusation in this man."

39 But since it is custom that I should release one of your prisoners during your festive time, would you be happy for me to pardon the King of the Jews for this Passover?"

40 They shouted back, "No, not this one, but Barabbas!" Barabbas was a Jewish freedom fighter, probably the leader of the band which included the other two who were crucified with Jesus.

Chapter 19

1 Then Pilate took Jesus and gave order for him to be scourged. *(Scourging was the legal preliminary to crucifixion, but, in this case, was inflicted illegally before the sentence of crucifixion was pronounced, with a view of averting the extreme punishment, and of satisfying the Jews. The punishment was extreme, the victim being bound to a low pillar or stake, and beaten, either with rods, or, in the case of slaves and provincials, with scourges, called scorpions, leather thongs tipped with leaden balls or sharp spikes. The severity of the infliction in Jesus' case is evident from His inability to bear His cross. Vincent)*

2 The soldiers plaited a crown of thorns and placed it on his head; they also threw a purple garment over him.

3 Then they positioned themselves in front of him and scorned him, saying, "Hail King of the Jews!" while continually slapping him in the face.

4 Then Pilate again went outside to the Sanhedrin saying, "Behold I am leading him out to you; I want you to know that I find no valid cause to condemn him."

5 Then Jesus came out of the Praetorium wearing a crown of thorns and the purple robe while Pilate announced, "Behold the man!" ***(Idou ho anthrōpos****; this exclamatory introduction of Jesus in mock coronation robes to the mob was clearly intended to excite pity and to show how absurd the charge of the Sanhedrin was that such a pitiable figure should be guilty of treason. Pilate failed utterly in this effort and did not dream that he was calling attention to the greatest figure of history, the Man of the ages. Robbertson's word pictures.)*

6 When they saw him, the chief priests and the temple police shouted with rage, "Crucify! Crucify!" Pilate told them, "You take him and execute the crucifixion yourselves, I find no fault in him."

7 The Jews answered him, "We have our own law and by this law he must die because he made himself out to be the Son of God!" *(See John 5:18 This was fuel for the fire of Jewish zeal in their determination to execute Jesus! Not only did he break their Sabbath, but now he has gone beyond all extremes! He calls God his own Father - who does he think he is - God's equal?)*

8 The claim of Jesus' deity only served to accelerate Pilate's superstitious fears.

9 He went again into the judgment hall and asked Jesus, "Tell me, who are you really?" Jesus did not answer him.

10 Pilate said, "Why do you not answer me, do you not realize my position? I have the power to crucify or free you!"

11 Jesus said, "You have no authority over me, except what was given you from above. Therefore he *[Caiaphas, the High Priest]* **who handed me over to you has the greater sin.** *(exousia, out of I am)*

12 This motivated Pilate even more to make every effort to release him; but the Jews would not buy into it at all; they cried out, "If you even consider to release this man you prove that you are not loyal to Caesar - this man's claim to royalty makes him Caesar's enemy!"

13 These words persuaded Pilate to go through with the procedures. He led Jesus outside and sat down in judgment in a place called the

Stone Pavement, a decorated mosaic area in the court which was called Gabbatha in Hebrew which means an elevated platform.

14 This was still during the preparation for the Passover, about the 6th hour. He announced to the Jews, "Behold! Your king!" *(About the sixth hour, hōs hektē. Roman time, about 6 a.m. when Pilate rendered his final decision. Mark 15:25 notes that it was the third hour (Jewish time), which is 9 a.m. Roman time, when the crucifixion began. Why should John give Jewish time writing at the close of the first century when Jerusalem and the Jewish state passed away in A.D. 70? He is writing for Greek and Roman readers. See also John 20:19)*

15 But they cried out, "[1]Lift him up! Lift him up! Crucify him!" Pilate said, "Shall I crucify your king?" The Chief priests answered, "We have no other king but Caesar!" *(The word, [1]**airo** means to lift up, to elevate. See John 12:32,33.)*

16 He then handed Jesus over to them to be crucified and they led him away.

17 Bearing the cross himself, Jesus went out from the Courtyard to the place called Skull; its Hebrew name was Golgotha.

18 There they crucified Jesus along with two others on either side of him.

19 Pilate wrote a placard and placed it on the cross. It read, "Jesus the Nazarene, the king of the Jews." *(Nazarite - "one separated" A name later given to Christians by the Jews, Acts 24:5)*

20 Many of the Jews who came up to the Passover feast from other nations could read this title since the place where he was crucified was

near the city and it was written in Hebrew, Latin and Greek.

21 But the Jewish rulers and priests complained about this and requested that he changes the wording to read, "He said, I am the king of the Jews."

22 To which Pilate replied, "What I have written, I have written!"

23 The soldiers who crucified Jesus took his outer garments and divided it between the four of them; the inner garment was a seamless woven tunic. *(The four pieces of the outer garment would be the head gear, the sandals, the girdle, the tallith which was the outer garment with fringes.)*

24 They therefore discussed between themselves to rather not tear the inner garment but to cast lots for it to determine whose it shall be. This was the fulfilment of prophetic Scripture, "They divided my outer garments among them and for my inner garment they cast lots." These very things predicted by David in Psalm 22:18, the soldiers unwittingly performed.

25 Standing by the cross were the three Mary's, the mother of Jesus, his aunt Mary the wife of Clopas and Mary of Magdala.

26 When Jesus saw his mother and the beloved disciple standing nearby, he said to her, "Ma'am, behold your son!"

27 Then he said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" From that moment the disciple adopted her as his own mother. *(Westcott remarks upon the four exclamations in this chapter - Behold the man! Behold your King! Behold your son! Behold your mother! This gives us a remarkable picture of what Christ is, and what he reveals people to be.)*

28 With this Jesus, realizing that all things are now [1]fully accomplished and that what was written was to be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" *(Everything is now done! **Ede panta [1]tetelestai**. Jesus studied Scripture with a different intent; he knew that he was reflected there! Familiar with the text, he brought context! Hebrews 10:7 "Then I said, I read in your book what you wrote about me; so here I am, I have come to fulfill my destiny." - Psalm 40:7, Luke 4:17, Luke 24:27, 44.)*

29 There was a jar filled with vinegar in which someone dipped a sponge attached to a branch of [1]hyssop and lifted it to his mouth. *(Compare these Scriptures, Matt 27:34; Psalm 69:21 They gave me gall for food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. Also reference Deut 29:18; Jer 9:15; Jer 23:15; Lam 3:15; Lam 3:19; Amos 5:7; Amos 6:12. Hyssop was a reed used by the Hebrews in their ritual sprinklings.)*

30 When Jesus had taken the vinegar he said, "It is [1]finished!" He then bowed his head and handed over the spirit. *(See Psa 31:5 "Into Your hand I commit my spirit." The word [1]**tetelestai** communicates the final consummation of all things; everything is now concluded! John again - as in verse 28 - records this powerful word, in the Perfect Passive Tense which denotes an action which is completed in the past, but the effects of which are regarded as continuing into the present without end. Nothing that happens in time could possibly intercept this act of God's redemptive genius. The only possible way we can delay the glory that follows the cross is by underestimating what happened there when Jesus died and cried: "It is finished!" There is no eschatology of any one's guess or definition that carries more weight than God's 'eschatos' [final] word that he spoke to us in sonship - in the one who bears the very stamp [charakter] of his nature and radiates the Father's being. The one seated upon the throne of mankind's redeemed innocence! Heb 1:1-3 We can afford to make Jesus' words on the cross, "It is finished!" our complete and final focus!)*

31 The Jews were keen to have the bodies removed from the cross before sunset when the Sabbath began, especially since this particular Sabbath would coincide with the first day of unleavened bread which was a 'great' day. Their preparation for the feast of unleavened bread and eating the Passover meal was in full swing. They approached Pilate therefore and requested that the bones of the victims be broken and that they might be lifted off the cross. *(To commemorate the unleavened bread that the Israelites ate when they left Egypt, they don't eat or even retain in their possession any "chametz" from midday of the day before Passover until the conclusion of the holiday. Chametz means leavened grain - any food or drink that contains even a trace of wheat, barley, rye, oats, spelt or their derivatives and wasn't guarded from leavening or fermentation. This includes bread, cake, cookies, cereal, pasta, and most alcoholic beverages. Ridding their homes of chametz is an intensive process. It involves a full-out spring-cleaning search-and-destroy mission during the weeks before Passover, and culminates with a search for chametz on the night before Passover, and then burning the chametz on the morning before the holiday.*

Instead of chametz, they eat matza - flat unleavened bread. It is a mitzvah to partake of matza on the two Seder Nights. During the rest of the holiday it is optional.

The highlight of Passover is the two "Seders," observed on the first two nights of the holiday. The first Seder is on Friday Evening, and the second Seder is on Saturday Evening. The Seder is a family oriented tradition and a ritual packed feast.

The focal points of the Seder are: Eating matza and bitter herbs to commemorate the bitter slavery endured by the Israelites. And drinking four cups of wine or grape juice - a royal drink to celebrate their newfound freedom.

The recitation of the Haggadah, a liturgy that describes in detail the story of the Exodus from Egypt. The Haggadah is the fulfillment of the biblical obligation to recount to our children the story of the Exodus on the night of Passover. See 1 Cor 5:6,7.)

32 The soldiers then broke the legs of the two men who were crucified with Jesus.

33 But when they saw that Jesus was already dead they did not break his legs.

34 One of the soldiers then pierced his side; blood and water flowed from the wound. *(The presence of these two elements was evidence that there had been heart rupture.)*

35 The one who witnessed these things has recorded their detail to convince the reader of their significance.

36 These things happened in fulfilment of that which was written prophetically, "No bone in the Pascal lamb shall be crushed." *[Ex 12:46 1500 - BC]*

37 Also another Scripture which reads, "They shall gaze upon him whom they have pierced!" *[Zec 12:10]*

38 Then Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate permission to remove the body of Jesus which Pilate was pleased to do. Joseph was a prominent leader, and a secret follower of Jesus, *(but here, while most of his close friends and followers forsook him, Joseph fearlessly offers to bury Jesus in his own rock-hewn tomb! See Matthew 27:60 He was a rich man and a counsellor of the great Sanhedrin, Luke 23:50. Mark emphasizes the boldness of this act. Mark 15:43)*

39 Also Nicodemus, who was the one who approached Jesus in the shelter of the night in order not to be publicly associated with him, made a very bold announcement of his love for Jesus and brought expensive sweet-smelling spices; a mixture of myrrh and aloes which weighed about a hundred pounds.

40 Then Joseph and Nicodemus took Jesus body and prepared it for burial. And according to Jewish custom they wrapped the body in linen cloths together with the spices.

41 In the area where he was crucified was a garden with a new tomb which was never used before.

42 Since it was still during their preparation for the Sabbath the location of the tomb where Joseph and Nicodemus placed Jesus was conveniently close. *(The Hebrews reckoned two evenings, an earlier and a later. The former began midway between noon and sunset, or at three o'clock in the afternoon. The latter began at sunset, six o'clock. The reference here is to the earlier evening, though the time may have been well on toward the beginning of the later. The preparations had to be hurried because the Sabbath would begin at sunset - Vincent.)*

Chapter 20

1 The first day of the Sabbaths, Maria from Magdala came to the tomb while it was still very early and saw that the stone was lifted out of the grave.

2 She left the tomb at once and ran to find Simon Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus was so fond of, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the grave and we have no idea where they put him!" *(Mary fears a grave robbery. She did not suspect his resurrection.)*

3 So Peter and the other disciple immediately went to the tomb.

4 They were both running but the other brother out-ran Peter and arrived at the tomb first.

5 He stooped down and observed with careful attention the strips of linen cloth lying there, yet he did not enter. *(Seeing the grave cloths, he immediately knew that it wasn't a grave robbery!)*

6 Then Simon Peter also arrived and went straight into the tomb and took a long look at the grave cloths lying there.

7 He also noticed that the cloth that was wrapped around the head of Jesus, was not lying with the other strips of linen cloth, but neatly rolled up separately.

8 Then the other disciple who arrived there first also went in and he saw and was convinced! *(According to Luk 24:12 Peter went away "wondering" still.)*

9 It was as if they could not fully grasp that this was indeed what was predicted in Scripture, that Jesus was [1]destined to rise up out of death. *(See Psalm 16:10 "For you will not leave my soul in Sheol; you will not let your Holy One see corruption." Destined; must happen - [1]**dei**. See Mark 8:31; Matthew 26:54; Luke 9:22; Luke 17:25; Luke 22:37; Luke 24:7, Luke 24:26,27, Luke 24:44, 46; John 3:14; John 12:34; Acts 1:16. Jesus emphasized the fact and the necessity of his resurrection which the disciples slowly perceived.)*

10 The disciples went away to [1]face their own thoughts. *([1]**pros hautous** - facing themselves.)*

11 But Maria remained facing the tomb, weeping. Then she stooped down and [1]gazed into the tomb. *(The word,* ***parakupto*** *from* ***para****, close proximity and* ***kupto*** *to stoop down, bend forward, to view attentively with scrutiny.)*

12 She saw two angels dressed in dazzling white seated, one at the head and the other at the feet where Jesus' body had been lying.

13 They asked her, "Woman why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They took my Lord away and I do not know where they have put him."

14 As she said this she looked around *(as if she instinctively felt the presence of someone behind her)* **and saw Jesus standing but did not immediately recognize him.**

15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for? She thought he was the gardener and said, "Sir, if you have taken him away, please tell me where you put him so that I may fetch him!"

16 Jesus said to her, "Mariam!" she turned in her step and exclaimed, "Raboni!" which is Hebrew for, my Teacher!

17 "You'll have to let go of me, so that I may continue on to the Father. Go and tell my friends that I am ascending to my Father and your Father; to my God and your God!" *(****mē mou haptou****, present middle imperative in prohibition with the genitive case, meaning "cease clinging to me!")*

18 So Maria the Magdalene went to the disciples and announced to them, "I saw the Lord!" And she told them all that he told her.

19 That evening of the first day of the week, the disciples were gathered in a room with the doors locked because they were afraid of the Jews. Suddenly Jesus stepped into their midst and said, "Shalom!"*(The addition of* ***tēi miāi sabbatōn*** *proves that John is using Roman time, not Jewish, for here evening follows day instead of preceding it.)*

20 Then he showed them his scarred hands and side and having now seen the Lord for themselves, they were exceedingly glad!

21 Again he repeated his salutation and said, "Peace be unto you! Just as the Father has commissioned me so do I now send you!"

22 Having said this he [1]breathed an effusion of Spirit upon them and said, "[2]Take Holy Spirit as your Companion." *("Having breathed on them",* [1]***enephusēsen****. First Aorist active indicative of* [1]***emphusaō****, late verb, here only in New Testament, though eleven times in the Septuagint and in the Papyri. From* ***en****, within, and* ***phuo****, to breathe, beget, bring forth, to spring up, to shoot forth. It was a symbolic act with the same word used in the Septuagint when God breathed the breath of life upon Adam (Gen 2:7). Jesus reminds his disciples of how his resurrection fulfilled the prophetic word in Hosea 6:2 and Ezek 37:1-9. The Valley of Dry Bones Ez 37:1 And the hand of the Lord came upon me, and the Lord brought me forth by the Spirit, and set me in the midst of the plain, and it was full of human bones. 2 And he led me round about them every way: and, behold, there were very many on the face of the plain, very dry. 3 And he said to me, Son of man, will these bones live? and I said, Oh Lord God, thou knowest this. 4 And he said to me, Prophesy upon these bones, and thou shalt say to them, Ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. 5 Thus saith the Lord to these bones; Behold, I will bring upon you the breath of life: 6 and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and will spread skin upon you, and will put my Spirit into you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. 7 So I prophesied as the Lord commanded me: and it came to pass*

while I was prophesying, that, behold, there was a shaking, and the bones approached each one to his joint. 8 And I looked, and behold, sinews and flesh grew upon them, and skin came upon them above: but there was not breath in them. 9 And he said to me, Prophesy to the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord; Come from the four winds, and breathe [εμφυσησον emphuseson] upon these dead men, and let them live. Hebrew, nâphach **חפנ** *to kindle, inflate, breathe. Ez 37:10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath entered into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, a very great congregation.*
See John 7:37-39, Also John 14 and 16. The word [2]***lambano****, to take what is one's own, to take to one's self, to associate with one's self as Companion. Holy Spirit seals and confirms our joint-resurrection with Jesus to be celebrated and endorsed in Feast of Pentecost.)*

23 "If you [1]forgive someone's sins, they are [1]gone and forgotten. If you don't [2]let go, then you are [2]stuck with them." *([1]**aphiēmi**, to let go, to divorce, to leave behind, to forgive; [2]**krateō** to seize. In the context of what has happened on the cross and here emphasized in the previous 3 verses, the basis of true forgiveness is the death and closure that Jesus brought to whatever it was that testified against us; his glorious resurrection and the companionship of Holy Spirit as the very breath of our zoe-life are the essence and authority of our commission which is to announce mankind's redeemed innocence!)*

24 But Thomas, the Twin, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples told him that they have seen the Lord. But his response was, "I will never believe it unless I see his nail pierced hands and thrust my finger into the wounds and also my hand into his side."

26 The next Sunday evening, Jesus again just showed up in their midst even though all the doors were locked and greeted them with, "Peace be unto you!" This time Thomas was with them.

27 Jesus immediately turned to Thomas and said to him, "Give me your finger and touch my hands so you that can see for yourself; and give me your hand and thrust it into my side! Replace your skepticism with persuasion!"

28 Without hesitation Thomas responded to Jesus with, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Jesus said to him, "You believe because you saw with your own eyes; blessed are those who believe even though they do not see!"

30 The truth is that Jesus did many more signs in front of his disciples' eyes than these ones recorded in this book.

31 But what is written here is enough evidence for the reader to be absolutely convinced that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. And thus your belief will echo the zoe-life unveiled in his name.

Chapter 21

1 Jesus also appeared to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias in the following incident:

2 Simon Peter and Thomas the twin, Nathaniel from Cana in Galilee, the Zebedee brothers and two of the other disciples were together.

3 It was Simon's idea to go fishing, so they joined him and got into a boat and spent the night trying, but caught nothing.

4 By daybreak Jesus was waiting for them at the shore but they did not recognize him.

5 Jesus asked them, "Lads, haven't you got anything to eat?" They said, "Nope!"

6 Then he told them to cast the net on the right side of the boat and they will definitely find some; so they did and took so many fish that they were unable to haul them in.

7 Then the disciple whom Jesus was so fond of said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girded his outer garment around him since he was naked, and promptly jumped into the water.

8 The other disciples dragged the net full of fish with a little boat. They were only about 100 yards from the shore.

9 When they got out of the boat they were surprised to see a coal fire with fried fish and bread on it.

10 Jesus suggested that they also bring some of the fish they had just caught.

11 Simon Peter joined them and pulled the net ashore; they counted 153 large fish, and the net didn't even tear!

12 Jesus then invited them to break their fast and feast together. By now they knew beyond doubt that it was the Lord and didn't even bother to ask him.

13 Jesus took the bead and handed it to them and also the fish.

14 This was the third time Jesus appeared to the disciples since he rose from the dead.

15 After they had their breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon of Jonah, do you agape me more than any of the others?" He answered, "Surely Lord, you see how fond I am of you!" He said to him, "Show your love for me by feeding my little lambs." *(Note the use of* ***agapao*** *and* ***phileo*** *in this conversation.)*

16 He asked a second time, "Simon of Jonah, do you agape me?" He answered, "Of course Lord, you know that you are my best friend." He said, "Then shepherd my sheep."

17 He asked him a third time, "Simon of Jonah, are you very fond of me?" By now Peter was feeling a little uncomfortable that Jesus asked him a third time, "Do you dearly love me?" He answered him, "Lord I cannot hide anything from you, and you know very well how fond I am of you!" And Jesus said to him, "Then nourish my sheep."

18 "You can mark my words, when you were younger you could choose what you wanted to wear and moved about freely wherever you wished; but there will come a time when someone else will dress you and take you where you do not want to go."

19 He pointed prophetically to Peter's martyrdom and death by which he would glorify God. And Jesus said to him, "Follow me."

20 Peter turned around and saw Jesus' beloved disciple following them; he was also the one who would lean against the chest of Jesus at the dinner table and asked, "Lord who will betray you?"

21 Seeing him Peter asked, "Lord, what about this man?"

22 Jesus said to him, "If I would rather have him remain while I am [1]going, should not concern you; just keep close company with me. *(The word [1]**erchomai** can mean coming or going - depends on the context.)*

23 So a rumor began amongst the followers that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus didn't say that he wasn't going to die, he said, "If I wish that he remains while I am going should not concern you."

24 This is the very disciple who is bearing witness to all these things in this writing. We confirm that his testimony is true.

25 Were the vastness of the work and words of Jesus carefully detailed, the libraries of the world could not contain them. *(See 20:30)*
(In this final chapter and Epilogue to his book, John beautifully highlights a significant parallel, reflecting on their first encounter with Jesus, when, as business partners he and his brother James and Simon Peter toiled all night and had nothing to show for their efforts; here he portrays Peter taking the initiative to go back fishing to possibly help them deal with the extreme emotional tensions of the past days and also his disappointment with himself in denying Jesus three times. In John's account, Jesus again demonstrates dramatically how a greater grace dimension that outperforms their best efforts and intentions, eclipses their familiar world with its highs and lows. In Jesus' conversation with Peter, as Simon the son of Jonah, he deliberately calls him this name again to remind him of the significant moment when he discovered by revelation that in Jesus as the son of man,

our physical identity is surpassed by a greater identity and birth, we are hewn out of the same rock; we share sonship because we have the same Father! This is the foundation of the Ekklesia that Jesus builds. [Matthew 16.] Then instead of blaming Peter for denying him, Jesus deliberately reminds him of their friendship where their love for one another is reinforced three times; this love union will also be the basis of Peter's role in his shepherd leadership of Jesus' flock. It is also interesting to note the names of Thomas, and Nathaniel in the account of the fishing episode; they, too, had their moments of doubt.)

Romans

ROMANS REVEALED

The Eagle Story

During our honeymoon in January, 1979, in the Blyderiver Canyons in Mpumalanga, South Africa, Lydia and I met a nature conservation officer who told us of a fascinating incident when they released a Black Eagle just the previous week; this bird, with a wingspan of more than two meters, had been in the Pretoria Zoo for ten years! She told us how excited they were when the eagle finally arrived in its wooden crate. This was the day for its release! But their excitement soon turned to frustration when, after opening the cage, the bird refused to fly. Ten years of caged life seemed to have trapped its mind in an invisible enclosure. How could they get the eagle to realize that it was indeed free? No amount of prompting and prodding seemed to help. Then, after some hours the bird suddenly looked up, and in the distance they heard the call of another eagle; immediately the zoo-eagle took off in flight!

This dramatic story left a deep impression on my mind. I knew that in the light of Paul's revelation of the Good News, we are left with one urgent priority, which is to announce to the nations with bold confidence the truth about their original identity and mirror-reflect the integrity of their redeemed innocence. No flying lessons are required when truth is realized!

This gives such clarity and content to the fact that Jesus came to the planet not to upgrade the cage of Judaism or any other religion by starting a new one called Christianity; but to be the incarnate voice of the likeness and image of God in human form! He came to reveal and redeem the image of God in us! His mission was to mirror the blueprint of our design, not as an example for us but of us! (Col 1:15, 2:9, 10).

In God's faith mankind is associated in Christ even before the foundation of the world. Jesus died mankind's death and when the stone was rolled away, we were raised together with him! Every human life is fully represented in him (Hosea 6:2).

If the gospel is not the voice of the free eagle, it is not the gospel.

Paul's Gospel

In this pivotal book, Paul immediately introduces himself and his intention: "My mandate and message is to announce the goodness of God to mankind. This message is what the Scriptures are all about. It remains the central prophetic theme and content of inspired writing." (Rom 1:1, 2).

Scripture could never again be interpreted in any other way! The gospel of the success of the Cross gives content and context to Scripture.

There is nothing to be ashamed of; this message unveils how God got it right to rescue man from the effect of what Adam did wrong! (Rom 1:16, 17)

The dynamic of the gospel is the revelation of God's faith as the only valid basis of our belief (from faith to faith). Paul quotes Habakkuk who prophetically introduced a new era when he realized that righteousness would be founded in what God believes and not in mankind's clumsy ability to obey the law.

From now on righteousness by God's faith defines life! (Hab 2:4, Rom 1:17, 3:27).

Instead of reading the curse when disaster strikes, Habakkuk realizes that the Promise out-dates performance as the basis to mankind's acquittal! Deuteronomy 28 would no longer be the motivation or the measure of right or wrong behavior! "Though the fig trees do not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like hinds' feet, he makes me tread upon my high places." (Hab 3:17-19 RSV).

From Romans chapters 1:18 to 3:20, Paul proceeds to give a graphic display of distorted human behavior. Being a Jew, and therefore to know the law, offers no real advantage since it offers no disguise or defense from sin. It is the same ugliness and deserves the same judgment. His triumphant

statement in verses 16, 17 of chapter 1 and again reinforced in chapter 3:21-24, is set against this backdrop. The good news declares how the same condemned mankind in Adam is now freely acquitted by God's grace through the redemption that is unveiled in Christ Jesus.

He brings the argument of the ineffectiveness of the law to get a person to change their behavior, to a final crescendo in Chapter 7. He states in 7:1 that he is writing to those who know the law. They have first-hand experience therefore of the weakness of the rule to consistently govern a person's conduct.

The best the law could offer was to educate and confirm good intention; but the more powerful law, the law of sin introduced to mankind through one man's transgression, has to be challenged by a greater force than human willpower.

Because sin robbed mankind of their true identity and awakened in them all kinds of worse-than-animal-like conduct, a set of rules couldn't do it. The revelation of God's righteousness has to be far more effective and powerful than mankind's slavery to sin.

It is evident that because of mankind's corrupt behavior, we deserve nothing less than condemnation. Yet within this context the grace and mercy of God is revealed; not as mere tolerance from God's side to turn a blind eye and to put up with sin, but as God's triumphant act in Christ to cancel our guilt and to break sin's spell and dominion over us.

For salvation to be relevant it has to offer mankind a basis and reference from which their faith is to be launched. It has to offer a conclusion of greater implication than the stalemate condition they find themselves in under the dispensation of the law.

"My inner person agrees that the law is good and desires to obey its requirements yet my best intentions leave me powerless against the demands of sin in my body! Oh, wretched being that I am!"

Woe be to us but for the revelation of God's righteous intervention! The

man Christ Jesus is the mediator of mankind. The judgment mankind rightfully deserved fell on him; he was made to be sin who knew no sin. “He was handed over because of our transgressions, and triumphantly raised because of our acquittal.” (Rom 4:25).

Paul is convinced that whatever happened to the human race because of Adam’s fall is far superseded in every possible proportion by the revelation of mankind’s inclusion in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He places the fall of Adam and every act of unrighteousness that followed against the one act of righteousness that God performed in Christ as proof of mankind’s acquittal.

The revelation of righteousness by God’s faith unveils how Jesus Christ represented and redeemed mankind. The etymological essence of the word, “righteousness” in its stem, diké, implies the idea of two parties finding likeness in each other; with no interference of any sense of blame, guilt or inferiority. The Hebrew word for righteousness is the word tzedek which refers to the wooden beam in a scale of balances. When Adam lost the glory of God (Hebrew, **דבכ** kabod, weight; the consciousness of God’s likeness and image) the law proved that no amount of good works could balance the scale again. Grace reveals how God redeemed his image and likeness again in human form; now the scale is perfectly balanced! No wonder Jesus cried out on the cross, “It is finished!” *See commentary note on 2 Corinthians 6:14.*
This is the message that Paul says he owes to the entire world!

“I proclaim Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery which was concealed in silence in the sequence of timeless ages, but now is made publicly known, mirrored in prophetic Scripture.” (“Surely he was wounded by our transgressions; he was bruised by our iniquities. The chastisement that brought us peace was upon him and by his stripes we were healed.” [Isa 53:4, 5]) And now the God of the ages has issued his mandate to make the mystery known in such a way that all the nations of the earth will discover the lifestyle that the hearing of faith ignites.” (Rom 16:25, 26) Paul gives new definition to obedience when he calls it “the obedience of faith.” Romans 1:5.

“The conclusion is clear: it took just one offense to condemn mankind; one act of righteousness declares the same mankind innocent. The disobedience of the one exhibits mankind as sinners, the obedience of another exhibits mankind as righteous. Romans 5:18, 19.

Just as all mankind became exceedingly sinful through one person’s disobedience but did not know it until the law revealed it, so all mankind became exceedingly righteous through one act of righteousness but they do not know it until the gospel reveals it. The principle of faith is to see what God sees. God calls things that seem not to be as though they were. Romans 4:17.

While we look not at the things that the senses observe, we look at the revelation of the unseen as it is unveiled in our understanding through the mirror revelation of the Gospel of Christ. See 2 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Corinthians 4:18.

Romans 4:17 finds its context in Romans 1:17 and 10:17, “It is clear then that faith’s source is found in the content of the message heard; the message is Christ. (We are God’s audience; Jesus is God’s language!)”

The incarnation is the voice of the free eagle.

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Chapter 1

1 Paul, [5]passionately engaged by Jesus Christ, [1]identified in him to [2]represent him. My [3]mandate and [4]message is to announce the goodness of God to mankind. *(Mandate, the scope or horizon of my message, from [3]**horitso**, meaning marked out. The word, [2]**apostelo**, means an extension from him, a representative; [5]**doulos**, means slave from **deo**, to*

*be bound or knitted together like a husband and wife; [1]**kletos** comes from **kaleo**, meaning called, to identify by name, to surname; and [4]**eu** + **angellion**, means well done announcement, good news, the official announcement of God's goodness.)*

2 This message is what the Scriptures are all about. It remains the central prophetic theme and content of inspired writing.

3 The Son of God has his natural lineage from the seed of David; *(In Matthew 22:41-45 Jesus asked the Pharisees, "What do you think of the Christ? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David." He said to them, "How is it then that David, inspired by the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying, 'The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, till I put your enemies under your feet'? If David thus calls him Lord, how is he his son?" Mat 22:41-45 "You must not call anyone here on earth Father, because you have only the one Father in heaven." [Mt 23:9]. "Yet there is for us only one God, the Father, who is the Creator of all things and for whom we live; and there is only one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were created and through whom we live." [1 Cor 8:6]. "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth receives its true name." [Eph 3:14, 15]. "... there is one God and Father of all people, who is Lord of all, works through all, and is in all." [Eph 4:6, 7].)*

4 however, his powerful resurrection from the dead by the Holy Spirit, [1]locates and confirms his being and sonship in God. *(The word translated, locates, comes from [1]**apo** + **horizo**, meaning to mark out beforehand, to define or locate; literally, horizon. The same word is translated as mandate in verse 1. In Acts 13:32-33, Paul preaches the resurrection and quotes Psalms 2, "Today I have begotten you." Jesus locates us and confirms that we have our genesis in God! Peter understands that we were born anew in the resurrection of Christ. The relevance of the resurrection is the revelation of mankind's inclusion in Christ [see 1 Pet 1:3]. Hosea 6:2 is the only Scripture that prophesies the third day*

resurrection, and here in this single dramatic prophesy, we are co-included in his resurrection! "After two days he will revive us, on the third day he will raise us up!" [RSV] This is the crux of the mystery of the Gospel! "Will the earth be brought forth in one day? Can a nation be born in a moment?" [Isa 66:8, 9].)

5 The grace and commission we received from him, is to bring about a [1]faith-inspired lifestyle in all the nations. [2]His name is his claim on the human race. *(Paul immediately sets out to give new definition to the term, "obedience," no longer by law, but of faith. [1]Obedience, from* ***upo*** *+* ***akoo****, means to be under the influence of what is heard, accurate hearing; hearing from above. [2]Every family in heaven and on earth is identified in him. Eph 3:15)*

6 In Jesus Christ you individually discover [1]who you are. *(The word, [1]****kaleo****, means to call by name, to surname.)*

7 In addressing you, I address all in Rome. I am convinced of God's love for you; he [2]restored you to the harmony of your original design; you were made holy in Christ Jesus; no wonder then that you are [1]surnamed [2]Saints. His grace gift in Christ secures your total wellbeing. The Father of the Lord Jesus Christ is ours also; he is our God. *(The word, [1]****kaleo****, means called, identified by name, surname; [2]****hagios****, means Saints, restored to the harmony of your original design; "He separated me from my mother's womb when he revealed his Son in me, in order that I may declare him in the nations; immediately I did not consult with flesh and blood." [Gal 1:15, 16]. "From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ after the flesh, we regard him thus no longer." [2 Cor 5:16 RSV].)*

8 My greatest joy is to realize that your faith is announced throughout the entire world. The total [1]cosmos is our audience. *(The word,* ***kosmos***

in the NT refers to the entire human family.)

9 I am completely engaged in my spirit in the gospel of God's Son; constantly including you in my prayers; God is my witness.

10 Since I already feel so [1]connected to you I long to also see you face to face. *([1]To beseech, **deomai**, from **deo** to tie together, to be knitted together.)*

11 I really look forward to finally meet you in person, knowing that my spiritual [1]gift will benefit you greatly; it will cement and establish you in your faith. *(The word, [1]**metadidomi**, translates as the kind of giving where the giver is not distanced from the gift but wrapped up in it! The Apostles, Prophets, preachers, pastors, and teachers are gifts to the **Ekklesia** to establish them in their faith and to present everyone in the full and mature stature of Christ [Eph 4:11-16]. There is such a vast difference between a gift and a reward! We are God's gifts to one another. What God now has in us is gift wrapped to the world. What we are in our individual expression is a gift and not a reward for personal diligence or achievement. These gifts were never meant to establish one above the other, or to become mere formal titles, but rather to identify specific and dynamic functions with one defined purpose, to bring everyone into the realization of the fullness of the measure of Christ in them!)*

12 And so we will be mutually refreshed in the [1]participation and reflection of our common faith. *(The word, [1]**sumparakaleo**, comes from **sum**, together; **para**, is a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection, and **kaleo**, meaning to identify by name, to surname.)*

13 Until now I have been prevented from coming to you, even though I have frequently desired to reap some harvest in you as much as I anticipate the full fruit of this gospel in all the nations.

14 I am so convinced of everyone's inclusion; I am [2]indebted both to the Greeks as well as those many [1]foreigners whose languages we do not even understand. I owe this message to everyone, it is not a matter of how literate and educated people are; the illiterate are equally included in the benefit of the Good News. *(The word, [1]**barbaros**, means one who speaks a strange and foreign language; [2]**opheiletes**, means to be indebted, obliges one to return something to someone that belongs to him or her in the first place.)*

15 Because of this compelling urgency I am so keen to preach to you Romans also.

16 I have no shame about sharing the Good News of Christ with anyone; the powerful rescuing act of God persuades both Jew and Gentile alike.

17 Herein lies the secret of the power of the Gospel; there is no good news in it until the righteousness of God is revealed! The dynamic of the gospel is the revelation of God's faith as the only valid basis for our belief. The Prophets wrote in advance about the fact that God believes that righteousness reveals the life of our design. "Righteousness by his *(God's)* **faith defines life."** *[Habakkuk 2:4]*
(The gospel is the revelation of the righteousness of God; it unveils how the Father, Son and Spirit succeeded to put mankind right with themselves. It is about what God did right, not what Adam did wrong. The good news reveals how God's righteousness rescued the life of our design and redeemed our innocence. Mankind's futile efforts to obey moral laws have failed them miserably - the Good News shifts the emphasis away from mankind's failure and condemnation to highlight what it was that God

accomplished in Jesus Christ on mankind's behalf! "Look away [from the law of works] unto Jesus; he is the Author and finisher of faith." [Hebrews 12:1]. The language of the old written code was, "Do in order to become! The language of the new is, "Be, because of what was done!" Instead of do, do, do, it's done, done, done! It is God's faith to begin with; it is from faith to faith, and not our good or bad behavior; we are not defined by our performance or circumstances. Paul refers here to Habakkuk 2:4, "The just shall live by his [God's] faith." Habakkuk sees a complete new basis to mankind's standing before God! Instead of reading the curse when disaster strikes, he realizes that the Promise out-dates performance as the basis to mankind's acquittal. Deuteronomy 28 would no longer be the motivation or measure of right or wrong behavior! Instead of righteousness as a reward to mankind's efforts to obey the law, Habakkuk celebrates God's righteousness based on God's belief, in the face of apparent disaster, represented in the evidence of all the curses mentioned in Deuteronomy 28! He sings, "Though the fig trees do not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fails and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like hinds' feet, he makes me tread upon my high places." [Habakkuk 3:17-19 RSV]. It is interesting to note that Habakkuk - **חבקוק *chăbaqqûq***, *was possibly the son of the Shunammite woman and her husband who hosted the Prophet Elisha. They could not have children, until Elisha declared that in a year's time she would embrace -* **חבק *chabaq*** *- a child! When the child grew up to be a young man he died of sunstroke and Elisha stretched himself over the boy and mirror-embraced the dead child, face to face and the boy came back to life.* **חבקוק *Chabaqquq*** *is a double embrace - it is the prophetic picture of our mirror-resurrection together with Christ! If anyone knew that righteousness was not by works but by God's faith, it was Habakkuk!*

The word righteousness comes from the Anglo Saxon word, "rightwiseness;" wise in that which is right. In Greek the word for righteousness is ***dikaiosune****, from* ***dikay****, that which is right; it is a relationship word and refers to two parties finding likeness in each other. Righteousness points to harmony in relationship. See 2 Corinthians 6:14. Faith-righteousness has nothing in common with the pagan philosophies of karma and performance-based approval; they could never balance the*

*scales or be evenly yoked together in any context. [The word **heterozugeō**, an unequal or different yoke; from the word, **zugos**, a yoke or a teaching; the yoke of a rabbi or philosopher represented their doctrine; from the Hebrew word,* **קידצ** ***tzedek**, the wooden beam in a scale of balances, which is the word for righteousness. It is also interesting to note that the Greek goddess of Justice is **Dike** [pronounced, dikay] and she is always pictured holding a scale of balances in her hand.] See also 2 Corinthians 6:15. In Colossians 2:9-10, "It is in Christ that God finds an accurate and complete expression of himself, in a human body! He mirrors our completeness and is the ultimate authority of our true identity.")*

18 God's [1]passionate persuasion is uncovered from heavens perspective in sharp [2]contrast to the foolishness of [3]people who [4]suppress and conceal the truth about their redeemed innocence while they continue to embrace an [5]inferior reference of themselves. *(The righteousness of God that is endorsed in the heavens is so different to the counterfeit, earthly reference that blindfolds people in their own unrighteousness. The word often translated wrath, [1]**orge**, means desire - as a reaching forth or excitement of the mind, passion. The preposition [2]**epi** means over, above, across, against, continuous influence upon; I translated it here as contrast. The word for the [3]human species, male or female is **anthropos**, from **ana**, upwards, and **tropos**, manner of life; character; in like manner. The word [4]**katecho**, to echo downwards is the opposite of **anoche**, to echo upward; see Romans 2:4 and 3:26. In Colossians 3:2 Paul encourages us to engage our thoughts with things above [God's belief], and not below [law of works]. The word [5]**adikia**, unrighteousness, is the opposite of **dikay**, two parties finding likeness in each other; thus, without harmony. The law reveals how guilty and sinful mankind is, while the gospel reveals how forgiven and restored to their original blueprint we are. See 2 Corinthians 4:4)*

19 For this reason God is not a stranger to anyone; whatever can be known of God is [1]apparent in human form. God has revealed it in the very core of their design which bears witness within their own

conscience! *(Note Rom 2:14 & 15 For even a pagan's natural instinct will confirm the law to be present in their conscience and though they have never even heard about Jewish laws. Thus they prove to be a law unto themselves. The law is so much more than a mere written code; its presence in human conscience even in the absence of the written instruction is obvious. See also 2 Corinthians 4:4 & 7 and Colossians 1:27. Blindfold-mode does not remove the treasure from where it was hidden all along! Every time we love, encounter joy or experience beauty, a hint of the nature of our Maker reflects within us; even in the experience of the unbeliever. In the incarnation Jesus unveils God's likeness, not his "otherness", in human form as in a mirror! The word* [1]**phaneros** *from* **phaino***, means to shine like light. Colossians 2:9,10 "It is in Christ that God finds an accurate and complete expression of himself, in a human body! Jesus mirrors our completeness." While the expanse cannot measure or define God, his exact likeness is displayed in human form. Jesus proves that human life is tailor-made for God! See also Ephesians 4:8 And James 3:9 We can say beautiful things about God the Father but with the same mouth curse a fellow human made in his mirror likeness. The point is not what the person did to deserve the insult! The point is that people are image and likeness bearers of God by design!)*

20 God is on display in creation; the very fabric of visible cosmos appeals to reason. It clearly bears witness to the ever present sustaining power and intelligence of the invisible God, leaving mankind without any valid excuse to ignore him. *(Psalm 19:1-4, "God's glory is on tour in the skies, God-craft on exhibit across the horizon. Madame Day holds classes every morning, Professor Night lectures each evening. Their words aren't heard, their voices aren't recorded, But their silence fills the earth: unspoken truth is spoken everywhere." — The Message)*

21 Yet mankind only knew him in a philosophical religious way, from a distance, and failed to give him credit as God. Their taking him for granted and lack of gratitude veiled him from them; they became absorbed in useless debates and discussions, which further darkened their understanding about themselves.

22 Their wise conclusions only confirmed their folly.

23 Their losing sight of God, made them lose sight of who they really were. In their calculation the image and likeness of God became reduced to a corrupted and distorted pattern of themselves. Suddenly a person has more in common with "creepy crawlies" than with their original blueprint.

24 It seemed like God abandoned mankind to be swept along by the lusts of their own hearts to abuse and defile themselves. Their most personal possession, their own bodies, became worthless public property.

25 Truth suppressed *(v18)* **became twisted truth. Instead of embracing their Maker as their authentic identity, they preferred the deception of a distorted image of their own making, religiously giving it their affection and worship. The true God is the blessed God of the ages. Hey! He is not defined by our devotion or indifference!** *(And all this because they traded the true God for a fake god, and worshiped the god they made instead of the God who made them. Message)*

26 By being confused about their Maker they became confused about themselves; which led to all manner of obsessions.

27 Men and women alike became inflamed with perverted fantasies. This brought about an intense [1]striving and [2]laboring in the pursuit of the illusion of a [3]distorted image - which are clear symptoms of an [4]inferior estimate of oneself. *(The word, [1]**orexei** describes a reaching out after something. The word [2]**katergazomai** from **kata**, downward; also to emphasize intensity; and **ergatsomai**, to toil. Then he uses the word [3]**aschēmosunē** from **aschēmōn**, deformed, from **a**, negative or without and*

schema, *form or pattern. The word* [4]***antimisthia*** *from* ***anti****, against or opposite and* ***misthois****, the wage of a hireling; translated here an inferior estimate; or a wage that leaves one disappointed. This word is only used again in 2 Corinthians 6:13)*

28 Their indifference about their god-identity veiled God from them.

29 Sin snowballs! It spreads like a disease, exhibiting its ugly symptoms in every possible form, from perverse sexual obsession, to every kind of atrocity. The problem with sin is that it never satisfies, leaving the victim miserably unfulfilled and constantly craving for more of the same deception: vileness, jealousy, anger and an unnatural obsession with self. Life is cheap, murder doesn't matter; they are steeped in constant quarrelling and wickedness, their conversation has become reduced to slanderous gossip.

30 No one is safe in their company; they think that by insulting people they can voice their hatred for God; proudly bragging about their latest inventions of filth. They remain [1]indifferent to any definition of [2]parenthood, disregarding the fact that we did not invent ourselves. *(The word* [1]***apeithēs****, where we get the word apathy from, traditionally translated to disobey, in my opinion translates better as being indifferent; from* ***a****, negative and* ***peithō****, to believe; to make friends, to win one's favor, gain one's good will, or to strive to please one. The word* [2]***goneus****, parent; from* ***ginomai****, to be born.)*

31 They live [1]dysfunctional, [2]disconnected lives where no [3]sympathy or mercy is shown. *(The words,* [1]***asynetous****,* ***a****, negative and* ***sunetos****; from* ***suniemi****; a joining together like that of two streams; a fusion of thought, a joint-seeing. Thus, with them, there seems to be no compatibility or harmony to connect meaningfully with others. The word* [2]***asunthetos*** *again,* ***a****, negative and* ***suntithemai*** *- to stand in agreement or support with of*

*another. They live completely out of sync with others. Then Paul uses the words, [3]**astorgos**, without natural affection and **eleēmōn,** no mercy.)*

32 It just doesn't make any sense, they started off knowing the [1]righteousness of God, yet by their lifestyle they flirt with death; it is almost as if sin has become a fashionable contest. *([1]**dikaioma**, righteousness - not judgment, as some translations suggest!*
From verse 18 to 32 Paul paints the picture of the dilemma and darkness of the fallen mindset - where the distorted picture becomes the norm. This is the language of a law system, which defines people by their behavior rather than their design. He then concludes in 2:4 with this amazing statement to underline his conviction as recorded in 1:16,17 about the powerful rescuing act of God announced in the Gospel. "Do not underestimate God's kindness. The wealth of his benevolence and his resolute refusal to let go of us is because he continues to hear the echo of his likeness in us! Thus his patient passion is to shepherd everyone into a radical mind shift.)

Chapter 2

1 A presumed knowledge of that which is right or wrong does not qualify you to judge anyone; especially if you do exactly the same stuff you notice other people do wrong. You effectively condemn yourself. No one is another person's judge.

2 God must judge all transgression, but your judging others does not make them any guiltier.

3 God is completely impartial in his judgment; you are not scoring any points or disguising your own sins by telling on others.

4 Do not [1]underestimate God's [2]kindness. The wealth of his [2]benevolence and his [3]resolute refusal to let go of us is because he continues to hear the echo of his likeness in us! Thus his [4]patient passion is to [5]Shepherd everyone into a [6]radical mind shift. *(The word translated, underestimate is the word, [1]**kataphroneō,** from **kata**, down, and **phroneo**, to think, to form an opinion; thus a downcast mind, to despise or take for granted. It is the revelation of the goodness of God that leads us to [6]repentance; it is not our "repentance" that leads God to goodness! The word "repentance" is a fabricated word from the Latin word, penance, and to give religion more mileage the English word became re-penance! That is not what the Greek word means at all! The word, [6]**metanoia**, comes from **meta**, meaning together with, and **nous**, mind; thus, together with God's mind. This word suggests a [6]radical mind shift; it is to realize God's thoughts towards us. [See Isa 55:8-10] The word, [2]**chrestos**, kind, benevolent, from **xeir**, hand which is also connected to the word **xristos**, to draw the hand over, to anoint, to measure; see also the Hebrew for Messiah, **mashach**, to draw the hand over, to measure! [Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon, B Davidson.] In Jesus Christ, God has measured mankind innocent, he is the blueprint of our design! The word [3]**anoches** comes from **ana**, meaning upwards; **ana** also shows intensity and the word **echo**, to hold, or embrace, as in echo. He continues to hear the echo of his likeness in us! [See Rom 3:26.] The word, [4]**makrothumias**, means to be patient in bearing the offenses and injuries of others. Literally, passion that goes a long way; from the stem **thuo**, to slay a sacrifice. The word, [5]**ago**, means to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep.)*

5 A calloused heart that resists change accumulates cause to self-destruction, while God's righteous judgment is revealed in broad daylight. *(The gospel openly declares that God declared mankind innocent.)*

6 By resisting him you are on your own; your own deeds will judge you. *(Rejecting his goodness [v 4] keeps you snared in a lifestyle ruled by*

sin-consciousness and condemnation.)

7 The quest of mankind is to be constant in that which is good, glorious and honorable and of imperishable value. We are eager to pursue the original blueprint-life of the [1]ages. *(The life of the ages, from [1]**aionios**, which is the most attractive life we could wish to live; it is the life of our design, yet it remains elusive outside the redemption that Christ achieved on our behalf. Not even the most sincere decision to live a blameless life under the law or any sincere philosophy could satisfy the heart hunger of mankind.)*

8 Yet there are those who ignore the truth through [2]unbelief. *(The truth about their original identity as sons)* **They continue to exist as mere [1]hirelings, motivated by a monthly wage** *(rather than sonship)***. They believe in their failure and unrighteousness and are consumed by outbursts of anger and displeasure.** *(The word, [1]**eithea, comes** from **erithos**, working as a hireling for wages; often translated, self-willed or contentious. The word, [2]**apeitheo**, means to be not persuaded, without faith, often wrongly translated as disobedient.)*

9 Pressures from every side, like an [1]overcrowded room, *(or a cramped foot in an undersized shoe,)* **is the experience of the soul of everyone who does what is worthless. The fact that the Jews are Jewish does not make their experience of evil any different from that of the Greeks.** *(Symptoms of disease are the same in anyone; they are not a respecter of persons. The word, [1]**stenochoria**, means narrowness of room.)*

10 In sharp contrast to this, bliss, self-worth and total tranquillity is witnessed by everyone, both Jew and Greek, who finds expression in that which is good. We are tailor-made for good.

11 God does not judge people on face value.

12 Ruin and self-destruction are the inevitable results of sin, whether someone knows the law or not.

13 Righteousness is not a hearsay-thing, it is faith-inspired practical living, giving new definition to the law.

14 For even a pagan's natural instinct will confirm the law to be present in their conscience and though they have never even heard about Jewish laws. Thus they prove to be a law unto themselves.

15 The law is so much more than a mere written code; its presence in human conscience even in the absence of the written instruction is obvious, condemning or commending personal conduct.

16 Every hidden, conflicting thought will be disclosed in the daylight of God's scrutiny, based on the Good News of Jesus Christ that I proclaim. *(The ineffectiveness of good intentions and self discipline to produce lasting change will be exposed as worthless in contrast to the impact of the message of Christ's death and resurrection as representing mankind's death and new birth as our ultimate reference to our redeemed identity and innocence.)*

17 Your Jewish identity does not make God your exclusive property,

18 even though you boast in the fact that you have the [1]documented desire of God [2]published like an instruction manual in the law. *(The word, [1]**dokimatso**, comes from document, decree, approve; [2]**diaphero**, **from** to carry through, to publish [Acts 13:49, the word was published throughout].)*

19 You promote yourself confidently as a guide for the blind, and a light bearer for those groping about in darkness.

20 You feel yourself so superior to the rest of the world that you promote yourself as the "kindergarten" teacher to the mindless, an instructor of infants, because you believe that in the law you have knowledge and truth all wrapped up in a nutshell.

21 However, the real question is not whether you are a good teacher; how good a student are you? What's the good of teaching against stealing when you yourself steal?

22 You speak against adultery while you cannot get your own mind off sexual sins. It just doesn't make sense does it? You say idolatry stinks yet you steal stuff from pagan shrines.

23 Your proud association with the law is ruined every time you dishonor God by dodging the doing bit.

24 This has been going on for hundreds of years; it is all recorded in Scripture. No wonder the Gentiles think that your God is no better than any of their philosophies when it comes to living the life the law promotes.

25 The real value of circumcision is tested by your ability to keep the law. If you break the law you might as well not be circumcised.

26 The fact that you are circumcised does not distinguish you from the rest of the world; it does not give you super-human power to keep the commandments.

27 If it is not about who is circumcised or not, but rather who keeps the law or not, then in that case even uncircumcised people can judge the ones who claim to know it all and have it all! On the one hand you have those who feel naturally inclined to do what is right, yet none of them are circumcised, then you have the circumcised who know the letter of the law but fail to keep it.

28 So it is not about who you appear to be on the outside that makes you a real Jew, but who you really are on the inside.

29 For you to know who you are in your heart is the secret of your spirit identity; this is your true circumcision, it is not the literal outward appearance that distinguishes you. After all it is God's approval and not another's opinion that matters most. People see skin-deep; God knows the heart.

Chapter 3

1 Having said all this, you might ask whether there is still any advantage in being Jewish? Is there any significance in circumcision?

2 Everything only finds its relevance and value in the original intention of God realized by faith.

3 The question is, how does someone's failure to believe God affect what God believes? Can their unbelief cancel God's faith? *(What we believe about God does not define him; God's faith defines us. See the RSV translation, "What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? By no means!")*

4 God's word is not under threat! In fact if all of mankind fails, truth remains intact. Truth is defined in God; it is neither challenged nor vindicated by human experience. Contradiction does not intimidate or diminish the faith of God. Scripture records that God stands justified in his own word; it confirms that God's promise and purpose are not compromised through mankind's failure; neither is God's reputation threatened by our behavior. *(Truth does not become true by popular vote. It is already as true as it gets because God believes it; it is from faith to faith, says Paul [Rom 1:17]; there is no gospel in it until the righteousness of God is revealed; "we can do nothing against the truth!" [See 2 Cor 13:5 and 8]. David's sin did not cancel God's promise. "But my mercy I will not take from him" and "his house shall be made sure, and his kingdom for ever before me, and his throne shall be set up forever." [2 Sam 7:15-16].)*

5 We could argue then that God doesn't have a right to judge us, if our unrighteousness only emphasizes his righteousness.

6 This would make God an unfair judge of the world.

7 This almost sounds like I am saying that it is not really wrong to sin, if our cheating only serves to further contrast the truth of God.

8 Because of my emphasis on God's grace, some people slanderously make the assumption and accuse me that my teaching would give people a license to sin. "Let us do evil that good may come!" I strongly condemn such foolish talk! *"But if our wickedness advertises the goodness of God, do we feel that God is being unfair to punish us in return? (I'm using a human tit-for-tat argument.) Not a bit of it! What sort of a person would God be then to judge the world? It is like saying that if my lying throws into sharp relief the truth of God and, so to speak, enhances his reputation, then why should he repay me by judging me a sinner? Similarly, why not do evil that good may be, by contrast all the more conspicuous and valuable? (As a matter of fact, I am reported as urging this*

very thing, by some slanderously and others quite seriously! But, of course, such an argument is quite properly condemned." — Phillips Translation)

9 It is common knowledge that sin holds the sway over both Jew and Greek alike. *(Just like disease would show the same symptoms regardless of someone's nationality.)*

10 Scripture records that within the context of the law, no-one succeeds to live a blameless life. *(Psalm 14:1-3, "To the choirmaster of David. The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt and they do abominable deeds, there is none that does good. The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any that act wisely, that seek after God. They have all gone astray, they are all alike corrupt; there is none that does good, no, not one [RSV]." In Genesis 18, Abraham intercedes for Sodom and Gomorrah, "If there perhaps are 50 righteous people, will you save the city on their behalf?" He continues to negotiate with God, until he's down to, "perhaps ten?"..."there was none righteous, no not one ..." This argument is building up to the triumphant conclusion of the fact that there is indeed no distinction; the same people who fell short of the glory of God are now justified through God's work of grace in Christ. If mankind was 100% represented in Adam, then they are equally 100% represented in Christ! [Rom 3:21-24].)*

11 Because there seems to be no sincere craving and desire to know God there is no spiritual [1]insight. *(While a person remains casual and indifferent about God, their heart remain calloused; the word, [1]**suinemi**, means a joint-seeing.)*

12 Their distraction has [1]bankrupted their lives; that goes for the mass of mankind, without any exception. *(This word, [1] **neelachu** אנחלאו 'unprofitable' in Hebrew means to become 'putrid' and 'offensive,' like fruit that is spoiled. In Arabic, it is applied to 'milk' that becomes sour.)*

13 "When they open their mouth to speak they bury one another with destructive words. They snake each other with lies and corruption. *(Albert Barnes comments, "Their throat is an open sepulchre - This and all the following verses to the end of the 18th are found in the Septuagint, but not in the Hebrew text; and it is most evident that it was from this version that the apostle quoted, as the verses cannot be found in any other place with so near an approximation to the apostle's meaning and words. The verses in question, however, are not found in the Alexandrian MS. But they exist in the Vulgate, the Ethiopic, and the Arabic. As the most ancient copies of the Septuagint do not contain these verses, some contend that the apostle has quoted them from different parts of Scripture; and later transcribers of the Septuagint, finding that the 10th, 11th, and 12th, verses were quoted from the 14th Psalm, imagined that the rest were found originally there too, and so incorporated them in their copies, from the apostle's text.*
Their throat is an open sepulchre - By their malicious and wicked words they bury, as it were, the reputation of all men. The whole of this verse appears to belong to their habit of lying, defamation, slandering, etc., by which they wounded, blasted, and poisoned the reputation of others.)

14 With sharp tongues they [1]cut one another to pieces, cursing and cheating; their every word is inspired by the [2]wearisome effort to survive in a dog-eat- dog world. *(Taken direct from the Hebrew text in Psalm 10:7 in Hebrew, [1]**tok tok** from **tavek**, to cut to pieces. In Hebrew [2]**amal** and **aven**, to exert oneself in wearisome effort.)*

15 Murder has become a regular ritual; without any regard for another's life.

16 Their path is littered with broken lives.

17 They have lost the art of friendship.

18 They have completely lost sight of God." *(3:13-18 are quotations from Psalm 10 and Psalm 14.)*

19 The fact that all these quotations are from Jewish writings, confirm that their law of moral conduct did not free them from the very same sins the rest of the world was trapped in. The entire human race is now confronted with the [1]righteousness of God. *(The word [1]**upodikos**, from **upo** under and **dikay**, two parties finding likeness in each other, the stem of the word **dikaiosunay**, righteousness. See Romans 1:17; also 3:21 and Acts 17:31, Romans 4:25.)*

20 The law proves all of mankind equally guilty and confirms that their most sincere duty-driven decisions and 'self-help' programs within the confines of the flesh could not give them any sense of improved confidence in their standing before God.

21 We are now talking a completely different language: the gospel unveils what God did right not what we did wrong! Both the law and all the prophetic writings pointed to this moment! *(This brings me back to the theme of my ministry, chapter 1:1, 2, 5, 16, 17. There is no point in telling people how condemned they are! Tell them how loved they are! God's dealing with mankind is based on the fact that their conscience continues to bear witness to their original design. Romans 7:22.)*

22 Jesus is what God believes about you! In him the righteousness of God is on display in such a way [1]that everyone may be equally persuaded about what God believes about them, regardless of who they are; there is [2]no distinction. *(The preposition, [1]**eis**, indicates a point reached in conclusion. The Greek, **ou gar estin diastoley** means [2]there is no exception - this includes every single person, Jew and Gentile alike!)*

23 Mankind is in the same boat; their [1]distorted behavior is proof of a [2]lost [3]blueprint. *(The word sin, is the word [1]**hamartia**, from **ha**, negative or without and **meros**, portion or form, thus to be without your allotted portion or without form, pointing to a disorientated, distorted, bankrupt identity; the word **meros**, is the stem of **morphe**, as in 2 Corinthians 3:18 the word **metamorphe**, with form, which is the opposite of **hamartia** - without form. Sin is to live out of context with the blueprint of one's design; to behave out of tune with God's original harmony. See Deuteronomy 32:18, "You have forgotten the Rock that begot you and have gotten out of step with the God who danced with you!" Hebrew, **khul** or **kheel**, to dance. See Romans 9:33 in the Mirror! The word [2]**hustereo**, to fall short, to be inferior, [3]**doxa**, glory, blueprint, from **dokeo**, opinion or intent.)*

24 While the law proved mankind's dilemma, the grace of God announces the same mankind redeemed in Jesus Christ! Their blameless innocence is a free gift! The gift-principle puts the idea of reward out of business! There is no exception - this belongs to every single person, Jew and Gentile alike! Mankind's righteousness is now redeemed. Jesus Christ is proof of God's grace gift; he redeemed the glory of God in human life; mankind condemned in the language of religion, is now mankind justified in the language of the gospel! *(The man Jesus Christ proved that God did not make a mistake when they made humankind in their image and likeness! Sadly the evangelical world proclaimed verse 23 completely out of context! There is no good news in verse 23, the gospel is in verse 24! All fell short because of Adam; the same 'all' are equally declared innocent because of Christ! The law reveals what happened to mankind in Adam; grace reveals what happened to the same mankind in Christ. Their is no distinction - all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God - now they are all justified freely as a gift through the redemption [the liberating action] of Jesus Christ!)*

25 Jesus exhibits God's mercy. In his blood conciliation God's faith persuades mankind of his righteousness and the fact that he has brought closure to the historic record of their sins. *(Not by demanding a sacrifice but providing the sacrifice of himself.)* **Jesus is the unveiling of**

the Father's heart towards us. *(See note to Hebrews 8:12; also 1 John 2:2)*

26 All along God [1]refused to let go of mankind. At this very moment God's act of [2]righteousness is [3]pointing them to the evidence of their innocence, with Jesus as the [4]fountainhead of faith. *(God's tolerance, [1]**anoche**, to echo upwards; God continues to hear the echo of his likeness in us. See Rom 2:4. In both these verses [25+26] Paul uses the word, [3]**endeixis**, where we get the word indicate from. It is also part of the stem of the word translated, righteousness, [2]**dikaiosune**. To point out, to show, to convince with proof. Then follows, [4]**ek pisteos iesou; ek,** source or origin and **iesou** is in the Genitive case, the owner of faith is Jesus! He is both the source and substance of faith! Hebrews 11:1, 12:2 "The Incarnation means that God Himself condescended to enter into our alienated human existence, to lay hold of it, to bind it in union with Himself; and the consummation of the Incarnation in the death and resurrection means the Son of God died for all men, and so once and for all constituted men as men upon whom God had poured out His life and love, so that men are for ever laid hold of by God and affirmed in their being as His creatures. They can no more escape from His love and sink into non-being than they can constitute themselves men for whom Christ has not died. How can God go back upon the death of His dear Son? How can God undo the Incarnation and go back upon Himself? How can God who is Love go back upon the pouring out of His love once and for all and so cease to be Himself? That is the decisive, final thing about the whole Incarnation including the death of Christ, that it affects all men, indeed the whole of creation, for the whole of creation is now put on a new basis with God, the basis of a Love that does not withhold itself but only overflows in our unending Love. That is why creation still continues in being, and that is why man still exists, for God has not given him up, but on the contrary poured out His love upon him unreservedly once and for ever, decidedly and finally affirming man as His child, eternally confirming the creation as His own handiwork. God does not say Yes, and No, for all He has done is Yes and Amen in Christ. That applies to every man, whether he will or no. He owes his very being to Christ and belongs to Christ, and in that he belongs to Christ he has his*

being only from Him and in relation to Him." Thomas F. Torrance courtesy Baxter Kruger's study notes.)

27 The law of faith cancels the law of works; which means there is suddenly nothing left for anyone to boast in. No one is superior to another. *(Bragging only makes sense if there is someone to compete with or impress. "While we compete with one another and compare ourselves with one another we are without understanding. [2 Corinthians 10:12]. "Through the righteousness of God we have received a faith of equal standing." [See 2 Peter 1:1 RSV] The OS (operating system) of the law of works is willpower; the OS of the law of faith is love. Galatians 5:6 Love sets faith in motion. The law presented one with choices; grace awakens belief! Willpower exhausts, love ignites! If choices could save us we would be our own Saviors! Willpower is the language of the law, love is the language of grace and it ignites faith that leads to romance; falling in love beats "making a decision to believe in love" by far! See Rom 7:19 Willpower has failed me; this is how embarrassing it is, the most diligent decision that I make to do good, disappoints.)*

28 This leaves us with only one logical conclusion, mankind is justified by God's faith and not by their ability to keep the law.

29 Which means that God is not the private property of the Jews but belongs equally to all the nations. *(While the law excludes the non-Jewish nations, faith includes us all on level terms.)*

30 There is only one God, he deals with everyone, circumcised or uncircumcised exclusively on the basis of faith.

31 No, faith does not re-write the rules; instead it confirms that the original life-quality meant for mankind as documented in the law, is again realized.

Chapter 4

1 If we look at our father Abraham as an example and scrutinize his life, would you say that he discovered any reason for placing confidence in the flesh through personal contribution? *(What qualified Abraham to be the father of the multitudes of nations? The only part he played was his unwavering belief in God's faith in him.)*

2 If he felt that his friendship with God was a reward for good behavior, then surely he would have reason to recommend the recipe; yet it is plain to see that it was all God's initiative from start to finish!

3 Scripture is clear, "Abraham believed what God believed about him and that concluded his righteousness."

4 There is a large difference between a reward and a gift: if you have earned something through hard work, what you receive in return is your due and certainly not a gift.

5 It is clear then that someone who believes that God declares the ungodly innocent understands that it is faith and not our toil that accounts for righteousness.

6 David confirms this principle when he speaks of the blessedness of the one who discovers God's approval without any reference to something specific that they had done to qualify themselves.

7 Oh what [1]happy progress one makes with the weight of sin and guilt removed and one's slate wiped clean! *(The Hebrew word [1]**ashar**, blessed,*

means to advance, to make progress. [See Ps 32:1])

8 "How blessed is the one who receives a [1]receipt instead of an invoice for their sins." *([1]**logitzomai**, to make a calculation to which there can only be one logical conclusion, to take an inventory.)*

9 Is this blessing restricted exclusively to the circumcised or extended also to the uncircumcised? Remember we are looking at Abraham as an example; his righteousness was founded on faith.

10 Did circumcision play any role in Abraham's standing before God? Certainly not; it is clear that God already calculated his faith as righteousness before he was circumcised. *(Righteousness is not a reward for good behavior.)*

11 Circumcision was introduced as a *(prophetic)* **external seal to confirm the fact that Abraham's faith already resulted in righteousness. This qualifies him to be the father of all uncircumcised people who would believe as he did in the impartation of acquittal.** *(The seal was not meant to be a distraction but rather a prophetic confirmation to righteousness by faith. Just like a receipt is only a reference to, and not the actual transaction.)*

12 At the same time he also represents as father all those for whom circumcision is not merely a skin deep religious ritual, but who walk in the footprints of his faith.

13 Righteousness by faith and not righteousness by law prompted the promise when God announced to Abraham that he would father those who would inherit the world. It is again a matter of embracing a gift rather than receiving a reward for keeping the law.

14 Faith would be emptied of its substance and the principle of promise would be meaningless if the law of personal performance was still in play to qualify the heirs. *(Faith is not in competition with the law. The life quality that faith reveals is consistent with mankind's original design and mirrors the very life the law promotes.)*

15 The law system is bound to bring about disappointment, regret and anger; if there is no law there is nothing to break; no contract, no breach.

16 Therefore since faith sponsors the gift of grace, the promise is equally secured for all the children. The law has no exclusive claim on anyone *(the reward system cannot match the gift principle).* **Faith is our source, and that makes Abraham our father.**

17 When God changed Abram's name to Abraham, he made a public statement that he would be the father of all nations. *(Genesis 17:5)* **Here we see Abraham faced with God's faith; the kind of faith that resurrects the dead and calls things which are not** *(visible yet)* **as though they were.** *(Note that most of Abram's ancestors were allready fathers by the time that they had turned 30 or 35; yet Terah was 70 years old before he had Abram; his name suggests that Terah acknowledged that he could not claim parenthood of this son, he was 'fathered from above'! [Gen 11:12-26] Now imagine how nervous Abram was when eventually he was 75 and still without child! That was when God met with him and added to his name the 'ha' of Jaweh's (Jehovah) own name! In Arabic the word raham means drizzling and lasting rain. The innumerable drops of water in a drizzling rain are like the stars mentioned in Gen 15:5 ("look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them . . . so shall your seed be") now imagine those innumerable stars raining down upon the earth and each one becomes a grain of sand! So shall your seed be! Gen 22:17 ("I will indeed bless you, and I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore"). Abraham's identity, his name, was the echo of God's faith and his bold confession in the absence of Isaac. The name change, similar to that of Simon to Rock, reminds mankind*

to realize their original identity as sons of God, hewn out of the Rock [Deut 32:18, Isa 51:1, 2].)

18 Faith gave substance to hope when everything seemed hopeless; the words, "so shall your seed be" conceived in him the faith of fatherhood. *(Abraham's case here pictures the hopelessness of fallen mankind, having lost their identity, and faced with the impossibility to redeem themselves.)*

19 Abraham's faith would have been nullified if he were to take his own age and the deadness of Sarah's womb into account. His hundred year old body and Sarah's barren womb did not distract him in the least! He finally knew that no contribution from their side could possibly assist God in fulfilling his promise!

20 While he had every reason to doubt the promise, he did not hesitate for a moment but instead empowered by faith confidence, he continued to communicate God's opinion. *(His name was his confession: in the Hebrew language, "Abraham"was not a mere familiar sounding name, but a meaningful sentence, a confession of faith authority, against the odds. He did not become embarrassed about his name; he did not change his name to "Abe" for short when there seemed to be no change in his circumstances. Every time he introduced himself or someone called him by his name, it was a bold declaration and repetition of God's promise, calling things that were not as though they were. I would imagine that Sarah spoke his name the most! In fact, every time they addressed one another they spoke the promise, "Mother of nations, kings of peoples shall come from you!" [Gen 17:5, 16]. Abraham, "the father of the multitudes.")*

21 Abraham's confidence was his [1]dress-code; he knew beyond doubt that the power of God to perform was equal to his promise. *([1]**plerophoreo**, from **plero** to be completely covered in every part, + **phoreo**, to wear garments or armor; traditionally translated to be completely*

persuaded. His faith was his visible identity and armor; he wore his persuasion like he would his daily garments.)

22 The persuasion of God rubbed off on Abraham and became his personal conviction. This was the [1]basis of his righteousness. *("Righteousness was [1]reckoned to him," this means that God's faith pointed Abraham to an invisible future where mankind's innocence and identity would be redeemed again. Greek, [1]**logitsomai**, logical conclusion.)*

23 Here is the Good News: the recorded words, "It was reckoned to him" were not written for his sake alone.

24 Scripture was written with us in mind! The same [1]conclusion is now equally relevant in our realizing the significance of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. *(By raising Jesus from the dead God proclaims his belief in our redeemed innocence. Isaac's birth from Sarah's barren womb prophetically declared the resurrection of Jesus from the tomb! Abraham's best efforts could not produce Isaac. Sarah's dead womb is a picture of the impossibility of the flesh to produce a child. This underlines mankind's inability to redeem themselves under the law of willpower. Jesus said, "Abraham saw my day!" Mankind's most extreme self-sacrifice offered in an attempt to win the favorable attention of their deity could never match the sacrifice of God's Lamb to win the attention of mankind! When Isaac questioned his father about the sacrifice, Abraham announced, "Jaweh jireh!" Jaweh sees! And he lifted up his eyes and behold **behind him** was a ram caught in the thorn bush by its horns! Note, "Behind him!" Faith sees the future in past tense-mode! The resurrection is the ultimate proof and trophy of righteousness by God's faith. [See Rom 6:11] [1]**logitsomai** - logical conclusion. "Consider [**logitsomai**] yourself dead indeed," compared with 4:19, "Abraham considered his own body dead." We can only study Scripture in the context of Christ as representing the human race; God had us in mind all along [John 5:39].)*

25 Here is the equation: He was handed over [1]because of mankind's [2]fallen mindset; he was raised [1]because we were declared righteous! His resurrection is the official receipt to our acquittal. *(His cross = our sins, his resurrection = our innocence! His death brought closure to our fallen mindset-paradigm; his resurrection is proof of our redeemed righteousness. Why was Jesus handed over to die? Because of, [1]**dia**, our transgressions. Why was he raised from the dead? Because of, [1]**dia**, our righteousness! His resurrection reveals our righteousness! If mankind was still guilty after Jesus died, his resurrection would be irrelevant! This explains Acts 10:28 and 2 Corinthians 5:14 and 16.*

See Youngs Literal Translation, Rom "who was delivered up because of our offences, and was raised up because of our being declared righteous."

*The word [2]**parapiptō** has two components, **para**, closest possible proximity of union, and **piptō**, to descend from a higher place to a lower; to fall; to be thrust down; from **petomai**, to fly. Thus to stop flying! Losing altitude! This speaks of mankind's fallen mindset. See Col 3:1-3.*

In Acts 17:31, Paul explains to the Greek philosophers that according to the Jewish prophetic word, "God had fixed a day on which he would judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given proof to all mankind by raising him from the dead." God's declaration of your redeemed innocence is his most urgent invitation to you(manity) to encounter intimate oneness!

See also 1 Peter 1:10-12 "This salvation which you now know as your own, is the theme of the prophetic thought; this is what captured the Prophets' attention for generations and became the object of their most diligent inquiry and scrutiny. They knew all along that mankind's salvation was a grace revelation, sustained in their prophetic utterance! (Salvation would never be by personal achievement or a reward to willpower-driven initiative! The law of works would never replace grace!)

1 Pet 1:11 In all of their conversation there was a constant quest to determine who the Messiah would be, and exactly when this will happen. They knew with certainty that it was the spirit of Christ within them pointing prophetically and giving testimony to the sufferings of the Christ and the subsequent glory. (Whatever glory was lost in Adam, would be redeemed again in Jesus Christ!)

1 Pet 1:12 It was revealed to them that this glorious grace message that

they were communicating pointed to a specific day and person beyond their own horizon and generation; they saw you in their prophetic view! This heavenly announcement had you in mind all along! They proclaimed glad tidings to you in advance, in the Holy Spirit, commissioned from heaven; the shepherd-messengers themselves longed to gaze deeply into its complete fulfilment.")

Chapter 5

1 The [1]conclusion is clear: our righteousness has absolutely nothing to do with our ability to keep moral laws; it is the immediate result of what Jesus accomplished on mankind's behalf. This gives context to [2]faith and finds expression in unhindered, [3]face to face [4]friendship with God! Jesus Christ is the head of this union! *(In one sentence Paul sums up the previous four chapters. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." [KJV] The word [1]**dikaiothentes** is an Aorist Participle, which translates, "having been justified by faith." See previous verse, Rom 4:25 in Youngs Literal Translation. [2]Paul's reference to our justification is the faith of God and not our own efforts to justify ourselves - see Romans 1:16,17 and Habakkuk 2:4. The preposition [3]**pros** means face to face; see John 1:1. The word, [4]**eirene**, means peace, from **eiro**, to join, to be set at one again, in carpentry it is referred to as the dove-tail joint, which is the strongest joint. Peace is a place of unhindered enjoyment of friendship beyond guilt, suspicion, blame or inferiority.)*

2 Jesus is God's face to face grace [1]embrace of the entire human race. So here we are, [2]standing tall in the joyful bliss of our redeemed innocence! We are God's [3]dream come true! This was God's [4]idea all along! *(To be welcomed with wide-open arms, [1]**prosagoge,** from **pros**, face to face and **ago**, to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep. The words, 'by faith'*

*are in brackets in the Greek text and are not supported by the best Greek manuscripts. Joy is not an occasional happy feeling; we are [2]positioned there, [2]**histemi,** in an immovable, unthreatened union! Hope, [2]**elpis** from **elpo**, to anticipate, usually with pleasure. The word [4]**doxa**, often translated, glory, is from **dokeo**, to form an idea, opinion.)*

3 Our blissful boasting in him remains uninterrupted in times of trouble; we know that pressure reveals patience. Tribulation does not have what it takes to nullify what hope knows we have!

4 Patience provides [1]proof of every positive expectation. *([1]**dokimos**, proof. Thayer Definition: scrutinized and accepted, particularly of coins and money.)*

5 This kind of hope does not disappoint; the gift of the Holy Spirit completes our every expectation and ignites the love of God within us like an artesian well. ***(ekxeo**, to pour out. The Holy Spirit is an outpouring not an in-pouring! See John 7:37-39, also Titus 3:6)*

6 God's timing was absolutely perfect; mankind was at their weakest when Christ died their death. *(We were bankrupt in our efforts to save ourselves.)*

7 It is most unlikely that someone will die for another person, even if they are righteous; yet it is remotely possible that someone can brave such devotion that one would actually lay down one's own life in an effort to save the life of an extraordinary good person.

8 Herein is the extremity of God's love gift: mankind was rotten to the core when Christ died their death.

9 If God could love us that much when we were ungodly and guilty, how much more are we free to realize his love now that we are declared innocent by his blood? *(God does not love us more now that we are reconciled to him; we are now free to realize how much he loved us all along! [Col 2:14, Rom 4:25])*

10 Our hostility and indifference towards God did not reduce his love for us; he saw equal value in us when he exchanged the life of his Son for ours. Now that the act of [1]reconciliation is complete, his life in us saves us from the gutter-most to the uttermost. *(Reconciliation, from [1]**katalasso**, meaning a mutual exchange of equal value. Thayer Definition: to exchange, as coins for others of equivalent value. "For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life." — RSV)*

11 Thus, our joyful boasting in God continues; Jesus Christ has made reconciliation a reality.

12 One person opened the door to [1]sin. Sin introduced *(spiritual)* **death. Both sin and death had a global impact. No one escaped its tyranny.** *(The word translated sin, is the word [1]**hamartia**, from **ha**, negative and **meros**, portion or form, thus to be without your allotted portion or without form, pointing to a disorientated, distorted identity; the word **meros**, is the stem of **morphe**, as in 2 Corinthians 3:18 the word **metamorphe**, with form, is the opposite of **hamartia** - without form. Sin is to live out of context with the blueprint of one's design; to behave out of tune with God's original harmony.)*

13 The law did not introduce sin; it was just not pointed out yet.

14 In the mean time death dominated everyone's lifestyle, from Adam till Moses, *(2500 years before the law was given)* **no one was excluded; even those whose sins were different from Adam's. The fact is that**

Adam's [1]deviation set sin into motion - what happened to mankind because of one man, Adam, is in principle typical of what was about to happen to the same mankind because of the one man, Jesus! *(Paul now employs a word that only he uses in his epistles [x9]* ***parabasis*** *instead of the usual word for sin,* ***hamartia*** *-* ***parabasis*** *has two components,* ***para****, which points to a close proximity/union and* ***bainos****, step, footprint - in this sense, a deviation; out of step - out of sync. In Adam mankind became out of sync with their true identity but didn't know it until the law revealed it - in Christ the same mankind became exceedingly righteous but do not realize it until the gospel reveals it.)*

15 The only similarity in the comparison between the [1]crash-landing and the gift, is that both Adam and Christ represent the masses. However, the grace gift lavished upon mankind in the one man Jesus Christ supersedes the effect of Adam's failure by far and is beyond comparison in significance to the idea of [2]death and separation. *(Now Paul introduces the word [1]****paraptoma****, from* ***para*** *closest possible proximity and* ***pipto****, to descend from a higher place to a lower – to stop flying. No wonder he urges us in Col 3:1-3 to engage our thoughts with the things that are above, where we are co-elevated and jointly enthroned in the heavenlies together with Christ! The word [2]****apothnesko****, death, suggests a separation; from* ***apo****, meaning any kind of separation of one thing from another by which the union or fellowship of the two is destroyed; also of a state of separation and distance. The word,* ***thnesko*** *means death.*
But God's free gift immeasurably outweighs the transgression. For if through the transgression of the one individual the mass of mankind have died, infinitely greater is the generosity wherewith God's grace, and the gift given in his grace which found expression in the one man Jesus Christ, have been bestowed on the mass of mankind.— Weymouth, 1912)

16 The principle of the gift speaks a different language and brings a radically different equation to the table. Whereas a single sin resulted in a judgment that concluded in condemnation; grace translates countless deviations into acquittal and innocence.

17 Death no longer has the final say. Life rules! If the effect of one man's crash-landing engaged mankind in a death-dominated lifestyle how much more advantaged is the very same mankind now that they are the recipients of the boundless reservoirs of grace, empowering them to enjoy the dominion of life through the gift of righteousness because of that one man, Jesus Christ. Grace is out of all proportion in superiority to the transgression. *(No, grace is not something you qualify for by receiving it! Grace already belongs to mankind without their permission! The words* ***οἱ λαμβάνοντες - [1]oi lambanontes*** *do not mean, to believingly accept, but simply the recipients! [the Present Active Participle Nominative] The word* ***[2]perisseia περισσεία*** *means super abundantly; that which exceeds all boundaries. Of course it doesn't take faith out of the equation! It gives context to faith! See verse 1&2. Faith isn't what you do in order to; it's what happens to you because of!)*

18 The conclusion is clear: if one offence condemns the entire human race; then in principle, the righteousness of one vindicates the entire human race.

19 The disobedience of the one [1]exhibits mankind as sinners; the obedience of another exhibits mankind as righteous. *(The word,* ***[1]kathistemi****, means to cause to be, to set up, to exhibit. We were not made sinners by our own disobedience; neither were we made righteous by our own obedience.)*

20 The presence of the law made no difference, instead it merely highlighted the offence; but where sin increased, grace superseded it.

21 Death provided sin its platform and power to reign from; now grace has taken over sovereignty through righteousness to introduce unthreatened life under the Lordship of Jesus Christ over us.

Chapter 6

1 It is not possible to interpret grace as a cheap excuse to continue in sin. It sounds to some that we are saying, "Let's carry on sinning then so that grace may abound." *(In the previous chapter Paul expounds the heart of the gospel by giving us a glimpse of the far-reaching faith of God; even at the risk of being misunderstood by the legalistic mind he does not compromise the message.)*

2 How ridiculous is that! How can we be dead and alive to sin at the same time?

3 What are we saying then in baptism, if we are not declaring that we understand our union with Christ in his death?

4 Baptism pictures how we were co-buried together with Christ in his death; then it powerfully illustrates how in God's mind we were co-raised with Christ into a new lifestyle. *(Hos 6:2)*

5 We were like seeds planted together in the same soil, to be co-quickened to life. If we were included in his death we are equally included in his resurrection. *(2 Cor 5:14 - 17)*

6 We perceive that our old lifestyle was co-crucified together with him; this concludes that the vehicle that accommodated sin in us, was scrapped and rendered entirely useless. Our slavery to sin has come to an end.

7 If nothing else stops you from doing something wrong, death certainly does.

8 Faith sees us joined in his death and alive with him in his resurrection.

9 It is plain for all to see that death lost its dominion over Christ in his resurrection; he need not ever die again to prove a further point.

10 His appointment with death was [1]once-off. As far as sin is concerned, he is dead. The reason for his death was to take away the sin of the world; his life now exhibits our union with the life of God. *(The Lamb of God took away the sin of the world; [1]**efapax**, once and for all, a final testimony, used of what is so done to be of perpetual validity and never needs repetition. This is the final testimony of the fact that sin's power over us is destroyed. In Hebrews 9:26, "But Jesus did not have to suffer again and again since the fall (or since the foundation) of the world; the single sacrifice of himself in the fulfillment of history now reveals how he has brought sin to naught." "Christ died once, and faced our judgment! His second appearance (in his resurrection) has nothing to do with sin, but to reveal salvation unto all who eagerly embrace him [Heb 9:28]."")*

11 This reasoning is equally relevant to you. [1]Calculate the cross; there can only be one logical conclusion: he died your death; that means you died to sin, and are now alive to God. Sin-consciousness can never again feature in your future! You are in Christ Jesus; his Lordship is the authority of this union. *(We are not being presumptuous to reason that we are in Christ! "[1]Reckon yourselves therefore dead to sin" The word, [1]**logitsomai**, means to make a calculation to which there can only be one logical conclusion. [See Eph 1:4 and 1 Cor 1:30].*
"From now on, think of it this way: Sin speaks a dead language that means nothing to you; God speaks your mother tongue, and you hang on every word. You are dead to sin and alive to God. That's what Jesus did."— The Message)

12 You are under no obligation to sin; it has no further rights to dominate your dead declared body. Therefore let it not entice you to obey its lusts. *(Your union with his death broke the association with sin [Col 3:3].)*

13 Do not let the members of your body lie around loose and unguarded in the vicinity of unrighteousness, where sin can seize it and use it as a destructive weapon against you; rather place yourself in [1]readiness to God, like someone resurrected from the dead and present your whole person as a weapon of righteousness. *(Thus you are reinforcing God's grace claim on mankind in Christ; [1]**paristemi**, to place in readiness, in the vicinity of.)*

14 Sin was your master while the law was your measure; now grace rules. *(The law revealed your slavery to sin, now grace reveals your freedom from it.)*

15 Being under grace and not under the law most certainly does not mean that you now have a license to sin.

16 As much as you once gave permission to sin to trap you in its spiral of spiritual death and enslave you to its dictates, the obedience that faith ignites now, introduces a new rule, rightness with God; to this we willingly yield ourselves. *(Righteousness represents everything that God restored us to—in Christ.)*

17 The content of teaching that your heart embraced has set a new [1]standard to become the [1]pattern of your life; the grace of God ended sin's dominance. *(The word, [1]**tupos**, means form, mold. The Doddrich translation translates it as, "the model of doctrine instructs you as in a mold.")*

18 Sin once called the shots; now righteousness rules.

19 I want to say it as plainly as possible: you willingly offered your faculties to obey sin, you stained your body with unclean acts and allowed lawlessness to gain supremacy in all of your conduct; in exactly the same way, I now encourage you to present your faculties and person to the supremacy of righteousness to find unrestricted expression in your lifestyle.

20 You were sins' slaves without any obligation to righteousness.

21 I know you are embarrassed now about the things you used to do with your body; I mean was it worth it? What reward or return did you get but spiritual death? Sin is a cul-de-sac. *(Sin is the worst thing you can ever do with your life!)*

22 Consider your life now; there are no outstanding debts; you owe sin nothing! A life bonded to God yields the sacred expression of his character, and completes in your experience [1]what life was always meant to be. *(Lit. The life of the ages, [1]**aionios**; traditionally translated, "and the end, eternal life".)*

23 The reward of the law is death the gift of grace is life! The bottom line is this: sin employs you like a soldier for its cause and rewards you with death; God gifts you with the highest quality of life all wrapped up in Christ Jesus our Leader. *(A soldier puts his life on the line and all he gets in the meantime is a meager ration of dried fish for his effort! **opsonion**, a soldier's wage, from **opsarion**, a piece of dried fish.)*

Chapter 7

1 I write to you in the context of your acquaintance with the law; you would agree with me that laws are only relevant in this life.

2 A wife is only bound by law to her husband while he lives; any further legal claim he has on her ends with his death.

3 The law would call her an adulteress should she give herself to another man while the first husband is still alive. Yet, once he's dead, she is free to be another's wife.

4 The very same finality in principle is applicable to you, my brothers and sisters. In the body of Christ you died to the system of the law; your inclusion in his resurrection brought about a new union. Out of this marriage*, (faith)* **now bears children unto God.** *(The first marriage produced sin; righteousness is the child of the new union. In the previous chapter Paul deals with the fact that our inclusion in Christ in his death broke the association with sin; now he reveals that it also broke the association with the system of the law of works as a reference to righteousness.)*

5 At the time when the flesh ruled our lives, the subtle influences of sins which were ignited by the law, conceived actions within us that were consistent in character with their parent and produced spiritual death.

6 But now we are fully released from any further association with a life directed by the rule of the law, we are dead to that which once held us captive, free to be slaves to the newness of spirit-spontaneity rather than age old religious rituals, imitating the mere face value of the written code. *(The moment you exchange spontaneity with rules, you've lost the edge of romance.)*

7 The law in itself is not sinful; I am not suggesting that at all. Yet in pointing out sin, the law was in a sense the catalyst for sinful actions to manifest. Had the law not said, "Thou shalt not covet," I would not have had a problem with lust.

8 But the commandment triggered sin into action, suddenly an array of sinful appetites were awakened in me. The law broke sin's dormancy.

9 Without the law I was alive; the law was introduced, sin revived and I died.

10 Instead of being my guide to life, the commandment proved to be a death sentence.

11 Sin took advantage of the law and employed the commandment to seduce and murder me.

12 I stress again that the law as principle is holy and so is every individual commandment it contains; it consistently promotes that which is just and good.

13 How then could I accuse something that is that good to have killed me? I say again, it was not the law, but sin that caused my spiritual death. The purpose of the law was to expose sin as the culprit. The individual commandment ultimately serves to show the exceeding extent of sin's effect on mankind.

14 We agree that the law is spiritual, but because I am [1]sold like a slave to sin, I am reduced to a mere carnal life. *(Spiritual death. The*

*word, [1]**piprasko** comes from **perao**, meaning to transport into a distant land in order to sell as a slave. Sin is a foreign land.)*

15 This is how the sell-out to sin affects my life: I find myself doing things my conscience does not allow. My dilemma is that even though I sincerely desire to do that which is good, I don't, and the things I despise, I do.

16 It is obvious that my conscience sides with the law;

17 which confirms then that it is not really I who do these things but sin manifesting its symptoms in me. *(Sin is similar to a dormant virus that suddenly breaks out in very visible symptoms.)* **It has taken my body hostage.**

18 The total extent and ugliness of sin that inhabits me, reduced my life to good intentions that could not be followed through.

19 Willpower has failed me; this is how embarrassing it is, the most diligent decision that I make to do good, disappoints; the very evil I try to avoid, is what I do. *(If mere quality decisions could rescue mankind, the law would have been enough. Good intentions cannot save someone. The revelation of what happened to us in Christ's death is what brings faith into motion to liberate from within. Faith is not a decision we make to give God a chance, faith is realizing our inclusion in what happened on the Cross and in the resurrection of Christ! See Rom 3:27.)*

20 If I do the things I do not want to do, then it is clear that I am not evil, but that I host sin in my body against my will.

21 It has become a predictable principle; I desire to do well, but my mere desire cannot escape the evil presence that dictates my actions.

22 The real person that I am on the inside delights in the law of God. *(The law proves to be consistent with my inner make-up.)*

23 There is another law though, *(foreign to my design)* **the law of sin, activating and enrolling the members of my body as weapons of war against the law of my mind. I am held captive like a prisoner of war in my own body.**

24 It doesnt matter how I [1]weigh myself I just do not measure up to expectations! The situation is absolutely desperate for mankind; is there anyone who can deliver them from this death trap? *(The word [1]**talaipōros** occurs only twice in the New Testament - Rom 7:24, Rev 3:17 - and both times it is translated wretched!? It has two comonents, **talanton**, which is the word for a scale of balance; that which is weighed, a talent; and **poros** from **peira**, to test as in testing the weight of something.)*

25 Thank God, this is exactly what he has done through Jesus Christ our Leader; he has come to our rescue! I am finally freed from this conflict between the law of my mind and the law of sin in my body. *(In the Incarnation, in a human body exactly like ours, Jesus balanced the scales! He is the true measure of the life of our design - he revealed and redeemed the image and likeness of God in us as in a mirror! See Rom 1:16,17 and 3:24 and 27.)*

Chapter 8

1 Now the decisive conclusion is this: in Christ, every bit of condemning evidence against us is cancelled. *("Who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." This sentence was not in the original text, but*

later copied from verse 4. The person who added this most probably felt that the fact of Paul's declaration of mankind's innocence had to be made subject again to a person's conduct. Religion under the law felt more comfortable with the condition of personal contribution rather than the conclusion of what faith reveals. The "in Christ" revelation is key to God's dealing with mankind. It is the PIN-code of the Bible. [See 1 Cor 1:30 and Eph 1:4].)

2 The law of the Spirit is the liberating force of life in Christ. This leaves me with no further obligation to the law of sin and death. Spirit has superseded the sin enslaved senses as the principle law of our lives. *(The law of the spirit is righteousness by faith vs the law of personal effort and self righteousness which produces condemnation and spiritual death which is the fruit of the DIY tree.)*

3 The law failed to be anything more than an instruction manual; it had no power to deliver us from the strong influence of sin holding us hostage in our own bodies. God disguised himself in his Son in this very domain where sin ruled us, in flesh. The body he lived and conquered in was no different to ours. Thus sin's authority in the human body was condemned. *(Hebrews 4:15, As High Priest he fully identifies with us in the context of our frail human life. Having subjected it to close scrutiny, he proved that the human frame was master over sin. His sympathy with us is not to be seen as excusing weaknesses that are the result of a faulty design, but rather as a trophy to mankind. He is not an example for us but of us.)*

4 The righteousness promoted by the law is now realized in us. Our practical day-to-day life bears witness to spirit inspiration and not flesh domination.

5 Sin's symptoms are sponsored by the senses, a mind dominated by the sensual. Thoughts betray source; spirit life attracts spirit thoughts.

6 Thinking patterns are formed by reference, either the sensual appetites of the flesh and spiritual death, or zoe-life and total tranquillity flowing from a mind addicted to spirit *(faith)* **realities.**

7 A mind focused on flesh *(the sensual domain where sin held me captive)* **is distracted from God with no inclination to his life-laws. Flesh** *(self-righteousness)* **and spirit** *(faith righteousness)* **are opposing forces.** *(Flesh no longer defines you; faith does!)*

8 It is impossible for those immersed in flesh to at the same time accommodate themselves to the opinion, desire and interest of God.

9 But you are not ruled by a flesh-consciousness, *(law of works),* **but by a spirit-consciousness,** *(faith);* **God's Spirit is [1]at home in you. Anyone who does not see [2]themself fully [1]clothed and identified in the Spirit of Christ, cannot be [2]themself.** *(If anyone does not embrace the Spirit of Christ, they are not themselves. The word [1]**echo** means to have in hand, to hold, in the sense of wearing like a garment, to possess in mind, to be closely joined to a person, and [2]**hauto** from **heauto**, reflexive relation, himself, herself, themselves. In James 1:24, "for they away from what the mirror reveals, and immediately forget what manner of person they are." Also in Romans 1:23, "Losing sight of God, made them lose sight of who they really were. In their calculation the image and likeness of God became reduced to a corrupted and distorted pattern of themselves." See also Luke 15:17, "The prodigal son came to himself ... ." [same word used here, [2]**heauto**].)*

10 The revelation of [1]Christ in you [1]declares that your body is as good as dead to sin's demands; sin cannot find any expression in a corpse. You co-died together with him. Yet your spirit is alive because of what righteousness reveals. *(The word traditionally translated, "if" [1]**de ei**, as in "if Christ is in you ..." can either be a condition or a conclusion, which*

makes a vast difference. [1]"If God be for us" (v 31) is most certainly a conclusion of the revelation of the Gospel; all of God's action in Christ confirms the fact that he is for us and not against us. Thus, [1]"because God is for us ... " in the same context this verse reveals that Christ is in us. See Galatians 1:16, "it pleased the Father to reveal his Son in me, in order that I might proclaim him in the nations." See also Romans 10:6-8, "Righteousness by faith says ... .")

11 Our union with Christ further reveals that because the same Spirit that awakened the body of Jesus from the dead inhabits us, we equally participate in his resurrection. In the same act of authority whereby God raised Jesus from the dead, he co-restores your body to life by his indwelling Spirit. *(Your body need never again be an excuse for an inferior expression of the Christ life, just as it was reckoned dead in Christ's death, it is now reckoned alive in his resurrection. See Eph 2:5.)*

12 We owe flesh nothing.

13 In the light of all this, to now continue to live under the sinful influences of the senses, is to reinstate the dominion of spiritual death. Instead, we are indebted to now exhibit the highest expression of life inspired by the Spirit. This life demonstrates zero tolerance to the habits and sinful patterns of the flesh.

14 The original life of the Father revealed in his Son is the life the Spirit now [1]conducts within us. *(The word, [1]**agoo**, means to conduct or to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep.)*

15 Slavery is such a poor substitute for sonship! They are opposites; the one leads forcefully through fear while sonship responds fondly to Abba Father.

16 His Spirit resonates within our spirit to confirm the fact that we originate in God.

17 Because we are his offspring, we qualify to be heirs; God himself is our portion, we co-inherit with Christ. Since we were represented and included in his suffering we equally participate in the glory of his resurrection.

18 He has taken the sting out of our suffering; what seemed burdensome in this life becomes insignificant in comparison to the glory he reveals in us. *(See 2 Cor 4:16-18)*

19 Our lives now represent the one event every creature anticipates with held breath, standing on tip-toe as it were to witness the unveiling of the sons of God. Can you hear the drum-roll?

20 Every creature suffered abuse through Adam's fall; they were discarded like a squeezed-out orange. Creation did not volunteer to fall prey to the effect of the fall. Yet within this stark setting, hope prevails.

21 All creation knows that the glorious liberty of the sons of God sets the stage for their own release from decay.

22 We sense the global agony and pain recorded in history until this very moment.

23 We ourselves feel the grief echo of their groaning within us while we are ready to embrace the original blueprint also of our physical stature to the full consequence of sonship. What we already now participate in as first fruits of the spirit will bloom into a full gathering of the harvest. *(The glorified physical body [Mt 17]. Also the full realization of everything reconciled in Christ. In James 1:18, "It was his*

delightful resolve to give birth to us; we were conceived by the unveiled logic of God, the Word of truth." We lead the exhibition of his handiwork, like first fruits introducing the rest of the harvest he anticipates.)

24 For what we already experience confirms our hope and continues to fuel our expectation for what we still cannot see. In the final visible completeness of the harvest, hope has fulfilled its function.

25 In the meantime our expectation takes us beyond visual confirmation into a place of patient contentment.

26 The Spirit also sighs within us with words too deep for articulation, assisting us in our prayers when we struggle to know how to pray properly. When we feel restricted in our flesh, he supersedes our clumsy efforts and hits bulls-eye every time. *(He continues to call things which seem non-existent as though they were! [Rom 4:17]. He is never distracted, he only sees and celebrates perfection.)*

27 He who scrutinizes the heart understands the intention of the spirit. His [1]intercession for the Saints is consistent with the blue-print purpose of God. *("I knew you even before I fashioned you in your mother's womb" [Jer 1:5]. "Then you will know, even as you have always been known." [1 Cor 13:12]. He knows us so much better than what we know ourselves. He intercedes for us, [1]**entungchano**, means to hit the target with an arrow or javelin. He is not trying to persuade God about us, he persuades us about the Father! He brings our conversation back to the point; the success of the cross.)*

28 Meanwhile we know that the love of God causes everything to mutually contribute to our advantage. His Master Plan is announced in our original identity. *(Called according to his purpose, **kaleo**, meaning to surname, to identify by name.)*

29 He pre-designed and engineered us from the start to be jointly fashioned in the same mold and image of his Son according to the exact blueprint of his thought. We see the original and intended pattern of our lives preserved in his Son. He is the firstborn from the same womb that reveals our genesis. He confirms that we are the invention of God. *(We come from above [See John 1:13; also John 3:3-13] We were also born anew when he was raised from the dead! [1 Peter 1:3] His resurrection co-reveals our common genesis as well as our redeemed innocence. [Rom 4:25 and Acts 17:31] No wonder then that he is not ashamed to call us his siblings! The word,* ***adelphous****, with* ***a*** *as a connective particle and* ***delphus****, the womb. We share the same origin [Heb 2:11* ***eks*** *[origin; source]* ***henos*** *[one]* ***pantes*** *[everyone], and, "In him we live and move and have our being, we are indeed his offspring!" [Acts 17:28].)*

30 Jesus reveals that we [1]pre-existed in God; he [2]defined us. He [3]rendered us innocent and also [4]adorned us with splendor and esteem. *(The word [1]****prohorisen*** *from* ***prohoritso****, pre-defined, like when an architect draws up a detailed plan. Then [2]****ekalesen*** *from* ***kaleo****, to surname, identify by name. The verb, [3]****edikaiosen*** *is in the Aorist Active form from* ***dikaioo****, to declare righteous and innocent. All the verbs in this verse are in the Aorist tense. The Aorist presents an occurrence in summary, viewed as a whole from the outside, almost like a snapshot of the action. Also [4]****edoxasen*** *from* ***doxazō****; we have been adorned with splendor and glory. He redeemed our innocence and restored the glory we lost in Adam. See Romans 3:23, 24)*

31 All these things point to one conclusion, God is for us! Who can prevail against us?

32 The [1]gift of his Son is the irrefutable evidence of God's heart towards us. He [2]held nothing in reserve; but freely [3]gave everything we could ever wish to have; this is what our [4]joint sonship is all about. *(The word [1]**paradidomi**, reflects the source of the gift, the very bosom of the Father. Without reserve, **ouk** [strong negative] **epheisato** from [2]**pheidomai,** means to treat leniently or sparingly. To show oneself gracious, kind, benevolent, is the word [3]**charizomai**. The word [4]**sun (pronounced soon) suggests complete union.***
Everything we lost in Adam is again restored to us in Christ. Sin left mankind with an enormous shortfall; grace restores mankind to excellence! [Rom 3:21-24, 1Cor 2:7])

33 God has [1]identified us, who can disqualify us? His [2]word is our origin. No-one can point a finger; he declared us innocent. *(The word [1]**kaleo**, means to identify by name, to surname. The word [2]**eklektos** suggests that we have our origin in God's thought; from **ek**, source, and **lego**, to communicate. He has placed us beyond the reach of blame and shame, guilt and gossip!)*

34 What further ground can there possibly be to condemn mankind? In his death he faced our judgment; in his resurrection he reveals our righteousness; the implications cannot be undone! He now occupies the highest seat of authority as the executive of our redemption in the throne room of God. *(See v 1, also Rom 4:25.)*

35 What will it take to distance us from the love of Christ? You name any potential calamity: intense pressure of the worst possible kind,

clusterphobia, persecution, destitution, loneliness, extreme exposure, life-threatening danger, or war?

36 Let me quote Scripture to remind you, "Because of our association with you, we were [1]reckoned as sheep to be slaughtered; we have been [2]jointly slain on that day. *"(The word [1]**logitsomai**, to take an inventory; to conclude. The word [2]**thanatoumetha** is only used once in this form - Paul quotes the LXX in Ps 43:23 [44:22 in Hebrew text] The preposition **meta,** together with, is combined with **thanatos,** to kill, to emphasize the idea of our joint crucifixion. Psalm 44:22. See also Ephesians 2:5; 4:8,9; Hosea 6:2, "After two days he will revive us, on the third day he will raise us up! We have been co-crucified, co-raised and are now co-seated together with Christ!)*

37 On the contrary, in the thick of these things our triumph remains beyond dispute. His love has placed us above the reach of any onslaught.

38 This is my conviction; no threat whether it be in death or life; be it angelic messengers, demon powers or political principalities, nothing known to us at this time, or even in the unknown future;

39 no dimension of any calculation in time or space, nor any device yet to be invented, has what it takes to separate us from the love of God demonstrated in Christ. The Lordship of Jesus Christ is our ultimate authority.

Chapter 9

1 What I am about to say is my honest persuasion; I am convinced beyond doubt of our inseparable union in Christ; my own conscience bears witness to this in the Holy Spirit.

2 In the light of mankind's inclusion and redeemed innocence, I feel such sorrow and painful longing for my fellow Jews. *(They are all equally included but they just do not see it!)*

3 If it could in any way profit them I would prefer myself to rather be excluded from the blessing of Christ. If my exclusion could possibly help them understand their inclusion, I would gladly offer my body as a sacrifice.

4 Sonship is the natural heritage of Israel; they historically witnessed the glory and covenants and the dramatic endorsement of the law; the prophetic rituals of worship and the Messianic promises belong to them.

5 They are the physical family of the Messiah. Yet he supersedes all our definitions; he is God, the [1]source of blessing and the ultimate announcement of everything good, for all ages. Amen! *(The word, [1]**eulogetos,** means blessed, from **eulogeo**, good word, good news, or "well done" announcement; normally translated, blessing. The Word of God reaches far beyond the boundaries of Israel, it includes every nation.)*

6 It is not as though their unbelief neutralized the Word of God in its effect; Israel is no longer restricted to a physical family and geographic location.

7 It is not the natural seed of Abraham that gives them their [1]identity, but Isaac, the faith-child. God said, "Your children's [1]identity is revealed in Isaac." ***([****Gen 21:12]; [1]**kaleo,** to surname, or to identify by*

name. Mankind's original identity was not preserved in the flesh, but in the Promise.)

8 By this God clearly indicates that mankind's true spirit identity is revealed in faith and not in flesh. The Promise is the fuel of faith. *(The promise ignites faith. Faith gives substance to what hope sees.)*

9 Remember God's pledge, "In nine months time, Sarah shall have a son." *(Genesis 18:10, "according to the time of life, thus nine months; Galatians 4:4, Jesus is the fullness of time; the promise is a Person!)*

10 Rebecca and Isaac also conceived, consistent with the promise, to further prove the point of faith versus performance.

11 God spoke to Rebecca while the twins were still in the womb. Nothing distinguished them in terms of good looks or performance *(except the fact that the one would be born minutes before the other, which would give him preference according to human tradition)***. It was recorded to emphasize the principle of [1]faith-identity as the ultimate value above any preference according to the flesh.** *(The word often translated as "election" is the word [1]**ekloge**, from **ek**, origin, source and **lego** from **logos,** the word, see Jhn 1:1,14. Faith nullifies any ground the flesh has to boast in. Rom 3:27)*

12 She was told, "the elder shall serve the younger."

13 We would say that Esau had the raw deal; he was disliked while Jacob was favored. *(And the Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples, born of you, shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other; the elder shall serve the younger." [Gen 25:23].*
The two come out of the same mold; yet they represent two types of people: one who understands his true identity by faith and one who seeks to identify

himself after the flesh. Again, the law of performance versus the law of faith is emphasized in order to prepare the ground for the promise-principle. Mankind's salvation would be by promise and not by performance; i.e. it would not be a reward for good behavior. No one will be justified by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; ***poneros****, "evil," full of hardships, annoyances and labor!)*

14 To say that God is unfair, is to miss the point.

15 Moses saw the glory of God's goodness; he saw God's mercy and the kindness of his compassion. *(Even when Israel deserved his absence he promised them his presence. Moses saw the glory and goodness of God, while he hid in the cleft of the rock. [Gen 33:18, 19]. Throughout Scripture the Rock represents the blueprint of mankind's original identity [Isa 51:1, Deut 32:18, Mt 16:15-18].)*

16 God's mercy is not a reward for good behavior; it is not a wreath given to the fastest athlete.

17 God employed Pharaoh as a prophetic figure to demonstrate the drama of mankind's salvation from their slavery to an inferior identity. Scripture records God's conversation with Pharaoh, (Ex 9:16) "But to show you my power working in you, I raised you up so that my Name *(revealing mankind's authentic and original identity)* **might be declared throughout all the earth."** *(Mankind's identity is not in Pharaoh's claim or some political leader's influence, but in their Maker.)*

18 The same act of mercy that he willingly bestows on everyone, may bless the one and harden the heart of the other.

19 This just doesn't sound reasonable at all! What gives God the right then to still blame anyone? Who can resist his will?

20 Who can dispute with God? The mold dictates the shape. *(There is only one true mold of mankind's design: the image and likeness of God.)*

21 The Potter sets the pace; same Potter, same clay; one vessel understands its value and another not; one realizes that it is priceless, the other seems worthless to itself.

22 Their sense of worthlessness has labelled them for destruction, yet God's power and passion prevail in patient endurance. *(God is not schizophrenic, having to balance out a seemingly unstable character by creating a nice guy and a bad guy: one for blessing and one for wrath! He cannot be both the Author of light and darkness; there is in him no shadow of compromise or change; no inconsistency or distortion whatsoever! [Jas 1:17, 18]. Mankind deceive themselves when their knowledge of their true identity becomes blurred by the flesh. "They go away and immediately forget what manner of person they are."*
Paul's noble birth carried no further significance when he discovered his spirit identity revealed in Christ. The recorded history of Israel prepares the prophetic stage of God's dealing with global mankind. Faith and not flesh would be the medium of God's dealing with man. Flesh reduces man to the senses and the soul realm, while faith's substance reveals mankind's true spirit identity. Truth ignites faith. His patience is shown in Pharaoh: "So get your livestock under roof, everything exposed in the open fields, people and animals, will die when the hail comes down." All of Pharaoh's servants who had respect for God's word got their workers and animals under cover as fast as they could, but those who didn't take God's word seriously left their workers and animals out in the field [Ex 9:19-21]. "For good news came to us just as to them; but the message which they heard did not benefit them, because it did not meet with faith in the hearers." [Heb 4:2 RSV])

23 He has set the stage to exhibit the wealth of his mercy upon the vessels of value. He desires to confirm in them his original intent. *(His glory,* ***doxa,*** *opinion, intent.)*

24 Being Jewish or Gentile no longer defines us; God's faith defines us. *(He "called" us;* ***kaleo****, to identify by name, to surname.)*

25 Hosea voiced the heart of God when he said, "I will call a people without identity, my people, and her who was unloved, my Darling." *(Even Esau whom you said that I hated. [See v 13]. It was common among the Hebrews to use the terms "love" and "hatred" in this comparative sense, where the former implied strong positive attachment, and the latter, not positive hatred, but merely a less love, or the withholding of the expressions of affection [compare Gen 29:30-31; Lk 14:26].)*

26 He prophesies that the very same people who were told that they are not God's people, will be told that they are indeed the children of the living God.

27 Isaiah weeps for Israel: "You might feel lost in the crowd, because your numbers equal the grains of the sand of the sea, but God does not abandon the individual." Numbers do not distract God's attention from the value of the one. *("Isaiah maintained this same emphasis: If each grain of sand on the seashore were numbered and the sum labelled 'chosen of God,' They'd be numbers still, not names; salvation comes by individual realization. God doesn't just count us; he calls us by name. Arithmetic is not his focus." — The Message)*

28 For his word will perfect his righteousness without delay; his word is poetry upon the earth. *(Jn 1:1,14; Rom 1:16,17.)*

29 The Lord of the [1]multitudes preserved for us a Seed, to rescue us from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. *(From Hebrew, [1]****tzaba, (tsabaoth)****, a mass of people. [See note on Rom 3:10] In Genesis 18, Abraham intercedes for Sodom and Gomorrah, "If there perhaps are 50 righteous people, will you save the city on their behalf?" He continues to negotiate with God, until he's down to "perhaps ten?" " ... there was none*

righteous, no not one ... .” The remnant represents the one Seed that would rescue the mass of mankind! In Romans 5:17, “one man’s obedience and act of righteousness, surpasses the effect of a multitude of sins!” If (spiritual) death saw the gap in one sin, and grabbed the opportunity to dominate mankind in Adam, how much more may we now seize the advantage to reign in righteousness in this life through that one act of Christ, who declared us innocent by his grace. Grace is superior in authority to the transgression! The single grain of wheat did not abide alone! [See John 12:24] Romans 5:18-19 states, “The conclusion is clear: it took just one offense to condemn mankind; one act of righteousness declares the same mankind innocent! The disobedience of the one exhibits mankind as sinners; the obedience of another exhibits mankind as righteous!”)

30 This means that the nations that stood outside and excluded, the very Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness through religious discipline of any kind, have stumbled upon this treasure of faith.

31 Yet Israel who sought to achieve righteousness through keeping the law, based upon their own discipline and willpower, have failed to do so.

32 How did they fail? Faith seemed just too good to be true. They were more familiar and felt more comfortable with their own futile efforts than what they did with faith. Their faith identity *(reflected in Christ)* **was a stone of offense.**

33 The conclusion of the prophetic reference pointed towards the rock as the spirit identity of human life. In Messiah, God has placed his testimony of mankind's identity in front of their eyes, in Zion, the center of their religious focus, yet, blinded by their own efforts to justify themselves, they tripped over him. But those who recognized him by faith, as the Rock from which they were hewn, are freed from the shame of their sense of failure and inferiority. *(See Deuteronomy*

32:18, "you have forgotten the Rock that birthed you…", and in Isaiah 51:1, "Look to the Rock from which you were hewn." It is only in him that mankind will discover what they are looking for. "Who is the son of man?" Mankind's physical identity is defined by their spiritual origin, the image and likeness of God, "I say you are Petros; you are Mr. Rock, a chip of the old block! [See Matthew 16:13-19]. Mankind's origin and true identity is preserved and revealed again in the Rock of ages. The term, "rock" in those days represented what we call the "hard drive" in computer language; the place where data is securely preserved for a long time. Rock fossils carry the oldest data and evidence of life. See 1 Peter 2:6)

Chapter 10

1 God knows how my heart aches with deep and prayerful longing for Israel to realize their salvation.

2 I have been there myself. I know their zeal and devotion; their problem is not their passion, but their ignorance.

3 They are tirelessly busy with their own efforts to justify themselves while blatantly ignoring the fact that God already justified them in Christ.

4 Christ is the conclusion of the law, everything the law required of mankind was fulfilled in him; he thus represents the righteousness of the human race, based upon faith *(and not personal performance)***.**

5 Moses is the voice of the law; he says that a person's life is only justified in their doing what the law requires.

6 But faith finds its voice in something much closer to a person than their most disciplined effort to obey the law. Faith understands that Christ is no longer a distant promise; neither is he reduced to a mere historic hero. He is mankind's righteousness now! Christ is no longer hidden somewhere in the realm of heaven as a future hope. For the Jews to continue to ask God to send the Messiah is a waste of time! That is not the language of faith.

7 Faith knows that the Messiah is not roaming somewhere in the region of the dead. "Who will descend into the abyss to bring Christ back from the dead," is not the language of faith. *(Those who deny the resurrection of Christ would wish to send someone to go there and confirm their doubts, and bring back final proof that Jesus was not the Messiah. Faith announces a righteousness that reveals that mankind has indeed been co-raised together with Christ; the testimony of the risen Christ is confirmed in the heart and life of every believer.)*

8 Faith-righteousness announces that every definition of distance in time, space, or hostility has been cancelled. Faith says, "The Word is near you. It is as close to you as your voice and the conviction of your heart." We publicly announce this message *(because we are convinced that it belongs to everyone).*

9 Now your salvation is realized! Your own [1]words echo God's voice. The unveiling of the masterful act of Jesus forms the words in your mouth, inspired by the conviction in your heart that God indeed raised him from the dead. *(In his resurrection, God co-raised us [Hos 6:2]. His resurrection declares our innocence [Rom 4:25]. Salvation is not reduced to a recipe or a "sinners prayer" formula; it is the spontaneous inevitable conversation of a persuaded heart! To confess, [1]**homologeo, homo,** the same thing + **logeo**, to say)*

10 Heart-faith confirms the fact of mankind's righteousness and ignites the kind of conversation consistent with salvation. *(He restored*

us to blameless innocence! It is impossible not to boldly announce news of such global consequence [Isa 40:9].)

11 Scripture declares that whosoever believes in Christ *(to be the fulfillment of the promise of God to redeem mankind)* **will [1]not be ashamed** *([2]hesitant)* **to announce it.** *([See Isa 28:16] These two Hebrew words, [2]**cush**, to make haste, and [Isa 49:23] [1]**bush**, to be ashamed, look very similar and were obviously confused in some translations—the Greek from Hebrew translation, the Septuagint, was the Scriptures Paul was familiar with and there the word was translated from the word [1]**bush.**)*

12 Nothing distinguishes the Jew from the Greek when it comes to the generosity of God. He responds with equal benevolence to everyone who sees themselves identified in him *(they realize that God defines them and not their cultural identity.)*

13 Salvation is to understand that every person's [1]true identity is revealed in Christ. *(Whosoever shall [1]call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved; [1]**epikaleomai,** to entitle; to identify by name, to surname.)*

14 How is it possible to convince people of [1]their identity in him while they do not believe that he represents them? How will they believe if they remain ignorant about who they really are? How will they understand if the Good News of their inclusion is not announced? *(The word, [1]**epikaleomai**, traditionally translates as "to call upon," from **kaleo**, which literary means to surname, or to identify by name. This is also the stem in **Ekklesia**, with **ek** being a preposition that denotes origin, and **kaleo**. In the context of Matthew 16 where Jesus introduces this word, he reveals that the son of man is indeed the son of God, "I say to you Simon, son of Jonah, you are **Petros** [Rock] and upon this **petra** I will build my **Ekklesia**!" [See note on Rom 9:33].)*

15 What gives someone the urgency to declare these things? It is recorded in prophetic Scripture, "How lovely on the mountains *(where the watchmen were stationed to witness the outcome of a war)* **are the feet of them leaping with the exciting news of victory. Because of their eyewitness encounter they are qualified to run with the Gospel of peace and announce the consequent glad tidings of good things that will benefit everyone."**

16 It is hard to imagine that there can yet be a people who struggle to hear and understand the Good News. Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?"

17 It is clear then that faith's [1]source is found in the content of the message heard; the message is Christ. *(We are God's audience; Jesus is God's language! The Greek, [1]**ek**, is a preposition that denotes source or origin; thus, faith comes out of the word that reveals Christ. The word "Christ" appears in the best manuscripts. Herein lies the secret of the power of the gospel; there is no good news in it until the righteousness of God is revealed! [See Rom 1:17] The good news is the fact that the cross of Christ was a success. God rescued the life of our design; he redeemed our innocence. Mankind would never again be judged righteous or unrighteous by their own ability to obey moral laws! It is not about what someone must or must not do but about what Jesus has done! God now persuades everyone to believe what he knows to be true about them. [It is from faith to faith.] The Prophets wrote in advance about the fact that God believes that righteousness unveils the life that he always had in mind for us. "Righteousness by his (God's) faith defines life." [Habakkuk 2:4].)*

18 Has God not given mankind a fair chance to hear? Psalm 19 says, "His words touch the entire world like the rays of the sun; nothing is hid from its heat; yes, truly their resonance resounded in all the earth, and their voice unto the ends of the earth."

19 I cannot understand how Israel could be so blind as to miss the Messiah in their midst. First it was Moses who predicted that God would provoke them to jealousy with a mass of people who are the nobodies in their estimation; a seemingly senseless bunch of people will steal the show to the disgust of Israel. *("They have stirred me to jealousy with what is no god; they have provoked me with their idols. So I will stir them to jealousy with those who are no people; I will provoke them with a foolish nation." [Deut 32:21 RSV])*

20 Then Isaiah in no uncertain terms hears God say, "I was stumbled upon by them who did not even bother to seek me, I became obvious to a people who did not pursue me."

21 "Yet My hands were continually hovering over Israel in broad daylight beckoning them, while their [1]unbelief and negative and [2]contradictory conversation caused them to blatantly ignore me." *(The word, [1]**apetheo**, (apathy) means refusal to believe; and [2]**antilego** means contradictory conversation. [See Isa 65:1, 2].)*

Chapter 11

1 I want to make it clear that I am not saying that God rejected Israel, my own life bears witness to that, and I am as Jewish as you can get; you can trace me back to Benjamin and Abraham.

2 God did not push his people aside; his reference is his knowledge of them before they rejected him. Scripture accounts occasions where God had abundant reason to abandon Israel. Elijah hits out against them and lists their sins to persuade God to utterly cast them off. ***(proginosko*** *- to know in advance.)*

3 "Lord, they butchered your Prophets, and undermined your provision through the sacrificial altar; I am the only one left and scared to death." *(1 Kings 19:14.)*

4 Yet God answers him in a completely different tone, "You are counting wrong, you are not alone; I have seven times a thousand on reserve who have not bowed the knee to Baal. They have not exchanged me for a foreign owner." *(Seven times a thousand refers to an innumerable amount and not to an exact 7000 people. The Hebrew word "Baal" means owner, husband or master [1 Kings 19:18].)*

5 Thus even in today's context, God's original word of grace has preserved a remnant of much larger proportion than what we can number. *(The word,* ***ekloge****, from* ***ek****, a preposition denoting source or origin, +* ***logos****, word or logic, thus translated as the "original word." Traditionally this is translated as "election.")*

6 Grace cannot suggest debt or obligation at the same time. The word grace can only mean what it says. The same argument goes for mankind's good works; if salvation or any advantage for that matter is to be obtained according to prescribed regulations of conduct, then that's it. No amount of grace can change the rules! Grace means grace and work means work.

7 The very thing Israel sought to obtain through their diligent labor they failed to get; yet those who embraced grace as God's original intent hit the bull's eye every time, leaving the rest groping around in the dark like blindfolded archers. *(****eklego:*** *the original reasoning, logic, word.)*

8 Isaiah said that God has given them a spirit of slumber, causing their eyes and ears not to function. This drowsiness seems to prevail

even to this day. *(Unbelief and religious ritual are blindfolds. "And the Lord said, this people draw near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips but remove their hearts and minds far from me, and their fear and reverence for me are a commandment of men that is learned by repetition ... ." [Isa 29:10, 13])*

9 David sees how the very table of blessing has become a stumbling block to them through their ignorance. The table of the Lord is the prophetic celebration of the sacrificed Lamb, where God himself provides redemption according to the promise; yet therein they were trapped and snared and they stumbled by their own unbelief. Now their only reward is the table they set for themselves. *([See Ps 69]. Commentary by John Gill: "... the table may be called an altar." 'You put unclean bread on my altar. And you say, 'How have we made it unclean?' By your saying, the table of the Lord is of no value [Mal 1:7].*
The sacrifices offered up upon "the table;" their meat offerings and drink offerings, and all others, likewise the laws concerning the differences of meats and indeed the whole ceremonial law which lay in meats and drinks and such like things; now the Jews are placing their justifying righteousness before God, in the observance of these rites and ceremonies, and imagining that by these sacrifices their sins are really expiated and atoned for; they neglected and submitted not to the righteousness of Christ, but went about to establish their own so that which should have led them to Christ became a handwriting of ordinances against them, and rendered Christ of no effect to them. Moreover, the sacred writings, which are full of spiritual food and divine refreshment, the prophecies of the Old Testament which clearly pointed out Christ, are not understood but misapplied by them, and proved a trap, a snare, and a stumbling block to them.)

10 This is the penalty of their disbelief; eyes that constantly fail to focus on the fact that Christ took their burdens and now their backs are still bending to the point of breaking under the strain of their own burdens.

11 Does this mean that the Jews are beyond redemption? Is their stumbling permanent? No! May it never be too late for them. Their failure emphasized the inclusion of the Gentile nations. May it only prove to be their wake-up call.

12 If their stumbling enriched the rest of the world and their lack empowered the Gentiles, how much more significant will their realizing their completeness be?

13 In my capacity as a representative of the Good News to the Gentiles, I will speak in such a way that the clarity of my conclusion

14 will provoke my own flesh-and-blood family to jealousy. I know that my words will rescue many of them.

15 The Gentile nations realized their inclusion in Christ in a sense at the expense of the Jews; to now also embrace the Jews in the welcome of God is to raise them from the dead.

16 The seed sets the pace; it sanctifies what sprouts from it. Seed produces after its kind. If the invisible root is holy so are the visible branches.

17 And if some of the original branches were broken off, and you Gentiles like a wild olive were grafted in to partake of the same nourishing fatness of the roots,

18 then there is no cause for boasting against the ignorance of the Jews because you are now suddenly better off than they are. Remember, the roots sustain the branches, and not the other way round!

19 There is no point in thinking that in order to accommodate you, God had to first break off the Jewish branches.

20 Their unbelief was their loss; your faith is your gain.

21 God could do them no favors just because they were the natural branches; neither does God now owe you any special privileges.

22 Both God's goodness as well as his decisiveness are based on his integrity; unbelief is not tolerated, not in them, neither will it be tolerated in you. His favor is not to be taken for granted; instead, continue to embrace and appreciate his goodness with gratitude.

23 The moment Israel turns from their unbelief, God is ready to immediately graft them back into the tree.

24 You were cut out of the unfruitful olive tree and were grafted into the stock of the original tree. How much more will these natural branches be grafted again into their original identity.

25 Do not be ignorant then of the mystery of their temporal exclusion; their blindness opened your eyes to the fullness of God's plan for the whole world.

26 Once the nations realize the full extent of their inclusion, then all Israel shall also be saved. Just as it is written prophetically, "There shall come a Deliverer out of Zion; he shall turn ungodliness away from Jacob.

27 For this is my covenant with them that I shall take away their sins." *("And as a Savior he will come to Zion, turning away sin from Jacob,*

says the Lord." [Isa 59:20] "And as for me, this is my agreement with them, says the Lord: my spirit which is on you, and my words which I have put in your mouth will not depart from your mouth, or from the mouth of your children, or from the mouth of your children's children, says the Lord, from now and for the ages to come." [Isa 59:21])

28 In your estimation they appear to be enemies of the gospel, but their Father's love for them has not changed. He knows their original worth.

29 For God's grace gifts and his persuasion of mankind's original identity are irrevocable. *(**kaleo** - to surname, to identify by name.)*

30 In days gone by, you did not believe God; yet in a sense Israel's unbelief opened the door for you to realize God's mercy.

31 Now you are returning the favor as it were; your testimony of his mercy extends an opportunity to them to turn from their unbelief and embrace mercy.

32 In God's calculation the mass of mankind is trapped in unbelief. This qualifies all mankind for his mercy.

33 Oh, how amazing is the depth of the wealth of God's wisdom and knowledge. The understanding of his judgements can only be sourced in a conversation that originates from above; his ways are only accessible in the footprints of his thoughts. *(The word* ἀνεξερεύνητος ***anexereunētos*** *from **ana**, upwards and **exereunaō**, to search out [1 Pet 1:10] from **ek**, source, and **ereo**, to utter to speak - [only here and in Eph 3:8] Again the next word begins with the preposition **ana** - ἀνεξιχνίαστος **anexichniastos** from **ana**, upwards and **ek**, source and **ichnos**, a footprint. Sadly, both these words have been wrongly translated to suggest that it is impossible to explain God's decisions or to understand his ways! Sounds*

like Isa 55:8,9 until verse 10 comes to the rescue! "BUT! Just as the rain and the snow come down from heaven [from above] and saturate the soil, SO shall my Word be! The Incarnation is the key to undersatnding God's thoughts and his ways!)

34 Who inspired his thought? Who sat in council with him?

35 Is God indebted to anyone?

36 Everything originates in him; finds both its authentic expression and ultimate conclusion in him. His opinion rules the ages. We cannot but agree with our yes and awe. Amen.

Chapter 12

1 Live consistent with [1]who you really are, inspired by the loving kindness of God. My [2]brothers, the most practical expression of worship is to [3]make your bodies available to him as a living sacrifice; this pleases him more than any religious routine. He desires to find visible, individual expression in your person. *(The word, [1]**parakaleo**, comes from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity; a thing proceeding from a sphere of union; to have sprung from its author and giver; originating from a place of intimate connection; and the word **kaleo**, meaning to identify by name, to surname. Jesus introduces the Holy Spirit in the same capacity: **parakletos**, meaning close companion, kinsman [John 14:16]. The word, [2]**adelphos**, comes from **a**, as a connective particle, and **delphos**, meaning womb. Commonly translated as brother. [See Heb 2:11] The word, [3]**paristemi**, means to exhibit, to present. In the context of the New Testament, the sacrificial system no longer involves dead animals, but living people. "You died in his death and are now alive to God" [Rom 6:11].)*

2 Do not allow [1]current religious tradition to mold you into its pattern of reasoning. Like an inspired artist, give attention to the detail of God's desire to find expression in you. Become acquainted with perfection. To [2]accommodate yourself to the delight and good pleasure of him will transform your thoughts afresh from within. *(The word, [1]**aion**, is traditionally translated as "do not be conformed to this world." Actually **aion** points to a period of time of specific influence. In the context of this writing, Paul refers to the religious traditional influence of his day. The word [2]**euarestos,** comes from **eu**, praiseworthy, well done + **arestos**, meaning to accommodate one's self to the opinions, desires, and interests of others.)*

3 His grace gift inspires me to say to you that your thinking must be consistent with everything that is within you according to the measure of faith that God has apportioned to every individual. [1]Let the revelation of redemption shape your thoughts. *(The word [1]**sophroneo** means a saved mind.)*

4 The parallel is clear. There are many different members in one body, yet not one competes with the other in function. Instead every individual member co-compliments the other.

5 In Christ, the many individuals are all part of the same body and members of one another.

6 Our gifts may differ in function, but his grace is the same. If it is your turn to prophesy, let faith and not a title be your inspiration.

7 The same goes for every aspect of ministry, whether it be serving or to give instruction,

8 or to just be there [1]alongside someone to remind them of their true identity; always let faith set the pace. You are [3]intertwined with your [2]gift, wrapped up in the same parcel. Lead with passion; minister mercy cheerfully. *([1]**parakaleo,** alongside, closest possible proximity of nearness; [2]**metadidomi** [see note on Rom 1:11], and [3]**haplous** from **ha**, a particle of union and **pleko**, to plait, braid or weave together. You cannot distance yourself from your giving! What God now has in us is gift wrapped to the world [Eph 4:11].)*

9 Love without any hidden agenda. Utterly detest evil; be glued to good.

10 Take tender care of one another with fondness and affection; esteem one another's unique value.

11 Do not allow any hesitation to interrupt the rhythm of your zeal; capture the moment; maintain the boiling-point intensity of spirit devotion to the Lord.

12 Delight yourself in the pleasure of [1]expectation; prayer prevails victoriously under pressure. *([1]**elpis**, to anticipate, usually with pleasure.)*

13 Purpose with resolve to treat strangers as Saints; pursue and embrace them with fondness as friends on equal terms of fellowship. Make yourself useful in the most practical way possible.

14 Continue to speak well even if someone wants to take advantage of you; bless and do not blame when you feel exploited.

15 Do not merely act the role in someone else's gladness or grief; feel with them in genuine joy and compassion.

16 Esteem everyone with the same respect; no one is more important than the other. Associate yourself rather with the lowly than with the lofty. Do not distance yourself from others in your own mind. *("Take a real interest in ordinary people."— JB Phillips)*

17 Two wrongs do not make a right. Never retaliate; instead, cultivate the attitude to [1]anticipate only beauty and value in every person you encounter. *([1]**pronoew,** to know in advance.)*

18 You have within you what it takes to be everyone's friend, regardless of how they treat you. *(See Romans 1:16, 17. Also Matthew 5:44, 45.)*

19 Do not bother yourselves to get even, dear ones. Do not let anger or irritation distract you; [1]that which we have in common with one another *(righteousness)* **must set the pace. Scripture confirms that the Lord himself is the [1]revealer of righteousness.** *([1]**ekdikeo**, from **ek**, a preposition denoting origin, and **dikeo,** two parties finding likeness in one another. That which originates in righteousness sets the pace in every relationship.)*

20 "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink." These acts of kindness will be like heaping coals of fire on his head and certainly rid him of the dross in his mind and win him as a friend. *(A refiner would melt metal in a crucible and intensify the process by heaping coals of fire on it [Prov 25:21,22]. This is good strategy; be sensitive to the needs of your enemies. God sees gold in every person. Hostility cannot hide our true value. He won us while we were hostile towards him [see also Rom 5:8, 10]. His kindness led us to the radical awakening of our minds! [Rom 2:4].)*

21 Do not let evil be an excuse for you to feel defeated, rather seize the opportunity to turn the situation into a victory for good.

Chapter 13

1 Submit to the authorities with your whole heart. Any authority only has its relevance in God. God is a God of order.

2 To rebel against a God ordained structure of authority is a criminal offense.

3 Rulers are there to encourage good behavior and frighten off any evil intention.

4 They represent God's desire to protect you and to do you good. The sword they carry is not for decoration; they know how to use it against evil.

5 Do not let fear of punishment be your motivation, rather embrace a good conscience.

6 The taxes you pay is to show the government that you support what they represent on God's behalf.

7 Fulfill all your obligations to the government, whatever the tax is that they require of you. Give them their due honor and respect.

8 Remain debt free; the only thing we owe the world is our love. This is the essence of the law.

9 Love makes it impossible for you to commit adultery, or to kill someone, or to steal from someone, speak evil of anyone, or to covet anything that belongs to someone else. Your only option is to esteem a fellow human with equal value to yourself.

10 Everything love does is to the advantage of another; therefore, love is the most complete expression of what the law requires.

11 You must understand the urgency and context of time; it is most certainly now the hour to wake up at once out of the hypnotic state of slumber and unbelief. Salvation has come.

12 It was [1]night for long enough; the day has arrived. Cease immediately with any action associated with the darkness of ignorance. Clothe yourself in the radiance of light as a soldier would wear his full weaponry. *(The night is far spent, [1]**prokopto**, as a smith forges a piece of metal until he has hammered it into its maximum length.)*

13 Our lives exhibit the kind of conduct consistent with the day, in contrast to the [1]parade of the night of intoxicated licentiousness and lust, with all the quarrels and jealousy it ignites. *(The word, [1]**komos**, refers to a nocturnal and riotous procession of half drunken and frolicsome fellows who after supper parade through the streets with torches and music in honor of Bacchus or some other deity, and sing and play before houses of male and female friends; hence used generally to describe feasts and drinking parties that are protracted late into the night and indulge in revelry.)*

14 By being fully [1]clothed in Christ makes it impossible for the flesh to even imagine to find any further expression or fulfillment in lust. Jesus is Lord of your life. *([1]**enduo**, fully immersed in the consciousness of the Christ-life, as defining you.)*

Chapter 14

1 [1]Welcome those who are young in their faith with warm hospitality. Avoid controversial conversation. *([1]**proslambano**, to take somebody as one's companion.)*

2 One may feel free to eat anything, while another believes one should only eat vegetables.

3 By having faith to eat anything does not qualify you to judge the one who abstains; God doesn't treat the vegetarian any differently.

4 You are in no position to criticize the hospitality of God; he invited both to the same table and he is well capable to uphold and establish someone who still stumbles and seems weak in faith.

5 One person may see more religious importance in some days while another values every day the same. Let everyone come to the full conclusion of what the day means in their own understanding.

6 Whoever esteems the specific importance of a certain day does so to the Lord, so does he who values every day equally. One eats while another abstains; both honor God in gratitude.

7 No one can live or die in isolation; our life and death touch others.

8 Neither can our life or death distance us from him; we remain his property.

9 The death Jesus died and his resurrection and the conclusion of his life now in us is the only relevance of life and death.

10 What qualifies you to be your brother's judge? On what grounds do you condemn your brother? All of us stand in the footprint of Christ. *(We are equally represented in him.)*

11 The Prophet recorded what he heard God say, "My own life is the guarantee of my conviction, says the Lord, every knee shall freely bow to me in worship, and every tongue shall spontaneously [1]speak with the same certainty mirrored in me!" *(The word [1]**exomologeo**, from **ek**, source, origin, **homo**, the same and **logeo**, to speak, thus to speak from the same source, the same inspired persuasion, to fully agree! Paul, here quotes Isaiah 45:23 See verse 20,22,& 23 "Face me and **be** saved all the ends of the earth! [Note, '**Be saved**!' Not 'become saved!'] I am God; your idols are figments of your invention and imagination!" Isa 45:23 "I have sworn by myself; the word of my mouth has begotten righteousness; this cannot be reversed!" (See Rom 1:17. The Hebrew word **Yatsa** can be translated, begotten like in Judges 8:30) "Every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall echo my oath!" (Thus, speak with the same certainty sourced in me! The Hebrew word, **Shaba** means to seven oneself, that is, swear - thus in the Hebrew mind, by repeating a declaration seven times one brings an end to all dispute! See Heb 6:13.16,17.) See also Philippians 2:10, 11.*
This echoes what John heard in Revelation 5:13, "Then I heard the voice of everything created in heaven, upon earth, under the earth and in the sea, all living beings in the universe, and they were singing: "To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb, be praise and honor, glory and might, for

timeless ages!" And in Colossians 1:15-17, "Now Christ is the visible expression of the invisible God. He existed before creation began, for it was through him that everything was made, whether spiritual or material, seen or unseen. Through him, and for him, also, were created power and dominion, ownership and authority. In fact, every single thing was created through, and for him. He is both the first principle and the upholding principle of the whole scheme of creation ... ." [Phillips] Colossians 1:20, "And God purposed through him to reconcile the universe to himself, making peace through his blood, which was shed upon the Cross, in order to reconcile to himself through him all things on earth and in heaven. [Weymouth Translation] In Ephesians 1:9, 10, "For God had allowed us to know the secret of his plan, and it is this: he purposed in his sovereign will that all human history shall be consummated in Christ, that everything that exists in heaven or earth shall find its perfection and fulfillment in him." [Phillips Translation])

12 Thus the logic of God will find its personal expression in every person.

13 There remains no further cause for judging anyone. Rather determine that you will not allow suspicion or prejudice to snare your brother into a trap.

14 I am completely persuaded that in the Lord Jesus nothing is unclean in itself; it only seems unclean in someone's own religious reasoning.

15 But to walk in love is more important than to feed your appetite with your favorite food. Much rather lose out on a meal than lose a brother for whom Christ died. I mean Jesus sacrificed his life; for you to sacrifice a meal is no big deal.

16 Do not let your right to eat bring shame on Christ.

17 God's royal dominion is not based on food and drink regulations, but righteousness, *(likeness)* **friendship** *(peace)* **and joy in the Holy Spirit.**

18 This is definitely a win-win situation; God is pleased and people respect you.

19 Pursue whatever promotes peace and mutual encouragement.

20 Do not let a diet issue undo the work that God has done in someone's life. All foods are good in essence; it only becomes evil if someone causes or takes offense.

21 For your brother's sake, in order not to offend or tempt his weakness, it is better to not eat meat or drink wine in his presence.

22 At the end of the day, it is your own belief that matters most before God; do what your heart approves of without allowing guilt to interfere with your joy.

23 Don't let principle and prejudice spoil your meals! Whatever is law- rather than faith-inspired is [1]out of sync with the celebration of life! *("Whatever is not sourced in faith is sin" [1]**hamartia**, a distorted form; out of sync.)*

Chapter 15

1 We who are strong in faith are obliged to lift up those who are weak, to seek their advantage and not our own.

2 We are to please others and consider their good and benefit.

3 For Christ was not in it for himself, but for us. It is written about him, that he took the full blow of the reproach and insults directed at us.

4 Whatever was written about him includes and represents us. We take instruction and encouragement from his patience, while Scripture is our close companion to remind us of our true spiritual identity. We anticipate the future with delight.

5 God's patience and reflection of who we really are transmits in us like-mindedness toward one another according to the pattern of Christ Jesus.

6 The opinion of God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, speaks one global language in us inspired by the same passion.

7 This gives us all the more reason to embrace one another in friendship with the same warmth wherewith Christ embraced us into the welcome of God.

8 I am convinced that the ministry of Jesus Christ was confirmation to the circumcised Jews of the truth of God's promises to their fathers.

9 So also will the Gentile nations glorify God for his mercy towards them. David prophesied the resonance and echo of praise in the Gentile

nations who would discover their true identity in his name. *(See also Ps 22:27)*

10 Again Scripture reveals in Deuteronomy 32:43 that the Gentiles will join in celebration as they too are co-revealed as his people. *(See context of Deut 32)*

11 Yet again in Psalm 117:1 the Gentiles are exhorted to give God praise and to join in the global applause of all the peoples of the earth.

12 The Prophet Isaiah sees the root of Jesse who shall rise out of the ground where it was cut off, to reign over the Gentiles; he will win their trust. *(Isa 11:1,10)*

13 God who is the engineer of expectation fills you to the brim with tranquil delight. The dynamic of the Holy Spirit causes faith to exceed any possible hesitation in hope.

14 I am completely persuaded about you, my friends, that you are able to mutually instruct one another in the full measure of the knowledge of everything that is good in you.

15 God's gift of grace is the motivation of my writing to you; I urge you to remember your [1]allotted portion in life. *(The word, [1]**meros**, means form or allotted portion; note the word translated as "sin" is **hameros**, which means to be without form, without your allotted portion. Every sin springs thus from someone's sense of unfulfillment and lack, due to ignorance concerning those things which rightfully belong to them, their true spiritual identity, their redeemed innocence, and their participating in the Divine nature which is their inheritance in Christ.)*

16 It is because of Jesus Christ that I am in the people business. I occupy this priestly office representing the goodness of God to [1]the masses of mankind persuading them to see how presentable and approved they are to God in the Holy Spirit. *(The word [1]**ethnos**, means the masses of non-Jewish people, gentiles)*

17 Because of who I am in Christ Jesus, I have taken a bold stand before God.

18 I could entertain you with all the details of my personal adventures, yet all I desire to communicate is how actively Christ worked through my words to grab the attention of the nations.

19 The message was confirmed in every sign and miracle in the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus, I went full circle from Jerusalem to Illyricum proclaiming the glad tidings of Christ in its most complete context. *(Taking Jerusalem as a center, Paul preached not only in Damascus and Arabia, but in Syria, in Asia Minor, in all of Greece, in the Grecian Islands, and in Thessaly and Macedonia. Illyricum was a country of Europe extending from the Adriatic Gulf to Pannonia; it extended from the river Arsia to the river Drinius thus including Liburnia on the west and Dalmatia on the east. It now forms part of Croatia, Bosnia, Istria, and Slavonia.)*

20 I have placed such fond value on the fact that I could pioneer the glad tidings in many of these areas without building on someone else's interpretation of Christ.

21 Isaiah prophesied that, "Those who have never been told about him, will be startled to see him clearly; even though they have never heard of him, they will understand his message." *(The message of truth speaks a global language. Paul says that the open statement of the truth, which is the Word made flesh in us in the mirror reflection of Christ,*

appeals to everyone's conscience [2 Cor 4:2]. "Our lives are letters known and read by all." [2 Cor 3:2])

22 Now you know why it took me so long to finally get to you.

23 There seems to be no more room for pioneering work in these regions, after these many years I can finally fulfill my dream.

24 I purpose to journey all the way through Italy to Spain, but it is with great delight that I look forward to meeting with you first and enjoy a rich measure of fellowship that will again propel me onward.

25 I am on my way to Jerusalem to encourage the Saints.

26 The believers in Greece, all the way from Macedonia as well as those in Achaia, have prepared a gift with great delight to bring relief to their Jewish friends in Jerusalem who are struggling financially.

27 They feel indebted to them since they share freely in their spiritual wealth.

28 As soon as I have delivered their harvest officially, I will depart to Spain via you.

29 I know that my coming to you will be like a cargo ship [1]filled to the brim with the blessing of everything that the Gospel of Christ communicates. *([1]**pleroma** means those things wherewith a ship is filled, freight, merchandise, etc.)*

30 Being co-identified with you as members of a godly family through our Lord Jesus Christ and feeling the same spiritual love-bond toward

one another, we are prayer partners before God joined in urgent passion.

31 Labor fervently in prayer with me that I will be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea, and also that my service to the Saints in Jerusalem will be favorably received.

32 Through the pleasure of God's purpose I will arrive in Rome in joy so that we may be mutually refreshed in one another's company.

33 God who sustains us in oneness and [1]peace is with everyone of you. Amen. *(The word, [1]**eirene**, means peace, from **eiro**, to join, to be set at one again, in carpentry it is the strongest joint,referred to as the dove-tail joint.) The names of 37 individual believers are personally honored in this chapter of salutation. Seven home churches are also specifically mentioned, five in Rome and two in Corinth. Since Paul never visited Rome before, these people were all acquaintances, converts, fellow prisoners, or travel companions of his before they moved to Rome.*
Since Prisca and Aquilla originally came from Rome (Acts 18:2, 26 and 1 Cor 16:19), they possibly purposefully returned there to start or strengthen the Ekklesia together with a strong team of believers. Their strategy was to scatter several home-fellowships throughout the city. This is reflected in Paul's letter to the Corinthians where he says, "Our expectation is that as your faith increases, our field amongst you will be greatly enlarged so that we may preach the gospel also in lands beyond you." (2 Cor 10:15, 16)

Chapter 16

1 I would like to introduce Phoebe to you, she is our sister and serves the Ekklesia in Corinth located in the port of Cenchreae.

2 Welcome her with appropriate saintly hospitality in the Lord. Support her and her business in every possible way you can. I am one of many who have greatly benefitted from her care and practical help.

3 Warmly embrace Prisca and Aquilla, my business partners in the Lord.

4 They are respected in all the Gentile churches for their unselfish lives. They have risked their own necks for me.

5 Salute the Ekklesia in their house. Give my dear friend Epaenetus a warm hug from me. He represents the whole of Asia to me since he was my first convert there.

6 Miriam must also be mentioned; I remember how relentlessly she exhausted herself for others.

7 Embrace my cousins Andronicus and June who were in prison with me. I hold them in high regard as ambassadors for Christ; they are my seniors in him.

8 Hug Amliatus, my lovely friend in the Lord.

9 Then there is Urbanos, my co-worker in Christ, as well as my dear friend Stachys.

10 Acknowledge Apelles, a true veteran in Christ; honor the household of believers in the home of Aristobulus.

11 Say a big hello to cousin Herodian; greet the believers in the Narcissus home.

12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa whose work in the Lord bears testimony to their diligence; also my dear friend Persis who works so tirelessly.

13 I also remember Rufus as an outstanding worker in the Lord, and salute his mother who has become a mother to me.

14 I embrace Asyncritus, Phlegon, Herman, Patrobas, Hermes and all the family in fellowship with them.

15 Warmly greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, as well as Olympas and all the Saints in their fellowship.

16 Our friendship is sacred. The Ekklesia of Christ here in Corinth salutes you.

17 Consistent with who you really are my friends, be alert to avoid anything that causes disunion or offense, contrary to the teaching that you have become acquainted with.

18 For there are those who are not addicted to our Lord Jesus Christ but, prompted rather by the hidden agenda of their own fleshly appetites, they use their clever manipulation of words and eloquent speech to deceive the emotionally unstable.

19 Your [1]obedience *(faith-focus)* **has become known everywhere. I am so happy for you; still, I desire for you to be wisely and exclusively acquainted with that which is good and [2]innocent** *(unmixed)* **of evil.**

(Paul's mission is to bring about the obedience prompted by faith [Rom 1:5, 16:26]. The word, ***[1]upoakouo****, is translated as obedience or accurate hearing; and* ***[2]akeraios*** *as unmixed, innocent.)*

20 God who is the author of our peace shall quickly and utterly trample [1]Satan, doing it with your feet. Your victory is realized in the revelation of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and echoed *(personalized)* **in your amen.** *(We are the body of Christ. God desires to demonstrate his reign of peace in us by confirming satan's defeat in our practical day to day experience. The defeat of [1]accusation is celebrated in what grace communicates. The word,* ***[1]satanos****, means accuser. The law of faith defeated the law of works!)*

21 Timothy my co-laborer greets you affectionately; also Luke, and Jason and Sosipater who are fellow Jews, salute you kindly.

22 I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, acknowledge you in the Lord.

23 My host, Gaius, in whose house the church meets, sends you his greetings. Then there is Erastus, the city chief who greets you, so does Brother Quartos. *(See Acts 19:29: Gaius was a travel companion of Paul, and he also mentions him in 1 Cor 1:14.)*

24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ belongs to you.

25 I am not talking "hear-say-theory"; I own the gospel I proclaim! This is my message! I salute God who empowers you dynamically and establishes you to be strong and immovable in the face of contradiction. Jesus Christ is the disclosure of the very mystery that was concealed in silence before [1]time or human [2]history were recorded. *(Titus 1:2 This is the life of the ages which was anticipated for generations; the life of our*

*original design announced by the infallible resolve of God before [2]time or space existed. [Mankind's union with God is the original thought that inspired creation. The word, [2]**aionios**, speaks of ages.] Paul speaks of God's mind made up about us, before the ages, which is a concept in which eternity is divided up into various periods, the shorter of which are comprehended in the longer. The word, [1]**xronos**, means a measured duration or length of time; [**kairos** is a due, or specific moment of time.] This was before the ages or any measure of calendar time existed, before the creation of the galaxies and constellations. There exists a greater dimension to eternity than what we are capable of defining within the confines of space and time! God's faith anticipated the exact moment of our redeemed union with him for all eternity! "This life was made certain before eternal time." [BBE 1949, Bible in Basic English] Paul's gospel does not merely proclaim Christ in history; he announces Christ unveiled in human life; Christ in you! Colossians 1:27)*

26 The mystery mirrored in [1]prophetic Scripture is now unveiled. The God of the ages determined to make this mystery known in such a way that all the nations of the earth will hear and realize the [2]lifestyle that faith ignites. *(This gospel breaks the silence of the ages and reveals how God succeeded to redeem his image and likeness in mankind. [1]Isa 53:4, 5. See note on 16:19, Faith inspires an [2]obedience of spontaneity beyond guilt and obligation.)*

27 Jesus Christ [1]uniquely [2]articulates the [3]wisdom of God; he is the [4]conclusion of the ages. *(Uniquely, [1]**monos,** alone, Jesus has no competition; this one man represents the entire human race; this is the mystery of the ages. 1 Cor 2:7 We voice words of wisdom that were hidden in silence for timeless ages; a mystery unfolding God's Masterful plan whereby he would redeem his glory in man. Our glorification has always been God's agenda, even before time was. 1 Cor 2:8 Neither the politicians nor the theologians of the day had a clue about this mystery (of mankind's association in Christ); if they did, they would never have crucified the Lord whose death redeemed our glory! The word, [3]**sophos**, means clarity,*

*wisdom. He forever broke the silence of the ages! The words, [4]**eis aion**, **eis** indicates a point reached in conclusion, thus the conclusion of the ages. He is the [2]**doxa**, opinion; the logos that was before time was; the Word that became flesh and dwells within us [Jn 1:1, 14]. The incarnation (Latin, **in carne**, in the body) is the final trophy of the eternal logos and doxa of God.*
Col 1:15 In him the image and likeness of God is made visible in human life in order that everyone may recognize their true origin in him. He is the firstborn of every creature. (What darkness veiled from us he unveiled. In him we clearly see the mirror reflection of our original life. The Son of his love gives accurate evidence of his image in human form. God can never again be invisible!)
Col 2:3 In Christ the complete treasure of all wisdom and knowledge is sourced.
Col 2:9 It is in Christ that God finds an accurate and complete expression of himself, in a human body! (While the expanse cannot measure or define God, his exact likeness is displayed in human form. Jesus proves that human life is tailor-made for God!)
Col 2:10 Jesus mirrors our completeness and endorses our true identity. He is "I am" in us. The days are over where our lives were dictated to under the rule of the law of performance and an inferior identity. [See Col 1:19] The full measure of everything God has in mind for a person, indwells him.)

I Corinthians

Paul's persuasion is firmly founded in his understanding of the success of the cross. In the economy of God, Jesus represents the human race. Every possible contradiction is filtered through this perspective.

In this letter Paul addresses several concerns regarding reports of divisions amongst the believers, a sexual scandal in their ranks and questions regarding marriage, diets and money.

In the first four chapters he takes his time to reinforce their faith in the finished work of the cross as the only valid reference to their lives.

In chapters 12 and 14, he brings clarity regarding the charismatic gifts.

Then he highlights the essence of the gospel in the most beautiful love poem in chapter 13. For many years this chapter was read and preached in a typical window-shopping frame of mind.

In Paul's gospel this mindset is completely reversed; he proclaims that what God has done in Christ actually unveils the life of our design. Love celebrates the completeness of all that God has always had in mind for us. Love is not some prize one has to labor for; love mirrors who you are! What we perceived in prophetic glimpses is now concluded in completeness! (1 Cor 13:9, 10)

In chapter 15, he emphasizes that the resurrection revelation is the theme and conclusion of the message he preaches.

Then he concludes in chapter 16:14 with, "Agape is your genesis. Loving everyone around you is what you are all about." (Our love for one another is awakened by God's love for us.) And in verse 22, he makes this final powerful statement: "Anyone who prefers the law above grace remains under the curse mentality. Jesus Christ has come; grace is the authority of his Lordship; we are so fond of him! He is the Messiah the world has been waiting for. (The Aramaic word, ***maranatha***, means, our Lord has come!)

Chapter 1

1 My name is Paul, the ministry of Jesus Christ is the mandate of my life according to God's delightful purpose. Brother Sosthenes is my

colleague. *([1]He was formerly the chief ruler of the synagogue at Corinth. [Acts 18:17])*

2 I address this writing to the [1]Ekklesia of God in Corinth. You have been restored to the harmony of your original design, made holy in Christ Jesus; no wonder then that you are surnamed Saints. You are in association with all those who have discovered their true identity in Jesus Christ everywhere in every location; he is the head of this union; his name relates us to one another in a global family. *(Eph 3:15 " ... from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named." [1]Church, **Ekklesia**, those who have discovered their original identity; from **ek**, source, origin + **kaleo**, to surname, identify by name.)*

3 Grace and peace is your portion from God who is our Father and from his executive, Jesus Christ. *(Grace and peace express the sum total of every beneficial purpose of God towards us. Paul brands his gospel with these words in order to distinguish the message of the revelation of the finished work of Christ as the basis to our faith from the law of Moses which restricted a person to their own efforts to justify themselves. It is a matter of grace vs reward and peace vs striving.)*

4 I am always so happy for you when I consider how greatly advantaged you are because of God's grace unveiled in Jesus Christ.

5 Your knowledge of Christ is based on so much more than hearsay; every aspect of your life gives eloquent expression to the rich reservoir of your union in him.

6 You certainly have the testimony of Christ evidenced in you. *(You possess full knowledge and give full expression because in you the evidence for the truth of Christ has found confirmation. — NEB)*

7 In [1]receiving the [2]revelation of Jesus Christ as the principal influence in your life *(his Lordship)***, you prove that you lack nothing and that his grace gifts fully compliment you.** *(This is in such contrast to those days when under-achievement was the rule; when you felt that you were never good enough and always lagging behind. Note: [1]**apekdechomai** is not "eagerly waiting for," but "eagerly accepting" or to welcome with hospitality; [2]**apokalupsis** is the unveiling, disclosure. I don't know why most translations always want to postpone what God has already unveiled!)*

8 He establishes you from start to finish; to stand [1]vindicated in your identity in the light of day as evidenced in the Lord Jesus Christ. *(The word, [1]**anegkletos**,from **ana**, upwards, **en**, in and **kaleo**, to identify by name. Jesus gives evidence to our original identity. Compare **anoche** from **ana** + **echo** in Rom 3:26)*

9 We are [1]surnamed by God, he is our true lineage; he is faithful and fully persuaded about our joint participation in the fellowship of sonship; we are included in everything that our Lord Jesus Christ and the Father enjoys. *(The word [1]**kaleo**, means to call or identify by name, to surname.)*

10 My dear fellow believers, because we are surnamed and identified in the name of our master Jesus Christ, I [1]urge you to speak with one voice, *(to say the same thing)* **we share the same source as our reference; no division or any sense of distance is tolerated, which makes us a perfect match, accurately joined in the same thought and communicating the same resolve.** *(The word, [1]**parakaleo**, is from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection and **kaleo**, to surname.)*

11 Some of the believers in Chleo's fellowship told me about the controversy in your ranks; this is most disturbing!

12 What I was told is that you are divided into groups, where some side with Paul, others with Apollos, still others with Cephas, and even some who say, "we are the Messianic group!"

13 This is really ridiculous: can Christ be cut up into little relics? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into Paul's name?

14 Baptism is not my business or emphasis; I am glad that I only baptized Crispus and Gaius amongst you! *(Crispus was his neighbor and leader of the synagogue [see Acts 18:8]. Gaius resided at Corinth. Paul stayed with him when he wrote the Epistle to the Romans [Rom 16:23]; he was also a travel companion of Paul's [Acts 19:29].)*

15 I distance myself from the idea of employing baptism as a means of branding my ministry with my name! Somehow baptism has become a snare to some who wish to win members to their denomination!

16 Oh yes! Now I remember that I also baptized the family of Stephanus. *(In 1 Corinthians 16:15, the family (young and old) of Stephanus were the first converts in Achaia)*

17 My mandate was not about winning members for some 'Christian club' through baptism! I am commissioned to declare the Good News without any strings attached; nothing to distract from the powerful effect of the revelation of the cross of Christ. *(The mystery of the cross is the revelation of mankind's inclusion in his death and resurrection [see 1 Cor 2:2,7].)*

18 To their own loss the message of the cross seems foolish to some; but to us who discover our salvation there, it is the dynamic of God.

19 Isaiah wrote: I will confuse the wisdom of the "so-called" wise and prove their experts wrong! *(Isa 29:14)*

20 God's wisdom puts the rest out of business! They have all closed shop; the philosophers, the academics, the smooth-talkers, the lot! *(When it comes to real answers to the dilemma of mankind, God's wisdom, revealed in the foolishness of the cross, is the currency of the Gospel.)*

21 By suspicious scrutiny the sense-ruled world surveys the works of God in creation and still do not recognize or acknowledge him; in sharp contrast to this, the foolishness of the message we proclaim brings God's work of redeeming his image in us into faith's focus. *(What we preach cancels every basis for boasting in personal contribution, which seems folly to the DIY systems of this world.)*

22 The Jews crave signs *(to confirm their doubts)* **while the Greeks revel in philosophical debate!** *(Both groups are addicted to the same soul realm.)*

23 The crucified Christ is the message we publicly proclaim, to the disgust of the Jews while the Greeks think we are wacky!

24 The dynamic of God's wisdom is the fact that both Jew and Greek are equally included and defined in Christ.

25 It seems so foolish that God should die mankind's death on the cross; it seems so weak of God to suffer such insult; yet their wisest schemes and most powerful display of genius cannot even begin to comprehend or compete with God in his weakest moment on the cross.

26 You might as well admit it, my friends; it was not your academic qualifications or your good looks or social connections that influenced God to represent you in Christ.

27 It is almost as if God deliberately handpicked the wacky of this world to embarrass the wise, the rejects to put to shame the noble.

28 The ones with no pedigree of any prominence, the "nobodies" in society, attracted God's initiative to unveil his blueprint opinion in order to redefine mankind. Thus he rendered any other social standard entirely irrelevant, redundant and inappropriate. *(Blueprint opinion, **eklegomai**, from **ek**, meaning origin, source, and **legomai** from **logos**, the logic of God; traditionally translated as "elect.")*

29 Every reason for someone's boasting in themselves dwindles into insignificance before God.

30 [1]Of God's doing are we in Christ. He is both the genesis and genius of our wisdom; a wisdom that reveals how righteous, sanctified and redeemed we already are in him. *(The preposition, [1]**ek**, always denotes origin, source. Mankind's association in Jesus is God's doing. In God's economy, Jesus Christ represents us; what mankind could never achieve through personal discipline and willpower as taught in every religion, God's faith accomplished in Christ. Of his design we are in Christ; we are associated in oneness with him. Our wisdom is sourced in this union! Also, our righteousness and holiness originate from him. Holiness equals wholeness and harmony of a person's spirit, soul, and body. Our redemption is sanctioned in him. He redeemed our identity, our sanity, our health, our joy, our peace, our innocence, and our complete well-being! [See Eph 1:4]. The Knox Translation reads, "It is from him that we take our [1]origin.")*

31 He is our claim to fame. *(This is what Jeremiah meant when he wrote: "Let not the wise glory in their wisdom, let not the mighty glory in their might, let not the rich glory in their riches; but let the one who glories glory in this, that they understand and know me, that I am the Lord who practice steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things do I delight, says the Lord." Jeremiah 9:23, 24.)*

Chapter 2

1 My intention in visiting you was not to engage with you in theological debate or to impress you with clever philosophical words guessing about the [1]mystery of God. *(The words* ***μαρτύριον [marturion],*** *testimony and* ***μυστήριον [musterion]****, mystery, look similar. The Alexandrian copy, and others, read, "the mystery" of God: also the Syriac version* **אהלאד אזר***, "the mystery of God". The Alexandrian text-type is the form of the Greek New Testament that predominates in the earliest surviving documents. The Syriac version of the New Testament, dates back to the second century A.D. Syria was the country in which the Greek language intersected with the Syriac, which was closely related to the Aramaic dialect used by Jesus and the Apostles. That is why Syriac versions are highly esteemed by textual critics. The context of this chapter beautifully unfolds the mystery of the Gospel.)*

2 My [1]mind is fully made up about you! The only possible way in which I can truly [2]know you, is in the light of God's mystery, which is [3]Christ in you! Jesus died mankind's death on the cross and thus brought final closure to any other basis of [1]judgment! *(The word, [1]****krino****, to judge, to determine, to deem in a forensic sense, here, in the Aorist Tense,* ***ekrina,*** *which suggests a once and for all completed act. The Aorist tense presents an occurrence in summary, viewed as a whole from the outside, almost like a snapshot of the action. Paul makes a very bold and*

*radical statement, confining his ministry focus to "know" the full scope and consequence of the revelation of mankind's redeemed innocence as communicated in the cross of Jesus Christ! This is the essence of the mystery of God! "For I determined to [2]know [- [2]**eido**, to see, to perceive] nothing in you except Jesus Christ and him crucified." Paul continues to unfold the mystery of our redeemed oneness! In the previous chapter, he concludes that we are **in Christ** by God's doing; here he clearly points to [3]**Christ in us**! [As Jesus declared in John 14:20]*
See 2 Cor 3:4 Christ is proof of our persuasion about you before God. Also 2 Cor 1:18 God's certainty is our persuasion; there is no maybe in him! 2 Cor 1:19 The Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom I, Paul, Sylvanus and Timothy boldly announced in you is God's ultimate yes to mankind. Human life is associated in all that he is. In God's mind, there exists not even a hint of hesitation about this!
See also 2 Cor 5:14,16 I am convinced that if one died for all, then all died! Therefore, from now on, I no longer know anyone from a human point of view! Also Gal 1:16 and Col 1:27.)

3 I felt completely inadequate; you know that it was not my eloquent speech that persuaded you. I was so nervous that my whole body was trembling with stage fright!

4 My message was not with persuasive arguments based on secular wisdom, since my aim was [1]not to point people to me but rather to the powerful working of the Spirit in them. *(Thayer's Greek definition of [1]**apodeiknumi** is to point away from one's self. Previous translations of this word have often given the impression that the great, miracle-working man of God would steal the show and entertain the crowds! This was so unlike Jesus and Paul! Paul never writes about how many people he had healed and brought to faith, etc. His all-consuming concern was that the eyes of our understanding would be illuminated with the revelation of Christ in us.*
Note 2 Corinthians 10:10 [RSV], "For they say, 'His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account.'" Also, 2 Corinthians 11:6, "Even if I am unskilled in speaking, I am not in knowledge." — RSV)

5 Mankind's wise schemes of influence could never match the power of God as reference to your faith.

6 The words we speak resonate revelation wisdom in those who understand how perfectly redeemed they are in Christ, this wisdom supersedes every secular kind; suddenly what once seemed wise and good advice has become useless information. *(All popular programs towards improved moral behavior are now outdated. "Of God's doing are we in Christ. He is both the genesis and genius of our wisdom; a wisdom that reveals how righteous, sanctified, and redeemed we already are in him." In God's economy, Christ represents us; what mankind could never achieve through personal discipline and willpower as taught in every religion, God's faith accomplished in Christ [1 Cor 1:30].)*

7 We voice words of wisdom that were hidden in silence for timeless ages; a mystery unfolding God's [1]Masterful plan whereby he would redeem his glory in man. Our glorification has always been God's agenda, even [2]before time was. *(Paul employs the words, [1]**prohoritso**, predesigned and [2]**pro aion** before the ages, in order to emphasize the certainty of God's persuasion concerning their determined intent to rescue and restore their image and likeness in us. Our redemption existed upon the inner-horizons of God before the ages. The word, **prohoritso**, from **pro**, before and **horitso**, horizon; means pre-defined, like when an architect draws up a detailed plan. See Romans 8:30 Jesus reveals that we pre-existed in God; he defines us. He justified us and also glorified us. He redeemed our innocence and restored the glory that we lost in Adam.)*

8 Neither the politicians nor the religious leaders of the day had a clue about this mystery; if they did, they would never have crucified the Lord whose death redeemed our glory! *(Time witnessed and recorded the death and resurrection of an individual; eternity witnessed the death and resurrection of the human race!)*

9 It is written: "What has been concealed for ages in a realm inaccessible to the senses; what no human eye could catch a glimpse of, nor their ear could even hear a whisper of, neither could the inquiring mind decipher the code of that mystery which God has already [1]fully accomplished and prepared as a royal highway [2]imprinted in the hearts of his lovers!" *(The exact detail of his plan to rescue his image and likeness in mankind was in place. How Jesus would represent mankind to die their death was the wisdom of God concealed. In the mind of God we were associated in Christ before the ages; this was according to God's eternal resolve. "The things that God has prepared" or [1]**hetoimatzo**, from the oriental custom of sending people ahead to level the roads and make them passable before a king's journey. What seemed a cul-de-sac for the flesh is a royal highway for faith.*
*The redemption of mankind was not to be the product of human philosophy or speculation. In the Hebrew text it is a quote from Isaiah 64:3 (In our English translations it is v 4) the Hebrew word, [2]**ghaka**, is used, which means to carve an image; to show by drawing or description, piercing, traditionally also translated as those who "wait upon the Lord." (In Isa 40:31, a different word is used for those who "wait" upon the Lord, **kawa** means to intertwine.) Paul writes in Greek and most probably from the Septuagint when he quotes Isaiah 64 (verse 3 in the Septuagint) and uses the phrase, "for those who love him." The Septuagint uses the word, **eleos**, tender compassion. Thus, faith opens the horizon of love's mystery. It is a place where thoughts [2]carve an impression; a place not accessible to the scrutiny of a suspicious, academic or a religious, guilt and a performance-based approach. [see 1 Cor 3:20])*

10 These profound mysteries of God's eternal resolve are now thoroughly unveiled to us by his Spirit; nothing is hidden from him; he explores the innermost thoughts of God.

11 Just as a person's spirit knows their own thoughts beyond the public eye, even so the Spirit of God is our faith decoder to access the

thoughts of God. *(In modern technology it would be impossible to access information from a source that is not compatible with your device; or without a decoder.)*

12 The Spirit proceeding from God unveils the gifts of his generosity. He has graced us with understanding so that we may know what he has always had in mind for us; this is so unlike the secular spirit of the wisdom of the world where everything has a price tag! *(Christ is the unveiling of the mystery of God's wisdom: now we know how God redeemed our righteousness and our wholeness in Christ. In God's economy, Christ represents us; what mankind could never achieve through personal discipline and willpower as taught in every religion, God's faith accomplished in Christ. Of his design are we in Christ; we are associated in oneness with him. Our wisdom is sourced in this union! Also our righteousness and holiness originate from him.*
Holiness equals wholeness and harmony of someone's spirit, soul and body. Our redemption is sanctioned in him. He redeemed our identity, our sanity, our health, our joy, our peace, our innocence and our complete well-being! [See note on 1 Corinthians 1:30] Secular religion is the product of the spirit of this world where everything is performance based; only the heroes of the moment are acclaimed; the rest are reduced to spectators and audience.)

13 The impact of our words are not confined to the familiar wisdom of the world taught by human experience and tradition, but communicated by seamless spirit resonance, [1]combining spirit with spirit. *(The word* ***sugkrinō****, suggests a spirit compatibility; joint together fitly, compound, combine, to interpret, to compare: thus, a joining of spirit with spirit!)*

14 The soulish person has no capacity to comprehend the language of the Spirit of God; spiritual things seem meaningless to them; they are incapable to discern that which can only be spiritually appreciated. *(A performance-based mindset cannot access what grace communicates. It would be as impossible as trying to get airborne with a motor car. Law cannot compete with grace.)*

15 Those who are spiritually awakened are immediately compatible to discern all things from a spiritual *(grace)* **perspective, while they themselves are free from anyone's critical scrutiny.**

16 There is no other basis to teach from but to echo the mind of Christ; he is the Master mind personified within us!

Chapter 3

1 This is ridiculous! Who am I talking to here? Are you mere spiritual infants stuck in the soul-ruled mode of the flesh, reduced to baby-talk? *(Cooing sentimental gibberish about who your favorite preacher is instead of discovering who you are in Christ!)*

2 I fed you with milk and now after all this time it seems that you have no appetite nor capacity for the meat of the gospel. While you remain on the milk diet of the soul-ruled realm of the flesh *(knowing Christ merely from a human point of view [see 2 Cor 5:16])***, you are unable to digest the meat message of what has been concluded and revealed in your union with Christ!** *(There is a huge difference between seeing Christ historically and sentimentally and realizing the revelation of the Gospel. This is the mystery of grace: God reveals us in Christ. He associated us in Christ before time began. Jesus did not die as an individual. He died our death and we were raised together with him.)*

3 Your heated debates and divisions prove that you are completely missing the point of the Gospel! You behave like any other spiritually unenlightened person, religiously obsessed with petty party politics while missing the essence of the message.

4 Can you not see that it is not about Paul or Apollos or any teacher you wish to associate with? We are not here to play the one off against the other, in a desperate attempt to win your vote to join our "group." *(Acts 19:1)*

5 Both Apollos and I are on the same assignment: we are here for you, to influence your faith to discover yourself in Christ. Every individual is equally gifted in him. *(See verses 21 and 22)*

6 I have planted, by bringing the gospel to you in the first place, then Apollos watered the seed in his ministry to you; but God causes the Christ life to ignite and expand in you.

7 If all we succeeded to do was to attach you to us as individuals, then we have failed you; the one who plants is not more important than the one who waters; it is not about us, it is about you realizing God's work within you. *(Our ministry has only one objective: to reveal Christ in you! See Paul's urgency in Philippians 2:12, "not only in my presence but much more in my absence, discover the full extent of your own salvation: it is God working in you both to will and to do!" This "working out your own salvation" has nothing in common with the guilt, willpower-restricted law of works system. It is discovering his working in you; energizing you with both the desire and capacity to give expression to him.)*

8 Our individual assignment does not place the one above the other; we have exactly the same mission; how we succeed or fail in that is to our own account.

9 We are co-employed by God. You are God's agricultural field; or in another context, you are his building and he is the architect and engineer of the life of your design.

10 His grace is the only reference for my skill; his gift qualifies me *(I did not earn my certificate as Master Builder at a university as a reward to my excellence!)***. The faith foundation that I have laid in your lives gives evidence to that. So let the next person take extra caution to build consistent with what grace communicates.** *(Grace alone defines and inspires New Testament ministry.)*

11 Jesus Christ is the only foundation; nothing that anyone else can possibly teach you can replace him.

12 Imagine the contrast in building materials, one builds with gold, silver and precious stones, while another uses wood, hay and stubble. *(By comparison, the teaching of the cross and its glorious effect in the believer's life is like building with gold, silver, and precious stones, whereas the wisdom of this world system based upon religious good works and not faith is like building with wood, hay, and stubble which is fuel for fire!)*

13 Everyone's work shall be tested in the scrutiny of real life; it shall be made apparent as in broad daylight just as gold is tested in fire: what you live will either burn like stubble or shine like gold. *(The revelation of mankind's co-crucifixion and co-resurrection with Christ is the gold of the gospel!)*

14 If what you teach is based on the revelation of the success of the cross it will certainly be confirmed in the heat of contradiction.

15 Obviously to witness the fruit of one's labor go up in smoke would be devastating, even though you escape with your own life!

16 Realize that your life is God's building; his sanctuary, designed for his permanent abode. His Spirit inhabits you! *(He designed every cell in your body to accommodate and express him.)*

17 Just like fire would burn away the dross, any defilement of God's temple would be destroyed in order to preserve human life as his permanent sanctuary. *(See verse 15)*

18 Why fool yourself? What is esteemed as wise according to popular Jewish sentiment is folly. There is no compromise when it comes to wisdom; the only wisdom that matters is what God deems wise, even if it seems foolishness to the reasoning of typical religion. Much rather be ridiculed by religion than esteemed as wise by them. *(The dynamic of God's wisdom is the fact that both Jew and Greek are equally represented and defined in Christ. It seems so foolish that God should die mankind's death on the cross; it seems so weak of God to suffer such insult; yet mankind's wisest schemes and most powerful display of genius cannot even begin to comprehend or compete with God in his weakest moment on the cross [1 Cor 1:24-25]. [See also 1 Cor 1:30, 2:7, 8])*

19 God's wisdom proves the foolishness of secular wisdom. It is on record in Scripture how God outwits the wise of this world. *(In The Message Translation, Job 5:13 reads, He catches the know-it-alls in their conspiracies - all that intricate intrigue swept out with the trash!)*

20 The Lord is familiar with the [2]unsuccessful search for meaning in mankind's empty [1]debates and dialogue. *(The word, [1]**dialogismos**, translates as someone deliberating with themselves. Psalm 94:11 says, "The Lord knows the thoughts of a person; that they are vanity." The word, [2]**maten**, translates as fruitless, unsuccessful search.)*

21 Therefore no one has any reason to boast in themselves, as if they gained anything that does not already belong to them! For all things you wish to gain already belong to you! *([See 1 Corinthians 4:7] Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise glory in their wisdom, let not the mighty glory in their might, let not the rich glory in their riches; but let the one*

who glories glory in this, that they understand and know me, that I am the Lord who practice steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, says the Lord." [Jeremiah 9:23, 24])

22 You are not winning any competition by picking your favorite teacher amongst Paul, Apollos or Kefas; they all belong to you anyway. The world belongs to you! Life and death are yours; in what you now have in this present moment you already possess the future! *(Not even death can threaten what you have in life! See Romans 8:38, 39.)*

23 As much as Christ is inseparably God's own, you are the property of Christ. You are one with him. *(Jesus endorsed God's ownership of the human race. See Psalm 24:1, Matthew 13:44 and Luke 15 where all three parables celebrate ownership - you cannot be lost unless you belong!)*

Chapter 4

1 This is how one should regard us *(so called, Apostles)***: we are the [1]under-rowers of Captain Christ; responsible for the engine room as it were! We are entrusted with the administration of the mysteries of God.** *(The unveiling of the mystery of the gospel of mankind's association in Christ is the driving force of the Church. The word, [1]**huperetes**, means an under-rower, who was one who was in the trireme, quadrireme, or quinquereme galleys and rowed in one of the undermost benches; those who were the lowest ranked slaves and often the most invisible part of the whole operation. We are not hiding behind fancy titles or impressive CV's to try and win your applause or financial support. We are not here to impress you with us; our mandate is to impress you with how complete you are in Christ because of God's doing. [See 1 Cor 1:30, 2:6-9].)*

2 *(Our title might be unimpressive, but our job is most significant.)* **For this reason our ministry is of unquestionable integrity.**

3 The authority of my ministry is not based upon your scrutiny of my life or even any cross examination by a human court. Neither is it by my own assumption;

4 even though I know of nothing against my conscience, I am not thereby acquitted. The point is not how self righteous I appear in my own eyes; the Lord's judgment is the only valid reference to our innocence.

5 Any judgment prior to the Lord's coming *(prior to the cross)* **is out of context.** *(The days of performance-based judgment are over!)* **His coming illuminates all the hidden mysteries** *(concerning mankind's inclusion in the death and resurrection of Christ. [See 1 Cor 2:7, 8])* **and unveils the [1]deepest desire of the heart of a person. In his appearing** *(through the proclamation of this gospel [see 1 Cor 5:4])* **shall everyone be [2]commended by God.** *(Not contaminated by an inferior judgment; [2]**apo** means away from the influence of mankind's judgment. [1]He is the desire of all nations. All nations long for the redemption of their true identity and their true innocence. [See Hag 2:7; also 1 Cor 1:7 and 1 Cor 2:7.] We voice words of wisdom that was hidden in silence for timeless ages; a mystery unfolding God's Masterful plan whereby he would redeem his glory in man!)*

6 I have deliberately applied this to myself and Apollos to show you the futility of hero-worshipping; to put us in a contest would be completely out of context of what I have written to you *(Both Apollos and I are on the same assignment: we are here for you, to influence your faith to discover yourself in Christ. Every individual is equally gifted in him. [See 1 Cor 3:5] Therefore no one has any reason to boast in*

themselves, as if they gained anything that does not already belong to them! For all things you wish to gain already belongs to you! [See 1 Cor 3:21])

7 How can there possibly be any ground left for dispute or discrimination if there is nothing in us that we did not freely receive? Now if who you are and what you have is a gift and not a reward for good behavior, then boasting makes no sense.

8 You are already saturated, literally jam-packed to capacity; you cannot get any wealthier than what you are! You are royalty *(because of what happened to you in Christ)* **not because of Apollos or Paul! Oh, that you might know this so that we may co-reign together with you!** *(We are not ranked any differently because we taught you the Good News! So do not try and make heroes of us while you reduce yourselves to mere supporters and spectators [see also 1 Cor 1:30 and 2 Cor 10:12]. Paul is re-enforcing the message of how complete we already are in Christ as our only reference. We are no longer striving towards completeness; we are living from completeness. The language of the Old Covenant was "towards;" the language of the New is "from!" The old said, "Do!" The new says, "Done!")*

9 If you really want to know, there is nothing glamorous about being an Apostle! It seems to some that God has us on exhibition as it were, as clowns in the circus; the laughing stock of the religious world-system! We are the latest gossip in town. Even the angels frown upon us! And you want to idolize us, think again! We are not handing out autographs! Neither are we your latest brand of Christianity! We have a death-sentence hanging over our heads!

10 Because of Christ we are considered fools *(in the eyes of the religious society!)* **Our foolishness serves only one purpose though: to prove to you that Christ is your wisdom. Our weakness serves to convince you of your source of strength in Christ; our ill repute in the eyes of popular opinion is to persuade you of your honored standing in**

Christ! *(Do not allow what we are suffering for you to distract you from realizing how wise, and strong, and honored you really are in Christ.)*

11 While writing this to you my life would seem such a contradiction! I mean here I am telling you how complete and without shortcoming you already are, and I can hardly remember when last I have had a decent meal! As I am writing this my mouth is dry with thirst, I'm stripped of my clothing; I have been beaten black and blue, and have nowhere to go.

12 I feel the fatigue from my physical labor. When people insult us we make sure that we speak well of them. We are harassed, but bear with it.

13 Hurtful rumors do the rounds but we find refuge and [1]comfort in our true identity. We are reckoned as [2]scapegoats, the scum of society. This is what we are faced with on a daily basis. *(The word, [1]**parakaleo**, comes from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, with a suggestion of union, and **kaleo**, to identify by name, to surname. The Greeks used to apply the term [2]**katharmata** as scapegoats, to victims sacrificed to make expiation for the people, and even to criminals who were maintained at the public expense, that on the outbreak of a pestilence or other calamity they might be offered as sacrifices to make expiation for the state.)*

14 My intention is not to embarrass you. I bring these things to your attention because you are my very dear children.

15 While you may have countless mentors supervising your lives, you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel.

16 I therefore summon you urgently to mirror my message.

17 This is why I send my beloved son Timothy to you. He is rock-solid in his faith. He shall remind you of me and reinforce my specific message and emphasis in every place and every church I visit. *(Paul's emphasis is unique in the way he teaches the "in Christ-", and "the Christ in you-" and his finished work-message. "There is no other gospel in spite of the many so-called Christian products branded 'gospel.' If any hint of the law remains, it is not good news but merely religious people's ideas, distracting from the gospel of Christ." [See Gal 1:7] "This is the heart of the gospel that I proclaim; it began with an unveiling of sonship in me, freeing me to announce the same sonship in the masses of non-Jewish people. I felt no immediate urgency to compare notes with those who were familiar with Christ from a mere historic point of view." [Gal 1:16] The Greek text is quite clear, "It pleased the Father to reveal his Son in me in order that I may proclaim him in the nations!" The words,* ***en emoi****, translate as "in me," and* ***en ethnos*** *translates as in the Gentile nations, or the masses of non Jewish people! Not "among" the Gentiles as most translations have it. Later when Barnabas is sent to investigate the conversion of the Greeks in Acts 11, instead of reporting his findings to HQ in Jerusalem, he immediately finds Paul, knowing that Paul's gospel is the revelation of the mystery of Christ in the nations [see Col 1:27]. No wonder then that those believers were the first to be called Christians, or Christ-like! For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed in you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not Yes and No; but in him it is always Yes. [2 Cor 1:19])*

18 I know some of you have the vaunted idea that my message and I will just vanish off the face of the earth! You cannot wish me away!

19 In the Lord's purpose I might show up sooner than what you think; then we will know if there is any dynamic in their inflated talk.

20 The kingdom of God *(the dominion of the Christ life)* **is about an empowered life and not just a matter of quoting your favorite teacher**

or Scripture!

21 Would you prefer it if I come to you with a whip-in-hand approach or with a loving, gentle spirit?

Chapter 5

1 The sexual scandal in your ranks has become public news: someone is said to have slept with his stepmother. This kind of behavior is not even tolerated in society in general, let alone among believers!

2 And you are engaged in discussing doctrine and organizing denominations! *(Chapter 1:10-13)* **This is heartbreaking! This shameful situation should have been dealt with in the most urgent manner by clearly distancing yourselves from such behavior and even going as far as disassociating yourselves from this person.** *(In the first four chapters Paul makes it very clear that this gospel is not an excuse to disguise sin but to remove it! Anyone who suggests that grace is a license to sin is fuel for fire! [See 1 Cor 3:12-15])*

3 Even though I am not physically with you, my spirit is present in this reading of my letter; and I assure you as solemnly as if actually present in your gathering, that I have already concluded my verdict in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ:

4 As you meet together and I meet with you in my spirit by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ present with us,

5 such a person is to be released from your midst and handed over to the [1]Accuser; let the accusation consume his flesh until the light of day, the revelation of Jesus Christ rise for him again to rescue his spirit from the deceit of his sin. *(Consider Paul's heart in 2 Cor 2:6-8, 10-11, For such a one this punishment by the majority is enough; so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him. Any one whom you forgive, I also forgive. What I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, to keep Satan ([1]**satanos**, accuser) from gaining the advantage over us; for we are not ignorant of his designs.*
*In Ephesians 4:26-27, he says, Even if you think you have a valid excuse, do not let anger dominate your day! If you don't deal with it immediately (in the light of the likeness of Christ in you) the sun sets for you and your day becomes one of lost opportunity where darkness employs anger to snare you into sin. Any sin that you tolerate is an open invitation to the [2]devil. Do not give him a platform to operate from. (The word, [2]**diabolos**, or Devil, comes from **dia** + **ballo**, translated as because of the fall; a fallen mindset)).*

6 By ignoring the presence of even a small amount of leaven the whole lump of dough will soon be permeated; thus all ground for boasting in how good things seemed to have been will be lost! *(See note on unleavened bread in John 19:31.)*

7 Because Christ our Paschal Lamb has already been sacrificed once and for all, the old leaven of sin-consciousness, which was upheld by the law, has already been thoroughly removed. On that basis alone are you able to now permanently rid yourselves of the old leaven mindset of tolerating sin, which was our reasoning under the law-system! *(We are talking a brand new language: the new covenant is the new lump of dough without a trace of the leaven of the old system that was done away with in Christ. A mindset introduced and sustained by the law! "In the very repetition of these ritual sacrifices the awareness of guilt is reinforced rather than removed." [Heb 10:3] The testimony of God is my only persuasion concerning you: Jesus Christ died your death on the cross! I can*

see you in no other light! "I have determined to know nothing amongst you except Jesus Christ and him crucified!" [1 Cor 2:2]
Hebrews 9:11-12 says, But now Christ has made his public appearance as High Priest of a perfect tabernacle. The good things that were predicted have arrived. This new tabernacle does not derive from its shadow type, the previous man-made one. It is the reality. (The restoration of God's original dwelling place in human life is again revealed!) As High Priest, his permission to enter the Holy Place was not secured by the blood of beasts. By his own blood he obtained access on behalf of the human race. Only one act was needed for him to enter the most sacred place of grace and there to institute a ransom of perpetual consequence.
[The perfection of the redemption he secured needs no further sacrifice. There are no outstanding debts; there is nothing we need do to add weight to what he has accomplished once and for all. The only possible priesthood activity we can now engage in is to continually bring a sacrifice of the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his Name; no blood, just fruit, even our acts of self-sacrifice, giving of time and money, etcetera are all just the fruit of our constant gratitude!])

8 Our daily life is now the extension of the Passover celebration; feasting on sustained innocence! The old sin conscious-system, the leaven-mind set *(always anticipating and tolerating sin)***, is replaced with an understanding of our unleavened innocence, just like when a diamond is [1]scrutinized in the rays of the sun to confirm its flawless integrity.** *(The word, [1]**elikrineia**, translates as scrutinized in the rays of the sun.)*

9 When I wrote to you about not associating with fornicators,

10 I certainly did not mean that you should distance yourself from the people of the world! If you had to avoid contact with the immoral, the greedy, the thieves, and the idol worshippers *(those worshipping a distorted image of themselves)***, then you would have to leave the planet!**

11 What I am saying is that anyone who acts like a brother while he continues his old typical lifestyle of fornication, greed, idolatry, abusing people, drunkenness, and stealing is obviously not sitting around the same table of fellowship with you!

12 It is none of my business to speak about the behavior of those outside the church; we are giving a responsible opinion regarding the behavior of those within our ranks.

13 We know God's judgment regarding the world *(the cross of Christ brought closure to every inferior reference)***; but in this case I am saying that you have to deal decisively with the troublemakers in your midst!** *(The sinners were attracted to Jesus not because he introduced a compromised set of rules; something like, "it's all right to sin just don't get caught or, try and do it less!" Instead, he revealed in his person the mirror-reflection of their true origin, their original identity and the integrity of their authentic innocence!*
They knew that the lie they lived as their identity had no power against the resonance of their own conscience. Jesus didn't say to the prostitute, "Go and sin less," he said to her, "Go and sin no more!" Jesus knew something about the life of our design that we had lost sight of! What he revealed, he also redeemed!)

Chapter 6

1 It alarms me that you even consider to have law-people decide on disputes within your fellowship, while these so-called "judges" have no clue of the basis of our righteousness in Christ. *(Now keep Paul's introduction in mind from 1 Cor 1:2: I address this writing to the Ekklesia of God in Corinth. You have been restored to the harmony of your original design; made holy in Christ Jesus; no wonder then that you are surnamed*

Saints. His name relates us to one another in a global family. See Rev 14:10 and 1 Cor 1:30)

2 Having discovered how thoroughly God sanctified us in Christ *(1 Cor 1:30)***, we now represent the principle of righteous judgment wherewith the whole world is to be judged; how can we possibly shrink from deciding a trivial matters within our own ranks?**

3 If the judgment we are entrusted with extends even into the spiritual realm where we are to judge angels, how much more relevant is our judgment now in deciding on day-to-day matters!

4 Since you are fully competent to judge such matters in the light of the gospel of grace, why bother to involve people who judge according to the standards of this world?

5 I mean this is most embarrassing! Are you expecting more justice from the world than from your own family? Is there not even one wise person in your midst that is able to settle in-house disputes?

6 Do you see how foolish it would be for friends to sue one another and reduce justice to a system that is founded in unbelief. *(A system based on the law of works and personal performance and not faith in the finished work of the cross.)*

7 Even if one wins the case, it is a defeat for the church! Why not suffer wrong; it is a far greater victory if you rather be cheated and accept it joyfully, than what it would be to fight for the right to prove your point.

8 By allowing the wisdom of this world to be your judge nothing will change; the injustice and fraud will merely continue to spread like

cancer in your ranks.

9 Do not be distracted into error; the typical lifestyle of unrighteousness has nothing in common with the kingdom of God. *(The kingdom of God is the dominion of the Christ-life.)*

10 People who continue to engage in prostitution, idolatry, adultery, sexual perversions, stealing, greed, drunkenness, abusiveness, and rage while they profess to be believers are deceiving themselves and have distanced themselves from the life of their design.

11 What you once were in terms of your lifestyle has radically changed! You have been cleansed, restored to total harmony *(holiness)* **and made righteous. The name of the Lord Jesus declares your salvation; the Spirit of our God realizes salvation in you!** *(1 Cor 1:30, 2:2)*

12 I am free to do what I want, but if what I do is inappropriate, I refrain from doing it and will not be snared by sudden notions.

13 Your appetite for food and sex does not define you. Your life is tailor-made for God; you fit him like a glove; he fulfills your deepest longings! *("You know the old saying, "First you eat to live, and then you live to eat?" Well, it may be true that the body is only a temporary thing, but that's no excuse for stuffing your body with food, or indulging it with sex. Since the Master honors you with a body, honor him with your body!" — The Message. "But you cannot say that our physical body was made for sexual promiscuity; it was made for God, and God is the answer to our deepest longings." — Phillips)*

14 God reveals in dramatic fashion the value he places on the human body by our joint resurrection with Jesus from the dead. *(Faith sees us joined in his death and alive with him in his resurrection. It is plain for all*

to see that death lost its dominion over Christ in his resurrection; he need not ever die again to prove a further point [Rom 6:8, 9].)

15 This means that your bodies are co-members of his; which makes it absurd to even consider engaging his body in sexual promiscuity!

16 Sex involves so much more than two bodies joining together; Scripture speaks of a sacred union of two lives becoming one. How can we reduce this sacred union to harlotry? *(There's more to sex than mere skin on skin. Sex is as much spiritual mystery as physical fact. — The Message)*

17 In our union with him we are one spirit with the Lord.

18 Flee fornication. Every sexual sin is a violation of the sacredness of the human body and scars the conscience of the individual like no other sin does. *(The best way to escape temptation is to remember who you are.)*

19 Do you not realize that your body is the sacred shrine of the Spirit of God, echoing within you. You do not own your life!

20 You are bought and paid for. All of you are his. Live your life conscious of how irreplaceably priceless you are. You host God in your skin. *(See 1 Peter 1:18 It is clear to see that you were ransomed from the futile, fallen mindset that you inherited from your fathers, not by the currency of your own labor, represented by the fluctuating values of gold and silver, and the economy of your religious efforts; 1 Pet 1:19 but you were redeemed with the priceless blood of Christ; he is the ultimate sacrifice; spotless and without blemish. He completes the prophetic picture! (In him God speaks the most radical scapegoat language of the law of judgment, and brings final closure to a dead and redundant system! In Psalm 40:6,7, it is clearly stated that God does not require sacrifices or offerings! Jesus is the Lamb of God!) See rest of Mirror Commentary 1 Pet*

1:19-21.
Also Matthew 13:44; Heb 6:16,17)

Chapter 7

1 In your writing to me you asked questions about marriage.

2 *(The fact that I am not married does not mean that I am against marriage.)* **Where a man is attached to his wife and she to him they are sexually secure.**

3 Marriage provides the ideal environment for both husband and wife to mutually esteem one another.

4 The wife belongs to her husband and he belongs to her. Their bodies are no longer their own.

5 By mutual agreement they may decide to abstain from physical contact for a specific period of time for prayer and fasting; not for prolonged times since this might give occasion for temptation.

6 I am not making rules about marriage; this is simply my advice to you in response to your request.

7 I could recommend my own life to everyone; yet I am convinced that life is a gift whether you are single or married.

8 My advice to the unmarried as well as to those who have lost their partner: it might be to your best interest to remain single even as I am.

9 Again, I am not laying down a law; much rather face the challenges of marriage than be consumed with desire!

10 Concerning your questions about divorce, I am strongly opposed to the idea; and this is not merely my advice, this is the Lord's instruction.

11 If the wife leaves her husband she is not to get re-married; her only option would be to be reconciled to her husband. In that case the husband may not resist her.

12 The brother who asked about his unbelieving wife: my advice is to remain committed to her as long as she is prepared to remain with you. *(Unbelief: not believing the truth about themselves as revealed in the gospel of the grace of God [1 Cor 1:30].)*

13 The same goes for the lady with the unbelieving husband; if he is pleased to be with you then you have no reason to divorce him.

14 In principle the unbelieving husband is sanctified by his wife's faith, and the unbelieving wife, by her husband's faith. If that was not true then your children would be contaminated by the unbelieving partner; yet they are pure because of the one parent's faith. The individual's faith blesses the whole family. *(Faith does not exclude; God's faith includes!)*

15 Yet if the unbelieving partner desires to divorce, then let it be. Pursue peace rather than forced friendship.

16 To fake friendship is not worth it; not even for the sake of possibly winning your partner to the Lord!

17 God dealt with each one of us uniquely and individually and connected with us regardless of our circumstances. He defines and completes your life, not your partner or lack of one! I am not just saying this in response to your questions about your specific challenges; I am equally persuaded about this in principle in all the churches.

18 Circumcision or the lack of it does not [1]define you! In Christ your Jewish or Gentile heritage is irrelevant and can never again [1]label you. *(The word, [1]**kaleo**, means to identify by name; to surname.)*

19 You couldn't keep the commandments anyway, whether you were circumcised or not! *(So if circumcision did not contribute anything while you were seeking to be justified under the law, how can it possibly now advantage you in your understanding of righteousness by faith?)*

20 You are not what your career or job description say you are.

21 Even if you were the lowest ranked slave before, it makes no difference to the dignity of your true identity. I am not saying that you should not go for promotion; by all means take it if it comes your way. The point that I am making is that in Christ you are equally free, whether you are a slave or free in society, a boss or an employee.

22 Society might label you as a slave, but Christ reveals how free you really are. Then again you might be a so called, "free person" in society but in Christ you are a bond slave!

23 You are not for sale! The ransom God paid for your freedom now binds you to the lordship of his love. The sign over your life says, SOLD! *(You are not for sale to the religious system of the law of works and performance based approval.)*

24 We belong to the same [1]household. Every individual originates from God and is [2]surnamed in him; this is our true lineage, [3]abide herein without compromise. *([1]Brothers, **adelphos,** meaning from the same womb. The word, [2]**kaleo**, means to surname, and [3]**para**, is a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection.)*

25 With regards to your question whether it was proper that the young unmarried people refrain from marriage because of the times we are facing, I have no specific direction from the Lord, but again you can trust my good advice! By the mercy of God I personally have no plans to get married!

26 Especially in these stressful times I would say that it is a good thing to remain single and unattached.

27 So my advice is, if you are already in a relationship with someone, don't quit; and if you are unattached, don't get involved.

28 It is certainly not wrong to get married. All I am saying is that marriage brings extra challenges in already difficult times.

29 The urgency of these times might demand mutual sacrifices from those who are married, such as sacrificing their time together for other priorities.

30 Even our most personal space for grief or joy is invaded; that leaves you with no time to indulge in your own interests and possessions. If you are in the process of buying something, buy as if you will never own it!

31 Do not lean too hard upon the fragile *(economic)* **structures of this world; they are here today and gone tomorrow!**

32 In my opinion the unmarried person lives an uncomplicated life; fully devoted to the Lord without any distractions;

33 while the married person is confronted with all the typical domestic challenges absorbing his attention in his commitment to his wife and her delights and demands.

34 The same goes for the ladies; the unmarried woman can give her undivided attention to the Lord without any emotional or physical marital obligations.

35 I really have your focused devotion to the Lord at heart and desire for you to live a beautiful life without any distractions that could possibly snare you.

36 If a man is engaged to a young girl and feels that he doesn't want to wait until she is older before they marry, let them go ahead and marry, there is nothing wrong with that!

37 Yet if he decides to rather wait, he is free to do as he has determined in his heart.

38 My personal conviction is to remain single, but I am not at all against marriage.

39 As long as the husband is alive, his wife is bound by law to remain with him; if he dies, then obviously she is free to marry another as she is led by the Lord.

40 Of course in my opinion she should not marry again.
(Obviously Paul's advice is typically that of a bachelor who has to feel justified in his decision to remain single! Lydia and I are now together for more than 40 years and certainly do not find our commitment to one another a distraction from the Lord at all! On the contrary it is the most recommendable wonderful life! — August, 2014)
Paul addresses the same issues he writes about here in Chapters 7 and 8 in his letter to Timothy, warning him against those who forbid marriage and enjoin abstinence from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving (1 Tim 4:3, 4). These issues were obviously controversial at the time.

Chapter 8

1 You have also asked me questions about whether believers are free to eat food offered to idols. We are free to hold to our own convictions about what to eat and what not to eat; but ultimately it is not about who wins the diet debate, but about sincerely loving people.

2 Let love define your convictions and not mere head knowledge.

3 Loving God *(and your fellow human)* **is so easy when you understand that he knows you! Let God's knowledge of you inspire your love for him and your fellow human.**

4 By making a fuss about eating food offered to idols gives idols undue prominence; they are nothing so why make something out of nothing! We know that there is only one God and that he has no competition!

5 There is a lot of talk about other gods and demonic powers operating on earth as well as in the heavenly realm; obviously they seem to be empowered by people's belief in them and conversation about them; so there seem to be many gods "lording" it over people.

6 This does not make them competition to God; we know that for us there is only one God who is the source of all things; there is only one authority, the Lord Jesus Christ. All things exist because of him; we owe our very being to him. He alone gives context and reference to our lives.

7 However not everyone realizes this; there are some believers who are convinced that idols are real, so for them to hear that we say that it's okay to eat food offered to idols presents a massive problem to their conscience.

8 Your diet preference certainly does not improve your standing before God; whether you eat meat or not.

9 The point is not about how justified you feel in your freedom to eat what you like, but how considerate you are not to be a stumbling block to someone else.

10 If someone who looks up to you as an example sees you eat at a banquet in a temple where the meat has obviously been sacrificed to idols, your liberty might give occasion for this person to be snared into idol worship.

11 So your "superior knowledge" is actually causing the ruin of someone for whom Christ died. *(You are influencing someone to exchange his new found belief in the sacrifice of Christ to become involved again in pagan worship and the sacrifice of animals.)*

12 You might think you have a valid argument to justify your position, but in the process you are beating your brother's conscience black-and-blue without realizing that you are injuring the cause of Christ.

13 I will much rather abstain from eating meat all together than run the risk of offending my brother.

Chapter 9

1 - 6 There seems to be different criteria whereby our ministries are judged; some Apostles seem to have liberties that others don't; in terms of their diets, financial benefits, plus the luxury to be accompanied by their wives. Would the brothers of Jesus and Kefas be rated higher than Barnabas and I amongst you? What would you say qualifies my commission to you? The fact that I have had a face-to-face encounter with our Master Jesus Christ followed by the impact and fruit of my ministry to you can surely not count against me?

7 Imagine a soldier goes to war at his own expense! I mean how absurd! Yet it is almost taken for granted that Barnabas and I have to earn our own living not to burden the very people we established and daily feed in their faith!

8 Anyone who plants a vineyard eats its fruit for free; the shepherd likewise is not expected to pay for a drink of milk!

9 Or is this just my own idea? If you insist on scriptural evidence, even the law of Moses says that the ox treading out the grain shall not be muzzled!

10 If God so cares for the oxen imagine how much more he cares for you! Moses certainly had more than oxen in mind in writing this; the farmer would be wasting his time plowing his field without participating in the harvest. While the oxen were still treading out the corn the farmer joyfully anticipates the bread.

11 Spiritual seed also translates into a material harvest.

12 While others enjoy this privilege why would it seem wrong that we share the same? We have not taken any advantage of you; we would rather suffer lack than insisting on our rights and in the process cause you to be distracted from the gospel of Christ.

13 It is common knowledge that the people engaged in temple ministry eat what is sacrificed there.

14 The same principle goes for those who proclaim the Gospel; and this is not just someone's good idea it is endorsed by the Lord.

15 The reason for my writing about these issues is not to bring you under any kind of obligation; on the contrary, I want to be very clear about this, the fact that I do things differently by not expecting anyone to pay me for my ministry is to emphasize my urgency to remove any possible excuse from anyone's mind that I might have ulterior motives! I am dead serious about this Gospel!

16 I live to preach; it consumes my total being. Your money is not going to make any difference since this Gospel has my arm twisted and locked behind my back! ***(anagke)*** **In fact, my life would be reduced to utter misery if it were not possible for me to preach the Good News!**

17 If this was a mere career choice, then surely you could hire or fire me! But I am not for sale; I am employed by the economy of persuasion!

18 So what's in it for me, you may ask? The pleasure of declaring the Gospel of Christ at no expense is priceless! No, I am not cheating anyone or myself by foregoing the rights I might have as a preacher.

19 So in a sense I am free from everyone's expectation or management; yet I have voluntarily enslaved myself to all people. This beats any other motivation to influence people.

20 I am like a Jew to the Jew to win them; I am disguised as a legalist to win those stuck under the law!

21 To the Gentiles who have no regard for Jewish sentiment, I became like one without any obligation to Jewish laws to win them! Don't get me wrong; I am not sinning to identify with the sinners! I am in the law of Christ! *(The agape law!)*

22 I am so persuaded about every person's inclusion in Christ that I desire to be everything I need to be in order to win everyone's understanding of their union with Christ. I do not present myself as super strong to the weak, but rather expose myself to their weakness in order to win them. I do not distance myself from anyone. My mission is to be exactly what is required of me in every possible situation to awaken every kind of person, whoever they are, to own their salvation! I have no other agenda. *(Traditionally translated, "in order to save some;" I do not believe that this is what Paul is saying here! The word,* ***[1]tis****, can also suggest every single kind.)*

23 The gospel explains my lifestyle; it is so much more than a pulpit ministry to me. My life is inseparably joined to you in the fellowship of the Good News!

24 Athletes run a race to win; their aim is to receive the prize not just to compete! This is why I preach, to persuade you and not just to entertain you! *(A soccer player can do magic with his footwork and ball skills, but it is no good if he cannot take the gap and score the goal!)*

25 The athlete knows how to draw from focused inner strength in order to win the crown; for them all their effort translates into a mere moment celebrated by a fading wreath of honor. For us to win your faith is of imperishable value!

26 I run with certain victory in my every step! I am not shadow boxing when I preach!

27 I deliberately compare myself to the sacrifice and dedication of a champion athlete; in similar fashion I would pummel my body and subdue it! I would deny myself many things in my pursuit to win your faith so that you will not have any excuse to reject my message. I want you, not your money! *(Paul is not saying this because he is worried about*

God's approval. It is his audience's approval that he is after: "becoming all things to all types of people in order to win every single one of them!" 1 Corinthians 9:12, we would rather suffer lack than insisting on our rights and in the process cause you to be distracted from the gospel of Christ. [See also Paul's urgency in Col 1:25-28])

Chapter 10

1 Now remember how the people of Israel were all delivered from slavery; the cloud of God's presence, protection, and provision included everyone equally. They were all miraculously led through the Red Sea on dry land and witnessed how their oppressors were completely defeated. *("These Egyptians whom you see today you will never see again!" [Ex 14:13]. Pharaoh was not to be blamed for their forty-year detour in the desert!)*

2 The cloud and sea was a type of baptism that they underwent to identify with the leadership of Moses. *(This was all a prophetic picture of Christ leading us out of bondage and slavery in his death and resurrection.)*

3 All of them daily partook of the same miraculous food.

4 They drank the same supernatural water from the Rock that accompanied them in all their travels; the Rock was the Messiah! *(Their experience was saturated in spirit dimension and the miraculous, yet they died through unbelief! The supernatural is not proof of faith! Their unbelief was rooted in their believing a lie about themselves. [Num 13:33]. Yet Christ was there even in their unbelief, the Rock accompanied them!)*

5 The vast majority of them completely disappointed God and died in the desert. *(Israel never entered into their inheritance! The desert was not their destiny! Hebrews 4:1 admonishes, "What a foolish thing it would be for us if we should now fail in a similar fashion to enter into the full consequences of our redemption." And in Hebrews 4:6, "They failed because of unbelief; they underestimated their deliverance and believed a lie about themselves;" and in Hebrews 2:3, "No one can afford to underestimate and be blasé about this final message, a salvation of such magnificent proportions! There is no alternative escape. Salvation as it is articulated in Christ is the message that God spoke from the beginning, and it was confirmed again and again by those who heard him. We cannot afford to delay the promise to a future event yet again.")*

6 We are clearly reminded not to follow their example; instead of feasting on God's merciful provision they had a craving appetite for evil.

7 Their idolatry snared them further! They were infatuated with a distorted pattern of themselves! *(This all started with them believing a lie about themselves [Num 13:33]. This was the same sin that snared Eve in paradise.)*

8 They became completely disorientated and indulged in sexual sins which killed countless thousands of them! *(What a foolish alternative to embracing and possessing the promise: Jesus redeemed the life of our design.)*

9 Remember also how Israel spoke against God and Moses and were snared by their own unbelief, suspiciously scrutinizing the Messiah who is the promise of God! *(They blamed God for what they brought upon themselves! [See Num 13:33 and Num 21:5, 6, 8] Even though God mercifully provided for them, they remained unfulfilled in their own miserable unbelief! Grumbling sets up the stage for the enemy to snare you! God's mercy prevailed in spite of their sins and here we see another*

dramatic prophetic picture of the judgment that was our due, taken by the scapegoat, Jesus. [Jn 3:14, 15; Gal 3:13; see notes in Mirror Translation on 2 Cor 5:21]. Jesus says in John 12:32, "When I am lifted up (on the cross), I will draw all judgment to me!")

10 Grumbling is a killer!

11 Now these prophetic pictures were written to alert us to the fact that they pointed to what we are now witnessing in the gospel; we are confronted with the completeness of everything that was promised!

12 If you reckon that you have it all together, make sure that you are standing strong *(in your true identity)* **when temptation strikes! How foolish it would be for us to now fall into the same unbelief that killed Israel!** *(They believed a lie about themselves [Num 13:33].)*

13 Your situation is not unique! Every human life faces contradictions! Here is the Good News: God believes in your freedom! He has made it possible for you to triumph in every situation that you will ever encounter!

14 My [1]dearly loved friends! Escape into his image and likeness in you where the [2]distorted image *([2]idolatry)* **loses its attraction!** *(Dearly loved friends, translated as [1]**agapetos**; to know the agape love of God is to know our true identity! The word, agape, comes from **agoo**, meaning to lead as a shepherd guides his sheep, and **pao**, to rest, like in Psalm 23, "he leads me beside still waters where my soul is restored; by the waters of reflection my soul remembers who I am! Now I can face the valley of the shadow of death and fear no evil!")*

15 I appeal to your common sense! Do not underestimate what I am saying to you.

16 When we share a meal together we declare our association in Christ! Every time we drink from the same cup, we communicate the language of the covenant of grace, which is what our fellowship is all about. The wine we drink is our participation in what the blood of Christ represents. *(You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot [1 Pet 1:18, 19]. He redeemed our original value and transparent innocence!)* **The bread we break celebrates our participation in the incarnation! The prophetic promise became flesh in his person; we are jointly declaring that in the revelation of our inclusion in his death and resurrection we are now the visible body of Christ.**

17 The single loaf of bread that we all partake of represents the fact that although there are many of us, there is only one Christ! By eating together from that one bread we are declaring that we are one body in Christ and that he is incarnated in each one of us! *(Our "many-ness" becomes "one-ness;" Christ doesn't become fragmented in us. Rather, we become unified in him. — The Message)*

18 Let us consider the context of the prophetic type of the sacrificial system of Israel; those who ate the sacrificed animals were partners in the same altar.

19 Now by this I am not saying that there is any magical power in a sacrifice made to an idol; an idol is nothing more than a mere figment of the imagination. The meat offered to an idol is just meat like any other barbecue!

20 The difference between Israel and the Gentile nations is in the prophetic type that Israel's sacrifices pointed to; a sacrifice offered to demons points to nothing and holds no advantage to you. I mean why would you associate with anything that reduces you to less than what

you are! *(The only significance in the Jewish sacrificial system was in its pointing to the Messiah; both the promise and the person of the Messiah points to the redemption of mankind's original identity and innocence!)*

21 You cannot celebrate the Lord in one meal and then devote yourselves to pagan worship the next time you eat! Every time you drink and eat you [1]co-echo your union in Christ! *(In our every communion, even in our daily meals, we co-echo "I am!" To partake comes from [1]**metecho**; with **meta** meaning together with, and **echo** meaning to echo what God spoke to us in Christ; like the word **metanous**, NOT repentance (re-penance); but to join thoughts about something; to co-know with God; to agree with God about you.)*

22 God is not in a tug of war with demons or our obsession with religious rituals! He has no competition. He is I am! *(Even the Jews, who continued their sacrificial rituals after Christ was sacrificed as God's Passover Lamb, were presenting their offerings to pagan gods and not to God! There remains no further spiritual relevance in the practice of Jewish rituals, including the Sabbaths and the annual feasts!)*

23 Everything is [1]endorsed in I am! Everything originates and [2]concludes in I am. Now that the prophetic picture is completed in Christ, Jewish rituals can no longer be [3]accommodated under the same roof. Christ is the relevance, not the historic ritual. *(Everything begins in I am. This comes from the Greek, **exesti,** from [1]**exousia**, which is **ek** + **eimi**. The word **ek** always denotes origin and **eimi,** I am. This word is often translated as "authority," or in this case, "endorsed;" traditional translations read, everything is "lawful." The word, [2]**sumphero**, means to bear together, to conclude. The image and likeness of God revealed and redeemed in human form is the substance of the prophetic picture. The word, [3]**oikodome**, comes from **oikos**, meaning dwelling or family and **dome**, meaning roof. Paul is urging the church to find their fellowship in the revelation of Christ and not in a mixture of Jewish and pagan religious rituals!)*

24 Even though I am free in my own persuasion, I do not pursue my freedom at someone else's expense! So even though we might feel perfectly justified in our own convictions, let each one of us consider how to benefit one another instead. *(The good news of what happened to every single person in Christ is all that matters!)*

25 Do not think twice about eating meat bought from the local market; why bother to ask questions about whether or not it was sacrificed at a Jewish or heathen temple. Such questions are completely irrelevant! To continue to live in a right or wrong consciousness is to injure yourself and others.

26 In Psalm 24:1, David declares categorically that the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. *(That should settle your conscience once and for all about diet debates! In mankind's mind an animal is sacrificed to a demon or deity of choice but the Creator owns everything anyway and he needs no one's permission to endorse his ownership, neither is he influenced by what a person believes.)*

27 Should you get a personal invitation to a banquet hosted by unbelievers and you desire to go, then be at liberty to eat whatever they prepare. Please do not embarrass them by asking sensitive questions about whether the food was sacrificed to idols or not! Leave your religious sentiment behind and enjoy the feast!

28 However if someone specifically mentions to you that the meat was indeed sacrificed to idols, then for that person's conscience sake rather refrain from eating the item in question in order to avoid giving the impression that you approve of idol worship.

29 No, I am not compromising my freedom by being sensitive to someone else's conscience! *("But, except for these special cases, I'm not*

going to walk around on eggshells worrying about what small-minded people might say; I'm going to stride free and easy, knowing what our large-minded Master has already said." — The Message)

30 Grace sets the pace in my conscience, not people's suspicious scrutiny. Every meal to me is a celebration of what grace reveals.

31 Live your life overwhelmed by God's [1]opinion of you! Your eating and drinking is certainly a constant reminder that you are his glory. Every meal proclaims the fact that the life of your design is redeemed again in Christ; salute life! *([1]Glory, **doxa** from **dokeo**, a good opinion)*

32 So live your life in freedom and wisdom. Thus the Jews, the Gentiles and the church will all witness the attraction of your life without taking any offense.

33 I am so persuaded about every person's inclusion in Christ that I desire to be everything I need to be in order to win everyone's understanding of their union with Christ; my mission is to be exactly what is required of me in every possible situation to awaken every kind of person, whoever they are, to own their salvation! I have no other agenda. *(See 1 Cor 9:22)*

Chapter 11

1 Mirror me as I mirror Christ. *(Jesus is not an example for us but of us!)*

2 I commend you for [1]giving such attention to detail concerning the heart of the gospel that I communicate. *(The word, [1]**paradidomi**, comes from **para**, a preposition that indicates close proximity, sphere of influence, and the word, **didomi**, meaning to give to someone what already belongs to them)*

3 - 17 *(I skipped these verses since they are certainly not in the context of the gospel that Paul preached. Paul understood that when Jesus died, all died; he therefore no longer knew people from a human point of view [see 2 Cor 5:14,16]. He declares in Galatians [RSV], "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." I had no liberty to translate these verses. These thoughts seem to have been added somehow by some church father to justify the tradition of the day where women had to show their submission to their husbands by wearing a head covering.*
My eldest son Renaldo once attended a church with Lydia and I where the women wore head coverings. One of the ladies brought a napkin and placed it on Lydia's head. Renaldo started giggling and when I asked him what was so funny, he said, "Dad, this is a crazy church, women are not allowed to show their hair but it's okay to show their breasts!" All around us there were mothers feeding their babies! This is Africa!)

18 My priority concern is that you are divided into different and distracting opinions when you gather as a church. Our focus is the nitty-gritty essence of the gospel. I believe in oneness not divisions.

19 The only advantage of any controversy is that the authentic becomes even more apparent in you.

20 What I heard is most disturbing: when you get together for a fellowship meal, instead of celebrating what the Lord's communion introduced,

21 some behave like gluttons while others are starving; then there are those who get wasted on the wine.

22 If you want to over indulge then do so in the privacy of your own homes! Why despise the assembly and insult the poor in the process! This is most disgusting! I am disappointed in you.

23 Let me remind you then what we are actually celebrating in our fellowship meal: The night in which the Lord Jesus was betrayed, he took bread

24 and gave thanks; breaking the bread into portions, he said, "[1]Realize your association with my death, every time you eat, remember my body that was broken for you!" *(Meaning [1]take, grasp,* ***lambamo****, to take what is one's own, to associate with one's self.)*

25 He did exactly the same with the cup after supper and said, "This cup holds the wine of the New Covenant in my blood; you celebrate me every time you drink with this understanding!" *(From now on our meals are meaningful. We celebrate the fact that the incarnation reveals our redemption; the promise became a person.*
He redeemed our original value, identity, and innocence; he died our death and defines the life we now live. He fulfills the theme of Scripture: the sufferings of the Messiah and the subsequent glory! [1 Pet 1:10, 11])

26 Your every meal makes the [1]mandate of his [2]coming relevant and communicates the meaning of the New Covenant. *(Whether you eat or drink, you are declaring your joint inclusion in his death and resurrection, confirming your redeemed innocence. Some translations read, "until I come..." The word translated until is, [1]****achri****, from* ***akmen****, which means extremity, conclusion, the present time; Jesus is the conclusion of prophetic time! The word [2]****erchomai****, to come is in the the Aorist Subjunctive Mood,*

elthe, *which is similar to the Optative expressing a wish. The Mood of the Greek verb expresses the mode in which the idea of the verb is employed. Thus, we are communicating the desire to have all people realize the meaning of the New Covenant. See 2 Peter 1:19 "For us the appearing of the Messiah is no longer a future promise but a fulfilled reality. Now it is your turn to have more than a second-hand, hear-say testimony. Take my word as one would take a lamp at night; the day is about to dawn for you in your own understanding. When the Morning Star appears, you no longer need the lamp; this will happen shortly on the horizon of your own hearts.")*

27 So whoever does not value the meaning of the bread and the wine, keep themselves in condemnation.

28 To see oneself associated in Christ's death and declared innocent in his blood is the only worthy manner in which to examine one's own life in the context of the new covenant meal. *(Self examination according to the Old Covenant, i.e. Deuteronomy 28 is no longer relevant. "Examine yourselves to see whether you are holding to the faith, test yourselves, do you not realize that Jesus Christ is within you!" [2 Cor 13:5 — RSV])*

29 Anyone who partakes of this meal in an indifferent manner, either because of religious sentiment or merely being blasé about the meaning of the meal, eats and drinks judgment upon themselves! The human body of Jesus represents the judgment of every single human life; to fail to acknowledge this is to deliberately exclude yourself from the blessing of the New Covenant. *(Isaiah 53:3-8, He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded by our transgressions, he was bruised by our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb,*

so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken by the transgression of my people? [RSV] No one can afford to underestimate what happened to us on the cross! To discern the Lord's body is to grasp what God's faith saw when Jesus died!)

30 This is the reason why many of you are suffering unnecessarily with weaknesses and illnesses, and many have already died.

31 By judging that we indeed co-died in his death we are free from any kind of judgment! *(John 5:22, "The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son." [RSV] John 12:31-33, "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all judgment to myself." He said this to show by what death he was to die.")*

32 By discerning the broken body of Christ we can only conclude that he suffered our brokenness and distortion. This is the instruction of the Lord; what foolishness it would be to continue to place yourself and the rest of the world under judgment when Jesus already took all judgment upon himself!

33 So when you come together to eat the covenant meal, embrace one another with utmost courtesy;

34 there is no point in getting together to see who can eat or drink the most! Eat at home if you are hungry; why turn a celebration into condemnation? *(Our feast celebrates the success of the cross and has nothing in common with a pagan banquet!*
The prophetic picture of the table was most significant! The priests had to daily place fresh bread on the table in the sanctuary. It was called Showbread, **מינפה מחל *lechem haPānīm***, *literally: "Face-bread; Bread of the Presence". The Hebrew word for presence means face to face! While Jesus spoke to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus in Luke 24, they*

did not recognize him, even though their hearts ignited while he was pointing to himself in Scripture, explaining the prophetic promise of mankind's redemption, from Moses through the Psalms and the Prophets. In Luke's interview, he pressed them for the detail; he wanted to know exactly at what point in their meeting with Jesus they recognized him in person! He writes in verse 28, "So they drew near to the village to which they were going and Jesus appeared to be going further..." Wow! Should Jesus not at this point have given them an opportunity to make a commitment or at least say a "sinners prayer"? Not even the best Rabbi could take them any further! Luke 24:29 "But they constrained him, saying, "Sir, stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them." Luke 24:30 "When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them."
Luke 24:31 "And their eyes were opened and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight." Instead of disappointment, a great excitement arrested their hearts and they took off in the night desiring to tell the others back in Jerusalem! Nothing mobilizes one more than realizing the relevance of the revelation of the incarnation! They knew that Jesus could no longer be any more present in his person than what he is present in the Word incarnate in us!
The moment we discover Jesus in Scripture as in a mirror, our hearts ignite and our very next meal becomes a celebration of the incarnation! "Every time you eat or drink, remember me!" Every meal celebrates the temple! Your body is God's address on planet earth! He does not dwell in buildings made by human hands. You will never again need to employ your willpower to diet and get into shape! Willpower is the language of the law! Love and value-consciousness ignites belief. The revelation of the truth sets you free to be free indeed! The days of fast food and junk-food are over! The Table is sacred and celebrates your body as the sanctuary of your redeemed life, the life of your authentic design! Sitting around the table is a feast of friendship and delightful conversation. Eat food that blesses the temple! Most diseases are diet-related! Study nutrition! We have this treasure in earthen vessels! The vessel takes its value from the treasure it holds!)

Chapter 12

1 Spiritual manifestations are supernatural, yet often very natural. Just because it is spirit dimension does not mean that you cannot understand what God's Spirit is saying to you.

2 Remember how, when you were still practicing pagan worship, you got carried away by dead and dumb idols into doing many weird things. *(Then you were snared by voiceless idols, now you are empowered by the voice God finds in ordinary people who amplify what he spoke to mankind in Christ.)*

3 Holy Spirit will never distract from Jesus or prompt anyone to dishonor Christ; Holy Spirit will always magnify Jesus! *(See John 16:13 But when she is come, the Spirit of truth, she will take you by the hand and guide you into the path of all truth. She will not draw attention to herself but will communicate and unveil everything she hears and discerns from a heavenly perspective about the things that is about to happen within you. John 16:14 Holy Spirit will endorse my opinion of you by taking that which is mine and interpreting it in you. See commentary notes in Mirror Bible. In Hebrew the word, Ruach, Spirit, is Feminine.)*

4 There may be different manifestations of the grace gifts but they will not confuse, since the same Spirit is speaking.

5 Also ministries may appear to be different in their function but the same Lord endorses his purpose and management in everyone.

6 We might be doing things differently but we are drawing from the same source. God energizes each and everyone for their particular purpose.

7 Every expression of the Spirit is given to bring that which God accomplished in Christ [1]into full focus. *(The word, [1]**sumphero**, means to co-bear, bring together.)*

8 To one is given a word that clears the air and wisdom prevails; to another a word of knowledge, where something that could not be known in any other way comes to light! The same Spirit is the source.

9 Yet another person is inspired with a gift of faith in the same Spirit and another with gifts of healing of specific diseases in the same Spirit.

10 And to another the working of mighty acts of miracles, and to another enlightened speech *(prophecy)***; to another the ability to discern the difference between God's Spirit and a foreign spirit; to someone else the ability to communicate in many different languages; another has a gift to interpret these languages.**

11 All these various gifts are inspired by the same Spirit who individually works in every person as Holy Spirit desires. *(See 1 Cor 14:1)*

12 The many members of the same body do not divide the oneness of the individual. The various gifts and workings of the Spirit of Christ find a beautiful similitude taken from the mutual dependence of the numerous parts of the human body. All the parts unite harmoniously into one whole. The Spirit of Christ is one Spirit; although their workings in each one of us may seem different there is no distraction from their oneness in us.

13 For in one spirit we are all immersed into one body; Jew and Gentile alike, whether we were slave or free is no longer relevant, we are all saturated in one spirit. We are drinking from the same fountain.

14 The individual member and its function do not define the body; the body gives context to the individual member. Your specific gifting does not define you; Christ defines you!

15 The different members co-compliment each other. The hand is not a more valid member of the body than the foot. How silly it would be for the foot to feel inferior to the hand simply because it does not look the same! They fulfill completely different roles but are equally part of the same body.

16 Should the ear say, "Because I am not the eye I am not part of the same body;" does that mean that the ear is right?

17 If the body was just one huge eye, then everything would be silent; if it was all ears, then how could it smell the fragrance of the flowers!

18 God engineered every individual part of the body according to his deliberate design.*(The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the Lord has made them both. [Prov 20:12])*

19 Our individual significance only finds context in relationship to others!

20 The sum total of the members equals one body.

21 The eye perceives and the hand touches; they do not compete for importance. The head will never make the feet feel inferior! In the body there is no sense of, "I am positioned higher than you and therefore I do not need you!"

22 The members are not rated in importance with how visible and prominent they seem to be. The less visible parts are indispensable; it is impossible for the body to function without them.

23 Those members that seem to be of lesser visible value deserve the greater and more personal care. There is so much more to a person than a pretty face!

24 God so structured the body that every single part is equally valued; the less visible parts are often treated with even greater honor and more specific care.

25 Because of the delicate interdependence of the various parts of the body it is natural that no schism can be tolerated; instead every member considers the other with affectionate care.

26 It is impossible for one part of the body to suffer injury without the rest of the body being immediately alerted to it; the pain of the one is the pain of all. In the same way the complete person is honored, not just the fingers that skillfully play the harp. Everyone is equally included in the same joy. *(This parallel explains perfectly mankind's inclusion in the horror of Christ's death and the glory of his resurrection; one has died for all, therefore all died! [2 Cor 5:14-17])*

27 You are the body of Christ; individually as much as you are his body corporately. Everyone of you mirrors him. [1]He defines your [2]form. The individual member does not give context to the body; the body gives context to the member. *("Members in particular" or individually comes from [1]**ek**, a preposition that always denotes origin and [2]**meros**, meaning a part or portion.)*

28 Wherever God places you in the body is to co-compliment the full function of the Ekklesia. The seemingly most prominent and visible gifts are the apostolic, then the prophetic, the teachers, the workers of miracles, those gifted with healing various diseases. Then there are those who can fulfill any role required of them for the moment; they are the ones who can [1]stand in full support to assist any of the other gifts! The administrators are gifted to [2]manage the various functions of the Ekklesia with great skill. Then there are those gifted in languages. *(The word, [1]**antilepsis**, means to lay hold of together; the word [2]**kubernesis** comes from **kubernao**, Latin for "to steer." No one is more important than the other! An apostle is not a title! To be "apostolic" simply explains that you are gifted with a specific function, which includes your commission to pioneer new frontiers as well as to take leadership initiative with wisdom and passion. A gift can never be mistaken with reward! Your gift does not define you; so don't let people call you Mr. Prophet! [See Eph 4:11]*
What God now has in us is gift wrapped to the world; some are commissioned to pioneer; others are gifted prophetically; some gifted as announcers of good news; some are Shepherds with a real gift to care and nurture, and others have a gift to ignite instruction through revelation knowledge.
[Couriers, communicators, counselors and coaches —Rob Lacey]
Each expression of his gift is to fully equip and enable the Saints for the work of the ministry so that they may mutually contribute in their specific function to give definition to the visible body of Christ [Eph 4:12].)

29 Everyone is not an apostle, or a Prophet, or a teacher, or a miracle worker! *(Your gift does not exalt you above anyone else; it is clear then that there can be neither competition nor any ground for boasting. The gifts do not compete with the each other; instead each gift compliments the other.)*

30 All are not specifically gifted as healers. All do not necessarily speak in tongues. Are all equally accurate in their interpretation of what was said in a foreign tongue? *(The point is not how gifted you are in*

yourself, but how effective you are to equip others to discover themselves in the full stature of Christ.)

31 While you are keen to discover which are your favorite gifts, allow me to introduce you to the *summum bonum* of life. This transcends all! ***(summum bonum*** *- the highest good - Latin)*
LOVE IS WHO YOU ARE!

Chapter 13

1 Speaking in tongues is not the point; [1]love is. It is neither Angelic eloquence, nor the mastery of human language that persuades. It doesn't matter how poetic, prophetic, or profound I may sound; my conversation is reduced to the hollow noise of clanging brass cymbals if love's echo is absent. *(The Greek word for the love of God is [1]**agape** from the word, **agoo**, meaning to lead like a shepherd guides his sheep, and **pao**, meaning to rest, i.e. "he leads me beside still waters." By the waters of reflection my soul remembers who I am. [Ps 23]. God's rest is established upon his image and likeness redeemed in us. Thus, to encounter agape is to remember who I am. Jesus the Savior of mankind rescued God's image and likeness in human form. The grace of God shines as bright as day making the salvation of mankind undeniably visible [Titus 2:11***]**.)*

2 I could predict the future in detail and have a word of knowledge for everyone. I could possess amazing faith, and prove it by moving mountains! It doesn't make me any more important than anyone else. Love is who you are! You are not defined by your gift or deeds. *(Love gives context to faith. Moving mountains is not the point, love is.)*

3 Love is not about defending a point of view; even if I am prepared to give away everything I have and die a martyr's death; love does not

have to prove itself by acts of supreme devotion or self sacrifice!

4 Love is large in being passionate about life and relentlessly patient in bearing the offenses and injuries of others with kindness. Love is completely content and strives for nothing. Love has no desire to make others feel inferior and has no need to sing its own praises.

5 Love is predictable and does not behave out of character. Love is not ambitious. Love is not [1]spiteful and gets no mileage out of another's mistakes; it bears no record of wrongs! *(The word, [1]**paroxuno**, translates as spiteful, it has no sharp edges.)*

6 Love sees no joy in injustice. Love's delight is in everything that truth celebrates.

7 Love is a fortress where everyone feels protected rather than exposed! Love's persuasion is persistent! Love believes. Love never loses hope and always remains constant in contradiction.

8 Love never loses its altitude! *(The word, **ekpipto**, means to lose height, to stop soaring.)* **Prophecies will cease.** *(Just like when a placenta is discarded after a baby is born.)* **Tongues will pause.** *(In order for that which was spoken in shadow-language to be fully interpreted.)* **The quest for knowledge will be inappropriate when perfection is grasped.**

9 What we perceived in prophetic glimpses

10 is now concluded in completeness!

11 When I was an [1]infant I spoke infant gibberish with the mind of an infant; my reasoning also was typical of an infant; how it all changed

when I became a grown-up! I am an infant no more! *(The word, [1]**nepios**, means without any command of speech.)*

12 There was a time of [1]suspense, when everything we saw was merely mirrored in the prophetic word, like in an enigma; but then *(when I became an adult in the revelation of Christ)* **I gaze face-to-face that I may know me, even as I have always been known!** *(The word, [1]**arti,** comes from **airo**, meaning to keep in suspense. "I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb!"[Jer 1:5])*

13 [1]Now persuasion and every pleasurable [2]expectation is [3]completed in agape. *(Here, in agape, my soul remembers who I am! Psalm 23)* **Faith, hope and love are in [3]seamless union. Agape is the superlative of everything faith and [2]hope always knew to be true about me! Love defines my [3]eternal moment!** *(Where the word, [1]**nun**, means now, at this very moment, **arti**, [v 12] means until now, a time of suspense; [2]**elpis**, means hope, pleasant expectation; and [3]**meno**, means to continue to be present. To continue in a seamless union)*

Chapter 14

1 Agape is God's only agenda! Be love driven in your pursuit of spiritual gifts; love awakens your most earnest desire to speak with [1]inspired revelation. *(The best way to pursue love and spiritual gifts is to realize how pursued you are by love! The word, [1]**προφητεύω, prophēteuō**, from **προφήτης, prophētēs**, from **pro[s]** before, also face to face, and **phaino**, to bring forth into the light, cause to shine, shed light; translates as enlightened speech. In Greek writings, a prophet is an interpreter of oracles or of other hidden things. In the context of Scripture, Jesus is both the theme as well as the completeness of the prophetic word. The prophetic*

foretelling of the Old Testament pointed to Christ. [Lk 24:27, 44; Jn 5:39]. ***See commentary note on the prophetic at the end of this chapter****.)*

2 For the one who speaks in a strange tongue speaks intimate spirit mysteries between him and God but no one else can understand him.

3 But those who prophesy inspire their audience constructively and comfort them with [1]companionship and [2]instruction. *(The word* ***[1]parakaleo****; to accompany; to affiliate; to associate; from* ***para****, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection, and* ***kaleo****, to identify by name, to surname. Instruction is translated from* ***[2]paramutheo****, from* ***para*** *and* ***muthos*** *from* ***mueo****, meaning to teach with narratives.)*

4 While speaking in tongues is primarily for personal edification, prophetic instruction inspires the church.

5 I am happy for all of you to speak in tongues, but I desire even more that each one of you will also speak revelation knowledge for the benefit of the whole church. So please do not speak in tongues in the church unless you can also interpret what you have just said.

6 Imagine how confusing it would be if I visit you and all I do is impress you with my spirituality by speaking in tongues; how could I possibly benefit you unless I speak with revelation insight and inspired prophetic instruction.

7 Any musical instrument like a flute or guitar would irritate the audience if all it did was repeating indistinct sounds without any

melody. Play music that everyone will appreciate! *(The Greek word for harp is **kithara**.)*

8 If the bugle gives an uncertain sound, the soldiers will miss the moment to prepare themselves to advance in battle! *(Do you realize the importance of what I am saying? Do not misinterpret strategic instruction for personal edification.)*

9 Make every word count in order to bring maximum benefit to your audience; [1]weigh your words then you will not be wasting your breath! *(The words [1]**eusemos logos** translates as a well marked word.)*

10 In nature every voice vibrates with meaning; even animal and bird sounds are distinct and significant.

11 There is no point in having a conversation with someone if you do not understand one another's language.

12 Let me make it very clear, while speaking in tongues has its personal benefits, do not make it the thing everybody wants to do! Then you miss the whole point of spiritual gifts! What is the value if a million people can speak in tongues but they are completely incapable of bringing a word of inspired instruction? Tongues are most certainly not a mark of spirituality! The greater blessing is not in getting the blessing but in being a blessing to others!

13 Do not even attempt to speak in tongues in the congregation if you are unable to also unfold and explain the meaning of what was said!

14 Why pray in tongues without understanding? Then there is no point in it.

15 Even in worship the two go hand in hand: I will pray with the spirit and continue with understanding; I will worship God in spiritual songs and then conclude by singing with inspired understanding! *(Remember Paul's introduction to the spiritual gifts in chapter 12:1, "Spiritual manifestations are supernatural, yet often very natural. Just because it is spirit dimension does not mean that you cannot understand what God's Spirit is saying to you." Paul's passion is to make all men see what God saw when Jesus died and was raised; the spiritual gifts are not to add confusion but clarity to the gospel.)*

16 If all you do is speak blessings in tongues, how can anyone else in the same room, especially those who are completely ignorant of spiritual things, feel included and in agreement with what you are saying?

17 There is nothing wrong with your thanksgiving as such; it is just a pity that you should exclude someone in your immediate audience.

18 Am I against speaking in tongues? Not at all! I am so grateful to God that I speak in tongues; I do so perhaps more than all of you!

19 But when we gather together I would rather speak five words with my understanding in order to inspire someone with mutual [1]resonance than waste a thousand words in tongues. *(The word, [1]**katecheo**, is where the word catechism comes from, **kata**, downward and echo, to hold or echo; thus, to resonate. Resonance instructs truth and defeats debate.)*

20 Brothers and sisters, the days of being children in our understanding of spiritual matters are over! Be innocent as [1]infants concerning evil but in [2]understanding be perfectly articulate! *(The word, [1]**nepios**, translates as without the command of language, babyish,*

*gibberish. The word Paul uses here for understanding is the word [2]**phren** where we get the word diaphragm; it refers to an inner knowing, a deeper knowledge than mere academic consent.)*

21 In the law it is written, "In foreign tongues and strange sounds I will speak to this people, and still they will not understand," says the Lord. *(The law refers to the Old Covenant Scriptures, including the Psalms and the Prophets. In Isaiah 28:9-11, Isaiah writes: You say, "Who are you to lord it over us? We're not babies in diapers to be talked down to by such as you—'Da, da, da, da, blah, blah, blah, blah. That's a good little girl, that's a good little boy.' But that's exactly how you will be addressed. God will speak to this people in baby talk, one syllable at a time—But they won't listen." — The Message.)*
*By now you (Jews) should have been professors, able to teach the rest of the world, but you are still struggling with the ABC of God's language in Christ [Heb 5:12]. The difference between the prophetic shadow and the real is like that between milk and meat in your diet. You cannot live on baby food for the rest of your lives! [Heb 1:1-3] The revelation of righteousness is the meat of God's word. [Babes live on milk, "the prophetic shadow of the real, which was to come."]) So does everyone who is not [1]pierced in the ear of his heart by the revelation of Christ. [Romans 1:17, God's act of righteousness in Christ restored mankind to blameless innocence.] The word, [1]**apeiros**, translates as not pierced, tested by piercing.*
Hebrews 5:14, This is the nourishment of the mature. They are those who have their faculties of perception trained as by gymnastic precision to distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant. (The mature are those who know the difference between the shadow and the substance; between the futility of the law of works and willpower to work righteousness, and righteousness revealed by the faith of God in the finished work of Christ.)

22 In a certain sense tongues are also a prophetic sign pointing towards the revelation of Christ; thus unbelievers are brought to faith. prophetic instruction is often used specifically to edify the believers. *(It can also be used to convince an unbeliever, e.g., through a word of knowledge. [See John 4:18, 19, 29]*

Acts 2:4-11 says it all: "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.
Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. And they were amazed and wondered, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God." [RSV])

23 If an unbeliever or someone completely ignorant of spiritual things happens to walk into one of your meetings while everyone is going off in tongues they will think that you are crazy and nothing will attract them to your faith.

24 However if all speak with inspired revelation, the newcomer will feel drawn by the message that brings conviction and light.

25 By witnessing the gift of the word of knowledge, where something that could not be known in any other way comes to light, the visitor will be struck with awe and acknowledge God in you and will yield himself to God in worship.

26 I would encourage you to conduct your meetings in such a way that everyone is mutually edified. Each one in turn may contribute in music, in a teaching; another may bring a tongue with a revelation and interpretation.

27 I want to be very clear on the issue of tongues and its practice in the assembly: if someone insists on speaking in tongues; keep it short,

let it be only two or at the most three in turn, definitely not all three at the same time, and let one interpret what was said.

28 If there is no interpretation, let the one who wants to talk in tongues rather be quiet; he can have his own private conversation with God when he is alone.

29 Let only two or three Prophets speak while the others weigh what was said.

30 If another picks up something that is not consistent with the revelation of the gospel, he should bring the conversation back to order while the first person be silent. *(Which is exactly what I have done with verses 34-38. I do not consider them legitimate Scriptures from Paul.)*

31 The two or three people prophesying should take turns to speak; if more than one speaks at the same time the objective is lost and no one can gain any insight or encouragement from the prophetic word.

32 The spirit of the Prophet is subject to the Prophet.

33 Confusion is not of God; peace and harmony sets the pace in all the churches of the Saints.

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35 *(Women should shut up in church; they should know their place of submission just as they are taught in the law! If they need to know anything their husbands can instruct them at home; church is certainly not a place where women should voice their opinion; they also do not qualify to operate in any of the gifts of the spirit!*
Hee hee hee! This sounds like a grumpy old church father voicing his

opinion!
This is certainly not consistent with Paul's revelation that in Christ there is neither male nor female! [See 2 Corinthians 5:14,16, Galatians 3:28, also 1 Corinthians 11:3-17])

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38 *(Now to add insult to injury, the same author of the previous verses lashes out against anyone who would not share his sentiment concerning women.)*

39 To conclude the tongues and prophecy debate; encourage prophecy with greater enthusiasm than tongues. However do not forbid tongues altogether,

40 but let it all happen with discretion and dignity!

Extended Note on The Prophetic- 1 Cor 14:1

In the New Testament the prophetic has its reference in the finished work of the cross more so than in the prediction of future events. The Prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired about this salvation; they inquired what person or time was indicated by the Spirit of Christ within them when predicting the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glory. [1 Pet 1:10-11 RSV]

*Hebrews 1:1 Throughout [1]ancient times God spoke in many fragments and glimpses of prophetic thought to our fathers. Now, this entire conversation has [2]finally dawned in sonship. Suddenly what seemed to be an ancient language, falls fresh and new like the dew on the tender grass! He is the sum total of every utterance of God in conversation with us. He is whom the Prophets pointed to and we are his immediate audience! (The word [1]**palai**, meaning, of old, ancient; from **palin** through the idea of oscillatory repetition or retrocession; anew, afresh. See Deut 32:1 "Give ear, Oh*

heavens, and I will speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. 32:2 May my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distil as the dew, as the gentle rain upon the tender grass, and as the showers upon the herb.... Deut 32:18 You were unmindful of the Rock that begot you, and you forgot the God who gave you birth. Like in James 1: 24, we have forgotten what manner of people we are - we have forgotten the face of our birth!

*The word [2]**eschatos** means extreme; last in time or in space; the uttermost part, the final conclusion. Sonship revealed and redeemed defines eschatology!)*

Heb 1:2 In sonship, God declares the Incarnate Word to be the heir of all things. He is, after all, the author of the ages. We have our beginning and our being in him. (Sonship endorses heirship! See Heb 6:16-18.)

Heb 1:3 Jesus is the crescendo of God's conversation with mankind; he gives context and content to the authentic thought. Everything that God had in mind for mankind is voiced in him. Jesus is God's language. He is the radiant and flawless expression of the person and [1]intent of God. He mirrors God's [2]character and exhibits his every attribute in human form. He is the incarnate voice of God in revealing and redeeming our sonship and innocence. This voice is the dynamic that sustains the entire cosmos. He is the force of the universe upholding everything that exists as the executive authority of God, enthroned in the boundless measure of his majesty. ("Having accomplished purification of sins, he sat down ..." His throne is proof of mankind's redeemed innocence!

More than two thousand years ago the conversation that had begun before time was recorded—sustained in fragments of thought throughout the ages, whispered in prophetic language, chiseled in stone and inscribed in human conscience and memory—became a man. Beyond the tablet of stone, the papyrus scroll or parchment roll, human life has become the articulate voice of God. The name of Jesus defines his mission. As Savior of the world he truly redeemed the image and likeness of the invisible God and made him apparent again in human form, as in a mirror.

*The word [1]**doxa** from **dokeo**, opinion or intent defines the glory of God. The word [2]**charakter** from **charax** - to engrave - translated 'mark of the beast' in the book of Revelation. Either the character of the Father or the character of the fallen mind will influence our actions (hand) because it is what engages our thoughts (forehead)*

Like in Isa 55:8-11 "Your thoughts are not my thoughts; therefore your ways are not my ways....but my word will incarnate, and saturate earth (flesh) just like the rain and the snow cancel the distance between heaven and earth, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth! It shall not return void but prosper in my purpose!")

The purpose of the prophetic, just like with every other ministry gift, is to encourage and edify the church with the success of the cross as its reference. In the instance recorded in Acts 11 where Agabus and his team foretold the famine that was to come, the new believers from Antioch immediately saw this as a brilliant strategy of the Holy Spirit to prepare provision for their Jewish friends in Judea. Antioch was the first community of believers to be called Christian, and they were non-Jewish; this might have caused distance between them and the Jewish church but here was their opportunity to take the initiative to break down any such barriers! "When your enemy is hungry, feed him!" [Rom 12:20]

Some modern day prophetic ministries have brought confusion rather than clarity and freedom by a wrong emphasis on the prophetic! Many sincere believers became addicted to the "prophetic" and began to attach more value to yet another future prediction than what they saw in the completed work of Christ! This became a snare and made the "prophetic" a type of Christian fortune telling! While knowledge about future happenings is exciting and also can be strategic, if it does not celebrate the finished work of Christ as its point of reference it becomes a distraction.

The most profound future information pales in significance in the light of what already happened to mankind in Christ! Religion thrives on two lies, distance and delay; Jesus cancelled both. Every possible definition of distance was cancelled on the cross. "Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; every crooked place shall be made straight and every rough place smooth!" [Isa 40:4] Every excuse that anyone could have to feel separated from God was deleted in Christ.

The hour that was to come has come; Jesus is the fullness of time! God can never get any closer to mankind than what he already did in the incarnation. God cannot say more to the human race than what he did in Jesus.)

Chapter 15

1 Brothers and sisters, herewith a summary of the Good News that I endorse; I announced to you with glad confidence how greatly advantaged you are in Christ; you immediately associated yourselves with this message in which you are now firmly established.

2 In this gospel you realized your salvation; the words I spoke echoed in your hearts; I now desire to reinforce your faith in order to erase any possible grounds for doubt.

3 I fully included you in the message I embrace with my whole being. Of first importance is the fact that the death that Jesus died for our sins was in exact fulfillment of the promise recorded in Scripture. *(Isa 53:4, 5, Ps 22)*

4 Also his burial and third day resurrection were accurately foretold. *(Hos 6:2)*

5 Then there are the many eyewitnesses; Kefas, as well as all the other disciples who saw him after his resurrection.

6 He then appeared to more than five hundred followers of whom most are still alive at the time of this writing.

7 After that he was seen by James *(Jesus's brother; Gal 1:19)***, then again by all the Apostles** *(at the Mount of Olives.)***,**

8 and finally he also appeared to me; certainly not as a reward for my spirituality or good behavior! It was like an unexpected traumatic

birth. *(The word,* ***ektroma****, means out of trauma.)*

9 Because I persecuted the church of God, I cannot even begin to rate myself along with the Apostles. I am the least of the least and unworthy to even be called an apostle.

10 While my own doing completely disqualified me; his doing now defines me. I am what I am by the grace of God. I am because he is! His grace was not wasted on me; instead I am inspired to labor beyond the point of exhaustion, more than anything I ever did under the law of performance; whatever it is that I accomplish now has grace written all over it. I take no credit for it.

11 Whether you came to faith through my preaching or someone else's is not important.

12 What is important though is that you understand the revelation of his resurrection. The resurrection of Christ from the dead is the theme of preaching; for some to say that he is not also raised within you is to miss the whole point of the message.

13 If our co-resurrection is not proclaimed then the resurrection of Jesus from the dead is no longer relevant.

14 If Christ is not raised from the dead there is nothing left for us to preach and nothing left for you to believe.

15 We would be misrepresenting God since we declared that he raised Christ from the dead; when in fact he did not, so it would be man's word against God's!

16 If there is no global resurrection from the dead then there can be no individual resurrection from the dead; then Jesus did not really rise from the dead.

17 And if Jesus is still dead your faith has no relevance and you are still in your sins. *(In Paul's understanding the body of Christ on the cross was the document of mankind's guilt and the resurrection was the receipt of their acquittal [Col 2:14, 15 and Rom 4:25]. If mankind was still guilty after Jesus died, his resurrection would neither be possible nor relevant! This explains Acts 10:28 and 2 Cor 5:14 and 16. Acts 17:31 says, "because God had fixed a day on which he would judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all men by raising him from the dead.")*

18 No resurrection implies no hope for anyone beyond the grave; it makes no difference whether you believed that you were included in Christ's death or not.

19 If our hope in Christ was restricted to only benefit us in this life then imagine the severity of our disappointment if it all had to come to an abrupt end when we died.

20 However this very moment the risen Christ represents everyone who has ever died; exactly like the first fruit represents the complete harvest.

21 The same mankind who died in a man was raised again in a man.

22 In Adam all died; in Christ all are made alive.

23 All are individually made alive in the order of Christ; he is the first fruit and in [1]his immediate presence we are personally revealed as his

own. *(The word [1]**parousia** was often translated to mean the coming of the Lord; however, the two components of the word are, **para,** a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **eimi**, I am: his immediate presence realized in me.)*

24 The complete conclusion in his work of redemption is celebrated in his yielding the full harvest of his reign to God the Father, having [1]brought to naught the law of works which supported every definition of dominion under the fall, including all [2]principalities, all [3]authority and every [4]dynamic influence in society. *(He brought to naught the law of works, [1]**katargeo**, from **kata**, meaning intensity, and **argos**, meaning labor; thus free from all self-effort to attempt to improve what God has already perfected in Christ. All principalities, [2]**arche**, or chief ranks, i.e., kings, governors; this includes any governing system whereby one is ranked above the other on the basis of their performance or preference. All authority, [3]**exousia**, comes from **ek**, denoting origin and **eimi**, I am; in this case, because of what I can do I am defined by what I can do better than you; therefore, I have authority over you. Every dynamic influence in society, [4]**dunamis**, means power, in this case, willpower. Every government structure in society will be brought under the dominion of grace where the Christ life rules.*
The kingdom of God is the authority of the Christ life in ordinary, day to day life, where righteousness is based on who we are and not on who we are trying to impress. The law of works is duty and guilt driven, whereas the law of faith is love driven. Rom 3:27, Gal 5:6. Also 2 Cor 10:12 When they measure themselves by one another, competing and comparing, they are without understanding.)

25 His dominion is destined to subdue all hostility and contradiction under his feet. *(The lowest part of the human body will equally share in this victory. "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I make*

your enemies your footstool." [Ps 110:1] Jesus is Lord of Lords; in his victory mankind is restored to lordship; "I say you are gods, all of you are sons of the Most High" [Ps 82:6 RSV].)

26 Resurrection life will finally triumph over every definition of death.

27 When David says in Psalm 8 that mankind is destined to reign over all things he obviously does not mean that mankind will also rule over their Maker. *(He has made mankind all but equal to himself, he crowned them with his own glory and dignity, and appointed them in a position of authority over all the works of his hands." [Hebrews 2:7 and Psalm 8:4-6; no Angelic shepherd-messenger can boast that.]*
Hebrews 2:8 God's intention was that mankind should rule the planet. He subjected everything without exception to their control. Yet, looking at the human race, it does not seem that way at all.
Hebrews 2:9 But what is apparent is Jesus ["but now God spoke to us in a Son ..." Heb 1:1-3] Let us then consider him in such a way that we may clearly perceive what God is saying to mankind in him. In the death he suffered he descended for a brief moment below the lowest ranked shepherd-messenger in order to taste the death of the entire human race; and in doing so, to fulfill the grace of God and be crowned again as a man, representing all mankind with glory and highly esteemed honor.
*Hebrews 2:10 He now towers in conspicuous prominence far above all things. He is both their author and their conclusion. He now summons every son of his, through a perfected salvation, to his own glory. The extent of the suffering he bore is the measure of the perfection of the salvation over which he presides. [The word, **prepo**, means to tower above in prominence. See also Heb 7:26]*
*Ephesians 4:8 Scripture confirms that he led us as trophies in his triumphant procession on high; he repossessed his gift [likeness] in mankind. [Eph 2:6, We are also elevated in his ascension to be equally welcome in the throne room of the heavenly realm where we are now seated together with him in his authority. Quote from the Hebrew text in Psalm 68:18; **lakachta mattanoth baadam**, thou hast taken gifts in human form, in Adam. [The gifts which Jesus Christ distributes to us he has received in us,*

in and by virtue of his incarnation. Commentary by Adam Clarke.]
Eph 4:9 The fact that he ascended confirms his victorious descent into the deepest pits of human despair. [In John 3:13: "No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, even the son of man." All mankind originates from above; we are ***anouthen,*** *from above. See Jas 1:17, 18.])*
Ephesians 4:10 He now occupies the ultimate rank of authority from the lowest regions where he stooped down to rescue us to the highest authority in the heavens, having executed his mission to the full. (Fallen mankind is fully restored to the authority of the authentic life of their design. [Ps 139:7,8 Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, You! If I make my bed in Sheol, You!])

28 In subduing all things under him, the Son himself in his own submission to the Father will confirm that God is all and in all. *(John 14:20, "In that day you will know that I am in my father and you in me and I in you." The day Jesus refers to here happened when he died and was raised again; the day for us dawns the moment we realize our co-inclusion in his death and resurrection.)*

29 *Now here's a novel idea: if someone died who didn't get baptized then you can baptize someone else in their stead. (That should convince God to raise that person from the dead one day; this way you don't have to worry about anything, just remember to charge a decent fee so that you can build an Olympic size pool in your church!)*
(There is no doubt that this passage was squeezed in here by some heretic church father; since the practice referred to only existed in some churches 200 years later and is in total contradiction to Paul's message; as were other practices that later evolved in churches, such as buying indulgences to shorten a deceased loved one's time in the church's idea of "purgatory!"
Here is Paul's take on baptism: *1 Cor 1:17, "My mandate was not about winning members for some "Christian club" through baptism! I am commissioned to declare the Good News without any strings attached; nothing to distract from the powerful effect of the revelation of the cross of Christ." [The mystery of the cross is the revelation of mankind's inclusion in his death and resurrection. See 1 Cor 2:7])*

30 Why would we bother to constantly put ourselves in life threatening situations by preaching this gospel if it is all coming to nothing in the end anyway?

31 My passion for your joy in Christ Jesus our Lord puts my life at frequent risk. As [1]certain as I am of your salvation, so certain am I of the resurrection; therefore, I am more than confident to daily live dangerously close to death. *(This [1]**ne** is a particle of swearing. People swear or affirm by their objects of dearest affection and desire; our salvation and joy was Paul's dearest affection.)*

32 If I like many other prisoners had to fight wild beasts in the amphitheater of Ephesus, what would be my gain if the dead are not raised; then we might as well live by the philosophy, "let us eat and drink as much as we can today for tomorrow we die!"

33 Do not be distracted by a message that excludes the revelation of the resurrection; yielding yourselves to the persuasive conversation of others, their negative influence in your lives would be inevitable.

34 Awake to righteousness, and the distortion of sin will have no further effect on you. God is not confused. What a shame that anyone should exchange what God knows to be true about us to someone else's inferior opinion.

35 There might be many skeptics who would say, "How are the dead raised and what does the resurrected body look like?"

36 Think about it this way, a seed that is sown has to first die before it lives again.

37 And the plant that grows from the seed does not even resemble the grain that was sown. If you only know what wheat looks like in its seed form you might not be able to recognize its plant.

38 God has designed a unique body for every plant species.

39 The human body differs from the bodies of animals and so do the bodies of fish and birds differ from all other bodies.

40 There are celestial bodies as well as terrestrial bodies. The glory of the one differs from the other. There are skin-bodies and spirit-bodies. *(Our skin-bodies have a sell by date; our spirit-bodies are eternal. [2 Cor 5:1])*

41 The glory of the sun differs from the glory of the moon; *(while the one radiates light, the other reflects light.)* **Also the stars differ from one another. Each one occupies its own unique place in space.**

42 So also with the resurrection from the dead, the body that was sown into the earth decays, but the risen person is immortal.

43 It is sown in sadness but raised in honor; it is sown in frailty but raised in power.

44 It is sown as a physical body and raised as a spiritual body. The fact that there is a physical body confirms that there is also a spiritual body.

45 It is recorded in Scripture how the first Adam became a living soul; the last Adam is a life radiating spirit. *(In partaking of resurrection life now, we radiate the Christ life. No wonder then that Peter's shadow*

healed people! Jesus is the last Adam; when he died mankind's Adamic reference died. Jesus is the head of the human race. Human life is not defined by Adam but defined in Christ.)

46 Physical life is the platform for spiritual life.

47 Human life was reduced to slavery and the soul-ruled earthly realm through Adam's fall but is now awakened to lordship in the heavenly realm of spiritual realities through the knowledge of our co-resurrection with Christ. *([See Col 3:1-11.] We theologically created the idea of mankind being "sinful by nature" as if humans are flawed by design. In fact it is a distorted mindset that we inherited from Adam that Jesus had to free us from. "Your indifferent mindset alienated you from God into a lifestyle of annoyances, hardships, and labors, sponsored by the law of sin and death that lodged in your bodies hosting a foreign influence, foreign to your design; just like a virus that would attach itself to a person." Col 1:21 There is nothing wrong with our design or salvation, we were thinking wrong. [See Isa 55:8-11, Eph 4:17, 18 and also Eph 2:1-11.])*

48 The reduced state of the individual left its mark on mankind as being earthly; now the redeemed state of mankind confirms their origin in God and marks their new heavenly life.

49 Just as we were once defined by the flesh *(our earthly image)* **we are now defined by our spirit** *(our heavenly)* **image.**

50 Flesh and blood has a sell-by date; the bodies you live in now will not last forever.

51 [1]Ponder this mystery, I want to show you something that you have never seen before: [2]no one will sleep; [3]we will all experience exactly the same change. *(In other words, [1]**idou musterion**, Look! A Mystery! And*

*[2]**pantes ou koimethesometha, means** no one will sleep; and [3]**pantes de allangesometha**; everyone will be changed. See 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*
If our hope in Christ was restricted to only benefit us in this life then imagine the severity of our disappointment if it all had to come to an abrupt end when we died. However this very moment the risen Christ represents everyone who has ever died; exactly like the first fruit would represent the complete harvest [1 Cor 15:19-22].
The same mankind who died in a man was raised again in a man. In Adam all died; in Christ all are made alive. [See 2 Cor 5:14] The love of Christ resonates within us and leaves us with only one conclusion: Jesus died mankind's death; therefore, in God's logic every individual simultaneously died. [See also Heb 9:27, 28] The same goes for everyone: a person dies only once and then faces judgment. Christ died once and faced the judgment of the entire human race! His second appearance has nothing to do with sin but to reveal salvation for all to lay a hold of him. He appeared as High Priest before the throne of Justice once, with his own blood to atone for the sins of the whole world. In his resurrection he appeared as Savior of the world! Sin is no longer on the agenda for the Lamb of God has taken away the sin of the world! The same High Priest who atoned for mankind is now also their Advocate! [1 Cor 15:3-5, Rom 4:25, Acts 17:30, 31; 1 Jn 2:1])

52 This will happen in an instant, in a blink of the eye: the final trumpet will sound, then the dead shall be raised and we, who are still alive, shall be instantly changed into a different kind of body.

53 For this corruptible must be clothed with incorruption and this mortal must be clothed with immortality.

54 What was spoken in Isaiah 25:8 is finally realized even in our physical death: "Death is swallowed up in victory!"

55 Oh death where is your sting? Oh grave, where is your victory?

56 The sting of death is sin; the strength of sin is the law. *(It was sin that made death so frightening and law-code guilt that gave sin its leverage. — The Message)*

57 Your victory is not a maybe; because of the magnanimous doing of Jesus Christ, it is a given! *(But now in a single victorious stroke of Life, all three—sin, guilt, death—are gone, the gift of our Master, Jesus Christ. Thank God! — The Message)*

58 For this reason you can afford to be absolutely settled and rock-solid in faith's persuasion and always ready to go beyond where you would have gone before. Your doing now is inspired by your knowing that you are in him. If his resurrection is yours then his victory over sin and death is equally yours.

Chapter 16

1 With regards your financial contributions to the Saints, I have the following arrangement with all the churches in Galatia:

2 I encourage you to prepare your individual gifts in advance on a [1]week-by-week basis to whatever extent each one has prospered. This should be kept in treasury; this way there will be no delays or distractions regarding money matters when I visit you.
(Romans 15:25-27, "I am on my way to Jerusalem to encourage the Saints. The believers in Greece, all the way from Macedonia as well as those in Achaia have prepared a gift with great delight to bring relief to their Jewish brothers and sisters in Jerusalem who are struggling financially. They feel indebted to them since they share freely in their spiritual wealth.
In Greek, "[1]On one of the Sabbaths." The Jews, however, used the word

Sabbath to denote the week; the period of seven days [See Mt 28:1, Mk 16:9, Lk 18:12, Lk 24:1, Jn 20:1, and Jn 20:19; compare with Lev 23:15 and Deut 16:9.] Christians celebrate the first day of the week rather than the seventh in order to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus as the new beginning of every week.)

3 Upon my arrival I will endorse by letter those whom you delegate to take your grace gifts to Jerusalem.

4 Should there be any merit in my joining them, then they can travel with me.

5 It is my intent to visit you via a brief visit to the province of Macedonia. *(Northern Greece)*

6 I will probably stay for a while and might even spend the winter with you; then you can help me prepare for my next destination wherever that might be. Some of you may even join me!

7 Even though I am not far from you presently, I would prefer not to just see you now in passing but would rather enjoy an extended stay with you in the Lord's purpose. *(The trip from Ephesus to Corinth was merely across the Aegean Sea, and comparatively a short passage en-route to Macedonia. He eventually stayed three months. [See Acts 20:2, 3])*

8 I am presently in Ephesus and will not begin my journey before Pentecost. *(Which was in the latter part of spring.)*

9 A massive door of opportunity to establish a powerful and effective ministry in Ephesus has opened for me, but since there are also many who dispute this message, I do not want to leave here too soon. *(In Acts 19:9, 10: "but when some were stubborn and disbelieved, speaking evil of*

the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them, taking the disciples with him, and dialogued daily in the school of Tyrannus. This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks." Luke does not mention the size of the building but much can be said about the impact of the message! In Acts 19:20-22, "So the word of the Lord grew and prevailed mightily. Now after these events Paul resolved in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying, 'After I have been there, I must also see Rome.' And having sent into Macedonia two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while'" [RSV])

10 My colleague in ministry, Timothy, should arrive in Corinth shortly; ensure that he feels absolutely at home with you. *(In 1 Corinthians 4:17, "This is why I send my beloved son Timothy to you. He is rock-solid in his faith. He shall remind you of me and re-enforce my specific message and emphasis; (the way I teach the 'in Christ' and 'the Christ in you' and his finished work message) in every place and every church I visit.")*

11 No one should underrate him; honor him by providing for him and even accompanying him on his journey to join me again in Ephesus. I am eagerly anticipating to welcome him and his team on their arrival from you.

12 I strongly urged Apollos to join the team visiting you at present, but he did not feel at liberty to do so. I am sure that he will come in due time. *(Apparently Apollos had left Corinth in disgust over the strife there, which involved him and Paul. He had enough of partisan strife over preachers. [See Acts 19:1 and 1 Corinthians 1-4])*

13 Be wide awake and constant in your faith, courageous and invincible.

14 Agape is your genesis. Loving everyone around you is what you are all about. *(Our love for one another is awakened by God's love for us.)*

15 Here is my urgent appeal to you: take the household of Stephanos as an example; this family was my first fruit of Greece and have taken the initiative to position themselves in ministering to the needs of the Saints.

16 Give yourselves in the same way to them and to everyone laboring tirelessly in team ministry.

17 I want you to know my delight in having Stephanus, Fortunatus and Achaius here with me in Ephesus! They certainly represent you and have made up for your absence!

18 Because of them I have such peace about you! They are a real credit to you.

19 The churches in all of Asia salute you; also Aquila and Priscilla and the church in their home greet you fondly in the Lord.

20 The whole church family sends you big hugs from here; greet one another with a sacred kiss.

21 This letter carries my personal signature.

22 Anyone who prefers the law above grace remains under the curse mentality. Jesus Christ has come; grace is the authority of his Lordship; we are so fond of him! He is the Messiah the world was waiting for. *(The Aramaic word, **maranatha**, means, our Lord has come! Instead of reading the curse when disaster strikes, Habakkuk realizes that*

the Promise out dates performance as the basis to mankind's acquittal! Deuteronomy 28 would no longer be the motivation or the measure of right or wrong behavior! "Though the fig tree do not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like hinds' feet, he makes me tread upon my high places." [Hab 3:17–19 RSV])

23 His grace is with you; you are highly favored!

24 My love is with you; our lives are intertwined in Christ Jesus. I salute him with a bold Yes and Amen! Paul.

II Corinthians

In defence of his personal integrity and the content of his message, Paul writes with utmost clarity and confidence in chapter 1:18, 19, "God's certainty is our persuasion; there is no maybe in him! The Son of God, Jesus Christ whom I, Paul, Sylvanus, and Timothy boldly announced in you is God's ultimate yes to mankind; human life is associated in all that he is. In God's mind there exists not even a hint of hesitation about this!"

The two passages of Scripture that impacted my own life and message perhaps more than anything else are recorded in this Epistle. They are 2 Corinthians 3:18, "Now we all with new understanding see ourselves in him as in a mirror; thus we are changed from an inferior mindset to the revealed opinion of our true Origin.". Then there are these verses in 2 Corinthians 5:14-17, "The love of Christ resonates within us and leaves us with only one conclusion: Jesus died mankind's death; therefore, in God's logic every individual simultaneously died.

"Now if all were included in his death they were equally included in his resurrection. This unveiling of his love redefines human life! Whatever reference we could have of ourselves outside of our association with Christ is no longer relevant.

"This is radical! No label that could possibly previously define someone carries any further significance! Even our pet doctrines of Christ are redefined. Whatever we knew about him historically or sentimentally is challenged by this conclusion.

(By discovering Christ from God's point of view, we discover ourselves and every other human life from God's point of view!)
"Now whoever you thought you were before, in Christ you are a brand new person! The old ways of seeing yourself and everyone else are over. Look! The resurrection of Jesus has made everything new"

Scofield's Reference Bible notes the following on 2 Corinthians

DATE: A.D. 60; probably from Philippi, after the events of Acts 19:23 to 20:1-21.

THEME: This Epistle discloses the touching state of the great apostle at this time. It was one of physical weakness, weariness and pain. Also his emotional burdens. These were two kinds: solicitude for the maintenance of the churches in grace as against the law-teachers, and anguish of heart over the distrust felt toward him by Jews and Jewish Christians. The chilling doctrines of the "legalizers" were accompanied by detraction, and by denial of his Apostleship.

It is evident that the really dangerous sect in Corinth was that which said, "and I of the Messiah" [1 Cor 1:12]. They rejected the new revelation through Paul of the doctrines of grace; grounding themselves, probably, on the kingdom teachings of our Lord as "a minister of circumcision" [Rom 15.8]; seemingly oblivious that a new dispensation had been introduced by Christ's death. This made necessary a defense of the origin and extent of Paul's apostolic message. — *Scofield's*)

Chapter 1

1 I, Paul, am overwhelmed with the sense of God's commission on my life; Jesus Christ is the compelling urgency of my ministry. My brother Timothy and I address this writing to the [1]Ekklesia of God in Corinth, including all the Saints in the whole of Greece. *(Meaning [1]church; from the preposition **ek**, which always denotes origin, and **kaleo**, which means to identify by name; to surname.)*

2 The Lordship of Jesus the Messiah endorses the fact that you are the object of God's favor and friendship.

3 [1]Well done, God! You are the Father of our Master Jesus Christ; you are the Father of [2]compassion and the God in whom everyone is

equally esteemed! *(The word, [1]**eulogeo**, is the well done announcement; [2]**parakaleo**, comes from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection and **kaleo**, meaning to surname.)*

4 There is no contradiction of any proportion that we can possibly face that has what it takes to exasperate us or distance us from God. Our consciousness of his inseparable nearness immediately reinforces us to extend the same tangible [1]closeness to you in your difficult times, and together we snuggle up in the [1]comfort of his intimate embrace! *(Paul uses the word, [1]**parakaleo**, which comes from **para**, close proximity, and **kaleo**, to identify by name; often translated, to comfort.)*

5 This bliss and closeness we now participate in was made possible through the enormous [1]consequence of the sufferings of Christ. The overwhelming extent of his sufferings brought about this equally overwhelming sense of inseparable oneness! *(Paul uses [1]**eis**, which is a primary preposition indicating the point reached in conclusion. The theme of Scripture is the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glory. "This is why no form of suffering can interfere with my joy. Every suffering on your behalf is just another opportunity to reinforce that which might still be lacking [in your understanding] of the affliction of Christ on behalf of his body which is the church." [1 Pet 1:10 and Col 1:24]*
The inconvenience that Paul might be suffering on behalf of the believers is not to add to the sufferings of Christ—as though the sufferings of Christ on our behalf were insufficient, but it is to further emphasize and confirm the principle of unselfish love that constrains New Testament ministry.)

6 Our afflictions and testimony of his closeness in the midst of it all is to spark you with courage whenever you might be facing similar contradictions. We all participate in the same salvation and enjoy equal closeness!

7 We are so confident about you, knowing that there is nothing you could possibly face or suffer that can separate you from his nearness.

8 We want you to know that we are not exaggerating the extreme contradictions and sufferings we faced in Asia! We were weighed down with enormous persecution beyond any measure of endurance; we really thought that we were going to die!

9 We came to terms within ourselves with the fact that we were on death row; there was no escape except our belief that God could raise us from the dead.

10 In the resurrection of Jesus from the dead he already delivered us from death's greatest threat; now he continues to make our victory over death's claim a daily reality. We are confident that he will raise us again! *(See 2 Cor 11:24-28 and Acts 14:19.)*

11 We value your prayers! The more people partner with us in prayer the greater the gratitude shared in our testimony!

12 The testimony of our [1]conscience is the source of our joy! We are [2]intertwined together in [3]transparent innocence; there is no trace of a hidden agenda for the flesh to glory in. God's grace is our [4]conversation in the world and is amplified in our oneness with you. Grace abounds! *(What we are able to see together gives me so much reason for boasting in our salvation! The word, [1]**suneido**, translates as conscience, joint-seeing; and [2]**haplous** comes from **hama**, a particle of union. The word, **pleko**, translates as to intertwine, and [3]**heilikrine** translates as scrutinized in the rays of the sun to prove its flawlessness. The word [4]**anastrepho** from **ana**, upwards and **strepho**, to turn back again. See James 1:5.)*

13 There is nothing to be read between the lines but only that which you will be able to [1]recognize with [2]immediate resonance. I am convinced that you will see the full intent and conclusion of our testimony from start to finish, and that you will never find any reason to think otherwise! *(The word, [1]**anaginosko**, from **ana**, upwards and **ginosko**; means to know again by recognition, and [2]**epiginosko**, where the preposition **epi** suggests a continuous influence upon; means to become fully acquainted with.)*

14 To some extent you have already understood that our joy is [1]mirrored in one another. The [2]day of the Lord Jesus Christ is no longer a distant promise but a fulfilled reality. *(The word, [1]**kathaper**, often translated, exactly as, comes from **kata**, meaning according to and **per**, which is an enclitic particle significant of abundance and thoroughness which comes from the word, **peiro**, meaning to pierce. The use of the Latin enclitic relates to a word that throws an accent back onto the preceding word, which is here translated as mirrored.*

*The "day of the Lord Jesus Christ," is [2]**hemera**, which is a specific and measured period. Eastern usage of this term differs from our western usage. Any part of a day is counted as a whole day, hence the expression, "three days and three nights," does not mean literally three whole days, but at least one whole day plus part of two other days.*

The day of the Lord Jesus is the theme of Scripture as in 1 Peter 1:10; this was what the Prophets were studying and desiring to know. The content of their message always pointed to the day and the person where the promise of redemption would be realized. The sufferings of the Messiah would redeem and release the glory of God's image and likeness in human life; the glory that Adam lost on behalf of the human race, returns. In Acts 17:31, "In the resurrection, God gave proof to the redeemed innocence of mankind; the "day and the person" prophesied was fulfilled in Jesus." Jesus gives context to this day in John 14:20, "In that day you will know that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you.")

15 Looking forward to celebrate our mutual joy, my initial plan was to come to you first before going anywhere else. We wanted you to enjoy the double blessing of our visit.

16 We were really looking forward to seeing you again on our return from Macedonia and then to be escorted by you on our trip to Judea.

17 It is not our style to hesitate between two opinions. We have no desire to make promises that we cannot keep. When we said yes to you we did not mean, no!

18 God's certainty is our persuasion; there is no maybe in him!

19 The Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom I, Paul, Sylvanus, and Timothy boldly announced in you, is God's ultimate yes to "you-manity". Jesus is God's Yes to you! Human life is associated in all that he is. In God's mind there exists not even a hint of hesitation about this! *(See 2 Cor 3:4.)*

20 In him the detail of every single promise of God is fulfilled; Jesus is God's yes to your entire well being! In our union with him the Amen that echoes in us gives evidence to his glorious intent through us.

21 God himself authorizes our oneness with you in Christ. He is our anointing! *(The word, χρίω* ***chriō*** *means to smear or rub with oil, to anoint.)*

22 His personal signet signature is the official stamp that sanctions the integrity of our ministry to you; this is the seal of the Spirit in our hearts.

23 So God is my witness in this; I did not break my promise to you. The only reason I did not come to Corinth was to spare you the embarrassment.

24 I am not your faith-monitor! I am your co-worker and I am jealous for your joy! You stand on your own feet in your faith!

Chapter 2

1 I came to the following conclusion that paying you another painful visit *(on my return trip)* **would be of no advantage to you!**

2 My visit would only put you in an awkward position; since you knew that you caused me grief, you would feel under obligation to cheer me up!

3 I wrote to you instead; not risking the embarrassment of facing you and then having to deal with sorrow when all I really desired from you was joy! I am convinced that my joy is also your joy!

4 There was nothing blasé about my writing. I was in tears with painful distress and deep-felt anguish, certainly not to upset you but that you would know the intensity of my love for you.

5 I am not exaggerating the issue by saying that the man whose behavior caused such alarm in me did not merely grieve me but in a sense everyone of you.

6 This person has been amply taxed by all.

7 It is due time now to offer him your forgiveness and closeness lest he be completely swamped with regret.

8 I implore you to make your love for him [1]very clear. *(The word, [1]**kuroo**, translates as officially; publicly confirm your love for him.)*

9 The intent and urgency of my first letter was to prove your loyalty to my ministry and message in its full context.

10 I am joined to you *(geographic distance does not separate us)***; your forgiveness is my forgiveness. The favor reflected in the face of Christ is our only valid reference to true forgiveness anyway.**

11 The [2]agenda of any [1]accusation is to divide and dominate. We are not ignorant about that. *(The word [1]**satanas** means accuser and [2]**nous** refers to mind or strategy, agenda, schemes.)*

12 So instead of coming to you I went to Troas where again a great ministry opportunity in the Good News of Christ was opened for me in the Lord. *(There is not a place on this planet that is not an open door for this gospel!)*

13 I expected to find Titus in Troas and was hoping to hear from him refreshing news concerning you. I felt so urgent to meet with Titus that I took leave from Troas and hastened on to look for him in Macedonia. *(See 2 Cor 7:4-8)*

14 I am overwhelmed with gratitude! Wherever my travels take me I am so aware that God leads us as trophies in his victory parade. What

he knows to be true about us diffuses through us like a perfume of sweet aroma everywhere we go, celebrating the success of the cross. *(In ancient triumphs, abundance of perfumes and wreaths of sweet smelling flowers were used in victory celebrations.)*

15 We are a sweet savor of Christ to God evident in everyone we meet. The fragrance of Christ is recognized in all to salvation. The same gospel that announces the fragrant victory of Christ declares the odor of death; the [1]defeat of destruction in everyone! *(This parade of victory is a public announcement of the defeat of the religious systems and structures based on the law of works. Just like it is in any public game where the victory celebration of the winning team is an embarrassment for the losing team. The death of evil is announced in resurrection life! The word, [1]***apollumi***, is derived from* **apo***, away from, and* **luo***, to loosen, to undo, to dissolve. See 1 John 3:8)*

16 The message we communicate is a fragrance with an immediate association; to darkness, it is the smell of doom *(the death of death);* **to life it is the familiar fragrance of life itself.**

17 We are not competing with those who have added their [1]price tag to the gospel. Our conversation has its source in Christ; we communicate from the transparent innocence of a face to face encounter with God. *(The law of personal performance or [1]**kapeleuo**, meaning retail, which I translated here as a gospel with a price tag.)*

Chapter 3

1 The days when I needed letters to endorse my authority are over! *(See Acts 9:2)* **We are not in a competition showing off our credentials!**

Some insist on certificates; I do not see any relevance in it! Neither do I require a note of recommendation to you or from you.

2 Instead of an impressive certificate framed on my wall I have you framed in my heart! You are our Epistle written within us, an open letter speaking a global language; one that everyone can [1]read and recognize as their mother tongue! *(The word [1]anaginosko, from ana, upward and ginosko, to know upward; thus to draw knowledge from a higher reference; from above; to recognize; to read with recognition.)*

3 The fact that you are a Christ-Epistle shines as bright as day! This is what our ministry is all about. The Spirit of God is the living ink. Every trace of the Spirit's influence on the heart is what gives permanence to this conversation. We are not talking law-language here; this is more dynamic and permanent than letters chiseled in stone. This conversation is embroidered in your inner consciousness. *(It is the life of your design that grace echoes within you!)*

4 Christ is proof of our persuasion about you [1]before God. *(The Greek preposition [1]**pros**, means towards; face-to-face. Also 2 Cor 1:18,19,20.)*

5 We have not [1]reached this conclusion by any merit of our own! Of God's doing are we made competent! *(The word, [1]**logitsomai**, means to reckon; making a calculation to which there can only be one logical conclusion.)*

6 It is God's signature in our spirit that authorizes New Testament ministry. We are not qualified by a legal document endorsed by a fellow human. The letter *(of the law)* **is the administration of death; it is the Spirit** *(of grace)* **that quickens life.**

7 Because of its prophetic purpose even the old administration of death, carved in stone evidenced a glimpse of glory; for a brief moment the face of Moses shone with such brilliance that the people of Israel could not even look at his face. The fact that the glory reflected in Moses was brief and fading confirmed that the ministry of the letter had a "sell by" date and that it was destined [1]to be brought to naught. *(It served merely to emphasize the failure of the flesh to access the glory that Adam had lost on mankind's behalf. The word, [1]**katargeo**, derives from **kata**, meaning intensity, and **argos**, meaning labor, denotes that the law of works would be rendered entirely useless; thus, the new arrangement would free us from all self effort to attempt to improve what God has already perfected in Christ. Consider the contrast in verse 18; from a mere glimpse of a veiled and fading glory to unveiled gazing into the face of glory as in a mirror and a transformed life radiating the same glory!)*

8 How much more radiant would the ministry of the Spirit be.

9 If the ministry of condemnation had a glimpse of glory, the glory that the ministry of righteousness now communicates is beyond comparison! *(There are two administrations: the one confirms mankind's guilt because of Adam; the other confirms mankind's innocence because of Christ! The one was upheld by the letter of the law; the other is sustained by the life of the Spirit. Mankind's standing before God is restored; righteousness by the merit of the cross far outweighs any attempt of the flesh to compete! Nothing that anyone can do can improve their standing before God!)*

10 What seemed glorious and important at the time has been reduced to total obscurity and irrelevance.

11 The fragile and fading glory of the flesh is dwarfed into insignificance by the unfading glory of the Spirit! *(The ministry of the New Testament reveals oneness and permanence. In Christ the idea of distance and delay is cancelled.)*

12 Our every expectation is fulfilled; therefore, we speak with clarity and conviction! *(Every definition of veil is removed from our conversation! We have no hidden agenda! This is what we say as plainly as possible: the glory that Adam lost on mankind's behalf, Jesus redeemed! The image and likeness of God is no longer a future promise of possibilities and potential; it is our reality and reference now! See Col 1:27)*

13 What we say is so unlike Moses who had to keep Israel in suspense with a veiled face; they did not realize that this arrangement would never suffice to secure their standing before God. In essence the letters on stone confirmed their death. All that they could see was the futility of the law of works; how entirely useless their best attempts would be to match the life of their design. *(In Adam all people alike stood condemned; they did not realize it until the law revealed it. In Christ all are declared innocent; yet they do not know it until the Gospel reveals it.* **[***Rom 10:17 and Rom 7:4-25])*

14 Since the time of Moses until this very day their minds remain calloused and veiled. They are kept in suspense without realizing that there is no glory left in the law: *(whatever glory there was, carried merely a fading, prophetic glimmer)* **reading the Old Covenant without understanding that Christ is the fulfilment of Scripture is a complete waste of time. Only in discovering our union with Christ is the veil removed and do we realize that the old system is [1]rendered entirely useless.** *(The word [1]**katergeo** comes from **kata**, meaning intensity, and **argos**, meaning labor, the law of works is rendered entirely useless; thus the new arrangement frees us from all self effort to attempt to improve what God has already perfected in Christ.)*

15 In the meantime nothing seems to have changed; the same veil continues to blindfold the hearts of people whenever Moses is read. *(Moses symbolizes the futility of self righteousness as the global blindfold of the religious world. [John 1:17] Against the stark backdrop of the law; with*

Moses representing the condemned state of mankind, Jesus Christ unveils grace and truth! He is the life of our design redeemed in human form.)

16 The moment anyone [1]returns to the Lord the veil is gone! *(The word, [1]**epistrepho** means to return to where we've wandered from; "we all like sheep have gone astray." Jesus is God unveiled in human form. [Col 1:15] Also 1 Pet 2:25 You were completely vulnerable, just like sheep roaming astray without direction or protection, but now you have returned and are restored to the shepherd and Guardian of your souls! And 1 Pet 1:17. Then, Hebrews 8:1, "The conclusion of all that has been said points us to an exceptional Person, who towers far above the rest in the highest office of heavenly greatness. He is the executive authority of the majesty of God. 8:2 The office he now occupies is the one which the Moses-model resembled prophetically. He ministers in the holiest place in God's true tabernacle of worship. Nothing of the old man-made structure can match its perfection. Heb 8:10 Now, instead of documenting my laws on stone, I will chisel them into your mind and engrave them in your inner consciousness; it will no longer be a one-sided affair. I will be your God and you will be my people, not by compulsion but by mutual desire." See James 1:25, "Those who gaze into the mirror reflection of the face of their birth are captivated by the effect of a law that frees them from the obligation to the old written code that restricted them to their our own efforts and willpower. No distraction or contradiction can dim the impact of what they see in that mirror concerning the law of perfect liberty [the law of faith] that now frees them to get on with the act of living the life [of their original design]. They find a new spontaneous lifestyle; the poetry of practical living." [The law of perfect liberty is the image and likeness of God revealed in Christ, now redeemed in human life as in a mirror.])*

17 The Lord and the Spirit are one; his Lordship sanctions our freedom. A freedom from rules chiselled in stone to the voice of our redeemed design echoing in our hearts!

18 And we all, with new understanding, see ourselves in him as in a mirror. The days of window-shopping are over! In him every face is

[1]unveiled. In [2]gazing with wonder at the [5]blueprint of God displayed in human form, we suddenly realize that we are looking into a mirror, where every feature of his [3]image articulated in Christ is [2]reflected within us! The Spirit of the Lord engineers this radical [4]transformation; we are led [6]from an inferior [5]mind-set to the revealed [5]endorsement of our authentic identity. *(The word, [1]anakalupto; from ana, a preposition denoting upward, to return again, and kalupto, to uncover, unveil. The word, [2]katoptrizomai, means to gaze into a reflection, to mirror oneself. Paul uses [4]metamorphumetha as a present Passive indicative from metamorpho; meta, together with, and morphe, form. [The word commonly translated sin, [1]hamartia, from ha, negative or without and meros, alloted portion or form; thus, a distorted form, which is the opposite of metamorphe; with form. The word meros is the stem of morphe.] Now, with unveiled faces we are gazing at the glory of the Lord as in a mirror and metaporhe happens - image and likeness awakens within us!*

The word, [3]eikon, translates as exact resemblance, image and likeness; eikon always assumes a prototype, that which it not merely resembles, but from that which it is drawn; [5]doxa, glory, translates as mindset, or opinion from dokeo, authentic, blueprint-thought. Changed 'from glory to glory', apo doxes eis doxan; eis, a point reached in conclusion; [6]apo, away from, meaning away from the glory that previously defined us, i.e. our own achievements or disappointments, to the glory of our original design that now defines us. Two glories are mentioned in this chapter; the glory of the flesh, which is the veiled, fading kind represented by Moses and the unfading, unveiled glory of God's image and likeness, mirrored in the face of Christ and now redeemed in us. See also chapter 4:4 -7.

[Note, the Greek word translated "from" in this verse is not the same as the word translated "from" in Rom 1:17 Paul says the unveiling of God's righteousness is from faith to faith. Here he does not use the word apo, away from, but the preposition, ek, which always denotes source or origin.]

Some translations of this Scripture read, "we are being changed from glory to glory." This would suggest that change is gradual and will more than likely take a lifetime, which was the typical thinking that trapped Israel for forty years in the wilderness of unbelief! We cannot become more than what we already are in Christ. We do not grow more complete; we simply grow in

the knowledge and awareness of our completeness! [See Colossians 3:10] How long does it take the beautiful swan to awaken to the truth of its design? The ugly duckling was an illusion! Whatever it was that endorsed the 'ugly duckling' mindset, co-died together with Christ! In the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God did not redeem a compromised replica of you; he rescued the original, blueprint you, created in his radiant mirror likeness! Any other 'self' you're trying to find or esteem will disappoint! See Romans 6:11, Reckon your 'DIY-law of works-self' dead, and your redeemed self co-raised and co-seated together with Christ! This is freedom indeed! Galatians 2:19,20; Gal 2:20 So here I am dead and alive at the same time! I'm dead to the old me I was trying to be and alive to the real me which is Christ in me! Co-crucified, now co-alive! What a glorious entanglement! I was in him in his death; now he is in me in my life! For the first time I'm free to be me in my skin, immersed in his faith in our joint-sonship! He loves me and believes in me! He is God's gift to me! (The verb συνεσταυρωμαι from sustauroō, is in the Perfect tense, indicating that not only was I crucified with Christ in the past, but I am existing now in that present condition. How can any human effort improve on this! See Hos 6:2 and Eph 2:5 also Romans 7:6 But now we are fully released from any further association with a life directed by the rule of the law, we are dead to that which once held us captive, free to be slaves to the newness of spirit-spontaneity rather than age old religious rituals, imitating the mere face value of the written code. The moment one exchanges spontaneity with rules, the edge of romance is compromised!))

Chapter 4

1 Since we are employed by the mercy of God, and not by our own qualifications, quitting is not an option.

2 We have renounced hidden agendas *(employing a little bit of the law in an attempt to "balance" out grace)***; we have distanced ourselves from**

any obscure [1]craftiness to manipulate God's word to make it mean what it does not say! With truth on open display in us, we highly recommend our lives to everyone's [2]conscience! Truth finds its most authentic and articulate expression in human life. This beats any doctrinal debate! *(It is our passion for all to see what is so completely obvious in the mirror of our redeemed likeness and innocence! The word translated craftiness, is the word [1]**panourgia** from **pas** and **ergon,** all manner of wearisome labor! [2]Conscience in Latin means to know together; in the Greek, [2]**suneido**, translates as joint seeing; which is the opposite of **Hades**, from ha + eido, not to see.)*

3 If our message seems vague to anyone, it is not because we are withholding something from certain people! It is just because some are so stubborn in their efforts to uphold an outdated system that they don't see it! They are all equally found in Christ but they prefer to remain lost in the cul-de-sac language of the law!

4 The survival and self-improvement programs of the [1]religious systems of this world veil the minds of the unbelievers; exploiting their ignorance about their true origin and their redeemed innocence. The veil of unbelief obstructs a person's view and keeps them from seeing what the light of the gospel so clearly reveals: the [2]glory of God is the image and likeness of our Maker redeemed in human form; this is what the gospel of Christ is all about. *(The god of this [1]**aion**, age, refers to the religious systems and governing structures of this world. The unbelief that neutralized Israel in the wilderness was the lie that they believed about themselves; "We are grasshoppers, and the 'enemy' is a giant beyond any proportion!" [Num 13:33, Josh 2:11, Heb 4:6] "They failed to possess the promise due to unbelief." The blueprint [2]**doxa**, glory of God, is what Adam lost on mankind's behalf. [See Eph 4:18])*

5 Even though we recommend ourselves with great confidence, it is not with arrogance; we do not preach ourselves! We preach Christ

Jesus the Lord; we are addicted to this gospel; employed by Jesus for your sakes.

6 The light source is founded in the same God who said, "Light, be!" And light shone out of darkness! He lit the lamp in our understanding so that we may clearly recognize the features of his likeness in the face of Jesus Christ reflected within us. *(The same God who bade light shine out of darkness has kindled a light in our hearts, whose shining is to make known his glory as he has revealed it in the features of Jesus Christ. — Knox Translation)*

7 And now, in the glow of this glorious light and with unveiled faces we discover this treasure where it was hidden all along, in these frail skin-suits made of [1]clay. We did not invent ourselves; we are God's idea to begin with and the dynamic of his doing and amazing engineering! *(The word translated earthen vessel or clay jar is the word [1]**ostrakinos** from **ostrakon** "oyster"! It is a great visual picture of how we carry a very valuable pearl within us. The cosmetic value of the clay pot can never compete with the treasure it holds. There is so much more to you than what meets the eye! "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in an agricultural field, which a man found and covered up; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys the entire field." [Matthew 13:44] In order to redeem our minds from the lies that we believed about us, God invested all that he has in the redeeming of our original value! See 1 Peter 1:18,19. He rescued the life of our design. Our inner life hosts this treasure. Jesus said in John 7:37,38, "If you believe that I am what the Scriptures are all about, you will know that you are what I am all about and rivers of living water will gush out of **your innermost being!**")*

8 We often feel completely hemmed in on every side but our inner space remains unrestricted; when there seems to be no way out, we escape within!

9 At times we are persecuted to the extreme but we are never abandoned. We are knocked down but not knocked out.

10 Wherever we go, whatever we encounter in our bodies, we bear witness within us of the fact that Jesus died our death; in this same body, we now exhibit his life. The fact that we co-died in his death confirms that we now co-live in his resurrection!

11 Our day-to-day experience continues to exhibit that even in the face of death, our association with the death Jesus already died remains the inspiration of his life made so clearly visible within us. This is in such contrast to the circumstances that we are often faced with.

12 Our persuasion of our co-crucifiction with Christ in the face of death threatening circumstances [1]inspires life in you! *(The word, [1]**energeo**, translates as energy trigger.)*

13 We [1]echo the exact same spirit of faith David had when he wrote: "I believe and so I speak!" We too believe and so we speak! Our persuasion is our conversation. *(The word, [1]**echo**, means to hold or to embrace. Paul quotes David here in Psalm 116; sometimes one's soul wants to gallop away into distraction like a wild horse; David speaks to and reminds himself to, "Return, Oh my soul, to your rest; for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you!" [RSV] "I believe, and so I speak!" God's bountiful dealings with us in Christ is our only valid rest; Sabbath celebrates perfection! And remember God does not employ circumstances to teach us something! The finished work of Christ teaches us; his work on the cross rescued us!)*

14 This resurrection life we enjoy in Jesus fully includes you.

15 Whatever we go through in the gospel is to advantage you! We live for you! As grace abounds in more and more people so does the volume of gratitude in the accomplished mission of Jesus break through the sound barrier to exhibit the [1]heart dream of God. *(The word, [1]**doxa**, means glory, from **dokeo**, meaning intent opinion, the heart dream of God is his image and likeness redeemed in mankind.)*

16 We have much reason to be brave! There might be a lot of wear and tear on the outside; but don't be distracted by that! On the inside we are celebrating daily revival!

17 We are fully engaged in an exceedingly superior reality; the extent and [1]weight of this glory make any degree of suffering vanish into insignificance! The suffering is fleeting and ever so slight by comparison to the weight and enduring effect of this glory we participate in for all eternity. *(In Hebrew the word* **דבכ** *Kabod, means weight - this is also the word for glory - Paul reflects on this weight as the standard measure of everything that defines the glory of God! According to 2 Cor 3:18 mankind is his glory. This glory is the true currency of life. Paul reasons that by comparison, any size contradiction is dwarfed into insignificance and appears ever so slight when positioned against the enormity of the weight of glory that dwells within us.)*

18 We are not keeping any score of what seems so obvious to the senses on the surface; it is fleeting and irrelevant; it is the unseen eternal realm within us which has our full attention and captivates our gaze! *(See John 1:18 Until this moment God remained invisible to mankind; now the [1]authentic begotten Son, ([1]**monogenes,** begotten only of God) the blueprint of mankind's design who represents the innermost being of God, the Son who is in the bosom of the Father, brings him into full view! He is the [2]official authority qualified to announce God! He is our guide who accurately declares and interprets the invisible God within us. (Official guide, [2]**eksegesato**, from **ek,** preposition denoting source, and **hegeomai,** the strengthened form of **ago**, to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep; thus*

hegeomai *means to be officially appointed in a position of authority.*
2 Cor 3:18 The days of window-shopping are over! In him every face is unveiled. In gazing with wonder at the blueprint likeness of God displayed in human form, we suddenly realize that we are looking at ourselves! Every feature of his image
is mirrored in us! This is the most radical transformation engineered by the Spirit of the Lord; we are led from an inferior mindset to the revealed endorsement of our authentic identity.)

Chapter 5

1 Our [1]skin-suits have a [2]"sell by" date; our spirit-bodies are eternal. The same God who fashioned these skin-bodies in our mother's womb, engineered our spirit-bodies to be our permanent dwelling. *(The word, [1]**skenos**, reminds of the English word skin and translates, tabernacle. The word, [2]**kataluo** means to be loosed because it has completed its function - like on a journey of travelers, when they halt to put up lodge for the night; the straps and packs of the beasts of burden are unbound and taken off or, more correctly, from the fact that a traveller's garments were tied up when they were on a journey to be loosed at its end.)*

2 Facing pressure times the way we often do, makes us sigh with longing to exchange our skin-suit with the permanent splendor of the heavenly-body.

3 In the meantime, whatever challenges we are facing in the meat-box, we know that we shall never be found naked; since we are already fully clothed with our heavenly identity in Christ in our inner person!

4 We are not complaining about our bodies, even though we are often aware of its frailties; instead we yearn to be overwhelmed with life. We know that every evidence of death, even in our bodies, will dissolve into life!

5 God wired us this way; his Spirit already confirms within us the present evidence of eternity. We are eternal beings by design.

6 We are cheerfully courageous, knowing that our immediate address in our earthly bodies cannot distance us from the Lord, since we originate from him.

7 Faith is to our spirit what our senses are to our bodies; while the one engages with the fading and the fragile, the other celebrates perfection!

8 Our [1]confidence stems from [2]knowing that even though it might feel at times that we are merely [4]reduced to flesh, our [3]greater reality is that we are [5]entwined in the Lord. He is our permanent abode! *(The word, [1]**tharreo**, means confident courage; [2]**eudokeo**, means well done opinion; [3]**mallon**, means prefer or rather; and [4]**ekdemeo**, from **ek**, is a preposition that always denotes origin or source and **demeo** from **deo**, to bind, to wind, to tie, to knit; originating out of the body (we were knitted together in our mother's womb). In severe affliction one feels at times reduced to mere physical identity; but [2]our persuasion is anchored in a greater [2]opinion; the reality of our genesis in God and our union in him. The word, [5]**endemeo**, means entwined, knitted together, tied in oneness. Yet at times it almost feels strange to be trapped in this body especially when we are exposed to such abuse and suffering; one longs to then do the exchange and relocate to our permanent address, where our hearts already are; in the immediate embrace of the Lord.)*

9 We are [1]completely engaged in the loveliness of that which is of exceedingly great value; whether we are [2]in a physical union with our bodies or a [3]spiritual union with our source; it makes no difference to God's esteem of us! We are highly favored by the Lord. *(The word, [1]**philotimeomai**, comes from **phileo**, meaning dear, fondness; **timay**, meaning value, esteem; and **einai** from **eimi**, I am. The word, [2]**endemeo**, means in union with, entwined; and [3]**ekdemeo** means tied to our source.)*

10 For we have all been [1]thoroughly scrutinized in the [2]judgment of Jesus. We are [3]taken care of and restored to the life of our design, regardless of what happened to us in our individual lives, whatever amazing or meaningless things we encountered in the body. *(See 5:14,16. We are mirrored in his life; his life reflects ours, not as an example for us but of us. See 2 Cor 3:18. The word, [1]phaneroo, means to render apparent; to openly declare; to manifest. Paul uses the Aorist Passive Infinitive tense phanerothenai, not referring to a future event. The present Infinitive expresses progressive or imperfective aspect. It pictures the action expressed by the verb as being in progress. The Aorist Infinitive however, does not express progressive aspect. It presents the action expressed by the verb as a completed unit with a beginning and end. The word, bematos, comes from [2]bayma, means footprint, also referring to a raised place mounted by steps, or a tribunal, the official seat of a judge The word, [3]kolumbaō, means to tend, to take care of, to provide for, to carry off from harm. Paul's reference was not about how much abuse and affliction he suffered, neither was it the many good times he remembered that defined him; "I am what I am by the grace of God!" If we are still to be judged for good or bad deeds that we performed in the body, then the judgment that Jesus faced on mankind's behalf was irrelevant. Sadly this verse has been grossly misrepresented in most other translations - "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body." Note the word "done" is in italics in the Authorised Versions - its not in the original text.*
For more context on the word, kolumbaō, see 1 Peter 1:8 So even though you have never seen Jesus in the flesh, you love him; even at times where he

seems remote and invisible, your awareness of your union in him continues to ignite belief! You are leaping with indescribable and exuberant joy as you hold him in high esteem! 1 Pet 1:9 In this place of joy, you are [1]beyond the reach of any harm. Joy gives your faith a voice announcing the perfection of your soul's salvation. (Joy celebrates the fulfilment of Scripture! Belief gives evidence of everything the Prophets pointed to! The word, [1]kolumbaō, to carry off from harm!) 1 Pet 1:10 This salvation which you now know as your own, is the theme of the prophetic thought; this is what intrigued the Prophets' minds for generations and became the object of their most diligent inquiry and scrutiny. They knew all along that mankind's salvation was a grace revelation, sustained in their prophetic utterance! (Salvation would never be by personal achievement or a reward to willpower-driven initiative! The law of works would never replace grace!))

11 We persuade people in the [1]radiance of the Lord! His visible glory is mirrored in us! Our lives are transparent before God; we anticipate that you will witness the same transparency in your [2]conscience! *(The word, [2]**suneido**, translates as conscience, joint seeing. In 2 Corinthians 4:2, "with the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience." The word, **phobe**, speaks of dread terror and fear! I would prefer to use the word, [1]**phoibe**, which means radiant! Because of images and idols of our own imagination of a schizophrenic, monster god, we have Bible translations to endorse that! If 2 Cor 5:10 points to a future judgment, then verse 11 makes sense! "We persuade people by the terror of God!" Wow! And 3 verses later in verse 14, Paul is constrained by the love of Christ!? Jesus is the express image of God, the radiance of his beauty! He has made the invisible God visible! He is the Father of lights with whom there is no shadow due to compromise; there is no dark side to God! Paul is not one day motivated by the terror of God and the next day by his love!)*

12 We do not want you to pity us, but rather to be proud of us for your own sakes! We are not into window-dressing because we are not into window-shopping. Neither are we here to impress you with us but to impress you with you!

13 We are [1]blissfully out of our minds with pleasure before our Maker; he delights in our ecstasy. Our insane mode is between us and God; we promise to behave ourselves sane and sober before you! *(The word, [1]**ekstase**, is to be blissfully out of one's mind with pleasure!)*

14 The love of Christ [1]resonates within us and leaves us with only one conclusion: Jesus died mankind's death; therefore, in God's logic every individual simultaneously died. *(The word, [1]**sunecho**, from **sun**, meaning together with and **echo**, meaning to echo, to embrace, to hold, and thus translated, to resonate. Jesus didn't die 99% or for 99%. He died mankind's death 100%! If Paul had to compromise the last part of verse 14 to read: "one died for all therefore only those who follow the prescriptions to qualify, have also died," then he would have had to change the first half of the verse as well! Only the love of Christ can make a calculation of such enormous proportion! The religious mind would question the extremity of God's love and perhaps prefer to add a condition or two to a statement like that!)*

15 Now if all were included in his death they were equally included in his resurrection. This unveiling of his love redefines human life! Whatever reference we could have of ourselves outside of our association with Christ is no longer relevant.

16 This is radical and our most defining moment! No label that could possibly previously identify someone carries any further significance! Even our pet doctrines of Christ are redefined. Whatever we knew about him historically or sentimentally is challenged by this conclusion. *(By discovering Christ from God's point of view we discover ourselves and every other human life from God's point of view! Paul sees by revelation that what Jesus redeemed in every person brings absolute closure and death to any other reasoning and judgment we may have had of ourselves or anyone else for that matter! This is our 'metanoia' moment! "From now on*

therefore, we no longer know anyone according to the flesh, even though we once knew Christ from a human and religious point of view.")

17 Now, in the light of your co-inclusion in his death and resurrection, whoever you thought you were before, in Christ you are a brand new person! The old ways of seeing yourself and everyone else are over. Acquaint yourself with the new! *(Just imagine this! Whoever a person was as a Jew, Greek, slave or freeman, Boer, Zulu, Xhosa, British, Indian, Muslim or American, Chinese, Japanese or Congolese; is now dead and gone! They all died when Jesus died! Remember we are not talking law language here! The 'If' in, "If anyone is in Christ" is not a condition, it is the conclusion of the revelation of the gospel! Mankind is in Christ by God's doing [1 Cor 1:30 and Eph 1:4]. The verses of 2 Corinthians 5:14-16 give context to verse 17! For so long we studied verse 17 on its own and interpreted the 'if' as a condition! Paul did not say, "If anyone is in Christ," he said "THEREFORE if anyone is in Christ ..." The "therefore" immediately includes verses 14 to 16! If God's faith sees everyone in Christ in his death, then they were certainly also in Christ in his resurrection. Jesus did not reveal a "potential" you, he revealed the truth about you so that you may know the truth about yourself and be free indeed! In the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God did not redeem a compromised replica of you; he rescued the original, blueprint you, created in his radiant mirror likeness! Any other 'self' you're trying to find or esteem will disappoint! Reckon your 'DIY-law of works-self' dead, and your redeemed self co-raised and co-seated together with Christ! This is freedom indeed! Galatians 2:19,20; Rom 6:11. See 1 Pet 1::3 We are reconnected with our original genesis through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead! This new birth endorses and celebrates the hope of the ages; God's eternal love dream concludes in life!)*

18 The idea of mankind's co-inclusion in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is entirely God's doing! To now realize that God has indeed brought final closure to the old and for us to see everything and everyone in this new light is to simply see what God has always known to be true about us in Christ; we are not debating human experience, opinion, or their contribution; this is exactly what God believes. In

Jesus Christ, God [1]exchanged equivalent value to redeem us to himself. He went to the highest extreme in this act of reconciliation to persuade us of our original worth! This God has given us as the mandate of our ministry. *(The word, [1]***katalasso***, translates as reconciliation; it is a mutual exchange of equal value. This transaction was not to buy us back from "the Devil"; a thief never becomes an owner; it was God redeeming our minds from the lies that we believed about ourselves - reconciliation is the bold unveiling of the value of the hidden treasure in everyone! See 2 Cor 4:7 and Math 13:44.)*

19 Our ministry declares that Jesus did not act independently of his Father. God was present in Christ when he reconciled the total [1]cosmos to himself. Deity and mankind embraced in him; the fallen state of mankind was deleted; their trespasses would no longer count against them! He now announces his friendship with every individual from within us! *(The incarnation did not separate the Father from the Son and the Spirit. In him dwells the fullness of God in a human body. Col 2:9. As a human person, Jesus felt the agony of fallen mankind on the cross when he echoed Psalm 22, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me! Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?" But then in verse 24, David declares triumphantly: "He has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; and he has not hid his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him." The word, [1]kosmos in the NT refers to the entire human family.)*

20 The voice God has in Christ he now has in us; we are God's ambassadors. Our lives exhibit the urgency of God to [1]persuade everyone to realize the reconciliation of their redeemed identity. *(The word, [1]****parakaleo****, comes from* ***para****, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection, and* ***kaleo****, to identify by name, to surname. In Luke 15:28, 31, His father pleaded with him, "My child, you are always with me,*

and all that I have is yours." "Be reconciled" could not be translated, "Become reconciled!" "Do in order to become" is the language of the Old Testament; the language of the New Testament is, "Be, because of what was done!")

21 This is the divine exchange: he who knew no [1]sin embraced our distortion; he appeared to be without form; this was the mystery of God's prophetic [2]poetry. He was disguised in our distorted image and marred with our iniquities; he took our sorrows, our pain and our shame to his grave and [3]birthed his righteousness in us. He took our sins and we [3]became his innocence. *(The word sin, is the word [1]**hamartia**, from **ha**, negative or without and **meros**, portion or form, thus to be without your allotted portion or without form, pointing to a disorientated, distorted, bankrupt identity; the word **meros**, is the stem of **morphe**, as in 2 Corinthians 3:18 the word **metamorphe**, with form, which is the opposite of **hamartia** - without form. Sin is to live out of context with the blueprint of one's design; to behave out of tune with God's original harmony. The word, [2]**poema**, often translated "made" like in, "he was made to be sin." However, because of its context here I have translated **poema** to read prophetic poetry. As the scapegoat of the human race, he took on the distorted image of fallen mankind, he did not become a sinner, but the official representative of mankind's sin. Then Paul uses the word [3]**ginomai**, he birthed his righteousness in us since we were born anew in his resurrection from the dead. Hos 6:2, Eph 2:5, 1 Pet 1:3.*
Isaiah 52:10 "The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." Isaiah 52:14-15 "Just as many were astonished at you—so was he marred in his appearance, more than any human and his form beyond that of human semblance—so will he startle many nations. Kings will shut their mouths because of him; for what had not been told them, they will see and what they had not heard, they will understand." Isaiah 53:4-5 "Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But surely he was wounded by our transgressions; he was bruised by our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was on him and by his stripes we ourselves are healed."

He was not bruised by God but by the very mankind he was about to redeem!
You may ask, "But what about Isaiah 53:10!?" [It pleased the Lord to "crush" him!] Translators of the New Revised Standard Version say in their footnotes to this verse: "Meaning of Hebrew uncertain." The Septuagint - Greek version of this verse - written 250 years before Jesus, by 72 Hebrew scholars, with access to older manuscripts than what we have today, have rendered the Hebrew text as follows: "and the Lord desires to purify him of the plague!" This can also be translated, "The Lord desires to cleanse his wounds!" The word, ***plege*** *means a wound.*
Deuteronomy 32:5, 6 "They have corrupted themselves; they did not behave as his children, they have become a distorted generation of people, twisted out of their true pattern; they are a crooked and perverse generation." (Paul quotes this verse in Philippians 2:15.) Deuteronomy 32:18 "You were unmindful of the Rock that begot you and have forgotten the God who danced with you." (Hebrew, ***khul*** *or* ***kheel****, to dance.)*
Romans 8:29 "He pre-designed and engineered us from the start to be jointly fashioned in the same mold and image of his Son according to the exact blueprint of his thought. We see the original and intended pattern of our lives preserved in his Son. He is the firstborn from the same womb that reveals our genesis. He confirms that we are the idea and invention of God." *(We were born anew when he was raised from the dead! [1 Peter 1:3] His resurrection co-reveals our common genesis as well as our redeemed innocence. [Romans 4:25 and Acts 17:31, 2 Timothy 1:9] No wonder then that he is not ashamed to call us his family! We indeed share the same origin [Hebrew 2:11], and, "In him we live and move and have our being; we are indeed his offspring!" [Acts 17:28].)*
Romans 8:30 Jesus reveals that mankind pre-existed in God; he defined us. He justified us and also glorified us. He redeemed our innocence and restored the glory we lost in Adam. *[Romans 3:23, 24: the word,* ***prohoritso****, means pre defined, like when an architect draws up a detailed plan; and the word,* **kaleo***, to surname, identify by name.]*
Titus 2:11 "The grace of God shines as bright as day making the salvation of mankind undeniably visible.")

Chapter 6

1 I want you to hear the urgency of our appeal: we are co-employed and implore you not to take God's grace for granted; what a waste it is to see less in grace than what God does! The danger is not to exaggerate what happened to mankind in Christ, but rather to underestimate it! *(Jesus did not warn his disciples not to see him in too many people, but certainly cautioned them not to miss him in the most unlikely! "How you treat the least is how you treat me." See 2 Cor 1:19, "The Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom I Paul, Sylvanus, and Timothy boldly announced in you, is God's ultimate yes to mankind. Human life is associated in all that he is. In God's mind there exists not even a hint of hesitation about this!")*

2 God declares that it is his [1]delight to do you good! "I have heard the [3]cry of the human race echo within [2]you *[Jesus; Ps 22:1]* **and immediately [3]ran to your rescue." Now this is mankind's defining moment! See it for yourself! This is your time; this is your salvation!** *(Already in the previous chapter Paul shares his own "from-now-on-therefore moment" in 2 Cor 5:16. Now he encourages us to come to the same conclusion. There is no need to wait any longer for that which was written to be fulfilled! God spoke of a specific time and person when he announced salvation. Jesus is the day of salvation [Jeshua] that Isaiah foretold. This day has fully come! Even though Isaiah spoke these words 700 years BC they were already recorded in the past tense! The Hebrew word, [1]**ratson,** means pleasure, delight, favor, goodwill, acceptance. The Greek word, [3]**boētheō**, from **boao**, a boisterous, most urgent cry for help, and **theo**, to run to the rescue. This is so typical of God; the Greek for God is **theos,** which is so similar to **theo**! God heard the cry of the human race echo in Christ. "My God my God, why have you forsaken me!" Ps 22:1, and in verse 24 he says, "For he has not despised nor distanced himself from the affliction of the afflicted; and he has not hid his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him." Note the [2]singular, **soi**, thus pointing to the Messiah, the one who died for all, as in 2 Cor 5:14. Isaiah saw the*

human race fully represented in the one act of righteousness completed in the one man! [Isa 53:4,5.] See also Heb 4:16, For this reason we can approach the authoritative throne of grace with bold utterance. We are welcome there in his embrace, and are reinforced with immediate effect in times of trouble. (The word, ***boetheia****, means to be reinforced, specifically a rope or chain for frapping a vessel in a storm.))*

3 See to it that you do not give offence or allow any kind of casual indifference to discredit this message.

4 In every circumstance we commend ourselves to be jointly positioned as [1]deacons of God; we co-exhibit incarnate grace, regardless of the degree of the contradictions that we might be facing. We remain constant in a fortress of patience, in situations of extreme pressure; even at times where it seems like we have our arms locked behind our backs and we feel squeezed into claustophobic spaces. *(The Greek word, [1]****diakonos,*** *from* ***dia,*** *a primary preposition denoting the channel of an act, and* ***konos,*** *dust; thus, we [1]co-exhibit incarnate grace.)*

5 In physical abuse; beaten up and bruised; caged in prison cells; often in chaotic circumstances; exasperating toil, with little sleep and nothing to eat!

6 While abiding constantly in bliss knowing what our innocence is founded in, we remain absolutely unmoved by any of these severe contradictions. We are in Christ; in Holy Spirit; in agape without a hint of hypocrisy.

7 We are sheltered in the word, entwined in unveiled truth, in the dynamic of God's power, because righteousness empowers us with every necessary weapon in our right and left hand to daily live undefeated by any of these onslaughts and contradictions! *(Righteousness by God's faith frees us from anything more we could do to*

prove or defend ourselves through our own efforts. See Habakkuk 2:4; 17-19 and Romans 1:17, also Hebrews 12:1.)

8 Whether people esteem us or despise us; whether we are ridiculed or recognized, we may even be accused of misleading people we are in actual fact freeing people!

9 Some would say that we are vague and ambiguous and yet who we are is an open letter to everyone's conscience. Some would wish us dead; but hey, here we are, fully alive! *(2 Corinthians 4:2)*

10 Our joy exceeds any reason for sadness; to enrich countless others by far outweighs the expense. It may appear that we are empty handed, yet we have everything in a firm grasp!

11 Precious Corinthians! Our bold words flow from hearts where you are embraced in a wide-open space!

12 Any sense of inadequacy you might feel comes from having an inferior perception about yourselves; the gospel we communicate esteems you highly!

13 We invite you in the most affectionate terms to respond to us without hesitation or restraint. See yourselves [1]mirrored in the same boundless space. *(The word [1]**antimisthia,** means requital, or correspondence, which I translated here, "mirrored".)*

14 Faith-righteousness has nothing in common with the philosophies of karma and performance-based approval; they could never [1]balance the scales or be evenly yoked together in any context. *(The word [1]**heterozugeō,** an unequal or different yoke; from the word, **zugos**, a yoke or*

a teaching; the yoke of a rabbi or philosopher represented their doctrine; possibly derived from the Hebrew word, ***tzedek,*** *to mean the wooden beam in a scale of balances, which is the word for righteousness. The Greek stem for righteousness is* ***dike*** *- interesting to note that the Greek goddess of Justice is Dike [pronounced,* ***dikay****] and she is always pictured holding a scale of balances in her hand.)*

15 There is no [1]symphony between the value that Christ reveals in people and the worthlessness that [2]Belial represents! Faith-righteousness and work based-righteousness are two opposites; they are conflicting systems that can never match. *(Paul uses the word [1]****sumphonēsis*** *from* ***sun****, denoting union and* ***phonay****, voice. Faith-righteousness is to know the truth about the redeemed life of your design; whereas a works based-righteousness is to believe a lie about yourself. The Hebrew word, [2]****beliya'al*** *literally means without profit; worthlessness. The etymology of this word has been variously given. The Talmud (Sanh. 111b) regards it as a compound word, made up of "beli" and "'ol" (without a yoke) which is very interesting in this context! Jesus says, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light!" Peterson renders it, "Walk with me and work with me--watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly. Matthew 11:29,30. The Message)*

16 How can the tangible, physical address of the living God [1]compare with a phantom image that people host in their minds? Mankind is God's idea - we did not invent God or ourselves; he invented us! He said, "In you will I reside and move and have my being; we belong together; I am yours and you are mine!" *(Ezekiel 37:27 My dwelling place shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. The word, [1]****sugkatathesis*** *means, a putting together or joint deposit (of votes), hence approval, assent, agreement; you cannot vote for both systems, they are opposites!)*

17 "Consequently, escape the snare of these phantom ideas; do not reduce your horizon to become [1]attached to anything that is not equally [2]elevated. *(in your joint seatedness in heavenly places, in your co-resurrection and co-ascension with Christ. The word* ***[1]haptomai*** *means to fasten to oneself; to adhere to; to cling to. The word* ***[2]akathartos,*** *from* ***ha****, which is a negative particle, and* ***kathairō****, from* ***kata****, intensive and* ***airo****, to lift up. The same word is used in John 15 where it was translated, to "prune, or cut off" the branches that do not bear fruit; yet the word would rather mean to lift up those branches so that they may bear more fruit!)*

18 Then you will know the embrace of your Father to simply enjoy being my sons and daughters," says the Almighty.

Chapter 7

1 Dearly beloved, these promises engage us with elevated thoughts and free us from the frustrating efforts of the flesh to compete with the innocence of the spirit in our divine devotion. *(Paul contrasts the futile efforts of the flesh to the spirit of grace, which is celebrated in the bliss of righteousness by faith.)*

2 You will have to admit it, we have judged no-one in an unworthy manner, or made anyone feel inferior, neither have we taken advantage of anyone.

3 There is no hint of condemnation in my message; I have always maintained that our hearts are joined with you in death and in life.

4 I am absolutely persuaded about you and take great pride in you; we are [1]seamlessly one; therefore my joy rises [2]above all sense of [3]claustrophobia ! *(The word, [1]**parakaleo**, comes from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **kaleo**, meaning to identify by name, to surname. The word [2]**epi**, is a preposition of position, over or against. The word [3]**thlipsis** means a pressing, to be under severe pressure; from **thlibō,** to crowd (literally or figuratively): - afflict, narrow, throng.)*

5 When we first arrived in Macedonia we had no chance to relax for a moment; we were literally thronged by trouble; we faced conflict on every side and felt deeply alarmed.

6 How wonderful it is to discover God's [1]comforting closeness when one feels like a bird that [2]cannot rise in flight to escape the fowler; this time God's closeness was reinforced in the arrival of Titus! *(The word, [1]**parakaleo**, comes from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, and **kaleo**, meaning to identify by name, to surname. The word, [2]**tapeinos**, means, not rising far from the ground.)*

7 Oh, and what a joy it was to hear personally from him how greatly encouraged he was by all of you! He told us how deeply you missed me and how you grieved with sincere concern for me. I immediately went from feeling a little sorry for myself into a happy-dance-mode!

8 For a brief moment I felt a little bad that I had perhaps saddened you with my previous letter yet I have no regrets now!

9 I rejoice in knowing that your sadness caused you to realize my sincere concern for you! The grief you felt brought God's heart into

clear view and confirmed in you that I have always only had your best interest in mind!

10 To [1]anchor one's thoughts in God's thoughts when faced with difficult or painful experiences, brings escape from sorrow and leaves one with no [2]regrets; but oh, what a dreadful contrast is the world system *(of the law of karma and works)* **which adds [2]regret upon sorrow! Whereas the one brings such immediate relief, the other seems to be an inescapable deathtrap!** *(The word [1]**metanoia** means to gather one's thoughts; in this context it means to realize God's thoughts. Sadly the Latin word, penance (repentance) became the popular English translation of **metanoia**. The word [2]**metamelētos,** means with regret.)*

11 Consider how this very thing that caused you such initial grief has turned your attention to God! It revived an [1]immediate sense of urgency to [2]realize your position in grace; almost [3]like when your arm is twisted and locked behind your back, and your own efforts to clear or save yourselves were completely neutralized. You were greatly alarmed with an intense desire and burning zeal to [4]re-endorse the basis of your righteousness. And so in everything your blameless innocence is vindicated! *(The word [1]**spoude** suggests speed, immediate, urgent. The word [2]**apologia** means to answer with reason, to apologize, to defend one's case. The word [3]**aganaktēsis,** from **ago,** to lead and **anagkē** to bend the arm. The word [4]**ekdikeo**, is a compound word from **ek**, a preposition denoting origin, and **dikeo**, two parties finding likeness in one another; which is the basis of the word for righteousness, **dikaios**. That which originates in righteousness. See Romans 12:19, Do not bother yourselves to get even, dear ones. Do not let anger or irritation distract you; that which we have in common with one another (righteousness) must set the pace. Scripture confirms that the Lord himself is the revealer of righteousness. [ekdikeo])*

12 The object of my writing was not to debate the detail of who was wrong and who was wronged, but you, discovering the heart of God [1]mirrored in our urgent appeal to you. *(The word, [1]**enōpion,** in the face or gaze of God.)*

13 We are so [1]inspired to know that you [1]are aquainted your true identity and are overjoyed by the way you have gladdened the heart of Titus; he is so happy and completely blessed and refreshed by all of you! *(The word, [1]**parakaleo**, comes from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, with a suggestion of union, originating from, and **kaleo**, meaning to identify by name, to surname. Jesus introduces the Holy Spirit in the same capacity: **parakletos**, meaning close companion, kinsman [John 14:16]).*

14 It is a wonderful thing to brag about one another and to know that we can never exaggerate the truth! Titus has confirmed our boasting about you!

15 He is absolutely overwhelmed with deep affection for you and reminded of the way you have accurately heard and the warm hospitality that all of you have shown him.

16 This pleases me so much! I am so proud of you!

Chapter 8

1 Allow me to encourage you with the striking testimony of the grace of God evidenced in the churches of [1]Macedonia! *(The Romans had*

lacerated [1]Macedonia economically. (Livy, XLV. 30)[30] The churches in Macedonia included Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea.)

2 Their mental mettle was [1]tested to the extreme; they found themselves squeezed into a very [2]narrow space. Yet, in the depth of their poverty, their ecstatic joy led them into extravagant generosity! They had discovered the conclusion of grace: no degree of poverty can separate us from our [3]seamless oneness with one another. Grace translates within us a wealth of liberality. *([1]Proof, **dokimēi**, a test proving the true character of metal. The word [2]**thipsis** from **thlibo**, to be thronged, hemmed into a very narrow space. The word [3]**haplotes**, from **hama**, which is a particle of union and **pleko**, braided; quality or state of unmixed motivation, without mental reservation, no hidden agenda, undivided heart.)*

3 I salute them for intentionally giving themselves beyond their means.

4 We had nothing to do with this - they were the ones who insisted with utmost sincerity and urgency that we mediate their [1]tangible grace-gift to their fellow Saints. *(The word, [1]**diakonos,** deacon or minister from **dia** + **konis** literally through dust, translates here, tangible,practical or incarnate; this word commonly translates as ministry, service, running errands. I believe that the ultimate ministry is the expression of the heart of God in tangible human form, true New Testament deacon is a celebration of the incarnation.)*

5 No-one expected this from them! They simply demonstrated how completely sold out they were to the Lord and to us! This explains their generous giving! The delightful pleasure of God compelled them!

6 Inspired by their enthusiasm, we [1]prompted Titus to complete his initiative in this grace gift that you yourselves were keen to participate

in! *(Here I have used the word prompted for* [1]***parkaleo,*** *which literally means to draw from the source of your identity.)*

7 Now everything about you already shines with extravagant evidence of your faith, your conversation, your knowledge, your enthusiasm. All bear witness to the affection that we have awakened in you! This is your opportunity to now equally excel in the grace of giving! *(See 1 Corinthians 1:4, Every aspect of your life already gives eloquent expression to the rich reservoir of your union in him. 1:6 You certainly have the testimony of Christ evidenced in you.)*

8 I am not laying out rules on giving to bring you back into bondage and duty-driven legalism. Your sincere love, encouraged by the enthusiasm of fellow believers, is what distinguishes your giving *(from the old written code of tithing!)*

9 You are acquainted with what the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ communicates: He exchanged his riches for our poverty; the extremities of his identifying with our poverty became the reference to our wealth. Everything he has is ours. *(We are his wealth! See Matthew 13:44, "He sold all he had and bought the entire field;" in this parable Jesus persuades us that we are all he has!)*

10 Here is my advice: since you originally came up with the idea a year ago,

11 it can only be to your own advantage if you would now also complete your willingness by reaching into your resources and giving liberally according to your means.

12 The willingness of heart is matched by what someone is able to give! I mean it is one thing to be willing to give a million dollars, but if you haven't got a million dollars then at least give the $10 you do have!

13 I am not suggesting that others must be eased at your expense.

14 The idea is that everyone should always have enough; your abundance can now bring immediate relief to them and vice versa.

15 The principle of "share and share alike" is as old as the Scriptures! *(See Exodus 16:18)*

16 I thank God for Titus; he feels entrusted with an equal urgency about you.

17 He readily responded to our prompting and immediately volunteered to go.

18 A brother who is very gifted in the gospel and popular with every church will accompany Titus.

19 He was also [1]handpicked by all the churches to join us on this journey of grace in the administration of the gifts to the glory of the Lord. We know that this will meet with your approval since it is what you really wanted to do all along. *(The word [1]**cheirotoneo** means to handpick or to vote by a show of hands. See 1 Corintians 16:3)*

20 We understand how sensitive money matters are and have taken the utmost precaution to secure the transparency of the administration of your bountiful gift.

21 We [1]anticipate this to be a [2]beautiful testimony to the Lord and to everyone. *(The word [1]**pronoeo** means to know in advance, to anticipate;*

the word [2]***kalon*** *means beautiful.)*

22 Along with these two men we are also sending a brother in whom we have great confidence; he has often proven himself trustworthy in many different situations and is now even more eager than ever since he knows how urgent we feel about you.

23 As for Titus, he is my close companion and represents my heart to you. The brothers who accompany him are commissioned by the churches to the glory of Christ.

24 Give these churches proof of your love and confirm the good reason we have to be proud of you.

Chapter 9

1 Our commitment to administer this relief fund to assist our fellow Saints is obvious. It shouldn't even be necessary for me to write to you about this.

2 When I witnessed your enthusiasm a year ago, I bragged about you before the churches in Macedonia and your zeal greatly inspired many of them.

3 So now I am sending these brothers in response to your readiness to confirm our boasting about you.

4 I just want to make sure that should some of the Macedonians perhaps join me when I visit you that it won't turn out to your and our

embarrassment!

5 This is the reason why I have recruited this team, to go in advance and give you the necessary time to arrange for the blessing that you have promised. I want it to remain the blessing that you originally intended and not something that you now feel pressurized to give!

6 We are all familiar with the natural law that says, "Stingy sowing will always reflect in the harvest; so does liberal sowing!"

7 Every individual must [1]thoroughly think this through in their own heart, not with thoughts of possible regret or out of a legalistic sense of duty! The agape-love of God inspires extravagance of [2]hilarious proportions! *(The word [1]**proaireomai** means to take full inventory; the Greek word [2]**hilaros** is from the stem **hileos** which means cheerful, attractive.)*

8 It is impossible to exaggerate the [1]dimensions and detail of the grace of God! Plunge into the [2]extravagance of grace where he exhibits the extreme [3]dynamics of his bountiful dealing with us! We are already advantaged [2]far beyond any calculation of personal merit to be completely [4]self sufficient at all times in every possible situation that we might face! The overflow thereof amply supplies the needs of others in many creative ways to do good! *(In Paul's estimate, grace cannot be exaggerated! He bursts forth in eloquent grace language in an attempt to explain the extremities of God's goodness. He strings together one superlative after the other in order to reinforce the all-inclusive and conclusive work of grace evidenced within us! With the word [3]**dunatei,** he speaks of the powerful dynamic of God, which is a word and a late tense that Paul invents from the word **dunamos**! Only he uses it and repeats it 3 times in his Epistles. In the words, [1]**pasan charin,** Paul includes every detailed aspect of grace; then he uses the verb, [2]**perisseuo** which means to*

exceed some number, measure, rank or need; to go over the limits, beyond and above, more than is necessary. Paul employs this verb in the Aorist Infinitive tense, ***perisseusai****, which indicates prior completion of an action in relationship to a point in time. Greek infinitives could have either a present or Aorist form. The contrast between the two forms have nothing to do with time. It is a difference of aspect. The present Infinitive was used to express progressive or imperfective aspect. It pictures the action expressed by the verb as being in progress. The Aorist Infinitive however does not express progressive aspect. It presents the action expressed by the verb as a completed unit with a beginning and end. This is an important point since many translations of this verse suggests that God's ability to make all grace abound towards us can only be in response to something we must first do in order to trigger God into action! Our doing good is simply the overflow of his good work within us! The word* [4]***autarkes****, is translated self sufficient; it is the feeling you have when you are completely satisfied with yourself. This word is only used here, in Philippians 4:11 and in 1Timothy 6:6. The use of this word shows Paul's acquaintance with Stoicism. He takes this word from Greek philosophy and applies it to the revelation of the completeness of the life of our design restored in us! Paul lived his life in touch with this place within himself. He discovered that the same I-am-ness that Jesus walked in, was mirrored in him! I am what I am by the grace of God!)*

9 Here is David's take on liberal and extravagant giving: in Psalm 112:9 he says, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness consistently triumphs even in challenging times."

10 The inventor of seed and bread is also the one who supplies and multiplies your resources and increases the harvest of your righteousness! *(Here Paul reminds them of Isa 55:10 & 11 "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it.)*

11 You are mutually enriched in every possible sense of the word and [1]inseparably joined to one another in an undivided heart, without any hidden agenda. And together we, the conduit of your gifts, will set the stage for a joyous grace celebration to God! *(The word [1]**haplotes**, from **hama**, which is a particle of union and **pleko**, braided or entwined, suggests an undivided heart.)*

12 This is such a win-win situation: not only are the Saints endorsed in their "I-am-ness" through this most practical translation of your generosity, but it also causes an abundant overflow of great gratitude to God as the testimony of his goodness finds tangible expression in your gifts!

13 And so the ripple effect continues! The gospel you communicate has found a very articulate voice in your giving and produces a rich harvest of glory to God. Your union with them further communicates the all-inclusive nature of the [1]koinonia we all participate in. *(The word [1]**koinonia** means to participate in, to fellowship.)*

14 Can you imagine how your abundant generosity to them has tied them to you with deep affection in their prayers for you!

15 Gratitude is the language of grace! Your giving has given a voice to his gift, beyond words!

Chapter 10

1 So here I am, Paul, somewhat shy when I am face to face with you, but, according to some rumors, my courage borders on arrogance in

my absence. I [1]address you from this place where there is no distance; our authentic identity is referenced in gentleness and [2]Christlikeness. *(The word, [1]**parakaleo**, comes from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, and **kaleo**, meaning to identify by name, to surname. The word [2]**epeikeia**, from **epi,** continuous influence upon, and **eiko**, to be like, to resemble.)*

2 I am [1]cautious not to come across arrogantly when I am [2]present with you. Yet I am extremely confident before those who accuse me of conducting myself in a mere carnal manner. *(The word [1]**deomai,** to desire, from deo, to bind; the word [2]**pareimi** refers to the closest proximity of the source of my I-am-ness.)*

3 The fact that we are living in a physical world in human bodies of flesh does not mean that we engage ourselves in a combat dictated to by the typical "tit-for-tat" strategies of the politics of the day.

4 The dynamic of our strategy is revealed in God's ability to disengage mindsets and perceptions that have held people captive in pseudo fortresses for centuries!

5 Every lofty idea and argument positioned against the knowledge of God is cast down and exposed to be a mere invention of our own imagination. We [1]arrest every thought that could possibly trigger an opposing threat to our redeemed identity and innocence at spear point! The calibre of our weapon is empowered by the revelation of the ultimate consequence of the obedience of Christ. *(The obedience of Christ dwarfs the effect of the disobedience of Adam into insignificance! See Romans 5:12-21. The word **aichmalōtizō** from **aichme**, spear and **halosis**, to capture, thus, to arrest at spear point.)*

6 Our ears are fine tuned to [1]echo the voice of [3]likeness that resonates within us. We are [2]acquainted with the articulate detail of the [4]authentic language of our origin. *(The word [1]**echo**, means to hold or embrace; the word [2]**hetoimos**, is from an old noun **heteos** (fitness) which means adjusted, ready, prepared. The word [3]**ekdikeō** from **ek**, denoting origin + **dike**, two parties finding likeness in each other. The word [4]**parakoē** from **para,** originating from, + **akouo**, to hear.)*

7 Do you form your perceptions on mere face value? No one has a secret advantage in his or her claim of Christ; think again: each one belongs equally to him, despite appearances or whether they realize it or not!

8 There is nothing superior in my confidence in who I am! God's gift to you wrapped up in me is not to intimidate you but to edify you!

9 The intention of my letters is not to daunt you with eloquent words!

10 Some are of the opinion that my letters are forceful, but my physical appearance is feeble and I am not much of a public speaker.

11 I assure you that the words my Epistles communicate in my absence, are confirmed in my day to day lifestyle.

12 We are not contesting with those who desire to commend themselves! While they compete and compare with one another they completely miss the point; they fail to [1]comprehend our joint I-am-ness! *(The word, [1]**suniemi**, means a joining together like that of two streams; a fusion of thought.)*

13 Why boast in something you can take absolutely no credit for! The only valid measure that defines our lives and explains why we have [1]arrived on your doorstep with the gospel, is the one wherewith God has measured us in Christ. *(One cannot measure temperature with a ruler. The word [1]**ephikneomai**, from **epi**, continuous influence upon, and **hēkō**, to have come, to have arrived, to be present. See Romans 6:14, Sin was your master while the law was your measure; now grace rules. [The law revealed your slavery to sin; now grace reveals your freedom from it.] Also Romans 3:27 The law of faith cancels the law of works, which means there is suddenly nothing left for mankind to boast in. No one is superior to another. Bragging only makes sense if there is someone to compete with or impress. "Through the righteousness of God we have received a faith of equal standing." See 2 Pet 1:1 RSV The OS (operating system) of the law of works is willpower; the OS of the law of faith is love. Gal 5:6 Love sets faith in motion. The law presented mankind with choices; grace awakens belief! Willpower exhausts, love ignites! If choices could save us we would be our own Saviors! Willpower is the language of the law, love is the language of grace and it ignites faith that leads to romance; falling in love beats "making a decision to believe in love"! See Rom 7:19)*

14 Our ministry to you is proof that there are no geographic limitations that could possibly exclude you from the gospel of Jesus Christ!

15 We are not competing with others for your membership; our vision for you is to see your faith mature into a full harvest; this is our standard rule, we have no other expectation! To the same degree that your faith matures, our field among you is greatly increased!

16 You become the extension of our sphere of influence as we together reach neighbouring regions beyond yourselves. The gospel is the key role-player here, not hidden agendas of man-made ministries!

17 So if you desire to boast about anything, boast in the Lord! *(Even as Jeremiah writes in Jer 9:23 & 24 "The LORD says: "Let not the wise glory in their wisdom, let not the mighty glory in their might, let not the rich glory in their riches; but let the one who who glories glory in this, that they understand and know me, that I am the LORD who practice steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, says the LORD.")*

18 The true [1]recipe for authentic ministry is not in clever marketing schemes; let the Lord promote you, he beats the best! *(The word [1]**dokimos** means test, proof, accepted, particularly of coins and money.)*

Chapter 11

1 This might sound a little foolish, but please bear with me!

2 I feel a divine jealousy for you! I have as it were been the groomsman who wooed you to belong solely to your one husband and presented you as a pure bride to Christ.

3 I am concerned for you that you might [1]pine away through the [2]illusion of separation from Christ and that, just like Eve, you might become [3]blurry-eyed and [4]deceived into believing a lie about yourselves. The temptation was to exchange the truth about our completeness *(I am)* **with the idea of incompleteness** *(I am not)* **and shame; thinking that perfection required your toil and all manner of wearisome labor!** *(The word, [1]**phteiro**, means to pine or waste away, to whither. Any idea of separation causes one to whither away in loneliness! The word [2]**haplotes** from **hama**, a particle of union, and **pleko**, to braid or plait together; sometimes translated, simplicity or unmixed. See*

*commentary in James 1:5 on entwined eyes. The Greek word, [3]**ophis** is translated serpent and comes from optomai, to gaze, in this case, to present a visual idea through illusion. The word [4]**exapataō** from **ek,** source + **apateo**, apathy is the source of deception, to be without faith, believing a lie about yourself! Heb 4:6 Israel died in the wilderness because of their unbelief. [Both Adam and Israel believed a lie about themselves. Num 13:33, Josh 2:11, 2 Cor 4:4.] The word [5]**panourgia**, from the words, **pas**, all, and **ergon**, work or toil, where your entire existence is reduced to wearisome labor. This word is often translated, cunning or craftiness. See also 2 Cor 4:2 "We have renounced hidden agendas [employing a little bit of the law in an attempt to "balance" out grace]; we have distanced ourselves from any obscure craftiness to manipulate God's word to make it mean what it does not say!")*

4 You will know by the echo within you whether the Jesus someone else preaches is the same Jesus we proclaim to you. You will recognize the same spirit; if it is a different spirit, it is not the same gospel! Why would you politely put up with deception, even if it comes packaged in prominent names and titles!

5 I am not inferior by any calculation to those Apostles so highly ranked in your estimate!

6 I am not here to entertain you with my public speaking skills, or to impress you with [1]me, but to impress you with you! It is not in the plausible sounding words of my conversation, it is in what I know to be true about you. This is clearly evident in all of our dealings with you. *(See 1Cor 2:4 "My message was not with persuasive arguments based on secular wisdom, since my aim was not to point people to me but rather to the powerful working of the Spirit in them." Thayer's Greek definition of [1]**apodeiknumi** is to point away from oneself. Previous translations of this word have often given the impression that the great, miracle-working man of God would steal the show and entertain the crowds! This was so unlike Jesus and Paul! Paul never writes about how many people he had healed*

and brought to faith, etc. His all-consuming concern was that the eyes of our understanding would be illuminated with the revelation of our own salvation. Note 2 Corinthians 10:10 [RSV], "For they say, 'Paul's letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech of no account.'")

7 Something doesn't seem to match here – am I humbling myself in order to elevate you by not putting a price tag on my preaching of God's gospel? Am I presenting a distorted picture?

8 It seems to me that you are taking it for granted that other churches sponsored my ministry to you!

9 Even while I was with you I did not burden you with my personal needs, but received provision from my Macedonian friends. I have no intent to ever be a burden to you!

10 The integrity of my ministry is [1]endorsed by Christ in me and not by human opinion; the same goes for my confident joy even in the regions of Achaia! *(The word [1]**sphragizō**, to set a mark upon by the impress of a seal or a stamp. Achaia was that part of Greece of which Corinth was the capital.)*

11 How is it possible for you to think that I do not love you? God knows my heart!

12 The way I do things exposes the agendas of others who claim that we are in the same team!

13 They are obviously operating under the deceitful disguise of an Apostleship with a hidden agenda! They are certainly not Apostles of Christ.

14 It shouldn't be a surprise since the [1]Accuser often comes camouflaged as a bearer of light! *(The word [1]**satanos** means the accuser. The dispensation of the law is the ministry of accusation.)*

15 Therefore it is no big deal if his associates in ministry would claim to also teach righteousness under the disguise of grace, while their message clearly promotes a righteousness based on their own works *(and not upon the finished work of Christ!)*

16 Let me put it to you plainly, if I am already behaving foolishly in your opinion, would you please bear with me in the foolishness of my boasting!

17 I am not saying, "the Lord says!" but allow me to say a few foolish things in my own defense!

18 Since there are so many who are boasting according to the flesh, I might as well enroll in the competition!

19 Your wisdom certainly equips you to grin and bear with the foolishness of others!

20 The ability to perceive things from an elevated place of wisdom already gives you the advantage to bear with their insults. Their intent is obvious: all they wish to achieve is to bring you back into the bondage of their own Jewish legalism. They wish to abuse and devour you; their apparent attempts to raise themselves to your level are only to slap you in the face.

21 Since Timothy and I did not take any part in their bravado at the time, it perhaps appeared to you as a weakness on our part. I know this might not make sense to you, but whatever extreme measures they pride themselves in, I can match!

22 Every possible advantage they claim through their natural lineage, whether it be their Hebrew language, their Jewish identity or their connection to the patriarch Abraham himself, I can equal that!

23 If you want to compare notes, I eclipse their claims as ministers of Christ. I speak from personal experience; none of them could compete with me when it comes to the extremities of wearisome labors endured: I was beaten up many times, frequently jailed, often face to face with death.

24 To be more specific, I received the infamous forty lashes less one, five times from the Jews!

25 Three times the Romans beat me up with sticks; once I was stoned and left for dead! Three times on my journeys I have been shipwrecked. I have been adrift at sea for a night and a day.

26 My frequent travels have kept me on the road more than most people I know; I faced flooded rivers, I was attacked by robbers and encountered life threatening dangers from both Jew and Gentile. Everywhere I turned I was confronted with great danger, whether in the city, countryside or at sea. It seemed that there was no safe place left for me on the planet! Even amongst fellow Christians I was snared into controversy and betrayal!

27 I was often extremely exhausted with a burdensome workload. The list goes on and on: I had many a sleepless night; I was frequently

forced to fast since I had nothing to eat or drink; I suffered extreme exposure in bitterly cold conditions with nothing warm to wear.

28 Beside the many external challenges I face daily, I continuously care for the churches in every place with all my heart.

29 Don't talk to me about weaknesses and scandalous insults! I have been there and bought the T-shirt! The scandal of the cross ignites me with fervor!

30 My frailties are my claim to fame!

31 God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has the full panorama of my life and testimony. In Jesus the ages conclude in beautiful logic! He is the ultimate reason of the universe! *(The word* [1]***eulogētos*** *often translated, blessing, is from* ***eu****, beautiful or well done, and* ***logos****, word, thought or logic.)*

32 Oh yes, and here is another bit of adventure: while in Damascus the governer under King Aretas set up a military guard in the city of Damascenes to hunt me down and arrest me.

33 I escaped through a window in the city wall, having been let down in a basket! *(Acts 9:25)*

Chapter 12

1 It would be inappropriate for me to boast about anything as though I achieved it by my own doing! My confident persuasion in what I have

received by revelation of the Lord is not to be confused with arrogance!

2 I know of an encounter in Christ fourteen years ago, where a person was translated into the third heaven.

3 Only God knows whether it was in or out of the body; it does not really matter to me!

4 This person was caught up into paradise! There he heard words that could not be articulated into language; he understood a conversation that did not [1]originate in human thought! *(The word [1]**exousia,** has two components, **ek**, a preposition pointing to the origin of something, and **eimi**, I am, in this case Paul refers to who I am as a human being.)*

5 Of this encounter I will confidently boast because it has nothing to do with anything that I did to promote myself! I would rather glory in that which emphasizes my failure to get it right by myself! Divine revelation is a gift, not a reward!

6 Even though I have legitimate reasons to boast, I prefer not to. My life speaks for itself and I have nothing to hide! *(See also 1 Corinthians 4:10-14 and 2 Corinthians 6:4-8)*

7 In sharp contrast to these spiritual revelations, the physical pain that I suffered and my severe discomfort momentarily distracted me. It was as if the old mindset of accusation *(Satan)* **persuaded me that this affliction was actually God's way of keeping me humble.** *(Note that it was not a messenger from God, but from Satan! The word, **satanas** means accuser! By these revelations of extreme proportions and consequence Paul understood that we are indeed co-seated together with Christ in heavenly places. In his resurrection he already elevated us beyond any claim of accusation. See Hosea 6:2 and Ephesians 2:5,6. We cannot get any more*

elevated into the bliss of our redeemed innocence than discovering our joint-seatedness with Christ in the throne room ! Colossians 3:1-3)

8 I almost believed this lie and even implored the Lord three times to remove the thorn from my flesh.

9 Finally it dawned on me that grace is God's language; he doesn't speak "thorn-langauge"! He said to me, "My grace [1]elevates you, to be fully content." And now, instead of being overwhelmed with a sense of my own weakness, he overwhelms me with an awareness of his strength! Oh what [2]bliss to rejoice in the fact that in the midst of my frailties I encounter the dynamic of the grace of God to be my [3]habitation! *(The word [1]**arkeo,** content, stems from the word **airo** which means to elevate. The word [2]**hedista** from **hedeos**, means pleasure. The word [3]**episkenoo** has two components: **epi**, continuous influence upon and **skenoo**, to encamp, to reside in a tent; the noun, **skenos** reminds of the English word skin! Paul suggests that God's grace fits you like a skin! One feels most at home in the consciousness of his grace!)*

10 I now enjoy a [1]delightfully different frame of mind when I encounter things that would normally make me feel frail, whether it be from insults or when I am in situations where [2]I'm forced to do things with my arms twisted behind my back; whether I am persecuted or feel squeezed into [3]claustrophobic spaces. Because of Christ, every time that I encounter weakness I escape into the strength of my [4]I am-ness! *(The word, [1]**eudokeo** is a compound word from, **eu**, well done, beautiful, and **dokeo**, to form an opinion. The word [2]**anagkē** to bend the arm like when your arm is locked behind your back, where your own efforts to clear or save yourself are completely neutralized. The word [3]**stenochōria**, means a narrowness of place. The word [4]**eimi**, is the verb, I am.)*

11 It is not my style to talk so much about myself, but here I am foolishly defending my reputation against your esteemed Apostles! Hey, I was hoping that you would rather defend me!

12 All the signs that confirmed my commission and Apostleship were evidenced in you. These signs and miracles and mighty works consistently accompany my ministry.

13 How can you possibly feel neglected? The only way in which you were treated differently from the other churches is that I did not burden you with any financial obligations to me.

14 This will be my third visit to you and again I have no intent to burden you in any way! Your money cannot enrich me but your friendship surely does! It is the parent's job to look after their children and not the other way around!

15 It is my pleasure to go to any expense, even to the extreme of bankrupting myself for your sakes! Yet it seems to me that the more I show my love the less I am loved!

16 Did I have a hidden agenda, tricking you with guile?

17 Did anyone that I sent to serve you perhaps abuse you?

18 I entreated Titus to encourage you in our [1]joint-affiliation and co-assigned our brother *(Luke)* **with him; did Titus take any advantage of you? Did we not conduct ourselves in the same spirit and leave the same impression?** *(The word, [1]**parakaleo**, comes from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, with a suggestion of union, originating from, and **kaleo**, meaning to identify by name, to surname. Jesus introduces the Holy*

Spirit in the same capacity: ***parakletos****, meaning close companion, kinsman. John 14:16.)*

19 My intent is not to justify myself at your expense! God knows that our sincere desire in everything we say is to edify you in Christ, dearly beloved!

20 I do not desire that my coming to you will disappoint any of your or my expectations! Contentious debates, petty jealousies, flaring emotions, divisions, bad-mouthing, rumorous gossip, inflated selfish ambitions and disharmony can certainly not be justified and should not be allowed to replace the rich and edifying fellowship which we can anticipate.

21 I certainly have no desire to be humiliated again facing the same old mindsets and sins of imorality, adultery and licentiousness ! This will break my heart! God knows.

Chapter 13

1 In getting ready to visit you now for the third time, I am reminded of the Scripture that says that at the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established.

2 I addressed this issue during my second visit and do so again now, in my absence, with this letter: when I arrive I will not tolerate the stubborn attitude of those who wish to continue in their [1]old distorted deeds. *(The word, [1]****prohamartia****, translate, old sins or previous sins, from* ***pro****, previous, and the word* ***ha****, without and* ***meros****, alloted portion or form;*

suggesting the distorted patterns of judgments we have had of ourselves, thus justifying the lies that we believed about ourselves and one another.)

3 The frailties that I testify to in myself, do not distract from the powerful impact that the word of Christ in me, has in you! This should be enough proof to you of the integrity of my ministry!

4 It seems such a paradox when one considers the frailty of Christ's frame, how he suffered such a dreadful death on the cross, compared to the power of God so evident in him as his source of life. Our own lives often mirror the same contrasting paradox that we have witnessed in Christ, where our times of weakness become a platform for the power of God to be displayed as the secret source of the life we participate in together with Christ, to encourage you!

5 I implore you to [1]examine faith for yourselves in order to test what it is that you really believe. Faith is so much more than the mere veneer of a superstitious belief in a historic Christ; faith is about realizing Jesus Christ in you, in the midst of contradiction! Just [2]as ore is placed into a crucible, where the dross is separated from the gold in a furnace, come to the conclusion for yourselves of his indwelling! Should it appear to you that Christ is absent in your life, look again, you have obviously done the test wrong! *(You cannot measure temperature with a ruler! Paul uses the word, [1]**peiratzo**, to examine closely, from **peira,** to pierce; a test to determine the hidden value of something; also from the word **peras**, which speaks of extremity or the furthest boundary. Faith is not a veneer to cover up potential depression or disappointment when faced with trying times! Note that Paul is not speaking about you putting your beliefs to the test; but you testing **the** faith for yourself! There is only one valid faith, not what we believe about God or about ourselves, but what God believes about us! Paul wants you to discover for yourselves what God believes about you. God is persuaded about Christ indwelling you, now he wants you to be equally persuaded! Then he uses the word, [2]**dokimatzo**, as in the testing of metals. Self-examination has nothing to do with finding*

hidden sins and flaws in you; it is all about realizing Christ in you! The object of the furnace is not to reveal the dross, but the gold! Christ himself is the proof of faith, he is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1. The test of truth is foolproof! See verse 8. Truth is not threatened by our scrutiny! See also 2 Corinthians 4:18 We are not keeping any score of what seems so obvious to the senses on the surface, it is fleeting and irrelevant; it is the unseen eternal realm within us that has our full attention and captivates our gaze! 2 Corinthians 4:7 We have discovered this treasure where it was hidden all along, in these frail skin-suits made of clay. 1 Corinthians 1:6 You certainly have the testimony of Christ evidenced in you. [You possess full knowledge and give full expression because in you the evidence for the truth of Christ has found confirmation. — NEB])

6 I really hope that in your discovery of Christ's indwelling, you will realize that we ourselves are equally found to have passed the test!

7 My sincere prayer is that, even if you cannot see us as meeting the requirements in your estimate, you do not use our apparent failure as an excuse to disqualify yourselves!

8 Truth does not become true by popular vote! It is already true without our permission! Therefore truth is not defined by our behavior. Nothing we do distracts from what truth really is. Truth triumphs inspite of what people think or do! *(The truth about you has its ultimate reference in Jesus. Ephesians 4:21)*

9 We rejoice in the fact that our weakness serves to prove you strong! We pray that you will find all the evidence you need to persuade yourself of your own perfection!

10 Somehow it seems better for me to write my thoughts to you; I think that was I physically present with you now, I might have been

more abrupt! Yet [1]who I am in the Lord is a gift to you; I only wish to edify you; there is nothing in me that could possibly do you any harm. *(The word [1]**exousia**, from **ek**, source, and **eimi**, I am, is often translated, authority. Thus it would read, "according to the authority which the Lord has given me to build you up and not to disappoint you.)*

11 And now, dear friends, we wish you joy; to be fully established, living your lives [1]within the immediate proximity of your true identity; with your minds made up about the fact that we are one, fitly joined together in perfect harmony; and knowing that God is your constant companion and that he himself is the source of love and peace. *(The word, [1]**parakaleo**, comes from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **kaleo**, meaning to identify by name, to surname.)*

12 Embrace one another with godly affection.

13 All the Saints enfold you in their hearts!

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit abide with all of you!

Galatians

In this amazing book, Paul endorses the gospel he owns and proclaims as a gift by the revelation of Christ within him.

Gal 1:12 This message is not invented by a man; my source was not my formal religious education; I received it by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Gal 1:15-16 God's eternal love dream separated me from my mother's womb; his grace became my identity. This is the heart of the gospel that I proclaim; it began with an unveiling of sonship in me, freeing me to announce the same sonship in the masses of non-Jewish people. I felt no immediate urgency to compare notes with those who were familiar with Christ from a mere historic point of view.

Paul contrasts the futility of the law of works in its clumsy effort to improve human behavior with the amazing revelation of the life of our design redeemed in us, in Christ! He uses the words, "law," "flesh" and "works" vs. grace, "spirit" and "faith" to give reference to the dynamic of the success of the cross.

The promise is concluded in the person of Christ; unveiled in human life!

Gal 3:21 No, the law does not oppose God's promise; it emphasizes the desperate need for a Redeemer to release righteousness in mankind as their life; something the law would certainly not be capable of! Had it been possible for the human race to be justified by the law, the promise would be unnecessary.

Gal 3:22 Scripture concludes that all mankind without exception are in the same predicament; they are imprisoned to sin. Now faith brings the promise of immediate release within everyone's reach! Jesus Christ makes it possible for all to believe what God believes concerning their righteousness and restored innocence.

Gal 4:5 Jesus' mandate was to rescue the human race from the regime of the law of performance and announce the revelation of their true sonship in God.

Gal 4:6 To seal our sonship God has commissioned the Spirit of sonship to resonate the Abba echo in our hearts; and now, in our innermost being we recognize him as our true and very dear Father.

Gal 5:1 Christ defines your faith; he is your freedom from anything the law could never free you of! Find your firm footing in this freedom. Do not let religion trip you up again and harness you to a system of rules and obligations!

Gal 5:6 Love sets faith in motion. *(It is easy for love to believe!)*

Chapter 1

1 My name is Paul, my ministry and message are neither accredited to a theological education, nor am I sponsored by a religious institution. I am sanctioned by Jesus the Messiah and God the Father who raised him from the dead. *(Apostle, compelled to go, commissioned. [2 Cor. 5:14, 20 and Rom. 1:5] Rather than a title, Apostleship defines the compelling urgency that prompts the spreading of the gospel. The resurrection revelation inspires the commission. Paul saw that mankind was co-raised together with Christ [Hos 6:2 and Eph 2:5, 6])*

2 I and my team of fellow believers here in Rome address this letter to all the churches in Galatia.

3 We greet you with grace and the peace that comes from knowing God as your Father, and Jesus who heads up the Christ-life. *(Jesus is Lord of the Christ-life; the life of our design unveiled.)*

4 Grace and peace have their reference in the fact that Jesus gave himself as the scapegoat for our sins and plucked us out from the [1]evil of this present religious age that encroached on us. This was exactly what the Father had planned in his love for mankind. *(The word, [1]**poneros**, means full of labors, hardships and annoyances; the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and labor "poneros"! This concludes in a judgment based on performance. Which is the opposite to an opinion of approval based on value!)*

5 His glorious reputation is ageless; it extends beyond all times and seasons. We salute him with our amen! *(Nothing that religion communicates in any age or context can match him.)*

6 I am amazed that you can so easily be fooled into swapping the Gospel for a gimmick! The Gospel reveals the integrity of your original identity rescued in Christ; the gimmick is a conglomeration of grace and legalism. This mixture boils down to a do-it-yourself plan of salvation. *(Which is a recipe for disaster.)*

7 There is no other gospel in spite of the many so-called Christian products branded "gospel." If any hint of the law remains, it is not good news but merely religious people's ideas, detracting from the gospel of Christ. *(Some seek to unsettle your minds by perverting the Gospel to accommodate their own opinion.)*

8 I and any of my team would stand equally disqualified, even if we claim to have had an Angelic visitation, if what we preach were to stray ever so slightly from the Gospel of the finished work of Christ.

9 Let me be blatant and clear about this: any gospel that does not emphasize the success of the cross is counterfeit and produces nothing but the curse!

10 *(In sharp contrast to the time when I needed letters of authority from the religious institutions of the day, endorsing my mission)* **God is my complete persuasion. I answer to him alone, not anyone else. Christ employs me; I am addicted to his grace. Popular religious opinion will not influence me to compromise my message.** *(What is the point of an impressive CV, when your Maker is not even asking for it?)*

11 I want to make it very clear to you my friends that the message I proclaim is not mere speculation or the product of philosophical or religious debate.

12 This is not my own invention, neither was I spoon-fed by human tuition; my source of reference is the unveiled mystery of Christ in me. *(Even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him thus no longer. 2 Corinthians 5:16.)*

13 Everyone knows what a zealous Jew I was when I savagely persecuted God's church.

14 And how I progressed in the Jewish faith beyond many of my peers in my excessive eagerness to preserve the traditions of my ancestors.

15 God's eternal [1]love dream separated me from my mother's womb; his grace became my [2]identity. *(The word, [1]**eudokeo**, means his beautiful intention; the well done opinion. [My mother's womb, my natural lineage and identity as son of Benjamin.] The word, [2]**kaleo**, means to surname, to summon by name.)*

16 This is the heart of the gospel that I proclaim; it began with an unveiling of his Son [1]in me, freeing me to announce the same sonship

[2]in the masses of non-Jewish people. I felt no immediate urgency to compare notes with those who were familiar with Christ from a mere historic point of view. *(The Greek text is quite clear: "It pleased the Father to reveal his Son in me in order that I may proclaim him in the nations!" The words,* ***en emoi****, translate as "in me," and* ***en ethnos*** *translate as in the Gentile nations, or the masses of non Jewish people! Not "among" the Gentiles as most translations have it. Later, when Barnabas is sent to investigate the conversion of the Greeks in Acts 11, instead of reporting his findings to HQ in Jerusalem, he immediately finds Paul, knowing that Paul's gospel is the revelation of the mystery of Christ in the nations [see Col 1:27]. No wonder then that those believers were the first to be called Christians, or Christ-like Anointed ones!)*

Jesus Christ confirms that the son of man is the son of God. "Call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father who is in heaven." [Mt 23:9] Paul reminds the Greek philosophers in Acts 17 that we live and move and have our being in God; mankind is indeed the offspring of God. He is quoting from their own writings, Epimenedes 600 BC and Aratus, 300 BC. The incorruptible seed of sonship is as much present in every person as the seed is already in all soil, even in the desert, waiting for the rain to awaken and ignite its life!

"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, so shall my word be that proceeds from my mouth, it shall not disappoint my purpose, it shall saturate the soil and cause it to bring forth and sprout. Instead of the thorn the cyprus and instead of the brier the myrtle!" [Isa 55:8-11, 13]

In Matthew 13:44, Jesus says that the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in an agricultural field! There is more to the field than what meets the eye!

In 2 Corinthians 4:4, 7 Paul says that we have this treasure in earthen vessels! But the god of this world has blindfolded our minds through unbelief [believing a lie about ourselves, Num 13:33] to keep us from seeing the light of the gospel revealing the glory of God in the face of Christ who is the image of God, as in a mirror!

When Jesus speaks of the sinner he speaks of him as the lost sheep, coin, or son. [Lk 15] You cannot be lost unless you belong! The inscription and image did not disappear from the coin when it was lost. How can we praise God and with the same mouth curse a person made in his image? [James

3:9 and Luke 20:20-26] Mankind has forgotten what manner of people they are by design; we are the image and likeness bearer of our Maker; this is exactly what Jesus came to reveal and redeem.
We may now behold him with unveiled faces as in a mirror and be immediately transformed [in our understanding] into his likeness. From the glory [opinion] of the flesh to the glory [opinion] of God. Legalistic religion kept the veil in place; the proclaiming of the liberating truth of the Good News, removes the veil! The "ugly duckling" didn't need a face-lift or lessons on how to fake the swan life! It only needed to know the truth about itself to be free indeed.)

17 This is radical! I deliberately distanced myself from Jerusalem and the disciples of Jesus. I landed up in Arabia before I returned again to Damascus. *(The weight of this revelation left me no choice; instead of finding out more about Christ in history, I desire to discover him more in me! [See also 2 Cor 5:16])*

18 Then three years later I ventured into Jerusalem, specifically to meet with [1]Kefas. I ended up staying with him for two weeks. *(In [1]Aramaic the word "rock" is **kefas**, and in Greek it is **petros**. Here Paul calls Peter Kefas in order to emphasize the meaning of his name rather than the familiar sound of Peter. Jesus said that the revelation of mankind's true identity and origin is the rock foundation of the **Ekklesia**, lit. original identity from **ek,** the preposition denoting origin and **kaleo**, to surname. [Mt 16:13-18; see also Isa 51:1; Deut 32:18; 1 Peter 2:5 and 1 Kings 6:7])*

19 During this time I did not see any of the other Apostles except James, the younger brother of Jesus. *(Saul (Paul), Peter (Kefas) and James shared a vital revelation; all three of them discovered their original identity beyond their natural birth: "From now on, we no longer know anyone according to the flesh", says Paul in 2 Cor 5:16. "Simon son of Jonah, flesh and blood did not reveal to you that as the son of man, I am the Christ, the Son of God; now that you know who I am, allow me to introduce you to you! I say that you are Mr Rock; a Chip of the old Block. [Mt 16:17, 18] James speaks about the effect of the Word as discovering the reflection*

of the face of our birth as in a mirror there! Rescuing us from our forgetfulness! "We have forgotten what manner of people we are!"
During the three years of Jesus's ministry none of his brothers believed in him. [John 7:5] But in 1 Corinthians 15:7, Paul specifically mentions the fact that Jesus also appeared to James after his resurrection. Suddenly it dawns on James that the Father of light birthed mankind by the eternal Word of truth; the word that became flesh and died mankind's death and who co-raised mankind into newness of life in his resurrection. If anyone hears this word they see the face of their birth as in a mirror! As Peter later admitted "We were born anew when Jesus was raised from the dead!" [1 Pet 1:3] The word that was before time was is our genesis. [Jas 1:17, 18, 23, 24])

20 I'm not writing this to trick you into anything; this is really how I started off preaching this gospel.

21 After my brief visit to Jerusalem, I travelled the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

22 None of the Judean Christian churches knew me face to face.

23 They only heard the rumor that the fierce opponent of their cause was now proclaiming the very Gospel he once endeavored to eradicate.

24 Consequently they recognized God's approval of my life and acknowledged God in me.

Chapter 2

1 It was fourteen years since that first visit that I went on a special mission to Jerusalem with Barnabas; we deliberately took Titus with us; *(... since he was one of our first fruits in Greece. Remember Barnabas was sent by HQ in Jerusalem to investigate the rumor of Greek converts; instead of returning to Jerusalem to give feedback to the senior Apostles, he went to fetch Paul, knowing his gift as a teacher and revelation of the mystery of Christ in you. [Col 1:26 and Acts 11:25,26])*

2 I especially wanted the most senior leadership of the church to hear what I teach in the Gentile nations as my revelation and specific emphasis of the Gospel. We decided to meet in private to avoid any possible public controversy. In this way they could best judge for themselves whether, according to their opinion, my ministry had credibility or not.

3 Our Greek companion, Titus, survived the circumcision scrutiny and wasn't forced to go for the cut!

4 Some disguised Jewish "friends" secretly sneaked in on us to spy out whether he was circumcised or not! Our liberty in Christ offended them; these spies had one agenda; to enslave us to their legalistic bondage!

5 We want you to know that we are sold out to keep the Gospel undiluted for your sakes; had we compromised the message ever so slightly to accommodate their opinion, the whole Gentile world would have felt cheated! We see such a future for the pure gospel in you.

6 The high ranked leaders had nothing to add to my message. I must say that their seniority did not intimidate me in the least. God does not judge people on face value. *(The important ones and the unimportant ones are equally esteemed and loved by him. [2 Cor 5:14, 16])*

7 From what I shared with them they acknowledged the accuracy of my message and felt that while Peter's ministry was more directed to the Jews, mine is tailor-made for the Gentile world!

8 They acknowledged that as much as Peter's ministry was sanctioned by God to preach to the Jews, my assignment was to evangelize the Gentiles.

9 The so-called pillars of the church, James *(the Lord's brother [Gal 1:19])***, Kefas, and John acknowledged my gift in the revelation of the message of grace, and extended their blessing on my work by giving us the right hand of fellowship. While they concentrated on converting the Jews I was recognized as the one with a message for the Gentiles.**

10 Their only request was that we give something to the poor amongst them which we were keen to do since we already came prepared with gifts. *(Acts 11:29, 30)*

11 But when Kefas in turn visited Antioch I had to take him to task for his hypocrisy.

12 His fellowship with the Greek believers seemed so sincere, he even ate with them until James's group arrived from Jerusalem. Then his loyalty to the law showed its true colors! His pretense was an embarrassment!

13 Because of his senior position, the other Jewish believers were swept along with his hypocrisy; they even seduced Barnabas! What a shame!

14 Their interpretation of the Gospel was clearly compromised. I confronted Peter publicly about this. "Behind your colleagues' backs

you pretend to live just like a Gentile as if your Jewish customs were no longer relevant; now suddenly you're imposing out-dated Jewish rules on these Gentile believers, to impress your Jewish friends!"

15 Sin is not a respecter of persons! Sin is sin whether you're Jew or Gentile.

16 As Jews we should be the first to know that righteousness is not a reward for good behavior according to the requirements of the Law. We have pursued righteousness for generations under the system of personal performance but failed miserably! Jesus Christ embodies [1]God's belief concerning mankind's redeemed righteousness; this is the only valid basis of our belief. Our best intentions to do good cannot add any weight to our righteousness. As Jewish believers, we know this! We have no advantage over any other person. Jew and Gentile alike were equally disqualified by the law; now we are equally justified because of Jesus and for no other reason! *(Paul uses the [1]objective Genitive - "faith of." "He is the author and finisher of faith; he is both the origin and conclusion of faith" [Heb. 12:2]; "from faith to faith" [Rom 1:17]. It is God's persuasion in the merit of his Son's achievement that awakens faith in mankind." Rom 4:25.)*

17 However, if in our quest to discover righteousness by faith in what Christ did for us, we find that it is still possible to stumble; do not now label yourself a sinner yet again! The fact that you sinned does not cancel the cross of Christ and gives you no reason to abandon justification by faith as if Christ is to be blamed for your distraction! That would be absurd! *(Now all of a sudden you want to keep the law again to further add to your righteousness as if Christ did not achieve enough. Do not let your experience deceive you to invent a new doctrine.)*

18 Only a con artist will try to be a law-man and a grace-man at the same time!

19 The law [1]demanded my death; grace reveals that in God's mind Jesus died that death. So as far as the law is concerned, I'm a dead man but as far as God is concerned I'm alive! *(The word [1]**dia** means because of; suggesting here that the law was what demanded my death! But in the mystery of God's genius, Jesus died mankind's death; which means, in God's belief, I died to the old system of trying to please him with my own good behavior! We might as well admit it! Our most sincere beliefs as well as our best attempts to attain to a righteousness based on us getting ten out of ten all the time, failed! There is no ways to get around this! See Rom chapter 7 in the Mirror Bible!)*

20 So here I am dead and alive at the same time! I'm dead to the old me I was trying to be and alive to the real me which is Christ in me! Co-crucified, now co-alive! What a glorious entanglement! I was in him in his death; now he is in me in my life! For the first time I'm free to be me in my skin, immersed in his faith in our joint-sonship! He loves me and believes in me! He is God's gift to me!
*(The verb [1]**συνεσταυρωμαι** from **sustauroō**, is in the Perfect tense, indicating that not only was I crucified with Christ in the past, but I am existing now in that present condition. How can any human effort improve on this! See Hos 6:2 and Eph 2:5 also Romans 7:6 But now we are fully released from any further association with a life directed by the rule of the law, we are dead to that which once held us captive, free to be slaves to the newness of spirit-spontaneity rather than age old religious rituals, imitating the mere face value of the written code. The moment one exchanges spontaneity with rules, the edge of romance is compromised!)*

21 It is an insult to the grace of God to prefer Moses to Jesus! If the law could justify you then Jesus wasted his time dying your death! *(That would reduce salvation to a ludicrous contest between your obedience and the obedience of Christ! [Rom 5:19])*

Chapter 3

1 Galatians! Galatians! Have you completely lost your common sense? Can't you see how the law bewitched you and blurred your vision to distort the revelation of what the cross of Christ accomplished in you? This was so clearly predicted in Scripture. How can you not be persuaded by the truth? *(He did not die as an individual, he died your death! [Isa 53:4, 5])*

2 Please would you reason with me on this one issue; on what basis did you receive the Holy Spirit? Are we talking gift or reward here? What kind of message ignites faith? What a condemned sinner and failure you are as revealed in the law, or what God believes to be true about you as revealed in the Gospel. Let's not confuse Law with Grace.

3 Can you see how stupid it would be to start in the spirit *(believing in the success of the cross)* **and then for some crazy reason to switch modes back to DIY again! As if your own works could add anything to what God has already done in Christ.** *([DIY - Do It Yourself.] It would be suicidal! It's like deliberately jumping out of the boat to try and swim across the ocean! There are two trees: the DIY tree or the Life tree. They represent two laws or systems: the law of works and the law of faith; the one represents what you have to do in order to become; the other tree reveals who you are by design and what Christ has done! Because of the Calvary-tree we are free to be! Spirit = faith; flesh = works)*

4 Remember how you felt when you first encountered faith; are you prepared to exchange that for religious sentiment? All the ground you've gained would be lost. *(The law does not complete faith, it nullifies it.)*

5 Would you accredit what you have received from God to something you did or something you have heard? Did God reward you for your

high moral standards when he worked extravagant miracles in you and lavished his Spirit upon you; or did it perhaps have anything to do with the content of the revelation of the message of grace that you have heard? Faith is the source of God's action on mankind's behalf; our hearing is the conduit of what God's faith reveals.

6 Abraham had no other claim to righteousness but simply believing what God declared concerning him! Isaac confirmed God's faith, not Abraham's efforts. This is all we have in common with Abraham. *(Righteousness reveals God's faith as responsible for mankind's salvation in direct contrast to their doing it themselves by keeping moral laws!)*

7 The conclusion is clear; faith and not flesh relates us to Abraham! *(Grace rather than law is our true lineage. Ishmael represents so much more than the Muslim religion. Ishmael represents the clumsy effort of the flesh to compete with faith; the preaching of a mixed message of law and grace.)*

8 Scripture records prophetically that the mass of non-Jewish nations would be justified by faith and not by keeping moral laws. This announcement by God over Abraham is the gospel in advance. God saw every nation included in the same principle of the faith that Abraham pioneered. "In you all the nations of the earth are equally represented in the blessing of faith." *([Gen 22:17] I will indeed bless you, and I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore. And your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies, Gen 22:18 and by your seed shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves. Righteousness by faith is the revelation of the gospel; [Rom 1:17 and Hab 2:4] "the just shall live by his (God's) faith" Righteousness by faith defines your life!)*

9 As did Abraham so do we now find our source in the blessing of faith.

10 In clear contrast to faith, the law is the authority of the curse. As it is written, "Everyone who fails to perform the detailed requirements of the law, even in the least, is condemned." *(Deut 27:26)*

11 Habakkuk confirms conclusively that righteousness by God's faith is the only basis to life; this terminates any possible justification before God based on moral behavior. *(Hab 2:4, 3:17-19)*

12 Law and faith have nothing in common! Law measures a person's doing and experience as defining their life. *(Faith measures God's doing in redeeming his design in us, as defining our lives.)*

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse as consequence of our failure to keep the law. In his cross he concentrated the total curse of the human race upon himself. In his abandoning himself to death, he absorbed and dissolved the horror of the curse in his own person. Scripture declares that anyone hanging on a tree embodies the curse. *(Deut 21:23)*

14 This act of Christ released [1]the blessing of Abraham upon the [2]Gentiles! Now we are free to receive [1]the blessing of the Spirit. *([1]Righteousness by God's faith in the achievement of Christ, and not as a reward for our behavior. In the obedience of Christ Deuteronomy 28 is out-dated! [Rom 5:19, Eph 1:3] [2]The mass of non-Jewish nations.)*

15 We are familiar with the fact that in civil affairs a testament, once endorsed, is authoritative and cannot be tampered with at a later stage.

16 It is on record that the promise *(of the blessing of righteousness by God's faith)* **was made to Abraham and to his seed, singular,** *(thus excluding his effort to produce Ishmael.)* **Isaac, the child of promise and not of the flesh mirrors the Messiah.**

17 This is my reasoning: God endorsed the covenant of promise in Christ 430 years before the law was given. The law did not later replace the promise! *(God's means of justifying mankind would always be by faith in his promise and never by their own ability to keep moral laws.)*

18 The law and the promise are not compatible; the one system nullifies the other. God gifts Abraham with heir-ship by promise *(and not by reward for his behavior.)*

19 So what is the use of the law then? It was an intermediary arrangement to make people aware of the extent of their wrong doings and at the same time point them to the promise of a Redeemer, the Messianic seed! It was given by Angelic beings to Moses as the middleman.

20 With Abraham there was no middleman; it was just God! *(The Mosaic law sopke the language of "the fallen mind" and required mediators - the Levitical priesthood - because it was an arrangement whereby mankind had a part and God had a part. God's covenant with Abraham was a grace covenant pointing to the man Jesus Christ, in whom God himself would fulfil mankind's part and therefore needed no mediator apart from himself. See Heb 6:17*
In the incarnation Jesus fulfills both the proposal and the "I do!" Melissa Perez)

21 No, the law does not oppose God's promise; it emphasizes the desperate need for a Redeemer to release righteousness in mankind as their life; something the law would certainly be incapable of! Had it been possible for a person to be justified by the law, the promise would be unnecessary. *("For if any kind of rule-keeping had power to create life in us, we would certainly have gotten it by this time." — The Message.*
Romans 5:6 "God's timing was absolutely perfect; mankind was at their weakest when Christ died their death—we were bankrupt in our efforts to save ourselves.")

22 Scripture concludes that all men without exception are in the same predicament; they are imprisoned to sin; now faith brings the promise of immediate release within everyone's reach! Jesus Christ makes it possible for all to believe what God believes concerning their righteousness and restored innocence. *(Jesus is the embodiment of God's faith in mankind. The righteousness of God is now on display in such a way that all may believe, regardless of who they are, there is no distinction. The same mass of mankind that was once reduced to an inferior identity through their sin, is now gifted with acquittal on the basis of the ransom paid by Jesus Christ for their liberation. [Rom 3:22-24])*

23 We were confined to the law, kept in custody to its constraining influence until the revelation of faith would come to our rescue!

24 The law was acting just like a slave appointed to be the guardian of his master's children, until they would be of age to go to the proper school of Christ to find in faith their righteousness revealed and endorsed.

25 Now that we have arrived at our destination, the prophetic road signs and pointers are of no further use. Faith replaced the Custodian. Now that faith has come the law is no longer relevant.

26 What Jesus Christ believes to be true about you is the final confirmation of mankind's redeemed sonship. His faith is the only valid reference to your belief!

27 Whoever is immersed in Christ is fully clothed with him! He is your brand new wardrobe confirming your sonship! *(From now on the diaper days are over! "Our own righteousness by doing the law compares to filthy rags!" [Isa 64:6])*

28 Nothing resembles your previous identity as Jew or Gentile, bond or free, male or female, Billabong or Gucci, now you are all defined in oneness with Christ! He is your significance and makes you beautiful!

29 Since Christ is the seed of promise, it is only in our realizing our union with him *(in the incarnation)* **that we are equally related to Abraham and heirs of the promise. Faith and not flesh relates us to Abraham.** *(We inherit his righteousness by the same faith!)*

Chapter 4

1 Infant heirs have no more say than a slave, even though they own everything! *(The best deal the law could possibly broker confirmed mankind's slavery to sin.)*

2 He would remain under domestic supervision and house rules until the date fixed by his father for his official graduation to the status of sonship.

3 This is exactly how it was with us; we were kidnapped as it were into infancy and confined to that state through the law. *(An inferior mindset as a result of Adam's fall.)*

4 But then the day dawned; the most complete culmination of time! *(Everything predicted was concluded in Christ!)* **The Son arrived, commissioned by the Father; his legal passport to the planet was his mother's womb. In a human body exactly like ours he lived his life subject to the same scrutiny of the law.**

5 His mandate was to rescue the human race from the regime of the law of performance and announce the revelation of their true sonship in God. *(Now our true state of sonship is again realized! [Jn 1:12; see Jn 1:11-14] "It was not as though he arrived on a foreign planet, he came to his own, yet his own did not recognize him. [Ps 24:1] But to everyone who realizes their association in him, convinced that he is their original life, in them he confirms that we are his offspring. These are they who discover their genesis in God beyond their natural conception! Man began in God. We are not the invention of our parents! Suddenly the invisible eternal Word takes on visible form! The Incarnation! In him, in us! The most accurate tangible display of God's eternal thought finds expression in human life! The Word became a human being; we are his address; he resides in us! He captivates our gaze! The glory we see there is not a religious replica; he is the authentic* ***monogenes*** *begotten only of God. In him we recognize our true beginning. The Glory that Adam lost, returns! In fullness! Only Grace can communicate truth in such complete context!)*

6 To seal our sonship God has commissioned the Spirit of sonship to resonate the Abba echo in our hearts; and now, in our innermost being we recognize him as our true and very dear Father. *(The original life of the Father revealed in his Son is the life the Spirit now conducts within us. [Rom 8:14] Slavery is such a poor substitute for sonship! They are opposites; the one leads forcefully through fear; sonship responds fondly to Abba Father. [Rom 8:15] His Spirit resonates within our spirit to confirm the fact that we originate in God. [Rom 8:16] Because we are his offspring, we qualify to be his heirs, God himself is our portion, we co-inherit with Christ.[Rom 8:17])*

7 Can you see how foolish it would be for a son to continue to live his life with a slave mentality? Your sonship qualifies you to immediately participate in all the wealth of God's inheritance which is yours because of Christ. *(Legalism in its every disguise contradicts sonship! Sonship is not for sale!)*

8 What really amazes me is how gullible you Gentile believers are to get yourselves all tangled up again in oppressive Jewish rites! I mean you know all about your BC days of slavery to imaginary gods under your pagan beliefs.

9 In the meantime, you have come to know the real God; *(quite unlike the god of your imagination)* **what is most significant however, is to discover that he knew you all along! After all, how could you possibly feel attracted again to the pathetic principles of religious deception? It does not matter in what disguise legalism comes, whether pagan or Jewish, it brings the same bondage.**

10 All of a sudden there are special days, months, seasonal, and annual festivities that are scrupulously celebrated; this is nothing more than superstitious religious sentiment.

11 I am alarmed that all my passion seems wasted on you!

12 I urge you to imitate me *(in my conviction about the fact that Jewish customs and their shadow-sentiments are out-dated!)***. We are exactly in the same boat, it is really not about me; it is about you!** *(Our Jewish or Gentile background makes absolutely no difference! I'm not into winning or losing votes for my ministry or me! It's this Gospel that is my concern and urgency!)*

13 I have never compromised the Gospel, from the first day I met you, even though I was physically challenged at the time it did not distract from the message.

14 Remember how hospitable and sensitive you were towards me in spite of my frail condition! Instead of feeling embarrassed or repelled you treated me like an shepherd-messenger with the same courtesy you would have shown Christ Jesus.

15 At that time you were so overwhelmed with gratitude towards me that you would have gladly given me what is most precious to you, even your own eyes, to give me relief for my discomfort. What tenderness of affection you showed!

16 Alas! How is it possible that the same truth that then bonded you to me now turns me into your enemy?

17 The people who make me out to be your enemy do that to your disadvantage: they are very eager to isolate you from me, so that your zeal for their Jewish sentiments will boost their religious ego! *(Can you not see it; the Law and its followers do not like you for you; their only desire is for themselves!)*

18 If you want to be zealous for the best possible cause, be zealous for grace. You are fooling yourselves to be nice to me when I'm with you but zealous for them behind my back! It is not about me, I am jealous for you! It is the message that matters most, not someone's private agenda!

19 My darling little children, my jealousy for you compares to a mother over her newly born! I gave birth to you once through my gospel; now I feel those same labor pains all over again. I travail for the full realization of Christ to be [1]formed within in you! *(The word, [1]**morpho**, means to mold, from **meros**, form or portion; note the word translated, sin, **hameros**, to be without form or without your allotted portion; **metamorpho**, together with form.)*

20 I long to be with you right now; I want you to hear the urgency in my voice! I wish I could convince you that the law is a cul-de-sac! *(Any*

effort of your own to add to what God has already perfected in you in Christ is a waste of time! It is like trying to re-invent the wheel.)

21 Since you are so intrigued by the law, please understand its prophetic message:

22 The law records the fact that Abraham had two sons: one by a slave girl, the other by a free woman.

23 The one is produced by the flesh *(the DIY-tree)***, the other by faith** *(the promise)***.**

24 There is a parallel meaning in the story of the two sons: they represent two systems, works and grace.

25 Sinai is an Arabian rocky mountain named after Hagar, *(outside the land of promise)***. Its association with the law of Moses mirrors Jerusalem as the capital of Jewish legalism. Hagar is the mother of the law of works.**

26 But the mother from above, the true mother of mankind is grace, the free Jerusalem; she is the mother of the promise.

27 For it is written, "Rejoice oh childless one! Erupt in jubilee! For though you have never known travail before, your children will greatly outnumber her who was married!" *(Married to the law. Isaiah 54:1)*

28 We resemble Isaac: we are begotten of faith, the promise is our parent.

29 Just as when the flesh child persecuted the faith child, so now these Jerusalem Jews in their Christian disguise seek to harass you;

30 however, Scripture is clear: "Expel the slave mother and her son; the slave son cannot inherit with the free son." *(In exactly the same way, rid your minds radically from the slave mother and child mentality. Light dispels darkness effortlessly.)*

31 Realize whose children we are my Brothers and Sisters: we are not children of the slave-mother, the law, but children of the free mother; we are begotten of grace!

Chapter 5

1 Christ defines your faith; he is your freedom from anything from which the law could never free you! Find your firm footing in this freedom. Do not let religion trip you up again and harness you to a system of rules and obligations! *(In this parallel, Christ represents Sarah, the faith-mother who birthed you in the resurrection. The rock-hewn tomb represents Sarah's dead womb! [1 Pet 1:3])*

2 I, Paul, am of the opinion, and you can quote me: If you would again consider circumcision as necessary to improve your standing before God, then you make Christ of no relevance to yourselves. Then you might as well delete him from your life altogether! *(By still holding on to any Jewish sentiment like keeping the Sabbath, etc, has the same effect.)*

3 I will state it categorically, that if you endorse circumcision as a means to obtain righteousness, you are immediately obliged to keep the

whole law! *(In for a penny, in for a pound!)*

4 Law-righteousness has nothing in common with grace-righteousness; they are opposites. As impossible as it is for anyone to travel in two opposite directions at the same time, equally irrelevant Christ becomes to anyone who continues to pursue righteousness under the law.

5 Our minds are made up; there is absolutely no advantage for anyone to pursue righteousness in the flesh; righteousness is a spirit dimension reality and can only be [1]embraced by faith. What God believes is our exclusive reference. *(Any other basis for righteousness leaves mankind falling hopelessly short. The word, [1]**apekdechomai** is often translated, to wait for; the components however, point to a favorable embrace; **apo**, from, **ek** out of, and **dechomai** to grasp, to welcome hospitably, to embrace.)*

6 God believes that we are fully represented in Christ, which takes circumcision or any contribution of the flesh out of the equation. Love fuels faith. *(It is easy for love to believe!)*

7 You started off like an athlete on a mission, who distracted you? You seemed so completely persuaded about the truth!

8 God is not confused about you. He surnamed you!

9 It is impossible to hide the effect of the smallest amount of yeast; the process of fermentation is immediately triggered. *(A little bit of legalism corrupts a person's whole life.)*

10 In spite of the interference of those "law-loving" people, I remain convinced about our like-mindedness in the Lord. It does not matter

what high profile position anyone may occupy, do not let their title disturb you! The very law they promote will be their judgment! *(The fermentation process is unavoidable when you host a legalistic mindset.)*

11 Would I compromise the message of the cross and preach circumcision just to avoid persecution! How insane would that be? *(This whole matter boils down to thinking that justification is the result of something we still have to do, or knowing that it is the result of something that God has already done!)*

12 These people who are so keen to cut off things should cut off their legalistic influence in your lives altogether!

13 Your redeemed identity defines your freedom, my friends! But freedom does not mean that you are now free to again employ the law. On the contrary, your freedom finds its most complete expression in a love that serves one another! As free as you are to the law, so enslaved you are now to love! *(You are at last free to live the life of your original design.)*

14 Love already completes the law: this is the nitty-gritty of the law; to value your fellow human as equal to yourself. *(Which was again and again proved to be completely impossible to achieve by employing the DIY tree-principle.)*

15 The best efforts under the legalistic mindset sooner or later ended up in strife: back-biting, tearing one another apart, devouring and consuming one another. *(It gets ugly! See how divorce destroyed love dreams; ex-business partners fighting one another in court; consider how worthless life becomes in war!)*

16 I conclude: let spirit be the dominant influence in your daily walk and see how it defeats the cravings of flesh. *(Spirit is satisfied by the love*

law, the revelation of grace; flesh craves to prove and gratify itself by the DIY law. Faith defeats flesh.)

17 While the law of works still features in your mind, it is a catalyst to disaster; you are caught in the middle of a war zone, wanting to do the things that you desire by design, but finding the flesh in strong resistance to what the spirit desires. *(The two trees, the flesh and the spirit, represent two opposing systems or forces of influence, two separate mind-sets; while the tree of life represents the inner-life of our design, the "I-am-not-tree " or what I call the DIY-Tree is external to the real person; but whilst hosted, like a virus, its influence becomes unavoidable and very visible. Paul compares the fruit of righteousness by faith working through love versus the works of the flesh and guilt performance based on obligation, guilt and willpower. See Romans 3:27, also Romans 7)*

18 Those who are led by the spirit *(of faith)* **are free from the law** *(of personal performance. [See 3:3])*

19 The typical lifestyle wherever a legalistic judgmental attitude prevails is one where sexual sins are rampant! Anything goes: adultery, filth, and outrageous licentiousness.

20 Then there is the worshipping of a distorted image of oneself, which is what idolatry is all about; drugs, hatred, constant conflict, jealous suspicion, violent outbursts of rage, everyone for himself in a cut-throat competitive world, trampling on others to get to the top, dissension, heresy, and manipulating people's minds with false teachings. *(The flesh is not your "lower nature;" it is the fruit of the "I-am-not tree system ; it is a mindset governed by a sense of lack and desperately trying to do life by sheer willpower, independent of your Source.)*

21 This is such a sad picture of a life consumed with envious self pity, murder, drunken stupor, intoxicated licentiousness and lust, with all the quarrels and jealousies it ignites. As I have stated before: those who

are practicing this kind of lifestyle have nothing in common with the Kingdom of God. *(The authority of the Christ-life opposes and defeats the dominance of the flesh.)*

22 Spirit effortlessly bears the rich harvest of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, integrity, gentleness and self control; all these individually reveal the irresistible attraction of the inner-life of our design. *(They are not fading, fragile emotions produced by willpower. This is the fruit of what you know in your spirit to be true about you. Fruit is the effortless, spontaneous expression of the character of the tree. Rest in the awareness and assurance of who you really are!)*

23 Legalism can neither match nor contradict this. There is no law against love! *(Love does not compete with law; love is extravagant in its exhibition of the Christ life.)*

24 Those who understand that their righteousness is of Christ and that it does not come as a reward for their ability to keep the law, have discovered that their flesh with its dictates and lusts were co-crucified with Christ. *(Gal 2:20; see also Gal 5:18)*

25 Because faith defines us and not flesh, we take our lead from the Spirit in our daily conduct. There is an authority in our step; we are marching in rank like soldiers! *(The Christ life is the dominant authority in the universe!)*

26 Quit your efforts to try and impress one another. The law of works reduces your life to envious comparison and petty competition, while love only always seeks the advantage of the other! *(This means total freedom from any external law!)*

Chapter 6

1 Brothers and sisters, if it seems that someone continues to [1]anticipate their next [2]failure *(by carrying just too much load, see verse 2)***, from your position in faith restore such a person in a spirit of courtesy and grace, keeping your own attitude in check; a legalistic approach would want to suspiciously probe into problems.** *(The word, [1]**prolambano**, means to anticipate, take in advance; [2]**paraptoma**, comes from **para**, close proximity, proceeding from a sphere of influence, and **pipto**, means to lose height, stop flying, to fail. Remember you represent grace not law.)*

2 The law of the Christ-life distinguishes your spirituality; taking the weight off someone's shoulder is fulfilling the law of Christ. *(The message of grace removes all law-related burdens such as guilt, suspicion, inferiority, shame and a sin-consciousness.)*

3 Anyone who imagines to be someone they are not, lives a lie. *(The law system sponsors pretense; grace reveals your true identity redeemed in Christ.)*

4 Now, without the pressure of pretense, you are free to give expression to your individual self and not some phony life you're trying to fake. Evaluate your own conduct in such a way that you do not need another's approval to confirm your joy.

5 Everyone ultimately lives their own life. *(even though we share our lives with one another)*

6 Both student and teacher draw from the same source; they equally participate in every good thing. The word they share echoes its distinct resonance within them.

7 Show-business does not deceive God! Do not be led astray and then pull your nose up at God, as if it was God who let you down. The harvest always reveals the seed.

8 The flesh cannot compete with the spirit; just like with Adam, the fruit of the DIY tree still produces death, while faith produces the spirit fruit of the life of the ages, the God-kind of life.

9 Every good deed has a predictable harvest. Let's not get discouraged in the in-between times. *(Make sure your good deeds are love-driven rather than duty-driven. Faith works by love, duty by willpower)*

10 Let us take advantage of every opportunity to be a blessing to everyone we meet, without neglecting our fellow faith family.

11 To raise the urgency in my voice, I will write the following in my own hand and in large letters:

12 Those who urge you to be circumcised are only trying to avoid persecution for the cross of Christ. They prefer to be popular with their fellow Jewish colleagues and thus compromise the message of the cross. To them it is only the outward sign in the flesh that matters.

13 It is not even so much for the law that they are concerned, they just want to boast in your flesh, as a sign that they successfully recruited you for their cause.

14 May my boasting be in nothing but the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the

world. The religious-systems and applause of this world have no appeal to me. As far as they are concerned, I am like a dead person.

15 The new creation in Christ steals the show; not whether someone is circumcised or not! *(God associated us in Christ; when he died we died, when he was raised we were raised together with him in newness of life)*

16 Our union with Christ sets the pace and makes us the true Israel, not whether we are Jew or Gentile, circumcised or not! Oh, what peace we discover in his mercy! This rule is the new law we submit ourselves to as the principle of our daily walk!

17 I will not be troubled anymore. I already bear enough scars in my body that brand me as being under the ownership of Jesus. *(Those scars that I carry from being persecuted for this Gospel are more significant to me than the scar of circumcision!)*

18 Brothers and sisters, may the revelation of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be the rule of your spirit.
Amen

Ephesians

In poetic articulation Paul unfolds the message of the mystery of Christ as representing mankind. He is absolutely passionate in his prayers and desires for everyone to see how completely associated they are in Christ. God found us in Christ before he lost us in Adam.

Eph 1:10 In the economy of the fullness of time, everything culminates in Christ; all that is in heaven and all that is on earth is reconciled in him.

He sees heaven not as a distant goal for us to strive towards, but how completely God has already lavished upon us every blessing heaven has in Christ. This is our point of departure! We are co-raised and co-seated together with Christ in heavenly places to begin with! Long before anyone but God believed it we were made alive together with Christ; “I desire that you know by revelation what he has known about you all along! I pray that your thoughts will be flooded with light and inspired insight.”

Eph 2:10 We are engineered by his design; he molded and manufactured us in Christ. We are his workmanship, his poetry. We are fully fit to do good, equipped to give attractive evidence of his likeness in us in everything we do.

Eph 3:4 In reading these words you will perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ.

Eph 3:20 We celebrate him who supercharges us powerfully from within. Our biggest request or most amazing dream cannot match the extravagant proportion of his thoughts towards us.

Eph 4:7 The gift of Christ gives dimension to grace and defines our individual value.

Eph 4:23 Be renewed in your innermost mind! It will cause you to be completely reprogrammed in the way you think about yourself!

Eph 4:15 Love gives truth its voice. The conversation that truth inspires creates the atmosphere wherein growth is both spontaneous and inevitable.

The whole person is addressed in Christ who is the head of the body; he is the conclusion of God's communication with mankind.

Eph 4:16 From him flows the original composition and detail of our design. Like words entwined in poetry, they connect layer upon layer to complete the harmony, following the rhythm of his thoughts like footprints. Meanwhile the body thrives and pulsates with the energy of love. Each individual expression finds its complete measure there.

Eph 4:21 It is not possible to study Christ in any other context; he is the incarnation; hear him resonate within you! The truth about you has its ultimate reference in Jesus.

He did not come to introduce a new compromised set of rules; he is not an example for us but of us!

Eph 5:14 This is the message of light; Christ awakens you from your intoxicated slumber and resurrects you out of the death trap of enslaved thought patterns.

Chapter 1

1 Paul, employed by the delightful resolve of God and commissioned to represent Jesus Christ to the Saints in Ephesus and also to every believer in Christ Jesus.

2 I greet you with the grace and peace that proceed from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Let's celebrate God! He lavished every blessing heaven has upon us in Christ!

4 He associated us in Christ before [1]the fall of the world! Jesus is God's mind made up about us! He always knew in his love that he would present us again [2]face-to-face before him in blameless innocence. *(The implications of the fall are completely cancelled. Paul uses the word, [1]**kataballo**, meaning "to fall away, to put in a lower place," instead of **themelios**, meaning "foundation" [see Eph 2:20]; thus, translated "the fall of the world," instead of "the foundation of the world." The entire "Fall" was a falling away in our minds from our true identity as image and likeness bearers of Elohim. Just like Eve, were we all deceived to believe a lie about ourselves, which is the fruit of the "I-am-not-tree ". We all, like sheep have gone astray. [Isa 53:6]) God found us in Christ before he lost us in Adam! We are presented in blameless innocence before him! The word, [2]**katenopion**, suggests the closest possible proximity, face-to-face!*
Your in-Christness is not the result of a lucky draw! Calvinism lied to you! Neither is it the result of your "choice" to follow Jesus! Something doesn't become true by popular vote! Or by our beliefs! If it wasn't true to begin with, we're wasting our time trying to "believe" it true! Faith happens to you when you encounter the good announcement! Of God's doing are we IN CHRIST... (1 Cor 1:30) For "evangelical theology" to miss the meaning of mankind's inclusion IN CHRIST before they knew it or believed it, is to completely miss the point of the death, descent into hell, resurrection and ascension of Jesus! This would make Jesus irrelevant and reduce the salvation of the human race to their own fate managed by institutionalized religion, attaching mere sentimental value to an historic Jesus who died and rose again. By dying our death as fully God and fully man, once and for all (not for a "select few!"), death became the doorway, whereby Jesus would enter into our hell and deepest darkness and sense of lostness and loneliness as a result of the lies we believed about ourselves - to triumphantly lead us out as his trophies and relocate us face to face with the Father of the universe! Eph 4:7,8 and 9 See mirror bible! All this happened while we were still dead in our trespasses and sins! Eph 2:5,6 Co-quickened, co-raised, co-seated in his Executive authority [his right hand] Now ponder Colossians 3:1-3 and engage your thoughts with throne room realities!)

5 He is the architect of our design; his heart dream realized our [1]coming of age in Christ. *(Adoption here is not what it means in our Western society. It is a coming of age, like the typical Jewish Barmitsva. See Galatians 4:1-6, " ... and to seal our sonship the spirit of his Son echoes Abba Father in our hearts." This is [1]**huiothesia.**)*

6 His grace-plan is to be celebrated: he greatly endeared us and highly favored us in Christ. His love for his Son is his love for us. *(The Gospel is not about telling people how lost they are, but reminding them of how loved they are!)*

7 Since we are *(fully represented)* **in him, his blood is the ransom that secures our redemption. His forgiving our sins measures the wealth of his grace.**

8 This grace shown towards us communicates a wisdom and discernment of our worth that completely surpasses any definition.

9 The secret is out! His cherished love dream now unfolds in front of our very eyes.

10 In the [1]economy of the fullness of time, everything culminates in Christ. All that is in heaven and all that is on earth is reconciled in him. Jesus is the [2]consummation of the ages! *(The word,[1]**oikonomia,** translates as administration. The word, ανακεφαλαιωσασθαι is the Aorist Infinitive of **anakephalaiomai**, which has two components, **ana**, upwards and **kephale**, head, pointing to a condition where no separation exists - the return to our Source. The Aorist Infinitive presents the action expressed by the verb as a completed unit with a beginning and end.*
"All human history consummates in Christ; everything that exists in heaven

or earth shall find its perfection and fulfillment in him." — Phillips. "All that is in heaven, all that is on earth, summed up in him!" — Knox)

11 This is how we fit into God's picture: Christ is the measure of our portion, we are in him, invented and defined in him. God's blueprint intention is on exhibition in us. Everything he accomplishes is inspired by the energy and intent of his affection. *(See Romans 8:29, "He engineered us from the start to fit the mold of sonship and likeness according to the exact blueprint of his design. We see the original and intended shape of our lives preserved in his Son; he is the firstborn from the same womb that reveals our genesis. He confirms that we are the invention of God.")*

12 It was our initial privilege *(as Jews)* **to cherish the Messianic hope; our lives in Christ were destined to prophetically promote the celebration of his [1]glorious plan with mankind** *([1]**doxa,** intention, opinion.)*

13 Now you *(Gentiles)* **also have discovered yourselves to be equally included in him having witnessed [1]the unveiled [2]logic of God. What exciting news! Your salvation is publicly announced. Consistent with the promise of God, the Holy Spirit gives guarantee to the fact of your faith, like the stamp of a signet ring that certifies a document. You are in him!** *([1]The Word, logic, from **logos**, of truth. The word, [2]**alethea**, comes from **a** + **lanthano**, meaning not hidden.)*

14 The Holy Spirit is our [1]tangible link to the inheritance that was ransomed and preserved for us. God's glorious plan for mankind is the theme of our celebration. *([1]Guarantee, or earnest comes from **arabon**, a Hebrew word meaning to braid, as two parties intertwine by giving something as surety and pledge. The pledge represents the full transaction. The legal document or title deed represents the complete value of the transaction. Like a wedding ring represents the marriage.)*

15 I am sure you can appreciate how the news of your faith and love greatly inspires me.

16 I am so happy for you; my thoughts and prayers are full of you.

17 I desire that you will draw directly from the source; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory kindles within you the spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the unveiling of his [1]Master Plan. I long for you to know by revelation what he has known about you all along! *([1]His intent, **doxa**, glory. In the words, **en epignosei auto**, Paul suggests that we might find our source in God's knowledge - in what it is that he knows! See 1 Cor 13:12 - to know even as we have always been known.)*

18 I pray that your thoughts will be flooded with light and inspired insight; that you will clearly picture his intent in identifying you in him so that you may know how precious you are to him. What God possesses in your redeemed innocence is his treasure and the glorious trophy of his inheritance! You are God's portion. You are the sum total of his assets and the measure of his wealth!

19 I pray that you will be overwhelmed with an understanding of the magnitude of his power in the finished work of Christ. This is what [1]results in the dynamic of [2]your faith. *(The preposition [1]**eis**, speaks of a point reached in conclusion. The word [2]**pisteuontas** is the Present Participle in the Accusative case of **pisteuo** [to be certain; to be persuaded] which describes an action thought of as simultaneous with the action of the main verb, which, in this case is **energeken**, "which he has wrought"... [see v 20] which is the perfect tense of **energeo**, to energize; to work dynamically. The Perfect tense denotes an action which is completed in the past, but the effects of which are regarded as continuing into the present.*

Paul is desiring to establish a basis for our faith that exceeds our attempts to believe!)

20 Do you want to measure the mind and muscle of God? Consider the force which he unleashed in Jesus Christ when he raised him from the dead and forever seated him enthroned as his executive authority in the realm of the heavens. Jesus is God's right hand of power! He was raised up from the deepest dungeons of human despair to the highest region of heavenly bliss! *[See Eph 2:5,6 & 4:8,9]*

21 Infinitely above all the combined forces of rule, authority, dominion or governments; he is ranked superior to any name that could ever be given to anyone of this age or any age still to come in the eternal future.

22 I want you to see this: he subjected all these powers under his feet. He towers head and shoulders above everything. He is the head;

23 the [1]Ekklesia is his body. The completeness of his being that fills all in all resides in us! God cannot make himself more visible or exhibit himself more accurately. *(The word, [1]**Ekklesia**, comes from **ek**, a preposition always denoting origin, and **klesia** from **kaleo**, to identify by name, to surname; thus the "church" is his redeemed image and likeness in human form.)*

Chapter 2

1 Picture where God found us. We were in a death trap of an inferior lifestyle, constantly living below the [1]blueprint measure of our lives. *(The word sin, is the word [1]**hamartia**, from **ha**, negative or without and*

***meros**, portion or form, thus to be without your allotted portion or without form, pointing to a disorientated, distorted, bankrupt identity; the word **meros**, is the stem of **morphe**, as in 2 Corinthians 3:18 the word **metamorphe**, with form, which is the opposite of **hamartia** - without form. Sin is to live out of context with the blueprint of one's design; to behave out of tune with God's original harmony. See Deuteronomy 32:18, "You have forgotten the Rock that begot you and have gotten out of step with the God who danced with you!" Hebrew, **khul** or **kheel**, to dance.)*

2 We were all part of a common pattern, swept along under a powerful invisible influence, a spirit-energy that adopted us as sons to its dictates through unbelief.

3 Throughout that time everyone of us were warped and corrupted in our conduct; snared in a jumble of forbidden lusts, driven by the desires of the senses, completely engaged in an expression of a life ruled by mind games; it was as if a twisted passion parented a global breed of people.

4 None of this could distract from the extravagant love of God; he continued to love us with the exact same intensity.

5 This is how grace rescued us: while we were yet in that state of deadness and indifference in our [1]deviations, we were co-quickened together with Christ! We had nothing to do with it. By [2]grace you are - having been saved! Grace defines us and interprets our salvation. *(The word often translated, trespasses, παράπτωμα **paraptoma** from **para** close proximity and **pipto**, to descend from a higher place to a lower; to stop flying, **petomai**, to fly. Losing altitude speaks of mankind's fallen mindset. Col 3:1-3. The sentence, [2]**χάριτί ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι** - literally translates, "By grace you are - having been saved!" We had no contribution to our salvation! God's Master-Plan unfolded in the mystery of the gospel declaring our joint inclusion in Christ's death and resurrection. This is the mystery of grace, God reveals us in Christ! Now we may know, even as we*

have always been known! 1 Cor 13:12. Of God's doing are we in Christ! 1 Cor 1:30. God saw us in Christ, in his death and resurrection before we saw ourselves there! He declared mankind's co-resurrection with Christ 800 BC. This is the only scripture in the entire Old Testament that specifically mentions the third day resurrection and it includes us! "After two days he will revive us, on the third day, he will raise us up!" Hosea 6:2)

6 We are co-included in his resurrection. We are also co-elevated in his ascension to be equally present in the throne room of the heavenly realm where we are co-seated with him in his executive authority. We are fully represented in Christ Jesus. *(We have wasted so much time trying to get there, when "there" is where we are to begin with! Our joint position in Christ defines us; this can never again be a distant goal to reach through religious devotion or striving, but our immediate location. Col 3:1-3)*

7 *(In a single triumphant act of righteousness God saved us from the "guttermost" to the uttermost. Here we are now, revealed in Christ in the highest possible position of bliss! If mankind's sad history could not distract from the extravagant love of God,)* **imagine how God is now able for timeless perpetuity** *(the eternal future)* **to exhibit the trophy of the wealth of his grace demonstrated in his kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. Grace exhibits excessive evidence of the success of the cross.**

8 Your salvation is not a reward for good behavior! It was a grace thing from start to finish; you had no hand in it. Even the gift to believe simply reflects his faith! *(Again, as in Eph 2:5 Paul says, χάριτί ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι **chariti este sesoosmenoi**, **"By grace you are, having been saved** by the gift of faith; grace reveals who we are and the faith of God persuades us of it. It was God's faith to begin with! It is from faith to faith says Paul in Romans 1:17. Jesus is both the source and conclusion of faith. Heb 12:2)*

9 If this could be accomplished through any action of yours then there would be ground for boasting.

10 We are engineered by his design; he molded and manufactured us in Christ. We are his workmanship, his [1]poetry. We are [2]fully fit to do good, equipped to give attractive evidence of his likeness in us in everything we do. *(God finds inspired expression of Christ in us. The Greek word for workmanship is [1]**poeima**. God has done everything possible to find spontaneous and effortless expression of his character in us in our everyday lifestyle. The word, [2]**proetoimatso**, translates a notion that God has prepared a highway for us to lead us out like kings, just like the Oriental custom, where people would go before a king to level the roads to make it possible for the king to journey with ease and comfort. [Isa 40:3-5])*

11 Remember where you came from; *(not only were you spiritually dead but)* **it wasn't long ago when you were still classified as non-Jewish, judging on the surface you had nothing that linked you to them. They sneered at you because you didn't share their distinguishing mark of circumcision, which was their claim to fame!**

12 During that time you were distanced from the Messianic hope; you had nothing in common with Israel. You felt foreign to the covenants of prophetic promise, living a life with nothing to look forward to in a world where God seemed absent.

13 But now, wow! Everything has changed; you have discovered yourselves to be located in Christ. What once seemed so distant is now so near; his blood reveals your redeemed innocence and authentic genesis.

14 It is in him that we are one and at peace with everyone; he dissolved every definition of division. *(What we know will put war and divorce out of business!)*

15 In his incarnation, he rendered the entire Jewish system of ceremonial laws and regulations useless as a measure to justify human life and conduct. In that he died mankind's death all grounds for tension and hostility were entirely removed. The peace he proclaims reveals one new human race, created and defined in Christ, instead of two groups of people separated by their ethnic identity and differences.

16 Both parties are fully represented and equally reconciled to God in one human body through the cross. He reinstated the former harmony; all opposing elements were thus utterly defeated.

17 On that basis he made his public appearance, proclaiming the Good News of peace to the entire human race; both those who felt left out in the cold *(as far as the promises and covenants were concerned),* **as well as to those who were near all along** *(because of their Jewish identity)***.**

18 Because of Christ both Jew and Gentile now enjoy equal access to the Father in one Spirit.

19 The conclusion is clear; you are no longer frowned upon as a foreigner; you are where you belong and part of an intimate family.

20 Your lives now give tangible definition to the spiritual structure, having been built into it by God upon the foundation that the Prophets and Apostles proclaimed. The first evidence of this building was Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. *(He is the visible testimony to the restored image and likeness of God in human form.)*

21 In him everyone of us are like [1]living Lego blocks fitted together of the same fabric *([1]conversation)***, giving ever [2]increasing articulation to a**

global mobile [3]sanctuary intertwined in the Lord. *(The word, [1]**sunarmologeo**, come from **sun**, meaning union, **harmo** meaning harmony, and **logeo** meaning conversation. The word, [2]**auxano**, means expanding with growth. The word, [3]**naos**, is translated as the most sacred dwelling space.)*

22 In him you are co-constructed together as God's permanent spiritual residence. You are God's address!

Chapter 3

1 My ministry is not measured by the size of my prison cell. I am confined by his grace; Christ Jesus is the prison keeper. You are why I am here. *(Grace measures my ministry; this prison cell cannot hide my message from you!)*

2 It is common knowledge that I have been entrusted with a message that reveals how included you Gentiles are in the grace gift of God.

3 You must have heard how this mystery was revealed to me, in a dramatic disclosure that broke the silence of a long kept secret. I have previously written briefly about this.

4 In [1]reading these words you will perceive my [2]insight into the mystery of Christ. *(The word, [1]**anaginosko**, suggests an upward knowledge; to know again, to recognize, to read with recognition. Insight, [2]**sunesis,** from **sun** + **eimi,** together "I am", a flowing together like two rivers.)*

5 In no previous generation has there been a more comprehensive and detailed understanding *(of the full consequence of grace)* **as it has now been uncovered in the Spirit to his ambassadors who brought the prophetic promise into full view! Mankind** *(the sons of men)* **may now realize that the prophetic word is fulfilled in them! Everything the Prophets saw is now declared! Both the Prophets** *(who saw this in advance)* **and the Apostles** *(who now proclaim this)* **are sanctioned in Christ.**

6 The essence of what I Reveals the fact that the multitude of mankind are joint participants in the same inheritance. *(together with Israel)* **We are all part of one and the same body in Christ. The Good news is that God's promise is equally relevant and applicable to all.**

7 This Gospel defines my ministry; I am supercharged by the gift of his grace!

8 I am the lowest ranked saint by far and qualified purely by his grace to declare this unexplored treasure of Christ in the nations. *(My claim to fame emphasizes the fact that grace is a gift and certainly not a reward for good behavior.)*

9 The mandate of my message is to make all men see. The unveiling of this eternal secret is to bring into public view an association that has always been hidden in God; Jesus Christ is the blueprint of creation. *(Eph 1:4)*

10 Every invisible authority and government in the arena of the heavenlies now witnesses the display of the wisdom of God. The church acts like a prism that disperses the varied magnitude of God in human form.

11 In Jesus Christ our Master, the timeless [1]prophetic thought of God is [2]poetically realized. *(Pre-determined, prophetic thought, from the prophetic significance of the face-bread in the temple, [1]**prothesis** which is the Greek word for the show bread. The Hebrew word is* **לחם מינפה *lechem paniym,*** *face bread, or bread of the presence. Poetry, from* ***poieo,*** *to fashion.)*

12 His faith in us gives our lives integrity. We echo and articulate the [1]original conversation publicly. He is our platform to a global audience. *(The word [1]**parrhesia,** from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **rhesia**, conversation. In him we express ourselves freely and openly.)*

13 You have no reason to feel embarrassed or responsible because of what I am suffering; rather feel honored!

14 Overwhelmed by what grace communicates, I bow my knees in awe before the Father.

15 Every family in heaven and on earth originates in him; his is mankind's family name and he remains the authentic identity of every nation.

16 I desire for you to realize what the Father has always envisaged for you, so that you may know the magnitude of his [1]intent and be dynamically reinforced in your inner being by the Spirit of God. *(The word, [1]**doxa,** opinion or intent.)*

17 This will ignite your faith to fully grasp the reality of the indwelling Christ. You are rooted and founded in love. Love is your invisible inner source, just like the root system of a tree and the foundation of a building. *(The dimensions of your inner person exceed any other capacity that could possibly define you.)*

18 Love is your reservoir of super human [1]strength which [2]causes you to see everyone equally sanctified in the context of the limitless extent of love's breadth and length and the extremities of its dimensions in depth and height. *(The word, [1]**exischuo** means to be entirely competent, to be empowered to [2]comprehend. The word [2]**katalambano**, **kata**, strengthened form; with **lambano**, to grasp, thus to entirely grasp, means to come to terms with, to make one's own. Rom 12:13 Purpose with resolve to treat strangers as Saints; pursue and embrace them with fondness as friends on equal terms of fellowship. Rom 12:16 Esteem everyone with the same respect; no one is more important than the other. Associate yourself rather with the lowly than with the lofty. Do not distance yourself from others in your own mind. ["Take a real interest in ordinary people."— JB Phillips] In the breadth and length we see the horizontal extent of the love of Christ: the complete inclusion of the human race. 2 Cor 5:14,16. The depth of his love reveals how his love rescued us from the deepest pits of hellish despair and led us as trophies in his triumphant procession on high. Eph 2:5,6, Eph 4:8-10, Col 3:1-4)*

19 I desire for you to become intimately acquainted with the love of Christ on the deepest possible level; far beyond the reach of a mere academic, intellectual grasp. Within the scope of this equation God finds the ultimate expression of their image and likeness in you. *(So that you may be filled with all the fullness of God! Awaken to the consciousness of their closeness! Separation is an illusion! Oneness was God's idea all along! Father, Son and Spirit desire to express themselves through your touch, your voice, your presence; they are so happy to dwell in you! There is no place in the universe where God would rather be!)*

20 We celebrate Elohim who supercharges us powerfully from within. Our biggest request or most amazing dream cannot match the extravagant proportion of their thoughts towards us. *(Now to him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us...KJV*
"Never doubt God's mighty power to work in you and accomplish all this. He will achieve infinitely more than your greatest request, your most unbelievable dream, and exceed your wildest imagination! He will outdo them all, for his miraculous power constantly energizes you." TPT)

21 God is both the author and conclusion of the glory on display in the [1]Ekklesia, mirrored in Christ Jesus. The encore continues throughout every generation, not only in this age but also in the countless ages to come. Amen! *(The word, [1]**Ekklesia**, often translated church, comes from **ek**, a preposition always denoting origin, and **klesia** from **kaleo**, to identify by name, to surname; the Ekklesia is the expression of God's image and likeness redeemed in human life.)*

Chapter 4

1 The fact that I am in prison does not in the least diminish my awareness of my "in-Christ-ness!" My complete existence is defined and confined in him. Let the detail of your day-to-day life [3]flow from the consciousness of your true [2]identity and [3]worth, as defined in him. *(Paul writing from prison, but seeing himself co-seated together with Christ in heavenly places! Eph 2:6. No distraction or contradiction can reduce his life to any other reality. "Walking worthy of your calling" I have replaced with, "Let the detail of your day-to-day life flow from the consciousness of your true identity and worth as defined in him. The word [1]**parakaleo**, inspired from within to live the life of your design. Your calling or vocation,*

*from [2]**kaleo**, to surname, to identify by name. To [3]walk worthy, **axios**, meaning having the weight of another thing of like value, worth as much.)*

2 Meekness and tenderness are the fabric of your make-up; this enables you to show compassion even in seemingly impossible situations, eagerly bearing with one another in an environment where love rules.

3 Being alert to treasure our oneness in spirit; encapsulated in peace. *(The word **sundesmos** from **sun**, a primary preposition denoting union and **deo** to bind in agreement like in a marriage. The word [1]**eirene**, means peace, from **eiro**, to join, to be set at one again; in carpentry it is referred to as the dove-tail joint, which is the strongest of joints. Peace is a place of unhindered enjoyment of friendship.)*

4 There is only one body and one Spirit. We are inseparably one in the same hope; there is no plan B. We bear the same [1]surname. *(Called, [1]**kaleo**, to identify by name, to surname.)*

5 There is only one legitimate Lordship; one faith and one [1]baptism; we are all immersed in the same oneness! *(There is only one faith! Not what we believe about God but what God believes about us! Our faith does not invent God; his faith defines us! Jesus is what God believes! See my commentary on John 1:33; John's baptism announces the incarnation; yet it communicates a mere prophetic picture of what Jesus' spirit baptism will fully interpret of mankind's co-inclusion and joint immersion into his death, resurrection and ascension. In the incarnation we have the prophetic word on exhibit, intercepting human history by assuming human form; thus we see divinity immersed into our mankind and declaring that there would be no stopping him from entering into our hell and deepest darkness. In dying our death, God would bring closure to every destructive mindset and futile fruit we inherited from Adam's fall. Just as he was raised out of the water in his baptism, we would be co-elevated together with him in his resurrection*

into newness of life! Hosea 6:2; Ephesians 2:5. The word [1]***baptizo*** *from* ***bapto****, to immerse, to overwhelm.)*

6 There is only one God. He remains the ultimate Father of the universe. We are because he is. He is [1]continually bearing influence upon one and all; everyone's being is ultimately [2]defined by him. He is never absent anywhere! He is present in all. *(He is not far from each one of us; in him we live and move and have our being. We are indeed his offspring. [Acts 17:24-28] The preposition* [1]***epi*** *suggests continuous influence upon, leading from the front! The preposition* [2]***dia*** *denotes the channel of an act; through; because of; by reason of; for the sake of.)*

7 The gift of Christ gives dimension to grace and defines our individual value. *(Grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of the gift of Christ. One measure, one worth! Our worth is defined by his gift not by a reward for our behavior.)*

8 Scripture confirms that he led us as trophies in his triumphant procession on high; he [1]repossessed his gift *(likeness)* **in human form.** *(See Ephesians 2:6, We are also elevated in his ascension to be equally welcome in the throne room of the heavenly realm where we are now seated together with him in his authority. Quote from the Hebrew text, Ps 68:18,* [1]***lakachta mattanoth baadam****, you have taken gifts in human form, in Adam. [The gifts which Jesus Christ distributes to us he has received in us, in and by virtue of his incarnation. Commentary by Adam Clarke.] We were born anew in his resurrection. 1 Pet 1:3, Hos 6:2.)*

9 The fact that he ascended confirms his victorious descent into the deepest pits of human despair. *(See John 3:13, "No one has ascended into heaven but he who* [1]*descended from heaven, even the son of man." All mankind originate from above; we are* [1]***anouthen****, from above [see Jas 1:17, 18].)*

10 He now occupies the ultimate rank of authority from the lowest regions of our darkness into which he stooped down in order to rescue us, to the highest authority in the heavens, having executed his mission to the full. *(Fallen mankind is fully restored to the authority of the authentic life of their design. [Psa 139:7,8 Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, You! If I make my bed in Sheol, You!] Eph 1:21)*

11 What God has in us is gift wrapped to the world: some are commissioned to pioneer, others are gifted prophetically, some as announcers of good news, some as Shepherds with a real gift to care and nurture, and others have a gift to ignite instruction through revelation knowledge. *(Couriers, communicators, counsellors and coaches. — Rob Lacey)*

12 Each expression of his gift is to fully equip and enable the Saints for the work of the ministry so that they may mutually contribute in their specific function to give definition to the visible body of Christ.

13 The purpose of these ministry gifts is to present everyone on par and in oneness of faith; believing exactly what the Son of God believes and knowing accurately what he knows concerning us. Standing face-to-face in equal stature to the measure of the [1]completeness of Christ. *(The word, [1]**pleroma**, means a life filled to the brim with Christ, like a freight ship carrying its cargo.)*

14 The most dangerous life you can live is an ignorant one. You're left like an infant on a ship out of control in the waves and winds of the storms of life. The fall of the dice dictates while the deceptive teachings of men and their distracting tricks entertain.

15 **[1]Love gives truth its voice. The conversation that [2]truth inspires creates the atmosphere wherein growth is both spontaneous and inevitable. The whole person is addressed in Christ who is the head of the body; he is the conclusion of God's communication with mankind.** *("Speaking the truth in love" is not only the preferred attitude in our every conversation, but the only option; where truth gives integrity to love, and love gives attraction to truth. Love, [1]**agape**, comes from **ago**, to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep, and **pao**, to rest. God's rest celebrates our perfection; **agape** is to see the same value that God sees in every person. [2]Truth as it is mirrored in Christ [v 21].)*

16 **[1]From him flows the original composition and detail of our design. Like words entwined in poetry,** *([1]like a conductor of music, [1]**epichoregeo**)* **they connect layer upon layer to complete the harmony, following the rhythm of his thoughts like footprints. Meanwhile the body thrives and pulsates with the energy of love. Each individual expression finds its complete measure there.** *(The church is not a dismembered, dysfunctional body, but a fully functional, coordinated lover of people." — Rob Lacey)*

17 **My most urgent appeal to you in the Lord is this: you have nothing in common with the folly of the empty-minded [1]masses; the days of conducting your lives and affairs in a meaningless way are over!** *(The Gentiles, [1]**ethnos**, the masses of people who are walking in the vanity of their minds.)*

18 **The life of their design seems foreign to them because their minds are darkened through a hardened heart ruled by ignorance. They are blinded by the illusion of the senses as their only reference, stubbornly wearing a blindfold in broad daylight.** *(Hardness of heart is the result of a darkened understanding; a mind veiled through unbelief. [See 2 Cor 4:4])*

19 Having become conditioned to a life distanced from God; they are calloused in spirit, and are lust and greed driven; they have completely abandoned themselves to outrageous shameless living. *(See Rom 1:19-23)*

20 Of what total contrast is Christ!

21 Truth is defined in Christ! It is not possible to study Christ in any other context; he is the incarnation; hear him resonate within you! The truth about you has its ultimate reference in Jesus. *(He did not come to introduce a new compromised set of rules; he is not an example for us but of us!)*

22 Now you are free to strip off that old identity like a filthy worn-out garment. Lust corrupted you and cheated you into wearing it. *(Just like an actor who wore a cloak for a specific role he had to interpret; the fake identity is no longer appropriate!)*

23 Be renewed in your innermost mind. *(Ponder the truth about you, as it is displayed in Christ; begin with the fact of your co-seatedness.)* **This will cause you to be completely re-programmed in the way you think about yourself!** *Notice that Paul does not say, "Renew your minds!" This transformation happens in the spirit of your mind, awakened by truth on a much deeper level than a mere intellectual or academic consent. We often thought that we had to get information to drop from the head to the heart; but it is the other way around! Jesus says in John 7:37, "When you believe that I am what the Scriptures are all about, then you will discover that you are what I am all about, and rivers of living waters will gush out of your innermost being! The spirit of mankind was never contaminated; just like the watermark in a paper note. The lost coin never lost its original inscription and image [see also James 3:9]; it was the mind that was veiled by darkness; we were darkened in our understanding! Our thoughts were reduced to the soul realm reference, knowing ourselves, and one another merely after the flesh. Isa 55:8-11 There is nothing wrong with our design*

or our redemption; we were thinking wrong! In order for our thoughts to be rescued from the dominion of darkness, Jesus as the incarnate image and likeness of God, has gone into our darkest hellish nightmare, and faced our cruellest judgment and fears, and died our death! This is the mystery that was hidden for ages and generations, for our glorification! We were co-crucified, to bring absolute closure to every reference we have had of ourselves as a result of Adam's fall! And while we were dead in our sins and trespasses, God co-quickened us and co-raised us, and co-seated us in Christ! Now, we all with unveiled faces may behold the glory of the Lord as in a mirror! And be radically transformed in our thinking in order to rediscover his image and likeness fully redeemed in us!)

24 Immerse yourself into this God-shaped new person from above! You are created in the image and likeness of God. This is what righteousness and true holiness are all about.

25 Faking it and lying to one another was part of the old life; now truth remains the constant inspiration in your every conversation. We are related to one another like different parts in the same body. *(Which means that cheating one another would be cheating yourself! Truth only finds context in Christ [v 21])*

26 Even if you think you have a valid excuse, do not let anger dominate your day! If you don't deal with it immediately *(in the light of the likeness of Christ in you)* **the sun sets for you and your day becomes one of lost opportunity where darkness employs anger to snare you into sin.**

27 Any sin that you tolerate is an open invitation to the Devil. Do not give him a platform to operate from.

28 If you were a thief before, you are one no more. Find an honest job where the fruit of your labor can be a blessing to others!

29 Instead of cheap talk, your mouth is now a fountain of grace, giving encouragement and inspiration to everyone within earshot.

30 The Holy Spirit is your signet ring from God to confirm that you are redeemed to live your life in the light of day; any conduct that belongs to the night grieves him.

31 Take up the strongest possible position against every form of distorted behavior in your own life. Do not allow yourself to be spiteful; outbursts of violent emotion and rage do not become you. You don't have to shout in order to make your point. People must feel safe in your conversation; therefore, slander and hurtful words *(blasphemy)* **are out!**

32 Be inspired by kindness and compassion; your forgiving one another when you might feel irritated and frustrated demonstrates the way God graciously treated us in Christ.

Chapter 5

1 Mirror God; you are his offspring. *(2 Cor 3:18.)*

2 This is how: let the love of Christ be your life; remember how he abandoned himself to us. His love is contagious, not reluctant but extravagant. Sacrificial love pleases God like the sweet aroma of worship. *(Resembling the holy anointing oil and the pure fragrant incense of spices, the work of a perfumer, to be burnt on the golden altar of incense in the inner court of the tent of meeting. [Ex 37:25-29])*

3 Love has nothing in common with lust, immoral acts, or greed. The absence of these motives even in the way you talk sets a standard of excellence.

4 Any [1]distorted language, sarcasm, or below the belt jokes are uncalled for; much rather let gratitude grace your conversation. *(The word, [1]**morologia**, means disfigured, exaggerated speech.)*

5 The Christ-life gives distinct definition to the kingdom of God. You cannot live a double-standard life. Abusing people through adultery, lust, and greed is like worshipping a distorted image of yourself, which is what idolatry is all about.

6 Avoid any association with those who employ hollow words to entice you; [1]unbelief only produces a breed of people that distorts the pattern of their design as image bearers of God; this certainly does not [2]please God. *(The phrase, [1]**uious tes apeitheias**, translates as unbelief produces a breed of people; not sons of disobedience as most translations read here! The word, [2]**orge**, means excitement of mind, from the word, **oregomai**, meaning to stretch one's self out in order to touch or to grasp something, to reach after or desire something.)*

7 Do not allow their unbelief to include you in their company.

8 You were there once, trapped in the same darkness, but now you are light; your life confirms that light rules.

9 The spiritual harvest of light is evident in all that is excellent, innocent, and of impeccable integrity.

10 This gives certain evidence to the life of God's delight.

11 Do not tolerate anything in your life that associates you with darkness; there is no profit in it for you. Let light dispel any residue of darkness in you.

12 By gossiping about shameful acts that people do in secret, you are giving those things undue mileage.

13 Darkness loses its grip upon that which light manifests. Light displaces darkness.

14 This is the message of light: Christ awakens you from your intoxicated slumber and resurrects you out of the death trap of enslaved thought patterns.

15 Take accurate stock of your life; wise conduct defeats foolishness.

16 Wisdom converts time into opportunity and frees your day from slog.

17 Make his master plan your meditation.

18 While wine offers no lasting escape from the evil of the day, spirit certainly does! Indulge in spirit intoxication!

19 Speak Psalms to one another; burst out in spontaneous celebration songs and spirit-inspired resonance. In your heart do not let the music stop; continue to touch the Lord with whispers of worship.

20 Because you are identified in the Name of Jesus Christ, you can afford to always overflow in gratitude to the Father, [1]in spite of everything that happens to you. You are not under circumstances but above circumstances because you are in him! *(The word, [1]**huper**, translates as, in spite of, over and above, beyond the reach of circumstances. We are not grateful "for" everything like in many other translations, but inspite of everything!)*

21 Inspired by the selfless consideration you witnessed in Christ, show perfect courtesy to one another. *(The way he abandoned himself to the will of God and to us [verse 2]. See Colossians 1:24, This is why no form of suffering can interfere with my joy. Every suffering on your behalf is just another opportunity to reinforce that which might still be lacking [in your understanding] of the affliction of Christ on behalf of his body which is the church. [The inconvenience that Paul might be suffering on behalf of the believers is not to add to the sufferings of Christ—as though the sufferings of Christ on our behalf were insufficient but it is to further emphasize and confirm the principle of unselfish love that constrains New Testament ministry.])*

22 *(Marriage is a portrait of this mutual yielding to one another.)* **Wives give yourselves fully to your husbands as you would to the Lord.** *(Remember verse 2: love is contagious, not reluctant but extravagant. Sacrificial love pleases God like the sweet aroma of worship.)*

23 In the same way that Christ gives salvation, security and completeness to the church as the head does to the body, the husband is all of that to his wife.

24 The church enjoys the full advantage of the complete package of salvation, by yielding themselves fully to Christ; even so the wife enjoys every benefit her husband represents in her abandonment to him.

25 The husband loving his wife pictures the parallel of Christ loving the church completely, and his unreserved giving of himself to us. *(This is what marriage is all about; it celebrates love's initiative, whether coming from the husband or the wife. This awakens a different level of commitment beyond any sense of duty or guilt.)*

26 Christ is the voice of God's language, immersed in this conversation, his love words bathe us and remove from us every stain of sin.

27 This intimate language presents the church *(his restored image and likeness)* **to himself, to his delightful approval without any distraction or reminder of a blemished past; no wrinkle or scar of sin's abuse remains; she stands before him in immaculate innocence.** *(1 Kings 6:7)*

28 *(A man could go through many disciplines in life to make himself look good financially or even go to great expense to win the applause of others; he could diligently workout in the gym and trim his body to perfection,)* **but the most valuable thing a man can do to himself is to love his wife.**

29 Consider how abnormal it would be for a man to abhor and detest his own body; the opposite is true! He would much rather pamper it and [1]fuss over it with tender care. *(It's all you've got. You can't trade it in for a new one so take good care of it. Watch what you feed it, how you exercise it, and gently nurse it when it is in pain.)* **Now get the message, you are the body of Christ; he does not merely tolerate you politely; you are his joy and delight! He wants to spoil you and take good care of you!** *(The word [1]**thalpei** is a late and rare word; used once in a marriage contract in a papyrus. In N.T. only here and 1Th 2:7. Primarily it means to warm - Latin foveo; then to foster with tender care.)*

30 We are his flesh and bone body; bearing his image and likeness. We give tangible expression of him.

31 Marriage reflects this union: a man would separate himself from his own parents to be glued to his wife; thus two separate people are now merged into one new identity. Two individuals become one flesh! *(In the same way he elevated us from our natural birth as our only identity to an understanding of our origin in him. This he confirmed again in our new birth, his resurrection, and our subsequent restored joint position together with him in heavenly places. Thus, he brought about a new union of intimate oneness; God and mankind revealed again in one person.)*

32 The secret of a successful marriage is reflected in this inseparable union between Christ and the church, as God's redeemed image and likeness in mankind. *(This union ultimately defines both marriage and church.)*

33 In conclusion then, no one has any excuse to love his wife less than what he loves himself; at the same time every wife is now free and fully empowered to honor her husband in the same context and devotion as the church would respond to the love initiative of Christ. *(We love him because he first loved us! [1 Jn 4:19])*

Chapter 6

1 *(This mutual yielding to one another continues in every social relationship we engage in and extends the attractive display of the Christ life, beginning at home, cradled in the warm embrace of loving parents;)* **the way children respond to their parents give evidence to their righteousness in the Lord.** *(In essence the term righteousness speaks of two parties esteeming likeness in one another.)*

2 The first commandment that includes an immediate and long term incentive is in reference to children honoring their father and mother.

3 Both quality and duration of life on earth is impacted by the way children relate to their parents. *(Length of life is meaningless outside of closeness in relationship.)*

4 Fathers, your role is not to exasperate your children *(by giving them burdens and tasks too heavy to bear). Y***ou are rather to awaken their minds in an environment conducive to draw on every virtue that is in them in the Lord.**

5 The next level of relationship equally implicated includes the heart attitude of a slave towards their owner; because of your devotion to Christ, you are now able to give your boss the same undivided, sincere respect and devotion. *(Remember we are talking practical church; the Christ-life celebrates love's initiative in transforming society!)*

6 This is not a matter of merely trying to put up a front in order to impress your boss; you are in essence slaves of Christ, addicted to the desire of God to find expression in you; now slave life becomes the Christ life. *(The so-called "low life" now mirrors the highest life.)*

7 However menial the task, put your heart and mind into it as you would to the Lord; he is your real boss, no-one else.

8 It is a well known fact that it is impossible for good deeds to go unnoticed. It makes no difference whether someone is free or a slave; every single good deed equally enjoys the favorable attention of the Lord. *(We already enjoy Gods favorable attention before we have done anything to deserve it. Our good works are now an expression of that and not an attempt to win his approval.)*

9 If you're the boss, love's initiative applies to you on exactly the same terms; the way you treat your slaves with respect rather than threats, even when they do stupid things clears the air immediately. Take it from your heavenly Master; he does not judge people or circumstances on face value.

10 In conclusion and with reference to the theme and context of this writing, I encourage you to realize your strength in the Master; your union with him is your limitless resource. *(Remember my prayer for you at the outset of this letter to the Ephesians: 1:19 I pray that you will understand beyond all comparison the magnitude of his mighty power towards us who believe. Faith reveals how enormously advantaged we are in Christ. Eph 1:20 It is the same dynamic energy that he unleashed in Christ when he raised him from the dead and forever established him in the power of his own right hand in the realm of the heavens. Eph 1:21 Infinitely above all the combined forces of rule, authority, dominion, or governments; he is ranked superior to any name that could ever be given to anyone of this age or any age still to come in the eternal future. Eph 1:22-23 I want you to see this: he subjected all these powers under his feet. He towers head and shoulders above everything. He is the head; the church (his redeemed image and likeness in mankind) is his body. The completeness of his being that fills all in all resides in us! God cannot make himself more visible or exhibit himself more accurately.)*

11 Fully immerse yourself in the detail and significance of every individual part of the armor of God. *(Acquaint yourself with all that God's victory in Christ represents.)* **Just like every aspect in a soldier's armor significantly completes their battle uniform to best equip them to face every [1]method and strategy that an [2]enemy could possibly employ against them.** *(The word, [1]**methodeia,** means strategy; [2]**diabolos**, comes from **dia**, because of, and **ballo**, cast down; thus referring to the fall of mankind or the fallen mindset of mankind, often translated Devil, the accuser. [See 1 Cor 15:47] Human life was reduced to slavery and the soul-ruled earthly realm through Adam's fall but is now awakened to lordship in*

the heavenly realm of spiritual realities through the knowledge of our co-resurrection with Christ. [See Col 3:1-11] We theologically created the idea of a person being "sinful by nature" as if humans are flawed by design. In fact it is a distorted mindset that we inherited from Adam that Jesus had to free us from. Peter says that we were redeemed from the futile ways we inherited from our fathers. [1 Pet 1:18] "Your indifferent mindset alienated you from God into a lifestyle of annoyances, hardships, and labors, sponsored by the law of sin and death that lodged in your bodies hosting a foreign influence, foreign to your design; just like a virus that would attach itself to a person." Col 1:21. There is nothing wrong with our design or salvation, we were thinking wrong. [See Isa 55:8-11, Eph 4:17, 18 and also Eph 2:1-11.])

12 People are not the enemy, *(whether they be husbands, wives, children, or parents, slaves, or bosses. They might host hostile, law inspired thought patterns through their unbelief or ignorance but)* **to target one another is to engage in the wrong combat. We represent the authority of the victory of Christ in the spiritual realm. We are positioned there** *(in Christ)***; we [1]confront the mind games and [2]structures of darkness, religious thought patterns, governing and conditioning human behavior.** *(The word, [1]**pros**, face to face; confront. The word, [2]**poneros**, is often translated as evil; this word is described in Thayer's Lexicon as, full of annoyances, hardships and labor, which is exactly what the DIY law-system of works produce!*
*[See 1 Cor 15:24] The complete conclusion in his work of redemption is celebrated in his yielding the full harvest of his reign to God the Father, having [1]brought to naught the law of works which supported every definition of dominion under the fall, including all [2]principalities, all [3]authority and every [4]dynamic influence in society. He brought to naught the law of works, from the word, [1]**katargeo**, from **kata**, meaning intensity, and **argos**, meaning labor; thus free from all self effort to attempt to improve what God has already perfected in Christ. All principalities, [2]**arche**, or chief ranks, i.e., kings, governors; this includes any governing system whereby one is ranked above the other on the basis of their performance or preference. All authority, [3]**exousia,** comes from **ek**,*

*denoting origin and **eimi**, "I am;" in this case, because of what I can do, I am defined by what I can do better than you; therefore, I have authority over you. Every dynamic influence in society, [4]**dunamis,** means power, in this case, willpower. Every government structure in society will be brought under the dominion of grace where the Christ life rules. The kingdom of God is the dominion of the Christ-life in human life, where righteousness is based on who we are and not on what we do; who we are by God's doing and not who we are by our own doing; right being and not merely right acting. Where the law of works was duty and guilt driven, the law of faith is love driven; [Rom 3:27, Gal 5:6, 2 Cor 10:12], when they measure themselves by one another, and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding.)*

13 It is most important therefore to acquaint yourself with every aspect of God's armor. You are fully fit to powerfully defeat any onslaught or contradiction on any day of confrontation, triumphantly standing your ground. The days where the law of [1]hardships, annoyances and labor dictated your life are over! *(God's armor represents his reputation; his victory defines you. Again the word, [1]**poneros**, is used, to be full of hardships, annoyances, and labor; traditionally translated evil. [See 1 Cor 15:48] The reduced state of the individual left its mark on mankind as being earthly; now the redeemed state of mankind confirms their origin in God and marks their new heavenly life. [1 Cor 15:49] Just as the flesh (our earthly image) once defined us we are now defined by our spirit [our heavenly] image.)*

14 Take your position: you have the truth *(of who you are in Christ)* **wrapped around your hips like a soldier's belt, holding the complete body armor together.** *(Know that your loins are protected from all manner of lust, gluttony and sexual sins.)* **Righteousness covers your heart like a bulletproof breastplate.**

15 You wear your eagerness and passion to communicate the Good News like soldier's shoes. Announce peace; the battle has already been

fought and won! *(Isa 52:7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace, who brings good tidings of good, who publishes salvation. Picture the body language of the messengers returning from the battlefield with the glad tidings of victory!)*

16 It is most important to engage your faith as a [1]man-size shield that covers your whole person and empowers you to extinguish the flame in every arrow of contradiction that you might face. The only visible part of you is your faith! *(The word, [1]**thureos** means a door-size shield. To co-believe with God protects your whole person, body, soul and spirit. See 2 Cor 5:7)*

17 Pondering redemption realities is your headgear that protects your mind; inspired thoughts give voice to God's word—this is your spiritual sword.

18 Prayer is an ongoing conversation; praying in the spirit includes every form of prayer, whether it be a prayer of request or a prayer of thanksgiving, or worship or interceding for all to realize their saintly innocence. Oh, and remember, you do not have to do all the talking! Always be attentive to the voice of the Spirit. *(Prayer is so much more than a one-way conversation.)*

19 My most urgent request is for clarity of utterance every time I open my mouth to speak. I desire that my words will be gifted with inspiration, boldly articulating the mystery of the gospel.

20 I am an ambassador in bonds, chained to this task of confidently communicating the revelation of the Gospel with the accuracy it deserves.

21 I know this is not much of a newsletter. My urgency is not to talk about myself, but my dear friend and faithful helper Tychicus, will fill

you in on the detail. *(He is also the scribe of this letter.)*

22 That is really why I sent him to you, that you may be well informed about our affairs and see yourselves fully identified with us.

23 My prayer for you is a relationship with one another of happy harmony, and love-entwined faith flowing from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Grace greetings to all of you who share our undivided passion for our Master, Jesus Christ. He is echoed in your amen.

(Thoughts on spiritual warfare: Speak tenderly to Jerusalem; and cry to her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned! [Isa 40:2]

The Message translation: " ... the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's Cross. He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets." [Col 2:14, 15])

Spiritual warfare teachings are a popular distraction that many modern-day churches engage in! It preaches a defeated Devil back into business! Pharaoh was taken out of the equation when Israel was delivered out of Egypt! They then became their own worst enemy by continuing to believe a lie about themselves! [See Num 13:33 and Josh 2:11]

James says that a double-minded person deceives himself!

Neither Jesus or anyone of the Acts church ever marched around towns to bind so-called "strong men" or poured oil over buildings or places!

Any teaching that distracts from the success of the cross is a waste of time to pursue. The only possible way we can delay the glory that follows the cross is by underestimating what happened there when Jesus died and cried: "It is finished!"

Jesus, grilled by the Pharisees on when the kingdom of God would come, answered; "The kingdom of God doesn't come by counting the days on the calendar." [The Message.] - The kingdom of God is within you! Luke 17:20.)

The kingdom of God is the authority of the Christ life, the life of our design

redeemed to reign in the most attractive practical lifestyle. The world is a ready audience. Your life is the message; Christ is your life!)

Philippians

Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke visited Philippe and founded the first church in Europe on Paul's second missionary journey around A.D. 50 (Acts 16:11-40)

This letter was written in about 61 A.D. from Rome while Paul was under house arrest.

He writes from a place of strength and joy to encourage his dear friends in Philippi, who were also facing many contradictions.

Phil 1:20 My immediate circumstances do not distract from my message! I am convinced that our conversation now and always will continue to give accurate account of the magnificence of Christ. The message is incarnate in me; whether I live or die, it makes no difference.

Phil 1:21 Christ defines my life; death cannot threaten or diminish that.

Phil 2:12 "Not only in my presence but much more in my absence..." Paul knew that he would be more present in his message than in his person! Ministry success is not measured by how many partners you can congregate, but how absent you can preach yourself!

Phil 3:1 The conclusion of your faith is extreme gladness in the Lord. He is your constant reference to bliss! I am not just saying this to be repetitive; joy is your fortress! There is no safer place to be, but to be ecstatically happy!

Paul encourages them not to allow religion to distract from the delight of romance.

Phil 3:7 The sum total of my religious pedigree and sincere devotion amounts to zero! What we have been gifted with in Christ has reduced what once seemed so important, to meaningless information. To esteem the law is to your loss! Faith is your profit.

Phil 3:8 In fact, I have come to the conclusion that every association I have had with that which defined me before as a devout Jew, is by far eclipsed by what I have gained in knowing the Messiah. Jesus Christ and his masterful redemption define me now. Religion is like dog pooh; and it stinks, avoid stepping in it!

Phil 4:4 Joy is not a luxury option; joy is your constant! Your union in the Lord is your permanent source of delight; so I might as well say it again, rejoice in the Lord always!

Phil 4:6 Let no anxiety about anything [1]distract you!

Phil 4:11 I have discovered my "I-am-ness" and found that I am fully [1]self sufficient, whatever the circumstance. *(Self sufficient, [1]**autarkes**, self complacent, the feeling you have when you are completely satisfied with yourself.)*
Phil 4:13 In every situation I am strong in the one who empowers me from within to be who I am! *(Paul lived his life in touch with this place within himself. He discovered that the same I-am-ness that Jesus walked in, was mirrored in him! I am what I am by the grace of God! 1 Cor 15:10)*

Chapter 1

1 Paul and Timothy address all the Saints in Christ Jesus in Philippi, including your leadership team, both the [1]overseers and the [2]deacons. *(Overseer, [1]**episkopos,** from epi, indicating continuous influence upon, and **skopos**, "scope" to see the overall picture, [2]**diakonos,** from **diako**, to run errands, to pursue; see Phil 3:14.)*

2 The Father's favor joins our lives inseparably in the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

3 The thought of you always inspires me with joy and gratitude to God.

4 Praying for you is certainly not a job - it is more like poetry; I joyfully anticipate the outcome of my prayers for you!

5 Our blissful participation in everything that the gospel communicates does not age. The freshness of our first encounter continues to this very day.

6 I possess an inward certainty about you, confident that he who is the [1]initiator of the good work within you is also the one who executes its completeness as mirrored in Jesus Christ, who is the light of day. He is the fullness of time. *(Initiator, [1]**enarche,** to rehearse from the beginning. See Eccl 3:15, "that which has been is now; and that which is to be has already been!")*

7 I am not being presumptuous to be this persuaded about you. In the context of our redeemed innocence I cannot think of you any differently; I have you in my heart! Your committed friendship in my imprisonment is of great encouragement to me in our combined defense and confirmation of the gospel. We are in this together! We are joint participants in the same grace. My grace is your grace.

8 God knows my intense longing for you! It is with the tender affections of Jesus Christ!

9 It is my desire for each one of you, that the realization of [1]love's completeness in you will increasingly burst through all boundaries and that every sphere of your relationship with others will be greatly impacted by your intimate acquaintance with love. *(The word [1]**agape** is a compound word from **ago**, which means to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep, and **pao**, which means rest! His love leads me into his rest; into the full realization of his finished work! Agape is Psalm 23 in one word. "By the waters of reflection my soul remembers who I am.")*

10 I urge you to examine this agape-love with the utmost scrutiny, just like when a diamond is viewed in the full sunlight to prove its flawless perfection. I dare you to take love to its ultimate conclusion! There is no offence in love, as evidenced in Jesus Christ who is the light of day. *(If the diamond is flawless to begin with, every possible test will prove its perfection; how someone might respond to love's initiative is not the point.*

Love's ultimate test was concluded on the cross. Truth does not become true by popular vote; someone's ignorance or indifference cannot change the truth.)

11 You have been fully furnished with the harvest of your redeemed innocence and righteousness for which Jesus Christ labored! This is what the glorious intent of God is all about! Celebrate him!

12 I wish to encourage you dear friends that the opposition I face, which was meant to defeat the gospel, has only served to advance it!

13 The prison has become my pulpit! All the soldiers in the Governor's guard and everyone involved in the palace have learnt about my message. They know that I am not their prisoner but that I am enclosed in Christ.

14 My imprisonment has also persuaded many believers in the Lord to speak the word with fearless courage.

15 Some slander the message and others speak with passion and delightful certainty.

16 There are those who wish to get mileage out of my predicament for their own agenda.

17 Others again are completely love inspired and in full support with me in my defense of the gospel!

18 I am thrilled! Christ is the topic of conversation everywhere! Even the negative publicity continues to advertise him!

19 I can just see how the Spirit of Jesus Christ, like a [1]conductor of music, takes all of this together with your prayers and turns it into a concert that celebrates salvation! *(The word, [1]**epichoregeo**, comes from **epi**, a preposition of position, over, in charge, + **chorus**, choir, orchestra, or dance + **ago**, meaning to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep; thus, the leader of a dance or the conductor of music.)*

20 My [1]thoughts are not trapped in my head! They roam free in expectation that I will not be ashamed by any contradiction! My [2]immediate circumstances do not distract from my message! I am convinced that our [2]conversation now and always will continue to give accurate account of the magnificence of Christ. The message is incarnate in me; whether I live or die, it makes no difference. *(The word, [1]**apokaradokia** is a compound word with 3 parts, **apo**, away from, **kara**, head and **dokeo**, thought. The word [2]**parrhesia**, from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **rhesia,** conversation.)*

21 Christ defines my life; death cannot threaten or diminish that.

22 To be alive now is to feast on the harvest of your faith! I cannot tell when I shall lift up the anchor of the flesh and sail away! It doesn't really matter to me. *(The word, [1]**aihreomai**, from **airo**, to lift the anchor and sail away.)*

23 I am often torn between these two thoughts. I have this strong yearning to step out of the confines of this body into the immediate embrace of Christ! Can you imagine the awesomeness of that!

24 Yet this gospel has my [1]arm twisted and locked behind my back; I am therefore determined to remain in the body for your sakes. *(The word, [1]**anagke,** suggests to have the arm twisted and locked behind one's back. See 1 Cor 9:16.)*

25 I am certain that my time with you will inspire the happy progress of your pioneering faith!

26 The joy of our union in Christ knows no limits! We have so much reason to celebrate! I can just imagine the eruptions of bliss should I be there with you right now in person!

27 The [1]one essential thing that would fully engage the focus of your earthly citizenship is the fact that your daily conduct communicates [2]like value and gives context to the gospel of Christ! So whether I am present with you to witness your steadfastness with my own eyes, or absent, our spiritual [3]union and single mindedness will be equally evident. *(The word [1]**monon,** points to that which is singled out as most essential; the word [2]**axios**, means, having the weight of another thing of like value, worth as much. Psyche, Greek, pshuche, suggests consciousness, mental attitude, awareness. Paul desires to express an inseparable togetherness; [3]**sunathleo**, athletic contest. Bicycle racing uses the term peloton; where the riders are strongest and fastest when they ride in the so-called "peloton", which is a densely packed group of riders, sheltering in each others' draft. In a mass-start race, most of the competitors usually end up in one large peloton for most of the race. The word is French, from a term that means rolled up in a ball.)*

28 Your brave fearlessness in the face of every kind of obstacle is a sure sign to those who oppose you that their efforts are futile. Your triumphant attitude makes salvation even more apparent. *(There is no counterfeit; God has no competition! Religion's self-help programs of salvation do not threaten him!)*

29 Because of the grace that you are gifted with in Christ, whatever you might suffer on behalf of him can never distract from what faith knows to be true about you!

30 Our faith is on exhibit in the same public [1]arena; we are not spectators of one another's endurance, but co-witnesses thereof. We mirror one another triumphantly. *(The word, [1]**agon**, refers to the place of contest, the arena or stadium.)*

Chapter 2

1 In Christ our [1]association is most intimate; we [2]articulate his love story; entwined in spirit communion and tender affections. *(The word [1]**parakaleo**, from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection, and **kaleo,** to identify by name, to surname. The word [2]**paramuthion**, is from **para** + **muthos**, a myth or tale, a story of instruction, told in heart to heart language.)*

2 Your Christ mindedness completes my delight! You co-echo the same agape; we are soul mates, resonating the same thoughts.

3 No hidden agenda with a compromised mixture of leaven or empty philosophical flattery can match a mind that genuinely values others above oneself

4 To discover your own completeness in Christ frees you to turn your attention away from yourself to others!

5 The way Jesus saw himself is the only valid way to see yourself!

6 His being God's equal in form and likeness was official; his Sonship did not steal the limelight from his Father! Neither did his mankind distract from the deity of God!

7 His mission however, was not to prove his deity, but to embrace our mankind. Emptied of his reputation as God, he fully embraced our physical human form; born in our resemblance he identified himself as the servant of the human race. His love enslaved him to us!

8 And so we have the drama of the cross in context: the man Jesus Christ who is fully God, becomes fully man to the extent of willingly dying mankind's death at the hands of his own creation. He embraced the curse and shame of the lowest kind in dying a criminal's death. *(Thus, through the doorway of mankind's death, he descended into our hellish darkness. Rev 9:1 and Eph 4:8-10.)*

9 From this place of utter humiliation, God exalted him to the highest rank. God graced Jesus with a Name that is far above every other name. *(Eph 1:20 Do you want to measure the mind and muscle of God? Consider the force which he unleashed in Jesus Christ when he raised him from the dead and forever seated him enthroned as his executive authority in the realm of the heavens. Jesus is God's right hand of power! He was raised up from the deepest dungeons of human despair to the highest region of heavenly bliss! [See Eph 2:5,6 & 4:8,9] Eph 1:21 Infinitely above all the combined forces of rule, authority, dominion or governments; he is ranked superior to any name that could ever be given to anyone of this age or any age still to come in the eternal future. The name of Jesus endorses his mission as fully accomplished! He is the Savior of the world! Titus 2:11 The*

grace of God shines as bright as day making the salvation of mankind undeniably visible. See also Eph 3:15, Every family in heaven and on earth originates in him; his is mankind's family name and he remains the authentic identity of every nation.)

10 What his name unveils will persuade every creature of their redemption! Every knee in heaven and upon the earth and under the earth shall bow in spontaneous worship! *(See Isa 45:23 "My own life is the guarantee of my conviction, says the Lord, every knee shall freely bow to me in worship, and every tongue shall spontaneously speak from the same God-inspired source.")*

11 Also every tongue will voice and resonate the same devotion to his unquestionable Lordship as the Redeemer of life! Jesus Christ has glorified God as the Father of creation! This is the ultimate conclusion of the Father's [1]intent! *(The word [1]**doxa,** intent, opinion, often translated, glory. Rev 5:13 And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein, saying, "To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!" Also my commentary note on Rom 14:11. Paul, here quotes Isaiah 45:23 See verse 20,22,& 23 "Face me and **be** saved all the ends of the earth! [Note, '**Be saved**!' Not 'become saved!'] I am God; your idols are figments of your invention and imagination!" Isa 45:23 "I have sworn by myself; the word of my mouth has begotten righteousness; this cannot be reversed!" The Hebrew word,* **אצי** ***Yatsa*** *can be translated, begotten like in Judges 8:30 "Every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall echo my oath!" [Thus, speak with the same certainty sourced in me!] The Hebrew word,* **עבשׁ** ***Shaba*** *means to seven oneself, that is, swear - thus in the Hebrew mind, by repeating a declaration seven times one brings an end to all dispute! See Heb 6:13.16,17.)*

12 Considering this amazing outcome of what our faith sees and celebrates, I strongly urge you my darling friends to continue to have your [1]ears tuned to that which inspires your conduct to give full expression to the detail of your own salvation in a most personal and

practical way. See salvation in its earth-shattering awesome and ultimate conclusion. I know that my personal presence encourages you greatly but now I want you to realize an inspiration in my absence that supersedes anything you've known before. This would mean that even if you were never to see my face again or receive another Epistle from me, it will make no difference at all to your faith! *(The success of Paul's ministry was not to enslave people to him but to his gospel! He knew that he would be more present in his message than in his person! Ministry success is not measured by how many partners you can congregate, but by how absent you can preach yourself! The word often translated, obedience, is the word* [1]***upoakoo,*** *to be under the inspired influence of what you hear.)*

13 Discover God himself as your inexhaustible inner source; he ignites you with both the desire and energy that matches his own delight!

14 Your entire life is a poem; any undercurrent murmuring or argumentative debating would be completely out of place! Do not let such issues disrupt the rhythm of your conversation.

15 Your flawless innocence radiates attraction as beacons of light in the midst of a people who have forgotten their true sonship and whose lives have become distorted and perverse. *(In this verse Paul quotes Deut 32:5 from the Greek Septuagint translation of the Hebrew text, with reference to Deut 32:4,5 &18. In context God's perfect workmanship as Father of mankind is forgotten; people have become "crooked and perverse" twisted and distorted out of their true pattern of sonship. Deut 32:18 says, "you have forgotten the Rock that begot you and have gotten out of step with the God who* [1]*danced with you!" Hebrew,* [1]***khul*** *or* ***kheel****.)*

16 Your lives [1]echo-exhibit the [2]logic of the message of life. You are positioned like the stars in the night sky, superimposed and radiating light, which shining pierces the darkness. Thus you [3]confirm the day of the Lord and [3]complete my joy! You are my wreath of honor and

[3]proof that I did not run my race in vain. *(The word, [1]**epecho,** is from **epi**, to superimpose, and **echo**, to hold, echo resonance. The word of life, [2]**logos,** it embodies a conception or idea, thought, logic. The preposition [3]**eis**, suggests a point reached in conclusion. See Col 1:29 Your completeness in Christ is not a remote goal, but your immediate reference! My labor now exceeds any zeal that I previously knew under the duty-driven law of willpower. I am laboring beyond the point of exhaustion, striving with intense resolve with all the energy that he mightily inspires within me.)*

17 I want you to see my ministry to you as wine poured out upon the altar of your faith. I rejoice in the thought that we drink from the same source and therefore celebrate a mutual joy!

18 Whatever you may suffer only concludes in joy! *(Joy is a bold declaration, in the face of severe danger and suffering, that contradiction does not define us or have the final say in our lives. We know that whether we live or die, our message is unstoppable and that it is conquering the world.)*

19 I trust the Lord that I will be able to send Timothy to you soon; this will be to me as if I am there personally with you!

20 I have no one here that share my heart more fully; I know that he will take care of you with utmost concern.

21 Sadly there are many in ministry with a selfish agenda

22 I do not need to tell you anything about Timothy because you already know his worth! We have labored together in the gospel in the closest possible association; we are like father and son in joint partnership.

23 I would like to send him to you immediately, but I am just waiting to see how things here turn out for me.

24 I obviously would be very keen to join him shortly! I trust in the Lord for a positive outcome in my trial.

25 I feel urgent about sending Epaphrodites to you immediately; he is my brother, fellow-worker and co-campaigner. You initially sent him to help me and now I am returning the favor!

26 He longs for you and really misses you. He felt quite distressed when he heard of your concern for him when he was so sick.

27 He nearly died but thank God for his mercy, not just for Epaphroditus' sake but for ours also! I cannot imagine the grief we would have suffered had we lost him!

28 I am sending him to you without delay; knowing what joy he will be to you is already such a comfort to me!

29 The immense value of his life is to be celebrated with a massive bliss-party when he arrives! Oh the joy to love one another in the Lord!

30 I so honor his total commitment to the work of Christ; he had no problem to risk his life to serve me on your behalf!

Chapter 3

1 The conclusion of your faith is extreme gladness in the Lord. He is your constant reference to bliss! I am not just saying this to be repetitive; joy is your fortress! There is no safer place to be, but to be ecstatically happy! *(The joy of Jaweh is your fortress. Nehemiah 8:10)*

2 The circumcision party are the enemies of your faith and freedom! They work with an evil agenda! Be on your guard for them just like you would avoid a vicious hound on the loose! They have their knives in for you!

3 We give "circumcision" its true spiritual meaning! Our worship is not defined by anything external that would even remotely resemble the law of works and religious rituals! We worship God in the certainty of our redeemed innocence and rejoice in the finished work of Jesus Christ. Faith-righteousness gives substance to spiritual worship; the flesh occupies the religious mind with its own futile efforts to attain to righteousness. I am convinced that circumcision or any work of the law can add nothing to the righteousness that Jesus secured on our behalf.

4 I have more reason than anyone else to rely on my years of diligent and most sincere devotion to Jewish sentiment and rituals. If gaining God's approval had anything to do with striving and personal effort I would beat the best in the business! My pedigree is obvious:

5 I received the famous cut when I was 8 days old, exactly as the law prescribed. I am Israeli by birth; the head of my tribe is Benjamin. I am a Hebrew of the Hebrews! In my observance of the law I belonged to the strictest party; I was proud to be a Pharisee. *(Rachel was the darling wife of Jacob; she died while giving birth to Benjamin; also the two tribes that did not revolt were Benjamin and Judah. By saying that he is a Hebrew of the Hebrews Paul emphasises that his lineage from both parents side was not mixed with any Gentile blood.)*

6 The extremities of my fervor were demonstrated in the way I fiercely opposed and persecuted anyone who identified themselves in Christ. *(The so-called Ekklesia.)* **If keeping the law and these credentials could possibly have given me a blameless standing before God, I had it made!**

7 The sum total of my religious pedigree and sincere devotion amounts to zero! What we have been gifted with in Christ has reduced what once seemed so important, to meaningless information. To esteem the law is to your loss! Faith is your profit.

8 In fact, I have come to the conclusion that every association I have had with that which defined me before as a devout Jew, is by far eclipsed by what I have gained in knowing the Messiah. Jesus Christ and his masterful redemption define me now. Religion is like dog pooh; and it stinks, avoid stepping in it!

9 So here I am; found in Christ! I was looking in the wrong place all along! My own duty-and-guilt-driven religious endeavor snared me in the cul-de-sac maze of self-righteousness, sponsored by the law of works! The faith of Christ reveals my identity; righteousness defines who God believes that I really am. This righteousness is sourced in God and endorses the authority of faith. *(Faith is a fairy tale if Jesus is not the substance of it!)*

10 Oh to comprehend the dynamic of his resurrection! His resurrection is evidence of our righteousness! In the revelation of God's economy of inclusion, I actually co-suffered with him and co-died together with Christ! *(Because I was already fully represented in his sufferings, his death and resurrection, I am greatly inspired when faced with contradictions now!)*

11 When confronted with death, I actually come [1]face to face with my own resurrection! *(The word [1]**katantao**, from **kata** + **anti**, to come to a*

place over against, opposite another, face to face. 1 Cor 15:18 No resurrection implies no hope for anyone beyond the grave; it makes no difference whether you believed that you were included in Christ's death or not. 1 Cor 15:19 If our hope in Christ was restricted to only benefit us in this life then imagine the severity of our disappointment if it all had to come to an abrupt end when we died. 1 Cor 15:20 However this very moment the risen Christ represents everyone who has ever died; exactly like the first fruit represents the complete harvest. 1 Cor 15:21 The same mankind who died in a man was raised again in a man. 1 Cor 15:22 In Adam all died; in Christ all are made alive.)

12 There may be blurry edges to my [1]comprehending the full scope of resurrection life beyond the grave; but I pursue the complete conclusion of co-comprehending and [2]fully grasping exactly that which Jesus Christ knew all along about me when he died my death; and to see me in his faith where I am so perfectly included when he rescued and raised me out of the grasp of death! *(The word, [1]**lambano**, means to comprehend, to grasp, to identify with. 1 Cor 1To know even as I have always been known! The word [2]**katalambano**, from **kata**, which here strengthens the verb **lambano**, thus to entirely grasp; to come to terms with, to make one's own. The KJV reads, "that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of by Christ Jesus.")*

13 I am not boasting about this new-found-righteousness as if I came up with the idea; on the contrary, I have distanced myself from everything the DIY-system of the law of works and willpower previously represented in my reference; now I am fully engaged with that to which the prophetic pointed. Christ is whom we were reaching for all along! Here he is [1]in our face; within our immediate grasp! *(The DIY-system, is the fruit of the 'do it yourself-tree'. The word [1]**emprosthen**, from **en,** in, and **pros**, that which is right in front of me! See Jn 4:26 Mirror "Jesus responded ... "I am the One you were longing for.")*

14 I have the prize of mankind's redeemed innocence in full view; just like a champion athlete in the public games I refuse to be distracted by anything else. God has [1]invited us in Christ, to lift up our eyes and realize our identity in him. *(The word, [1]**klesis,** invitation, from **kaleo**, to surname, to identify by name. While the law engages one with that which is below, faith captivates our gaze to only see that which is above, where we are co-seated together with Christ in heavenly places! We are identified in him. Col 3:1)*

15 We who have discovered our perfect righteousness have our thoughts anchored in Christ. If you still see yourself as imperfect, God will reveal to you that you are wasting your time to imagine that you can become more accepted and righteous than what you already are!

16 So then, let the message of grace set the pace. *(The law is a detour leading nowhere!)*

17 You are free to mimic me as we together impact the lives of many others to follow in our footsteps.

18 As you know I am often moved to tears talking about these things; I am so passionate about the revelation of mankind's redeemed innocence that it makes no sense to me that there can still be people who oppose this message. Many are openly hostile and indifferent to the cross of Christ.

19 Do they not realize that the DIY law-system leads to self-destruction? All their devotion to the god of their religious appetites, endorses their shame; yet they seem to have no problem with it since their minds are seared with [1]sin-consciousness. *("[1]Earthly things" in this case refers to the fallen mindset ruled by a sin-consciousness. See Col 3:1-3, Heb 10:1, 19-22)*

20 Our [1]citizenship is referenced in our joint position with Christ in heavenly places! heaven is not our goal, it is our [2]starting point! Our understanding is [3]sourced in a Savior; we [4]fully embrace the Lord Jesus Christ! *(The word, [1]**politeuma**, common wealth, our social identity. The word [2]**uparcho**, means to make a beginning, starting point. The word translated source is the word, [3]**ek**. To fully embrace, [4]**apekdechomai**, from **apo**, away from [that which defined me before] and **ek**, out of, source; and **dechomai**, to take into ones hands to accept whole heartedly, to fully embrace)*

21 The salvation that Jesus is the author of, re-fashions these bodies of clay and elevates us to fully participate in the same pattern of his heavenly glory! The severe contradiction that we might often face in the frailty of the flesh, is by far surpassed by the glorious splendor displayed in his human body raised from the dead; according to the working of God's dynamic power he imprints the mirror pattern of his likeness in us. Thus he subdues all things to himself. *(Paul's quest to fully comprehend the power of the resurrection (3:10) is consistent with his prayer in Eph 1:19 I pray that you will understand beyond all comparison the magnitude of his mighty power at work [1]in us who believe. Faith reveals how enormously advantaged we are in Christ. [The preposition [1]**eis**, speaks of a point reached in conclusion.] Eph 1:20 It is the same dynamic energy which God unleashed in Christ when he raised him from the dead and forever established him in the power of his own right hand in the realm of the heavens. Eph 1:21 Infinitely above all the combined forces of rule, authority, dominion, or governments; he is ranked superior to any name that could ever be given to anyone of this age or any age still to come in the eternal future. Eph 1:22 I want you to see this: he subjected all these powers under his feet. He towers head and shoulders above everything. He is the head; Eph 1:23 the [1]church is his body. The completeness of his being that fills all in all resides in us! God cannot make himself more visible or exhibit himself more accurately. [The word, [1]Ekklesia, comes from ek, a preposition always denoting origin, and klesia from kaleo, to identify by*

name, to surname; thus the "church" is his redeemed image and likeness in mankind.]
See again Phil 2:6 His being God's equal in form and likeness was official; his sonship did not steal the limelight from his Father! Neither did his mankind distract from the deity of God! Phil 2:7 His mission however, was not to prove his deity but to embrace our mankind. He emptied himself into a physical human form; born in our resemblance he identified himself as the servant of the human race. His love enslaved him to us! Phil 2:8 And so we have the drama of the cross in context: the man Jesus Christ who is fully God, becomes fully man to the extent of willingly dying mankind's death at the hands of his own creation. He embraced the curse and shame of the lowest kind in dying a criminal's death. Phil 2:9 From this place of utter humiliation, God exalted him to the highest rank. God graced Jesus with a Name that is far [1]above as well as equally representative of every other name; [The word, [1]uper, means above, also instead, or for the sake of. The name of Jesus endorses his mission as fully accomplished! He is the Savior of the world! See also Eph 3:15, Every family in heaven and on earth originates in him; his is mankind's family name and he remains the authentic identity of every nation.] Phil 2:10 What his name unveils will persuade every creature of their redemption! Every knee in heaven and upon the earth and under the earth shall bow in spontaneous worship! Eph 4:8 Scripture confirms that he led us as trophies in his triumphant procession on high; he [1]repossessed his gift (likeness) in mankind. (See Ephesians 2:6, We are also elevated in his ascension to be equally welcome in the throne room of the heavenly realm where we are now seated together with him in his authority. Quote from the Hebrew text, Ps 68:18, [1]lakachta mattanoth baadam, thou hast taken gifts in human form, in Adam. [The gifts which Jesus Christ distributes to us he has received in us, in and by virtue of his incarnation. Commentary by Adam Clarke.] We were born anew in his resurrection. 1 Pet 1:3, Hos 6:2))

Chapter 4

1 Now in the light of all this, I am sure that you can appreciate what enormous delight you are to me! My precious friends, you are my trophy and my joy! Just as you have been doing, continue to stand immovably strong in the Lord!

2 Your [1]source defines you by name! Dear [2]Eodias and [3]Syntyche, let me remind you of the meanings of your names! Engage your thoughts to follow the direct and easy way of grace; then you will together fulfill your mission in the Lord without distraction. *(The word, [1]**parakaleo**, comes from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **kaleo**, meaning to identify by name, to surname. The word [2]**eudias**, from **eu**, good, and **odos**, a road, thus a prosperous and expeditious journey, to lead by a direct and easy way; [3]**suntuche**, from **sun,** together with, and **tugchanō**, to hit the mark; of one discharging a javelin or arrow)*

3 Suzegos, you are the meaning of your name to me; my trustworthy yoke fellow! Associate yourself closely with these ladies who have been my fellow athletes in the gospel! Also Clement as well as all my other colleagues - I have their names on record in the book of life! *(Paul has all his friends names on record! [See Romans 16:1-23] Zoe life as defined in Christ has given such rich meaning to proper names. **Suzugos**, meaning yoke-fellow. At Philippi, women were the first hearers of the Gospel, and Lydia the first convert. Acts 16:13-15. **Clement**, clear skies, bright and sunny weather. Paul whose own name was changed from, **Sheol**, meaning dark underworld, to **Pao**, rest, appreciates the meaning of proper names. He calls Peter, Kefas which is the Aramaic for Petros, to deliberately steer away from the more familiar sound of Petros, thus he specifically emphasizes the meaning of his name. The rock foundation of God's Ekklesia. In Mat 16 Jesus identifies Simon, the son of Jonah by a new name, Petros; and upon this revelation, that the son of man is the son of God the Ekklesia is built!)*

4 Joy is not a luxury option; joy is your constant! Your union in the Lord is your permanent source of delight; so I might as well say it again, rejoice in the Lord always!

5 Show perfect [1]courtesy towards all people! The Lord is not nearer to some than what he is to others! *(Courtesy, [1]**epieikes**, from **epi**, indicating continuous influence upon, and **eikos**, reasonable, courteous. This is exactly Paul's attitude towards the idol worshipping Greek philosophers in Acts 17:27,28. See also Titus 3:3. Your joy makes the gospel visible! Every definition of distance is cancelled!)*

6 Let no anxiety about anything [1]distract you! Rather translate moments into prayerful worship, and soak your requests in gratitude before God! *(The word [1]**merimnao**, anxiety, through the idea of distraction, from **meritzo**, to divide. Your requests do not surprise God; he knows your thoughts from afar and is acquainted with all your ways; yet he delights in your conversation and childlike trust! Song of Songs 2:14; Mat 6:8)*

7 And in this place of worship and gratitude you will witness how the peace of God within you echoes the awareness of your oneness in Christ Jesus beyond the reach of any thought that could possibly unsettle you. *(uperecho)* **Just like the [1]sentry guard secures a city, watching out in advance for the first signs of any possible threat, your hearts deepest feelings and the tranquility of your thoughts are fully guarded there.** *(This peace is not measured by external circumstances, it is residing deeply in the innermost parts of your being. We are not talking about a fragile sense of peace that can easily be disturbed; one that we have to fabricate ourselves; this is God's peace; the peace that God himself enjoys!)*

8 Now let this be your conclusive [1]reasoning: consider that which is [2]true about everyone as evidenced in Christ. Live [3]overwhelmed by

God's opinion of you! Acquaint yourselves with the revelation of [4]righteousness; realize God's likeness in you. Make it your business to declare mankind's redeemed [5]innocence. Think [6]friendship. Discover how [7]famous everyone is in the light of the gospel; mankind is in God's limelight! Ponder how [8]elevated you are in Christ. Study [9]stories that celebrate life. *(See Col 3:3, "Engage your thoughts with throne room realities where we are co-seated together with Christ!" The word [1]**logitsomai** suggests a logical reasoning by taking everything into account; [2]**alethes**, means that which was hidden, but is now uncovered; In Eph 3:21 Paul speaks about the truth as it is embodied in Jesus. The word overwhelmed is, [3]**semnos**, from **sebomai**, to revere, to adore. The word for righteousness is [4]**dikaios**, from **dikay**, two parties finding likeness in each other, where there is no sense of inferiority, suspicion, blame, regret or pressure to perform. The gospel is the revelation of the righteousness of God; it declares how God succeeded to put mankind right with him. It is about what God did right, not what Adam did wrong. See Rom 1:17. The word [5]**hagnos** speaks of blameless innocence. The word [6]**prophileo,** is exactly what it says, pro-friendship. The English word for famous is derived from the Greek word [7]**euphemos**, from **eu**, well done, good and **phemos**; it means to be in the lime light, from **phao**, to shine; Jesus said, "you are the light of the world." Just like a city set on a hill, your light cannot be hid. The word [8]**arete**, is often translated, virtue, from **airo**, to raise up, to elevate; [9]**epainos**, commendable, praise worthy, from **epi**, indicating continuous influence upon, and **ainos**, story.)*

9 These things are consistent with all that I teach and live; you can confidently practice what you hear and see in me. The peace that inevitably follows this lifestyle is more than a fuzzy feeling; this is God himself endorsing our oneness.

10 I am so happy in the Lord that after all this time you have shown such revived concern in my well-being. It is refreshing to know your

support, even though you did not recently have the opportunity to express it.

11 Hey, don't get me wrong, I am not hinting for funding! I have discovered my "I-am-ness" and found that I am fully [1]self sufficient, whatever the circumstance. *(Self sufficient, [1]**autarkes**, self complacent, the feeling you have when you are completely satisfied with yourself.)*

12 I am not defined by abuse or abundance! It might be a different day and a different place, but the secret remains the same; whether I am facing a feast or a fast, a fountain or famine. *(Abundance is not a sign of God's goodness; neither is lack a sign of his absence! "Righteousness by his (God's) faith defines life." The good news is the fact that the Cross of Christ was a success. God rescued the life of our design; he redeemed our innocence. Mankind would never again be judged righteous or unrighteous by their own ability to obey moral laws! It is not about what someone must or must not do but about what Jesus has done! It is from faith to faith, and not a person's good or bad behavior or circumstances interpreted as a blessing or a curse [Hab 2:4]. Instead of reading the curse when disaster strikes, Habakkuk realizes that the Promise out-dates performance as the basis to mankind's acquittal. Deuteronomy 28 would no longer be the motivation or the measure of right or wrong behavior! "Though the fig trees do not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like hinds' feet, he makes me tread upon my high places [Hab 3:17-19 RSV]. "Look away [from the law of works] to Jesus; he is the Author and finisher of faith." [Heb 12:1]. See Rom 1:17.)*

13 In every situation I am strong in the one who empowers me from within to be who I am! *(Paul lived his life in touch with this place within himself. He discovered that the same I-am-ness that Jesus walked in, was mirrored in him! I am what I am by the grace of God! Christ in me, mirrors Christ in you! Phil 2:12, "Not only in my presence but much more in my*

absence! Col 1:27 In us God desires to exhibit the priceless treasure of Christ's indwelling; every nation will recognize him as in a mirror! The unveiling of Christ in human life completes mankind's every expectation. He is not hiding in history, or in outer space nor in the future, neither in the pages of Scripture, he is merely mirrored there to be unveiled within you. Mt 13:44, Gal 1:15, 16.)

14 Now I am not saying that I did not need or appreciate your help! Your joint participation in my difficult times was like beautiful poetry to me!

15 You and I know very well that your initial encounter with the gospel inspired you to partner with me in the wonderful rhythm of giving and receiving. Your generosity then financed my trip in and out of Macedonia! No other church did what you did. *(Paul visited Thessalonica and Berea, about 12 years before this epistle was written. Acts 17: 1-14.)*

16 You also helped me several times in Thessalonica.

17 I am not reminding you of your gifts for any other reason but to encourage you to realize the abundant harvest in the word that you are a living epistle of. *(Greek, the fruit of "your word.")*

18 This letter is my official [1]receipt to you, proving that my capacity is filled to the brim! I am bursting at the seams indulging in your gifts that Epaphrodites brought! Your generosity celebrates God's pleasure like a sweet perfume poured out on the altar of your love for me. *(The word [1]**apecho** here is used as a commercial term meaning to receive a sum in full and give a receipt for it. From **apo** and **echo**, to hold; in this context the preposition **apo** with the accusative denotes correspondence of the contents to the capacity; of the possession to the desire. J.B. Lightfoot)*

19 My God shall also abundantly fill every nook and cranny to overflowing in all areas of your lives. The wealth of his dream come true in Christ Jesus measures his generosity towards you!

20 For countless ages upon ages God will be celebrated as our Father. We are his glory! Most certainly!

21 Embrace every saint in Christ Jesus on our behalf; the friends with me embrace you!

22 All the Saints, especially those within the household of Caesar greet you dearly!

23 The grace that Jesus Christ embodies embraces you in your spirit.

Colossians

In this marvelous work, Paul continues to eloquently celebrate the perfection of God's work in Christ in redeeming his likeness in us. His aim is to make the mystery of the gospel known in its most accurate context; the unveiling of Christ in us completes our every expectation. Paul sees the whole world as his audience! He has no other agenda but to reveal Christ in the nations!

Col 1:28 This is the essence and focus of our message; we awaken every person's mind, instructing every individual by bringing them into full understanding *(flawless clarity)* in order that we may prove *(present)* everyone perfect in Christ.

Col 1:15 In him the image and likeness of God is made visible in human life; in order that everyone may recognize their true origin in him; he is the firstborn of every creature. *(What darkness veiled from us he unveiled. In him we clearly see the mirror reflection of our original life. The Son of his love gives accurate evidence of his image in human form. God can never again be invisible!)*

Col 2:9-10 Christ reveals that there is no place in the universe where God would rather be; his fullness physically resides in Christ! Jesus proves that human life is tailor-made for God! Jesus Christ mirrors our completeness; he is I am in us.

Any teaching that leaves you with a sense of lack and imperfection rather than completeness is a distraction from the truth.

Col 2:16 Do not let anyone therefore bring a restriction to your freedom by reviving religious rules and regulations pertaining to eating and drinking; all Jewish festivals, new moons, and Sabbaths have come to an end in Christ!

The religious facade that disguised the law of works as a means of defining a person's life, was openly defeated. The success of the Cross will never be silenced!

Col 3:1 Since you are in fact raised together with Christ, relocate yourselves

mentally; engage your thoughts with throne room realities!

Col 4:4 My sincere desire is that my message will accurately unveil the mystery of Christ in its most complete context. You! This is the mission of my life! **(***Eph 3:9)*

Chapter 1

1 My name is Paul. My colleague, Timothy and I, are together in this mission ordained by the purpose of God, representing the ministry of Jesus Christ.

2 We greet you with grace, which is the blessing of his favor and friendship; and honor you who are in Colossae as Saints and friends included in Christ. God is our Father and Jesus Christ our Master.

3 Every time we pray for you we thank God for you. Together with our Lord Jesus Christ we enjoy a common origin in the Father.

4 The reports of your belief in Christ Jesus and your love for every devoted follower inspires us.

5 heaven *(the spiritual realm)* **is the limitless reservoir of your expectation. The announcement of the goodness of God is not far-fetched or too good to be true. The word you heard is absolutely true!**

6 This word resonates within you and its appeal is prevailing in the whole world. The harvest is evident everywhere and gaining ground; as also witnessed in your own experience from the moment you heard and understood the true implication and the relevance of his grace. *("My*

greatest joy is to realize that your faith is announced throughout the entire world. The total cosmos is our audience!" [Rom 1:8] Paul always sees the larger audience when he addresses the individual.)

7 Your experience is consistent with the teaching you received from our dear co-worker Epafras. He is passionate about your well-being in Christ.

8 He told us how much you love us in the spirit;

9 and so we have become inseparably linked to you. Our constant desire for you is that you might be overwhelmed with the knowledge of God's dream for your lives. We pray that the pattern of his wisdom and thoughts will fall into place for you in all [1]spiritual understanding. *(The word, [1]**sunesis** from **suniemi**, means a joining together like that of two streams; a fusion of thought, a joint-seeing.)*

10 Go on a [1]walkabout tour to explore the extent of the land that is yours under his Lordship. Now you can conduct yourselves appropriately towards him, pleasing him in every harvest of good works that you bear. Meanwhile, you continue to increase in your intimate acquaintance with that which God knows to be true about you. This results in the most attractive and fulfilled life possible. *(The word, [1]**peripateo**, means to walk about everywhere. The knowledge of God is not our perception of him, but his knowledge of us; to know even as we have always been known. [Jer 1:5, 1 Cor 13:12])*

11 You are empowered in the dynamic of God's strength; [1]his mind is made up about you! He enables you to be strong in endurance and steadfastness with joy. *(His glorious power, or [1]**doxa**, comes from **dokeo**, to recognize for what it really is, true opinion; God's intention—his mind made up.)*

12 We are grateful to the Father who qualified us to participate in the complete portion of the inheritance of the [1]saints in the light. *(The light of the Gospel reveals what God accomplished to transform the sinner into a saint; from **hagos**, an awful thing to [1]**hagios**, a consecrated object: "call no-one unholy or unclean." [Acts 10:28])*

13 He rescued us from the [1]dominion of darkness *(the sense-ruled world, dominated by the law of performance)* **and relocated us into the kingdom where the love of his Son rules.** *(Darkness is not a force, it is the absence of light. [See Eph 4:18] A darkened understanding veiled the truth of our redeemed design from us. 2 Cor 4:4. What "empowered" darkness was the lie that we believed about ourselves! The word, [1]**exousia**, sometimes translated authority, is from **ek**, origin or source, and **eimi**, I am. Thus, I was confused about who I am until the day that I heard and understood the grace of God in truth, as in a mirror. See 2 Corinthians 3:18, John 1:12.)*

14 In God's mind mankind is associated in Christ; in his blood sacrifice we were ransomed; our redemption was secured; our [1]sins were completely done away with. *(The word sin, is the word [1]**hamartia**, from **ha**, negative or without and **meros**, portion or form, thus to be without your allotted portion or without form, pointing to a disorientated, distorted, bankrupt identity; the word **meros**, is the stem of **morphe**, as in 2 Corinthians 3:18 the word **metamorphe**, with form, which is the opposite of **hamartia** - without form. Sin is to live out of context with the blueprint of one's design; to behave out of tune with God's original harmony. See Deuteronomy 32:18, "You have forgotten the Rock that begot you and have gotten out of step with the God who danced with you!" Hebrew, **khul** or **kheel**, to dance. Sin distorts the life of our design. Jesus reveals and redeemed our true form.)*

15 In him the image and likeness of God is made visible in human form in order that everyone may recognize their true origin in him. He is the firstborn of every creature. *(What darkness veiled from us he unveiled. In him we clearly see the mirror reflection of our original life. The Son of his love gives accurate evidence of his image in human form. God can never again be invisible!)*

16 Everything that is begins in him whether in the heavenly realm or upon the earth, visible or invisible, every order of justice and every level of authority, be it kingdoms or governments, principalities or jurisdictions; all things were created by him and for him.

17 He is the initiator of all things, therefore everything finds its relevance and its true pattern only in him.

18 The Ekklesia *(church)* **is the visible expression** *(body)* **of which Jesus is the head. He is the principle rank of authority who leads the triumphant procession of our new birth out of the region of the dead. His pre-eminent rank is beyond threat.** *(" ... leading the resurrection parade" —The Message. See also Rev 1:5 and Eph 4:8,9.)*

19 God is fully at home in him. Jesus exhibits God's [1]happy delight to be human. *(Delightful intent, [1]**eudokeo**. "So spacious is he, so roomy, that everything of God finds its proper place in him without crowding." — The Message)*

20 He initiated the reconciliation of all things to himself. Through the blood of the cross God restored the original harmony. His reign of peace now extends to every visible thing upon the earth as well as those invisible things which are in the [1]heavenly realm. *(The heavens, [1]**ouranos**, a place of elevation, from **oros**, a mountain, from **airo**, to lift, to raise, to elevate, "Not only that, but all the broken and dislocated pieces of the universe, people and things, animals and atoms, get properly fixed and*

fit together in vibrant harmonies, all because of his death." — The Message.)

21 Your indifferent mindset alienated you from God into a lifestyle of annoyances, hardships, and labors. Yet he has now fully [2]reconciled and restored you to your original design. *(The word, [1]**poneros**, is described in Thayer's Lexicon to mean, annoyances, hardships, and labors, often translated as evil. [See Septuagint: tree of knowledge of good and hard labor!] To reconcile: [2]**apokatallasso**, fully restored to the original value. [In Thayer Definition: to change, exchange, as coins for others of equivalent value.])*

22 He accomplished this in dying our death in a human body; he fully represented us in order to fully present us again in blameless innocence, face-to-face with God; with no sense of guilt, suspicion, regret, or accusation; all charges against us are officially cancelled.

23 Remain under the influence of what your faith knows to be true about you, firmly consolidated in the foundation of your belief so that nothing can distract you from the expectation of the Gospel; a hope that is consistent with what you have heard. Just as I, Paul, am in the ministry to proclaim the one and only message that rings true with resonance in all of creation under heaven. *(The dimension of the invisible spiritual realm. "You stay grounded and steady in that bond of trust, constantly tuned in to the Message, careful not to be distracted or diverted. There is no other Message—just this one. Every creature under heaven gets this same Message. I, Paul, am a messenger of this Message." —The Message.)*

24 This is why no form of suffering can interfere with my joy. Every suffering on your behalf is just another opportunity to reinforce that which might still be lacking *(in your understanding)* **of the affliction of Christ on behalf of his body which is the church.** *(The inconvenience that Paul might be suffering on behalf of the believers is not to add to the*

sufferings of Christ—as though the sufferings of Christ on our behalf were insufficient but it is to further emphasize and confirm the principle of unselfish love that constrains New Testament ministry.)

25 I am an administrator in God's economy; my mission is to make his word known to you with utmost clarity.

26 Mankind's most sought after quest, the mystery which has remained elusive and concealed for ages and generations, is now fully realized in our redeemed innocence.

27 Within us, God is delighted to exhibit the priceless treasure of this glorious unveiling of Christ's indwelling in order that every person on the planet, whoever they are, may now come to the greatest discovery of all time and recognize Christ in them as in a mirror! He is the [1]desire of the nations and completes their every expectation! *(He is not hiding in history, or in outer space nor in the future, neither in the pages of Scripture, he is merely mirrored there to be unveiled within you. Mt 13:44, Gal 1:15, 16, 2 Cor 3:18, 2 Cor 4:4,7. This is huge! What God was now able to disclose in the Saints is immediately equally relevant in the nations! Christ in the nations is the hope of glory! This is the mystery of the ages! This is what we were waiting for [[1]Haggai 2:6,7])*

28 This is the essence and focus of our message; we [1]awaken everyone's mind, instructing every individual by bringing them into [2]full understanding *(flawless clarity)* **in order that we may [3]prove** *(present)* **everyone [4]perfect in Christ.** *(Translating [1]**vous** + **tithemi** as to re-align every mind with God's mind. The word, [2]**sophos**, comes from **sophes** meaning clear, clarity. The word, [3]**paristano**, comes from **para**, sphere of influence, closest possible association, and **histemi**, meaning to stand, to exhibit with evidence. The word, [4]**teleios**, means perfect, without shortcoming and fully efficient.)*

29 [1]Your completeness in Christ is not a remote goal, but your immediate reference! My labor now exceeds any zeal that I previously knew under the duty-driven law of willpower. I am laboring beyond the point of exhaustion, striving with intense resolve with all the energy that he mightily inspires within me. *([1]**eis**, a point reached in conclusion.)*

Chapter 2

1 Picture this: The stage is set; the game is on! And you are more than a mere spectator. We are [1]standing opposite each other in the [2]arena like two athletes of exactly the same stature: the contest is to display Christ in you to the extent that all of you as well as those in Laodicea may witness what I know face-to-face and not just by hearsay! *(Christ is not more in Paul than what he is in his audience! The KJV reads, "What [1]great [2]conflict!" The word, [1]**helikos**, from Thayers Definition translates "as tall as; as old as; equal comrades. Two contestants weighing the exact same weight as well as being athletes of the exact same age." And arena or contest, [2]**agon**, in Thayers Definition is "an assembly met to see games within the arena or stadium.")*

2 The [1]mandate of my ministry is for everyone's heart to be awakened to their true identity, [2]intertwined in love's tapestry. This will launch you into a life of knowing the wealth of every [3]conclusion and joint witness hidden within the mystery of God who fathered us and co-revealed us in Christ. *(The word, [1]**parakaleo**, is often translated as comfort from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **kaleo**, to surname, to identify by name, to call by name. The phrase,*

*[2]**sumbibatzo en agape**, means intertwined in love's tapestry; and the word, [3]**suniemi**, means joint seeing or understanding.)*

3 Everything that could possibly define our wealth is [1]hidden in Christ. In this place of our union in him the complete [2]treasure of all wisdom and knowledge is sourced. *(The word, [1]**apokriphos**, translates from **apo,** away from and **krupto**, to conceal, to keep secret. The word, [2]**thesaurus**, means treasure; the place in which precious things are collected and laid up; from **tithemi**, to place and **theo**, God, the ultimate capacity of all things. Christ is the context of all wisdom and knowledge.)*

4 I want to say it with such clarity that no one will be able to lead you to an inferior conclusion by bending your mind with clever words. *(Any message that would divert from the revelation of the mystery of Christ in you is founded in error.)*

5 My physical absence does not distance me from you spiritually. I rejoice to witness that your disciplined and practical lifestyle does not distract from the simplicity of your faith and confidence in Christ.

6 Your daily walk is no different from that initial embrace when you first understood your divine association in him. *(As you have received Christ, so walk in him.)*

7 Just like the roots of a tree, draw your sustenance and strength from him. Like a building rising up out of its foundation your life makes the full stature of Christ visible; standing tall in his shoes, firm in your faith posture. The language of gratitude that overflows from your lips reflects the exact impression of what you were taught.

8 Make sure that you become no one's victim through empty philosophical intellectualism and meaningless speculations, molded in

traditions and repetitions according to mankind's cosmic codes and superstitions and not consistent with Christ. *(Any teaching that leaves you with a sense of lack and imperfection rather than completeness is a distraction from the truth.)*

9 All of [1]Deity [2]resides in him, in a human body! He proves that human life is tailor-made for God! *(The word, [1]**theotes**, godhead/deity, is feminine. Jesus gives detailed expression of what the Father, Son and Spirit is like, in human form. The word [1]**katoikeō** means to dwell in, to inhabit. While the expanse cannot measure or define God, their exact likeness is displayed in human skin. See Col 1:19, God is fully at home in him. Jesus exhibits God's [1]happy delight to be human.)*

10 And you are in him! He is the [1]chief authority and [2]fountainhead of your being, [3]endorsing your completeness. *(The word, [1]**arche**, means chief in rank. The head - [2]**hē kaphalē.** God packaged completeness in "I am". The word, [3]**exousia**, is often translated authority; from, **ek** + **eimi**, originating out of "I am." The days are over where our lives were dictated to under the rule of the law of performance and an inferior identity.)*

11 You were in Christ when he died which means that his death represents your true circumcision. Sin's authority in the human body was deleted you in him dying your death.

12 In the same parallel *(your co-circumcision in his death)* **your co-burial and joint-resurrection is now demonstrated in baptism; your co-inclusion in Christ is what God's faith knew when he powerfully raised him from the dead.** *(Hos 6:2)*

13 You were once spiritually dead, as confirmed in your constant failure, being bound to a lifestyle ruled by the [1]distorted desires of the flesh; but now God made you alive together with him and thus

[2]graciously restored our innocence and dignity, having forgiven us all our [3]short fallings. *([1]The uncircumcision of the flesh, i.e., in the Greek, a life controlled by the sexual organs. God [2]graced us in Christ. The word translated, forgiven, [2]**charisamenos** from **charizomai** means he graciously restored our innocence and dignity! The word, [3]**paraptoma**, comes from, **para**, close proximity, sphere of influence and **pipto**, to stop flying, from **petomai**, to fly; thus, to fall from flight or to lose altitude.)*

14 His body nailed to the cross hung there as the [3]document of mankind's guilt; in dying our death he [1]cancelled the detailed [2]hand-written [3]record which testified against us. Every [1]stain on our conscience, reminding of the sense of failure and guilt, was thus fully blotted out. *(The word, [1]**exaleipho**, comes from **ek**, out of, and **aleipho**, with **a,** as a particle of union, and **liparos**, to grease, to leave a stain; guilt, as well as all hurtful memories were like grease stains upon the conscience. In N.T. only here and Rev 3:5; 7:17; 21:4 and in Acts 3:19 "Be awakened in your minds and fully converted to face the fact of your redeemed innocence - your sins have been thoroughly blotted out!" Plato used it of blotting out a writing. The word, [2]**cheirographon**, translates as hand-written. The word, [3]**dogma**, comes from **dokeo**, a thought pattern; thus thought patterns engraved by human experience of constant failure to do what the law required. In his personal handwriting mankind endorsed their own death sentence. The hands of fallen mankind struck the body of Jesus with the blows of their religious hatred and fury when they nailed his bloodied body to the tree; they did not realize that in the mystery of God's economy, Jesus became the scapegoat of the entire human race! [Isaiah 53:4, 5] See notes on Heb 8:12. "The slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's Cross." —The Message)*

15 In him dying mankind's death, he [1]defused every possible claim of accusation against the human race and thus made a public [2]spectacle of every [3]rule and authority in God's brilliant triumph, demonstrated in him. The [4]voice of the cross will never be silenced! *(The horror of the*

Cross is now the eternal trophy of God's triumph over sin! The cross stripped religion of its authority to manipulate mankind with guilt. Every accusation lost its leverage to blackmail the human race with condemnation and shame! The word, [1]***apekduomai****, is translated from* ***apo****, away from, and* ***ekduo****, to be stripped of clothing; to disarm; the religious facade that disguised the law of works as a means of defining a person's life, was openly defeated. Same word used in Col 3:9. The dominance of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil [****poneros****, hard work and labor] was ended. The word,* [2]***deikmatizo****, means to exhibit in public. See* [3]*commentary below of the words* ***arche****, rule and* ***exousia****, authority. The word,* [4]***parresia****, comes from* ***pas****, all and* ***rheo****, outspokenness, pouring forth speech.*

"He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets." — The Message

See commentary for 1 Corinthians 15:24, The complete conclusion in his work of redemption is celebrated in his yielding the full harvest of his reign to God the Father, having brought to naught the law of works which supported every definition of dominion under the fall, including all ***principalities****, all authority and every dynamic influence in society. [He brought to naught the law of works,* ***katargeo****, from* ***kata****, meaning intensity, and* ***argos****, meaning labor; thus free from all self effort to attempt to improve what God has already perfected in Christ. All principalities,* [3]***arche****, or chief ranks, i.e., kings, governors; this includes any governing system whereby one is ranked above the other on the basis of their performance or preference. All authority,* [3]***exousia****, comes from* ***ek****, denoting origin and* ***eimi****, I am; in this case, because of what I can do I am defined by what I can do better than you; therefore, I have authority over you. Every dynamic influence in society,* ***dunamis****, means power, in this case, willpower. Every government structure in society will be brought under the dominion of grace where the Christ-life rules.]*

In 1 Corinthians 2:7-8, We voice words of wisdom that was hidden in silence for timeless ages; a mystery unfolding God's Masterful plan whereby he would redeem his glory in mankind. Neither the politicians nor the theologians of the day had a clue about this mystery [of mankind's association in Christ]; if they did, they would never have crucified the Lord whose death redeemed our glory!)

16 Do not let anyone therefore bring a restriction to your freedom by reviving religious rules and regulations pertaining to eating and drinking; all Jewish festivals, new moons, and Sabbaths have come to an end in Christ! *(Their relevance only served to remind of the promise of Christ on an annual, monthly, and weekly basis. They carried the promise like a placenta would hold the unborn child, but became obsolete as soon as the child was born.)*

17 These things were only prophetic shadows; Christ is the substance.

18 A religious mentality of voluntary humility and obsession with pious observances of angels will bring you no further reward. So do not let anyone who tries to act as an umpire of your devotion insist on his own opinion, confined to a mind inflated by the sensational and spooky; his so called visions are just a puff of hot air. *(In his judgment he fails to correctly interpret the legal implications of the Cross.)*
"Don't tolerate people who try to run your life, ordering you to bow and scrape, [in order to improve your standing before God] insisting that you join their obsession with angels and that you seek out visions. They're a lot of hot air, that's all they are." — The Message.

19 Such religious jargon is completely out of rhythm with the head. You are directly connected to Christ who like a [1]choir conductor draws out the music in everyone like a tapestry of art that intertwines in harmony to reveal the full stature of divine inspiration. *(Which is Christ in you. The word, [1]**epichoregeo**, is choir director. [See 2 Pet 1:11] Thus, the great Conductor of music will draw your life into the full volume of the harmony of the ages.)*

20 If it is true that you were included in Christ's death, then the religious systems of this world with its rules and regulations no longer apply to you. What further relevance would there be for you to continue to live under the influence of mankind's doctrines and ideas?

21 Things like: "Do not associate with this one!" or "Do not taste that!" or "Do not even touch this with your finger!"

22 These instructions are of no permanent value in any case since they refer to things that perish after it is consumed, thus they leave no lasting impact in your life. So do not let man-made menus cause you to major on minors. *(Jesus said it is not what goes into the mouth that matters, but what comes out of the heart!)*

23 Religious tradition appears to be very devout and its followers seem to be so humble and holy in their strict observance of rules that seek to control the behavior of the body. The only problem with this is that the flesh is never permanently satisfied. *(The Message translates verses 19-23 as: "They're completely out of touch with the source of life, Christ, who puts us together in one piece, whose very breath and blood flow through us. He is the Head and we are the body. We can grow up healthy in God only as he nourishes us. So, then, if with Christ you've put all that pretentious and infantile religion behind you, why do you let yourselves be bullied by it? "Don't touch this! Don't taste that! Don't go near this!" Do you think things that are here today and gone tomorrow are worth that kind of attention? Such things sound impressive if said in a deep enough voice. They even give the illusion of being pious and humble and ascetic.)*

Chapter 3

1 See yourselves co-raised with Christ! Now ponder with persuasion the consequence of your co-inclusion in him. Relocate yourselves mentally! Engage your thoughts with throne room realities where you are co-seated with Christ in the executive authority of God's right hand.

2 Becoming affectionately acquainted with throne room thoughts will keep you from being distracted again by the earthly *(soul-ruled)* **realm.** *("Set your minds upon the things that are above and not upon the things below!" RSV. Whatever you face in your daily lives, acquaint yourselves with the greater reality! The things that are above! Do not engage the energy of the things that are below! Also note Romans 1:18, where the word* ***katecho*** *is used - to echo downwards is the opposite to* ***anoche****, to echo upwards - Romans 2:4 and Romans 3:26. Also 2 Corinthians 4:18 "We are not keeping any score of what seems so obvious to the senses on the surface; it is fleeting and irrelevant; it is the unseen eternal realm within us which has our full attention and captivates our gaze!" A renewed mind conquers the space previously occupied by worthless pursuits and habits. See my notes on Earthbound vs. Heavenly Dimension Realities at the end of Revelation Chapter 16.)*

3 Your union with his death broke the association with that world; see yourselves located in a fortress where your life is hidden with Christ in God! *("In that day you will know that I am in my father, and you in me and I in you." [Jn 14:20] Occupy your mind with this new order of life; you died when Jesus died; whatever defined you before defines you no more. Christ, in whom the fullness of deity dwells, defines you now! The word, "hidden" can also be translated, secret; the secret of your life is your union with Christ in God! [See Col 2:9, 10] "Risen, then, with Christ you must lift your thoughts above where Christ now sits at the right hand of God, you must be heavenly minded; not earthly minded, you have undergone death, and your life is hidden away now with Christ in God. Christ is your life, when he is made manifest you are made manifest in his glory." — Knox Translation)*

4 The unveiling of Christ, as defining our lives, [1]immediately implies that, what is evident in him, is equally mirrored in you! The exact life on exhibit in Christ is now repeated in us. We are included in the same bliss and joined-oneness with him; just as his life reveals you, your life reveals him. *(This verse was often translated to again delay the revelation*

*of Christ to a future event! The word, [1]**otan**, often translated as "when" is better translated as "every time." Thus, "Every time Christ is revealed we are being co-revealed in his glory." According to Walter Bauer Lexicon, **otan** is often used of an action that is repeated. Paul declares our joint-glorification in Christ! We are co-revealed in the same bliss. [See 1 Cor 2:7-8, Rom 3:23-24, Rom 8:30, 2 Pet 1:3.] In him we live and move and have our being; in us he lives and moves and has his being! [Acts 17:28])*

5 Consider the members of your body as dead and buried towards everything related to the porn industry, sensual uncleanness, longing for forbidden things, lust and greed, which are just another form of idol worship. *(Idol worship is worshipping a distorted image of yourself!)*

6 These distorted expressions are in total contradiction to God's design and desire for your life. *(The sentence, "upon the sons of unbelief" was added later in some manuscripts.)*

7 We were all once swept along into a lifestyle of lust and greed.

8 But now, because you realize that you co-died and were co-raised together with Christ, you can flush your thoughts with truth! Permanently put these things behind you: things such as violent outbursts of rage, depression, all manner of wickedness, [1]slander and every form of irregular conversation. *(The lifelong association with sin is broken; the dominion of the character of God is revealed again in ordinary life. The word [1]**blasphemos** means any attempt to belittle someone else and to cause someone to receive a bad reputation.)*

9 That old life was a lie, foreign to our design! Those garments of disguise are now thoroughly stripped off us in our understanding of our union with Christ in his death and resurrection. We are no longer obliged to live under the identity and rule of the robes we wore before, neither are we cheating anyone through false pretensions. *(The*

garments an actor would wear define his part in the play but cannot define him.)

10 We stand fully identified in the new creation renewed in knowledge according to the pattern of the exact image of our Creator.

11 The revelation of Christ in us gives identity to the individual beyond anything anyone could ever be as a Greek or a Jew, American or African, foreigner or famous, male or female, king or pawn. From now on everyone is defined by Christ; everyone is represented in Christ. *(In seeing him not just recorded in history but revealed in us, we discover the face of our birth as in a mirror! [Jas 1:18])*

12 You are the product of God's love; he restored you to his original thought. You belong to him exclusively. It is like changing garments. Now that you have gotten rid of the old, clothe yourselves with inner compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience, *(Just like you were once identified by your apparel, the characteristics of these qualities define you now.)*

13 upholding one another in positive expectation. If anyone finds fault with another, restore that person to favor, remembering how the Lord's forgiveness has transformed our lives.

14 Wear love like a uniform; this is what completes the picture of our oneness.

15 Appoint the peace of Christ as umpire in your hearts. We are all identified in the same person; there is only one body. We are born to be a blessing and exhibit his benevolence.

16 Christ is the language of God's logic. Let his message sink into you with unlimited vocabulary, taking wisdom to its most complete conclusion. This makes your fellowship an environment of instruction in an atmosphere of music. Every lesson is a reminder, echoing in every song you sing, whether it be a [1]psalm or a [2]hymn or a [3]song in the spirit. Grace fuels your heart with inspired music to the Lord. *(The word [1]**psalmos** is raving about God in praise and worship accompanied by musical instruments. The word [2]**humnos** suggests a clebration in song - a testimony song. An [3]**ōdē en pneumatikos** is a new spontaneous spirit chant or song.)*

17 Your every conversation and the detail of your daily conduct reflect him; his name and Lordship define your lives and inspire your deep gratitude to God the Father for his grace.

18 His peace is the umpire of your every relationship, especially in the family! Wives, place yourselves in the intimate care of your husbands, acknowledging the lordship of Christ in them.

19 Husbands, love your wives tenderly. Do not exasperate them.

20 Children, you display the Christ-life in the way you respond to your parents, keep them glowing with joy, they reflect God's delight in you. *("Parents, don't come down too hard on your children or you'll crush their spirits." — The Message.)*

21 Parents are responsible for the atmosphere at home; avoid vibes that dampen the child's spirit.

22 If you are employed by someone, even having to work like a slave, remember your hearts are [1]intertwined in devotion to God. Don't just look busy when you are being watched, show the same diligence behind

your bosses back. *(The word, [1]**haplotes**, from ha, particle of union; **hama**, together with + **pleko**, meaning to plait, braid, weave together. See Luke 11:34 "The eye is the lamp of the body; if the eye is single the whole body is full of light!" Entwining our eyes with Papa's eyes is what enlightens our entire being! Which is exactly what the word Kawa in Hebrew means in Isa 40:31 they that entwine with the Lord's thoughts mount up with wings like eagles! We are wired by design to entwine!)*

23 Whatever you do, picture Christ in the person you are doing it for; it makes such a difference when you put your heart into it.

24 God is no-one's debtor; you are employed under the Lordship of Christ.

25 To live contrary to the life of your design is to injure yourself; your job description does not define you, it doesn't matter who you are. Unrighteousness carries its own consequence and it is not a respecter of persons.

Chapter 4

1 If you are the boss, treat those who work for you in the light of their equality in Christ; he treats you like that and he is the big Boss in the spiritual realm. *(This verse concludes the thought in 3:25 and should rather be part of the previous chapter. Paul did not write in chapters and verses.)*

2 Persist in prevailing prayer. Be attentive and sensitive *(to the voice of the Spirit; do not be over-occupied with prayers for yourself and your own needs)* **Grace and gratitude is the language of prayer.**

3 At the same time remember me in your prayers. Pray that what God has in me would impact many with the revelation of the mystery of Christ far beyond the walls of this prison cell. The confines of this prison do not measure my ministry; the message of the mystery of Christ in me does. *(Col 1:25-29)*

4 My sincere desire is that my message will accurately unveil the mystery of Christ in its most complete context. You! This is the mission of my life! (*Eph 3:9)*

5 Do not spoil your chances to touch others with the word through a lack of wisdom. Even though they may seem to be "outside," your attitude towards them will reveal to them how "inside" they in fact are. Redeem the time by making the most of every opportunity. *(Time only finds its relevance in redemption-realities.)*

6 Season your conversation with grace. This remains the most attractive and appropriate option to respond in every situation.

7 Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He is my colleague and such a lovely brother whose ministry is distinguished by integrity.

8 I commissioned him to come to you in this capacity, to cross-pollinate between us, so that you may also be encouraged and comforted by him.

9 Onesimus, who originally comes from your area, will join him. He is a beloved and faithful brother. They will represent us with you.

10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you warmly; so does Mark, the son of Barnabas's sister. Remember I told you to give him a special

welcome when he comes to you.

11 Then there is also Jesus, some call him Justus. These three brethren, originally Jews by faith, are my close companions and co-laborers for the Kingdom of God.

12 Epahras, who is also fruit of your ministry, salutes you. What a diligent worker of Christ he is, always laboring on your behalf with great intensity in his prayers. His desire for you is to stand strong in the full accomplishment of Christ and to be fully persuaded in God's purpose for your lives.

13 I can tell you that he has a real passion for your welfare, as well as for the believers in Laodicea and Hierapolis.

14 The dear doctor Luke greets you and so does Demas.

15 Please extend our greetings to the brethren in Laodicea and also to Nymphas and the church in her house.

16 Make sure that the church at Laodicea also gets the opportunity to read this epistle and that you again read the letter I wrote to them.

17 Archippus, I want you to be diligent to fulfill the ministry you have received in the Lord.

18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. You must remember my bonds. God's grace is yours.

I Thessalonians

This letter to the Thessalonians was probably the first of Paul's letters. It is not possible to say exactly when Paul appeared before Gallio, but Acts 18:12–18 suggests that this happened shortly after Gallio assumed office, probably towards the end of Paul's eighteen months in the city. It is likely that 1 Thessalonians was written shortly after Paul's arrival in Corinth. It may therefore be dated in the early part of 51 or 50 if the earlier dating of Gallio's assumption of office is preferred, making it the first written book in the New Testament.

Macedonia was organized as a Roman province in 146 B.C. Thessalonica was made the seat of government and was fondly called the Mother of all Macedon. Thessalonica, named after the stepsister of Alexander the Great, may have had as many as 200 000 people in Paul's day. It stood on the Via Egnatia, the Roman highway to the East and proved a very strategic location for a church. Also ideally situated for trade, Thessalonica attracted a community of Jews, which Luke notices by his reference to the synagogue Acts17:1

The following verses sum up Paul's heart toward the Thessalonians: For our appeal to you was from a place of union, a place of seamless oneness where distance or any definition of distraction of subtle hidden agendas were eliminated! *(The word, [1]**parakaleo**, comes from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **kaleo**, meaning to identify by name, to surname.)* In God's [1]esteem of us, we were entrusted with this wonderful announcement: the gospel! Our conversation is prompted by God's approval of us which might not be very popular with the typical religious mindset! *(The word [1]**dokimatso**, is from the word **dokeo**, to form an opinion, to estimate.)* Come on, you should know better than that! How could you possibly suspect us of setting you up with [1]smooth talk when all we were really after was your money and your vote? God knows that we would never disadvantage you. *(The Gospel does not flatter the religious ear because there is no ground left for boasting in personal achievement!*

Gift-language disarms reward-language! The word, [1]***kolakeia*** *means flattery.)* We were not even fishing for compliments from you or anyone else for that matter! We would never "pull rank" on you as commissioners of Christ! Instead we were fostering you with the tender care of a mother nursing her children. It is with this same motherly affection that we yearn for you and were delighted to present you God's gospel gift wrapped in us, since you are so very dear to us! 1 Thessalonians 2:3-8

Chapter 1

1 Paul, Silvanus and Timothy greet the church in the region of Thessalonica with grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. *(The* [1]***Ekklesia,*** *or church, is those who discovered their original identity redeemed in Christ. From* ***ek****, origin and* ***kaleo****, to surname, to identify by name. The mission of Jesus through his church is to persuade the world of their true sonship: the son of man is the son of God! Matthew 16:13-18)*

2 You feature so prominently in our prayers and conversation which is always marked with the gentle cheerfulness of a grateful heart to God.

3 We fondly remember the testimony of your faith which is so evident in your day to day lives in your love labor, even through many difficult times, and the cheerful constancy of the very hope that our Lord Jesus Christ personifies, in whom we enjoy the immediate presence of our Papa God. *(In sharp contrast to a duty-and guilt driven rule, Paul mentions their faith inspired work and their love inspired labor. Paul understands that love ignites faith. Galatians 5:6)*

4 Beloved friends, you have come to understand that you are [1]God's idea to begin with! *(The word [1]**ekloge** has traditionally been translated and interpreted as election, which led to the illusion that some are in and some are out, by God's intent! However, the preposition **ek**, always denotes source or origin and **lego** points to the authentic thought, the **logos** that John refers to in John 1:1 &14.)*

5 Our [1]gospel [2]birthed in you so much more than mere intellectual reasoning; your encounter bore witness to the dynamic of the Holy Spirit as you became thoroughly [3]permeated with [1]the well done announcement and [4]perceived within yourselves the full impact of our immediate influence. *(The gospel, [1]**euaggellion**, is the well done announcement. The word [2]**ginomai**, means to cause to be, to become. The word [3]**plerophoria** means to be permeated. The word [4]**eido** means to see, to perceive. See Titus 3:5)*

6 In [1]embracing the word as your own, even in the midst of great contradiction, the [2]mirror likeness of the Lord reflected in us was ignited in you with the joy of the Holy Spirit! *(The word [1]**dechomai** means to to receive favorably, give ear to, embrace, make one's own, approve. The word [2]**mimetes**, means to imitate or mirror.)*

7 And so the story unfolds; your lives came to be the very mirror, modeling the Christ life and endorsing the faith of everyone throughout Macedonia and Achaia.

8 The word of the Lord found such an articulate voice in you and resounded forth to reach regions far beyond you! Not only in your immediate provinces, but in every place your faith concludes in a face to face encounter with God! You are the message! We need not say anything! *(The Greek preposition **pros**, indicates direction, forward to; that is toward the destination of the relation. Face-to-face is the conclusion.)*

9 Others from these provinces testify of this; they recall how our visit to you has greatly influenced your lives to return to God and now, instead of being absorbed by the imaginary illusions of idolatry you are engaged with God unveiled in real life!

10 And all along you remain focused on the Son of God who reveals our joint-origin in the heavenlies. He endorsed our redeemed innocence in his resurrection! He has [1]drawn us to himself and rescued us from every definition of judgment! *(The word [1]**rhuomai**, means to draw to oneself, to rescue, to deliver.)*

Chapter 2

1 I am sure that the [1]content of the gospel is clear to you ever since our first contact with you dear friends. *(The word [1]**kenos,** empty, means that our visit was not in vain.)*

2 As you know, the many things we suffered before, and even the way we were abused in Philippi, did not intimidate or distract us in any way. We were very bold in our God to communicate the news of what he has so wonderfully accomplished in Christ, in the face of much contradiction. *(The Greek word for the Good News is the word [1]**euangelion,** which is the well done announcement! It is the news of what God has so wonderfully accomplished! The gospel is a declaration. We have made it an 'if-then' proposition. But the 'if-then' proposition is a catch 22 situation; which is a 'no-win' dilemma or paradox. Often these situations are such that solving one part of a problem only creates another, which ultimately leads back to the original problem. A situation in which a desired outcome or solution is impossible to attain because of a set of*

inherently illogical rules or conditions. For so long evangelism has been beg, coerce, bribe or scare, now it is no longer telling people what they must do but what God has done and believes about them!)

3 For our appeal to you was from a place of union, a place of seamless oneness where distance or any definition of distraction of subtle hidden agendas were eliminated! *(The word, [1]**parakaleo**, comes from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **kaleo**, meaning to identify by name, to surname.)*

4 In God's [1]esteem of us, we were entrusted with this wonderful announcement: the gospel! Our conversation is prompted by God's approval of us which might not be very popular with the typical religious mindset! *(The word [1]**dokimatso**, is from the word **dokeo**, to form an opinion, to estimate.)*

5 Come on, you should know better than that! How could you possibly suspect us of setting you up with [1]smooth talk when all we were really after was your money and your vote? God knows that we would never disadvantage you. *(The Gospel does not flatter the religious ear because there is no ground left for boasting in personal achievement! Gift-language disarms reward-language! The word, [1]**kolakeia** means flattery.)*

6 We were not even fishing for compliments from you or anyone else for that matter! We would never "pull rank" on you as commissioners of Christ!

7 Instead we were fostering you with the tender care of a mother nursing her children.

8 It is with this same motherly affection that we yearn for you and were delighted to present you God's gospel gift wrapped in us, since you are so very dear to us! *(The word, [1]**metadidomi**, translates as the kind of giving where the giver is not distanced from the gift but wrapped up in it! The Apostles, Prophets, preachers, pastors, and teachers are gifts to the Ekklesia to establish them in their faith and to present everyone in the full and mature stature of Christ [Eph 4:11-16]. There is such a vast difference between a gift and a reward! We are God's gifts to one another. What God now has in us is gift wrapped to the world. What we are in our individual expression is a gift and not a reward for personal diligence or achievement. These gifts were never meant to establish one above the other, or to become mere formal titles, but rather to identify specific and dynamic functions with one defined purpose, to bring everyone into the realization of the fullness of the measure of Christ in them!)*

9 I don't have to remind you to what extreme extents we were prepared to go in our efforts to bring you God's gospel at no expense to you at all! We kept going night and day, both teaching you as well as actively trading in the marketplace!

10 We behaved with utmost integrity and courtesy; making absolutely sure that we gave no offense to disappoint your faith. We have noting to hide! God knows we had no ulterior motives.

11 Just like a father would instruct his children, so we engaged ourselves with you to remind you of your origin in God,

12 [1]inspiring you to live in the [2]daily awareness of your true value and [3]identity. In God's opinion you are royalty. *(The word [1]**paramutheomai**, inspired from within to live the life of your design. To [2]walk worthy, **axios**; having the weight of another thing of like value, to be worth as much. [3]Your calling or vocation, from **kaleo**, to [2]surname, to identify by name.)*

13 The way in which you joined yourselves to the word that we taught is such a constant source of gratitude to us; you immediately knew that this was not mere human opinion, but you took a hold of our message as the very logic of God, and so the truth energizes you from within, endorsing your faith.

14 You mirror those who have likewise discovered their original identity in Christ as God's [1]Ekklesia in Judea. You suffered persecution from your own people just as they did from the Jews. *(The traditions and cultures that defined people historically are challenged by the [1]church, the* ***Ekklesia*** *of God which is the revelation of the original identity of mankind now declared and redeemed in Christ.)*

15 They killed their own Prophets as well as their Messiah, the Lord Jesus, and drove us out of their midst as if they were doing God a favor! Instead they have become enemies of the entire human race!

16 They sought to [1]intimidate us in order to dwarf our message into insignificance, hoping to prevent us from declaring to the nations their salvation. Their [2]distorted behavior has come full circle! They have proved to themselves to be their own worst enemy. Their [3]passion to oppose the message has become their judgment! *([1]****kōluō*** *, to prevent, from* ***kolatzo****, to dwarf. The word sin, is the word [2]****hamartia****, from* ***ha****, negative or without and* ***meros****, portion or form, thus to be without your allotted portion or without form, pointing to a disorientated, distorted, bankrupt identity; the word* ***meros****, is the stem of* ***morphe****, as in 2 Corinthians 3:18 the word* ***metamorphe****, with form, which is the opposite of* ***hamartia*** *- without form. Sin is to live out of context with the blueprint of one's design; to behave out of tune with God's original harmony. Hamartia suggests anything that could possibly distract from the awareness of our likeness. See Deuteronomy 32:18, "You have forgotten the Rock that begot you and have gotten out of step with the God who danced with you!"*

*Hebrew, **khul** or **kheel**, to dance. By killing their own Prophets and their Messiah and now seeking to prevent the spreading of the gospel to the nations, they are opposing the very promise of their patriarch Abraham in whom God has blessed all the nations of the earth! The word [3]**orge**, associated with wrath or punishment is from **oregomai,** to stretch oneself, to reach out, to long for, to desire, to experience the excitement of the mind.)*

17 We were only briefly separated from you in person but never in our hearts. This has caused us to yearn with greater expectancy to see you face to face again!

18 On two occasions I was restrained from coming to you. *(Luke mentions two occasions when they were restrained by the Holy Spirit not to go into an area for their own safety, Acts 16:6, Acts 16:7. Maybe the mention of Satan here in 1 Thessalonians was in reference to the messenger of Satanas who frustrated Paul with the "thorn in the flesh" he mentions in 2 Corinthians 12 before he learned to deal with a defeated Devil by the understanding of his sufficiency and authority in grace! The thorns on Jesus' head broke the curse associated with the thorn in the flesh! I am also of the opinion that maybe the reference to Satan was added later when it became a popular excuse to blame the Devil when things did not seem to go according to plan.)*

19 We expect nothing less in the context of the gospel than you enjoying a face to face encounter in the [1]immediate presence of our Lord Jesus Christ! This is our delight and wreath of honor! *(The word [1]**parousia** speaks of the immediate presence of the Lord! From **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **eimi,** I am! There is not even a hint of judgment or punishment in this word! Please do not believe everything you read in Strongs! "G3952 parousia from the present*

Participle of G3918; a being near, that is, advent; often, return; specifically of Christ to punish Jerusalem, or finally the wicked."!!??)

20 You are our trophy and joy!

Chapter 3

1 We could not bear being separated from you and since it did not seem possible for me to visit you personally any time soon, we determined to send Timothy to you in the meantime whilst I remained behind in Athens.

2 He is such a dear brother and minister of God; my colleague in the Good News of what Christ accomplished. His mission was to strengthen you and to establish you in your spirit identity and belief.

3 He was to make sure that none of you is shaken by these pressure times that somehow inevitably seem to lie in our way.

4 When we were with you, we told you that we were to often face fierce contradictions, just as you have indeed witnessed it for yourselves! *(The religious and traditional systems of this world will always feel threatened by what the gospel communicates, since your freedom means that they can no longer abuse you with fear and sin-consciousness.)*

5 It was most urgent then for me to get first-hand feedback from Timothy regarding your faith, since I know how temptation would scrutinize you and attempt to nullify what we have labored for in you.

6 So you can imagine how the wonderful news of your faith and love blessed us! Timothy returned with the happy tidings of how affectionately you remember me and also long to see me, even as I yearn for you.

7 We share such a constant bond in our oneness in Christ. Your faith greatly impacts and comforts us in our affliction and hard times.

8 Your strong standing in the Lord gives us such zest for life.

9 We cannot thank God enough for you! We dance with delight before him because of you!

10 You are constantly in our prayers, night and day; oh, how we long to see you face to face and thoroughly establish you in every area of your faith.

11 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ will himself make a way for us to visit you.

12 We can already see how the Lord causes the love we have for you to dynamically impact each of you and burst its banks to flood the entire world!

13 The [1]dominion of the Christ life establishes you in blameless innocence before our God and Father in the constant awareness of his presence in our mutual togetherness with all the Saints! *(The subject of the sentence is the Lord Jesus Christ from the previous verse. His lordship endorses the reign of the Christ life in us.)*

Chapter 4

1 Finally then friends, we would earnestly implore you to mirror the walk which we share in this bond of oneness in the Lord Jesus. Live your lives fully in the delight of God.

2 For you are acquainted with the fact that Jesus Christ is the [1]source of our message. *(The word [1]**paraggelia**, from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **angellos**, to announce.)*

3 The resolve of God declares you innocent; this announcement frees you from fornication. *(The resolve of God is declared in his accomplished redemption of the life of our design in Christ. Fornication is a form of idolatry, which is to be engaged with a distorted image of yourself. It is to be obsessed with something that you feel you must have in order to complete you. Just like Eve was attracted to eat the fruit of the "I-am-not-tree".)*

4 Everyone of you should take ownership of your bodies with utmost care. The vessel takes its [1]value from the treasure it holds. *(The word [1]**timay** means a valuing by which the price is fixed. See 2 Corinthians 4:7)*

5 Lusting after things with an all-consuming longing is typical of people who do not know how complete they already are in God.

6 In all of your dealings with one another, whether in business or the mere day-to-day domestic and social matters, live [1]from the persuasion

of your mutual likeness, just as we have given testimony to and instructed you in the revelation of the Lord's righteousness. *(The word [1]**ekdike** is traditionally, sadly, often associated with judgment and punishment! However the two components of this word are the preposition **ek**, which always points to source or origin, and **dike,** which means two parties finding likeness in each other. This is also the stem of the word for righteousness, **dikaiosune**. The revelation of Paul's gospel declares how God succeeded in Christ to cancel all grounds for separation, hostility, inferiority and condemnation and how God's faith redeemed our blameless oneness. See Romans 1:17. The gospel is the happy announcement of the finished work of Christ and not a new compromised set of rules! Many traditional translations and interpretations do not distinguish between the deadly duty-driven law of self-effort and the life giving love-driven law of faith! Romans 3:27)*

7 By design, God [1]defines you wholly separated unto him. Sin is not who you are! *(The word [1]**kaleo** means to surname, to identify by name.)*

8 This is not to be regarded lightly as mere good advice, since God has given us his Holy Spirit endorsing our holiness unto him, just as he has separated himself unto us!

9 I need not even write to you about your fondness for one another since the love of God is best taught by him within!

10 I know your affection for your fellow family throughout Macedonia. From this place of our close union in our [1]common origin we anticipate the ever [2]increasing impact of love's irresistible impression. *(Our common origin, [1]**parakaleo**; The word, [2]**perisseuo** means to super-abound.)*

11 Cultivate the [1]highest esteem for that which is of value and honor; [2]cease from striving; mind your own business and give whatever you do your personal touch! These practical instructions are all part and parcel of the same [3]source as our constant sphere of influence. *(The beautiful word [1]**philotemeomai,** means to have a fondness for value and honor. The word [2]**hesuchatzo** means to rest and to cease from striving. See commentary note on the word [3]**paraggelia** in verse 2)*

12 Always maintain a good attitude towards those who still see themselves as outside of your company; do not hint for favors, echo completeness.

13 I do not want you to be ignorant concerning those who seem to be fast asleep in their indifference and unbelief. There is no need for you to grieve as if they are beyond hope! *(See 1 Cor 15:51 [1]Ponder this mystery, I want to show you something that you have never seen before: [2]everyone will awaken out of sleep; we will [3]all experience exactly the same change. Look! A Mystery - [1]**idou musterion**; [2]**pantes ou koimethesometha**, means no one will sleep; [3]**pantes de allangesometha**; everyone will be changed.)*

14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and that he fully represents and includes even those who have not awoken unto him yet. God will [1]lead them to realize that they are in Jesus. *(The word [1]**ago** means to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep. See 1 Corinthians 1:30, Ephesians 1:4.)*

15 We give voice to the word of the Lord; we are God's wake-up call to them that are asleep! We are exhibiting the [1]immediate tangible presence of the Lord and shall not [2]exclude them! *(The word [1]**parousia** means immediate presence. See my comment in 1 Thessalonians 2:19. See*

*the use of the word [2]**phthanō,** to prevent, to hinder or exclude, also in 2 Corinthians 10:14, Our ministry to you is proof that there are no geographic limitations which could possibly exclude you from the gospel of Jesus Christ! See also 1 Thessalonians 3:12, "We can already see how the Lord causes the love we have for you to dynamically impact each of you and burst its banks to flood the entire world!" The people who dwelt in darkness have seen a great light! The true light that enlightens everyone has come! And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together!)*

16 The Lord will personally step out of the invisible heavenly realm into our immediate visible horizon with an inciting shout, announcing his triumphant reign in the trumpet-like billowing voice of God; and even the dead will rise from their sleep, since they too are included in Christ!

17 In the wake of their arising we will all be gathered into a large dense multitude of an innumerable throng of people, united as one, like the particles of water in a cloud, and we will encounter the Lord in the very air we breathe and so shall we continually celebrate our I-am-ness in our union with him. *(This is the moment redemption declares, where Deity and mankind are married. The Bride and her Groom are united!)*

18 The fact that we are all deeply connected in the same source of our 'beingness' causes us to be constantly engaged in this conversation with one another.

Chapter 5

1 I do not need to speculate about [1]specific prophetic moments or even mention [2]significant dates. *(The word [1]**xronos**, speaks of a specific space or portion of time, an individual opportunity, or season; [2]**kairos**, a fixed and definite time, the decisive epoch waited for.)*

2 You know for yourselves from experience how the day of the Lord suddenly dawns like a thief in the night! *(Acts 9:3 Now as he journeyed he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed about him. 2 Corinthians 4:6 For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. Isa 9:2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. Joh 1:9 A new day for mankind has come. The authentic light of life that illuminates everyone was about to dawn in the world!)*

3 The systems of this world of darkness and unbelief, which held the masses under their pseudo-sway of make-belief peace and security shall suddenly be broken into, like travail upon a woman with child, and none of their captives shall remain under their claim! *(The gates of Hades shall not prevail! Hades from ha + eido, not to see.)*

4 You are no longer in darkness; there are no daunting surprises waiting for you like a thief in the night!

5 All of you are begotten of light, the Day of the Lord is your true parent! Neither night nor darkness have any claim on you!

6 Live alert and you will not become intoxicated by the indifference of others.

7 Sleeping and drunkenness are typical things people do at night, but now the day of the Lord has dawned within us and has put an end to the slumbering effect and intoxication of the practices of darkness.

8 So let us clothe ourselves with day-garments, protecting our sober seeing by having our hearts fully guarded by the breastplate of love-inspired faith, and having our minds encircled, like a helmet, with an expectation which is consistent with what salvation declares!

9 For God did not set us up for disappointment; he is not teasing us with [1]desires that we desperately reach for but cannot attain to! He has brought us to a place where we are surrounded by the poetry of what salvation communicates in the lordship of Jesus Christ. *(The word often translated, wrath, is the word [1]**orge**, from **oregomai** which means to stretch oneself out with strong and passionate desire.)*

10 The fact that he died our death is equally valid to those who are awake to its effect or still fast asleep in their indifference to it; we are together destined to live in the [1]closest possible association with him! *(The word [1]**hama** is a particle of union denoting close association.)*

11 Continue, as you so eloquently do, to edify one another by cultivating the environment of your [1]close association in your joint-genesis. *(The word [1]**parakaleo** is here translated as our joint-genesis)*

12 We also entreat you as our fellow family, birthed from the same womb, that you recognize those whose toil is evidenced in you; those who are appointed to be your guides in the Lord and who re-align your thinking.

13 You can confidently lavish your esteem and extravagant love upon them because of your immense appreciation for their work! Be at peace within yourselves, joined into oneness, into a place of union, which cannot be disturbed.

14 And we remind you of our joint-genesis as our point of reference for you to re-align the thinking of those who seem to have lost life's rhythm; encourage the fainthearted; be the sounding board to them who feel weak; be super patient with one and all!

15 No-one is to requite evil with evil, regardless of how much someone may seem to deserve retaliation! Never allow the old "law and judgment language" to influence you again! At all times, under all circumstances, let that which is good set the pace in your dealing with every single person, both those who are "in" as well as the so-called "outsiders"! *(If we are to treat offenders like that, how could we possibly reason that God is about to strike the world with 'punishment' like a "thief in the night"? Are we to be more tolerant than God?)*

16 Be cheerfully happy at all times!

17 Constantly engage your thoughts in worshipful prayer.

18 Your gratitude is not based on anything fragile or fading, but secured in the fact that God's purpose for you was concluded in Christ Jesus.

19 Do not suffocate the flame of the Spirit within you.

20 The prophetic word is not to be underestimated.

21 Test everything like one would test gold to determine its true value, then treasure that which is precious with great care.

22 Distance yourselves immediately from every practice remotely related to the fruit of the "I-am-not-tree ", which is the typical exhausting [1]law of works system. *(The tree of the knowledge of good and evil [[1]**poneros**] represents mankind's lost sense of identity and righteousness, where mankind's global pursuit would now be their constant effort to achieve righteousness by means of their own works. This inevitably leads to disappointment where shame replaces innocence, and union and fellowship are lost. The word evil, **poneros**, suggests being full of hardships, labors and annoyances.)*

23 There, away from any effort of your own, discover how the God of perfect [1]peace, who fused you skillfully into oneness - just like a master craftsman would dovetail a carpentry joint - has personally perfected and sanctified the entire harmony of your being without your help! He has restored the detailed default settings. You were re-booted to fully participate in the life of your design, in your spirit, soul and body in blameless innocence in the [2]immediate presence of our Lord Jesus Christ. *(It is not in my "I-used-to-be-ness" or "I'm-trying-to-become-ness", but in my "I-am-ness!" The word [1]**eirene,** translated peace, refers to the dove-tail joint in carpentry. The word [2]**parousia**, suggests immediate presence; see my comment on 1 Thessalonians 2:19.)*

24 You are defined by the faith of God; you are his poetry!

25 Our precious family, continue to include us in your prayers.

26 Embrace one another with generous fondness!

27 I hereby solemnly implore you by the Lord's authority that this Epistle is read to everyone in every church! *(This was Paul's very first Epistle to the churches; written from Athens.)*

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus is your constant companion. Amen!

II Timothy

Timothy is one of Paul's first disciples. His mother was a Jewess and a believer, and his father a Greek."

Paul wrote to Timothy from prison in Rome. This is his last writing, as he suffered martyrdom shortly thereafter; the tone of this letter is quite emotional and personal in character.

His love for Timothy is obvious: "As my close associate and travel companion, you fully participate in everything that my teaching and life proclaims; you share my resolve, my belief, my fortitude, my love, my perseverance." 2 Timothy 3:10.

Paul says about Timothy in Philippians 2:19 "I trust the Lord that I will be able to send Timothy to you soon, this will be to me as if I am there personally with you!"

"I am reminded of your tears and my heart takes such joyful courage at the thought of being with you soon. I rejoice in the pure faith that I see in you. Remember that you are the third generation of a strong lineage of faith. The same unwavering persuasion that indwelt your grandmother Lois also resides in your mother Eunice and is now abundantly evident in you. This gives me all the more reason to remind you to fan the flame of God's grace gift within you into a blazing hot fire. Your life and ministry mirrors mine; I endorsed the gift of God's boldness within you when I laid my hands on you. Become fully acquainted with his gift in you, there is nothing timid about it; the dynamic of a mind liberated in the spirit of love is fearless and unstoppable. Do not let my imprisonment make you feel embarrassed about the testimony of Christ or your association with me! We are partners in the afflictions of the gospel and also in the intensity of God's power! We experience a constant download of power in the midst of affliction!" 2 Timothy 1:4-8.

He reminds Timothy that, "Everything that grace pointed to is now realized in Jesus Christ and brought into clear view through the gospel: Jesus is what grace reveals. He took death out of the equation and re-defines life; this is good news indeed! Grace is my commission; it is my job and joy to

proclaim this message and guide the nations into a full understanding of the love initiative of God." 2 Timothy 1:10,11.

He encourages him to, "See the future of this gospel in everyone you influence; their persuasion is also their competence to instruct others in the same revelation." 2 Timothy 2:2.

"Avoid foolish questions that do not educate anyone but only breed quarrels. In your position as someone completely dedicated to the Lord there is no virtue in winning an argument but losing the person! I would much rather have you exhibit a sensitive courtesy towards all people; skillfully educate them and keep your cool under pressure. Your gentle way of instructing those who oppose you will inevitably lead them to see what God believes concerning them and give them the best possible chance to acknowledge the truth." 2 Timothy 2:23-25.

Chapter 1

1 The amazing news of [1]announcing this life which is unveiled in Christ Jesus is what my ministry is all about! The promise is a Person! I, Paul, am a man on a [2]mission; God's [3]delightful desire sponsors me!
*(The word [1]**epangelia** means the promise, announcement; [2]**apostelo**, a man with a mission; [3]**thelema**, delightful desire.)*

2 Dear Timothy, you are my son in everything that grace, mercy and peace communicate. This life has only one reference: God is our Father and Jesus is our Master and brother; the Christ life rules!

3 I love the [1]constant [2]thought of you; I am aware of our union in Christ 24/7. [3]Prayer is such a permanent thing when we discover God's [4]grace-echo in our [5]worship! Our [6]conscience celebrates our [7]pre-

creation [8]innocence before God! *(The word [1]**adialeiptos**, means without interruption; [2]**mneia**, remembrance; [3]**deeisis**, prayer; [3]**charin echo**, grace echo, sometimes translated as thanksgiving; [5]**latreuo**, to worship without obligation, not under compulsion; [6]**suneido**, conscience, to see together [with God]; [7]**progonos**, before birth; [8]**katharos**, innocence, clean, pure. We celebrate an innocence that pre-dates Adam's fall! We have allowed an illegitimate sin-consciousness to prevail in our theologies and worship! The prodigal son's father had no reference to, or remembrance of past sins; imagine how that would spoil the party!)*

4 I am reminded of your tears and my heart takes such joyful courage at the thought of being with you soon.

5 I rejoice in the pure faith that I see in you. Remember that you are the third generation of a strong lineage of faith. The same unwavering persuasion that indwelt your grandmother Lois also resides in your mother Eunice and is now abundantly evident in you.

6 This gives me all the more reason to remind you to fan the flame of God's grace gift within you into a blazing hot fire. Your life and ministry mirrors mine; I endorsed the gift of God's boldness within you when I laid my hands on you.

7 Become fully acquainted with his gift in you, there is nothing timid about it; the dynamic of a [1]mind liberated in the spirit of love is fearless and unstoppable. *(The word [1]**sophronismos** means a saved mind, a mind saved from tolerating inferior thoughts. Isa 55:8-11)*

8 Do not let my imprisonment make you feel embarrassed about the [1]testimony of Christ or your association with me! We are partners in the afflictions of the gospel and also in the [2]intensity of God's power! We experience a constant [2]download of power in the midst of affliction!

*(The [1]testimony of Christ is what gives us great liberty. Jesus and his finished work is God's testimony of our redeemed innocence. [2]**kata**, down, also to emphasize intensity.)*

9 He rescued the [1]integrity of our original [2]design and revealed that we have always been his own from the beginning, even [3]before time was. This has nothing to do with anything we did to qualify or disqualify ourselves. We are not talking religious good works or karma here. Jesus unveils grace to be the [4]eternal intent of God! Grace celebrates our pre-creation innocence and now declares our redeemed union with God in Christ Jesus. *(The word [1]**hagios**,means holiness, purity, integrity; **hagios** + **kaleo** is often translated, holy calling; [2]**kaleo** means to identify by name, to surname; [3]**pro xronos aionios**; **pro**, before; **xronos**, means a measured duration or length of time; **aionios**, speaks of ages. Paul speaks of God's mind made up about us, before the ages, which is a concept in which eternity is divided up into various periods, the shorter of which are comprehended in the longer; this was before calendar time existed, before the creation of the galaxies and constellations. [**kairos** is a due, or specific moment of time.] What happened to us in Christ is according to God's eternal purpose [[4]**prothesis**], which he has shown in every prophetic pointer and shadow; in the Hebrew tradition the showbread [**prothesis**] pointed to the true bread from heaven, the authentic word that proceeded from the mouth of God - Jesus, the incarnate word - sustaining the life of our design. See Heb 9:2 The first tented area was called the Holy Place; the only light here came from the lamp-stand illuminating the table upon which the showbread - **prothesis** - was presented. The Hebrew word is* **לחם מינפה** ***lechem paniym,*** *face bread, or bread of the presence. The lampstand was a beautifully crafted golden chandelier portraying budding and blossoming almond branches. Remember that this is also what Jeremiah saw in Jer 1:12, when God said, "I am awake over my word to perform it." The same Hebrew word is used here,* **דקש** ***shaqad**, the almond was called the 'awake tree', because it blossomed first, while the other trees were still in their winter sleep. The showbread pointed towards the daily sustenance of life in the flesh as the ultimate tabernacle of God, realized in the account of Jesus with the two from Emmaus. Their hearts were burning*

with resonance and faith while he opened the Scriptures to them, and then around the table their eyes were opened to recognize him as the fulfillment of Scripture, their true meal incarnated: Luke 24:27-31; Mankind shall not live by bread alone, but by the authentic thought of God, the Word proceeding from his mouth, the original intent, his image and likeness incarnated, revealed and redeemed in human life.
Titus 1:2 This is the life of the ages that was anticipated for generations; the life of our original design announced by the infallible resolve of God before time or space existed. [Mankind's union with God is the original thought that inspired creation. There exists a greater dimension to eternity than what we are capable of defining within the confines of space and time! God's faith anticipated the exact moment of our redeemed union with him for all eternity!]
This life was made certain before eternal time. [BBE 1949, Bible in Basic English])

10 Everything that grace pointed to is now realized in Jesus Christ and brought into clear view through the gospel: Jesus is what grace reveals. He took death out of the equation and re-defines life; this is good news indeed!

11 Grace is my commission; it is my job and joy to proclaim this message and guide the nations into a full understanding of the love initiative of God.

12 What I suffer because of this does not frighten me at all; faith has made him so [1]apparent. I am absolutely persuaded that I am safe in him. We are no longer looking for a future event, or another day, the day has come! Death is not Doomsday; nothing can interrupt what he has done! *(Greek, [1]**eido**, Latin, **video**, to see, to know)*

13 Your conversation echoes what you have heard from me; you articulate the exact [1]drift of my thought. We are fully embraced in the

same persuasion of love, immersed in Christ Jesus. *(The word* [1]***para****, is a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection.)*

14 This priceless treasure is placed in your custody by the Holy Spirit who inhabits us.

15 I'm sure that you have heard by now that everyone in the province of Asia deserted me because of my chains, even Phygellus and Hermogenes.

16 Onesiphorus and his family have been a real gift from the Lord and a great encouragement to me. They have often taken tender care of me. The fact that I was jailed did not intimidate them at all.

17 When he was in Rome he immediately searched for me until he found me.

18 His visit meant so much to me that day in Rome; he made God's mercy tangible! No one knows better than you what a blessing he has been to us in Ephesus!

Chapter 2

1 Timothy my son, grace is the source of your strength. It is so much more than a doctrine, it is the person of Jesus Christ; he embodies what grace reveals.

2 What you have learned from me is not a theory; you have witnessed ample evidence that confirms the integrity of my message. See the future of this gospel in everyone you influence; their persuasion is also their competence to instruct others in the same revelation. *(See Titus 1:9)*

3 Picture yourself as a soldier who endures hardship for the cause of Christ.

4 A soldier does not get himself distracted by civilian pursuits; he fully engages himself with the job at hand.

5 An athlete stands no chance of winning the trophy if he cheats in his training.

6 A farmer understands how much hard work goes into a harvest. *(In all three examples, Paul reminds Timothy that our aim is to win the world with the gospel; the world is the trophy and the harvest of the cross; this is the motivation of our ministry.)*

7 Ponder my words; the Lord will give you insight which will inspire you in every contradiction that you face.

8 Make my gospel emphasis the focus of your thoughts: Jesus Christ is the seed of David, he is the promised Messiah; his resurrection from the dead is the proof. *(It is the evidence that he completed the salvation of mankind by defeating death. Hosea 6:2, Ephesians 2:5, Romans 4:25, Acts 17:31)*

9 I might be in bonds, but the word of God is not. *(It might seem to some that my suffering contradicts what I preach, but it cannot! My*

ministry is measured by the word not by my circumstances. See Colossians 1:24)

10 This gives me more than enough reason not to quit. I desire for everyone to discover the fact that the life of their [1]design is redeemed in Christ Jesus; this is the timeless intent of God. *(The word [1]**eklegomai**, **ek**, source, origin, and **legomai** from **logos**, word, thus the life of our design.)*

11 The logic of God endorses our faith: we were included in his death and are therefore equally included in his resurrection.

12 Sufferings do not distract us; neither do they contradict our joint position with him in the throne room , the Christ-life rules. If we [1]contradict ourselves *(behave unlike ourselves)***, he will contradict us and prove us wrong!** *(The word [1]**arneomai** means to contradict.)*

13 Our unbelief does not change what God believes; he cannot contradict himself! *(See Rom 3:3,4 What we believe about God does not define him; God's faith defines us. God cannot be untrue to himself!)*

14 Gently remind your audience always of these things which focus on the fact that the life of your design is redeemed in Christ Jesus, because we were included in his death and are therefore equally included in his resurrection. This the foundation of our faith and cannot be contradicted by any persecution, because God cannot be untrue to himself! Let your testimony in your face to face encounter with the Lord, speak for itself! You don't need to engage in a war of words to desperately try and defend doctrines and perceptions! Instead of proving profitable, these debates are catastrophic to the faith of your students! To mix two systems will certainly confuse your audience! *(See verse 10, 11 and 2 Corinthians 5:14 & 15)*

15 [1]Without any delay [2]live your life from a place where you are familiar with the complete approval of God; you do not need to apologize for the fact that your experience might be a contradiction to your faith! What God believes about you needs no defense! There is such an immediate authority in [3]clarity! Truth triumphs over every contradiction! It makes a clear-cut division between light and darkness; the word of truth shows distinctly that the duty-driven law of works and annoyances and the love-driven law of perfect liberty have nothing in common! *(The word [1]**spoudazō** means to use speed, to be prompt, immediately. The word [2]**paristemi** from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and istemi, to position. The word [2]**alētheia** means not concealed, truth, clarity.)*

16 Do not engage in any conversation that may sound pious but carries no content; it only leads to lengthy and meaningless ungodly debates.

17 Their conversation consumes like [1]gangrene; Hymenaeus and Philetus are typical examples. *(Greek, **gaggraina**, Gangarine.)*

18 They have completely lost track of the truth by arguing that the resurrection of Christ has no further relevance. Any teaching that distracts from mankind's joint-inclusion in Jesus' resurrection turns belief upside down! *(See verses 8 & 11. The inclusion of mankind in the death and resurrection of Christ is the focal point of the gospel! 1 Corinthians 2:8 Neither the politicians nor the theologians of the day had a clue about this mystery [of mankind's association in Christ]; if they did, they would never have crucified the Lord whose death redeemed our glory!)*

19 The foundation of what God believes about you stands immovable and beyond dispute regardless of human opinion or contradiction! The inscription and impression made by the signet ring of God is his signature in your innermost being; he knows you as his own. Let everyone see themselves defined by the name of Christ and depart from everything which does not reveal likeness.

20 Even in mega-rich households there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay; a vessel's usefulness defines its true value. Even though their functions differ, each vessel is equally important.

21 Realize your individual value and stop discrediting yourself! You are indispensable for your Master's use; he knows exactly what he has in you; be ready for any good work! *(See 2:12 If we contradict ourselves [behave unlike ourselves], he will contradict us and prove us wrong! Also 2:13 Our unbelief does not change what God believes; he cannot be untrue to himself!)*

22 The best way to escape the snare and distractions of youthful lusts, which are often typified by an all consuming longing for forbidden pleasures, is to pursue and engage your life actively in everything that celebrates your redeemed oneness. Instead of a sin-consciousness, cultivate a righteousness-consciousness. Become addicted to the adventures of faith; let the agape-love of God romance you into his rest where you cease from striving and bask in completeness. Feast on peace, celebrate your joint togetherness with everyone who has mutually discovered their original identity in the Lord. Live your life from this place of innocence, from your heart.

23 Avoid foolish questions that do not educate anyone but only breed quarrels.

24 In your position as someone completely dedicated to the Lord there is no virtue in winning an argument but losing the person! I would much rather have you exhibit a sensitive courtesy towards all people; skillfully educate them and keep your cool under pressure.

25 Your gentle way of instructing those who oppose you will inevitably lead them to see what God believes concerning them and give them the best possible chance to acknowledge the truth.

26 And so they will escape the intoxicating influence of the fallen mindset and the enslaving dictates of the Devil.

Chapter 3

1 Know also that there will be days where the [1]extremities of people's fallen mindsets will be very obvious; where the [2]gulf between heavenly grace-thinking and earthly legalism-thinking will be most pronounced. *(The word [1]**escahtos**, extreme, is the superlative form of the word **echo**, to hold or to resonate. The "last days" doctrine - **eschatology**, is associated with this word. The word [2]**chalepos** from **chalao** means to loosen, to slacken, to let down from a higher place to a lower. From 'I am' to 'I am not'; from finished to unfinished; from gift to reward; from love to judgment.)*

2 For people will be absorbed with their own selfish ambitions; in love with money and the illusion of how it could make their dreams come true; living a lie of pretense and vanity; loving the limelight; engaged in hurtful gossip and indifferent to their parents; taking everything for granted; ungrateful and having no genuine regard for that which is sacred.

3 Typically calloused and without affection; unforgiving, displaying the characteristic of an accusing diabolical mindset, they are without self-control; savage and cynical!

4 They easily betray friendship; are typically impulsive, living in pretense like a fire that is all smoke and no flame! Addicted to sensual pleasures but averse to God!

5 Their make-belief devotion denies the very dynamic of God! Avoid their hypocrisy!

6 They sneak into the homes of vulnerable women like wolves in sheep's clothing, and under the pretense of "ministry" they shepherd them into snares of exaggerated longings and the intoxicating lies of law-language!

7 These women are like sitting ducks, they never seem to learn. They fall for anything that remotely sounds like a "Bible-study" and fail to tell the difference between "window-shopping" the promises and "mirror-gazing" the truth!

8 These guys, with their deadly legalistic Jewish agendas, seem to be on par with the two Egyptian magicians, Jannes and Jambres, who tried their best tricks to compete with Moses! The supernatural is not proof of faith! These people oppose the truth *(of grace)***; their minds are fully engaged in selling their religious self-help programs, and they stubbornly refuse to acknowledge what God believes about them.** *(Remember Israel died in the wilderness because of unbelief, which was believing a lie about themselves, not because of a lack of the supernatural! Numbers 13:33, Joshua 2:11)*

9 Enough is [1]enough! Their self-help systems are exhausted; their folly shall be on exhibit for all to realize, just like Jannes and Jambres! *(See Rom 13:12 It was [1]night for long enough; the day has arrived. Cease immediately with any action associated with the darkness of ignorance. Clothe yourself in the radiance of light [the night is far spent, [1]**prokopto**, as a blacksmith forges a piece of metal until he has hammered it into its maximum length.])*

10 As my close associate and travel companion, you fully participate in everything that my teaching and life proclaims; you share my resolve, my belief, my fortitude, my love, my perseverance.

11 You have witnessed the persecutions and hardships that I endured in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra; at anytime I could have been swept away by these, but the Lord dramatically rescued me out of every single situation!

12 Somehow, everyone who determines to live a life entwined in [1]beauty and worship in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. *(The word [1]**eusebos**, from **eu**, good, well done, and **sebomai**, to adore, revere, worship, is born as the fruit of **euaggelion**, the well done announcement, the good of the Good News! The spontaneity of such worship often seems to offend those engaged in a system controlled by the legalistic rituals of institutional religion.)*

13 People who are trapped in the mindset of [1]hardships, labors and annoyances will continue to desperately try to get mileage out of a dead and redundant system. The [2]lie that they believe is the very currency in which they trade. *(The word, [1]**poneros,** means hardships labors and annoyances. [2]Deceived and deceiving.)*

14 In sharp contrast to this deceptive duty-driven system, continue to fully engage yourself in the certainty of what you have learned, knowing the integrity of your source.

15 The sacred Scriptures that you were raised with from your mother's womb dynamically pointed you to the [1]explicit clarity of salvation! God's [2]belief was always wrapped up in Christ Jesus! *(The Greek word for wisdom, [1]**sophos**, from **saphe,** that which is clear. The words [2]**tes pisteos** are in the genetive case which points to ownership, belonging to. "Righteousness by his (God's) faith defines life." [Habakkuk 2:4; 3:17-19]. Instead of reading the curse when disaster strikes, Habakkuk realizes that the Promise out-dates performance as the basis to mankind's acquittal).*

16 Jesus Christ and his work of salvation is the theme of Scripture. The [1]value of [2]scripture in its most complete context is always found in [3]God's prophetic voice inspiring a [4]thorough education in the revelation of righteousness! This is what carries the [3]breath of God and gives substance and [5]proof to accurately [7]gauge what is being [6]taught. *(Mankind's righteousness, lost in Adam would be redeemed again in Christ. The breath of God, meaning [3]the words that proceed from his mouth, [4]educates us in the understanding of our original identity, likeness and innocence. The teaching of righteousness gives significance to Scripture. "You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. John 5:39,40. The promise will become a Person, and in his death he would be the Lamb of God laying down his life to die mankind's death. Throughout the writings of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms, God speaks in Messianic language, revealing his resolve to redeem his image and likeness in human form. "And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Luke 24:27 "They said to each other, did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to*

us the Scriptures?" Luk 24:32 "Then he said to them, these are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead" Luk 24:44-46

"Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But you would not, therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isa 7:11-14. "For unto us a child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end." Isaiah 9:6,7. See also Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53. In his resurrection on the third day, God would co-quicken mankind and co-raise us together with him! Hosea 6:2, Ephesians 2:5. Human life will again be the tabernacle of God! "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." John 2:19. "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so will the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. " Mathew 12:40. "On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, opposite the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne inside the palace opposite the entrance to the palace; and when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she found favor in his sight and he held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther approached and touched the top of the scepter." Esther 5:1,2

In many fragments of prophetic thought, God would [1]heap up the evidence as [5]proof of his purpose to raise fallen mankind up to be [7]co-elevated with him, standing tall like a mountain-monument! The little stone that was cut out by no human hand is destined to strike that image of vanity and piety on its feet of iron and clay, to remove every trace of the substitute, man-made self-image with its glorious head of golden glitter and its silvery bust and bronze body. The stone will become in its place a Rock that fills the whole earth; the true image and likeness of God, restored and revealed in ordinary human life. (Dan 2:32-35) "And the ends of the earth shall remember and return to the Lord!" Psalm 22:27; "The Prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours, searched and inquired about

this salvation; they inquired what person or time was indicated by the Spirit of Christ within them when predicting the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glory." 1 Peter 1:10,11 See also Romans 4:25 "Our sins [1]resulted in his death; our redeemed righteousness resulted in his resurrection." His resurrection is the receipt for our acquittal. This is one of the most important statements in the entire Bible. Why was Jesus handed over to die? Because of, ***dia****, our sins. Why was he raised from the dead? Because of,* ***dia****, we were justified! His resurrection reveals our righteousness! Here is the equation: his cross = our sins; his resurrection = our innocence! If we were still guilty after Jesus died, his resurrection would neither be possible nor relevant! This explains Acts 10:28 and 2 Cor 5:14 and 16. Paul proclaims to a group of idol worshipping Greek philosophers, in Acts 17:31, that because human life is the offspring of God, and in the light of what happened to mankind in Christ, God now urgently implores all of mankind everywhere, to awaken in their understanding, "because God had fixed a day on which he would judge the world righteous by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given proof to all by raising him from the dead!" The resurrection of Jesus from the dead and mankind's mystical union with him, is the crux of the Gospel. This is God's receipt endorsing mankind's redeemed innocence and identity, which is what the Teaching of Righteousness is all about!*

*The following words are highlighted: [1]****ōphelimos****, valuable, profitable, from* ***ophellō****, to heap up, to accumulate benefit; [2]****pasa graphe****, Scripture in completeness, context; [3]****theopneustos*** *, God-breathed, Divine inspiration; [4]****pros paideian ten en dikaiosune****, for the purpose of a thorough education in the revelation of righteousness; [5]****elegchos****, proof, evidence; [6]****didaskalia****, teaching, instruction; [7]****epanorthosis****, from* ***epi,*** *continuous influence upon,* ***ana,*** *upwards, and* ***orthos*** *from* ***oros****, a mountain from* ***airo****, to lift, to elevate, and* ***ornis****, a bird, see Isaiah 40:3-5, & 31)*

17 Being thoroughly schooled in the word of righteousness will equip you to be fully refreshed in sparkling newness of life, giving you a fresh start to tackle every relevant and good task with renewed inspiration.

Chapter 4

1 I give testimony to this word as one standing face to face with God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is about to be equally visible to those who have died as well as those who are still alive; the dominion of the Christ-life has the final say.

2 Broadcast the word on every occasion, even when it doesn't seem to be convenient; give evidence to this message; value every individual in your audience highly; esteem people's authentic identity passionately; teach tirelessly!

3 There will be times when people will not relate to their [1]inner resonance, when it comes to discerning [2]sound instruction! Instead they would prefer the familiar language of the [3]fallen mindset and [4]desperately chase after titles and teachers who [5]entertain rather than educate; they would [6]accumulate for themselves libraries of information without any revelation! *(I have translated [1]**anechomai**, our inner-resonance; from **ana**, upward and **echo**, to hold, to resonate, which suggests an upward echo. Our minds are redeemed to engage with the resonance of our inner witness - we are co-seated together with Christ in heavenly places - which is contrasted with a mindset engaged with the fallen soul realm below; from [3]**kata,** downward. See Colossians 3:1,2 "Set your minds upon the things that are above and not upon the things below!" Also note Romans 1:18, where the word **katecho** is used - to echo downwards, to suppress is the opposite to **anoche**, to echo upwards - Romans 2:4 and Romans 3:26. Also 2 Corinthians 4:18 We are not keeping any score of what seems so obvious to the senses in the natural realm, it is fleeting and irrelevant. It is the unseen, eternal realm within us which has our full attention and captivates our gaze! A renewed mind conquers the space previously occupied by worthless pursuits and habits. The word*

*[2]**hugiaino**, means sound, healthy, wholesome; the word [4]**epithumia**, means constant cravings, panting after in hot pursuit; [6]**episōreuō means** to heap up, to accumulate in piles; [5]**knetho** from **knao**, means to tickle the ear; it suggests to be entertained rather than educated! Seneca, a famos Greek philosopher in Paul's days, uses this word and says: "Some come to hear, not to learn, just as we go to the theater, for pleasure, to delight our ears with the speaking or the voice or the plays".)*

4 In their pursuit they would exchange the truth for man-made fictions and fables as their source of reference!

5 But you be vigilant in all things, don't allow the devastating things that you suffer to get to you! Continue in the full persuasion of your ministry as herald of the Good News; you cannot have a more poetic job description!

6 So here I am, my life is poured out as a wine offering on the altar of ministry; I am ready to go! *(See also Philippians 2:17,18 "I want you to see my ministry to you as wine poured out upon the altar of your faith. I rejoice in the thought that we drink from the same source and therefore celebrate a mutual joy! Whatever you may suffer only concludes in joy! - Joy is a bold declaration, in the face of severe danger and suffering, that contradiction does not define us or have the final say in our lives. We know that whether we live or die, our message is unstoppable and that it is conquering the world.)*

7 Like a champion athlete I have run my race and completed the course; I have carefully [1]attended to the faith! *(The word [1]**tereo** means to attend carefully, to guard.)*

8 My wreath of righteousness awaits me as testimony to the Lord's righteous judgment. He will crown me in that day, the moment I step out of this body. I will not be the only one receiving a wreath of honor;

everyone, [1]loving the brilliance of his appearing will be jointly crowned! *(In seeing him, everyone will see themselves, mirrored in him. The word [1]**agape**, from **ago**, to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep, and **pao**, to rest. By the waters of reflection, my soul remembers who I am! Psalms 23:2,3. Note the 1st verse of chapter 4. See also 1 Corinthians 15:49-54 "The reduced state of the individual left its mark on mankind as being earthly; now the redeemed state of mankind confirms their origin in God and marks their new heavenly life. Just as we were once defined by the flesh [our earthly image] we are now defined by our spirit [our heavenly] image. Flesh and blood has a sell-by date; the bodies you live in now will not last forever. Ponder this mystery, I want to show you something that you have never seen before: everyone will awaken out of sleep; we will all experience exactly the same change. This will happen in an instant, in a blink of the eye: the final trumpet will sound, then the dead shall be raised and we, who are still alive, shall be instantly changed into a different kind of body. For this corruptible must be clothed with incorruption and this mortal must be clothed with immortality." Also 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18 "We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and that he fully represents and includes even those who have not awoken unto him yet. God will [1]lead them to realize that they are in Jesus. [The word [1]**ago** means to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep.] We give voice to the word of the Lord, we are God's wake-up call to them that are asleep! We are exhibiting the [1]immediate tangible presence of the Lord and shall not [2]exclude those who are asleep! [The word [1]**parousia** means immediate presence. See the use of the word [2]**phthanō**, to prevent, to hinder or exclude. The true light that enlightens everyone has come! And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together!] The Lord will personally step out of the invisible heavenly realm into our immediate visible horizon with an inciting shout, announcing his triumphant reign in the trumpet-like billowing voice of God; and even the dead will rise from their sleep! In the wake of their arising we will all be gathered into a large dense multitude of an innumerable throng of people, united as one, like the particles of water in a cloud, and we will encounter the Lord in the very air we breathe and so shall we continually celebrate our I-am-ness in our union with him. [This is the moment that redemption declares, where Deity and mankind are married. The Bride and her Groom are united!]The fact that we are all deeply connected in the same source of*

our 'beingness' causes us to be constantly engaged in this conversation with one another.
Also Hebrews 12:1 "So now the stage is set for us: all these faith-heroes cheer us on, as it were, like a great multitude of spectators in the amphitheater. This is our moment. As with an athlete who is determined to win, it would be silly to carry any baggage of the old law-system that would weigh one down. Make sure you do not get your feet clogged up with sin-consciousness. Become absolutely streamlined in faith. Run the race of your spiritual life with total persuasion, persuaded in the success of the cross. Heb 12:2 Look away from the shadow dispensation of the law and the Prophets and fix your eyes upon Jesus. He is the fountainhead and conclusion of faith. He saw the joy (of mankind's salvation) when he braved the cross and despised the shame of it. As the executive authority of God [the right hand of the throne of God] he now occupies the highest seat of dominion to endorse our innocence!" [Having accomplished purification of sins, he sat down. Heb 1:3, Isa 53:11])

9 I really need you with me right now; would you get over here as quick as you can!

10 Demas abandoned me and left for Thessalonica; he has fallen in love with the current mindset of this philosophical religious age. Crescens is in Galatia province, Titus in Dalmatia.

11 Luke is the only one here with me. Make sure to bring Mark with you; he will be a great help in ministry.

12 I'm sending Tychicus to Ephesus.

13 Bring my winter coat that I left in Troas with Carpus; also the books and [1]parchments. *(The word [1]**membranas**, means skin, membrane, or parchment. Dressed skins were among the earliest materials for writing, and were in common use before the art of making paper from rags was*

discovered. These "parchments" seem to have been something different from "books," and probably refer to some of his own writings. They may have contained notes, memorandums, journals, or unfinished letters.)

14 Alexander the coppersmith has been a real pain in the butt! Is it not wonderful though to know that the Lord's work on the cross even includes him! He is equally forgiven. *(He will be rewarded according to his [the Lord's] work!)*

15 I do warn you however to be on the lookout for him, since he has greatly opposed our message.

16 No one dared associate themselves with me during my preliminary hearing, instead they all scattered; I hold nothing against them!

17 Throughout my trial, I was so aware of the Lord's tangible presence; he strengthened me with dynamic boldness and assured me that my life will be an accurate conduit of the message articulated in its most complete context, for all the nations to hear! And I was snatched from the very jaws of the lion!

18 I am so persuaded that the same Lord who delivered me out of the Lion's jaws, also safeguards me from getting snared by the subtle attempts of the [1]law-guys to break in on the effortless rhythm of grace that I am addicted to! Our salvation celebrates his heavenly kingdom. We live our lives from a dominion far superior to the systems of the world; there is no fading to the glory of his kingdom! His eternal intent spans the ages! *(The words, [1]**poneros ergon**, refer to the law of works, hardships and annoyances.)*

19 Give Priscilla and Aquila a big hug from me! Also the family of Onesiphorus.

20 Erastus stayed behind in Corinth. I had to leave Trophimus in Miletus since he was sick.

21 Make sure you get here before winter. Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all your friends send their greetings.

22 May your spirit continuously encounter his Lordship and grace.

Titus

Paul reminds Titus that mankind's union with God is the original thought that inspired creation. My mission is to persuade people of their origin in God; by bringing them into a complete understanding of the truth as the only valid reference to meaningful devotion.

Tit 2:11 The grace of God shines as bright as day making the salvation of mankind undeniably visible.

The following verses are some of the most profound in Paul's writings:

Tit 3:2 Gossip is out! Never have anything bad to say about anyone! You do not have to win every argument. Instead, avoid quarreling, be appropriate, always show perfect courtesy to one and all.

Tit 3:3 Do not be harsh on others. Remember that we, too, were typically foolish. We were stubborn and indifferent to spiritual things. Our addiction to the sensual and sexual kept us running around in circles. We were engaged in malice and spiteful jealousies. We were bored and lonely, often utterly disliking ourselves and hating one another!

Tit 3:4 But then, oh happy day! It was the generosity of God and his fondness for mankind that dawned on us like a shaft of light. Our days of darkness were over! Light shone everywhere, and we became aware: God rescued the human race!

Chapter 1

1 Paul the bondman of God, on assignment by Jesus Christ; my mission is to persuade people of their [1]origin in God; by bringing them into a complete understanding of the truth as the only valid reference to [2]meaningful devotion. *(The word traditionally translated as 'elect' is*

*[1]**eklego**; **ek** is a preposition that always denotes origin or source and **lego,** is the word or the logic of God as in Jhn 1:1, "To go back to the very beginning is to find the Word already present there. The Logic of God defines the only possible place where mankind can trace their genesis." [2]**eusebeia**, beautiful worship, adoration.)*

2 This is the life of the [1]ages which was anticipated for generations; the life of our original design announced by the infallible resolve of God before [2]time or space existed. *(Mankind's union with God is the original thought that inspired creation. The word, [1]**aionios**, speaks of ages. Paul speaks of God's mind made up about us, before the ages, which is a concept in which eternity is divided up into various periods, the shorter of which are comprehended in the longer. The word, [2]**xronos**, means a measured duration or length of time; **kairos** is a due, or specific moment of time. This was before the ages or any measure of calendar time existed, before the creation of the galaxies and constellations. There exists a greater dimension to eternity than what we are capable of defining within the confines of space and time! God's faith anticipated the exact moment of our redeemed union with him for all eternity!*
This life was made certain before eternal time. [BBE 1949, Bible in Basic English]
Hebrews 13:8 Take your lead from Jesus. He is your reference to the most complete life. In him yesterday is confirmed today and today mirrors tomorrow. What God spoke to us in Christ is as relevant now as it was in the prophetic past and will always be in the eternal future! [Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever; there is a history to our salvation that carries more authority and relevance than anything that ever happened in our past, or anything present in time or still to happen in the future. Imagine the enormity of eternity in his sameness before time was; and we were there in him all along! See Rom 8:34 What further ground can there possibly be to condemn mankind? In his death he faced our judgment; in his resurrection he declares our innocence; the implications cannot be undone! He now occupies the highest seat of authority as the executive of our redemption in the throne room of God. See Rom 8: 1, also Rom 4:25. The heavens declare his glory, night to night exhibits the giant solar testimony

that is mathematically precise, revealing that God knew before time was the exact moment he would enter our history as a man, and the exact moment the Messiah would expire on the cross and be raised again from the dead!])

3 My message announces the completeness of time; God's eternal moment realized the logic of our salvation. *(But then the day dawned; the most complete culmination of time! [Gal 4:4] Everything predicted was concluded in Christ!*

John 1:14 Suddenly the invisible eternal Word takes on visible form! The Incarnation! In him, and now confirmed in us! The most accurate tangible display of God's eternal thought finds expression in human life! The Word became a human being; we are his address; he resides in us! He captivates our gaze!

*Hebrews 1:1 Throughout [1]ancient times God spoke in many fragments and glimpses of prophetic thought to our fathers. Now, this entire conversation has [2]finally dawned in sonship. Suddenly what seemed to be an ancient language, falls fresh and new like the dew on the tender grass! He is the sum total of every utterance of God in conversation with us. He is whom the Prophets pointed to and we are his immediate audience! [The word [1]**palai**, meaning, of old, ancient; from **palin** through the idea of oscillatory repetition or retrocession; anew, afresh. See Deut 32:1 "Give ear, Oh heavens, and I will speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. Deut 32:2 May my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distil as the dew, as the gentle rain upon the tender grass, and as the showers upon the herb.... Deut 32:18 You were unmindful of the Rock that begot you, and you forgot the God who gave you birth. Like in James 1: 24, we have forgotten what manner of people we are - we have forgotten the face of our birth!*

*The word [2]**eschatos** means extreme; last in time or in space; the uttermost part, the final conclusion. Sonship revealed and redeemed defines eschatology!]*

Heb 1:2 In sonship, God declares the Incarnate Word to be the heir of all things. He is, after all, the author of the ages. We have our beginning and our being in him. [Sonship endorses heirship! See Heb 6:16-18.]

Heb Jesus is the crescendo of God's conversation with mankind; he gives context and content to the authentic thought. Everything that God had in mind for mankind is voiced in him. Jesus is God's language. He is the

radiant and flawless expression of the person and [1]intent of God. He mirrors God's [2]character and exhibits his every attribute in human form. He is the incarnate voice of God in revealing and redeeming our sonship and innocence. This voice is the dynamic that sustains the entire cosmos. He is the force of the universe upholding everything that exists as the executive authority of God, enthroned in the boundless measure of his majesty. ["Having accomplished purification of sins, he sat down ..." His throne is proof of mankind's redeemed innocence!
More than two thousand years ago the conversation that had begun before time was recorded—sustained in fragments of thought throughout the ages, whispered in prophetic language, chiseled in stone and inscribed in human conscience and memory—became a man. Beyond the tablet of stone, the papyrus scroll or parchment roll, human life has become the articulate voice of God. The name of Jesus defines his mission. As Savior of the world he truly redeemed the image and likeness of the invisible God and made him apparent again in human form, as in a mirror.])

4 Titus, you really are like a son to me in our mutual faith. The Father's favor, compassion, and tranquillity is yours; this is what our Master Jesus Christ restored us to through his great act of salvation.

5 There is still some unfinished business in Crete; I would like you to give it your undivided attention by appointing a leadership team in every city exactly as I have instructed you.

6 Here are some practical guidelines: appoint people with unquestionable integrity; consider what kind of husband and father your potential leader is. He must obviously be a man who is completely devoted to his wife and whose children are steadfast and are not troublemakers or unruly.

7 An overseer must be above reproach; if he has a bad reputation in the community you do not want him to be part of your leadership team! A leader administrates God's economy and must therefore be a

competent manager of God's business. A person with his own selfish agenda, or one who loses his temper easily, or someone that is known to over indulge in food or wine, or a bully, or greedy for money is certainly not a candidate.

8 He must be [1]fond of strangers and able to make people feel immediately at home. Your leader must be a [2]caring person and one who shows [3]unselfish devotion to the welfare of others. Someone [3]sober-minded, whose thought-life is sorted out; one who walks in the [4]revelation of the finished work of Christ; a man of [5]mercy and who is strong in spirit. *(The word, [1]**philoxenos**, means fond of strangers. The word, [2]**philagathos**, translates as benevolent, good, kind, humane, generous, liberal, benign, philanthropic, altruistic. The word, [3]**sophrone**, means a saved mind. The word, [4]**dikaion**, translates as righteousness, the revelation of the finished work of Christ, and the word, [5]**hosios**, is translated as mercy as in Acts 13:44, which is a quote from Isaiah 55:3 from the Hebrew word, **ghesed**, for mercy)*

9 The overseer [1]mirrors the persuasion of the word he was taught and is competent to instruct with accuracy and to entreat and convince those who oppose the message. *(The word, [1]**antechomai,** comes from **anti** meaning against, standing opposite, and **echo**; thus one who mirrors the word.)*

10 There are many who engage in worthless debates about their Jewish sentiments and playing mind-games in order to snare new believers into legalism.

11 By entreating and persuading them with wisdom, their influence will be silenced. The rot must be stopped since they have already confused entire families with their teachings and robbed them financially in the process.

12 According to one of their own so called "enlightened" leaders, the Cretans are known to be phony, lazy gluttons, and savage brutes.

13 This gives all the more reason that they need distinguished leaders who are capable of rebuking such behavior sharply and establish them in robust faith. *(We are not here to merely comment on people's behavioral trends; we are here to declare people free to live the life of their redeemed design! Faith sees that old life co-crucified with Christ and the new resurrected life emerge victoriously. Faith is not a "mickey-mouse" cover-up for sin; faith defeats sin.)*

14 Admonish them not to pay any attention to Jewish fiction and their man-made rules and regulations which achieve exactly the [1]opposite to what truth promotes. *(The word, [1]**apostrepho**, means to reverse).*

15 The truth proves everything to be pure but to those who are contaminated with unbelief in their minds and conscience everything seems to be equally stained with impurity. *(Unbelief is to believe a lie about yourselves. [Num 13:33 and 2 Cor 4:4])*

16 They might even pretend that they know God by saying a few nice clichés, but when it comes to real life the veneer cracks and the stench is nauseating; the effects of unbelief cannot be camouflaged.

Chapter 2

1 Your message is in its own class; you instruct with distinction!

2 Encourage the senior men to be established in their [1]"I-am-ness"; [2]focused in their faith; to be [3]distinguished with a [4]mind established in redemption realities and [5]comprehensive in their belief, their [6]love, and in their [7]fortitude. *([1]"I-am-ness" from **eimi**, I am; often translated, "to be". The word, [2]**nephalios**, means sober, focused, not to compromise their belief with Jewish sentiment; [3]**semnos**, means eminent, distinguished; [4]**sophron**, means a saved mind; [5]**hugiaino te piste** translate as unmixed, comprehensive in their faith; [6]**agape**, means to lead into rest, the love of God leads us to see in us and others what he sees in us; his rest celebrates our perfection, and [7]**hupomone**, means fortitude, to be steadfast, to remain the same, from **hupo**, under the influence of, subject to + **meno**, to continue to be present.)*

3 Instruct the elderly women also to exhibit a consecrated character in all their conduct. Encourage them not to [1]slander, neither are they to get intoxicated with wine; their example makes [2]beauty irresistibly attractive. *(The word, [1]**diabolos**, means Devil, accuser, from **dia**, because of, and **ballo**, the fall; the Devil and the fall of mankind are no longer our reference in conversation! Gossip (to be double minded about someone) is a form of intoxication to be avoided at all costs! The word, [2]**kalodidaskalos**, means irresistibly beautiful teaching.)*

4 They are to radiate a conversation that flows from a mind radically transformed by redemption realities. Their instruction should inspire young women to treat their husbands and children with tender affection. *(The word, **philandros**, and **philoteknos**, connote fond affection for their husbands and children. Paul uses this same combination in chapter 3:4. It is the fondness of God for mankind that persuaded our hearts! [**philanthropos**])*

5 They are to be clearheaded and innocent in heart, creative homemakers, gentle, exclusive in their devotion to their husbands *(not*

flirting with other men); **nothing in their attitude or actions would distract from the word of God. Domestic life beautifully displays the fascination of the Incarnation.**

6 In the same manner [1]incite the young men to become acquainted with their redeemed identity. *([1]Incite, arouse, being alongside, from the Greek [1]**parakaleo**, derived from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection, and **kaleo**, to identify by name, to surname.)*

7 Being a young man yourself, your day-to-day life mirror-echoes the typical mold into which your message translates [1]without any hint of the fallen mindset; you excel in distinguished eminence and innocence. *(The word, [1]**adiaphthoria**, means without any hint of the fallen mindset, from **a**, negative + **diaballo**, through the fall, cast down, Devil, accuser, + **phtero**, to waste away, to pine. Neither the Devil nor accusation feature in your conversation!)*

8 Your wholesome conversation will silence the opposition.

9 Employees are to give their undivided devotion to their bosses, making them proud of them in every respect. It is good advice never to give your boss any backchat, even if you think that you are in the right!

10 They are to have no hidden agenda, instead in the way they exhibit their faith they are making the message irresistibly attractive in everything they do.

11 The grace of God shines as bright as day making the salvation of mankind undeniably visible.

12 [1]The day and age we live in sets the stage for displaying the attraction of an [2]awe-inspired life; our [6]minds are rescued in the revelation of righteousness. We are in the [4]school of grace, instructed how to thoroughly [5]reverse the apathy and [3]indifference that erupts in a [5]wave of lust that would seek to dictate the day! *(The word, [1]**aion**, as in the day and age we live in; [2]**eusebos**, meaning godly, the attraction of devotion, awe; [3]**asebeia**, as in ungodliness, indifference; [4]**paideou**, training students; [5]**arneomai**, from **a**, negative, and **rheo**, pouring forth of utterance; [5]**kosmikos epithumia**, worldly lusts; [6]**sophronos**, saved minds; the revelation of righteousness shows how completely God redeemed mankind in Christ and empowers us to cultivate an innocence consciousness instead of a sin consciousness).*

13 Everyone must [1]welcome with open arms the outrageously blessed expectation; Jesus is what the world was waiting for! He radiates the brilliant intent of God, engineered by his greatness to rescue the world in him. *(The word, [1]**prosdechomenoi**, means to receive to oneself, to welcome with open arms.)*

14 He gave himself as sacrifice in [1]exchange for our freedom. We are [1]redeemed from every obligation and accusation under the law and declared absolutely innocent. He defines who we are! [2]Our brand name is "I am." We are exclusively his. We are a [3]passionate people; we excel in doing everything we do beautifully. *(The word, [1]**lutroo**, means ransom, redemption price, to purchase from slavery; [2]**periousios**, comes from **peri**, for sphere, circuit, locality, pertaining to, and **eimi**, "I am;" [3]**zelotes**, translates as zealous, passionate; and [4]**kalos**, as beautiful.)*

15 Continue to communicate content in your every conversation; [1]inspire and entreat with conviction and assertiveness; you are not at

the mercy of anyone's [2]suspicious scrutiny. *(Encourage everyone to become acquainted with their redeemed identity, [1]**parakaleo**; and the word, [2]**periphroneo**, translates as to think beyond what is obvious, suspicious scrutiny.)*

Chapter 3

1 Remind the Christians in Crete to respect their Roman officials; they must be ready to volunteer for any beneficial service required of them.

2 Gossip is out! Never have anything bad to say about anyone! Don't try and be the [1]macho man, having to win every argument; instead, avoid quarrelling, be appropriate, always show perfect courtesy to one and all. *(The word, [1]**amachos** from **a** as a negative particle and **mache**, a brawler, to be controversial, striving. You don't have to wait for people to change before you are nice to them. There is a big difference between "fake politeness" and perfect courtesy!)*

3 Do not be harsh on others. Remember that we, too, were typically foolish; we were stubborn and indifferent to spiritual things, our addiction to the sensual and sexual kept us running around in circles, we were engaged in malice and spiteful jealousies, we were bored and lonely, often utterly disliking ourselves and hating one another!

4 But then, oh happy day! It was the generosity of God and his fondness for mankind that dawned on us like a shaft of light. Our days of darkness were over! Light shone everywhere and we became aware: God rescued the human race! *(See 2:11)*

5 Salvation is not a reward for good behavior. It has absolutely nothing to do with anything that we have done. God's mercy saved us. The Holy Spirit endorses in us what happened to us when Jesus Christ died and was raised! When we heard the glad announcement of salvation it was like taking a deep warm bath! Our minds were [1]thoroughly cleansed and re-booted into [2]newness of life! *(The word [1]**paliggenesia** suggests a complete restoration to the original, in modern terms, rebooted. The word [2]**anakainosis**, from **ana**, upwards, and **kainosis**, newness, speaks of a fresh upward focus; a re-engaging with heavenly thoughts. See Col 3:1-3; also 1 Thess 1:5. We realized that we were indeed co-included, co-crucified, and co-raised and are now co-seated together with Christ in heavenly places! [See 2 Cor 5:14-21; Hosea 6:2; Eph 2:5, 6; and 1 Pet 1:3])*

6 Holy Spirit is the extravagant Administrator of the salvation of Jesus Christ; gushing forth within us like an artesian well. *(An artesian well is a well, sunk through solid strata of sedimentary rock into strata from an area of a higher altitude than that of the well, so that there is sufficient pressure to force water to flow upwards. From the French word, artesian, referring to the old French province Artois, where such wells were common. In John 7:37-39, John records how Jesus witnessed the eighth day, the great and final day of the Feast of Tabernacles, when, according to custom, the High Priest would draw water from the Pool of Siloam with a golden jar, mix the water with wine, and then pour it over the altar while the people would sing with great joy from Psalm 118:25-26, and also Isaiah 12:3; "Therefore with joy shall we draw water from the wells of salvation!" Then, Jesus, knowing that he is the completeness of every prophetic picture and promise, cried out with a loud voice: "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink! If you believe that I am what the Scriptures are all about, you will discover that you are what I am all about, and rivers of living waters will gush from your innermost being!" See Rom 5:5)*

7 His grace [1]vindicates our innocence. We have also [2]become heirs to the life that we have always longed for, the life of the ages. *(God's gift has restored our relationship with him and given us back our lives. —The*

Message.
Both verbs pointing to our righteousness, as well as the fact that by the same grace we have become heirs, are in the Aorist tense, [1]***dikaiothentes,*** *having been declared righteous, and* [2]***genethomen****, having been begotten. The Aorist tense presents an occurrence in summary, viewed as a whole from the outside, almost like a snapshot of the action.*
Titus 1:2 This is the life of the ages that was anticipated for generations; the life of our original design announced by the infallible resolve of God before time or space existed.
This life was made certain before eternal time. (BBE). Mankind's union with God is the original thought that inspired creation.)

8 You can confidently lean the weight of your being on this word! I want you to be emphatic about this; encourage the believers to be conscious of the fact that they are the [1]custodians of this message. In their day-to-day lifestyle they positively advertise its attraction and beauty. *(The word,* [1]***proistemi****, is protector, guardian)*

9 Avoid confusing speculations and debates about genealogies and quarrelsome controversies about the law; it is folly to engage in such [1]useless conversation. It is like chewing chewing-gum that has long lost its flavor! *(The word,* [1]***mataios****, translates as folly, of no purpose, from* ***maten****, which is the accusative case of a derivative from the base of* ***masso****, to chew, to gnaw, like eating food with zero nutritional value.*
Hebrews 1 Do not be swayed by distracting speculations. Any influence foreign to what grace communicates, even if it seems very entertaining and carries the Christian label, is to be shunned. Feast on grace; do not dilute your diet with legalism. There is no nourishment left in the law. What's the use of being busy but not blessed? [Legalism includes any form of self-sacrifice or self-effort with the illusion of gaining further favor from God or improving your spiritual standing before God]).

10 If a person continues to be argumentative and factious *(distracting from the essence of the gospel)***, and you have brought it to his attention**

several times, then it is better to avoid his company.

11 Such a person is obviously out of line and brings himself under condemnation by [1]his own autocratic ruling. *([1]autokatakritos)*

12 I will send Artemas to you, or possibly Tychicus, and then I want you to join me as soon as possible in Nicopolis where I have decided to spend the winter.

13 Do whatever you can to assist Zenas the Scribe and Apollos with their trip. Make sure they lack nothing. *(Acts 18:24, 19:1, 1 Cor 16:12)*

14 Encourage our people to be productive and generous.

15 We all send you our fond greetings; salute our friends in the faith. Grace!

Hebrews

The Author

The fact that Paul's message, which is the revelation of our restored innocence, based on the finished work of the cross, as witnessed in all his Epistles, is evident throughout this magnificent study, overshadows the argument that his signature as probable author is absent.

The Sabbath Rest

In Christ the Sabbath Rest is no longer a shadow prefiguring the real, a token holy day in the week, but the celebration of a perfect redemption in which the exact image and likeness of God is revealed and redeemed in human form. Mankind's innocence is redeemed. "Having made purification for sins, he sat down ..." The executive authority of his throne is established on the fact of our innocence! Sabbath is now a place of God's unhindered enjoyment of mankind and mankind's unhindered enjoyment of God. Through the torn veil of his flesh, he has triumphantly opened a new and living way for mankind into the life of their design in the loving embrace of their Maker.

This letter has a Hebrew audience in mind and is written to exhort the Jewish believer neither to underestimate such a great salvation, or to clutter the message with redundant Jewish rituals and sentiments.

Under the dispensation of the law of performance, historic Israel failed to access the redemptive Sabbath of God and remained snared in an inferior slave-mentality, "we are insignificant grasshoppers in our eyes". Numbers 13:33

Let us therefore be prompt to understand and fully appropriate that rest and not fall again into the same snare of unbelief.

The message that God spoke in Christ becomes a living and powerful influence in us, cutting like a surgeon's scalpel, sharper than a soldier's sword, piercing to the deepest core of human conscience to the dividing of soul and spirit ending the dominance of the sense realm and its neutralizing effect upon the human spirit. In this way a person's spirit is freed to be the ruling influence again in the thoughts and intentions of the heart. The

scrutiny of this word detects every possible disease, discerning the body's deepest secrets where joint and bone-marrow meet. *(The moment we cease from our own efforts to justify ourselves by yielding to the integrity of the message that announces the success of the cross, God's word is triggered into action.)* What God spoke to us in sonship *(the incarnation)*, radiates his image and likeness in our redeemed innocence. (Heb 1:1-3) This word powerfully penetrates and impacts our whole being, body, soul, and spirit. Hebrews 4:11,12;

Righteousness by faith. Hab 2:4

Hebrews 10:38 Righteousness by God's faith defines life; reverting to the law of works ignores God's work of grace. *(Instead of reading the curse when disaster strikes, Habakkuk realizes that the Promise out dates performance as the basis to mankind's acquittal. Deuteronomy 28 would no longer be the motivation or the measure of right or wrong behavior! "Though the fig trees do not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like hinds' feet, he makes me tread upon my high places. (Hab 3:17-19 RSV)* In the Gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed, from faith to faith. (Rom 1:17) Herein lies the secret of the power of the Gospel; there is no good news in it until the righteousness of God is revealed! *(The good news is the fact that the cross of Christ was a success. God rescued the life of our design; he redeemed our innocence. Mankind would never again be judged righteous or unrighteous by their own ability to obey moral laws! It is not about what a person must or must not do but about what Jesus has done!)* God now persuades everyone to believe what he knows to be true about them. *(It is from faith to faith.)* The Prophets wrote in advance about the fact that God believes that righteousness unveils the life that he always had in mind for us. "The just shall live by his (God's) faith." Righteousness by God's faith defines life.

Hebrews 12:1 Look away from the shadow dispensation of the law and the Prophets and fix your eyes upon Jesus. He is the fountainhead and conclusion of faith. He saw the joy *(of mankind's salvation)* when he braved the cross and despised the shame of it. As the executive authority of God

(the right hand of the throne of God), he now occupies the highest seat of dominion to endorse mankind's innocence.

The Gospel is the revelation of the righteousness of God; it declares how God succeeded to put mankind right with him. It is about what God did right, not what Adam did wrong. The word righteousness comes from the Anglo Saxon word, rightwiseness, wise in that which is right. In Greek, the word for righteousness is dikaiosune, from dike, pronounced, dikay, which means two parties finding likeness in each other. The Hebrew word for righteousness is the word tzedek, which refers to the beam in a scale of balances. *See commentary note on 2 Corinthians 6:14*
Colossians 2:9: It is in Christ that God finds an accurate and complete expression of himself, in a human body! 2:10 He mirrors our completeness and is the ultimate authority of our true identity.

"God desires to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose." (Heb 6:17 —RSV)

If Christ is both the author and perfecter of faith, self-assessment by any other reference would be foolish. It would be just as impossible to attempt to measure temperature with a ruler. Christ defines our original design and our restored innocence. We find our identity and our destiny there.

We have obtained unrestricted access into the intimate and immediate friendship of God.

Sins were dealt with in such a thorough manner that no further offerings would ever be required. Nothing that we might personally sacrifice could ever add any virtue to our innocence.

A brand new way of life has been introduced.

Because of his torn flesh on the cross, our own flesh can no longer be made an excuse for veiling our experience of his favor and presence.

We have a High Priest in the house!

We are free to approach him with absolute confidence, fully persuaded in our hearts that nothing can any longer separate us from him. We are invited to draw near now! We are thoroughly cleansed, inside and out, with no trace of sin's stains on our conscience or conduct. Our inner thought patterns are purged by the sprinkled blood; our bodies also are bathed in clean water. (Our behavior bears witness to this.)

The Kruger National Park

Lydia and I love the Kruger National Park. It is our favorite holiday destination.

While on a game drive early one morning, I was filled with such gratitude to be there, and to know that we have a valid entry permit; and how the gospel reveals our restored innocence through the successful accomplishment of Christ as the vehicle that gives access to the sanctuary encounter of God.

He secured our right of access to every imaginable blessing. Jesus gives definition to God's eternal love-dream of our unhindered union with him, forever free from the obstructive consciousness of sin.

This is what the theme of the book of Hebrews is all about!

When you visit the Game Reserve you are immediately aware that you are in a very special place. The glossy pictures in the official road map promise glimpses of the enormous variety of game on record. The stage is set; everything is in place. You do not bring anything but your own presence to this Reserve. All its magnificent plant, bird, animal, reptile, and insect species are already there and fully represented. They give unique context to the place. As you drive or sit quietly at your camp or some remote water hole, the sights, sounds and smells are powerful confirmations, complementing and confirming the attraction of the bush.

Here, the roar of the lion belongs to me, the fresh footprint in the sand, the call of the fish eagle, as well as the vastness of the landscape with its magnificent trees. Every sunrise and sunset continues to decorate the canvas of my horizon!

The entry permit gives to every visitor equal access to the Reserve. Yet it takes the keen, observant eye to often encounter the most amazing sightings.

To visit the Reserve simply to tick off the next sighting on your list, certainly does not do justice to the pleasure and bliss to be surrounded by such splendid beauty! The fact that these animals are not caged makes it even more exciting to track them down or be surprised by their sudden appearance in view.

This beats the glossy brochure and the most realistic "zoo" experience.

In traditional church-life we have often sought to confine God's Spirit within the narrow scope of predictable programs and routines.

In Christ, God opened a new and exciting way for us to encounter him without hesitation or restriction! He is not caged in an historic prophetic picture; he is unveiled in pulsating tangible human life!

This Epistle belongs to every believer.

Love kindles faith and faith opens the horizon to explore love's mystery; it is a place where thoughts carve an impression; a place not accessible to the scrutiny of a suspicious academic or religious, guilt and performance-based approach.

It is a document of profound beauty, leading the student beyond insubstantial religious rituals and sentiments into tangible Divine intimacy.

In his book, Mind Aflame, James Arraj writes about Emile Merch, *"It is the work of a guide to lead us to the top of a mountain and then to move aside to let us see the tremendous vistas on every side. What remains is our gratitude to the teacher for bringing us to such a place.*
It is as if he has been saying to each of us, "Look within. Don't be afraid to use your mind to the utmost and to seek your deepest center. Far from this attention to the deepest realm of the human spirit walling you up within

yourself, it will open out on to the whole mystery of the universe and the human race. It will show you your union with the forests and birds and distant galaxies, and every other human being who ever was or ever will be. And this kind of metaphysical seeing will give you a tiny glimpse of the fiery mystery of existence from which all things have come and by which they are continually sustained and to which they long to return."
But as splendid as this mystery is, it is meant to draw you into the mystery of Christ. The Word of God has become flesh, and by taking a human form in that very act has transformed it and transforms, as well, the universe and the human race. You have a new being in Christ in which you share through him in the very life of the Trinity."
http://www.innerexplorations.com/catchtheomor/m.htm

Chapter 1

1 Throughout [1]ancient times God spoke in many fragments and glimpses of prophetic thought to our fathers. Now, this entire conversation has [2]finally dawned in sonship. Suddenly what seemed to be an ancient language falls fresh and new like the dew on the tender grass! He is the sum total of every utterance of God. He is whom the Prophets pointed to and we are his immediate audience! *(The word [1]**palai**, meaning, of old, ancient; from **palin** through the idea of oscillatory repetition or retrocession; anew, afresh. See Deut 32:1 "Give ear, Oh heavens, and I will speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. Deut 32:2 May my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distil as the dew, as the gentle rain upon the tender grass, and as the showers upon the herb.... Deut 32:18 You were unmindful of the Rock that begot you, and you forgot the God who gave you birth. Like in James 1:24, we have forgotten what manner of people we are - we have forgotten the face of our birth! Jesus successfully rescued the real you, not the pseudo, make-belief you! God has never believed less of you than what he was able to communicate in the sonship that Jesus mirrored and redeemed!*

*The word [2]**eschatos** means extreme; last in time or in space; the uttermost part, the final conclusion. What God said about 'you-manity' in Jesus defines eschatology! Jesus is what has been on the tip of the Father's tongue all along!)*

2 In sonship, God declares the Incarnate Word to be the heir of all things. He is, after all, the author of the ages. We have our beginning and our being in him. *(Sonship endorses heirship! See Heb 6:16-18.)*

3 Jesus is the crescendo of God's conversation; he gives context and content to the authentic thought. Everything that God had in mind for mankind is voiced in him. Jesus is God's language. He is the radiant and flawless expression of the person and [1]intent of God. He mirrors God's [2]character and exhibits his every attribute in human form. He is the voice of God announcing our redeemed innocence. By his own doing he accomplished purification for sins and sat down, enthroned in the boundless measure of his majesty in the right and of God as the executive authority; the force of the universe, upholding everything that exists. His voice is the dynamic that sustains the entire cosmos. *("Having accomplished purification of sins, he sat down ..." His throne is the very authority and proof of mankind's redeemed innocence!*
More than two thousand years ago the conversation that had begun before time was recorded—sustained in fragments of thought throughout the ages, whispered in prophetic language, chiseled in stone and inscribed in human conscience and memory—became a man. Beyond the tablet of stone, the papyrus scroll or parchment roll, human life has become the articulate voice of God. Jesus is the crescendo of God's conversation with humankind; he gives context and content to the authentic thought. Everything that God had in mind for man is voiced in him. Jesus is God's language. His name declares his mission. As Savior of the world he truly redeemed the image and likeness of the invisible God and made him apparent again in human form as in a mirror.
*The word [1]**doxa** from **dokeo**, opinion or intent defines the glory of God. The word [2]**charakter** from **charax** - to engrave - translated 'mark of the beast' in the book of Revelation. Either the character of the Father or the*

character of the fallen mind will influence our actions (hand) because it is what engages our thoughts (forehead).
Like in Isa 55:8-11 "Your thoughts are not my thoughts; therefore your ways are not my ways....but my word will incarnate, and saturate earth (flesh) just like the rain and the snow cancel the distance between heaven and earth, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth! It shall not return void but prosper in my purpose!")

4 No prophetic or shepherd-messenger can compete with him in rank or name. This is his rightful portion. *(Whatever the medium was through which God spoke of old, whether Angelic or prophetic - recorded Scripture is not superior to revealed sonship!)*

5 God did not address any of the prophetic messengers when he said, "You are my Son, today I have given birth to you! I am to you all that a Father can be to a son, and you are to me all that a son can be to a Father." *(See Acts 13:30-33 But God raised him from the dead; and for many days he appeared to those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people. And we bring you the Good News that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus; as also it is written in the second Psalm, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you." The resurrection of Jesus represents our new birth and our redeemed sonship. 1Pet 1:3)*

6 And when he leads his Son in triumphant parade, as his firstborn, before the whole inhabited world, he says, "Let all God's [1]prophetic shepherd-messengers [2]worship him in adoration." *(Paul quotes from the Septuagint since this verse was not in the Hebrew text, Deut 32:43 Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, and let all the angels of God worship him; rejoice ye Gentiles, with his people, and let all the sons of God strengthen themselves in him! [Here the Gentiles are proclaimed as joint heirs in equal sonship!] The word often translated angel, [1]**aggelos** has two components, **ago** to lead as a shepherd leads and **agele,** a herd of cattle or company. This word carries the idea of a messenger both in the shepherd as well as the*

prophetic context. The context here points to their prophetic role.
*The word often translated worship, [2]**proskuneo**, from **pros**, face to face and **kuneo**, which I would like to believe to be a derivation of **koinonia**, joint-participation; rather than **kuon** which means dog. I know, some tried to connect the idea of a dog licking its master's hand, which then became a possibility of kissing. I prefer a divine face to face koinonia encounter to define true worship! Although, I do believe that dogs, often referred to as man's best friend because of the very nature of their devotion to their master, has its Greek stem connected - **koinonia** is a friendship word to begin with and in it is therefore possible to see its etymological link. [See Extended commentary on the word **proskuneo** at the end of the Mirror.] This reminds of Ephesians 4:8, Scripture confirms that he led us as trophies in his triumphant procession on high; he [1]repossessed his gift [likeness] in mankind. Quote from the Hebrew text, Ps 68:18, [1]**lakachta mattanoth baadam**, thou hast taken gifts in human form, in Adam. [The gifts which Jesus Christ distributes to us he has received in us, in and by virtue of his incarnation. Commentary by Adam Clarke. We were born anew in his resurrection. [1 Pet 1:3, Hos 6:2] The fact that he ascended confirms his victorious descent into the deepest pits of human despair [Eph 4:9]. See John 3:13 [RSV], "No one has ascended into heaven but he who [1]descended from heaven, even the son of man." All mankind originate from above; we are [1]**anouthen**, from above. He now occupies the ultimate rank of authority, from the lowest regions, where he stooped down to rescue us from, to the highest authority in the heavens, having executed his mission to the full. Fallen mankind is fully restored to the authority of the authentic life of their design. [Eph 4:10])*

7 Of the Angelic shepherd-messengers he says, I inspire you to be swift like the wind and he fashions those who work his cause like a flash of lightning.

8 But when he addresses the Son he says, "Your throne, Oh God, extends beyond the ages. The scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom." *(Ps 45:6)*

9 "You love righteousness and detest evil. Therefore, Oh God, your God anointed you with the oil of joy to stand head and shoulders above your associates." *(Ps 45:7)*

10 "The earth traces its foundation back to you, the heavens also are your invention; they are all hand-crafted by you." *(Ps 102:25)*

11 They shall become obsolete, but you will remain; they shall show wear like an old garment,

12 and you will eventually roll them up as a mantle; they shall be replaced, but you remain "I am," and your years will never cease. *(Ps 102:26)*

13 Neither was it the prophetic messengers he had in mind when he said, "You are the extension of my right hand, my executive authority; take your position and witness how I make your enemies a place upon which you may rest your feet." *(Mt 22:42-45)*

14 What role do the shepherd-messengers play in God's strategy? They are all employed by God in the prophetic-apostolic ministry of the Spirit to help administer the inheritance of salvation that belongs to mankind.

Chapter 2

1 I have said all this to help you realize the tremendous importance of the message you have heard. Become completely engaged in its

meaning and thus you will never drift away from its influence and appeal.

2 The words which God spoke through prophetic messengers, were not to be taken lightly; considering the fact that the many and various ways in which God spoke to our fathers, *(1:1-3)* **did not compromise the initial intention and [1]resolve of God; neither did the prophetic announcement distract from the [2]ultimate conclusion of the word, [5]realized in the Son of God. The prophetic word [2]stands above reproach in every way; the same [3]source is confirmed in our hearing today, and is to be [4]judged in the same integrity.** *(Note the words, [1]**bebaios**, steadfast, from **baino**, to stand, and [2]**parabaino**, and [3]**parakoo** are used here; **para**, closest possible proximity and **baino**, footprint, to stand; and then also the word **para** combined with **akoo**, to hear, hearing from the original source. The word, [4]**endike**, from **en**, in, and **dike**, judged equal, two parties finding likeness in each other; a scale perfectly balanced. The word, [5]**lambano**, to receive, to realize, to grasp, to associate with.)*

3 No one can afford to underestimate and be blasé about this final message; a salvation of such magnificent proportions! There is no alternative [1]escape. Salvation as it is articulated in Christ, is the message that God spoke from the beginning, and it was confirmed again and again by those who heard him. *(We are [1]rescued from the lies that we believed about ourselves under the law of performance.)*

4 The purpose of God in every sign, miracle, and gift of the Holy Spirit was *(not to distract, but rather)* **to complement and confirm this great message of salvation.**

5 God never intended to put the shepherd-messengers in charge of this [1]new world order that we are speaking of. *(The [1]age and dispensation of mankind's realized salvation.)*

6 Somewhere in the Scriptures it is written, "What is it about the human species that God cannot get them out of his mind? What does he [1]see in the son of man, that so captivates his gaze?" *(The word [1]**episkeptomai**, from **epi**, continuous influence upon, and **skopos**, to view; to observe with interest.)*

7 He has made mankind all but equal to himself; he crowned them with his own glory and dignity, and appointed them in a position of authority over all the works of his hands." *(No Angelic shepherd-messenger can boast that. [Ps 8:4-6])*

8 God's intention was that human life should rule the planet. He subjected everything without exception to his control. Yet, looking at the human race, it does not seem that way at all.

9 But what is apparent, is Jesus *(but now God spoke to us in a son... [Heb 1:1-3])* **Let us then consider him in such a way, that we may clearly perceive what God is saying to mankind in him. In the death he suffered, he descended for a brief moment below the lowest ranked shepherd-messenger, in order to taste the death of the entire human race, and in doing so, to fulfill the grace of God and be crowned again** *(as a man, representing all mankind)* **with glory and highly esteemed honor.**

10 He [1]towers in conspicuous prominence far above all things. He is both their author and their conclusion. He now summons every son of his, through a perfected salvation, to his own glory. The extent of the suffering he bore is the measure of the perfection of the salvation over which he presides. *(The word, [1]**prepo**, means to tower; see also Heb 7:26. Who needs a gift, if you can have a reward?! The gift of God, wrapped up in the achievement of Christ, disarms every idea of reward!)*

11 Because both he who carried out the rescue mission, as well as those whom he saved and restored to innocence, [1]originate from the same source. He proudly introduces them as members of his immediate family. *(The word, [1]**ek**, always denotes origin, source, out of; see 1 Corinthians 1:30.)*

12 He says, "I will reveal your name to my brothers as being their own; this will fuel my praise in the Ekklesia, where I will celebrate God in song." *(This reminds of the emotional moment when Joseph revealed himself to his brothers. [Gen 45:1, Ps 22:22] In Hebrew: "I will inscribe [The word, **safar**, means enumerate, detail] your name, in the core of my kindred;" **tavek**, to cut to the core, sever, to bisect, a mathematical term which is the division of a given curve, figure, or interval into two equal parts, the one mirroring the other.)*

13 "I will win his friendship again with trust." He says in another place, "I am surrounded by the children which God has given me. I am one of them." (*Rom 5:10,* ***"****While we were still hostile, he reconciled us to himself.")*

14 Being one with the children of God presupposes the fact that he lived and died in a body exactly like theirs; being as fully human as we are, he is qualified to remove the dominion of death that was introduced [1]as a result of Adam's fall. *(Had he done all this in a superhuman body, the implications of his life, death and resurrection would be irrelevant. The word, [1]**diabolos**, usually translated Devil, literally, **dia** + **ballo**, translated as through the fall, or as a result of the fall.)*

15 As a fellow human, he re-defined death and delivered them from the lifelong dread of death. *(He brought final closure to the idea of judgment, which is what the system of works is all about. Heb 9:27,28. Evil is not immortal, love is. See 1 John 4:18.)*

16 This is why it is so relevant to understand that Jesus did not arrive on the planet in an Angelic form *(or a Superman-suit);* **he embraced the seed of Abraham.** *(The seed of faith-righteousness and not flesh-righteousness was preserved. See Galatians 3:16; also 4:21-31)*

17 He was obliged to completely assimilate every detail of his human family so that, in his position as Chief Priest, his compassion and integrity would prevail effectively over the [1]lies that they believed about themselves, to reconcile them with God. *(The Greek word, [1]**hamartia**, often translated as sin, is the word, **ha**, without, and **meros**, alloted portion; which is the stem of the word **morphe**, form; thus a distorted form; the lie that we believed about ourselves as a result of the futile ways we inherited from our fathers because of Adam's fall! See 1 Pet 1:18.)*

18 He experienced mankind's temptation with the same intensity, and under the same scrutiny, and was therefore qualified to represent them with immediate effect. *(To run to their rescue. See Heb 4:15,16.)*

Chapter 3

1 Friends, in the context of our co-inclusion in Christ, we are blameless; we [2]participate in his heavenly [1]identity. [4]Acquaint yourselves immediately and fully with Christ Jesus as the Ambassador and Chief Priest of our [3]confession. Our lives co-echo the logic of God's eternal conversation in him. *(The word, [1]**kaleo**, means to identify by name, to surname; the word, [2]**metochos**, comes from **meta**, meaning together with, and **echo**; to hold; to embrace; we echo his conversation. The word, [3]**homologeo**, comes from **homo**, the same, and **lego**, to speak. The word, [4]**katanoeio**, from **kata**, in this case a preposition denoting*

*direction towards, and **noeo**, to perceive, to contemplate; translates as fully acquainted. The Aorist imperative is used here, **katanoesate**, which implies the urgency to get something done once and for all.)*

2 Jesus is proof of God's workmanship; he exhibits God's persuasion concerning us. Jesus is what God believes about us. In Moses we have the prophetic model, demonstrated in his complete belief in God's purpose displayed in the meticulous attention to detail regarding the construction of the tabernacle. *(See Heb 8:5 The prophetic model mirrors God's meticulous attention to detail when it comes to every aspect of your life! You are his tabernacle; you are his address on planet earth!)*

3 Yet his fame surpasses the glory of Moses, because the one who designs and constructs the house gets the greater glory. *(Heb 1:4; John 1:15)*

4 Every house is an expression of someone's design; God is the ultimate architect and creator of all things. *(He owns the blueprint.)*

5 Moses took responsible charge of the administration of the tabernacle as a servant of, and witness to the prophetic voice.

6 But Christ is in charge of his own household, not as a servant but as a son. Understand this: we are part of this family; this is our real state now; we are not playing a role, or doing the dress rehearsal. We are no longer talking prophetically in figures and analogies. We are bursting with confidence. What good reason we now have for rejoicing! Our expectation, inspired by its foundation in prophecy, has now come to full fruition.

7 In Psalm 95:7-11, the Holy Spirit said, "Discern the voice of the shepherd. Grasp the urgency of what God is saying to you today! *(Sonship is the Father's language [Heb 1:1])*

8 Therefore, do not be calloused in heart as the people of Israel were: every time they faced any contradiction or temptation in the wilderness, their response immediately revealed their irritation, rather than their persuasion in God's belief.

9 Your fathers continued to scrutinize me suspiciously, examining me as though my intentions with them could not be trusted, even though they were eye-witnesses of my miraculous works for forty years.

10 They were a generation of people who grieved me deeply; instead of learning my ways, they habitually went astray in their hearts, intoxicated by their unbelief.

11 *(Even to this day they are still trapped in the wilderness of unbelief.)* **Hear the echo of God's cry though the ages, "Oh! If only they would enter into my rest."**

12 Make sure that none of you tolerates the poison of unbelief in your hearts, allowing callousness to distract and distance you from the living God. *(Unbelief, believing a lie about yourself and your salvation [Num 13:33, Josh 2:11]; unbelief exchanges the living God for a dead god of your own imagination. A calloused heart is a mind dominated by the senses.)*

13 Instead, [1]remind one another daily of your true identity; make today count! Do not allow callousness of heart to cheat any of you for even a single day out of your allotted portion. *("To encourage one another daily," from the word, [1]**parakaleo**, from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection, and **kaleo**, to identify by name, to surname. Jesus introduces the Holy Spirit in the same capacity, **parakletos** [Jn 14:16]*

Greek, ***hamartia,*** *sin,without form, or allotted portion. Sin would be anything that distracts from the awareness of our likeness.)*

14 Who we are in our [1]union with Christ must be taken to its ultimate conclusion. Do not cancel out your confident start, by making a poor finish. *(Starting in faith, then going back to the law of works. Again the word, [1]****metochos****, is used, from* ***meta****, meaning together with, and* ***echo****; to hold; to embrace; we co-echo Christ in our union with him.)*

15 Every day is an extension of God's today; hear his voice, do not harden your heart. The stubborn rebellion of Israel brought them nowhere.

16 The same people who experienced God's mighty act of deliverance out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses were the very ones who rebelled.

17 They grieved him for forty years in the wilderness and died there.

18 God's invitation does not exclude anyone from possessing the promise of his [1]rest; their unbelief does. Persuasion cannot be compromised by unbelief. *(Our believing a lie about ourselves cannot compromise what God knows to be true about us. Futile striving to become cannot match the bliss of discovering and celebrating who you already are by his design and redemption. [1]His rest declares his perfect likeness revealed and redeemed in human form. [See Gen 1:26, 31, 2:1, 2])*

19 The point is this: even though they survived by supernatural means in the wilderness for forty years, they failed to grasp what God had in mind for them. Their own unbelief disqualified them. *(They did not die because of an inferior salvation from Egypt; Pharaoh was taken out of the equation. They died because of unbelief, they believed a lie about*

themselves! [Num 13:33, Josh 2:11] Don't blame Pharaoh or the Devil for your own unbelief! You can experience God's supernatural provision and protection and yet remain outside his rest. The ultimate proof of faith is not experience of the supernatural, but entering into his rest. His rest celebrates his perfect work; it finds its definition and reference in Genesis 1:31, 1 Kings 6:7 and Colossians 2:9, 10. He longs for you to discover your own completeness and perfection as seen from his point of view. His rest is sustained in you by what he sees, knows, and says about you in reference to the finished work of Christ. Jesus is what God believes about you.)

Chapter 4

1 What a foolish thing it would be if we should now fail in a similar fashion to enter into his rest, where we get to celebrate the full consequences of our redemption. *(Why waste another lap in the same wilderness of unbelief!)*

2 What God has now spoken to us in Jesus confirms that we were equally included in the prophetic message which was proclaimed to our ancestors; their unbelief disqualified them from possessing the promise; they could not make the vital connection with the promise while they remained enslaved to their dwarfed opinions of themselves! Because the word did not mingle with faith, there was no catalyst to ignite its effect in their hearts, and so the promise did not profit them at all. *(They were absorbed with the typical fruit of the "I-am-not-tree - mentality"; they remained more persuaded about a perception of an inferior identity, than what they were about the largeness of their salvation from slavery, into the freedom of the authentic life of their design. Numbers 13:33)*

3 Faith *(not willpower)* **realizes our immediate access into God's rest. Hear the echo of God's [1]cry though the ages, "Oh! If only they would enter into my rest." His rest celebrates perfection. His work is complete; the [2]fall of mankind did not flaw its perfection.** *(Sadly most translations read, "I have sworn in my wrath that they will never enter into my rest!" The word, wrath is derived from* ***orge****, meaning passionate desire, any strong outburst of emotion. The text doesn't say "they will never enter my rest!" Both the Septuagint and the Hebrew text quoted here from Ps 94:11 in the Septuagint, which is Ps 95:11 in the Hebrew, read, "Oh that they would enter into my rest!" Greek* ***ei*** *and Hebrew,* ***אִם im.*** *See Heb 4:6 It is clear then that there is still an opportunity to enter into that rest which Israel failed to access because of their unbelief, even though they were the first to hear the Good News of God's intention to restore mankind to the same Sabbath that Adam and Israel had lost. (Both Adam and Israel believed a lie about themselves. [Num 13:33, Josh 2:11]) Heb 4:7 So, now again many years later, he points specifically to an extended opportunity when he announces in David's prophecy, "Today when hearing my voice, do not do so with a calloused heart." Heb 4:8 If Joshua, who led the new generation of Israel out of the wilderness of their parent's unbelief, had succeeded in leading them into the rest that God intended, David would not so many years later have referred to yet another day!*

First Adam failed to enter into God's finished work, and then Israel failed to enter into the consequence of their complete redemption out of slavery; and as a result of their unbelief, they perished in the wilderness. Now let us not fail in the same manner to see the completed work of the Cross. God desires for us to see the same perfection; what he saw when he first created mankind in his image and then again, what he saw in the perfect obedience [lit. hearing] of his Son. God is not "in his rest" because he is exhausted, but because he is satisfied with what he sees and knows concerning us! He now invites us with [1]urgent persuasion to enter into what he sees. His rest was not at risk. "His works were finished from the foundation of the world." The word, ***apo****, translates as away from, and [2]****kataballo****, cast down, the fall of mankind, sometimes translated, foundation [see notes on Eph 1:4] "This association goes back to before the fall of the world, his love knew that he would present us again face to face before him in blameless innocence." The implications of the fall are completely cancelled out. The*

entire "Fall" was a falling away in our minds from our true identity as image and likeness bearers of Elohim. Just like Eve, were we all deceived to believe a lie about ourselves, which is the fruit of the "I-am-not-tree ". We all, like sheep have gone astray. [Isa 53:6])

4 Scripture records the seventh day to be the prophetic celebration of God's perfect work. What God saw satisfied his scrutiny. *(Remember what happened on the 7th day? I celebrate you! I still do! Behold, it is very good, and God rested from all his work. [Gen 1:31, 2:2] God saw more than his perfect image in Adam, he also saw the Lamb and his perfect work of redemption! "The Lamb having been slain from the foundation of the world." [Rev 13:8] "That which has been is now; that which is to be, has already been." [Ecc 3:15] Also 2 Tim 1:9)*

5 In Psalm 95 the same seventh day metaphor is reiterated: "Oh, that they would enter into my rest!"

6 It is clear then that there is still an opportunity to enter into that rest which Israel failed to access because of their unbelief, even though they were the first to hear the Good News of God's intention to restore mankind to the same Sabbath that Adam and Israel had lost. *(Both Adam and Israel believed a lie about themselves. [Num 13:33, Josh 2:11])*

7 So, now again many years later, he points specifically to an extended opportunity when he announces in David's prophecy, "Today when hearing my voice, do not do so with a calloused heart. Be faith sensitive."

8 If Joshua, who led the new generation of Israel out of the wilderness *(where their parents perished through unbelief)***, had succeeded in leading them into the rest that God intended, David would not so many years later have referred to yet another day.** *(This moment still remains as an open invitation to mankind to enter into their rest: the living blueprint of*

their design. This confirms that the history of Israel was a mere shadow and prophetic type of that Promise that was yet to be fulfilled.)

9 The conclusion is clear: the original rest is still in place for God's people. *(The people of this planet are the property of God [Ps 24:1])*

10 God's rest celebrates his finished work; whoever enters into God's rest immediately abandons his own efforts to improve what God has already perfected. *(The language of the law is "do;" the language of grace is "done.")*

11 Let us therefore be [1]prompt to understand and fully appropriate that rest and not fall again into the same trap that snared Israel in [2]unbelief. *(The word, [1]**spoudatzo,** from **spoude**, I translated prompt, not labor; this word also reminds of the English word, speed; immediately! The word, [2]**apeitheia** [apathy] from **a** as a negative particle, not; and **peitho**, convince; is often, wrongly translated, disobedience.)*

12 The message God spoke to us in Christ, is the most life giving and dynamic influence in us, cutting like a surgeon's scalpel, sharper than a soldier's sword, piercing to the deepest core of human conscience, to the dividing of soul and spirit; ending the dominance of the sense realm and its neutralizing effect upon the human spirit. In this way a person's spirit is freed to become the ruling influence again in the thoughts and intentions of their heart. The scrutiny of this living Sword-Logos detects every possible disease, discerning the body's deepest secrets where joint and bone-marrow meet. *(The moment we cease from our own efforts to justify ourselves, by yielding to the integrity of the message that announces the success of the Cross, God's word is triggered into action. What God spoke to us in sonship (the incarnation), radiates his image and likeness in our redeemed innocence. [Heb 1:1-3] This word powerfully penetrates and impacts our whole being; body, soul and spirit.)*

13 The entire person is thoroughly exposed to his scrutinizing gaze. *(Psa 139:2, You know the deepest impulse of my thoughts.)*

14 In the message of the incarnation, we have Jesus the Son of God representing mankind in the highest place of spiritual authority. That which God has spoken to us in him is his final word. It is echoed now in our conversation.

15 As High Priest he fully identifies with us in the context of our frail human lives. Having subjected it to close scrutiny, he proved that the human frame was master over sin. His sympathy with us is not to be seen as excusing weaknesses which are the result of a faulty design, but rather as a trophy to mankind. *(He is not an example for us but of us.)*

16 For this reason we can approach the authoritative throne of grace with bold utterance. We are welcome there in his embrace, and are [1]reinforced with immediate effect in times of trouble. *(The word, [1]**boethei**a, means to be reinforced, specifically a rope or chain for frapping a vessel in a storm.*
In his incarnate human body Jesus represents us on the deepest possible level of every detail of our lives, spirit, soul and body. He victoriously faced every onslaught and scrutiny that we would ever possibly encounter!)

Chapter 5

1 Traditionally a person would be appointed from among their fellows to fulfill the office of High Priest in presenting gifts and sacrifices before God on behalf of the people and for their own sins. *(The High Priesthood of Christ is in sharp contrast to the system of priesthood the Jews were familiar with.)*

2 Every Jew felt reassured by the fact that High Priests themselves were hemmed in by the same sins that snared the people they represented. By virtue of their own limitations and inadequacies they were able to sympathize with the ignorance and waywardness of the people under them.

3 It was accepted practice that they would offer sacrifices for both their own and the people's sins.

4 This honorable office was not by self-appointment but, as in Aaron's case, the priest was summoned to the work by God.

5 Neither did Christ assume the high priestly office by his own presumption, but in fulfillment of the prophetic word *(in Psalm 2)* **concerning the Messiah, in which God, speaking through David, said, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you."**

6 Just as he has spoken in other Scriptures concerning this new priestly order: "Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." *(By translation, "the King of Righteousness," [Gen 4:18] In these Scriptures a new and eternal order of priesthood is introduced. [Ps 110:4] Jesus knew that his priesthood was prophesied in Scripture, a priesthood neither passed on by natural birth, nor ending with natural death.)*

7 When he faced the horror of his imminent death, he presented his urgent plea to God in an outburst of agonizing emotion and with tears. He prayed with urgent intent to be delivered from death, knowing that God was able to save him. He was heard because of his [1]firm grip on the prophetic word. *(Not because he feared, as some translations have put*

it, but because he [1]fully grasped that he was the fulfillment of Scripture; he knew that he would be raised on the third day; [Hos 6:2] ***eu + lambano.)***

8 Acquainted with sonship he was in the habit of [1]hearing from above; what he heard [2]distanced him from the effect of what he had suffered. *(The word often translated as obedience is the word, [1]**upoakuo**, under the influence of hearing, or hearing from above. "By" the things he suffered, [2]**apo**, away from, distanced. "Then I said, I read in your book what you wrote about me; so here I am, I have come to fulfill your will." [Heb 10:7])*

9 By his perfect hearing he forever freed mankind to hear what he had heard. *(He now makes it possible for us to hear in such a way that we may participate again in the full release of our original identity; the logos finding voice in the incarnation in us.)*

10 The authority of this high priestly order of Melchizedek [1]flows directly from God. *("Called" of God is from the word, [1]**prosagereo**, from **pros**, a preposition of direction, towards, face to face + **ago**, to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep, and + **reo** (Strong's number: 4482) to flow, or to run like water. His High Priestly office originates in God.)*

11 On this subject there remains so much to be said; but oh, how difficult it is to explain something to someone who hears with an indifferent attitude.

12 By now you *(Jews)* **should have been professors, able to teach the rest of the world, but you are still struggling with the ABC's of God's language in Christ.** *(Heb 1:1-3)* **The difference between the prophetic shadow and the real is like that between milk and meat in your diet. You cannot live on baby food for the rest of your lives!**

13 The revelation of righteousness is the meat of God's word. Babes live on milk *(the prophetic shadow of the real, which was to come)***; so does everyone who is not [1]pierced in the ear of his heart by the revelation of Christ.** *(The word,[1]**apeiros**, comes from **a,** negative, and **peira**, pierced, not pierced, tested by piercing. God's act of righteousness in Christ restored mankind to blameless innocence [Rom 1:17])*

14 This is the nourishment of the mature. They are those who have their faculties of perception trained as by gymnastic precision to distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant. *(The mature are those who know the difference between the shadow and the substance; between the futility of the law of works and willpower to work righteousness, and righteousness revealed by the faith of God in the finished work of Christ.)*

Chapter 6

1 Consequently, as difficult as it may seem, you ought to divorce yourselves from your sentimental attachment to the foreshadowing doctrine of the Messiah, which was designed to carry us like a vessel over the ocean of prophetic dispensation into the completeness of the fulfilled promise. A mind shift from attempts to impress God by your behavior, to realizing the faithfulness of God, is fundamental. There is no life left in the old system. It is dead and gone; you have to move on. *(Rom 3:27)*

2 All the Jewish teachings about ceremonial washings *(baptisms)***, the laying on of hands** *(in order to identify with the slain animal as sacrifice)***, and all teachings pertaining to a sin consciousness, including the final resurrection of the dead in order to face judgment, are no longer relevant.** *(All of these types and shadows were concluded and fulfilled in Christ, their living substance. His resurrection bears testimony to the*

judgment that he faced on mankind's behalf and the freedom from an obstructive consciousness of sin that he now proclaims. [Rom 4:25; Acts 17:31; Jn 12:31-33] Jesus said, "and when I am lifted up on the cross, I will draw all judgment unto me!" [Heb 9:28])

3 So it is with God's prompting that we advance. *(From the prophetic types and shadows of Scripture into the substance of what God has now spoken to us in sonship. Heb 1:1-3)*

4 Now it may be that someone may clearly see the light *(of the prophetic word)* **and participate in the Holy Spirit by already having sampled the heavenly gift,** *("The Prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired about this salvation; they inquired what person or time was indicated by the Spirit of Christ within them when predicting the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glory. [1Pet 1:10, 11])*

5 and they might even begin to feast on the beauty of the Word; already having experienced the power of the age of the promise that all were waiting for.

6 If such a person were to insist on relapsing into the old mindset of legalism, sin consciousness, and condemnation, it becomes impossible for him to be restored again and again to [1]repentance. The principle of repeated [1]repentance, as practiced under the law, does not make sense in the context of the new dispensation, because it would absurdly imply that Christ was being re-crucified and subjected to public shame over and over again. This new order is not to be confused with the old! Grace is not a cheap excuse for sin! C'mon, [1]awaken to faith-conciousness once and for all. You are free from the old rules and bondage of the duty-driven law of willpower. It is impossible for the old system to match the new! *(See Rom 3:27. Under the shadow system of the law, sacrifices were repeatedly slain because no permanent cleansing was possible. [Heb 10:1-4] The word often translated, repentance, is the word,*

*[1]**metanoia**, which does not imply pennace at all; let alone, re-pennance! It suggests a radical and total mindshift!)*

7 For when cultivated soil is soaked by frequent showers and produces the useful, life-giving crop expected by the farmer, the harvest brings much celebration.

8 What a complete disappointment though, if the same soil produces nothing but thorns and thistles; it is a worthless yield, and fit for burning; like a dream that has gone up in smoke.

9 Having said all this, my dear friends, I am fully convinced of God's love for you; what God accomplished in salvation on your behalf is beyond comparison to anything you were familiar with before. Salvation realities echo what the law could only foreshadow.

10 God is not unfair, neither is he unaware of the affectionate way in which you have honored his Name, and the diligence you have shown in your unrelenting religious service in keeping all the sacred rituals and ceremonies, even to this the present day.

11 I urge you to employ that same sincere devotion to now realize the fulfillment of everything that the old system anticipated.

12 We do not want you to behave like [1]illegitimate children, unsure of your share in the inheritance. Mimic the faith of those who through their patience came to possess the promise of their allotted portion. *(The word, [1]**nothros** comes from **nothos**, one born outside of wedlock, of a concubine or female slave. The child of the law and not of the promise. [Gal 3:29; Gal 4:22-31])*

13 Since God had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself. He could give Abraham no greater guarantee but the integrity of his own Being; this makes the promise as sure as God is.

14 Saying, "I will continue to speak well of you. I will confirm my intention always only to bless you, and to multiply you beyond measure." *(In blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you.)*

15 And so Abraham continued in patience and secured the promise.

16 It is common practice in human affairs to evoke a higher authority under oath in order to add weight to any agreement between parties, thereby [1]silencing any possibility of quibbling. *(The word [1]**peras**, means the end of all dispute; the point beyond which one cannot go.)*

17 In the same context we are confronted with God's eagerness to go to the last extreme in his dealing with us as heirs of his promise, and to cancel out all possible grounds for doubt or dispute. In order to persuade us of the unalterable character and finality of his resolve, he [1]confined himself to an oath. The promise which already belongs to us by heritage is now also confirmed under oath. *(The word [1]**mesiteo** is used, interposed or mediated. Compare **mesites**, mediator, from **mesos**, midst. In the incarnation, God has positioned himself in the midst, of his creation. See Galatians 3:20 With Abraham there was no middleman; it was just God! [The Mosaic law sopke the language of "the fallen mind" and required mediators - the Levitical priesthood - because it was an arrangement whereby mankind had a part and God had a part. Mankind's part was to obey the commandments and God's part was to bless. God's covenant with Abraham was a grace covenant pointing to the man Jesus Christ, in whom God himself would fulfil mankind's part and therefore needed no mediator apart from himself.*
In the incarnation Jesus fulfills both the proposal and the "I do!" M. Perez]

The Word is the promise; the Incarnate, crucified and risen Christ is the proof. He desires to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose. RSV .
Mankind was not redeemed from the Devil; a thief never becomes an owner; neither did Jesus do what he did to change his Father's mind about us! It was our minds that needed persuasion! God was not to be reconciled to his creation; God was in Christ when he reconciled the world to himself! 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

18 So that we are now dealing with two irreversible facts which make it impossible for anyone to prove God wrong; thus our persuasion as to our redeemed identity is powerfully reinforced. We have already escaped into that destiny; our expectation has come within our immediate grasp! *(The promise of redemption sustained throughout Scripture and the fulfillment of that promise in Jesus. See John 8:13-18* ***John 8:17*** *That should settle it for you since it is written in your law that the testimony of two, is true! [This combined witness of two is not true just because they agree, unless true in fact separately. But if they disagree, the testimony falls to the ground. Deuteronomy 17:6; and Deut 19:15. - Robertson. Also Rev 10:6 See notes on the Oath at the end of Rev 10 also the Notes on the Testimony of Jesus at the end of Rev 20.])*

19 Our hearts and minds are certain; anchored securely within the innermost courts of God's immediate Presence; beyond the *(prophetic)* **veil.**

20 By going there on our behalf, Jesus pioneered a place for us and removed every type of obstruction that could possibly distance us from the promise. In him we are represented for all time; he became our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. We now enjoy the same privileged access he has. *(He said, "I go to prepare a place for you so that you may be where I am. On that day you will no longer doubt that I and the Father are one; you will know that I am in the Father and you in me and I in you!"[John 10:30, 14:3, 20])*

Chapter 7

1 This is the same Melchizedek, King of Salem, Priest of the Supreme God, who met Abraham after he had defeated the four kings, and blessed him.

2 It was to him Abraham gave a tenth part of all the spoils. To begin to appreciate the significance of Melchizedek, we must first appreciate the meaning of his name: King of [1]Righteousness and King of [2]Peace. He is the one who administers God's promise and guarantees his ability to restore us to blameless innocence and wholeness! *(The word, [1]**dikaiosune**, meaning righteousness, from **dike**, two parties finding likeness in one another; [2]**eiren**e, means peace, from **eiro**, to join, to be set at one again, in carpentry it is referred to as the dove-tail joint, which is the strongest joint; to rest. In Hebrew, the word is [2]**shalom**, meaning completeness, wholeness, friendship. The Hebrew word for righteousness is [1]**tzedek**, referring to the wooden beam in a scale of balances. See commentary note on 2 Corinthians 6:14. The gospel is the revelation of the righteousness of God; it declares how God got it right to put mankind right with him. The English word righteousness comes from the Anglo Saxon word, 1rightwiseness, wise in that which is right.)*

3 There exists no record that can link Melchizedek to a natural father or mother; no birth certificate neither any account of his death, nor is there any record of his age. He resembles exactly the Son of God: his priesthood abides without beginning or end. *(This was at a time where detailed records were kept of every genealogy.)*

4 Now carefully consider this; the fact that Abraham the great Patriarch gave him a tenth portion of the spoil just goes to show what a

distinguished man Melchizedek must have been in Abraham's estimation, and what an impression he had made on him! *(In the Hebrew mind, Abraham was the most important individual standing as a reference to their identity and tradition.)*

5 Levi's sons, who were priests by natural descent, were obliged by law to receive tithes from their brethren, even though they were equals and shared a common Father in Abraham.

6 However, Melchizedek here receives tithes from everyone associated with Abraham, despite his having no natural link to their lineage. In the blessing that he pronounced over Abraham he recognized Abraham as the holder of God's promises. *(He confirmed the Good News of the promise of righteousness represented by Abraham's faith.)*

7 In principle, the junior always receives the blessing from the senior person.

8 In the case of the Levites, the duration of their priesthood is contemporaneous with their lifespan; but Scripture declares that Melchizedek's life has no end.

9 My reasoning is that even Levi, who would later receive the tithe, had already paid the tithe to Melchizedek in Abraham.

10 When Melchizedek and Abraham met, Levi was already present in the loins of his father. *(By the time Levi was born, Melchizedek was still alive; since he has no beginning of time nor end of life, in him time and eternity meet.)*

11 The point that I wish to make is this: if the Levitical priesthood, linked to the law of Moses, was a flawless system *(by succeeding in*

presenting mankind in blameless innocence before God), **there would surely be no further mention made of another order of priesthood presided over by Melchizedek and not by Aaron.** *(Ps 110:4)*

12 If there is a new order of priesthood, there must obviously be a new law. *(Melchizedek reveals a new basis for righteousness, related not to a person's effort to keep the law by their own willpower, but based upon the perfect work of Christ. This new law is called the law of faith [Rom 3:27], the law of perfect liberty [Jas 1:25], and the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus [Rom 8:2].)*

13 The person who is prophetically implicated as being the leader of this new priesthood belongs to a completely different tribe. This implies a complete break with tradition because no one from any tribe other than the Levites ever touched the altar.

14 History is clear that the Lord's lineage is from Judah, concerning whom Moses made no mention of a priestly office.

15 Of far greater significance and even more apparent is the fact that Jesus is mirrored in Melchizedek in whom the new priestly office arises.

16 This new office is not based on the law of precepts constrained by the frailty of the flesh, but by the authority of an indestructible life *(as demonstrated in his resurrection)*.

17 Thus Scripture confirms his perpetual priesthood exactly according to the pattern of Melchizedek.

18 This new order brought about an immediate end to the previous inferior and useless system of laws and commandments.

19 In its ability to reunite mankind with God, the law did not succeed even once; that is why it was superseded by the introduction of a far superior hope, a new order in which we are perfectly represented before God.

20 The previous priesthood was reduced to a mere tradition and passed on through natural descent from father to son. God had no say in the matter.

21 To give irrefutable integrity to the new Messianic priesthood, it was written, "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.'" *(Psalm 110:4)*

22 Melchizedek mirrors Christ in the highest office of priesthood as mediator between God and mankind. Jesus is now the living proof of God's covenanted pledge to benefit mankind in a far better way than under any previous arrangement.

23 The fact that there were so many priests shows how frequently they died and had to be replaced.

24 But there will be no successor to the Priesthood of Jesus because he remains forever.

25 Through him mankind's approach to God is forever secured; he continues to communicate the full accomplishment of their salvation.

26 As our High Priest he towers far above every other priestly system in conspicuous prominence and in holy character. His guileless, flawless life on earth was never compromised by sin, and he himself was exalted

above the heavens where he occupies the highest rank of authority in the eternal realm.

27 Unlike the previous high priests whose system of daily sacrifices was a constant reminder of their own failures, he had no need to sacrifice on his own behalf. The sacrifice he offered was himself for all; a sacrifice never to be repeated.

28 Under the law, men were appointed as high priests regardless of their weaknesses. The word of the oath, which succeeded the law, appointed the Son in perpetual perfection.

Chapter 8

1 The conclusion of all that has been said points us to an exceptional Person, who towers far above the rest in the highest office of heavenly greatness. He is the executive authority of the majesty of God. *(The right hand of God)***.**

2 The office he now occupies is the one which the Moses-model resembled prophetically. He ministers in the holiest place in God's true tabernacle of worship. Nothing of the old man-made structure can match its perfection.

3 The task of bringing gifts and sacrifices was the duty of every High Priest; with Jesus there would be no exception. *(He would bring the perfect sacrifice.)*

4 So here on earth, since he had no further offering to sacrifice *(in terms of the Jewish priesthood)***, he would not qualify to be a priest**

among the Jews, who still have their own priesthood functioning to offer the various gifts presented in accordance with the prescriptions of their law. *(Animal sacrifice was still practiced at the time of this writing, this continued until 70 AD when the temple was destroyed by the Romans.)*

5 They are maintaining a shadow service to God; one which was originally intended as a prophetic picture of the real, just as Moses followed instructions to erect a tabernacle consistent with the accurate pattern that God had shown him on the mountain. *(The prophetic model mirrors God's meticulous attention to detail when it comes to every aspect of your life! You are his tabernacle; you are his address on planet earth!)*

6 Jesus is now the fulfillment of all those promises towards which the old practices were merely pointing; as when an arrow strikes the bulls-eye. The dispensation he now administers is far superior to the old. He is the arbitrator of a more effective covenant; sanctioned by its being an announcement of far greater benefit to mankind.

7 If there had been no flaw in the first dispensation, why bother to replace it by a second?

8 He had already faulted the first system when he said through Jeremiah, "Behold the days will come when I will make an entirely new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

9 We will be making a new agreement, completely unlike the previous one based on external ritual. I had literally to take your hand and lead you out of slavery from Egypt; yet you refused to spontaneously follow or trust in me; I could never abide your indifference. *(God prophesies a covenant that will not be subject to the same defect of the previous one; or one that was spoon-fed to Israel and whose obligations they yet failed to meet. God had to take them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt. This time, he promised, I will put my laws into their minds and write them it upon their hearts ...)*

10 Now, instead of documenting my laws on stone, I will chisel them into your mind and engrave them in your inner consciousness; it will no longer be a one-sided affair. I will be your God and you will be my people, not by compulsion but by mutual desire.

11 Knowing me will no longer be a Sunday-school lesson, or something taught by persuasive words of doctrine, neither will they know me on account of family tradition or door to door evangelism *(each one telling his neighbor)***. Everyone, from the most unlikely to the most prominent people in society, will know me inwardly.**

12 This knowledge of me will never again be based on a sin-consciousness. My act of mercy, extended in Christ as the new Covenant, has removed every possible definition of sin from memory! *(God's memory of our sins was not what needed to be addressed in the redemption of our innocence. God did not have a problem with sin-consciousness, we had! He wasn't hiding from Adam and Eve in the garden; they were hiding from him! What needed to be addressed were our perceptions of a judgmental God, which were the inevitable fruit of the "I-am-not tree system " and mentality.*
Revenge, judgment, guilt, condemnation, inferiority, shame, regret, suspicion etc. could not be treated lightly; they are the enemies of romance! If rules could do it, then the law would be our opportunity to save ourselves, simply by making the correct decisions! If willpower could save us then Moses would be our savior! But, alas! "The good that I want to do I cannot!" See Rom 7
The scapegoat system would be introduced to somehow address and attempt to manage the consequences of sin. The typical "eye for and eye, tooth for a tooth" scenario would be substituted with the idea of a scapegoat. And so, every system of sacrifice carried some significance, but only as far as it pointed to its weaknesses in dealing with the root of the problem, and the need for a better solution! We needed more than forgiveness of our sins; we needed a savior who could rescue us from our sinfulness! This was not merely a means whereby we could get rid of the cobwebs; the spider needed

to be killed! The "pay now, sin later-system" had a very real sell-by date!
See Heb 10:2 & 3 Had it been possible to present the perfect offering that had the power to successfully remove any trace of a sin-consciousness, then the sacrificial system would surely have ceased to be relevant. But in the very repetition of these ritual sacrifices the awareness of guilt is reinforced rather than removed.
God does not demand sacrifice; he provides the sacrifice! The ultimate sacrifice for sins would never be something we did, or brought to God, to appeal to him; but the shocking scandal of the cross, is the fact that mankind is confronted with the extravagant, embarrassing proportions of the love of their Maker; he would go to the most ridiculous extreme to finally convince us of his heart towards us! In order to persuade us of our worth to him, he speaks the most severe scapegoat language: "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world!" This completely disarms religion! Suddenly there is nothing that we can do to persuade God about our sincere intentions; this is God persuading us of his eternal love dream!
God did not clothe Adam with the skin of an animal because of a divine need to be appeased, but because of their unconditional love for Adam; they spoke the language of Adam's own judgment: Adam, not God, was embarrassed about his nakedness. The clothing was not to make God look at Adam differently, but to make Adam feel better about himself! And ultimately it was to prepare Adam for the unveiling of the mystery of mankind's redemption in the incarnation. Here Deity would clothe themselves in human skin in a Son, and the Lion of Judah would become the Lamb of God in order to free our minds to re discover his image and likeness in our skin! Mankind is tailor-made for God!)
See also ***1 Peter 1:19 but you were redeemed with the priceless blood of Christ; he is the ultimate sacrifice; spotless and without blemish. He completes the prophetic picture!*** *(In him God speaks the most radical scapegoat language of the law of judgment, and brings final closure to a dead and redundant system! In Psalm 40:6,7, it is clearly stated that God does not require sacrifices or offerings! Jesus is the Lamb of God! He collides victoriously with the futile sacrificial system whereby offerings are constantly made to the pseudo, moody, monster gods of our imagination! This is the scandal of the cross! God does not demand a sacrifice that would change the way he thinks about mankind; he provides the sacrifice of*

himself in Christ in order to forever eradicate sin-consciousness from our minds and radically change the way we think about our Maker, one another and ourselves! [Sin-consciousness is a works-based consciousness which is the currency of religion.])

13 He announces the new dispensation to confirm that the old shadow system has been rendered redundant.

Chapter 9

1 The first system followed a specific pattern of worship which was conducted in a specific and sacred place of worship. *(The detail of which spoke in shadows of the new.)*

2 The first tented area was called the Holy Place; the only light here came from the lamp-stand illuminating the table upon which the [1]showbread was presented. *(The lamp-stand was a beautifully crafted golden chandelier portraying budding and blossoming almond branches. Remember that this is also what Jeremiah saw in Jeremiah 1:12, when God said, "I am awake over my word to perform it." The same Hebrew word is used here,* **דקש *shaqad***; *the almond was called the "awake tree," because it blossomed first, while the other trees were still in their winter sleep. The Hebrew word* **מחל מינפה *lechem haPānīm,*** *face bread, or bread of the presence. What happened to us in Christ is according to God's eternal purpose [*[1]***prothesis***,] which he has shown in every prophetic pointer and shadow; in the Hebrew tradition the showbread pointed to the true bread from heaven, the authentic word that proceeded from the mouth of God - Jesus, the incarnate word - sustaining the life of our design. The showbread pointed towards the daily sustenance of life in the flesh as the ultimate tabernacle of God, realized in the account of Jesus with the two men from Emmaus; their hearts were burning with resonance and faith while he*

opened the Scriptures to them, and then around the table their eyes were opened to recognize him as the fulfillment of Scripture, their true meal incarnated [Lk 24:27-31]. Mankind shall not live by bread alone, but by the authentic thought of God, the Word proceeding from his mouth, the original intent, his image and likeness incarnated, revealed, and redeemed in human life. See note to 1 Cor 11:34.)

3 The second veil led to the inner tent known as the Most Holy Place.

4 Therein were the golden altar of incense, and the ark of the covenant. The [1]box was completely covered in gold, both inside and out. In it were kept the golden jar with a sample of the [2]miracle manna from the wilderness, as well as the budding rod of Aaron, as also the two engraved tablets of stone with the ten commandments of the Covenant. *(A"fire-pan" was for the purpose of carrying fire, in order to burn incense on the day of Atonement once a year in the ultimate place of worship. The word, [1]**kibotos**, the wooden box, is the same word used for Noah's ark; the container of mankind's redemption. Gen 6:14 The [2]**manna** prophetically pictured the true bread from heaven, not the bread that mankind's labor produces. John 4:35, 38.)*

5 Hovering above and over the ark of the Covenant were the two cherubim, images of glory, intent upon the mercy seat that [1]covered the box on which the blood was sprinkled once a year by the High Priest to cover the sins of the people. Every detail is significant but cannot be discussed at length in this writing. *(The Hebrew word, [1]**kopher**, means to cover (specifically with bitumen), figuratively to cover by legal and equal exchange in order to restore a previously disturbed balance. The rule was an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life, etc.*
The ark represented a place of mercy where atonement would be made. Innocence had to be achieved at a cost equal to the replacement value of the peace sought between the different parties. See also Genesis 6:14, where the same word denotes the [1]covering of Noah's ark with pitch. The Cross cannot be taken out of the equation of atonement. The first animal

sacrifice was when God used an animal's skin to [1]cover Adam and Eve's nakedness. God did not clothe Adam with the skin of an animal because of a divine need to be appeased, but because of their unconditional love for Adam; they spoke the language of Adam's own judgment: Adam, not God, was embarrassed about his nakedness. The clothing was not to make God look at Adam differently, but to make Adam feel better about himself! And ultimately it was to prophetically prepare Adam for the unveiling of the mystery of mankind's redemption in the incarnation. Here Deity would clothe themselves in human skin, in a Son; and the Lion of Judah, would become the Lamb of God, in order to free our minds to re-discover his image and likeness in our skin! See 1 Peter 1:2.)

6 In the context of this arrangement the priests performed their daily duties, both morning and evening. *(The daily duties included their dress and preparations, baptisms, sacrificial offerings, lighting and trimming, removing the old showbread and replacing it with fresh bread, and sprinkling the blood of the sin offerings before the veil of the sanctuary.)*

7 The routine was interrupted only once a year, when the High Priest alone would enter the second tent, the most sacred place of worship, with the blood sacrifice for his own and the people's accumulated errors.

8 Already in this arrangement the Holy Spirit indicated that there was a yet more sacred way, beyond the first tent, that was still to be opened. While the first pattern was still being upheld, its fulfillment in truth could not yet commence.

9 The tabernacle pattern of that time was an analogy of the hitherto imperfect system in which the gifts and sacrifices presented failed completely to cleanse the conscience of the worshipper.

10 All these external rituals pertaining to food and drink and the various ceremonial baptisms and rules for bodily conduct were imposed upon them until the anticipated time of restoration; the foretold moment when [1]all that was crooked would be made straight and restored to its natural and original condition. *(This word, [1]**diothosis**, is only used in this one place in the New Testament; what was crooked will be made thoroughly straight, restoring to its natural and normal condition something which in some way protrudes or has gotten out of line, as broken or misshapen limbs.)*

11 But now Christ has made his public appearance as High Priest of a perfect tabernacle. The good things that were predicted have arrived. This new tabernacle does not derive from its shadow type, the previous man-made one. It is the reality. *(The restoration of God's original dwelling place in human life is again revealed!)*

12 As High Priest, his permission to enter the Holy Place was not secured by the blood of beasts. By his own blood he obtained access on behalf of the human race. Only one act was needed for him to enter the most sacred place of grace and there to institute a ransom of perpetual consequence. *(The perfection of the redemption he secured needs no further sacrifice. There are no outstanding debts; there is nothing we need do to add weight to what he has accomplished once and for all. The only possible priesthood activity we can now engage in is to continually bring a sacrifice of the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his Name; no blood, just fruit, even our acts of self-sacrifice, giving of time and money, etc. are all just the fruit of our constant gratitude!)*

13 The blood of beasts and the ashes of the burnt sacrifice of a heifer could only achieve a very temporal and surface cleansing by being sprinkled on the guilty. *(The word for heifer, is **damalis**, from **damatzo**, to tame; this was the most dear and expensive sacrifice. She was a strong, pristine, spotless female calf, she was raised as a family pet; "A Little Princess!" This was the best that the law-system could present; yet, no*

inner purging of conscience was possible; only the sense of temporal relief; whilst knowing that the entire process would have to be repeated again and again! In this arrangement, God addressed the dilemma of our sin consciousness; the deep-seated stain that it had left needed to be thoroughly exposed, and then brought to closure. The shadow system with its imperfections, as a possible means of obtaining a lasting and meaningful sense of innocence, had to be exhausted; ultimately proving that no sacrifice that anyone can bring at any expense of their own, could possibly match the sacrifice of God giving himself as scapegoat to the human race in order to persuade us that his love for us would go to the scandalous extreme, where we are finally confronted with the fact that it is not in a sacrifice that we bring where God's mind is favorably influenced towards us; but in the shocking sacrifice of himself, where he forever, in the most radical language, impact our ideas and thoughts about the Father, Son and Spirit's estimate of us. There is nothing dearer in the universe to them, but our redeemed innocence and our individual value realized! See Colossians 2:14,15 in the Mirror Bible.)

14 How much more effective was the blood of Christ, when he presented his own flawless life through the eternal Spirit before God, in order to purge your conscience from its frustration under the [1]cul-de-sac rituals of the law. There is no comparison between a guilt and duty-driven, dead religious system, and the vibrancy of living your life free from a sin-consciousness! This is what the new testament priesthood is all about! *(Dead works, [1]**nekros ergon.** A dead, religious-routine system can never compete with the resurrected Christ now realized in you.)*

15 As [1]fully representing mankind, Jesus's death brought an end to the old, and introduced the New Testament. He thus redeemed us from the transgressions recorded under the first Covenant and identified us as heirs; qualifying us to participate in the full inheritance of all that he obtained on our behalf. *(The concept of a [1]mediator, **mesites**, in this analogy, is not a go-between, as if Jesus had to change the Father's mind about us; it was our minds that needed to be persuaded! Jesus did not save*

us from God; he is fully God and fully man, and in him mankind is most completely represented. See Galatians 3:20; also Hebrews 6:16-20)

16 For a will to take effect the person who made it must be dead.

17 Before the testator dies the will is merely a future promise with no immediate benefit to anyone.

18 Even the first Covenant required a death for its actualization; the blood of the animal sacrifice represented that death.

19 After Moses uttered the detailed requirements of the law in the hearing of all the people, he would take the blood of calves and of goats, mix it with water and, dipping a bunch of hyssop bound with scarlet wool into the blood-basins, sprinkle the blood on the book and upon the people.

20 While performing this cleansing ritual, Moses would solemnly declare, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has made binding upon you."

21 The same blood was then also sprinkled on the tabernacle, and on all the furniture and ministry utensils.

22 Thus, according to the law, all purging was by means of blood; [1]forgiveness was specifically associated with the shedding of blood. *(The idea of closure to the particular case was communicated in the death of an innocent victim. The blood symbolizes this currency. See 1 Pet 1:18,19. The word translated forgiveness, or remission is the word [1]**aphiemi**, from **apo**, away from, and **hieimi** an intensive form of **eimi**, I am; thus forgiveness is in essence a restoring of one's true 'I-am-ness.' The injury, insult, shame, hostility or guilt would no longer define the individual.)*

23 If the methods of the law were only a shadow prefiguring the heavenly reality, the fulfillment of these examples surely requires a stronger and more efficacious sacrifice.

24 In Christ we have so much more than a type reflected in the tabernacle of holy places set up by human hands. He entered into the heavenly sphere itself, where he personally represents mankind face to face with God.

25 Neither was it necessary for him to ever repeat his sacrifice. The High Priests under the old shadow system stood proxy with substitute animal sacrifices that had to be offered every year.

26 But Jesus did not have to suffer again and again since the [1]fall of the world; the [2]single sacrifice of himself in the fulfillment of history now reveals how he has brought sin to naught. *(The word, [1]**kataballo**, meaning "to fall away, to put in a lower place," instead of **themelios**, meaning "foundation" [see Eph 2:20]; thus, translated "the fall of the world," instead of "the foundation of the world." The entire "Fall" was a falling away in our minds from our true identity as image and likeness bearers of Elohim. Just like Eve, were we all deceived to believe a lie about ourselves, which is the fruit of the "I-am-not-tree ". We all, like sheep have gone astray. [Isa 53:6]) [2]God's Lamb took away the sins of the world!)*

27 The same goes for everyone: a person dies only once, and then faces judgment.

28 Christ died once and faced the judgment of the entire human race! His second appearance *[in his resurrection]* **has nothing to do with sin, but to reveal salvation for all to [1]fully embrace him.** *(To fully embrace, [1]**apek-dechomai**, from **apo**, away from [that which defined me before] and*

***ek**, out of, source; and **dechomai**, to take into one's hands to accept whole-heartedly, to fully embrace. In his resurrection he appeared as Savior of the world! Sin is no longer on the agenda, for the Lamb of God has taken away the sins of the world! Jesus Christ fulfilled mankind's destiny with death! [1 Cor 15:3-5, Rom 4:25, Acts 17:30, 31.])*

Note: *Jesus did not come to condemn the world. The Father judges no one for he has handed over all judgment to the Son, who judged the world in righteousness when he took their judgment in his own body. Now in his appearance in us, his body, his mission is to unveil the consequence of redemption through the Holy Spirit.*

*Many Scriptures have been translated and interpreted with only a futuristic value and have consequently neutralized many, like the Jews, to diligently wait for the Messiah still to come. The Messiah has come once and for all as Messiah. Jesus appeared again after his resurrection and now his resurrection life in us as his body is the extension of his second appearance; God making his appeal to an already reconciled world to "be reconciled!" [Acts 3:26, 2 Cor 5:19, 20] The church continued to postpone the reality that God introduced in Christ. We are now already fully represented in his blamelessness! The second coming as doctrine is not in context of these chapters at all! [See 1 Pet 1:10-13] The Aramaic word, **maranatha**, means our Lord has come!*

*See also 1 Thessalonians 2:19 We expect nothing less in the context of the gospel than you enjoying a face to face encounter in the [1]immediate presence of our Lord Jesus Christ! This is our delight and wreath of honor! (The word [1]**parousia** speaks of the immediate presence of the Lord! From **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **eimi,** I am! There is not even a hint of judgment or punishment in this word! Please do not believe everything you read in Strongs! "G3952 parousia from the present Participle of G3918; a being near, that is, advent; often, return; specifically of Christ to punish Jerusalem, or finally the wicked."!!??))*

Chapter 10

1 For the law presented to us a faint shadow, outlining the promise of the blessings anticipated in the coming of Christ, even detailing its future significance. The mere sketch however, could never be confused with the actual object that it represented. The annual sacrificial rites as shadow of the eventual object would always leave the worshipper feeling inadequate and be a reminder year after year of the sinfulness of mankind. *(Barnes Notes on Heb 10:1, "For the law having a shadow: That is, the whole of the Mosaic economy was a shadow; for so the word "Law" is often used. The word "shadow" here refers to a rough outline of anything, a mere sketch, such as a carpenter draws with a piece of chalk, or such as an artist delineates when he is about to make a picture.*

He sketches an outline of the object which he desires to draw, which has "some" resemblance to it, but is not the "very image;" for it is not yet complete. The words rendered "the very image" refer to a painting or statue that is finished, where every part is an exact representation of the original. The "good things to come" here refer to the future blessings which would be conferred on mankind by the Gospel. The idea is, that under the ancient sacrifices there was an imperfect representation; a dim outline of the blessings which the Gospel would impart to people. They were a typical representation; they were not such that it could be pretended that they would answer the purpose of the things themselves which they were to represent, and would make those who offered them perfect.

Such a rude outline; such a mere sketch, or imperfect delineation, could no more answer the purpose of saving the soul than the rough sketch which an architect makes would answer the purpose of a house, or than the first outline which a painter draws would answer the purpose of a perfect and finished portrait. All that could be done by either would be to convey some distant and obscure idea of what the house or the picture might be, and this was all that was done by the Law of Moses."

The Gospel is no longer a future prediction; it is a now and relevant revelation. We are talking good news, and not just good predictions! News already happened! Every definition of distance or delay is cancelled in Christ)

2 Had it been possible to present the perfect offering that had the power to successfully remove any trace of a sin-consciousness, then the sacrificial system would surely have ceased to be relevant.

3 But in the very repetition of these ritual sacrifices the awareness of guilt is reinforced rather than removed.

4 The conclusion is clear: animal sacrifices failed to remove anyone's sinfulness or their sin-consciousness.

5 So when Jesus, the Messiah, arrives as the fulfillment of all the types and shadows, he quotes Psalm 40:6-8, and says, "In sacrifices and offerings God takes no pleasure; but you have ordained my incarnation!" *(Adam Clark writes the following commentary: A body hast thou prepared me - The quotation of this and the two following verses by the apostle, is taken from the Septuagint, with scarcely any variety of reading: they are widely different in verbal expression in the Hebrew. In the Hebrew text David's words are,* ***oznayim caritha li,*** *which we translate, My ears hast thou opened; but the writer of this Epistle quotes,* ***soma*** *[body]* ***de katertiso moi****. How is it possible that the Septuagint and the apostle should take a meaning so completely different from the sense of the Hebrew? Dr. Kennicott has a very ingenious conjecture here: he supposes that the Septuagint and Apostle express the meaning of the words as they stood in the copy from which the Greek translation [Septuagint] was made; and that the present Hebrew text is corrupted in the word* ***aznayim****, ears, which has been written through carelessness for* ***az gevah****, then, a body... The first syllable,* ***az****, Then, is the same in both; and the latter,* ***nyim****, which, joined to* ***az*** *makes* ***oznayim****, might have been easily mistaken for* ***gevah****, body; the letter* ***nun*** *being very like the letter* ***gimel****;* ***yod*** *like* ***vau****; and* ***he*** *like final* ***mem****; especially if the line on which the letters were written in the MS. happened to be blacker than ordinary, which has often been a cause of mistake, it might then have been easily taken for the under-stroke of the* ***mem****, and thus give rise to a corrupt reading; add to this, the root* ***carah*** *signifies as well to prepare, as to open, bore, etc. On this supposition the ancient copy translated by the Septuagint, and followed by the apostle, must*

have read the text thus: ***az gevah charitha li****;* ***soma de katertitsoo moi - Σωμα δε κατηρτισω μοι****. Then a body thou hast prepared me: thus the older Hebrew text, the version of the Septuagint, and the Apostle, will agree in what is known to be an indisputable fact in Christianity; namely, that Christ was incarnated for the sin of the world.*
The Ethiopic has nearly the same reading: the Arabic has both, "A body hast thou prepared me, and mine ears thou hast opened." But the Syriac, the Chaldee, and the Vulgate, agree with the present Hebrew text; and none of the MSS. collated by Kennicott and De Rossi have any various reading on the disputed words.
It is remarkable, that all the offerings and sacrifices which were considered to be of an atoning or cleansing nature, offered under the law, are here enumerated by the psalmist and the apostle, to show that none of them, nor all of them, could take away sin; and that the grand sacrifice of Christ was that alone which could do it.
Four kinds are here specified, both by the psalmist and the apostle: viz. Sacrifice, zebach, θυσια; Offering, minchah, προσφορα; Burnt-Offering, olah, ὁλοκαυτωμα; Sin-Offering, chataah, περι ἁμαρτιας. It was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats, etc. should take away sin.)

6 None of the prescribed offerings and sacrifices, including burnt offerings and sin offerings were your request. *(For the use of the word 'request' here, and pleasure in verse 6, see the Hebrew words used in Psalm 40:6, Chapetz - pleasure, delight and Shawal, request, demand.)*

7 "Then I said, I read in your book what you wrote about me; so here I am, I have come to fulfill my destiny." *(Ps 40:7, Lk 4:17, Lk 24:27, 44.)*

8 Having said what he did in the above quote, that the prescribed offerings and sacrifices were neither his desire nor delight, he condemned the entire sacrificial system upheld by the law.*(These only served to sustain a sin-consciousness and was of no redemptive benefit to anyone.)*

9 Also by saying, "I am commissioned to fulfil your will," he announces the final closure of the first in order to introduce the second. *(Grace replaces the law; innocence supersedes sin-consciousness.)*

10 So, by this fulfilled will, in the mind of God and by his resolution he declares mankind immediately sanctified through one sacrifice; the presentation of the body of Jesus Christ.

11 Every priest continually repeats the same daily rituals and sacrifices, knowing that they have always proved incapable of removing sins.

12 But now we have an exception. In complete contrast to the previous priesthood, this priest offered a single sacrifice of perpetual efficacy for sins. To celebrate the perfection of what was attained through his single sacrifice, he sat down as the executive authority of God. *(God's right hand [Heb 1:3]. He occupies the highest seat of dominion to endorse mankind's innocence! "Having accomplished purification of sins, he sat down.")*

13 His seat of authority is established on the sure expectation that all his enemies will be subdued. He will stand in triumph, his feet on the neck of his enemy.

14 By that one perfect sacrifice he has [1]perfectly [2]sanctified sinful mankind forever. *(The word, [2]**hagiazomenous**, means sanctify, the present Participle describes an action thought of as simultaneous with the action of the main verb, "perfectly;" [1]**teteleioken**, in the Perfect Tense denotes an action which is completed in the past, but the effects of which are regarded as continuing into the present. [See Heb 2:11] For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin.)*

15 This is exactly what the Holy Spirit now endorses in us having already foretold it in Scripture. *(Jer 31:33, 34)*

16 This is my covenant that I will make with you during those days, says the Lord; I will greatly advantage you by [1]giving my laws in your hearts and engrave them in your inmost thoughts. *(The word, [1]**didomi**, means to give someone something to their advantage.)*

17 This is final: I have no record of your sins and misdeeds. I cannot recall them. *(Nothing in God's reference of mankind, reminds him of sin. See Hebrews 8:12)*

18 Sins were dealt with in such a thorough manner that the idea of having to add any further offerings in future would never again be considered. Nothing that we can personally sacrifice could add further virtue to our innocence.

19 Brethren, this means that through what the blood of Jesus communicates and represents, we are now welcome to access this ultimate place of sacred encounter with unashamed confidence.

20 A brand new way of life has been introduced. Because of his flesh torn on the cross. *(Our own flesh can no longer be a valid excuse to interrupt the expression of the life of our design.)*

21 We have a High Priest in the house!

22 We are free to approach him with absolute confidence, fully persuaded in our hearts that nothing can any longer separate us from him. We are invited to draw near now! We are thoroughly cleansed, inside and out, with no trace of sin's stains on our conscience or

conduct. The sprinkled blood purges our inner thought-patterns; our bodies also are bathed in clean water. *(Our behavior bears witness to this.)*

23 Our conversation echoes his persuasion; his faithfulness backs his promises. *(His integrity inspires our confession. "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful; :24 and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works." RSV)*

24 Let us also think of creative ways by which we can influence one another to find inspired expression in doing things that benefit others. Good actions give voice and volume to the love of God.

25 In the light of our free access to the Father, let us extend that embrace to one another. Our gatherings are no longer a repetition of tradition but an essential fellowship where we remind one another of our true identity. Let us do so with greater urgency now the day has dawned in our understanding. *(The prophetic shadow has been replaced by the light of day.)*

26 To know the truth, as we now do, and still persist in deliberate sinning is to openly discard God's provision in Christ. But unlike the old sacrificial system, no further sacrifice can be offered in the new.

27 To despise and reject his gift inevitably brings the self-inflicted judgment of the law of works; this destructive judgment devours lives like stubble in a fire. *(To know that Jesus bore your judgment and still prefer to carry it yourself by remaining under the law is absurd!)*

28 There was no mercy under Moses's law; two or three witnesses could sentence a suspect to death. *([See also Heb 6:6-17; Jas 2:13] Judgment shows no mercy to those who do not walk in mercy, but (the law*

of liberty) mercy fears no judgment. [Gal 5:22, 23] There is no law against love. [See also 1 Jn 4:18])

29 With how much closer scrutiny do you suppose someone will be viewed who has trampled the Son of God underfoot and scorned the blood of the Covenant by publicly insulting the Spirit of grace. *(Preferring the law above the revelation of grace brings you back under judgment of the law without the possibility of further sacrifice. There is no alternative mercy outside of God's grace gift in Christ.)*

30 As Jews we are familiar with Scripture, which says that God is the revealer of righteousness, jealous to restore the order of peace. He is the umpire of his people. *(Deut 32: 36)*

31 What a foolish thing it would be to deliberately shun the hands that bled for your salvation.

32 Remember how strongly you stood against painful contradictions in those early days when you first saw the light.

33 As if on a theatre stage, you were publicly ridiculed and afflicted for your faith, both personally and in your association with others that were similarly abused.

34 I remind you of the sincere sympathy you felt for me then, during my imprisonment; how you also cheerfully accepted the plundering of your personal property. You were convinced that the treasure you have within you is of far greater and more permanent value, secured as it is in the heavenly dimension.

35 I urge you not to relinquish your confident conversation. Persuasion gives substance to every definition of reward and confirms

what grace reveals.

36 Employ patience as you continue to echo the poetry of God's desire for you to possess the promise. *(The word, [1]**poeima**, means make poetry of the promise; your doing is to echo the promise and the desire of God! The promise is a gift of faith and not a reward for behavior!)*

37 Time becomes insignificant once the promise is realized. Remember how the promise of his imminent appearance was recorded in Scripture. *(The arrival of Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise and the realizing of righteousness by faith, as Habakkuk prophesied. [Hab 2:2-4.] He is the fullness of time. [Gal 4:4])*

38 Righteousness by God's faith defines life; reverting to the law of works grieves God's work of grace. *(Instead of reading the curse when disaster strikes, Habakkuk realizes that the Promise out dates performance as the basis to mankind's acquittal. Deuteronomy 28 would no longer be the motivation or the measure of right or wrong behavior! "Though the fig tree does not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fails and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like hinds' feet, he makes me tread upon my high places. [Hab 2:4, 3:17-19 RSV])*

39 But we are not of the quitting kind; we possess a persuasion of soul that believes against all the odds.

Chapter 11

1 Persuasion confirms confident expectation and proves the unseen world to be more real than the seen. Faith celebrates as certain what hope visualizes as future. *(The shadow no longer substitutes the substance. Jesus is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of everything the Prophets foretold. The unveiling of Christ in human life completes mankind's every expectation. Col 1:27.)*

2 People of previous generations received the testimony of their hope in faith. It was faith that made their hope tangible. *(Only the Messiah can give substance to the Messianic hope. No substitute will suffice!)*

3 Faith alone explains what is not apparent to the natural eye; how the ages were perfectly framed by the Word of God. Now we understand that everything visible has its origin in the invisible.

4 It was faith that made the difference between the sacrifices of Abel and Cain, and confirmed Abel's righteousness. God bore witness to righteousness as a gift rather than a reward! Even though he was murdered, his faith continued to be a most relevant prophetic voice. *(See Heb 12:24)*

5 Enoch enjoyed God's favor by faith, in spite of Adam's fall; he proved that faith defeats death. *(His absent body prophesied the resurrection of Christ; faith does not die!)*

6 There is no substitute [1]reward for faith. Faith's return exceeds any other sense of achievement. Faith knows that God is; those who desire to respond to his invitation to draw near, realize by faith that he is life's most perfect gift. *(If he is the desired one then no substitute will suffice. Jesus Christ defines God's faith; he is Emmanuel. He is the substance and evidence of all that God believes. Jesus is what God believes. The word translated "reward" is the word [1]**misthapodotes**. This word is only used once in the Bible and is an interesting combination of two words, **misthoo**,*

*a wage and **apodidomi** to give away; righteousness is revealed by faith as a gift and not as a reward for keeping the law; faith pleases God, not good or bad behavior.)*

7 Noah received Divine instruction to save his household from judgment; faith prompted him to construct the Ark immediately, long before the rains were evident. His faith demonstrated the difference between judgment and justification.

8 By faith Abraham acknowledged the [1]call of God which gave him his identity and destiny, as evidence of his inheritance as he journeyed into the unknown. *(The word, [1]**kaleo**, means to call, to identify by name, to surname.)*

9 Nothing but his faith seemed permanent while Abraham camped in tents like a stranger in the land of promise. His sons Isaac and Jacob joined him as sojourners; equally persuaded that they were heirs of the same promise.

10 His faith saw a city with permanent foundations, designed and constructed by God.

11 Sarah's testimony of faith is just as amazing: she conceived and bore a child when it was humanly impossible. She believed that God would be faithful to his promise, and [1]gave that belief authority over her life. *(The word, [1]**hegeomai**, strengthened form of **ago**, to officially appoint in a position of authority.)*

12 Faith brought into reality an offspring beyond calculation; from one as good as dead children would be born more numerous than the stars and as impossible to count as the grains of sand on every distant sea shore. *(The uttermost parts of the earth, bordered by the sea shore, will*

know the blessing of righteousness by faith which is the blessing of Abraham, meant for the entire world.[1 Pet 1:3])

13 These heroes of faith all died believing. Although they did not witness the promise in their lifetime, they saw its fulfillment in the future and embraced the promise by their persuasion. Convinced of its reality; they declared by their way of living that they were mere sojourners and pilgrims in a shadow land whose geography could neither confine nor define their true inheritance.

14 They clearly declared by faith a hinterland beyond their immediate horizon. *(A place of promise where God and mankind would be one again.)*

15 They did not regret the country they had left behind. Their faith took them beyond the point of no return. *(Do not allow the contradictions in your past or present to become your reference once again. James says that the person who goes back into an old mindset immediately forgets what manner of person they are. [James 1:24, 25]. The old things have passed away [in his death]. Behold, everything has become new! In his resurrection we were born anew. [2 Cor 5:14-17, 1 Pet 1:3])*

16 Their faith saw a greater reality in the spiritual realm than that which they experienced in their present situation; they reached for their true native city designed by God where he himself is proud to be their permanent address. *(The fulfillment of the promise is Christ. He is both our native land and our eternal city!)*

17 Faith became a more tangible evidence of the promise than even Isaac could ever be to Abraham. Isaac neither fulfilled nor replaced the promise. Inspired by what faith saw, Abraham was ready to do the ridiculous; to sacrifice his only son, convinced that not even Isaac's death could nullify the promise that God had made to him. *(If Isaac was not the substance of Abraham's faith then who was? Abraham saw beyond*

Isaac. Jesus said, "Abraham saw my day!" [Jn 8:56-58] "Before Abraham was, I am.")

18 Yet Abraham knew that God had said that his lineage of faith would be traced through Isaac!

19 He made a prophetic [1]calculation by faith to which there could only be one logical conclusion based on the word he had received: that God would raise the promise from the dead. *(In the context of Abraham's vision, this was an analogy pointing to the parable of the death and resurrection of Christ. A calculation, logical conclusion, from the word, [1]**logitzomai**, from logos; God's faith is God's logic.)*

20 By the same faith Isaac extended the future of the promise in the blessing he pronounced over his sons, Esau and Jacob.

21 In his dying moments, Jacob, in worship to the God of Abraham, as the father of the nations, included in the promise [1]the sons of Joseph who were born in Egypt. *([1]In exalting the two grandsons into the rank and right of Joseph's brothers, he bestowed on them, rather than on Reuben, the double portion of the first-born. Again, faith exceeds the natural. Even though they had an Egyptian mother, they would have an equal interest in all the spiritual and temporal blessings of the covenant of promise.)*

22 At the end of his life, Joseph prophetically reminded his sons of the exodus. He had such a firm belief that they would possess the land of promise that he exacted an oath from them: they were not to leave his bones in Egypt.

23 By faith the parents of Moses did not fear the king's decree, but hid him from Pharaoh for three months, because they saw a future in the child.

24 It was faith that made Moses realize that he was not the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

25 By faith he preferred to be associated with the affliction of God's people rather than with the fleeting privileges of Pharaoh's house, which did not constitute the true [1]portion of his inheritance. *(The word, [1]**hamartia**, from **ha**, meaning negative, and **meros**, meaning form or portion, without your portion, to fall short of your portion; often translated as sin.)*

26 He was not embarrassed to be associated with the Messianic promise at the expense of the treasures of Egypt. He deliberately looked away from those towards the greater riches of his reward in Christ. *(No reward of the flesh can compare with the wealth of faith.)*

27 The rage of the King did not scare him when he abandoned Egypt; faith, giving substance to the invisible, made him brave.

28 His faith saw the Paschal Lamb and the sprinkled blood on the door posts as the salvation of the people.

29 By faith they crossed the Red Sea on dry ground, but the Egyptians drowned when they followed them.

30 By faith the walls of the city of Jericho collapsed when Israel marched around the city for seven days. *(They did not conquer through the strength of their army.)*

31 Rahab the prostitute's faith saved her even though her house was built in the wall! While all the other houses collapsed around her, her

own remained. She welcomed the spies and acknowledged the God who saved them out of Egypt. *(Josh 2:11)* **Her family also was given an equal opportunity to be saved through her faith.** *(Imagine their surprise, bearing in mind her life and shameful reputation!)*

32 And so the list of faith-heroes continues. There is not enough time to tell the stories of Gideon and Barak and Sampson and Jephtah, of David, Samuel and the Prophets.

33 These are they who conquered kingdoms by faith. *(Gideon, like Rahab, was in no position to claim any credit for his achievement; faith nullifies boasting [see Rom 3:27, Judg 6:11-16]* **They accomplished righteousness by that same faith and thus secured the promise** *[by faith and not by performance]***.** *Deborah told Barak the son of Abinoam that, although he would deliver Israel, he would not get the honor, since a woman would do it for him. [See Judg 4:21] In the principle of righteousness by faith, the flesh will take no glory.* ***Barak****, means to worship in adoration, and* ***Abinoam*** *means, "my father's delight" or "grace.")* **By faith they shut the mouths of lions.** *(Samson, whose mighty achievements were immediately accredited to the Spirit of the Lord who moved upon him. Again there was no occasion to glory in the flesh.)*

34 Their faith extinguished powerful fires. They escaped from fierce battles. They were empowered in spite of their frailty. They became heroes in battle and caused hostile armies to flee before them. *(Jephtah whose own brothers disinherited him because his mother was a prostitute became the captain of the army of Israel.)*

35 By faith women received their children back from the dead. *(1 Kings 17:18-24, 2 Kings 4:32-34)* **Others were severely tortured for their faith and refused to accept release when it was offered them on condition that they would renounce their opinions. To have accepted deliverance then could have saved their lives, but their faith saw a more honorable and glorious resurrection.**

36 Still others were mocked and ridiculed for their faith: they were beaten up, shackled and imprisoned.

37 While some were stoned to death, others *(like Isaiah the Prophet)* **were sawn asunder with a wood saw. There were yet others who were tempted by the promise of possible release from torture, and then were brutally slaughtered with the sword. Many became wandering refugees with nothing but sheep and goatskins for clothing. They lost everything and were harassed and tormented.**

38 The world did not realize their worth. These faith-heroes were often driven from their homes and forced to live in the deserts and mountains; sleeping like animals in caves and holes in the ground.

39 Their lives were trophies to their faith, as the substance of what was visualized by their hope, and the evidence of things their natural eyes never saw.

40 God saw the perfect picture in us; we now complete the history of their lives. *(Everything that the shadows prefigured has now found its substance through Christ in us.)*

Chapter 12

1 So now the stage is set for us: all these faith-heroes cheer us on, as it were, like a great multitude of spectators in the amphitheater. This is our moment. As with an athlete who is determined to win, it would be silly to carry any baggage of the old law-system that would weigh one down. Make sure you do not get your feet clogged up with sin-

consciousness. Become absolutely streamlined in faith. Run the race of your spiritual life with total persuasion. *(Persuaded in the success of the cross.)*

2 Look away from the shadow dispensation of the law and the Prophets and fix your eyes upon Jesus. He is the fountainhead and conclusion of faith. He saw the joy *(of mankind's salvation)* **when he braved the cross and despised the shame of it. As the executive authority of God** *(the right hand of the throne of God)* **he now occupies the highest seat of dominion to endorse mankind's innocence!** *(Having accomplished purification of sins, he sat down. [Heb 1:3, Isa 53:11])*

3 [1]Ponder how he overcame all the odds stacked against him; this will boost your soul-energy when you feel exhausted. *([1]**analogitsomai**, upwards calculation.)*

4 Would you be willing to die for your faith? *(Are you as persuaded of your faith in the substance of Christ as your predecessors were in their believing a mere shadow?)*

5 The word in Scripture that confirms your genesis in God addresses you as sons, "My son do not undervalue the [1]loving instruction of the Lord; neither become despondent when you are corrected." *(See note in verse 7 on [1]loving instruction. The word, [1]**parakletos**, in the King James Version is translated as exhortation, but here it is translated rather as loving instruction, "comfort" as in John in relation to the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. The word consists of two components, **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection, and **kaleo**, to identify by name, to surname.)*

6 For every instruction is inspired by his love, even as a father would discipline his sons with affection, though it might seem harsh at the time.

7 Embrace correction. His instruction confirms your true sonship; just as a father would take natural responsibility for the education of his children. *(The word,* ***paideo****, comes from* ***pais****, for a boy or a girl and* ***deo****, to bind, to tie [relational]; thus to correct with education, instruction and the schooling of a child. The word, education in English comes from the Latin word,* ***educare****, which means to draw out!)*

8 See yourselves as sons, not as illegitimate children, *(children of faith, not of the slave woman)* **welcoming your spiritual education together with the rest of the family of faith.**

9 As we have shown respect to our natural fathers in the process of our education, how much more should we value the instruction of the Father of our spiritual origin who upholds the life of our design.

10 In their opinion they gave us the best possible education during the brief time that we were under their roof; God has our ultimate wellbeing in mind.

11 The process of education is not immediately appreciated; at the time it seems to be more pain than pleasure, but it certainly yields the harvest of righteousness for the faith athlete.

12 Shake off your weariness, loosen your limbs, catch your breath! *(Get back into faith-mode, quit the flesh-mode)*

13 Get rid of all obstacles that could possibly cause you to stumble and sprain an ankle! Don't let a recurrent injury force you out of the

race. [1]Recover and carry on running. Don't allow old legalistic mind-sets to trip you up again. *(Isaiah 40:28-31, the [1]**kawa** principle, [1]intertwining with God's thoughts concerning you immediately causes you to escape the weariness of the old DIY times and mount up with wings like an eagle, to run and not be weary, to walk and not faint! Hebrew **kawa**, to intertwine.)*

14 Pursue peace with all people; true friendship can only be enjoyed in an environment of total forgiveness and innocence. This makes God visible in your life.

15 You must understand that this is a grace-race and not a law-race. While we're in compete- and compare-mode we create the opportunity for resentment to flourish and to poison many in the process. *(We are all equally included in the same victory in Christ!)*

16 A performance-driven mindset triggers the law system into action and [1]distorts the picture: suddenly the fleeting moment of pleasure seems more attractive than your true portion This is exactly what happened to Esau, when he traded his birthright for a morsel of meat. *(Sin is a distorted picture; the word, [1]**hamartia**, often translated as sin is made up of two words, **ha**, meaning without, and **meros**, meaning form, or allotted portion.)*

17 Esau's regret could not change Isaac's mind. God's mind is made up about our salvation. *(We are saved by faith in his finished work and not by our own works; his system of faith cannot be challenged or replaced by another law system. Sincerity does not influence God; faith does.)*

18 We are not talking of a visible and tangible mountain here, one spectacularly ablaze in a setting of dark blackness and tempestuous winds. *(Witness the vivid contrast between the giving of the law and the unfolding of grace; the exclusiveness of the one and the all inclusive*

embrace of the other. The dramatic encounter of Moses on the mountain is by far exceeded by the mountaintop experience to which we are now welcomed and elevated through Christ! Mankind is now fully represented and co-seated together with Christ in heavenly places! [Eph 2:5, 6, Hos 6:2])

19 Shrill trumpet sounds and a thunderous voice uttering human language. This filled the people with such terror that they begged for silence!

20 Beast and human alike felt threatened and excluded from that terrible mountain!

21 Even Moses, the representative of the people, was extremely terrified. He was shivering and shaking. Who could approach God and live? How impossible it seemed to find favor with such a 'terrifying' God!

22 By contrast, we have been welcomed to an invisible mount Zion; the city of peace *(Jerusalem)***, the residence of the living God, the festive assembly of an innumerable Angelic host!**

23 We are participating in a mass joint-celebration of heavenly and earthly beings; the [1]Ekklesia-church of the firstborn mirror-inscribed in the heavenlies. *(Our original identity, [1]**Ekklesia**, from **ek**, a preposition that always denotes origin, and **kaleo**, meaning to identify by name, to surname], is endorsed by Jesus, patterned in him, the first born from the dead.)*

24 Jesus is the spokesman and arbitrator of the New Testament order. His blood signature sanctions mankind's innocence. This is a complete new language that communicates better things, in that it is the very

substance of what was spoken in the shadow-type message of the blood sacrifice that Abel brought. *(Abel's faith was a prophetic introduction to the sacrificial shadow system of the Old Covenant. Jesus is the substance of things hoped for! Heb 11:4 It was faith that made the difference between the sacrifices of Abel and Cain, and confirmed Abel's righteousness. God bore witness to righteousness as a gift rather than a reward! Even though he was murdered, his faith still has a most relevant prophetic voice.)*

25 If Jesus is the crescendo of God's final message to mankind, you cannot afford to politely excuse yourself from this conversation. Consider the prominent place that Moses plays in the history of Israel: if you think that Moses or any of the Prophets who spoke with authority on earth deserve honor, how much more should this word that God declared from heaven concerning our sonship, and our redeemed innocence revealed in the Messiah himself, deserve our undivided attention!

26 When he introduced the prophetic shadow of what was to come *(the Law system)***, his voice visibly shook the earth.** *(Ex 19:18.)* **But now the Messiah has come** *(he is the desire of the nations; he is what heaven and earth were waiting for [Hag 2:6,7])* **The voice of God** *(articulated in Christ's birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection)* **has rocked not only the systems on the earth, but also every unseen principality in the heavens, to their very foundations!**

27 In the words of the Prophet, "Yet once more will I shake every unstable system of man's effort to rule himself." God clearly indicates his plan to remove the old and replace it with the new. The second shaking supersedes any significance in the first shaking. Then it was a physical quaking of the earth; now the very foundations of every man-made system was shaken to the core while the heavens were impacted by the announcement of his permanent rule on earth as it is mirrored in heaven.

28 We are fully associated in this immovable Kingdom; an authority that cannot be challenged or contradicted. Our participation echoes grace *(and not law-inspired obedience)* **as we [1]accommodate ourselves to God's delight, yielding in awe to his firm embrace.** *(The word, [1]**euaresto**, means well pleasing, to accommodate yourself to God's delight.)*

29 His zeal for us burns like fire. *(Deut 4:24)*
Some hints on practical kingdom living, including family, friends, fellowship, marriage, money and ministry:

Chapter 13

1 Treasure family bonds and friendship. Family fondness remains the essence of this kingdom. *(Relationship is long-term in every sense of the word.)*

2 Treat strangers with equal affection; they could be a messenger of God in disguise!

3 Identify with those who are in prison or suffering abuse for their faith as if you were the one afflicted.

4 Honor the sanctity of marriage as the exclusive place of intimacy. God does not approve of casual or illicit sex.

5 Don't give money a prominent place in your thoughts; realize that what you already have is priceless! He has said that he will never quit on you or abandon you! *(Josh 1:5)* **That is reason enough for total and continual contentment!**

6 What he said concerning us gives our confession the edge; we boldly echo Scripture, "The Lord is for me, I cannot be afraid of anything that anyone could possibly do to harm me." *(Ps 118:6)*

7 Be mindful of those who guide you in the revelation of God's word; follow their faith, consider the conclusion of their lives. *(Do not follow a counterfeit! This would be someone who fakes faith while actually living the law.)*

8 Take your lead from Jesus. He is your reference to the most complete life. In him yesterday is confirmed today and today mirrors tomorrow. What God spoke to us in Christ is as relevant now as it was in the prophetic past and will always be in the eternal future! *(Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever; there is a history to our salvation that carries more authority and relevance than anything that ever happened in our past, or anything present in time or still to happen in the future. Imagine the enormity of eternity in his sameness before time was; and we were there in him all along! See Rom 8:34 What further ground can there possibly be to condemn mankind? In his death he faced our judgment; in his resurrection he declares our innocence; the implications cannot be undone! He now occupies the highest seat of authority as the executive of our redemption in the throne room of God. See Rom 8: 1, also Rom 4:25. The heavens declare his glory, night to night exhibits the giant solar testimony that is mathematically precise, revealing that God knew before time was the exact moment he would enter our history as a man, and the exact moment the Messiah would expire on the cross and be raised again from the dead!)*

9 Do not be swayed by distracting speculations. Any influence foreign to what grace communicates, even if it seems very entertaining and carries the Christian label, is to be shunned. Feast on grace; do not dilute your diet with legalism. There is no nourishment left in the law. What's the use of being busy but not blessed? *(Legalism includes any*

form of self-sacrifice or self effort with the illusion of gaining further favor from God or improving your spiritual standing before God).

10 For us there is only one altar and one sacrifice; we can never again confuse him with the rituals of the old redundant system. It seems that some would like to eat the meat of their own sacrifices and at the same time indulge in the benefits of grace. This is not possible. *(It is like trying to go in opposite directions at the same time.)*

11 When it comes to the sin offering, the carcasses of the slain animals were burnt outside the camp *(no one was permitted to eat from them anyway)*.

12 According to the prophetic pattern, Jesus, as the final sin sacrifice, was slain outside the city walls.

13 There are two opposing systems; you cannot associate with Christ for your convenience while still hanging on to your Jewish sentiment. If you're going to take your stand for Jesus, go all the way. Break your ties with the old shadow-system. Go outside the city-system. Be prepared to share his shame when your fellow Jews mock your commitment to Jesus.

14 We are not finding our identity or security in the walled city of popular legalistic religious opinion. Our interest is captured by a different kind of city, much closer to us than the visible one.

15 Praise replaces sacrifice; the harvest we bring is the tribute of our lips acknowledging his Name. *(His Name represents the authority of our identity and redeemed innocence.)*

16 God delights in good deeds. These deeds are like beautiful poetry giving a voice to your fellowship. *(They are inspired by your innocence; rather than offered as guilt-driven sacrifices.)*

17 Trust your guides *(in this grace revelation)* **and yield to their instruction.** *(Even though it seems different to the law system that you were formerly acquainted with.)* **They are genuinely alert to your well-being.** *(Just as with Shepherds guarding their sheep, you are their total concern.)* **They have taken official accountability for you.** *(They represent to you all that grace reveals rather than what the law requires.)* **It is to your advantage to embrace their care with joy; this makes their work a pleasure and not a burden.**

18 Worship prayerfully with us; we believe that our joint seeing inspires a beautiful life.

19 Pray also that I might be able to re-join you speedily; I can hardly wait!

20 This is my prayer for you: that the God who made peace with the human race through the blood of the eternal Testament, who raised Jesus from the dead as the supreme shepherd of the sheep,

21 will thoroughly equip you in the most distinguished way possible, to give expression to his design in you according to his delight realized in Jesus Christ, who is the blueprint of the ages. Jesus is the accurate expression of God's glory. Our lives confirm and echo the Amen!

22 My friends, I have written to you briefly, [1]reminding you of your original identity in order to [2]increase the volume of its resonance in your hearts. *(The word, [2]**anechomai,** means to hold oneself up against, from **ana**, often means by repetition in order to increase intensity, and **echo**,*

*to hold, embrace or echo, resonance. The word, [1]**parakaleo**, from **para**, originating from a sphere of influence, and **kaleo**, to call by name, to surname [see notes on **Ekklesia**, Heb 12:23].)*

23 Brother Timothy has already been released from prison; as soon as he arrives we will visit you together.

24 Greet all your leaders and the Saints; the Italian believers salute you!

25 Grace is our embrace! YES!

James

JAMES - THE BROTHER OF JESUS

Mankind's lost and found identity

From the first and the last verse of James chapter one, it appears that James sets his teaching up against the sense of a lost identity: the twelve scattered tribes, and the widows and the orphans.

To lose your land of heritage or your immediate family would be the greatest and most challenging test or temptation anyone can face: "to forget what manner of person you are." *(James 1:24, Deuteronomy 32:18.)*
As the flesh-and-blood brother of Jesus, there was a time when neither he nor any of his family believed in Jesus. *(John 7:5)* It was only after the resurrection when Jesus appeared to him that the truth dawned on him, that his brother Jesus was indeed the one who all the rumors and prophetic pointers throughout time said he was! Jesus is God unveiled in flesh, the incarnate Word who redeemed the lost identity of mankind in his death and resurrection! James' eyes were opened to the fact that neither Jesus nor he bagan in Mary's womb! 1 Cor 15:7.

Man began in God! We are not merely the desire of a parent, we are the desire of God. Mankind shares a common origin, the *boulomai*, the affectionate desire and deliberate resolve of God, the Father of lights, with whom there is no distortion or hidden agenda. The unveiling of mankind's redemption also reveals our true genesis; we are God's personal invention. We are ***anouthen,*** from above. We are perfect and complete and lacking in nothing. God's Sabbath is the celebration of our perfection, both by design and redemption. "Every good and perfect gift comes from above, ***(anouthen)*** from the Father of lights with whom there is no variableness and no shadow due to change, he brought us forth by the Word of truth."

Born from above

John sees the same genesis. He only begins to write when he is already more than 90 years old. Unlike Luke and Matthew, he skips the genealogies of Joseph, he declares, "In the beginning was the Word, what God was, the Word was, and the Word became flesh. He sees that the destiny of the Word was not the book, but human life! God finding accurate expression of himself, his image and likeness revealed in human form. Genesis 1:26 lives

again; mankind is standing tall in the stature of the invisible God. “If you have seen me, you have seen the Father!” “Unless a someone is born from above ***(anouthen)***, they cannot see the Kingdom of God.” The kingdom of God *(the reign of God’s image and likeness in human life)* is made visible again on earth as it is in heaven; tangible in human form. (*Jn 3:3*)

In John 3 Nicodemus discovers that his irresistible attraction to Jesus was because of the fact that our natural birth is not our beginning! We come from above! God knew us before he formed us in our mother’s womb! [Jer 1:5] If people did not come from above, the heavenly realm would offer no attraction to them. In our make-up we are the god-kind with an appetite for more than what bread and the senses could satisfy us with. We are designed to hunger for and feast from the Logos that comes from above. From a dimension where the original thought remains preserved and intact without contamination; the Logos that comes from his mouth is the unveiled mirror radiance of our authentic origin, quickening and sustaining the life of our design. “No one ascended into heaven, who did not also descend from heaven, even the son of man.” (*Jn 3:13*)

Paul celebrates the same theme in Galatians 1:15 God’s eternal [1]love dream separated me from my mother’s womb; his grace became my [2]identity. *([1]**eudokeo:** his beautiful intention; the well done opinion. My mother’s womb, my natural lineage and identity as son of Benjamin. [2]**kaleo,** to surname, to summon by name.) Gal* 1:16 This is the heart of the gospel that I proclaim; it began with an unveiling of sonship [1]in me, freeing me to announce the same sonship [2]in the masses of non-Jewish people. I felt no immediate urgency to compare notes with those who were familiar with Christ from a mere historic point of view. *(The Greek text is quite clear, “It pleased the Father to reveal his son in me in order that I may proclaim him in the nations!” [1]**en emoi,** in me, and [2]**en ethnos**, in the Gentile nations, or the masses of non Jewish people! Not ‘among’ the Gentiles as most translations have it. Later when Barnabas is sent to investigate the conversion of the Greeks in Acts 11, instead of reporting his findings to the HQ in Jerusalem, he immediately finds Paul, knowing that Paul’s gospel is the revelation of the mystery of Christ in the nations. Col.1:27. No wonder then that those believers were the first to be called Christians, or Christ-*

like!)
Paul reminds the Greek philosophers in Acts 17 that we live and move and have our being in God; mankind is indeed the offspring of God. He is quoting from their own writings. [Epimenedes 600 BC and Aratus, 300 BC.] The incorruptible seed of sonship is as much in every person as the seed is already in all soil, even in the desert, waiting for the rain to awaken and ignite its dormant life! Mankind only has one Father! Math 13:44 the treasure was already in the field before it was discovered! 2 Cor 4:4 & 7. God wrote the script of every individual's innermost being when he knitted us together in our mother's womb; the code is "Christ in you!" Col 1:27.
Jesus has come to reveal that the son of man is the son of God. "If you have seen me you have seen the Father! Mat 23:9 "Call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven." He says to Peter, "Flesh-and-blood cannot reveal to you who the son of man is, but my Father who is in heaven; blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, I give you a new name that reveals your original identity: you are Rock! ***(petros**, hewn out of the rock, **petra** (Isa 51:1, Deut 32:3, 4, 18).* This revelation is the rock foundation that I will build my identity upon, *(my image and likeness)* and the strong gates of ***Hades**, (from ha + eido, not to see)* that trapped mankind into the walled city of the senses will not prevail against the voice that surnames and summons mankind again. *(Mt 16:13, 17) Church, **Ekklesia**, from **ek**, denoting source or origin and **klesia** from **kaleo**, to surname or identify by name.)*

Therefore, Paul did not immediately consult with flesh and blood. He deliberately avoided the opportunity to get to know Jesus from a human point of view by visiting the eleven disciples who were still alive and living in Jerusalem. They could have informed him first-hand about the life, ministry, parables, and miracles of Jesus. *(2 Cor 5:16)* But Paul does not make mention in any of his writings even of a single parable Jesus told or miracle he performed, because his mandate and revelation was not to merely relate Christ in history, but to reveal Christ in mankind.

Only three years later he returned briefly to Jerusalem specifically to visit Peter and James, the Lord's brother. *(Gal 1:18, 19.)* One is not surprized to discover that the first believers ever to be called Christians were the Greeks in Antioch who sat under Paul's ministry. *(Acts 11)*

After his encounter with the risen Jesus James writes in Jam 1:17 that the Father of lights brought us forth by the word of truth! When anyone hears this word, he sees the face of his genesis as in a mirror! “for he sees himself”.

What James, Peter and Paul had in common was an understanding that their flesh and blood birth did not define them. Jesus came to reveal and redeem mankind’s authentic spirit identity.

Mankind share three births:
1/ Man began in God. Mal 2:10. Have we not all one father? Has not one God created us? See Joh 3:13 No one ascends into heaven but he who also descended from heaven, even the son of man. See also Math 22:41-46 and Math 23:9.
2/ The only passport to planet earth is the womb of a mother. “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you.” Jer 1:5. It is not our brief hsitory on earth that introduces us to God.
3/ In God’s faith every human life is equally represented and included in Jesus Christ. “One has died for all; therefore all have died!” 2 Cor 5:14. “While we were still dead in our sins, God made us alive together with Christ and co-raised us together with Christ.” Eph 2:5. We have been born anew through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. 1Pet 1:3. “Now if all were included in his death they were equally included in his resurrection.” 2 Cor 5:15; Hos 6:2.
Paul describes the “metanoia-moment” in Titus 3:4 But then, oh happy day! It was the generosity of God and his fondness for mankind that dawned on us like a shaft of light. Our days of darkness were over! Light shone everywhere and we became aware: God rescued the human race! (See 2:11)
Titus 3:5 Salvation is not a reward for good behavior. It has absolutely nothing to do with anything that we have done. God’s mercy saved us. The Holy Spirit endorses in us what happened to us when Jesus Christ died and was raised! When we heard the glad announcement of salvation it was like taking a deep warm bath! We were thoroughly cleansed and resurrected in a new birth! It was a complete renovation that restored us to sparkling newness of life!
In 2 Cor 5:16 Paul declares: “From now on therefore, we no longer know anyone according to the flesh!”

James says, “We can say beautiful things about God the Father but with the same mouth curse a person made in his mirror likeness.” *(True worship is to touch someone’s life with the same devotion and care you would touch Jesus himself; even if the other person seems a most unlikely candidate. James 3:9.)*

Chapter 1

1 My name is James, I am bonded to God and the Lord Jesus Christ. It is in this capacity that I am writing to you, wherever you are. You might even be part of the twelve tribes which are scattered like seed all over the world. I greet you with joyful encouragement!

2 Temptations and contradictions come in different shapes, sizes, and intervals; their intention is always to suck you into their energy field. However, my friends, your joy in who you know you are [1]leads you out triumphantly every time. *(The word, [1]**hegeomai**, comes from a strengthened form of ago, to lead, thus, to officially appoint in a position of authority; to lead with distinguished authority. Joy is the official voice of faith! “Count it all joy,” make a calculation to which joy can be the only logical conclusion.)*

3 Here is the secret: joy is not something you have to fake, it is the fruit of what your faith knows to be true about you! You know that the proof of your faith results in persuasion that remains constant in contradiction.

4 *(Just like a mother hen patiently broods over her eggs,)* **steadfastness provides you with a consistent environment, and so patience prevails**

and proves your perfection; how entirely whole you are and without any shortfall.

5 The only thing you could possibly lack is wisdom. *(One might sometimes feel challenged beyond the point of sanity)* **however, make your request in such a way that you draw directly from the [2]source** *(not filtered through other opinions)***. God is the origin and author of wisdom; he [1]intertwines your thoughts with good judgment. His gifts are available to all, without regret.** *(The word, [1]**haplos**, from ha, particle of union; **hama**, together with + **pleko**, meaning to plait, braid, weave together. See Luke 11:34 "The eye is the lamp of the body; if the eye is single the whole body is full of light!" Entwining our eyes with Papa's eyes is what enlightens our entire being! Which is exactly what the word* **הוק** *Kawa in Hebrew means in Isa 40:31 they that entwine with the Lord's thoughts mount up with wings like eagles! We are wired by design to entwine! Also Matthew 6:22, "If your eye is entwined with light your whole body will be full of light." See 2 Cor 1:12. Wisdom that comes from above remains unaffected by the contradictions of the senses. The word, [2]**didomi**, to give, to be the author or source of a thing — Wesley J. Perschbacher.)*

6 Faith must prompt your requests *(not your needs)***. Faith is the stabilizing factor; otherwise you become driven by emotions** *(inconsistent judgments)* **that get out of control like rough seas tossed by tempest winds.**

7 A haphazard request makes it impossible to interpret God's wisdom accurately; *(faith is the grace that reveals one's capacity to receive from God. The Greek word, **para**, with the genitive, indicating source or origin, ["coming from" — Wesley J. Perschbacher] and **lambano**, to receive, to comprehend.)*

8 Someone of two opinions remains jittery in all his judgments and seems always lost for direction.

9 *(Adverse circumstances can make or break you, depending on how you respond under pressure and allow these conditions to influence your judgment.)* **Let the down and out brother boast in his elevation in the Lord.** *(God's wisdom makes you see things differently. Begin by seeing yourself co-seated together with Christ in heavenly places! Col 3:1-3)*

10 The rich should boast with confidence when things seem to threaten their position of financial strength. Flowers fade; so does fame when wealth is lost. *(Poverty or wealth is not the measure of your life, faith is.)*

11 A severe sun combined with scorching eastern winds can completely destroy a harvest before it ripens; something that looked so beautiful and promising the one day, can be gone the next day; even so a wealthy person can suddenly perish in his pursuits. *(A person must have a reference that is more stable than changing conditions.)*

12 Blessed is the one who does not lose their footing when temptation strikes; they are [1]crowned the victor; their lives prove the [2]currency and character of their [3]design. The [4]verdict: No contradiction can distract from the love of the Lord. *(Love inspires faith. [Galatians 5:6] The word, [1]**stephanos**, means a mark of royal rank, or a wreath or garland, which was given as a prize to victors in public games. Yet life as God sees it is a gift, not a reward. [James 1:17-25] Thus even our reward is a gift because our enduring and steadfastness is not something we engage in with our diligence and willpower, but the energy ignited within us by the revelation of the Word of truth. The word, [2]**dokimos**, means accepted, particularly of coins and money; thus, currency. The Greek word for [3]birth, **ginomai**. The verdict, [4]**epaggello**, official announcement.)*

13 Do not say, "I am scrutinized by God" when you feel enticed. He is not in the teasing business; evil offers no attraction to God for God to be tempted by it, neither is he experimenting with your design! *(God cannot be both the source of light and darkness. Every temptation is an attempt of darkness to intercept light. [James 1:17])*

14 Temptation employs lust to [1]lure someone into a trap *(just like in hunting or fishing)***, one is deceived by the attraction of the [2]bait. Your own private desires can snare you.** *(The word, [1]**exelko**, means to lure as in hunting or fishing, and [2]**deleatzo** comes from the word, **dolos**, to deceive by bait.)*

15 When passion conceives, it becomes the parent of sin. Sin's mission is to murder you.

16 My dear friends, do not go wandering off into deception. *(By giving credit to temptation, thinking that it could possibly be God's way of speaking to you!)*

17 Without exception God's gifts are only good, its perfection cannot be improved upon. They come from [1]above, *(where we originate from,)* **proceeding like light rays from its source, the Father of lights, with whom there is no distortion or even a shadow of shifting to obstruct or intercept the light; nor a hint of a hidden agenda.** *(The word, [1]**anouthen**, means, from above. John 3:3, 13)*

18 It was his delightful [1]resolve to give birth to us; we were conceived by the [2]unveiled logic of God. We lead the exhibition of his handiwork, like first fruits introducing the rest of the harvest he anticipates. *(The word, [1]**boulomai**, means the affectionate desire and deliberate resolve of God. Truth, [2]**alethea**, from **a**, negative + **lanthano**, meaning hidden; that which is unveiled; the word of truth.)*

19 Consequently, my beloved brethren, *(when you are faced with temptation and contradiction)* **ponder the Word that reveals your true origin, do not ponder the problem; that is how frustration is conceived. Rather remain silent than to give anger your voice.** *(Quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.)*

20 Anger distorts the picture and brings no credit to compliment God's righteousness.

21 Get rid of any remaining residue of evil that polluted your life before *(if a quick temper was your problem then, don't make it your problem again.)* **Welcome with sensitive embrace the word that powerfully conceives salvation in your soul.** *(Saving you from negative thought patterns and depressing emotional traits!)*

22 Give the word your [1]undivided attention; do not underestimate yourself. [3]Make the calculation. There can only be one logical conclusion: your authentic origin is mirrored in the word. You are God's poem; [2]let his voice make poetry of your life! *(The word, [1]**akroate**, means intent listening. James is not promoting the doing of the law of works; he is defining the law of perfect liberty. Doing the word begins with your undivided attention to the face of your birth. [2]A doer of the Word, **poetes**, means poet. Make the calculation, [3]**paralogizomai**, from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, union, and **logizomai**, to reckon the logic in any calculation***.)**

23 The difference between a mere spectator and a participator is that both of them hear the same voice and perceive in its message the face of their own genesis reflected as in a mirror;

24 they realize that they are looking at themselves, but for the one it seems just too good to be true; this person departs *(back to the old way of seeing himself)* **and immediately forgets what manner of person he is; never giving another thought to the one he saw there in the mirror.**

25 The other one is [1]mesmerized by what he sees; [2]captivated by the effect of a law that frees a person from the obligation to the old written code that restricted one to their own efforts and willpower. No distraction or contradiction can dim the impact of what is seen in the mirror concerning the law of perfect [3]liberty *(the law of faith)* **that now frees everyone to get on with the act of living the life** *(of their original design.)* **They find a new [3]spontaneous lifestyle; the poetry of practical living.** *(The law of perfect liberty is the image and likeness of God revealed in Christ, now redeemed in mankind as in a mirror. Look deep enough into that law of faith that you may see there in its perfection a portrait that so resembles the original that he becomes distinctly visible in the spirit of your mind and in the face of every person you behold. I translated the word, [1]**parakupto,** with mesmerized from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection, and **kupto**, to bend, stoop down to view at close scrutiny; [2]**parameno**, to remain captivated under the influence of; **meno**, to continue to be present. The word often translated as freedom, [3]**eleutheria**, means without obligation; spontaneous.)*

26 Meaningless conversation is often disguised in religious eloquence. Just because it sounds sincere, doesn't make it true. If your tongue is not bridled by what your heart knows to be true about you, then you cheat yourself.

27 The purest and most uncompromising form of religious expression is found at its [1]source. God is the Father of mankind. He inspires one to take a genuine interest in helping the fatherless and the widows in their plight and to make sure that one's own life does not become blemished

in the process. *(The word* [1]***para****, is a preposition indicating close and immediate proximity, intimate connection.)*

Chapter 2

1 Jesus heads up the kind of faith that does not judge on face value, neither is it influenced by popular opinion or [1]outward appearance. *([1]Face value,* ***prosopolepsia****)*

2 Here is a typical example: an influential impressive looking man, dressed in glitter and fine jewelry may visit your assembly; then a shabby looking poor man may walk into the same gathering;

3 the smart guy gets the best seat while the shabby looking chap gets told to stand in the back or sit on the ground like a slave at your feet.

4 To discriminate in your heart against anyone conceives a judgment in you that can cause great ill; can you imagine how it hurts to be rejected like that?

5 May I have your full attention on this issue my dear friends, faith in who you really are according to [1]your original identity is the real measure of your wealth; you might be poor according to the standards of this world but according to God you possess your allotted portion which is the kingdom of his promise to those who love him. *(The word,* [1]***eklegomai****, comes from* ***ek****, a preposition denoting origin, and* ***lego****, meaning to speak; thus, the original blueprint-word,* ***logos****.)*

6 But you insult the poor, in your effort to impress the rich; meanwhile you fail to realize that the rich have abused their influence against you. They have conned you into their prejudices and discriminatory judgments. They bought your vote with cheap currency. *(Any value outside of the price God paid in Christ is an inferior value to human life)*

7 Their apparent position of influence is just a disguize they employ to blaspheme the name that defines your true identity.

8 Scripture confirms that the law of the kingdom is fulfilled in you realizing the same value in your neighbor as you would see in yourself; this is what doing the word is all about, and it makes beautiful poetry. *(Lev 19:18; Lk 10:27, Mt 22:37-40. By not forgetting what manner of person you are, you will not forget what manner of person your neighbor is according to the mirror principle.)*

9 To judge anyone on outward appearance is a [1]sin. *(The word, [1]**hamartia**, from **ha**, meaning negative and **meros**, meaning form or allotted portion; sin represents any thing that robs you of your allotted portion which is the true measure of your life.)* **This violates the law of liberty and revives condemnation and guilt.**

10 If you lower the standard of the law in just one aspect of it you have [1]failed entirely. *(To fail, stumble, err, [1]**pipto**, to descend from a higher place to a lower, from **petomai**, to fly; thus, to stop flying.)*

11 For he who said you shall not commit adultery also said you shall not kill. Here is an example, you might be faithful to your wife, yet you have killed someone; your not committing adultery does not cancel out the murder! *(And vice versa.)*

12 Let the law of liberty set the pace *(be the judge)* **in your conversation and conduct.** *(The law of perfect liberty is the image and likeness of God revealed in Christ, now redeemed in mankind as in a mirror. Look deep enough into that law of faith that you may see there in its perfection a portrait that so resembles the original that he becomes distinctly visible in the spirit of your mind and in the face of everyone you behold. [Heb 1:25])*

13 Judgment showed no mercy to those who do not walk in mercy, but mercy triumphs over judgment. *(Those who walk in mercy walk in the law of liberty. [Gal 5:22, 23] There is no law against love. While judgment threatens condemnation, mercy interposes and prevails over judgment. See 1 John 3:20 So, even if our own hearts would [1]accuse us of not really being true to ourselves, God is greater than our hearts and he has the full picture! His knowledge of us is not compromised. (This word, [1]kataginosko is only used three times in the NT, translated, to blame, or condemn. From kata, down and ginosko, to know; thus to know from below; from a fallen mindset perspective) 3:21 Beloved when we know what God knows to be true about us, then instead of condemning us, our hearts will endorse our innocence and [1]free our conversation before God. (The word [1]parresia, from para, a preposition indicating close proximity, and* ***rheo****, to pour forth; to flow freely, suggesting an unreservedness in speech; bold utterance.)*
Also 1 John 4:18,19 Fear cannot co-exist in this love realm. The perfect love union that we are talking about expels fear. Fear holds on to an expectation of crisis and judgment [which brings separation] and interprets it as due punishment [a form of karma!] It echoes torment and only registers in someone who does not realize the completeness of their love union [with the Father, Son and Spirit and with one another.] We love because he loved us first! [We did not invent this fellowship; we are invited into the fellowship of the Father and the Son!])

14 My friends, if your faith *(in your true identity)* **is not practical and visible in your conduct it is fake and cannot benefit you in any way.**

15 Let's bring it closer to home *(I am not even talking about your duty to strangers)***, someone in your own family might be struggling financially to the extent that they do not even have the basics as far as clothes and food are concerned.**

16 What's the good if you keep your contact with them very brief and distant and wave them goodbye with empty words, something like, "May the Lord richly bless you brother! Be warm, be fed, ok, bye! Have a great day!" A coat and a cup of soup is going to say so much more!

17 It is clear then that without corresponding acts of kindness, faith on its own is fake.

18 Faith is not in competition with works; the one cannot operate without the other. Faith remains invisible without action; indeed the only way to communicate faith is in doing the things prompted and inspired by faith.

19 Congratulations! So you believe in one God; so do demons; however, their belief in God doesn't change them it just gives them the shivers.

20 Hey man, if you have nothing to show for your faith your faith is meaningless; it remains a dead doctrine.

21 Abraham's righteousness inspired his act of faith when he presented his son Isaac as a sacrifice upon the altar. *(Genesis 15:1, 6 confirms that Abraham was justified long before Isaac was born. God was his reward, not Isaac. No amount of good works can justify a person; good works follow faith, not the other way around! Here James asks the question, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, in that he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar? The answer is clearly, "No! Abraham was justified*

when he believed God's Word concerning his offspring, many years before Isaac was born.")

22 His works were in synergy with his faith, and completed it. The one compliments the other.

23 Abraham's friendship with God was the fruit of the righteousness he received by faith; this was announced in Genesis 15:6 and prompted a lifestyle that confirmed his faith. *(2 Chr 20:7 calls Abraham the friend of God.)*

24 It is obvious then that justification does not stop at faith but continuous into action.

25 By protecting the messengers Rahab the prostitute showed her faith in their message and was justified. *(Heb 11:31)*

26 Just as the body gives expression to the spirit, so actions give expression to faith.

Chapter 3

1 My friends, let's not be quick to assume the title of teacher. Remember when we teach we subject ourselves to greater scrutiny.

2 It is common habit to [1]descend from a higher place *(of faith)* **to a lower** *(of the senses)***, especially in conversation. However, if you want to be in perfect charge of your whole person, the best place to begin is to take charge of your tongue.** *(To reflect the word that confirms your true*

*genesis [Jas 1:18, 19]. The word, [1]**peripipto**, comes from, **peri**, meaning surrounded + **pipto**, from **petomai**, meaning to fly; thus, to descend from a higher place to a lower, to stop flying.)*

3 With bit and bridle we are able to direct the strong body of a horse; it's the little bit in the mouth that makes the difference!

4 Consider the effect of a small rudder on a large ship, when the seasoned captain skillfully steers that vessel on a straight course contrary to fierce winds and weather.

5 As small a member the tongue might be it can make great claims. A little fire can go out of control and consume a large forest!

6 A tongue can strike like lightning and turn the harmony of your world into chaos; one little member can stain the whole body. It can disrupt the pattern of your design, taking its spark from the smoldering garbage heaps of [1]Gehenna. *([1]The garbage heap outside Jerusalem, commonly related to hell. **Gehenna**, is the Latin word; **Geenas** is the Greek word used for the Hebrew "**Valley of Hinnom**," which is modern day **Wadi er-Rababi**. A fiery place for the disposal of waste matter from the city of Jerusalem. The "Valley of Hinnom" lies outside of ancient Jerusalem. Thus to slander someone is to reduce that person to rubbish.)*

7 From tigers to eagles, cobras to dolphins, humans have succeeded to curb the wild nature of beasts and birds, reptiles and sea creatures.

8 Yet no-one can tame a tongue; no-one can restrain the evil in its fatal venom. *(The law of works operated by willpower cannot match the effect of the law of perfect liberty! Mirror likeness ignites true freedom to utter that which is precious!)*

9 We can say beautiful things about God the Father but with the same mouth curse a fellow human made in his mirror likeness. *(The point is not what the person did to deserve the insult. The point is that people are image and likeness bearers of God by design! True worship is to touch someone's life with the same devotion and care you would touch Jesus himself; even if the other person seems a most unlikely candidate.)*

10 My friends, a blessing and a curse cannot originate from the same source. *(Discovering our true source brings true freedom. [Jam 1:17,18])*

11 Not even a natural fountain produces both bitter and sweet water.

12 As impossible as it is for a fig tree to bear olives, and a vine to produce figs, so a fountain cannot yield salt and fresh water from the same source.

13 Humility advertises wisdom; it shows in the quality of your conversation and actions. This distinguishes you with the reputation of someone who is acquainted with wisdom and skilled in understanding.

14 If there is any hidden agenda, secretly driven by bitter jealousy and contention, you have nothing to be proud of. Your big talk sounds superficial and offers no disguise. *(The fountain of your heart always shows.)*

15 This wisdom does not originate from above, but is clearly reduced to a kind that is earthly, ruled by the senses and dictated to by demons. *(Or **daimōn**; from **daiō** (to distribute fortunes). The Greeks gave the word **daímōn** the same meaning as god. What they meant by the word; however, is still a conjecture. They may have related a demon with **daemmonas**, knowing or being experienced in a thing, or they may have derived the word from **daíomai**, meaning to assign or award one's lot in life (**diaítētai kai dioikemtai tōn ánthrōpōn**), the arbitrators or umpires and governors of*

men.
They conceived of them as those who ruled and directed human affairs, not as a personality, but primarily as a destructive power. Thus they called the happy or lucky person ***eudaímōn****, one who is favored by this divine power. The adjective,* ***daimónios****, was used for one who demonstrated power irrespective of whether it was saving or destructive. The Tragic Poets use* ***daímōn*** *to denote fortune or fate, frequently bad fortune, but also good fortune if the context represented it as such. Thus,* ***daímōn*** *is associated with the idea of a gloomy and sad destiny independent of a person, coming upon and prevailing over them. Consequently,* ***daímōn*** *and* ***túchē****, luck, are often combined, and the doctrine of demons developed into signifying either a beneficent or evil power in the lives of people. — Zodhiates Complete Word Study Lexicon)*

16 An environment of envy and rivalry is conducive to confusion and disorder and all kinds of worthless pursuits.

17 The wisdom that originates from above sets the pace in innocence; it loves peace; it is always appropriate *(polite)***; persuaded about that which is good; filled with compassion; these fruits are pure goodness and [1]without discrimination.** *(From [1]****anhupokritos****, without hypocrisy. See James 1:17)*

18 Seed always predicts the harvest. Righteousness inspires the kind deeds of those who embrace peace; these are like seeds sown into fertile soil.

Chapter 4

1 What is it that triggers disputes and fighting? Is it not selfish desires and greedy agendas that [1]both parties host within themselves? Hence wars are born. It is a global identity crisis! *(The word, [1]**enteuthen**, means, repeated on both sides; also translated, hence, from this point. This is in such contrast to the wisdom from above, see 1:17 & 3:17. Any sense of lack causes you to forget what manner of person you are, and how perfect and complete and without lack you are by design, as mirrored in Christ! This is again the typical arena of the law of works and striving against the law of perfect liberty.)*

2 You allow your heart to become so consumed with longing for something until you are ready to kill for it. Then you are still not satisfied. What you want keeps evading you; you quarrel and strive, and you just can't get it. If you are desperately unfulfilled why don't you simply ask God to give you what you need? *(This is in such contrast to the wisdom from above, see 3:17. Also James 1:5, The only thing you could possibly lack is wisdom [One might sometimes feel challenged beyond the point of sanity]; however, make your request in such a way that you draw directly from the source [not filtered through other opinions]. God is the origin and author of wisdom; he intertwines your thoughts with good judgment. His gifts are available to all, without regret.)*

3 You have asked, but God seems reluctant to give it to you, you may say. But when your motivation is to get something just so that you can squander it on yourself, you are doing it all wrong! *(This is like expecting God to support your own futile efforts to justify yourself. See James 1:2-4, 17, 18, 23-25)*

4 Adultery, whether it is the husband or the wife who does the flirting, is destructive. Can't you see that even though the world system might approve of such behavior, it is contrary to God's design for you? Whose friend do you want to be? Are you prepared to distance yourself from God *(and the life of your design)* **just to win the plastic applause of the world?**

5 Scripture is not quoting empty words when it states that God yearns with jealous expectation over the spirit which he has made to inhabit us.

6 His gift of grace *(1:17)* **is in direct opposition to the vanity of the proud mindset of self effort, whereby people strive to prove themselves as superior to others! Gift and reward are opposites! Humility attracts grace.**

7 Your most effective defense against any diabolical mindset, is to yield yourselves in total abandonment to God, and there encounter his dream-life for you. You will witness how effortlessly those thoughts flee from you. *(The word* ***diabollos,*** *from* ***diaballo****,* ***dia****, because of, and* ***ballo****, to cast down; to accuse, to make false and defamatory statements against someone. This points to the develish fallen mindset-system which has engaged generations in the blind-fold mode of pride and accusation, by not seeing the image of God in human life.)*

8 Snuggle up to the warm embrace of God; experience his closeness. *(In Christ every definition of distance or delay is cancelled.)* **The sinner can come with all stains washed from his hands; the double-minded can come with a purified heart.**

9 This is not a mere blase yielding. Realizing the misery that you have brought upon yourself and others is often accompanied by intense grief and weeping. This is no place for superficial laughter and make-belief joy; nor any occasion for boasting! *(Your futile efforts to justify yourself through striving and fighting only reinforce your nakedness. The perfect law of liberty, unveiling the mirror message declares your redeemed innocence through the finished work of Christ.)*

10 Put down your own efforts to fight for your rights; let him lift you up to the dignity of his [1]presence. *(The word translated, presence, [1]**enopion** means in the gaze of; face to face. See your own face reflected in his! There is no higher elevation to engage in!)*

11 Gossip is out; to bad-mouth and point your finger at your brother is to insult the law of liberty; you put yourself up as a law enforcer and thereby assume that you are above scrutiny.

12 God is the one who endorses the law of perfect liberty. That makes him the only judge with power to save. He rendered the law of performance completely irrelevant. He never handed you the power of attorney to judge anyone.

13 Hey, you've got your year planner out and can already taste the profits in all your business ventures; you're going big; travel, and trade from city to city!

14 Meanwhile, you have no handle on tomorrow! Your life is like a mist that is visible for a short while before it evaporates.

15 My best advice for you is to wrap up all your plans and conversations in the delightful resolve of God.

16 Don't be so cocksure about your dreams for the future. Plans that presumptuously exclude God's opinion end up to be [1]full of labors, annoyances, and hardships. *(The word, [1]**poneros**, is described in Thayer's Lexicon to mean, full of annoyances, hardships, and labors; often translated as evil.)*

17 To turn a blind eye to an obvious opportunity to do good is [1]out of character. *(The word, [1]**hamartia**, comes from **ha**, meaning without and **meros**, meaning portion or form, distorted behavior, often translated as sin.)*

Chapter 5

1 Your wealth cannot disguise your weakness when calamity strikes. Then it is too late to scream and cry.

2 Whatever you have hoarded to show how strong you are financially shows signs of rot; your wardrobes of fine clothing are moth eaten.

3 Your tarnished treasures of gold and silver bear witness against you; instead of exhibiting your riches they show off your shame. Your wealth worries have given you ulcers that consume you like a fire from within. You would have thought that you stored up enough insurance to last you to the end of days.

4 In the process you have short paid your laborers who reaped your harvests; those wages have now become a loud voice together with the groans of the workers you have cheated and abused; they shout out against you in earshot of the Lord of the masses.

5 You have indulged in a delicate lifestyle on all your properties; you have stuffed yourselves; grabbing and looting like soldiers on the battlefield.

6 In your quest to get to the top you have stepped on others and ruined innocent lives; while no one opposed you.

7 My friends, if you are the ones abused, remain passionate about the [1]presence of the Lord. Consider how the farmer lays hold of the harvest by patiently letting the early and latter rain do its work in the soil to prepare its precious yield. *(The word, [1]**parousia**, means presence, from **para**, closest possible proximity, and **eimi**, "I am." Sadly this beautiful word has always been traditionally translated to point to yet another future event—the coming of the Lord. Religion thrives on two lies, distance and delay! Emmanuel cancelled both in Christ! Jesus says in John 4, "Do you not say, "there are yet four months then comes the harvest." Yet you are looking at the wrong harvest! Lift up your eyes, look away from your own labor and see the harvest that is already ripe!)*

8 Let your hearts also be firm in patience while the [1]closeness of the embrace of his presence sustains you. *(The word, [1]**engidzo**, means to bring near, reflexively — Strong's Concordance; here translated as "the closeness of his embrace.")*

9 When circumstances [1]squeeze you into tight spots, don't make your problem your topic of conversation with one another *(there is no relief in feeling sorry for yourselves)* **while the Lord is left standing outside behind closed doors. Let him be the judge of your situation.** *(The word, [1]**stenadzo**, means to groan, complain; from **stenos**, meaning narrow.)*

10 The Prophets who spoke in the Name of the Lord are our [1]mentors; consider what they had to put up with and what hardships they went through, and with what fortitude they prevailed. *(The word, [1]**upodeigma**, means an exhibit, pattern for imitation.)*

11 To look back at the faith heroes of yesterday is always an inspiration. Even Job's life was prophetic. Consider how God came through for him in the end; his endurance proved God's extreme compassion and tender mercies. *(The first part represents life under the law of fear, the latter the law of faith.)*

12 *(Since you are convinced of God's tender feelings towards you,)* **making foolish oaths does not add weight to your intentions! It makes no difference whether you attempt to tap into heaven's magic or swear by some earthly institution, or any other binding authority. Keep it simple, yes cannot mean no at the same time. Swearing silly oaths makes you look phony anyway!**

13 If anyone is going through a tough time, let him worship; when times are good, sing praises. *(Don't take your lead from your negative or your positive circumstances!)*

14 If you feel too [1]weak to [2]worship, find encouragement in the care of those who are mature in their faith. Let them anoint you with oil and worship with you in [3]prayer. Identify yourself in all that the Lord's name represents. *(The words, [1]**astheneo**, means weak, feeble; [2]**proseuxomai**, worship; and [3]**euxomai**, prayer.)*

15 The prayer *(environment)* **of faith shall restore the feeble. The Lord shall revitalize and quicken you; he even forgives you anything stupid you might have done to have caused the situation.**

16 *(Do not tolerate vibes)* **if you have wronged someone talk to him about it; pray for each other to maintain a healthy fellowship. Righteousness is the fuel of effective prayer.** *(How right things are, not how wrong things are now motivate your every prayer and conversation! Not the size or the detail of the problem.)*

17 Elijah wasn't superman, yet his prayers had supernatural results with global impact. Remember how he prayed. He prayed with such resolve that he stopped the rain for three and a half years!

18 He prayed again and everything was back to normal; rain and harvest in season!

19 If a brother strays off from the truth, go and fetch him.

20 To turn a sinner back from error not only rescues the individual but stops the ripple effect of the rot in a community.

I Peter

Chapter 1

1 I am Peter, an ambassador of Jesus Christ to the many [1]foreigners who are scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. *(The word, [1]**parepidemos**, from **para**, proceeding from a sphere of influence, originating from; and **epidemeo,** from **epi**, continuous influence upon, and **demos**, to bind together; thus, a people who are bound together socially, whilst living in a foreign country. The picture of mankind's scatteredness away from "home-in the Father's bosom", is captured here.)*

2 Your [1]original identity is defined by what God, the Father of mankind has [2]always cherished about you; how your pre-Adamic innocence would be preserved in the prophetic word, and redeemed through the obedience of Jesus Christ, and the effect of the sprinkling of his blood. Realizing his grace and peace exceeds any definition of contradiction or reward. *(The word [1]**eklektos**, derives from **eklegomai**, which has two components, **ek**, a preposition that indicates source or origin, and **lego**, to speak; translates, original logic; see John 1:1-3 and 12. The word [2]**prognosis** means to know in advance. Peter emphasizes the priceless value of our redeemed innocence through the obedience of Christ and the shedding of his blood. See 1 Peter 1:18,19; 2 Pet 1:9)*

3 So let us [1]boast about it and bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ with articulate acclaim! He has reconnected us to our original genesis through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead! This new birth endorses and celebrates the hope of the ages; God's eternal love dream concludes in life! *(The word, [1]**eulogetos**, means to brag, to*

bless, to speak well of. Jesus reminds Nicodemus that we are born ***anouthen****, from above, [John 3:3, and John 3:13 No one can fully engage in heaven's perspective, unless one's heavenly origin is realized! The Son of man declares mankind's co-genesis from above!] and now through our joint resurrection, we are reconnected again to our original identity as sons. The word* [2]***anagennao****, from* ***ana****, upward, [reconnecting with* ***anouthen*** *- Jn 3:3 - from above, where we came from in the first place]; and* ***gennao****, to regenerate, to give birth. As much as his death brought dramatic closure to our futile and failed attempts to justify and define ourselves, our co-resurrection rebooted the original blueprint of our Maker's image and likeness in us.)*

4 We are reintroduced to an [1]imperishable inheritance, which has been [2]flawlessly [3]preserved for us in the heavenly realm, where neither Adam's fall, nor mankind's failure to justify themselves, could possibly [2]contaminate, discredit or diminish the original portion of our true sonship realized in Christ Jesus! *(Here Peter employs three adjectives to reinforce the idea of the absolute imperishable integrity of our inheritance. The word,* [1]***aphthartos*** *from* ***a*** **+** ***ptheiro,*** *incorruptible, indestructible, that which time cannot decay or decrease; the word,* [2]***amiantos, a*** **+** ***miaino****, discredit, dishonor, flaw; also,* [3]***amarantos****, from* ***a*** **+** ***maraino****, extinguish, neither time nor decay could touch or contaminate it in any way! The verb,* ***teteremenen****, is in the perfect Passive tense, which translates having been kept. See also Hebrews 6:16,17)*

5 Your legitimate inheritance was guarded all along by God's belief in you, to be fully unveiled in the [1]conclusion of time as the perfect solution to mankind's predicament! *([1]Jesus is the incarnate Word, Hebrews 1:1-3; Galatians 4:4)*

6 So, regardless of any degree of contradiction, whether prolonged, or swift, your reason for exuberant joy remains uninterrupted; even at times where you might have occasion to feel utterly miserable!

7 This will help you in those difficult times: think of your belief as something much more precious than any possible evaluation of gold; remember that fire does not destroy the metal, it reveals it! Now even gold is an inferior comparison to faith! Gold as a currency has only temporal and unpredictable value; it fluctuates as the market changes. Now, in the same way that fire reveals gold, your faith in the midst of contradiction, makes Jesus Christ visible and gives much reason to testimony [1]stories worth telling. This is what has permanent [2]value, and exhibits the glory of Christ in you! *(The word often translated as praise, [1]**epainos,** has two components, **epi**, continuous influence upon, and **ainos,** which often reflects a story worth telling; the word [2]**timay**, honor, suggests a valuing by which the price is fixed. See 2 Cor 13:5.)*

8 So even though you have never seen Jesus in the flesh you love him; even at times where he seems remote and invisible, your awareness of your union in him continues to ignite belief! You are leaping with indescribable and exuberant joy as you hold him in high esteem!

9 In this place of joy, you are [1]beyond the reach of any harm. Joy gives your faith a voice announcing the perfection of your soul's salvation. *(Joy celebrates the fulfilment of Scripture! Belief gives evidence of everything the Prophets pointed to! The word, **kolumbaō**, to carry off from harm! See 2 Cor 5:10)*

10 This salvation which you now know as your own, is the theme of the prophetic thought; this is what intrigued the Prophets' minds for generations and became the object of their most diligent inquiry and scrutiny. They knew all along that mankind's salvation was a grace revelation, sustained in their prophetic utterance! *(Salvation would never be by personal achievement or a reward to willpower-driven initiative! The law of works would never replace grace!)*

11 In all of their conversation there was a constant quest to determine who the Messiah would be, and exactly when this will happen. They knew with certainty that it was the spirit of Christ within them pointing prophetically and giving testimony to the sufferings of the Christ and the subsequent glory. *(Whatever glory was lost in Adam, would be redeemed again in Jesus Christ!)*

12 It was revealed to them that this glorious grace message that they were communicating pointed to a specific day and person beyond their own horizon and generation; they saw you in their prophetic view! This [1]heavenly announcement had you in mind all along! They proclaimed glad tidings to you in advance, in the Holy Spirit, commissioned from heaven; the shepherd-messengers themselves longed to gaze deeply into its complete fulfilment. *(Peter uses the word, [1]**anaggello**, where the preposition, **ana**, points upwards to the source of the announcement.)*

13 How amazing is that! Jesus is what the Scriptures are all about; and you are what Jesus is all about! Now wrap your minds around that! This unveiling is [1]what tied up all the loose ends that would trip you and frustrate your seamless transition from the old to the new! The revelation of Jesus is no longer a future expectation! Do not allow the old mindset of a future tense glory to intoxicate you and distract you from the relevance of this moment! Stop pointing to a future Messiah! You're it! You are who the Prophets pointed to! You are the fruit of his sufferings; you are the glorious resurrection generation! Fully engage your [2]minds with the consequence of this grace in the revelation of Jesus Christ! He [3]completes your every [4]expectation! *(The word [1]**anazosamenoi,** to gird up, is an Aorist Participle, which translates, "having girded up the loins of your mind, be sober!" The word [2]**dianoia**, suggests deep contemplation, thinking something thoroughly through in order to reach a sober conclusion! Then Peter writes, [3]**teleios** [4]**elpisate**, this is the completeness of every expectation! See Colossians 1:27.*
In one act of righteousness, God removed every possible definition of distance and delay! Every excuse that we could have to feel separated from

God was cancelled! This is what the Prophets saw: "Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the crooked places shall be made straight, even the rough places shall be made smooth. And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." Isaiah 40:4,5)

14 Your [1]accurate hearing is what distinguishes you as the resurrection generation; the days of being driven by every [2]desperate, distorted passion of your former ignorance are over! The [3]fashions and patterns of a redundant system are no longer relevant! *(The word, [1]**upoakoo** is often translated, obedience, from **upo**, meaning under, as in under the influence of, and akoo, to hear. In the context of this chapter, Peter urges us to hear accurately what was communicated in the prophetic word concerning the life of our design, now rebooted into newness by our joint resurrection with Jesus Christ! The word, [2]**epithumia**, translates, desire, craving, longing, desire for what is forbidden, lust. The word, [3]**suschēmatizō**, from **sun**, union, and **schema**, pattern; a typical template.)*

15 The one whose [1]idea you are to begin with, designed you to radiate his image and likeness; he is the true pattern of your beingness! So, [2]be who you are in realizing the exact detail of your genesis! You are [3]whole and in perfect harmony; seamlessly one with him! *(The word [1]kaleo, to define by name; to surname. The word [2]**genethete**, referring to genesis, or birth, is in the Aorist, Passive, imperative case; the distinction between the Aorist imperative and the present imperative is one of aspect, not tense. Thus, to get something over and done with! The word, [3]**hagios**, holy, separate from common condition and use. See Hebrews 10:14-16 Mirror Bible)*

16 On the very account that what is [1]written in prophetic Scripture, *(and echoed in your innermost being)***, already mirrors the life of your design, you are free to [2]be who you are. As it is written, "I am, therefore you are! I am wholly separated unto you, and invite you to**

explore the same completeness of your being in me!" *(The word, [1]**grapho**, to engrave, often refers to the prophetic writings, Old Testament Scripture. The appeal of truth is confirmed in the resonance within us due to the echo of that which is already written in our innermost being by design! "Did not our hearts ignite within us while he opened to us the Scriptures! Luke 24:27,32,44,45. The Textus Receptus uses the word **genesthe**, instead of [2]**esesthe**, from eimi, as in the Westtcott & Hort text. This makes a massive difference! So, instead of **ginomai**, to become, it is the word, **esesthe** "be!" from **eimi**, I am! See note in John 1:1 Three times in this sentence John uses the active indicative imperfect form of the verb **eimi,** namely **aen [ἦν]** to be, [in the beginning 'was' the Word etc...] which conveys no idea of origin for God or for the Logos, but simply continuous existence, "I am." Quite a different verb **egeneto,** "became," appears in John 1:14 for the beginning of the Incarnation of the Logos. The Word 'became' flesh. The incarnation is not the origin of Jesus. See the distinction sharply drawn in John 8:58, "before Abraham was [born, **genesthai** from **ginomai**] I am." The word **eimi**, I am; the essence of being, suggesting timeless existence. You did not begin in your mother's womb. You began in God's I-am-ness! You are the most magnificent idea that the Engineer of the Universe has ever had! "I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb!" Jer 1:5. In him we live and move and have our being! Acts 17:28.)*

17 Now since you are defined in your Father, who does not judge anyone on face value, but always only according his work; *(his finished work in Christ)* **wherever you find yourself located geographically or emotionally, [1]return to your 'at home-ness' in him, with a deep sense of God-consciousness; you are not defined by your circumstances.** *(The word [1]**anastrepho**, suggests a radical returning; literally a turning upside down! Actually **ana**, means upwards - so, it's actually a turning downside up! See 2 Cor 3:16)*

18 It is clear to see that you were ransomed from the futile, fallen mindset that you inherited from your fathers, not by the currency of your own labor, represented by the fluctuating values of gold and silver, and the economy of your religious efforts;

19 but you were redeemed with the priceless blood of Christ; he is the ultimate sacrifice; spotless and without blemish. He completes the prophetic picture! *(In him God speaks the most radical scapegoat language of the law of judgment, and brings final closure to a dead and redundant system! In Psalm 40:6,7, it is clearly stated that God does not require sacrifices or offerings! Jesus is the Lamb of God! He collides victoriously with the futile sacrificial system whereby offerings are constantly made to the pseudo, moody, monster gods of our imagination! This is the scandal of the cross! God does not demand a sacrifice that would change the way he thinks about mankind; he provides the sacrifice of himself in Christ in order to forever eradicate sin-consciousness from our minds and radically change the way we think about our Maker, one another and ourselves! [Sin-consciousness is in essence a works-based consciousness.] God did not clothe Adam with the skin of an animal because of a divine need to be appeased, but because of their unconditional love for Adam; they spoke the language of Adam's own judgment: Adam, not God, was embarrassed about his nakedness. The clothing was not to make God look at Adam differently, but to make Adam feel better about himself! And ultimately it was to prophetically prepare Adam for the unveiling of the mystery of mankind's redemption in the incarnation. Here Deity would clothe themselves in human skin, in a Son; and the Lion of Judah would become the Lamb of God in order to free our minds to re-discover his image and likeness in our skin! See 1 Peter 1:2.)*

20 He was always destined in God's prophetic thought; God knew even before the [1]fall of the world order that his Son would be the Lamb, to be made manifest in these [2]last days, because of you! *(You are the reason Jesus died and was raised! The word, [1]**kataballo**, meaning "to fall away, to put in a lower place," instead of **themelios**, meaning "foundation" [see Eph 2:20]; thus, translated "the fall of the world," instead of "the foundation of the world." The entire "Fall" was a falling away in our minds from our true identity as image and likeness bearers of Elohim. Just like Eve, were we all deceived to believe a lie about ourselves, which is the fruit of the "I-am-not-tree ". We all, like sheep have gone*

astray. [Isa 53:6])
*The word **eschatos** means extreme; last in time or in space; the uttermost part, the final conclusion. What God said about 'you-manity' in Jesus defines eschatology!)*

21 He is the conclusive cause of your belief in God. Seeing then how perfectly you fit into the scheme of things, it is no wonder that your faith in God's act of raising Jesus from the dead becomes the glorious reference to your own new birth! The glory that God gave Jesus by raising him from the dead, is the conclusion of everything that your faith longed for! *(This is the redeemed glory that the Prophets pointed to! Hos 6:2 "After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up!" Isaiah 40:5 "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together!")*

22 As a result of your [1]accurate hearing of the unveiled truth, and through the agency of the Spirit, you have engaged your souls fully with the purifying effect of your inclusion in his glorious work of redemption. *(See [1]commentary note in 1 Peter 1:14. The same Spirit of Christ who spoke from within the Prophets of old, now endorses truth within your spirit!)*

23 This co-resurrection-new-birth does not compare to the fading qualities of that which is produced by the perishable seed of the carnal works- and performance-based mindsets. The indestructible living seed of the word of God conceives resurrection life within you; this life is [1]equal to its source. *(The word, [1]**meno** means, abiding in seamless union, or, to remain the same. You are giving stature to the rise of a new person; a new resurrection generation of a people who are coming out of obscurity into his marvelous light!)*

24 "All flesh is grass, and all its glory is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades,

25 but the word of our God is [1]risen for ever. This word is the [2]exact same message of the glad tidings announced by the Prophets and now proclaimed unto you! *(Peter again quotes from Isaiah 40, this time verse 6 and 8. The Hebrew word [1]**Qum**, means to rise up; like in Hosea 6:2, "After two days he will revive us, on the third day, he will raise us up!" Isaiah 40:6,8; also see note on 1:13. The word [2]**meno** is used in the Septuagint and also here in the Greek text, Peter uses the word, **meno**, to remain the same; to continue to be present.)*

Chapter 2

1 Now, since you are rebooted and redefined in this eternal conversation, any distracting talk is inappropriate. Do away with everything associated with the old performance based mindsets! Anything perverse, all manner of guile and hypocrisies and spiteful jealousies as well as any kind of backbiting is to be shunned. There is zero nourishment in such conversation.

2 Imagine how a newborn babe would crave nothing else but pure mother's milk; in just the same way, drink with total abandonment from the unmixed milk of the word. This is your true nourishment! *(Approach the Scriptures with an attitude of a new born babe, drawing milk from the mother.)*

3 Once you've tasted pure grace, you are spoilt for life! Grace rules! The Lordship of Jesus is established upon the dynamic of his goodness. *(χρηστὸς ὁ Κύριος)*

4 The irresistible attraction seen in him, the living stone, is not at all compromised by the fact that man-made religious structures rejected

him; he is esteemed most precious and remains the original and pivotal idea of God!

5 Likewise, you yourselves are living stones *(co-quickened in his resurrection; 1:3)* **and are co-constructed, and seamlessly joined into a spiritual house; you are a priestly people separated to offer spiritual sacrifices, reflecting God's total approval of Jesus Christ. Everything that was prophetically mirrored in the shadow tabernacle of Israel, has finally found its relevance in Jesus Christ; he fully unveils the real deal; the temple, the priestly-order and the people are all one in him.**

6 This is [1]central to the prophetic theme of Scripture: as voiced in Isaiah 28:16: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone, the [2]exact and precise reference to the authentic thought of God; the one who exhibits the perfect idea of human life indwelled by God. This makes him most precious and desirable; he will not disappoint anyone's belief that he is indeed the Messiah, the Savior of the world! He exhibits human life as the true temple of God. *(The word [1]**periecho**, from **peri**, which, in compounds, retains substantially the same meaning of circuit (around), excess (beyond), or completeness (through), with **echo**, to hold, to resonate. The word, [2]**eklego**, from **ek**, origin, and **lego**, idea, thought.*

See Eph 2:20 The first evidence of this building was Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. He is the first visible testimony to the restored image and likeness of God in human form.

Also Rom 9:33 The conclusion of the prophetic reference pointed towards the rock as the spirit identity of a person. God placed his testimony of their identity in front of their eyes, in Zion, the center of their religious focus, yet, blinded by their own efforts to justify themselves, they tripped over him. But those who recognized him by faith, as the Rock from which they were hewn are freed from the shame of their sense of failure and inferiority. [See Deuteronomy 32:18, "you have forgotten the Rock that birthed you;" and in Isaiah 51:1, "Look to the Rock from which you were hewn."] It is only in him that mankind will discover what they are looking for. Who is the son of man? His physical identity is defined by his spiritual origin, the image and

likeness of God, I say you are petros, you are rock [see Mt 16:13-19]. Mankind's origin and true identity is preserved and revealed again in the Rock of ages. The term, rock in those days represented what we call the hard drive in computer technology; the place where data is most securely preserved. Rock fossils carry the oldest data and evidence of life.)
See also Rom 10:11 Scripture declares that whosoever believes in Christ [to be the fulfillment of the promise of God to redeem mankind] will [3]not be ashamed ([4]hesitant) to announce it. [See Isa 28:16] These two Hebrew words, [3]cush, to make haste, and [Isa 49:23] [4]bush, to be ashamed, look very similar and were obviously confused in some translations—the Greek from Hebrew translation. The Septuagint was the Scriptures Paul was familiar with and there the word was translated from the word [1]bush.)

7 His irreplaceable and priceless value is realized in your conviction; the very stone rejected by the unbelief of the religious leaders of the day, has become the head of the house!

8 Unbelief is such a predictable set-up where that which is highly esteemed by faith, seems scandalous and offensive to the self-righteous mind. Since there is no ground left for boasting, grace offends the typical "law of works-mentality." They are the ones who refuse to see the reference to their original identity revealed and redeemed in Christ.

9 You are proof of the authentic *[eklego]* **generation; you give testimony to the original idea of the royalty of true priesthood** *[the order of Melchizedek;]* **you are a perfect prototype of the mass of the human race. You are the generation of people who exhibit the conclusion** *[eis]* **of the prophetic, poetic thought of God that has come full circle.** *(See 1:3)* **You publish the excellence of his elevation and display that your authentic identity has been rescued out of obscurity and brought into his spectacular light!**

10 You were once a people without identity, but have now discovered the integrity of your original identity in God; where there was no mercy *[under the cruel judgment of the law of works, sponsored by the "I am not-tree-system,]* **you have now received much mercy!**

11 It does not matter how appealing the system of the flesh-glory seems, it can never define or fulfill you; do not allow yourself to be lured into its strategies and sway! You are dearly loved! I urge you from within this place of our joint oneness to remain like pilgrims and strangers to the subtleties of a world-system that is foreign to your design. Avoid any influence that does not [2]resonate with your innocence. *(The word, [1]**parakaleo** has two components; **para**, suggesting close proximity and **kaleo**, to surname or to identify by name; suggesting close and intimate companionship; the word [2]**apechomai, apo**, away from and **echo**, to abstain from that which does not resonate.)*

12 The beautiful way in which you conduct yourselves in the company of people who are not familiar with your beliefs, will attract their attention to the resonance of their hearts as they witness for themselves God's intentions as evidenced in your good works. This will be as clear as daylight to them and will completely disarm the rumors that they have heard about you.

13 Reflect the Lordship of Jesus in your life in the way that you submit to every man-made ordinance, by acknowledging the supremacy of a king.

14 Recognize their leadership and structures as their objective to manage the evil doers in a righteous way as well as to commend those who do well.

15 God desires that your good conduct will silence those foolish people who see you as a threat to society.

16 Yes you are free *(from man-made rules and institutions to govern your behavior)* **but do not use your freedom in a way that others may read it as a disguise for an evil agenda! You are God-governed!** *(Where love rules!)*

17 Esteem all people with equal respect. Love family with much affection. Revere God. Respect the King.

18 Servants be subject to your masters in every possible way; not only to those who are nice to you but even to the crooked ones!

19 Seeing together with God enables you to suffer wrongfully, gracefully.

20 For someone to get beaten up for his sins and then to bear it patiently is one thing; but suffering such abuse while you are doing well is pure grace before God!

21 These are defining moments for us, since Christ suffered our judgment in his innocence, thus leaving us a perfect example! In this way, our attitude in bearing insults we do not deserve, reveals the grace of God to the ones mistreating us.

22 He never said or did anything wrong!

23 Even when they heaped abuse upon him, he never retaliated; he suffered much, but never threatened; instead he fully yielded himself to the righteous judgment of God; which is God declaring the unjust righteous because of what Christ has done!

24 In his person he bore our sins in his own body upon the tree and thus [1]brought closure to every distorted pattern of sin's influence upon us; we were made alive unto righteousness; we were healed by the blows he took in his body! *(The word [1]**apogenomenos** from **apo**, away from and **ginomai,** to cause to be, to generate; in giving up his body to death, he removed us from the deadly influence of every distortion that sin could possibly generate in us! See 1 Pet 1:11.)*

25 You were completely vulnerable, just like sheep roaming astray without direction or protection, but now, you have [1]returned and are restored to the shepherd and Guardian of your souls! *(The word, [1]**epistrepho** means to return to where we've wandered from! See 2 Cor 3:16. Also 1 Pet 1:17)*

II Peter

Chapter 1

1 I am Simon the Rock, bondman and ambassador of Jesus Christ. We are in this together; God's faith [1]sees everyone [2]equally valued and justified in Jesus Christ our Savior. *(He rescued us from the lies we believed about ourselves. The word, [1]**lanchano**, means to be measured out beforehand; to be allocated something by allotment. This emphasizes the fact that nothing we did or determined to achieve had any influence upon God to qualify us. Faith is not something we do to persuade God; faith is what happens to us when we realize how persuaded God is about us. Salvation belongs to everyone based on exactly the same merit. God's righteousness persuades us. What God did right in Christ cancels out everything that Adam, or we did wrong! See Rom 1:17 Herein lies the secret of the power of the Gospel; there is no good news in it until the righteousness of God is revealed! The dynamic of the gospel is the revelation of God's faith as the only valid basis for our belief. The Prophets wrote in advance about the fact that God believes that righteousness defines the life that he always had in mind for us. "Righteousness by his (God's) faith defines life." The word, [2]**isotimos**, means to esteem of equal value.)*

2 God's [1]desire is that we may now increasingly be overwhelmed with grace as his divine influence within us and become fully acquainted with the awareness of our [2]oneness. The way he has always [3]known us is realized in Jesus our Master. *(The verb [1]**plethunthein,** meaning to increase, to multiply, is in the Optative mood which expesses a wish. The word [2]**eirene,** means peace, from **eiro**, to join, to be set at one again, in carpentry it is the strongest joint,referred to as the dove-tail joint. The [3]knowledge of God is not our knowledge of him; it is God's knowledge of*

us! He knew us before he formed us in our mother's womb! Jer 1:5. In this context no one can ever feel ignored or neglected again.)

3 By his divine [1]engineering he gifted us with all that it takes to live life to the full, where our ordinary day to day lives mirror our [2]devotion and romance with our Maker. His [3]intimate knowledge of us [4]introduces us to ourselves again and [5]elevates us to a position where his [6]original intention is clearly perceived! *(I have translated the word, [1]**dunamis,** power or ability, as engineering, in this context. The word [2]**eusebeia** means devotion or worship. The word [3]**epignoseos** suggests an intimate knowledge; here it is in the Genitive case, which means God is the owner of this knowledge. Jer 1:5, 1 Cor 13:12. The word [4]**kaleo**, means to surname, I translated it, "he introduced us to ourselves again", which reminds of Jesus declaring to Simon, son of Jonah his original identity and thus laying the rock-foundation in our understanding that the son of man is indeed the son of God, now celebrated in the Ekklesia, which literally means our original identity. Math 16:17,18. The word [5]**arete** from **aireo** means to elevate, to lift one's perspective; often translated, virtue. The word [6]**doxa**, often translated, glory, from **dokeo**, original intention, opinion.)*

4 This is exactly what God always had in mind for us; everyone of his abundant and priceless promises pointed to our restored participation in our [1]godly origin! This is his gift to us! In this fellowship we have escaped the distorted influence of the corrupt cosmic virus of greed. *([1]His image and likeness is redeemed in us. The default settings are restored. We are re-booted to fully participate in the life of our design.)*

5 Now *(in the light of what we are gifted with in Christ)* **the stage is set to display life's excellence. Explore the adventure of faith! Imagine the extreme dedication and focus of a [1]conductor of music; how he would [2]diligently [3]acquaint himself with every individual voice in the choir, as well as the contribution of every specific instrument, to follow the precise sound represented in every single note in order to give**

maximum credit to the original composition. This is exactly what it means to exhibit the divine character. You are the choir conductor of your own life. Familiarize yourselves with every ingredient that faith unfolds! See there how [4]elevated you are, and from within this position *(of your co-seatedness in Christ),* **[5]enlightened perspective will dawn within you.** *(The word, [1]**epichoregeo**, comes from **epi**, a preposition of position, over, in charge, indicating continuous influence upon, + **chorus**, choir, orchestra, or dance + **ago**, meaning to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep; thus, the conductor of music. [2]"Giving all diligence, extreme devotion." The word, [2]**spoude**, means to interest one's self immediately and most earnestly. The word, [3]**pareisphero,** means to introduce simultaneously. I translated it, to acquaint yourself with every detail of the whole. From **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection, + **eisphero**, to reach inward. Before a performance, the first violinist will give the exact key of the piece to be played; now every instrument can be finely tuned to that note, in the same way the faith of God gives that exact pitch. The word, [4]**arete**, often translated, virtue, comes from the word **airo**, to raise up, to elevate. Faith unfolds the secret of our joint-elevation with Jesus. See yourself seated together with Christ! Colossians 3:1-3. Now from this position of elevation we begin to see new horizons; in fact we begin to see everything differently! There is a level of understanding, [5]**gnosis**, a knowing, that can only be accessed by faith. In Hebrews 11:3, "by faith we understand that the ages were framed by the Word of God.")*

6 Here you will realize your inner strength and how fully competent you are to prevail in patient perseverance in the midst of any contradiction. It is from within this place of enlightened perspective that meaningful devotion and worship ignite! *(Spiritual strength exceeds mind-, muscle- or willpower by far!)*

7 In worship you will find a genuine fondness for others. At the heart of everything that faith unfolds is [1]the agape-love of God. *(Worship and devotion includes esteeming people and honoring friendship [Jas 3:9]; the same voice that magnifies God cannot insult a person made in God's image. True worship is to touch someone's life with the same devotion and care you would touch Jesus himself; even if the other person seems a most unlikely candidate. The word, [1]**agape**, is from **ago**, meaning to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep, and **pao**, to rest; as in Psalm 23, "he leads me besides still waters, he restores my soul; or, by the waters of reflection, my soul remembers who I am!"*
See The Message translation, " ... each dimension fitting into and developing the other.")

8 While you diligently [1]rehearse the exact qualities of every divine attribute within you; the volume will rise with ever increasing gusto, guarding you from being ineffective and barren in your knowledge of the Christ-life, displayed with such authority and eloquence in Jesus. *("These things being in you." The word, [1]**uparcho**, translates rehearse, from **upo** + **archomai**, to commence or rehearse from the beginning. The word **arche**, suggests commencement or beginning.)*

9 If anyone feels that these things are absent in his life, they are not; spiritual blindness and short-sightedness only veil them from you. This happens when one loses sight of one's innocence. *(The moment one forgets the tremendous consequence of the fact that we were cleansed from our past sins, one seems to become pre-occupied again with the immediate sense-ruled horizon, which is what short-sightedness is all about; this makes one blind to his blessings. Spiritual realities suddenly seem vague and distant. Become acquainted with your innocence!)*

10 Therefore I would encourage you my fellow family, to make every immediate effort to become cemented in the knowledge of our [1]original identity [2]revealed and confirmed in the logic of God. Fully engage these

realities in your lifestyle, and so you will never [3]fail. *(Your original identity, [1]**kaleo**, often translated as calling, to surname, to identify by name; [2]**eklogen**, often translated as election; yet the two parts of this word, **ek**, a preposition denoting origin or source, and **lego**, from **logos**, suggests the original word (the logic of God) as our source [Jn 1:1,14]. The word, [3]**ptaio**, means to fail, falter, or get out of tune again in the context of verse 5, literally to fall, lose height, to stop flying.)*

11 Thus the great [1]Conductor of music will draw your life into the full volume of the harmony of the ages; the [2]royal song of our Savior Jesus Christ. *(In Colossians 2:19, "You are directly connected to Christ who like a choir conductor draws out the music in everyone like a tapestry of art that intertwines in harmony to reveal the full stature of divine inspiration," which is Christ in you. Again the word [2]**epichoregeo** is used, the choir conductor; this time, God is doing the conducting and is leading us into his harmony; [2]**eis** + **odos**, meaning access into the road. Yet, in this context I prefer the thought that we are led into a song, an **ode**; a ceremonious lyric poem. The form is usually marked by exalted feeling and style. The term **ode** derives from a Greek word alluding to a choric song, usually accompanied by a dance; also a poem to be sung composed for royal occasions.)*

12 Having said all this I am sure that you can appreciate why I feel so urgent in my commitment to you to repeatedly bring these things to your attention; as indeed you have already taken your stand for the truth as it is now revealed *(in the Gospel)***.**

13 So while I am still in this body-suit, I take my lead from the revelation of righteousness and make it my business to thoroughly stir you until these truths become permanently molded in your memory.

14 All the more since I know that my time in this tabernacle is almost done; our Lord Jesus Christ has prepared me for this.

15 In the meantime, I will do whatever it takes to make it possible for you to always be able to easily recall these realities even in my absence.

16 We are not con-artists, fabricating fictions and fables to add weight to our account of his majestic appearance; with our own eyes we witnessed the powerful display of the illuminate presence of Jesus the Master of the Christ-life. *(His face shone like the sun, even his raiment were radiant white [Mt 17].)*

17 He was spectacularly endorsed by God the Father in the highest honor and glory. God's majestic voice announced, "This is the Son of my delight; he completely pleases me."

18 For John, James, and I the prophetic word is fulfilled beyond doubt; we heard this voice loud and clear from the heavenly realm while we were with Jesus in that sacred moment on the mountain.

19 For us the appearing of the Messiah is no longer a future promise but a fulfilled reality. Now it is your turn to have more than a second-hand, hearsay testimony. Take my word as one would take a lamp at night; the day is about to dawn within you, in your own understanding. When the Morning Star appears, you no longer need the lamp; this will happen shortly on the horizon of your own hearts.

20 It is most important to understand that the prophetic word recorded in Scripture does not need our interpretation or opinion to make it valid.

21 The holy men who first spoke these words of old did not invent these thoughts, they simply voiced God's oracles as they were individually inspired by the Holy Spirit.

I John

Chapter 1

1 The [1]Logos is the source; everything commences in him. The initial reports concerning him that have reached our ears, and which we indeed bore witness to with our own eyes - to the point that we became irresistibly attracted - now captivates our gaze. In him we witnessed [2]tangible life in its most articulate form. *(The Logos - the [1]Word. To touch**, [2]psallo**, to touch the string of a musical instrument, thus resonance.)*

2 The same life that [1]was [2]face to face with the Father from the beginning, has now dawned on us! The infinite life of the Father became visible before our eyes in a human person! *(In the beginning "was" the Word; [1]**eimi**, timeless existence, "I am". The preposition [2]**pros** says so much more than 'with,' it suggests towards; face to face. See John 1:1&2. Also John 1:14 "Suddenly the invisible eternal Word takes on visible form! The Incarnation! In him, and now confirmed in us! The most accurate tangible display of God's eternal thought finds expression in human life! The Word became a human being; we are his address; he resides in us! He captivates our gaze! The glory we see there is not a religious replica; he is the authentic begotten Son. The glory (that Adam lost) returns in fullness! Only grace can communicate truth in such complete context!" Also John 1:18 "Until this moment God remained invisible; now the authentic begotten Son, the blueprint of mankind's design who represents the innermost being of God, the Son who is in the bosom of the Father, brings him into full view! He is the official authority qualified to announce God! He is our guide who accurately declares and interprets the invisible God within us.***")***

3 We include you in this conversation; you are the immediate audience of the logic of God! This is the Word that always was; we saw him incarnate and witnessed his language as defining our lives. In the incarnation Jesus includes mankind in the eternal friendship of the Father and the Son! This life now finds expression in an unreserved union. *(We do not invent fellowship; we are invited into the fellowship of the Father and the Son!)*

4 What we enjoy equally belongs to you! I am writing this for your reference, so that joy may be yours in its most complete measure. *(In all these years since the ascension of Jesus, John, now ninety years old, continues to enjoy unhindered friendship with God and desires to extend this same fellowship to everyone through this writing.)*

5 My conversation with you flows from the same source which illuminates this fellowship of union with the Father and the Son. This, then, is the essence of the message: God is radiant light and in him there exists not even a trace of obscurity or darkness at all. *(See James 1:17, "Without exception God's gifts are only good, their perfection cannot be improved upon. They come [1]from above, proceeding like light rays from the source, the Father of lights, with whom there is no distortion or even a shadow of shifting to obstruct or intercept the light; no hint of a hidden agenda. [The word, [1]anouthen, means, from above.] John 3:3-13. Man is not the product of his mother's womb; man began in God." Jer 1:5)*

6 This is the real deal! To live a life of pretense is a such a waste of time! The truth has no competition. Truth inspires the poetry of friendship in total contrast to a fake, performance-based fellowship! Light is not threatened by darkness! Why say something with darkness as your reference?

7 We are invited to explore the dimensions of the same light that engulfs God; when we see the light in his light, fellowship ignites! In his light we understand how the blood of Jesus Christ is the removal of

every stain of sin! The success of the cross celebrates our redeemed innocence!

8 To claim innocence by our own efforts under the law of personal performance is to deceive ourselves and to deliberately ignore the truth. The truth about you does not mean that you now have to go into denial if you have done something wrong!

9 When we [1]communicate what God says about our sins, we discover what he believes concerning our redeemed oneness and innocence! We are cleansed from every distortion we believed about ourselves! Likeness is redeemed! *(The word traditionally translated "confession" is the word [1]**homologeo** from homo, the same, and logeo to speak. In the context of verse 7, this suggests that we say what God says about us!)*

10 If we judge ourselves innocent by the law of our own works, then we make Jesus Christ, and what his word and blood communicate within us, irrelevant.*(See John 1:3-5 The Logos is the source; everything commences in him. He remains the exclusive parent reference to their genesis. There is nothing original - except the Word! His life is the light that defines our lives. (In his life, man discovers the light of life.) The darkness was pierced and could not comprehend or diminish this light. (Darkness represents mankind's ignorance of their redeemed identity and innocence [Isaiah 9:2-4, Isaiah 60:1-3, Ephesians 3:18, Colossians 1:13-15])". See also Isaiah 9:2 "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined." Matthew 4:16 The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death, light has dawned." A new day for mankind has come. The authentic light of life that illuminates everyone was about to dawn in the world!)*

Chapter 2

1 My darling little children, the reason I write these things to you is so that you will not [1]believe a lie about yourselves! If anyone does believe a [1]distorted image to be their reality, we have Jesus Christ who [2]defines our likeness [3]face to face with the Father! He is our [4]parakletos, the one who endorses our true identity, being both the source and the reflection of the Father's image in us! *(The root of sin is to believe a lie about yourself. The word sin, is the word [1]**hamartia**, from **ha**, negative or without and **meros**, portion or form, thus to be without your allotted portion or without form, pointing to a disorientated, distorted, bankrupt identity; the word **meros**, is the stem of **morphe**, as in 2 Corinthians 3:18 the word **metamorphe**, with form, which is the opposite of **hamartia** - without form. Sin is to live out of context with the blueprint of one's design; to behave out of tune with God's original harmony. Jesus the righteous, **iesoun xriston dikaion**; the word [2]**dikaiosune**, righteousness is from the stem **dike**, two parties finding likeness in each other. The preposition [3]**pros** suggests a face to face presentation. [See John 1:1] The word [4]**parakletos** comes from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **kaleo**, meaning to identify by name, to surname. Jesus introduces the Holy Spirit in the same capacity: **parakletos**, meaning close companion, kinsman [John 14:16]. Sadly this word has been translated as 'advocate' as if Jesus needs to persuade the Father to like us and possibly forgive us!)*

2 Jesus is our [1]at-one-ment, he has conciliated us to himself and has taken our sins and distortions out of the equation. What he has accomplished is not to be seen as something that belongs to us exclusively; the same at-one-ment includes the entire [2]cosmos! *(The word [1]**hilasmos**, means to conciliate, to bring about atonement, from h**ileos**,*

gracious, merciful. Also reminds of the word ***hilaros****, cheerful, joyous, hilarious! The word,* [2]***kosmos*** *in the NT refers to the entire human family.)*

3 In this we know that we know him; by [1]treasuring the [2]conclusion of his prophetic purpose. *(The word* [1]***tereo****, means to attend to carefully, take care of, to guard, to treasure something with great attention. The word* [2]***entole****; often translated commandment or precept; the two components of this word are* ***en****, in and* ***telos****, from* ***tello,*** *to set out for a definite point or goal; properly the point aimed at as a limit, that is, by implication, the conclusion of an act or state, the result; the ultimate or prophetic purpose. Strong's 5056)*

4 To merely claim that you know him, based on your own academic or even sentimental interpretation of him, and not upon the conclusion of his prophetic purpose unveiled in a heart that treasures his truth, is to continue to live a life of pretense! *(As Paul also says in 2 Corinthians 5:16, we once knew Christ from a human point of view but we no longer know him like that! Keep the context of John's writing in mind, 1 John 1:5-8 My conversation with you flows from the same source which illuminates this fellowship of union with the Father and the Son. This, then, is the essence of the message: God is radiant light and in him there exists not even a trace of obscurity or darkness at all. This is the real deal! To live a life of pretense is a such a waste! The truth has no competition. Truth inspires the poetry of fellowship in total contrast to a fake, performance-based friendship! Light is not threatened by darkness! Why say something with darkness as your reference? We are invited to explore the dimensions of the same light that engulfs God; when we see the light in his light, fellowship ignites! In his light we understand how the blood of Jesus Christ is the removal of every stain of sin! The success of the cross celebrates our redeemed innocence! To claim innocence by our own efforts under the law of personal performance is to deceive ourselves and to deliberately ignore the truth.)*

5 Whoever treasures [1]the logic of God's authentic thought, has his agape-love fully realized in its most complete context. This is what our

association and this union in Christ is all about! *(God's word, or logic, his authentic thought, [1]**logos**; John 1:1. See John 14:20, "In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you!" Also 1 John 5:20 "We know that the Son of God has come, and he has given us understanding to know him who is true, and we are in him who is true!")*

6 It is in this place of consciously [1]abiding in the awareness of your oneness that your conversation unveils the same fellowship with the Father that Jesus enjoys, and results in a daily walk that mirrors his; one of living your life in the full [2]benefit of it! *(The word, [1]**meno** suggests an uninterrupted abiding, a seamless oneness! The word [2]**opheilō**, often translated, ought to, is from the stem **ophelos**, which means to advantage, to profit, to gain, to heap up, to accumulate, to benefit!)*

7 My beloved family, I know that the words I write to you here may not immediately remind you of the [1]precepts of Moses; this does not mean that it is a new [1]doctrine, it is the ancient [1]conversation that [2]echoes God's voice prophetically! It is indeed the very [1]conclusion of the word, which you have heard from the beginning! *(The word [1]**entole** is often translated commandment or precept; this word has two components: **en**, in and **telos**, from **tello**, to set out for a definite point or goal; properly the point aimed at as a limit, that is, by implication, the conclusion of an act or state, the result; the ultimate or prophetic purpose. Strong's 5056. The word, [2]**echo**, to hold, like sound is held in an echo; to resonate.)*

8 And yet it is a glorious [1]new [2]message that I am writing to you! You may ask, "How can that which is old, also be new?" Herein is the secret of its newness: whatever is true of Jesus is equally true of you! The days of the [3]dominance of darkness as a reference to human life, are over! The true light surely shines with [4]bold certainty and illuminates your life, as it is unveiled in Christ. *(The word [1]**kainos** means, fresh, recent, unused, unworn, of a new kind, unprecedented, novel, uncommon. The*

*freshness of this encounter is celebrated in a fellowship of exactly the same oneness enjoyed between the Father and the Son! Again the word [2]**entole** is used, precept or teaching. The word [3]**parago** from para, close proximity and **agoo**, to lead; thus darkness will no longer lead you into its sway. The word [4]**ede**, even now: - already, by this time; from **ē** [pronounced ay] an adverb of confirmation; assuredly: - surely; and **dē** [pronounced day] which is a particle of emphasis or explicitness; now, then, etc.: - also, and, doubtless, now, therefore.)*

9 To feel justified in your judgment to [1]dislike a fellow human, is to continue in darkness, even if you might claim to be in the light! This place of illumination is not cheap talk! It immediately translates into seeing your brother differently! *(See 1 John 1:6, also 2 Corinthians 5:16. [1]It was common among the Hebrews to use the terms "love" and "hatred" in this comparative sense, where the former implied strong positive attachment, and the latter, not positive hatred, but merely a less love, or the withholding of the expressions of affection [compare Genesis 29:30-31; Luke 14:26].)*

10 From this conscious union with that which light reveals, there follows a deep love for the very brother who might previously have irritated you!

11 If anyone thinks less of his brother than what love reveals, it is proof of a blindfold mode, where reference is blurred by a mind trapped in a maze of dark thoughts, which leads nowhere.

12 The reason of my writing is to remind you to live your lives in the innocence of an infant! The name Jesus means that you can rest assured in your salvation from sin's harassment! *(Teknion, diminitive of teknon, an infant.)*

13 May my writing also remind you that your fatherhood has its authentic genesis in him who is from the beginning. *(1 John 2:7,8; 5:20)* **And to you young men, I write to congratulate you for your victory over the [1]exhausting system of hardships, annoyances and labors. You have discovered your strength in Christ's achievement and not your own efforts! I wrote to all of you as children because you know God as your Father.** *(The word often translated evil, is [1]**poneros**, which according to Thayer's definition means to be full of labors, annoyances, hardships; to be pressed and harassed by labors. This is so typical of the religious system of a works-based self-righteousness, as opposed to faith righteousness. This is the fruit of the I am not-tree-system. The young men who become weary and exhausted under the system of hardships and labor; the law of works, have discovered their eagle wings in Kawa-mode; where God's thoughts entwine with their thoughts, and his strentgh ignites within. Isa 40:31 The Hebrew word, **kawa**, often translated, to wait, means to entine; to plat together.)*

14 What I have written previously will resonate with the fathers whose acquaintance with him is established in the prophetic voice [1]from the beginning. Also the young men will find their strength endorsed in my writing, since they have the word firmly rooted within them as their permanent source and reference. They have defeated the duty-and guilt-driven system that snared them before in the futility of their own efforts. *(The word [1]**arche**, means to be first in order, time, place or rank.)*

15 The Father's love does not compete with anything the world-system has to offer! Its cosmetic attraction is surface and external; the Father's love is from within. Do not be lured into an emptiness where love is absent and romance seems lost!

16 There is a clear distinction between the [1]biological, physical life that is exploited by the "I am not - mentality" of the world system, and the authentic zoe-life of our design that is sourced in the Father. The one engages the individual with a constant yearning and craving for

fleshly gratification, with eyes desperately scanning for recognition; this inevitably results in [2]cheap bragging and boastful conversation, which is so utterly boring; while the Father's life satisfies completely! *(The word, [1]**bios** refers to biological, or physical life; while **zoe** refers more to spiritual life. The word [2]**alazoneia**, means empty, braggart talk.)*

17 The world system with all its glamorous dreams comes and goes; but whoever engages with the poetry of God's desires abides unchanged into the conclusion of the ages.

18 Children, this is the completeness of time; the revelation of Christ brings finality and closure to the hour; which makes the anti-Christ system now more apparent than ever, just as it was rumored. There are many who have positioned themselves against the Christ; blatantly opposing grace; this confirms that time has reached its most extreme context! The days of confusion between two oposing systems are over! *(See John 1:17 Against the stark backdrop of the law, with Moses representing the condemned state of mankind, Jesus Christ unveils grace and truth!)*

19 Here there remains no room for hiding in compromize mode! Pretense is no disguise; the grace and finished work of Christ has absolutely nothing in common with religious systems that continue to keep people enslaved to their programs and rituals of outdated sentimental ideals! Their departure from amongst us simply reveal that they never really embraced Christ; one cannot be for and against Christ at the same time!

20 The Christ anointing within you is evidence that you echo what you carry! The Holy Spirit has made him tangible in your life, and you see clearly.

21 My writing to you is not to question your perception of the truth, but to endorse it! No form of deception can possibly coexist with truth.

22 Deception just cannot see that Jesus is the Christ. The anti-Christ system contradicts both the Father and the Son.

23 You cannot have the one without the other! To reject the one is to reject the other. What you say about the Son, immediately reflects your opinion of the Father! *(The word,* ***homologeo****, from* ***homo****, the same, and* ***lego,*** *to speak.)*

24 Make that which you have heard from the beginning your permanent reference; and what I have written in the beginning of this letter *(1 John 1:1-4)* **will be your testimony too! The same constant that is enjoyed in the fellowship of the Father and the Son is yours!**

25 This is the essence of the life of the ages which he has announced and purposed from the beginning. *(Amazing thoughts to consider that our Father who knew us individually, completely, long before he formed us, is the same Engineer who knew every minute detail of our being as we grew mystically in the secret sanctuary of our mother's womb! And knows us now, and longs to introduce us to ourselves again, so that we may know, even as we have always been known! Jeremiah 1:5, 1Corinthians 13:12)*

26 My intention with this writing is to nullify the influence of those who wish to unsettle you.

27 I am convinced that the effect of his touch within you is permanent; this is the Christ-annointing that teaches you all things, so that you do not need any teacher whose doctrine does not resonate with truth. Deception cannot compete with spirit-resonance.

28 So now, just like an [1]infant in a mother's embrace, [2]abide in this place of innocence where his [3]manifest appearance is meant to be fully realized and echoed in unashamed utterance! In his [4]immediate presence there exist no sense of shame or any form of [5]separation! *([1]**Teknion**, diminitive of **teknon**, an infant. The word, [2]**meno** suggests an uninterrupted abiding, a seamless oneness! The word, [3]**phanerothe** is an Aorist Passive in the Subjunctive mode, expressing the hypothetical, expected result of the completed action; from **phaneroo**, to appear; to fully realize, to manifest. The word [4]**parousia** speaks of the immediate presence of the Lord! From **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **eimi,** I am! There is not even a hint of judgment or punishment in this word! Sadly this word has often been translated to yet again point to a future event suggesting the coming of Christ! Please do not believe everything you read in Strongs! For instance: "G3952 parousia, to return; specifically of Christ to punish Jerusalem, or finally the wicked."!!?? The word, [5]**apo**, away from, here translated separation.)*

29 To perceive God's righteousness as defining his [1]"I-am-ness", concludes that everyone born of him inherently partakes of the same pattern and poetry that his righteousness inspires. Righteousness is our true genesis. *(The word, [1]**estin**, to be, from **eimi**, I am. The word for righteousness is [2]**dikaios**, from **dikay**, suggesting two parties finding likeness in each other, where there is no sense of inferiority, suspicion, blame, regret or pressure to perform. The gospel is the revelation of the righteousness of God as our blueprint identity. See Psalm 23:2 "By the waters of reflection, my soul remembers who I am. He leads me in the footprints of righteousness.")*

Chapter 3

1 Consider the amazing love the Father lavished upon us; this is our [1]defining moment: we began in the agape of God - the engineer of the universe is our Father! So it's no wonder that the performance-based systems of this world just cannot see this! Because they do not recognize their origin in God, they feel indifferent towards anyone who does! *(The word, [1]**kaleo**, to identify by name; to surname.)*

2 Beloved, we know that we are children of God to begin with, which means that there can be no future surprises; his manifest likeness is already mirrored in us! Our sameness cannot be compromised or contradicted; our gaze will confirm exactly who he is - and who we are. *(See Philippians 2:15 Your flawless innocence radiates life's contrast as beacons of light in the midst of a people who have forgotten their true sonship and whose lives have become distorted and perverse. [In this verse Paul quotes Deuteronomy 32:5 from the Greek Septuagint translation of the Hebrew text, with reference to Deuteronomy 32:4,5 &18. In context, God's perfect workmanship as Father of mankind is forgotten; people have become "crooked and perverse" twisted and distorted out of their true pattern of sonship. Deuteronomy 32:18 says, you have forgotten the Rock that begat you and have gotten out of step with the God who danced with you! Hebrew, **khul** or **kheel**.])*

3 And every individual in whom this expectation echoes also determines to realize their own flawless innocence mirrored in him whose image they bear. *(The word **echo**, to hold, to echo, to resonate. John discovered the same "in him" unveiling that Paul walked in! See John 14:20, "In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you!" Also 1 John 5:20 This is what has become distinctly clear to us: the coming of the Son of God is God's mission accomplished! He is the incarnate Christ. The moment all of Scripture pointed to has arrived! The Son is present! In him God has given us the greatest gift, a mind whereby we may know him who is true; and in the same knowing, to*

find ourselves there in him who is true! Mankind is fully included and located in him, in his Son Jesus Christ; this means that whatever Jesus is as son, we are. This is the true God; this is the life of the ages! 1 John 5:21 This defeats every image of our imagination that could possibly compete with the authentic likeness of our design! Darling children, distance yourselves from every substitute image, which is what idolatry is all about! Colossians 2:9,10)

4 [1]Distorted behavior is the result of a warped self-image! A [2]lost sense of identity is the basis of all sin! *(The word sin, is the word [1]**hamartia**, from h**a**, negative or without and **meros**, portion or form, thus to be without your allotted portion or without form, pointing to a disorientated, distorted, bankrupt identity; the word **meros**, derives from **morphe**, as in 2 Corinthians 3:18 the word **metamorphe**, with form, which is the opposite of **hamartia** - without form. Sin is to live out of context with the blueprint of one's design; to behave out of tune with God's original harmony. It is to be out of step with our true sonship! See Deuteronomy 32:18. Sin is not something we do or don't do, it is missing out on sonship. Hear the father pleading with the other "lost" brother in Luke 15, "My son, you've always been with me and all that I have is yours!" See 1 John 3:9. The root of sin is to believe a lie about yourself, which is the fruit of the 'I am-not Tree'. This was also the essence of Israel's unbelief that kept them trapped in a grasshopper-mindset for 40 years. The word often translated, lawlessness, [2]**anomia**, from **a**, without, and **onoma**, name - thus without a name, anonymous. In my opinion there exists an etymological link between the words **onoma** and **anomos**.)*

5 We have witnessed with our own eyes how, in the unveiling of the prophetic word, when he was lifted up upon the cross as the Lamb of God, he [1]lifted up our sins and disengaged its dominion and rule over us! *(John 1:29 "Behold, the Lamb of God, who [1]takes away [**airo**] the sin of the world! The word [1]**airo** means to lift up.)*

6 To [1]abide in him in uniterupted seamless oneness, is to live free from sin. Whoever continues in sin has obviously not perceived how free they are in him; they clearly do not really know him. (*The word, [1]**meno** suggests an uninterrupted abiding; a seamless oneness!)*

7 Little children, do not be led astray by any other opinion; his righteousness is the source of our righteousness.

8 Sin's source is a [1]fallen mindset, from the beginning! For this purpose the Son of God was revealed! His mission was to undo the works of the Devil! *(The word, **diabolos**, from **dia**, because of and **ballo**, to cast down.)*

9 To discover one's authentic sonship in God, is to discover true freedom from sin. We are born of him and his seed remains in us; this is the only possible reference to sober up the mind from the intoxicating influence of deception. *(The incorruptible seed of our Father carries the exact pattern of the authentic life of our design! Jesus calls the Devil, the father of lies.*
John 8:31 Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, John 8:32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." John 8:36 So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. John 8:44 You are of your father the Devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks from his own distorted opinion; for he is a liar and the father of lies.
His intention was to kill mankind's awareness of their god-identity.
John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad." John 8:57 The Jews then said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?" John 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." Two chapters later Jesus addresses the same audience again: John 10:30 I and the Father are one." John 10:31 The Jews took up stones again to stone him. John 10:32 Jesus

answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of these do you stone me?" John 10:33 The Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we stone you but for blasphemy; because you, being a man, make yourself God." John 10:34 Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, you are gods'? John 10:35 If he called them gods to whom the word of God came [and Scripture cannot be broken], John 10:36 do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?
Here Jesus quotes from Psa 82:6 I say, "You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you! What does it mean to build your house upon the rock? "Son of man, I say you are Rock; you're a chip of the old block - the son of man is the son of God!" Dig deep = Gaze deeply, intently into the mirror likeness of the face of your birth! Luke 6:48; James 1:18,23-25; Isaiah 51:1; Deuteronomy 32:18 Living your life from who you are in Christ [Grace] beats living your life from who you are in Adam [law of works] by far! Plus it is storm-proof!)

10 There is a very visible and vast difference between living one's live from your God identity, or from a fallen mindset; the [1]diabolos-fruit has nothing in common with [2]righteousness; neither does it know anything about brotherly love. *(The children of the Devil; here translated the [1]**diabolos**-fruit; the typical fruit that the fallen mindset bears. Righteousness, [2]**diakaiosune**, from **dike**, two parties finding likeness in each other.)*

11 Our love for one another was the topic of conversation from the start! God had nothing less in mind than a loving family!

12 Cain's [1]killing of his brother Abel, is in such contrast to this! His motivation was clearly [2]sourced in the [3]poneros tree-system; his idea of Divine [4]favor was to count on his own works as being superior to his brother's faith righteousness. *(Immediately after the fall, Adam named the woman Eloyim gave him, Eve, [in Hebrew **Chawah**, and in Greek, **Zoe**.] He thus co-echoes and reinforces the prophetic word that **Eloyim** gave him:*

Life in the face of death! "The seed of the woman, shall crush the deceiver's head!" The fallen mindset shall be destroyed! So here, in their two sons, we have the first generation of fallen mankind confronted with their personal pursuit of a lost identity and a lost sense of value and favor. Caleb's motivation was clearly sourced [[2]***ek***, out of, origin] in the* ***diabolos*** *[cast down], which is so typical of the* [3]***poneros*** *tree-system. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil [****poneros****] represents mankind's lost sense of identity and righteousness, where the global pursuit of mankind would now be their constant effort to achieve righteousness by means of their own works. This inevitably leads to disappointment where shame replaces innocence, and union and fellowship are lost. The word evil,* ***poneros****, suggests to be full of hardships, labors and annoyances. Gen 3:19; "In the sweat of your face shalt you eat your bread." The sacrifice of Cain is exactly that! It represents his trust in the fruit of his own toil to gain him a* [4]*favorable [****charin****] standing with God.*

We have the prophetic picture of a scapegoat repeated here in Genesis 4. Not only in the sacrifice that Abel brought; but also in him being murdered by his brother! Just like we would one day murder our brother Jesus! In Genesis 3, Eloyim did not clothe Adam with the skin of an animal because of a divine need to be appeased, but because of their unconditional love for Adam; they spoke the language of Adam's own judgment: Adam, not Eloyim, was embarrassed about his nakedness. The clothing was not to make Eloyim look at Adam differently, but to make Adam feel better about himself! And ultimately it was to prepare Adam for the unveiling of the mystery of mankind's redemption in the incarnation. Here Deity would clothe themselves in human skin in a Son, and the Lion of Judah would become the Lamb of God in order to free our minds to re discover his image and likeness in our skin! Revelation 5:5,6.

Only John uses the word, [1]***sphatzo****, which speaks of a slaying. Four times in the book of Revelation he employs this word in the context of the slain Lamb of God.*

See also Hebrews 11:4, "It was faith that made the difference between the sacrifices of Abel and Cain, and confirmed Abel's righteousness. God bore witness to righteousness as a gift rather than a reward! Even though he was murdered, his faith still has a voice today."

Philo a Hellenistic Jewish philosopher says, that in the dispute between

Cain and Abel, Abel attributed all things to God, and Cain ascribed everything to himself; so that the controversy was about grace and works. [Philo lived c. 25 BCE – c. 50 CE]

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents a fallen identity; the thought that likeness with God could be earned through good intentions, rather than realizing the gift of life that already defines his image and likeness in us.)

Thoughts on, "Why the other tree and why the temptation in the Garden?"

I think the picture that we are presented with in the garden of Sabbath abundance, and of the 2 trees and the temptation, presents us inevitably with the full scope of our design! We are not robots who are to simply respond to our Maker in remote control fashion.

To give ultimate context to the setting of paradise beauty, we were presented with the opportunity to consciously and spontaneously fellowship with our invisible Maker and to explore the dynamics of our own being there; and from that place of knowing that we are known we would reflect what we discover in fellowship union and intimacy in Eloyim and in one another! We were designed to explore the limitless dimensions of our being as referenced in our Source.

The temptation was to follow the suggestion of an alternative idea that maybe we are not perfect by design; maybe, we thought, even Eloyim knew that we are not really what they had in mind, and would therefore feel threatened by our knowledge of good and evil; maybe that is the reason they didn't want us to eat of the fruit of the "other" tree, we reasoned!

The alternative tree gives us the opportunity to engage an alternative system, whereby we have to now prove to ourselves, and to one another, as well as to our own ideas of deity (religion) that we can manage and possibly master our own being and destiny, independent of our Source!

The quest to prove my I-am-ness would now become my constant drive; instead of finding and celebrating me in fellowship with my Maker and my fellow human being, and also in my harmonious co-existence with paradise nature, I have to now strive for it in the fruit of my own efforts to become something I already am by design, perfect and esteemed.

And so we have exchanged Eloyim's perfect approval of us, based on their perfect knowledge of us, for our imperfect knowledge of ourselves and of one another, proved by the inevitable evidence in our disappointment with

ourselves and with one another.
The "I am not-tree-system" would continually be reinforced by feelings of shame, guilt, inferiority and competing, which sadly brings with it every shade of hostility and frustration and the corruption that our history and societies have borne such horrid witness to.
The law expresses and confirms the existence of these systems and their dominance in societies and philosophies for many centuries.
The love of God, the Engineer of our being, demonstrated in the unveiling of our inclusion in the death, decent into hell, the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, reveals that we are rescued from the lies that we have believed about ourselves, about our Maker and about one another! We are presented with a brand new beginning! The old things have passed away! Behold, everything has become new! 2 Corinthians 5:14-21.
See also 1 Peter 1:18,19 It is clear to see that you were ransomed from the futile, fallen mindset that you inherited from your fathers, not by the currency of your own labor, represented by the fluctuating values of gold and silver, and the economy of your religious efforts; but you were redeemed with the priceless blood of Christ; he is the ultimate sacrifice; spotless and without blemish. He completes the prophetic picture! [In him God speaks the most radical scapegoat language of the law of judgment, and brings final closure to a dead and redundant system! In Psalm 40:6,7, it is clearly stated that God does not require sacrifices or offerings! Jesus is the Lamb of God! He collides victoriously with the futile sacrificial system whereby offerings are constantly made to the pseudo, moody, monster gods of our imagination! This is the scandal of the cross! God does not demand a sacrifice that would change the way he thinks about mankind; he provides the sacrifice of himself in Christ in order to forever eradicate sin-consciousness from our minds and radically change the way we think about our Maker, one another and ourselves! [Sin-consciousness is in essence a works-based consciousness.]
Now immediately engage your thoughts with the reality of your co-seatedness in Christ in the highest dominion of life, and discover there the bliss of your redeemed innocence and your eternal oneness! Colossians 3:1-4)

13 It is no wonder then, that the performance-based religious systems of this world loathe you and detest what you stand for! A works-based society finds its leverage in both boasting and condemnation! *(See Romans 3:27)*

14 It is clear that we have relocated from a system of dead works into the dynamic of authentic life in the way we love the family. Love is life; not to love is death.

15 To hate a brother, is to murder human life; the life of the ages does not echo any resonance in a murderer. It is only in the constant, seamless resonance of life that agape is realized. *(Agape, from ago, to lead, and pao, to rest.)*

16 Love is known in its other-centeredness; just as Jesus laid down his life for us to free his love within us for others.

17 The indwelling love of God compels one to live sensitively aware of people around us, and not to exclude those in need.

18 My darling children, lets not deceive ourselves by paying lip service to love while we can truly live the dynamic of love in our practical daily doing!

19 In this we know that our beingness is sourced in that which is really true about us; our doing good is not phoney or make-belief; this is who we are in God's sight!

20 So, even if our own hearts would [1]accuse us of not really being true to ourselves, God is greater than our hearts and he has the full picture! His knowledge of us is not compromised. *(This word, [1]**kataginosko** is only used three times in the NT, translated, to blame, or condemn. From*

***kata**, down and **ginosko**, to know; thus to know from below; from a fallen mindset perspective. See also Colossians 3:9)*

21 Beloved when we know what God knows to be true about us, then instead of condemning us, our hearts will endorse our innocence and [1]free our conversation before God. *(The word [1]**parresia**, from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, and **rheo**, to pour forth; to flow freely, suggesting an unreservedness in speech; bold utterance.)*

22 Now, instead of begging God, we [1]speak with confident liberty as sons. We also [2]treasure the [3]conclusion of his prophetic purpose *[in redeeming our sonship]* **and [4]fully accommodate ourselves to his desires and pleasure! Knowing the warmth in his [5]eyes inspire [6]poetic freedom in our every expression.** *(The word [1]**aiteo**, to ask with great liberty and humble confidence; knowing both the desire as well as the ability of the Father to grant us our requests. The word [2]**tereo**, means to attend to carefully; take care of; to guard; to treasure something with great affection; [3]**entole** is often translated commandment or precept; this word has two components: **en**, in and **telos**, from **tello**, to set out for a definite point or goal; properly the point aimed at as a limit, that is, by implication, the conclusion of an act or state, the result; the ultimate or prophetic purpose. Strong's 5056. The word [4]**arestos** from **aresko**, means to please; to accommodate one's self to the opinions desires and interests of others. The words [5]**enopion autou**, means in his sight; face to face. The English word poetry derives from [6]**poiema**, to make or do.)*

23 And this is the ultimate conclusion of his itention and desire *[entole]* **that we [1]would be fully persuaded concerning the name of Jesus Christ who has successfully accomplished his mission as the Son of God to rescue mankind's authentic sonship! Our love for one another completes his joy!** *(The word [1]**pisteusomen** is an Aorist Passive in the Subjunctive mode, expressing the hypothetical, expected result of the completed action; from **pisteuo**, to believe.)*

24 Everyone who treasures this final conclusion of God's dream, abides unhindered in seamless oneness in him and he in them. His gift of the Spirit is to endorse our awareness of his abiding within us! *(See John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Also 1 John 4:13)*

Chapter 4

1 Beloved do not be swayed by everything that seems spiritual or prophetic; just like with costly metals, there is [1]a reliable test! There are many false Prophets who come and go in the religious world-system! They might even sound very inspirational and carry a "Christian" label; this does not mean that God is their source of insight. *(The word [1]**dokimatzo**, refers to the testing of metals.)*

2 This is how you discern the Spirit of God: the incarnation is the central theme of the communication of the Spirit; the fact that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is what gives legitimacy to every prophetic word. *(See 1 Peter 1:10-14)*

3 No so-called "spiritual revelation" that fails to communicate the revelation of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, is of God. This is the anti-Christ spirit that you have heard of and even now witness in the world. Any idea that Jesus Christ is not the incarnate word of God, does not originate in God but is the typical pseudo mindset of the spirit of this fallen cosmic system. *(The Latin rendering from the 2nd century reads, "No spirit that would separate the human Jesus from the divine Christ, is of God.")*

4 My darling children, you have nothing to fear; do not doubt for a moment the legitimacy of your sonship! You originate in God and have already conquered the worldly religious system because of the unveiling of Christ in you! His living presence in you is far superior to the futile anti-Christ mindsets present in the world!

5 Their conversation mirrors their source and appeals to a common audience; the pseudo-claim of a pseudo-system has blindfolded multitudes to believe a lie about themselves.

6 Our beingness originates in God; anyone who knows what God knows about mankind's authentic genesis, hears us; those who do not see their origin in God are deaf to what we communicate. This is the difference between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. *(The essence of the incarnation is the revelation that Jesus Christ is the word made flesh; [John 1:1-18] he is the one who as the Son of God, mirrors and redeems the image and likeness of God in human form. He declares God as the only legitimate Father of the human race.)*

7 Beloved, [1]love always includes others, since love springs from God; its source is found in the fellowship of the Father, Spirit and Son. Everyone who encounters love immediately knows that they too are born of the same source! It is not possible to fully participate in love without discovering God. To love is to know God; to know God is to love. *([1]**Agape** from **agoo**, to lead, and **pao**, to rest - love is where the Sabbath of God is perfectly celebrated.)*

8 Not to love, is not to know God. There is nothing in love that distracts from who God is. Love is who God is - they are inseparable.

9 The love of God is unveiled [1]within us in the Son; he was [2]begotten of the Father in the flesh and sent into the world that we might live because of him. Our lives are mirrored and defined in him. Both his

birth in the flesh as well as his commission into the world were [2]entirely God's doing. *(Unfortunately most English translations reads, "The love of God was manifest towards us, or amongst us rather than in us! The Greek word is clear, [1]**en hemin** ἐν ἡμῖν, in us.*

*The incarnation is not the origin of Jesus. The word [2]**monogenes**, born only of God, or entirely begotten of God, refers to the physical birth of Jesus, which was the incarnation of the Word. [See John 1:1 "To go back to the very beginning is to find the Word already present there; face to face with God. The Word is I am; God's eternal eloquence echoes and concludes in him. The Word equals God." In the beginning, **arche**, to be first in order, time, place or rank. The Word, **logos**, was "with" God; here John uses the Greek preposition pros, towards; face-to-face. Three times in this sentence John uses the active indicative imperfect form of the verb **eimi,** namely **aen [ἦν]** to be, [in the beginning 'was' the Word etc...] which conveys no idea of origin for God or for the Logos, but simply continuous existence, "I am." Quite a different verb **egeneto,** "became," appears in John 1:14 for the beginning of the Incarnation of the Logos. The Word 'became' flesh. See the distinction sharply drawn in John 8:58, "before Abraham was [born, **genesthai** from **ginomai**] I am." The word **eimi**, I am; the essence of being, suggesting timeless existence. See also my commentary note on 1 Pet 1:16])*

10 Love is not defined by our love for God, but by his love for us! It is not our response to God that attracts his attention; we have always had his undivided affection as declared in the prophetic promise and finally demonstrated in his Son's commission and work of atonement for our sins. *(See 1 John 2:2 Jesus is our at-one-ment, he has conciliated us to himself and has taken our sins and distortions out of the equation. What he has accomplished is not to be seen as something that belongs to us exclusively; the same at-one-ment includes the entire cosmos! [The word hilasmos, means to conciliate, to bring about atonement, from hileos, gracious, merciful. Also reminds of the word hilaros, cheerful, joyous, hilarious!])*

11 Loved Ones! If this is true about God's love for us, it is equally true of his love in us for others!

12 God was never visible to anyone until Jesus brought him into full view; now your love does the same! Our love for one another is evidence of God's seamless union with mankind as witnessed in his love perfected within us! *(See Joh 1:18 Until this moment God remained invisible to everyone; now the authentic begotten Son, [monogenes, begotten only of God] the blueprint of our design, who represents the innermost being of God, [the Son who is in the bosom of the father,] brings him into full view! He is the official authority qualified to announce God! He is our guide who accurately declares and interprets the invisible God within us.)*

13 His own Spirit is the [1]source of this gift, of knowing that we are [2]continuously, seamlessly and very consciously present in him and he in us. *(The preposition [1]**ek** always denotes source or origin. The word [2]**meno** means to continue to be present.)*

14 We bear witness to that which has [1]arrested our attention concerning the Father's intent in commissioning the Son as Savior of the world! *(John uses the word, [1]**theaomai**, to view attentively, to contemplate, to learn by looking. Realizing authentic, redeemed sonship is what rescues the world!)*

15 For anyone [1]to see and to say that Jesus is the Son of God is to awaken to the awareness that we are [2]continuously, seamlessly joined in oneness. *(The word [1]**homologeo**, from **homo**, the same and **lego**, to speak; thus to say the same. The word [2]**meno** means to continue to be present. Young's Literal Translation reads: God in him doth remain, and he in God. [Now God cannot remain somewhere if he was never there to begin with, neither can we!] See John 14:20)*

16 And thus we have come to know and believe the love that God has unveiled within us. God is love. Love is who God is; to live in this place of conscious, constant love, is to live immersed in God and to feel perfectly at home in his indwelling. *(You're not alone and adrift in the universe; you are at home in the Father's good pleasure - Godfrey Birtill - The Wine is Alive!)*

17 So now, with us awakening to [1]our full inclusion in this love union, everything is perfect! Its completeness is not compromised in contradiction. Our [2]confident conversation [3]echoes this fellowship even in the face of [4]crisis; because, as he is, so are we in this world - our lives are mirrored in him. We are as blameless in this life as Jesus is! This perfect love union is the source of our confidence whenever we [5]face the scrutiny of contradiction. *(This place of seamless union is the perfection of Agape - **en toutoo teteleotai he agape meth'hemoon**; notice, the word [1]**meth'hemoon**, together with us; from meta, together with and hemoon, us; to be included in the same togetherness. The word [2]**parresia**, from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, and **rheo**, to pour forth; to flow freely, suggesting unreservedness in speech; bold utterance, confidence. The word, [3]**echo**, to hold, like sound is held in an echo; to resonate. The word [4]**krisis** is often translated, judgment. So, the [5]day of judgment, "in the face of crisis", can be translated, "facing the scrutiny of contradiction in our daily lives.")*

18 Fear cannot co-exist in this love realm. The perfect love union that we are talking about expels fear. Fear holds on to an expectation of crisis and judgment *[which brings separation]* **and interprets it as due punishment** *[a form of karma!]* **It echoes torment and only registers in someone who does not yet realize the completeness of their love union.** *[With the Father, Son and Spirit and with one another.] (See Heb 2:15.)*

19 We love because he loved us first! *(We did not invent this fellowship; we are invited into the fellowship of the Father and the Son!)*

20 If anyone claims to love God but he cannot stand a fellow human, his love for God is fake; how is it possible to not love someone you can see with your eyes yet claim to love an invisible God? *(Love is not defined by our ability to like or dislike someone; love is a God-thing from start to finish. God cannot make his love for mankind more tangibly certain than what he did in his Son, Jesus Christ.)*

21 God's [1]conclusion on this is clear, loving him includes loving your fellow human - there is no distinction. *(Conclusion, **entole.**)*

Chapter 5

1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ, the incarnate begotten Son of God, loves the Father and esteems the Son with equal affection.

2 In this knowing *[of mankind's co-genesis revealed in the Christ-incarnation,]* **we love the children of God with the same love that we have discovered in God; we [1]treasure the [2]conclusion of his prophetic purpose with affection.** *(The word [1]**tereo**, means to attend to carefully; take care of; to guard; to treasure something with great affection. The word [2]**entole** is often translated commandment or precept; this word has two components: **en**, in and **telos**, from **tello**, to set out for a definite point or goal; properly the point aimed at as a limit, that is, by implication, the conclusion of an act or state, the result; the ultimate or prophetic purpose. Strong's 5056.)*

3 For the love of God is realized in the way we evaluate his [1]precepts; if love's triumph is [1]the conclusion of every prophetic pointer, how can this be interpreted as an unbearable burden? *(Again the word [1]**entole** is used.)*

4 Whatever is born of God is destined to triumph over the world system. Our faith celebrates a victory that is already accomplished!

5 This is the ultimate victory: the certainty that the human Jesus is the divine Son of God; *(that he is indeed the incarnate Christ - and the central theme of both the Word that was before time was as well as the key to understanding all of Scripture. He is the Savior of the world. See Luke 24:27 and John 1:1-3, also John 5:39,40)*

6 This is he who was to come; he arrived in the flesh via his mother's womb - [1]by water and blood - Jesus Christ. And in his ministry as the Christ, he was not only borne witness to by John the Baptist [2]in the prophetic baptism of water, but he went all the way into his baptism of death, [2]in his shed blood, where he died mankind's death. And it is the Spirit that bears witness according to her own being, which is truth! *(Note the change of the prepositions [1]**διά** by, used in the sense of accompaniment, also of instrumentality, i.e., by, through, by means of, for [2]**ἐν** in, clearly pointing to his baptism in water and then in his shed blood! No wonder John writes, "He was not only revealed in water; but also in blood!" If mankind's salvation could be secured only in the incarnation of the Christ and his 3 years of ministry, then his death and resurrection would be irrelevant.*
See John's reference to Jesus' moment of realizing that the hour has come for the son of man to be glorified in the single grain of wheat, falling into the ground, not to abide alone, but to bear much fruit. Then he says, John 12:27 "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, for this purpose I have come to this hour!"
Also John 1:32-34 And John the Baptist bore witness, "I saw the Spirit

descend as a dove from heaven, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him; but he who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.")

7 There are three witnesses,

8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three [1]agree as one! *(καὶ οἱ τρεῖς [1]**εἰς** τὸ ἕν εἰσιν; the word **eis**, into, indicating the point reached; the one does not distract from the other.*
The only Greek manuscripts in any form which support the words, "in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one; and there are three that bear witness in earth," are the Montfortianus of Dublin, copied evidently from the modern Latin Vulgate; the Ravianus, copied from the Complutensian Polyglot; a manuscript at Naples, with the words added in the Margin by a recent hand; Ottobonianus, 298, of the fifteenth century, the Greek of which is a mere translation of the accompanying Latin. All the old versions omit the words.)

9 Now if it is reasonable for us to be readily persuaded by the evidence that people may lay out before us, how much more certainty is there in the evidence that God has so compellingly borne witness to concerning his Son! *(To go back to the very beginning is to find the Word already present there; face to face with God; this Word, translated into the prophetic promise in Scripture and pointing to the Messiah Redeemer for centuries, the Logos, finally became flesh and forever divided human history into a BC and AD. The heavens declare his glory, night to night exhibits the giant solar testimony that is mathematically precise, revealing that God knew before time was the exact moment he would enter our history as a man, and the exact moment the Messiah would expire on the cross and be raised again from the dead! No one has ever known God as Father; Jesus, the humble brother of the human race, [as my dear friend Baxter Kruger would say,] he has revealed him in the most articulate language as our Father. "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father!" John 14:9.*

"In that day, you will know that as I am in my Father, so you are in me, and I am in you!" John 14:20. The Holy Spirit now endorses in us what happened to us when Jesus died and was raised, and now echoes from within our spirits, "Abba Father!")

10 Whoever shares in the same persuasion concerning the Son of God, has God's testimony confirmed within themselves; he who rejects what God believes concerning Jesus sets himself up against the testimony of God and makes God out to be a liar.

11 The evidence is clear, God has given us back the life that we have lost, the life of the ages, which is the life of our design; this is the same life on exhibit and mirrored in his Son. *(The word [1]**didomi** can also mean to return something that already belongs to the person.)*

12 To [1]mirror-echo the Son is to mirror-echo life; those who ignore this [1]inner resonance concerning the Son, miss out on the very life of their design! (*The word, [1]**echo**, means to hold, like sound is held in an echo; to resonate.)*

13 My intention in this writing is to endorse your belief in the name of the Son of God; *[you are convinced that the name Jesus means that he is indeed the Savior of the world.]* **To know this is to know the life of the ages!**

14 Thus we engage in an [1]unreserved conversation, [2]face to face with the father; we know that it is his delight to be our audience in whatever we may ask him. *(The word [1]**parresia**, from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, and **rheo**, to pour forth; to flow freely, suggesting unreservedness in speech; bold utterance. The preposition [2]**pros** means towards, face to face. It is not a question of whether we are asking anything according to his will or not; but rather a statement that it is his will to hear us in whatever we may ask of him!)*

15 And convinced of his delight with us within this place of intimate conversation, it is clear that our every request is held in the same echo - we already have what we've asked for!

16 *(Note on verse 16: The language and sentence construction here is not found elsewhere in the New Testament; ie to sin a sin not unto death, ἁμαρτάνοντα ἁμαρτίαν μὴ πρὸς θάνατον; then again to sin unto death, ἔστιν ἁμαρτία πρὸς θάνατον*
It is my humble thought that this would be another case where a scribe added their opinion and commentary, which then became absorbed in the text. The issue of a sin unto death has kept the commentators and theologians busy for many a century without any conclusive agreement! Some of the many explanations are as follows: Such sin as God punishes with deadly sickness or sudden death. (!!??) All those sins punished with excommunication. An unrepented sin. Envy. A sinful state or condition. The sin by which the Christian falls back from Christian life into death, etc. etc.
The only time in Scripture where a phrase remotely like this is used is, ***λαβεῖν ἁμαρτίαν θανητοφόρον****, to incur a death-bearing sin, which is in Numbers 18:22 [Septuagint] And henceforth the people of Israel shall not come near the tent of meeting, lest they bear sin and die. Henceforth the distinction between sins unto death and sins not unto death became common in Rabbinic writings.*
This type of doctrine gave rise to the heresy of indulgences and people getting baptized on behalf of the dead! See my note on 1 Corinthians 15:29.)

17 [1]Disharmony in relationship is [2]unlike the true rhythm of your being. The deception of a distorted image will [3]not face death again!
*(The word unrighteousness, [1]**adikia**, from **a**, negative or without and **dikia**, indicating two parties finding likeness in each other; thus relationship in conflict. The root of sin is to believe a lie about yourself. The word sin, is the word [1]**hamartia**, from **ha**, negative or without and **meros**, portion or form, thus to be without your allotted portion or without form, pointing to a*

*disorientated, distorted, bankrupt identity; the word **meros**, is the stem of **morphe**, as in 2 Corinthians 3:18 the word **metamorphe**, with form, which is the opposite of **hamartia** - without form. Sin is to live out of context with the blueprint of one's design; to behave out of tune with God's original harmony. See Deuteronomy 32:18, "You have forgotten the Rock that begot you and have gotten out of step with the God who danced with you!" Hebrew, **khul** or **kheel**, to dance. The root of sin is to believe a lie about yourself. Sin is not unto death or, sin will not [3]face [**pros**] death - this is the whole point of the gospel! Jesus as Savior of the world; the Lamb of God took away the sins of the world; he died mankind's death. See Hebrews 9:27,28 The same goes for everyone: a person dies only once, and then faces judgment. Christ died once and faced the judgment of the entire human race! His second appearance has nothing to do with sin, but to reveal salvation for all to [1]fully embrace him. See 2 Corinthians 2:15 We are a sweet savor of Christ unto God evident in everyone we meet. The fragrance of Christ is recognized in all unto salvation. The same gospel that announces the fragrant victory of Christ declares the odor of death; the defeat of destruction in everyone! [This parade of victory is a public announcement of the defeat of the religious systems and structures based on the law of works. Just like it is in any public game where the victory celebration of the winning team is an embarrassment for the losing team. The death of evil is announced in resurrection life! The word, **apollumi**, is derived from **apo**, away from, and **ollumi**, to destroy, to ruin.] The message we communicate is a fragrance with an immediate association; to darkness, it is the smell of doom [the death of death]; to life it is the familiar fragrance of life itself. We are not competing with those who have added their price tag to the gospel. Our conversation has its source in Christ; we communicate from the transparent innocence of a face to face encounter with God. [The law of personal performance or **kapeleuo**, meaning retail; which is a gospel with a price tag.] Revelation 20:15 also my Extended Notes on the lake of fire and the Second Death at the end of Revelation 19.)*

18 What was made absolutely [1]clear *[in the incarnate Christ]* **is that whoever is begotten of God cannot be a [2]distorted image of God! Likeness begets likeness. Jesus did not come to reveal the "otherness" of God, but his likeness in human form. There is nothing wrong with**

mankind's design, neither with their salvation! To [1]see one's true revealed and now redeemed genesis in God, is to treasure the person you really are by his divine engineering and to remain [4]unstained in your thoughts by [3]the "I am not-Tree system." The [3]idea that I am not the expression of his image and likeness can no longer [4]attach itself to my thoughts, neither do I allow it to ignite its destructive cycle of self-righteousness or depression! The system of this world is based on a mentality of separation, which is marked by [3]hardships annoyances and labors! It becomes an all consuming and most exhausting lifestyle of having to prove oneself in every relationship and a futile striving for recognition; with its inevitable results of disappointment, condemnation, rejection and pretense. *(John begins the 3 sentences in verse 18,19 & 20 with he verb [1]**oidamen** which is the Perfect Active tense of [1]**eido**, to see, to observe, to pay attention, perceive, to know as an eye-witness. The Perfect Indicative Active tense denotes an action which is perfected or completed in the past, but the effects of which are regarded as continuing into the present. A distorted image is what the word [2]**hamartia** suggests; from **ha**, negative and **meros**, portion or form; thus without form. The word [3]**poneros,** often translated evil, refers to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil [**poneros**] which is the fruit of a lost fellowship, identity, value and innocence. Through hardships, labors and annoyances mankind has strived for generations in vain, to redeem themselves from their own judgment and their illusions of separation. This concludes in a judgment based on performance. Which is the opposite to an opinion of approval based on value! The word [4]**haptomai** means to fasten itself to, or to cling to something; from **hapto** to kindle a fire; to ignite.*

If there is indeed nothing wrong with mankind's design or redemption, there can only be one problem, we are thinking wrong! See Isaiah 55:8,9; "Your thoughts are not my thoughts, therefore your ways are not my ways!" also Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." Isaiah 55:9,10 Just like the rain and the snow bridges the distance between heaven and earth and cancels the drought, so shall my word be, it shall cancel distance and drought and saturate the earth (flesh); every nook and cranny of human life shall be filled in the Incarnation! The word became

flesh and indwells us! In the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has brought final closure to the rule of the "I am not Tree-system." The idea of God's absence as well as every definition of distance and separation was canceled. Jesus is God's mind made up about you-manity! He is not more Emmanuel to the Jew than what he is to the Gentile. See John 1:14 Suddenly the invisible eternal Word takes on visible form - the Incarnation on display in human life as in a mirror! In him, and now confirmed in us! The most accurate tangible display of God's eternal thought finds expression in human life! The Word became a human being; we are his address; he resides in us! He captivates our gaze! The glory we see there is not a religious replica; he is the authentic begotten Son. The glory (that we lost in Adam) returns in fullness! Only grace can communicate truth in such complete context!)

19 We know that we have our origin in God; yet the whole world [1]lies trapped in the blindfold-mode of a lost identity; intoxicated by the poneros system of a futile mentality of hardships labors and annoyances! *(The word **keimai** means to lie prostrate, outstretched; buried.)*

20 This is what has become distinctly clear to us: the [1]coming of the Son of God is God's mission accomplished! He is the incarnate Christ. The moment all of Scripture pointed to has arrived! The Son is [1]present! In him God has given us the greatest gift, [2]a mind whereby we may know him who is true; and in the same knowing, to find ourselves there in him who is true! Mankind is fully included and located in him, in his Son Jesus Christ; this means that whatever Jesus is as Son, we are. This is the true God; this is the life of the ages! *(The word [1]**heko** means to have come, to have arrived, to be present. John uses the word [2]**dianoian**; deep thought; with **dia** relating to the means by which we may know; a mind to know; compare metanoia, to know together with; an entwining of thought; the mind of Christ.*
Jesus said, you will know the truth as it is unveiled in me, and that will set you free!
The culmination of the gospel according to John is summed up in these

verses: John 14:20 "In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me and I am in you!" Also 1 John 2:7 & 8, "what is true of him, is equally true of us. 1 John 4:17 "As he is, so are we in this world! Our lives are mirrored in him" as well as here in 1 John 5:20)

21 This defeats every image of our imagination that could possibly compete with the authentic likeness of our design! Darling children, distance yourselves from every substitute image, which is what idolatry is all about! *(The word* [1]***eidolon,*** *often translated idol, refers to image or likeness.*
Isa 40:18-21 To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness compare with him? The idol? A workman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold, and casts for it silver chains. He who is impoverished chooses for an offering wood that will not rot; he seeks out a skilful craftsman to set up an image that will not move. Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you ***from the beginning****? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? Remember your beginning! You are God's idea - the Engineer of the Universe imagined you! Gen 1:26; Col 1:15; Col 2:9,10.*
Act 17:28-31 For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your poets have said, 'For we are indeed his offspring.' Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the Deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, a representation by the art and imagination of human origin. The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he compels all of mankind everywhere to awaken to their redeemed identity and innocence!
Idolatry is a projection of an image of one's own making. Idolatry is the crux of religion - it is expensive business since your idol is like a slot machine at the casino! It remains hungry and it is wired to bite and bankrupt you!)

Revelation

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF REVELATION

The book of Revelation is the unveiling of Jesus Christ as the great Rescuer of the human race. As the slain and risen Lamb of God, he fulfilled mankind's destiny with death and judgment! The significance of the implications of this cannot be exaggerated! It reaches into the entire past, present and future of human history!

In the immediate context of the time of its writing – about 68 AD – the graphic and prophetic symbolism of Revelation seem to have already played out in the tragic events of 70 AD. However, the central message of the book is of a far more dramatic and timelessly relevant significance.

It unveils the extent of the triumph of the Lamb of God in redeeming the innocence, the sense of belonging, inherent value, identity and royalty of the entire human race and securing their Wedlock-union in the Romance of the ages! In his blood he brought closure to an incompetent sacrificial system which failed in its attempt to manage mankind's sinfulness and their sin-consciousness. Jesus Christ who is fully God and fully man, represents us individually; he gave himself as our "Scapegoat" in dying our death, then raised us together with him in his resurrection. As first-born from the dead, he re-birthed us and redeemed his image and likeness within us!

Colossians 1:26, Mankind's most sought after quest, the mystery which has remained elusive and concealed for ages and generations, is now fully realized in our redeemed innocence.

Col 1:27, Within us, God is delighted to exhibit the priceless treasure of this glorious unveiling of Christ's indwelling in order that every person on the planet, whoever they are, may now come to the greatest discovery of all time and recognize Christ in them as in a mirror! He is the desire of the nations and completes their every expectation! *[Haggai 2:6,7]*
Col 1:28, This is the essence and focus of our message; we awaken and re-align everyone's mind, instructing every individual by bringing them into full understanding *(flawless clarity)* in order that we may prove *(present)* everyone perfect in Christ. *(Translating **vous** + **tithemi**, to re-align every mind with God's mind.)*

The message in the Revelation of the Lamb is not static but dynamic; people across the planet would face challenges at any time of testing and experience temptation to conform to diabolical religious mindsets at the expense of their true identity and freedom. Sadly history will repeat itself, in "judgments" of horrific proportions until we fully realize the finished work of Jesus and what it was that the Lamb of God accomplished when, instead of demanding a sacrifice, he gave himself as sacrifice and took away the 'sin' of the world - thus bringing hostility and every excuse for separation to an end! Tragedy, crisis and wars are not acts of God! Judgment is not God's business! God's business is salvation!

DATE: The "Syriac version" of the New Testament, which dates back to the second century AD, states that Revelation was written during the reign of Nero bringing a date of 64-68 AD. This date is also confirmed in the "Muratorian Fragment" which dates back to 170-190 AD A quote, arguably attributed to Papius (130 AD), states that John the Apostle was martyred before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

SYMBOLISM: John uses the word sēmainō in Rev 1:1 which is an important word to introduce the idea of a symbolic sign; to signify; to picture; to portray. Symbolism and imagery play a significant role throughout the book. John would regularly employ pictures that his mostly Jewish audience was already familiar with in their own prophetic writings.

PROPHETIC: Rev 1:10, I was in a spiritual trance where I witnessed the day of the Lord - I heard a loud voice behind me, clear and distinct, like the sound of a trumpet!

The fact that John hears a word ***behind him*** is so significant! It means that what he hears already happened within its prophetic context! This reminds of the incident recorded in Genesis 22:7 & 8 where Abraham was asked by Isaac, "We have the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham answered, "God will provide a lamb for the burnt offering, Son." Then, in Gen 22:13, we read that Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, ***behind him*** was a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns! Jesus refers to this in John 8:56-58 when he says, "Abraham saw my day!" And, "Before Abraham was, I am!"

Rev 1:12, Having turned about to face the voice, I saw seven lamp-stands made out of gold. *(John's attention is drawn back to the prophetic context of the OT Scriptures. Exodus 25:36, "The entire lamp-stand was fashioned from one piece of hammered, pure gold." Exo 25:37, "Make seven of these lamps for the Table. Arrange the lamps so they throw their light out in front." [prophetic light!] Exo 25:34, "The lamp-stand itself is to have four flower cups shaped like almond blossoms, with buds and petals." The almond tree is the prophetic tree; of all the trees, it's blossoms awaken first after it's winter sleep! It also pictures the resurrection, the first born from the dead. Jer 1:11,12, "Jeremiah, what do you see?" I answered, "I see a branch of an almond tree." Then the LORD said to me, I am* ***awake*** *over my word to perform it! The Hebrew word* **דָּקַד** ***shaqad****, means awake; it is also the word for an almond tree.*
The table in the temple is also a significant theme in the Revelation of Jesus Christ! It clearly points to the New Covenant, Bridal-banquet of the Marriage feast of the Lamb!)
Much of what John saw reflected in the Jewish mind as familiar prophetic pointers and symbols. See the prophetic imagery in Ezekiel 1:1-28 mirrored in Revelation 4. The symbolic pictures John sees of judgment would immediately remind his typical Jewish audience of their prophets' imagery about judgment. This time however, the slaughtered and risen Lamb brings brand new context! Israel's unfaithfulness is met and eclipsed by God's faithfulness. The Lamb's death and resurrection confronts every idea of judgment that was mankind's due.

Rev 1:19, Now therefore, without delay, give accurate account in documenting everything that you have seen; both as they are and also what their immediate, intentional context has brought about. It is important to see the relevance in mirror-matching all these things, both in their prophetic context as well as in their fulfilment.

Rev 10:11, And he said to me, Necessity is laid upon you to now disclose with new insight the prophetic word again - this prophecy's time has come and is now relevant and you will declare it before many peoples and different nations and their kings in their specific mother tongue languages.

Rev 12:10, Then I heard a very loud voice in the heavens announcing, This is the moment which the entire prophetic word pointed to and culminates in; it is the realization of mankind's salvation. The power of the kingdom of our God and its authority is endorsed in the I-am-ness of his Christ. The business of accusation is bankrupted. The 24/7 industry of condemning the brotherhood of mankind before the face of God has been annihilated.

Rev 22:10, He told me not to seal this conversation in futuristic, prophetic language since it's time has come!

THE LAMB OF GOD: In the scandalous genius of God, the slain and risen Lamb is the central theme of the book. "Look! The Lion has conquered! He who is of the tribe of Judah, the root of David is qualified to open the scroll and its seven seals!" So I looked to see the Lion and there, as if fused into one with the throne and in unison with the four Living Beings, taking center stage in the midst of the elders, I saw a little Lamb, alive and standing; even though it appeared to have been violently butchered in sacrifice! It had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out to accomplish his bidding in all the earth. *(Rev 5:5,6. Also Zechariah 3:9 For behold, upon the stone which I have set before Joshua, upon a single stone with seven facets [eyes], I will engrave its inscription, says the LORD of hosts, I will remove the guilt of the earth in a single day.)*
1 Pet 1:18, It is clear to see that you were ransomed from the futile, fallen mindset that you inherited from your fathers, not by the currency of your own labor, represented by the fluctuating values of gold and silver, and the economy of your religious efforts;

1 Pet 1:19, but you were redeemed with the priceless blood of Christ; he is the ultimate sacrifice; spotless and without blemish. He completes the prophetic picture! *(In him God speaks the most radical scapegoat language of the law of judgment, and brings final closure to a dead and redundant system! In Psalm 40:6,7, it is clearly stated that God does not require sacrifices or offerings! Jesus is the Lamb of God! He collides victoriously with the futile sacrificial system whereby offerings are constantly made to the pseudo, moody, monster gods of our imagination! This is the scandal of the cross! God does not demand a sacrifice that would change the way he*

thinks about mankind; he provides the sacrifice of himself in Christ in order to forever eradicate sin-consciousness from our minds and radically change the way we think about our Maker, one another and ourselves! [Sin-consciousness is in essence a works-based consciousness.] God did not clothe Adam with the skin of an animal because of a divine need to be appeased, but because of their unconditional love for Adam; they spoke the language of Adam's own judgment: Adam, not God, was embarrassed about his nakedness. The clothing was not to make God look at Adam differently, but to make Adam feel better about himself! And ultimately it was to prophetically prepare Adam for the unveiling of the mystery of mankind's redemption in the incarnation. Here Deity would clothe themselves in human skin, in a Son; and the Lion of Judah would become the Lamb of God in order to free our minds to re-discover his image and likeness in our skin! See 1 Peter 1:2.)

In 1 Cor 2:2 Paul makes a very bold and radical statement, confining his ministry focus to "know" the full scope and consequence of the revelation of mankind's redeemed innocence as communicated in the cross of Jesus Christ! This is the essence of the mystery of God! He writes, "My mind is fully made up about you! The only possible way in which I can truly know you, is in the light of God's mystery, which is Christ in you! Jesus died mankind's death on the cross and thus brought final closure to any other basis of judgment! *(The word, **krino**, to judge, to determine, to deem in a forensic sense, here, in the Aorist Tense, **ekrina**, which suggests a once and for all completed act.)*

Also in 2 Cor 5:14 Paul makes this emphatic statement in the immediate context of the constraining impact of the Agape of Christ within his spirit; "I am persuaded that One has died for all, therefore all have died!" In the Mirror it reads, "The love of Christ resonates within us and leaves us with only one conclusion: Jesus died mankind's death; therefore, in God's logic every individual simultaneously died."

THE THRONE OF GOD: Rev 4:1, Oh wow! What I see takes my breath away! A wide-open door in the heavenly realm! The first thing I heard was this voice addressing me! It was distinct and clear like the sound of a trumpet; it captured my attention, inviting me to enter. "Come up here and I will show you how everything coincides with what you have already seen!"

Rev 4:2 So here I am, immersed in this unrestricted space of spirit ecstasy. As the vision opens I immediately notice the throne and One seated upon it.

Rev 20:11, And I saw a huge white throne and it was as if heaven and earth fled away from the presence of the One seated upon the throne and its place was never found again. *(This means that there is no accusation in the heavens or upon the earth that could possibly stand in the presence of the Lamb, the One seated upon the throne of the judgment of righteousness – his throne gives testimony and is established upon the legitimacy and authority of mankind's redeemed innocence.*
"Having accomplished purification of sins, he sat down!" Hebrews 1:3.
There was never a time where God's royal rule was in question. In giving himself as a scapegoat to be murdered by his own creatures, he assumes a weakness that does not compromise his authority at all! In the genius of his wisdom he defeats the entire system of judgment under the law of performance governing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The seeming frailty of the slain Lamb never compromised the authority of the Lion of Judah!)
THE DAY OF THE LORD: Rev 1:10, I was in a spiritual trance where I witnessed the day of the Lord - I heard a loud voice behind me, clear and distinct, like the sound of a trumpet! *(The day of the Lord is the very day to which the prophetic voice of the Spirit of Christ pointed - Jesus the Messiah, is the fulfillment of the day! See 1 Peter 1:10 and 11 where Peter specifically makes mention of the fact that throughout Scripture the Prophets mentioned the day of the Lord as pointing to the sufferings of the Christ and the consequent glory. Their urgent quest was to search out when this would happen and who the Messiah would be. Also in Acts 17:31 Paul addresses the Greek Philosophers and reminds them of their own ancient writings and he quotes two of their well known philosophers: in 600BC Epimenedes wrote a song saying, "We live and move and have our being in God" then Aratus wrote in 300BC that we are indeed God's offspring! Paul then announces to them, that the God whom they worship in ignorance is not far from each one of us! He is not more Emmanuel to the Jew than what he is to the Gentile! Then, in the context of his Jewish background and personal encounter of the revelation of Jesus Christ, Paul declares to them the Good News of mankind's redeemed innocence. "God has overlooked the times of ignorance and now is calling all of mankind, whoever and*

wherever they are, to a radical mind-shift, since he has prophetically fixed a day on which he would judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this [righteous judgment] he has given proof to all by raising him from the dead." Acts 17:30,31. See slso Rom 4:25 where, in Paul's understanding, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead includes mankind's co-resurrection and seals their acquittal and redeemed innocence. See extended commentary at the end of Revelation chapter 1 on this theme. Also Extended Notes on Eschatology at the end of Rev 17.
John 5:25, Oh how I desire for you to get this! The prophetic hour has come! This is the moment for the dead to hear the voice of the Son of God - C'mon! Hear and live!
ESCHATOLOGY REDEFINED: Rev 1:17, Observing all this, I fell at his feet like a dead man; then, kneeling down, he ordained me with his right hand upon me and said, Do not be afraid! I am the origin and the conclusion *[eschatology]* of all things. *See Isa 44:6.*
Heb 1:1, Throughout ancient times God spoke in many fragments and glimpses of prophetic thought to our fathers. Now, this entire conversation has finally dawned in sonship. In these last days ***(eschatos)*** God has spoken to us in the radiance of our redeemed sonship and innocence! Suddenly, what seemed to be an ancient language falls fresh and new like the dew on the tender grass! *[See Deut 32:1-4]* He is the sum total of every utterance of God. He is whom the Prophets pointed to and we are his immediate audience! (What God said about 'you-manity' and their redeemed sonship and innocence in Jesus, defines eschatology! "Having accomplished purification of sins, he sat down!" Hebrews 1:3.)

John 6:39, My Sender's desire is for me to rescue every single individual - [1]this is his gift to me - that I will lose [2]no detail of mankind's original identity mirrored in me! My rescuing mission will conclude in their joint-resurrection! This is the [3]completeness of time! *(This is his gift to me, [1]ho dedoke moi. The phrase, [2]hina pan apoleso ex auto, meaning, that I should lose nothing out of it. In the conclusion/fullness of time - [3]te eschate hemera - This phrase occurs only in John - in chapters 6:39, 6:40, 6:44 and 6:54. See also John 4:23, The end of an era has arrived - the future is here! Whatever prophetic values were expressed in external devotional forms and rituals are now eclipsed in true spirit worship from within - face to face*

with the Father - acknowledging our genesis in him - this is his delight! The Father's desire is the worshipper more than the worship!)

John 6:40, And this is the desire of my Father, that every one who [1]sees the son, through his eyes, and finds the conclusion of (eis) their persuasion in him, will resonate (echo) the life of the ages! And I will [2]raise him up on the [3]final day! *(The word [1]theōreo means to gaze attentively. See Hosea 6:2, After two days he will revive us; [2]on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him. The word [3]eschatos means extreme; last in time or in space; the uttermost part, the final conclusion. What God said about 'you-manity' in their co-resurrection in Jesus, defines eschatology! Heb 1:1-3; Eph 2:5,6.)*

1 Peter 1:20, He was always destined in God's prophetic thought; God knew even before the [1]fall of the world order that his Son would be the Lamb, to be made manifest in these [2]last days, because of you! *(You are the reason Jesus died and was raised! The word, [1]kataballo, meaning "to fall away, to put in a lower place," instead of themelios, meaning "foundation" [see Eph 2:20]; thus, translated "the fall of the world," instead of "the foundation of the world." The entire "Fall" was a falling away in our minds from our true identity as image and likeness bearers of Elohim. Just like Eve, were we all deceived to believe a lie about ourselves, which is the fruit of the "I-am-not-tree ". We all, like sheep have gone astray [Isa 53:6]. The word [2]eschatos means extreme; last in time or in space; the uttermost part, the final conclusion.)*

THE SON OF MAN IS THE SON OF GOD: Rev 1:13, And encircled by the lamp-stands there was one who appeared to be of **human offspring, a son of man**! Clothed with a long robe and with a golden girdle round his chest. *(See Isa 6:1, I saw the Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne and the train of his robes filled the temple. The lavish splendor and grandeur of his royal majesty was the very atmosphere of the temple.)*

Rev 1:14, His head of hair was luminous white, like wool covered in fresh, shiny snow and his eyes were ablaze with fire. *(Resembling the Ancient of days! See Daniel 7:9 and Dan 10:6. His body also was like beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet alike in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.)*

Rev 1:15, His feet looked like brilliant bronze fashioned in a furnace and his voice was like the sound of many cascading waterfalls. *(Triumphant in the fiery furnace of the altar/cross!)* Rev 1:16, In his right hand he held seven stars and his words were like a sharp two-edged sword proceeding from of his mouth. His face shone like the sun in it's full strength.

Rev 2:18, Write also to the leader of the Ekklesia in Thyatira. **The Son of God** with eyes ablaze and feet shining like burnished bronze says...*(Here Jesus introduces himself as the son of God! The Rock foundation of the Ekklesia that Jesus is both the Architect and Master-builder of, is the unveiling of the Father! The son of man [Rev 1:13] is the son of God! Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah! Flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father! I say, you are Rock, a chip [**petros**] of the old Block [**petra**]! And upon this **petra**, I will build my Ekklesia and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. Matthew 16:13-19.*
See Deut 32:18, You were unmindful of the Rock that begot you, and you forgot the God who gave you birth. Also Isa 51:1, Look to the Rock from which you were hewn, the quarry from which you were dug!
Here in Rev 2:18, as in Rev 1:15, his feet looked like brilliant, burnished bronze fashioned in a furnace. As the Lamb of God who presented his body in sacrifice on the "Bronze Altar", he descended into mankind's deepest darkness and triumphantly led mankind out into a place where the enemies of the human race [the Satanas-System] are made our footstool! See Heb 1:13, You are the extension of my right hand, my executive authority; take your position and witness how I make your enemies a place upon which you may rest your feet. Also 1 Cor 15:25, His dominion is destined to subdue all hostility and contradiction under his feet. (The lowest part of the human body will equally share in this victory. Ps 110:1, The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. Jesus is Lord of Lords; in his victory mankind is restored to lordship; "I say you are gods, all of you are sons of the Most High" [Ps 82:6 RSV] Mt 22:42-45.)
JEWISH AUDIENCE: Much of what John saw was reflected in the Jewish mind as familiar prophetic pictures, pointers and symbols. See the prophetic imagery in Ezekiel 1:1-28 repeated in Rev 4. The symbolic pictures John sees about judgment would immediately remind his typical Jewish audience of their prophets' imagery of judgment. This time however, the slaughtered and risen Lamb brings brand new context! Israel's

unfaithfulness is met and eclipsed by God's faithfulness. The Lamb's death and resurrection confronts every idea of judgment that was mankind's due.

As it was in Pharaoh's day, stubborn minds which were set in their perceptions had to be convinced - the 144,000 were sealed and therefore protected from harm - yet they were witnesses of the prophetic/historic fate of Pharaoh. This is now repeated in dramatic fashion in front of their eyes to persuade them of the prophetic picture of deliverance from slavery which is now concluded in the Lamb's death, burial and resurrection and celebrated for ages upon ages by the entire universe!

Rev 14:1, Oh wow! You've got to see this! The little Lamb, standing on mount Zion and with him a hundred and forty four thousands with the Lamb's Name and the Name of his Father written on their foreheads. *(Sonship redeemed! Heb 1:1-3. Note the 144,000's in plural, representing the symbolic value that includes the entire prophetic significance of the Jews as well as the prophetic context of their representing the entire human race. In you, all the nations of the earth will bless themselves. See Extended Notes at the end of Rev 14 on* ***From Mt Sinai to Mt Zion!****)*
Although John's immediate audience is primarily Jewish, seven times in the book of Revelation human society is addressed in the most all-inclusive fashion, with a similar grouping of words. Rev 5:9, Rev 7:9, Rev 10:11, Rev 11:9, Rev 13:7, Rev 14:6 and Rev 17:15. Also note Rev 5:13 and Rev 11:15.
Rev 7:9, At this moment I saw a massive throng of people, impossible to count, standing tall and innocent; everyone of them dressed in white with palm branches in their hands; they have escaped everything that could possibly define them as a non-Jewish, Gentile world! In fact, every sphere of society were there - including the entire spectrum of people-groupings; all tribal identities with their unique language-specific dialect preferences; they were all present facing the throne and the Lamb as the people of the planet! *(Amazing how, in the previous verses of this chapter, the tribes of Israel are associated with a very specific "number", emphasizing the prophetic detail of the entire Jewish nation. But here, John sees a massive throng of people, impossible to count! In Israel there is a prophetic voice of God's intention to release the blessing of the single SEED of God's faith through Abraham and bless all the nations of the earth! "Count the stars,*

count the sand!"
*The word **stolay**, is the white outer garment worn by kings, priests, and persons of rank. The palm branches and the white robes are signs of the celebration of victory and joy. The preposition **ek**, points to source or origin; mankind was delivered out of their national, geographical and historical identities!) (See Extended Notes on Israel at the end of Rev 20.)*
THE THEME OF THE BOOK: Rev 1:9, I am John, your brother and companion in tribulation in the midst of which we are equally participating in the authority of the kingdom and the steadfastness of Jesus Christ. I was on the Isle of Patmos because of the word of God and because of the testimony of Jesus Christ. *(See Extended Notes at the end of Rev 20.)*
Rev 1:17, Observing all this, I fell at his feet like a dead man; then, kneeling down, he ordained me with his right hand upon me and said, Do not be afraid! I am the origin and the conclusion *[eschatology]* of all things.

Rev 1:18, I am also the Living One; I became dead and now, see, here I am alive unto the ages of the ages and I have the keys wherewith I have disengaged the gates of [1]Hades and death!" *(This profound statement of Jesus in verses 17 & 18 is the platform, theme and focus of the entire book. To distract from these words of Jesus is to miss the point of the Revelation! [1]See commentary note in verse 20 and Rev 2:7 on the gates of Hades.)*
Rev 2:23, The offspring of these 'mindsets', conceived in your licentious idolatry has no future! I will cause it [1]to utterly perish! And every Ekklesia shall [2]know that I scrutinize the hidden thoughts of the heart. And I will expose every single work of your own doing as judged in my work. *(See verse 26 - my works vs your works. To [1]kill in death is a very strong expression, **apokteuno en thanato**. The symbolic significance of killing the children of the church's idolatrous adultery in death can only be understood in the context of the unveiling of Jesus the Christ who already died mankind's death and in that death brought final closure to the offspring of mankind's guilt-ridden mindsets that we have inherited from our world systems which were founded in the fruit of the "I-am-not tree system". He thus broke the spell of the claim of judgment and death over the Adamic race. This signifies the death of death. The significance of the implications of Jesus' death cannot be exaggerated! It reaches into the entire past, present and future of human history! The word [2]**ginosontai** is the future*

*ingressive punctiliar middle of **ginosko**, 'we shall certainly come to know', this confirms the theme of the book of Revelation! The unveiling of Jesus Christ and his finished work will most definitely complete God's purpose of redeeming mankind's lost sense of sonship, value, innocence, identity and royalty in the earth!)*

THE TEXT: Revelation was clearly a book that needed to circulate with much commentary and explanations. In many cases the text represented by the commentary is older than the (most often very late) manuscript in which it is found.

Deliberate changes to the wording of the Book of Revelation itself were made to improve and clarify the force of its message. One of many examples can be found in the note on Rev 20:5. The words, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" were added at a time when the church claimed to be fulfilling the thousand-year reign of Christ. The Sinaitic manuscript - remarkable as for being the oldest as well as for its completeness and accuracy - is the only Greek authority on Revelation ante-dating the fifth century: and it does not contain the clause. Most minuscule manuscripts of Revelation are accompanied by a commentary; and these represent an unusually high proportion of witnesses.

"Text appears to have been added first as an explanatory note, and in process of time crept into the text. Adam Clarke"

We have no original manuscript - the thousands of manuscripts we do have are handwritten copies of copies for centuries and what happened was, that, from time to time, a scribe's notes become text. The majority of these do not alter the meaning of the text though. But some do, which makes it an important observation.

The first edition of the New Testament with a Greek text was prepared by Erasmus and published in 1516. For Revelation, he based his Greek text on a single manuscript, minuscule 1r (now numbered 2814 according to the new Gregory-Aland number). This manuscript, however, lacks the final verses of the book of Revelation, and in order to have a complete text, Erasmus retranslated these verses into Greek from the Latin. Elements of his translation survive in every edition of the so-called Textus Receptus, which were the standard text of the printed Greek New Testament until the nineteenth century.

Codex Sinaiticus [Aleph B 33] and the Codex Vaticanus are considered

amongst most current scholars to be the best Greek texts of the New Testament. These were extensively used by Westcott and Hort in their edition of The New Testament in the Original Greek in 1881. Aleph is the famous Sinaiticus, the great discovery of Constantine von Tischendorf, the only surviving complete copy of the New Testament written prior to the ninth century.)
There are about 200,000 variants in the 5300 manuscripts of the NewTestament we have access to! These are not "errors" but variant readings, the vast majority of which are strictly grammatical; but according to the warning you dare not add or take away any word, in Rev 22:18 &19, the question arises, any of which manuscripts are we talking about! See my notes at the end of Rev 22.

It is also significant to note the difference between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint of the Old Testament. The Scriptures in Jesus' and New Testament times were the Septuagint, since Greek was the academic language, though Aramaic was the spoken language. *[The Roman letters for 72, LXX is used to name the Septuagint which was translated by 72 Jewish scholars (6 from each of the 12 tribes of Israel) 300 to 200 BC] The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947, confirms that the Septuagint is based on a different, and older Hebrew text than the Masoretic text.*
For example, one of the main Jewish apologist argument against Messianic interpretation of Isa 53 is that all the references to the suffering 'servant', so they say, are in the plural, making him a symbol of Israel. But in the LXX they are singular.

See my commentary note in Rev 8:1, *Isa 52:13 in the Septuagint reads,* ***Behold my boy!*** *The word, "servant" is only in the Masoretic Hebrew text which dates a thousand years later than the LXX.*
Also Isa 53:4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; ***yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted****. (See Isa 53:10 in the Septuagint! No! It did not "please the Lord to bruise him!!" The Lord desires to cleanse his wounds - and in the offering of his life as sacrifice he shall see his seed afar off! See verse 11 - the joy that is set before him! The offspring is the fruit of the travail of his soul! Heb 12:2, for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame!*
See also my commentary on Heb 1:6 and Heb 10:5; this reveals an

important change in the text!
I believe that, just like gold-containing ore, so the Bible contains the Word. Though the ore is a most important pointer to the gold, it cannot be confused with the gold. Jesus is the Word unveiled - He studied scripture with a different intent; he knew that he was reflected there! Familiar with the text, he brought context! Ps 40:7 and Heb 10:7; also John 5:39.

I deal more intensively with this in my introduction to the Mirror Bible - Understanding the Bible - The Incarnation Code.
Also in my notes on the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus - at end of Rev 20.

Revelation - a lifting of the veil to bring into view what is already there!

Chapter 1

1 Jesus Christ [1]unveiled! This is the revelation of God's [2]gift which was wrapped up [3]in him, in order to clearly illustrate to his bond-servants that, which according to prophetic pointers, [4]inevitably [5]was to have happened in a brief moment of time. This message was [6]vividly portrayed in symbolic pictures by his [7]Shepherd-Herald, commissioned to communicate its mystery to his bond-servant John. *(The word, [1]**apokalupsis** means an uncovering. The word [2]**didōmi** means to give; to furnish; to extend; to present. The word [3]**autoo** is the personal pronoun in the Dative case, indicating location in. The word [4]**dei** is from **deoo**, to bind; thus predictably, necessarily, inevitably. John employs the verb, [5]**ginomai**, to beget, in the Aorist Infinitive tense, **genesthai**, which indicates prior completion of an action in relationship to a point in time. Greek infinitives could have either a present or Aorist form. The contrast between the two forms was not necessarily one of time, it is a difference of aspect. The Present Infinitive was used to express progressive or imperfective aspect. It*

*pictures the action expressed by the verb as being in progress. The Aorist Infinitive however does not express progressive aspect. It presents the action expressed by the verb as a completed unit with a beginning and end. The word [6]**sēmainō**, to give a symbolic sign; signify; to picture; to portray. Symbolism and imagery play a significant role throughout the book. John would employ pictures that his mostly Jewish audience was already familiar with in their own prophetic writings. A bond-servant is one who cleaves to his master out of no other obligation but total loving devotion. The word often translated shepherd-messenger or messenger, [7]**aggelos** has two components, **ago** to lead as a shepherd leads and **agele** a herd of cattle or company. This word carries the idea of a messenger both in the shepherd as well as the prophetic context.)*

2 John gave accurate evidence to the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ, exactly as he saw it. *(The Testimony of Jesus Christ is the context of the prophetic word. See Notes at the end of Chapter 20. Col 3:4, The unveiling of Christ, as defining our lives, immediately implies that which is now evident in him, is equally mirrored in you!)*

3 Blessed is the one who [1]reads and those in his audience who hear with understanding the words of this [2]Prophetic Enlightenment and treasure what is recorded in this writing; its [3]time has [4]come! *(To read, [1]**anaginosko**, from **ana**, upward and **ginosko**, to know upward; thus to draw knowledge from a higher reference; from above; to recognize; to read with recognition. The word, [2]**prophēteia**, prophecy, from **pro**, before, with the idea of face to face, [see **pros** in John 1:1] and **phemi**, to make known one's thoughts; **phos** light, and **phainō**, to shine. The word [3]**kairos** implies particular time; as related to some event, a convenient, appropriate time; absolutely, a particular point of time, or a particular season, like spring or winter; [4]**engus** pointing to that which is imminent.)*

4 I, John, address this writing to the seven [1]churches in Asia: I invite you to tap into the heavenly download of grace and peace from him

who [2]is I am, who always [3]was and [4]will continually be the Accompanying One. And from the seven Spirits who are in the throne room , in constant [5]eye contact with him. *(The word [1]**Ekklesia**, church, from **ek**, pointing to origin or source and **klesia** from **kaleo**, to surname to identify by name. In the context of Matthew 16 where Jesus introduces this word, he reveals that the son of man is indeed the son of God, "I say to you Simon, son of Jonah, you are **petros** [Rock] and upon this **petra** I will build my **Ekklesia**!" [See note on Rom 9:33]. The word [4]**erchomenos**, to come or go, to accompany; to appear; here used in the Present Participle which describes an action thought of as simultaneous with the action of the main verb, [2]**ho hoon**, who is, which is also the Present Active Participle of **eimi**, the one who is I am; then John uses the Active Indicative Imperfect form of the verb [3]**eimi,** namely **ho aen [ἦν]** who was. The Imperfect is the past tense, yet denoting continuous action. [See John 1:1, in the beginning 'was' the Word etc...] which conveys no idea of origin for God or for the Logos, but simply continuous existence, "I am." This phraseology is purely Jewish, and probably taken from the Tetragrammaton. The Four Letters referring to the unpronounceable Name of God - **YHVH - הוהי -** Jaweh "Existing" **הוהי** includes in itself all time, past, present, and future. Hidden in this word are three words, **היה** hajah, was, **הוה** havah, is, and **היהי** jahjah, shall be**.** But they often use the phrase of which the Greek, **ho hoon, kai ho aen, kai ho erchomenos,** of the apostle, is a literal translation. [Adam Clark]*

The entire Revelation is set against the backdrop of the One who is and was and is to come, or, the ever unfolding one. Him who is I am; who always was and will continually be the accompanying one. It is impossible to interpret the Book, without seeing the prophetic significance of the Old Testament and its people.

*The word [5]**enopion** suggests eye to eye contact within the closest possible proximity of one another.)* ***See extended notes*** *on the number seven at the end of the chapter.)*

5 May this grace and peace of Jesus Christ overwhelm you! He is the first born from the dead and embodies the evidence and testimony of everything that God believes about you. He heads up the authority in which [1]we reign as kings on the earth. His crown endorses our crown!

He always [2]loves us and [3]loosed us once and for all from the dominion of [4]sin in the shedding of his blood! *(We are the [1]kings of the earth - see the next verse! Note the change of tense. Christ [2]loves us always, [Present] and [3]loosed us once for all, [Aorist]. In his blood he brought closure to an incompetent sacrificial system in its attempt to manage mankind's sinfulness and their sin-consciousness. Jesus Christ who is fully God and fully man, represents the entire human race; by becoming our distortedness in his death, and raising us together with him in his resurrection as first born from the dead, he re-birthed us and redeemed his image and likeness within us! The word for sin, [4]**hamartia** from **ha**, negative and **meros**, portion or form, thus to be without your allotted portion or without form; pointing to a disorientated, distorted or bankrupt identity; the word **meros**, is the stem of the word **morphe**, as in 2 Corinthians 3:18 where the word **metamorphe**, with form, [transform] is the opposite of **hamartia** - without form. Sin is to live out of context with the blueprint of one's design; to behave out of tune with God's original harmony.*
Col 1:18 He is the principle rank of authority who leads the triumphant procession of our new birth out of the region of the dead. He is the first-born from the dead (" ... leading the resurrection parade" —Msg.) Also Eph 4:8,9.
We are crowned with the triumph of Jesus' resurrection. See 1 Pet 1:3.
Psalm 103:1-5, A Psalm of David. Bless Jaweh **הוהי** ***YHVH****, Oh my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless Jaweh* **הוהי** ***YHVH****, Oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,* ***He redeems your life from the Pit and weaves a crown for you*** *out of loving-kindness and tender mercies. He satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.)*

6 He fashioned us into a kingdom of priests unto his God and Father. The glory and the ruling authority of the ages belong to him for all time and eternity! Amen! *(Again the revelation is contained within its familiar context of Scripture. See Ex 19:6: ...and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Also 1 Pet 2:9: You are proof of the authentic [**eklego**] generation; you give testimony to the original idea of the royalty of true priesthood [the order of Melchizedek] you are a perfect prototype of*

*the mass of the human race. You are the generation of people who exhibit the conclusion [**eis**] of the prophetic, poetic thought of God which has come full circle. You publish the excellence of his elevation and display that your authentic identity has been rescued out of obscurity and brought into his spectacular light!)*

7 Behold he comes with a [1]large dense multitude; an innumerable throng of people, united as one, like the particles of water in a cloud. Every eye will see him, not merely as observers, but they will perceive him for who he really is - even those who participated in his murder, when they pierced his hands and his side. Every single tribe of the earth will see him and weep greatly at the thought of their foolish rejection of him! This will surely be! *(The word **nephos** is a cloud, a large dense multitude, a throng. 1 Thessalonians 4:16, The Lord will personally step out of the invisible heavenly realm into our immediate visible horizon with an inciting shout, announcing his triumphant reign in the trumpet-like billowing voice of God. Even the dead will rise from their sleep, since they too are included in Christ! 1 Thess 4:17, In the wake of their arising we will all be gathered into a large dense multitude; an innumerable throng of people, united as one, like the particles of water in a cloud, and we will encounter the Lord in the very air we breathe and so shall we continually celebrate our I-am-ness in our union with him. (This is the moment redemption declares, where Deity and mankind are married. The Bride and her Groom are united!) 1 Thess 4:18, The fact that we are all deeply connected in the same source of our 'beingness' causes us to be constantly engaged in this conversation with one another.)*

8 The God who is Lord over all things says: I am the Alpha and the Omega - my I-am-ness defines time - I am present, past and future. *(The union of **Alpha** and **Omega**, in Greek, makes the verb **αω**, I breathe. And in Hebrew the union of the first and last letter in their alphabet, **Aleph** and **Tau** makes **תא** **et**, which the Rabbis interpret as the first matter out of which all things were formed, [see Gen 1:1]. The particle **et**, is untranslatable in English but, says Rabbi Aben Ezra, "it signifies the substance of the thing!" Jesus is the [1]**Alpha** and **Omega** in whom we live,*

and move, and have our being! He is indeed closer to us than the air we breathe! Don't waste a day waiting for another day!
The clause, "the commencement and completeness; the genesis and conclusion of everything", is wanting in almost every MS and version of importance. It appears to have been added first as an explanatory note, and in process of time crept into the text [Adam Clarke].
Even though this does not distract from the context of the thought, it is an example of how commentary notes, in time, could become part of the text. We have no original manuscript - the thousands of manuscripts we do have are handwritten copies of copies for centuries and, unlike my own commentary notes where I have used italics and brackets, there were no such thing in those days which means this could easily have happened where a scribe's notes became text! The majority of these do not alter the meaning of the text however, but some do, which makes it an important observation.)

9 I am John, your brother and companion in tribulation in the midst of which we are equally participating in the authority of the kingdom and the steadfastness of Jesus Christ. I was on the Isle of Patmos because of the word of God and because of the testimony of Jesus Christ. *(See Extended Notes at the end of Rev 20.)*

10 I was in a spiritual trance where I witnessed the [1]Day of the Lord. I heard a loud voice [2]behind me, clear and distinct, like the sound of a trumpet! *(The [1]Day of the Lord is the very day to which the prophetic voice of the Spirit of Christ pointed - Jesus the Messiah, is the fulfillment of this day! The word [2]**opiso** points to that which is behind in place and time. The fact that John hears a word **behind him** is so significant! It means that what he hears already happened within its prophetic context! This reminds of the incident recorded in Genesis 22:7 & 8 where Abraham was asked by Isaac, "We have the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham answered, "God will provide a lamb for the burnt offering, Son." Then, in Gen 22:13, we read that Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, **behind him** was a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns! Jesus refers to this in John 8:56-58 when he says, "Abraham saw my day!" And,*

"Before Abraham was, I am!" [See Extended notes on the Day of the Lord in the Introduction to Revelation as well as at the end of Rev 17.])

11 This is what I heard the voice say, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

12 Having [1]turned about to face source of the sound, I saw seven lamp-stands made out of gold. *([1]John's attention is drawn back to the prophetic context of the OT Scriptures. Exodus 25:36, "The entire lamp-stand was fashioned from one piece of hammered, pure gold." Exo 25:37, "Make seven of these lamps for the table. Arrange the lamps so they throw their light out in front." [prophetic light!] Exo 25:34, "The lamp-stand itself is to have four flower cups shaped like almond blossoms, with buds and petals." The almond tree is the prophetic tree; of all the trees, it's blossoms awaken first after it's winter sleep! It also pictures the resurrection, the first born from the dead. Jer 1:11,12, "Jeremiah, what do you see?" I answered, "I see a branch of an almond tree." Then the LORD said to me, I am **awake** over my word to perform it! The Hebrew word* **דָּקַד** ***shaqad****, means awake; it is also the word for an almond tree.)*
The table in the temple is a significant theme in the Revelation of Jesus Christ! It clearly points to the New Covenant, the Bridal-banquet of the Marriage feast of the Lamb!)

13 And encircled by the lamp-stands there was one who appeared to be of human offspring, a son of man! He was wearing a long robe with a golden girdle round his chest. *(Rev 2:18 and the extended notes on* ***The Son of Man is the Son of God*** *at the end of Rev 2.)*

14 His head of hair was luminous white, like wool covered in fresh, shiny snow and his eyes were ablaze with fire. *(Resembling the Ancient of days! See Daniel 7:9 and Dan 10:6. His body also was like beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his*

arms and his feet alike in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.)

15 His feet looked like brilliant bronze fashioned in a furnace and his voice was like the sound of many cascading waterfalls. *(Triumphant in the fiery furnace of the altar/cross!)*

16 In his right hand he held seven stars and his words were like a sharp two-edged sword proceeding from of his mouth. His face shone like the sun in its full strength. *(See my comments in Rev 2:16 on the imagery of the two edged sword. Also Heb 4:12 and Rev 19:21. Heb 1:1 Throughout ancient times God spoke in many fragments and glimpses of prophetic thought to our fathers. Now, this entire conversation has finally dawned in sonship. In these last days (**eschatos)** God has spoken to us in the radiance of our redeemed sonship and innocence! Suddenly, what seemed to be an ancient language, falls fresh and new like the dew on the tender grass! [See Deut 32:1-4] He is the sum total of every utterance of God. He is whom the Prophets pointed to and we are his immediate audience! What God said about 'you-manity' and their redeemed sonship and innocence in Jesus, defines **eschatology**!)*

17 Observing all this, I fell at his feet like a dead man. Then, [1]kneeling down, he ordained me with his right hand upon me and said, Do not be afraid! I am the origin and the [2]conclusion of all things. *(See Isa 44:6. The word [1]**tithemi** from **theo**, to kneel down, lay down, to ordain, purpose, put, set (forth) See John 15:16, I have **ordained** you - I have strategically positioned you! Also 1 Tim 2:7 I am an "ordained" preacher.*
*Again the word, [2]**eschatos;** Jesus, as the Alpha and Omega, defines eschatology!)*

18 I am also the Living One; I became dead and now, see, here I am alive unto the ages of the ages and I have the keys wherewith I have disengaged the gates of [1]Hades and death! *(This profound statement of*

Jesus in verses 17 & 18, is the platform, theme and focus of the entire book. To distract from these words of Jesus is to miss the point of the Revelation!
[1]See commentary note in verse 20 and Rev 2:7 on the gates of Hades. Multitudes are in hell on this side of the grave; we have the keys to unlock a door that was already opened when Jesus went there as a man to free the human race from Adam to Noah, to now! Wow, what joy to introduce people to the freedom of sonship! Let's not make the other brother in Luke 15 our reference when we can know the Father's heart!)

19 [1]Now therefore, [2]without delay, give accurate account in documenting everything that you have seen; both as they are and also what their immediate, [3]intentional context has [4]brought about. It is important to see the relevance in [5]mirror-matching all these things, both in their prophetic context as well as in their fulfilment. *(The word, [1]**oun**, certainly, accordingly, truly, then, therefore, verily. With direct reference to what was said in the previous statement. Then the word [2]**grapson**, to document in writing, is used in the Aorist Imperative and employed here very intentionally, emphasizing once and for all, to get it over and done with! The idea was never to document a mystery in symbolic language that would in any way confuse or distract from the theme of the revelation of the triumph of the Lamb of God. The symbolic would purely be to picture the powerful parallels between the prophetic in the Jewish Scriptures, pointing to the Symbolic Lamb of God as the Redeemer of the world, and its complete fulfilment in the day of the Lord. Jesus is the fullness of time! The word [3]**mello**, speaks of anticipated intent; expectation.*
*John again, as in verse 1, employs the verb, **ginomai**, to beget, in the Aorist Infinitive tense, [4]**genesthai**, which indicates prior completion of an action in relationship to a point in time. Unfortunately many of the later texts changed the **e** for an **i**, which makes g**e**nesthai, g**i**nesthai, which is the Present Infinitive, expressing progressive or imperfective aspect!*
*I have translated the words **meta tauta**, as mirror-matching; **meta** - together with and **tauta**, all these things!)*

20 Here is the [1]significance of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven lamp-stands that are made of gold: the seven stars are the [2]Shepherd-messengers, representing the entire conclusion of the message of the Ekklesia-church and the seven golden lamps are the seven churches in their complete prophetic context. *(The word [1]**musterion** suggests the inner meaning of a symbolic vision. The number seven speaks of completeness in its entire context. The stars are the carriers of light, the Angelic, shepherd-messengers. The word often translated shepherd-messenger or messenger, [2]**aggelos** has two components, **agoo** to lead as a shepherd leads and **agele** a herd of cattle or company. This word carries the idea of a messenger both in the shepherd as well as the prophetic context.*

The golden candlestick is the prophetic light - soon to be replaced by the Morning Star when the day dawns for everyone!

Revelation Chapter 1 Extended Notes:

Significance of the Number Seven

The Day of the Lord

The Ekklesia

Significance of the Number Seven

The number seven is most significant in the context of its reference to the seventh day. The Sabbath, both in its prophetic shadow throughout the OT Scriptures and now in its substance in the person of Jesus Christ, is a constant reminder of God's celebration of perfection and completeness - behold, everything that he made, was very good!

Thus the number seven was regarded by the Hebrews as a sacred number, and it is throughout Scripture the covenant number, the sign of God's covenant relation to mankind. "Seven is the number of every grace and benefit bestowed upon Israel; which is thus marked as flowing out of the covenant, and a consequence of it. All the feasts are ordered by seven, or else by seven multiplied into seven, and thus made more even intense. Thus it is with the Sabbath, the Passover, the Feast of Weeks, of Tabernacles, the Sabbath-year, and the Jubilee." Vincent's Word Studies

In the book of Revelation the prominence of the number is marked. To a remarkable extent the structure of this book is molded by the use of numbers, especially of the numbers seven, four, and three. There are

seven spirits before the throne; seven churches; seven golden candlesticks; seven stars in the right hand of him who is like unto a son of man; seven lamps of fire burning before the throne; seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb; seven seals of the book; and the thunders, the heads of the great Dragon and of the Beast from the sea, the angels with the trumpets, the plagues, and the mountains which are the seat of the mystic Babylon, - are all seven in number.

See also **Isa 45:23 I have [1]sworn by myself; the word of my mouth has [2]begotten righteousness; this cannot be reversed. Every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall echo my oath!** *(The Hebrew word,* **עבש** ***Shaba*** *means to seven oneself, that is, swear - thus in the Hebrew mind, by repeating a declaration seven times one brings an end to all dispute! See Heb 6:13.16,17. See also Philippians 2:10 & 11. Extended notes on the Oath at the end of Revelation 10. The Hebrew word* **אצי** ***Yatsa*** *can be translated, begotten like in Judges 8:30. Thus, speak with the same certainty, sourced in me!)*

The Day of the Lord

Rev 1:10 I was in a spiritual trance where I witnessed the [1]day of the Lord - I heard a loud voice [2]behind me, clear and distinct, like the sound of a trumpet! *(The [1]day of the Lord is the very day to which the prophetic voice of the Spirit of Christ pointed - Jesus the Messiah, is the fulfillment of the day! See 1 Peter 1:10 and 11 where Peter specifically makes mention of the fact that throughout Scripture the Prophets mentioned the day of the Lord as pointing to the sufferings of the Christ and the consequent glory. Their urgent quest was to search out when this will happen and who the Messiah would be. Also in Acts 17:31, Paul addresses the Greek Philosophers and reminds them of their own ancient writings and he quotes two of their well known philosophers: in 600BC Epimenedes wrote a song saying, "We live and move and have our being in God" then Aratus wrote in 300BC that we are indeed God's offspring! Paul then announces to them, that the God whom they worship in ignorance is not far from each one of us! He is not more Emmanuel to the Jew than what he is Emmanuel to the Gentile! Then, in the context of his Jewish background and personal encounter of the revelation of Jesus Christ, Paul declares to them the Good News of mankind's redeemed innocence. "God has overlooked the times of ignorance and now is calling global mankind,*

wherever they are, to a radical mind-shift, since he has prophetically fixed a day on which he would judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this [righteous judgment] he has given proof to all by raising him from the dead." In Paul's understanding, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead includes mankind's co-resurrection and seals their acquittal and redeemed innocence. See Eph 2:5.

*The word [2]**opiso** points to that which is behind in place and time. The fact that John hears a word **behind** him is also significant! It means that what he hears already happened within its prophetic context! Like when Abraham lifted up his eyes and behold, **behind** him was a ram caught by its horns in the thicket!" Jesus said, "Abraham saw my day! Before Abraham was, I am!" John 8:56-58.)*

2 Cor 1:14 To some extent you have already understood that our joy is mirrored in one another. The day of the Lord Jesus Christ is no longer a distant promise but a fulfilled reality. *(The word, **kathaper**, comes from **kata**, meaning according to and **per**, which is an enclitic particle significant of abundance and thoroughness which comes from the word, **peiro**, meaning to pierce. The use of the Latin enclitic relates to a word that throws an accent back onto the preceding word, which is here translated as mirrored.*

*The "day of the Lord Jesus Christ," is **hemera**, which is a specific and measured period. Eastern usage of this term differs from our western usage. Any part of a day is counted as a whole day, hence the expression, "three days and three nights," does not mean literally three whole days, but at least one whole day plus part of two other days.*

The day of the Lord Jesus is the theme of Scripture as in 1 Peter 1:10; this was what the Prophets were studying and desiring to know. The content of their message always pointed to the day and the person where the promise of redemption would be realized. The sufferings of the Messiah would redeem and release the glory of God's image and likeness in human life; the glory that Adam lost on behalf of the human race, returns. In Acts 17:31, "In the resurrection, God gave proof to the redeemed innocence of mankind; the "day and the person" prophesied was fulfilled in Jesus." Jesus gives context to this day in John 14:20, "In that day you will know that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you.")

*See **Zechariah 3:9** For behold, upon the stone which I have set before Joshua, upon a single stone with seven facets, I will engrave its inscription,*

says the LORD of hosts, I will remove the guilt of the earth in a single day. ***Isa 66:8*** *Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall a land be born in one day? Shall a nation be brought forth in one moment?* ***Hos 6:2*** *After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him. Acts 17:31, Rom 4:25, 1 Pet 1:3*
See Notes on the Day of the Lord in the introduction to Revelation. Also Extended Notes on ***The Fullness of Time*** *at the end of Chapter 17 - Follow on from Revelation 17:12)*

The Ekklesia

Rev Here is the significance of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven lamp-stands that are made of gold: the seven stars are the shepherd-messengers, representing the entire conclusion of the message of the Ekklesia-church and the seven golden lamps are the seven churches in its complete prophetic context. *(The golden candlestick is the prophetic light - soon to be replaced by the Morning Star when the day dawns for everyone! Note Peter's reference to his, James' and John's encounter with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration [Matthew 17] 2 Peter 1:16 We are not con-artists, fabricating fictions and fables to add weight to our account of his majestic appearance; with our own eyes we witnessed the powerful display of the illuminate presence of Jesus the Master of the Christ-life. [His face shone like the sun, even his raiment were radiant white.] 2 Pet 1:17 He was spectacularly endorsed by God the Father in the highest honor and glory. God's majestic voice announced, "This is the son of my delight; he completely pleases me." 2 Pet 1:18 For John, James, and I the prophetic word is fulfilled beyond doubt; we heard this voice loud and clear from the heavenly realm while we were with Jesus in that sacred moment on the mountain. 2 Pet 1:19* ***For us the appearing of the Messiah is no longer a future promise but a fulfilled reality.*** *Now it is your turn to have more than a second-hand, hearsay testimony. Take my word as one would take a lamp at night; the day is about to dawn within you, in your own understanding. When the Morning Star appears, you no longer need the lamp; this will happen shortly on the horizon of your own hearts." Remember the significance of Matthew, 16:13-19, which records the remarkable unveiling of the answer to the most important question in the Bible and in life, "Who am I, the son of man!?" This happened just 6 days before the event referred to above in Matthew 17. The question Jesus asks here, in Math 16 underlines the focus of his mission; he is about to*

redeem mankind's lost sense of sonship and identity! Simon, by heavenly revelation realizes that the son of man is indeed the son of God! Jesus immediately endorses him, Simon, the flesh and blood son of Jonah, as Petros, Mr. Rock, the Chip of the old Block! We have forgotten the Rock from which we were hewn! Deut 32:18. "You who seek God and pursue righteousness, here is your clue! "Look to the Rock from which you were hewn!" Isa 51:1. Then Jesus makes this remarkable statement, that on this Rock [the revelation of mankind's true sonship redeemed], he would build his ***Ekklesia*** *[from* ***ek****, origin and* ***kaleo****, to surname; original identity] and the gates of* ***Hades*** *[from the negative particle,* ***ha****, and* ***eido*** *to see] The blindfold mode of the human race will not prevail against the revelation of the son of man as the offspring of God - this is the triumph of the Ekklesia! Rev 2:7)*

Rev 2:18 Write also to the leader of the Ekklesia in Thyatira; the Son of God with eyes ablaze and feet shining like burnished bronze, says, *(Here Jesus introduces himself as the son of God! John sees him as the son of man in Rev 1:13. Haha! The Rock foundation of the Ekklesia that Jesus is both the Architect and Master-builder of, is the unveiling of the Father! The son of man is the son of God! Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah! Flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father!! I say, you are Rock, a chip [****petros****] of the old Block [****petra****]! And upon this* ***petra****, I will build my Ekklesia and the gates of Hades [not to see] will not prevail against it! Matthew 16:13-19. See Deut 32:18 You were unmindful of the Rock that begot you, and you forgot the God who gave you birth. Isa 51:1 Look to the Rock from which you were hewn, the quarry from which you were dug!*

Here, as in Rev 1:15, his feet looked like brilliant, burnished bronze fashioned in a furnace. As the Lamb of God who presented his body in sacrifice on the Bronze Altar, he descended into mankind's deepest darkness and triumphantly led mankind out into a place where the enemy of the human race [the Satanas-System] are made our footstool! See Heb 1:13 "You are the extension of my right hand, my executive authority; take your position and witness how I make your enemies a place upon which you may rest your feet." Also 1 Cor 15:25 His dominion is destined to subdue all hostility and contradiction under his feet. (The lowest part of the human body will equally share in this victory. "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool." [Ps 110:1] Jesus is Lord of Lords; in his victory mankind is restored to lordship; "I say you are

gods, all of you are sons of the Most High" [Ps 82:6 RSV].)Mt 22:42-45.
*Ephesians 1:19 I pray that you will be overwhelmed with an understanding of the magnitude of his power in the finished work of Christ. This is what results in the dynamic of your faith. (The preposition **eis**, speaks of a point reached in conclusion. The word **pisteuontas** is the Present Participle in the Accusative case of **pisteuo** [to be certain; to be persuaded] which describes an action thought of as simultaneous with the action of the main verb, which, in this case is **energeken**, "which he has wrought"... [see v 20] which is the perfect tense of **energeo**, to energize; to work dynamically. The Perfect tense denotes an action which is completed in the past, but the effects of which are regarded as continuing into the present. Paul is desiring to establish a basis for our faith that exceeds our attempts to believe!)*
Eph Do you want to measure the mind and muscle of God? Consider the force which he unleashed in Jesus Christ when he raised him from the dead and forever seated him enthroned as his executive authority in the realm of the heavens. Jesus is God's right hand of power! He was raised up from the deepest dungeons of human despair to the highest region of heavenly bliss! [See Eph 2:5,6 & 4:8,9]
Eph 1:21 Infinitely above all the combined forces of rule, authority, dominion or governments; he is ranked superior to any name that could ever be given to anyone of this age or any age still to come in the eternal future.
Eph 1:22 I want you to see this: he subjected all these powers under his feet. He towers head and shoulders above everything. He is the head;
*Eph 1:23 the Ekklesia is his body. The completeness of his being that fills all in all resides in us! God cannot make himself more visible or exhibit himself more accurately. (The word, **ekklesia**, comes from **ek**, a preposition always denoting origin, and **klesia** from **kaleo**, to identify by name, to surname; thus the "church" is his redeemed image and likeness in human form.)*
Eph 2:20 Your lives now give tangible definition to the spiritual structure, having been built into it by God upon the foundation that the Prophets and Apostles proclaimed. The first evidence of this building was Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. (He is the visible testimony to the restored image and likeness of God in human form.)
Eph 2:21 In him everyone of us are like living Lego blocks fitted together of

the same fabric (conversation), giving ever increasing articulation to a global mobile sanctuary intertwined in the Lord. (The word, ***sunarmologeo****, come from* ***sun****, meaning union,* ***harmo*** *meaning harmony, and* ***logeo*** *meaning conversation. The word,* ***auxano****, means expanding with growth. The word,* ***naos****, is translated as the most sacred dwelling space.)*
Eph 2:22 In him you are co-constructed together as God's permanent spiritual residence. You are God's address!
In the next two chapters of Revelation, seven churches in Asia, are addressed, The seven Churches were Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.
The seven named, symbolize the entire Church.
The geographic location of these churches signifies the rising sun - the new day that has come for mankind to re-discover their forgotten identity!
Asia - meaning East, or Orient - its origin is late Middle English: via Old French from Latin ***orient****- 'rising or east', from* ***oriri*** *'to rise'.*
The Orient, literary the countries of the East, especially East Asia. Also referring to the treasures including pearls of the finest quality of the Orient.
East as in the pointer to the rising sun, being the most prominent point of reference in order to 'orientate' oneself; which means to align or position oneself or something relative to the points of a compass or other specified positions. Which is exactly the intent of the book of Revelation, to re-align the mindsets of the entire human race, mirrored in the ekklesia as the sons of God!
Anatolia (Greek: Ανατολία, from Ἀνατολή Anatole, "a rising above (the horizon)," from anatellein "to rise," from ana "up" (see ana-) + tellein "to accomplish, perform."
Turkish: Anadolu "east" or "[sun]rise"), also known as Asia Minor)

Chapter 2

1 Write to the shepherd-messenger of the Ekklesia of Ephesus: The One who holds the seven stars in his right hand and who walks between the seven golden lamp-stands, would say this to you:

2 I see how hard you work and all your exhausting efforts; also your unyielding commitment to the task and how you cannot stand the wicked. You have made it your business to scrutinize some so-called Apostles and judge them to be false.

3 You have applied great diligence and have relentlessly pushed yourself beyond limits - and all along you did it in my Name as if you were representing me!

4 Here is my problem, you have divorced me and abandoned your first love! *(A repeat of the Garden of Eden! Where Adam and Eve preferred the fruit of the tree of their own toil and labor to become like God rather than to rest in the conviction of the likeness and union they already enjoyed by design!)*

5 Now, I implore you to call to mind that place where you have fallen from. Remember our intimate romance. The poetry of this union is the driving force of your life! It is so different from being guilt or guilt. It is in your [1]entwining with my thoughts that you are most [2]strategic and effective. *(The word often wrongfully translated, repent as in the Latin penance, is the word [1]**metanoia** - with thought. The idea of the [2]lampstand suggests a strategic location of influence. See notes on Isa 40:31 in James 1:5.)*

6 I must say to your credit that we both have a common disregard for those who want to abuse their position to [1]control people! *(The business of the [1]**nikolaitoon** - from **nikao**, to conquer, and **laos**, people.)*

7 Now listen up with your inner ears! Hear with understanding what the Spirit is saying to the [1]Ekklesia! The [2]conquering one will feast with me on the fruit of the tree of life from the [3]paradise of God. *(The*

*word **ekklesia** from **ek**, source and **kaleo**, to surname - thus those who discover their identity in me. The same word, [2]**nikao** to conquer, as in the previous verse! This time it's not lording it over people to abuse them but discovering the lordship of the Christ-life within you! This reminds of the 2 trees in the garden, the knowledge of good and evil- [**poneros**] tree and the tree of life. The **poneros** tree is the tree representing labors annoyances and hardships in human efforts to become by their own doing what they already are by design and by redemption! The word [3]**paradise** from **para**, closest possible union, and **eido**, to see; thus to see from a place of our co-seatedness - This is the opposite of the word **Hades** - not to see! See notes on 1 John 3:12 Why the other Tree.)*

8 Write the following to the messenger of the church in Smyrna; tell him that the One who is the origin and conclusion of all things, who became dead and was restored to life, says:

9 I see your hard work and the tight claustrophobic spaces that you are facing; also the beggarly state that you're convinced you're trapped in when in fact you are super rich! I know about the hurtful slander of those who pretend to defend Jewish culture against your influence, but are actually part and parcel of the satanic synagogue-system of accusation! *(From the Hebrew **sawtan**, to attack, to accuse, oppose.)*

10 You have no need to fear anything you might suffer at any time! Know that [1]this "Outcast-system" is about to cast some of you out of your comfort-zone of fellowship into a place of confinement and imprisonment where you will be examined and severely pressurized for a period of [2]ten days. I desire for you to be fully persuaded even in the face of death and be crowned like a champion athlete with my victory over death - behold in death I will personally crown you with life! *(The [1]**diabolos** [from **dia**, because of and **ballo**, to cast down] represents the system of religion which is the typical fruit of the same tree of temptation in the garden of Eden; the Tree of legalistic rule and performance that would want to squeeze people into its mold to make them conform to their*

structures of control. It is the system empowered by the "I am-not-Tree."
The significance of the [2]10th day: ***the Passover lamb was selected on the 10th day of the 1st month!*** *Exodus 12:3 also 12:5 "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old; you shall take it from the sheep or from the goats."*
So when faced with severe contradiction, remember how the Lamb was scrutinized and faced our death in his broken body.
FB Meyer comments, "This epistle has a new pathos and significance if we connect it with "the blessed Polycarp," who almost certainly was the chief minister of the church in Smyrna. He was the disciple of John. Irenaeus who lived a generation later, tells how, in early boyhood, he had heard from the lips of Polycarp what John had told him of our Lord's person, converse, and earthly ministry. How sweet the comfort of this epistle must have been to him in the closing scene of his life, when, at eighty-six, he was sentenced to be burned.")

11 Now listen up with your inner ears! Hear with understanding what the Spirit is saying to the Ekklesia, *(those who discover their identity in me)* **he that triumphs** *(in their fearless embrace of my resurrection life)* **will know that there is no judgment in the second death.** *(Remember the One talking is the One "who became dead and was restored to life", and said, "Behold in death I will personally crown you with life! In my death I redefined your death." See Hebrews 9:25 Neither was it necessary for him to ever repeat his sacrifice. The High Priests under the old shadow system stood proxy with substitute animal sacrifices that had to be repeated every year. Heb 9:26 But Jesus did not have to suffer again and again since the fall of the world; the single sacrifice of himself in the fulfillment of history now reveals how he has brought sin to naught. [The word,* ***katabole****, means cast down. God's Lamb took away the sins of the world!] Heb 9:27 The same goes for everyone: a person dies only once, and then faces judgment. Heb 9:28 Christ died once and faced the judgment of the entire human race! His second appearance [in his resurrection] has nothing to do with sin, but to reveal salvation for all to fully embrace him. [To fully embrace,* ***apekdechomai****, from* ***apo****, away from [that which defined me before] and* ***ek****, out of, source; and* ***dechomai****, to take into one's hands to accept whole heartedly, to fully embrace. In his resurrection he appeared as Savior of the*

world! Sin is no longer on the agenda, for the Lamb of God has taken away the sins of the world! ***Jesus Christ fulfilled mankind's destiny with death and judgment!*** *[1 Cor 15:3-5, Rom 4:25, Acts 17:30, 31.] Note: Jesus did not come to condemn the world. The Father judges no one for he has handed over all judgment to the son, who judged the world in righteousness when he took their chastisement in his own body. Now in his appearance in us, his body, his mission is to unveil the consequence of redemption through the Holy Spirit. See Extended Notes on the lake of fire and the Second Death at the end of Chapter 19.)*

12 And to the messenger of the Ekklesia in Pergamos write: these are the words of him with the swift double-edged sword: *(Pergamos means united by marriage)*

13 I see where you reside, in the very headquarters, as it were, of the [1]Accuser, yet you remain strong in your association with my Name and have not [2]contradicted my belief in you. Even during those difficult times when my faithful witness Antipas was murdered in your midst; right there where severe satanic accusation seems to have taken up permanent residence! *([1]**Satanos**. The word [2]**arneomai** means to contradict)*

14 My concern is that you are compromizing the Ekklesia by tolerating those who encourage idol worship and sexual perversion, forgetting how Balaam seduced Balak back in the day and sabotaged Israel's pilgrimage!

15 So in the same way that Israel had the wiles of Balaam, you now entertain the ideas of the Nicolaitans! *(The [1]**nikolaitoon** - from **nikao**, to conquer, and **laos**, people. The business of those who wish to abuse their position to [1]control people.)*

16 I urge you to come to your senses immediately! The sword of my mouth will swiftly wage war against this type of conversation. *(Cutting to the division of soul and spirit - see Hebrews 4:12 Also Rev 1:16*
The Sword would always point back to mankind's original identity. The Hebrew word in Gen 3:24, ***חָפַה hâphak*** *is a primitive root; meaning to turn about; by implication to change, to return, to be converted, turn back. Also in the Septuagint the same thought is communicated in the Greek word,* ***strephō****, which is the strengthened from the base of* ***tropay****; to turn around or reverse: - convert, turn again, back again, to turn self about. In Luke 15 the prodigal son returns to himself - Plato is quoted by Ackerman [Christian Element in Plato] as thinking of redemption as coming to oneself! See Notes on the splendor of the Gates Rev 21.)*

17 Your victory is secured in your hearing the word of the Spirit addressing the Ekklesia - feast on the revelation of the hidden manna in the Ark. *[This prophetically pointed to the Messiah - the mystery that was hidden for ages and generations is Christ in you!]* **I also give you a little white pebble used in the courts of justice, signifying your acquittal - take it as your secret source of strength in the midst of accusation - it has your new name on it! No one knows you by this name, until you [1]realize your own identity reflected in it!** *(The golden pot of manna was "laid up before God in the ark". Exodus 16:23. It was believed that Jeremiah hid the ark, before the destruction of Jerusalem, where it would not be discovered till Israel was restored. 2 Macc. 2:5ff. Robertson's Word Pictures. See Math 16:13 on Simon discovering his new name.)*

18 Write also to the leader of the Ekklesia in [1]Thyatira: The [2]Son of God with eyes ablaze and [3]feet shining like burnished bronze says, *(Also interesting to note that [1]Thyatira means sacrifice! Here Jesus introduces himself as the* ***[2]Son of God****! See Extended notes on* ***The Son of Man is the Son of God*** *at the end of Rev 2.)*

19 I know your hard work and how you love what you're doing - also that you are absolutely convinced that you are doing the right thing

and how relentlessly you've exerted yourselves - even more so now than ever before!

20 It disturbs me that you accommodate the typical Jezebel influence, a self-appointed Prophetess who teaches and seduces my [1]devoted friends into participating in an [2]idolatrous sacrificial system by eating food offered to [3]idols and fornicating with her foreign ideas about God. *(The word [1]**doulos**, bond-servant or slave; also a devoted friend, from **deo**, to be bound to another in friendship or marriage. The word [2]**eidōlothuton**, from **eidolon** and **thuo**, to slay in sacrifice. The word [3]**eidolon** where we get the word idol from means image or likeness - this is the theme of the Bible and redemption; the image and likeness of God revealed and redeemed in human form! See **Extended Notes on Food Offered to Idols** at the end of this chapter.)*

21 I gave her opportune time [1]to see with my eyes, to know my heart and to wake up out of the sway of her adultery but she had no inclination to yield to my thoughts. *(The word wrongly translated, [1]repent from Latin, re-pennance is **metanoia** - to think with me; to awaken to my thoughts about you!)*

22 The bed of your adultery will become you and your lovers' [1]confinement to great anguish. Even then will I continue to invite you to awaken from your deception! *(The word [1]**thlipsis** means a narrow claustrophobic space of intense pressure. The very platform of the man-made 'church' institution from where you have run your religious business will become your prison and punishment- the scene of the sin is also the scene of the inevitable consequence. "But where sin increased grace superseded it!" Romans 5:20)*

23 The offspring of these 'mindsets', conceived in your licentious idolatry has no future! I will cause it [1]to utterly perish! And every Ekklesia shall [2]know that I scrutinize the hidden thoughts of the heart. And I will expose every single work of your own doing as judged in my work. *(See verse 26 - my works vs your works. To [1]kill in death is a very strong expression, **apokteuno en thanato**. The symbolic significance of killing the children of the church's idolatrous adultery in death can only be understood in the context of the unveiling of Jesus the Christ who already died mankind's death and in that death brought final closure to the offspring of mankind's guilt-ridden mindsets that we have inherited from our world systems which were founded in the fruit of the "I-am-not tree system". He thus broke the spell of the claim of judgment and death over the Adamic race. This signifies the death of death. The significance of the implications of Jesus' death cannot be exaggerated! It reaches into the entire past, present and future of human history! The word [2]**ginosontai** is the future ingressive punctiliar middle of **ginosko**, 'we shall certainly come to know', this confirms the theme of the book of Revelation! The unveiling of Jesus Christ and his finished work will most definitely complete God's purpose of redeeming mankind's lost sense of sonship, value, innocence, identity and royalty in the earth!*
Heb 4:12, The message God spoke to us in Christ, is the most life giving and dynamic influence in us, cutting like a surgeon's scalpel, sharper than a soldier's sword, piercing to the deepest core of human conscience, to the dividing of soul and spirit; ending the dominance of the sense realm and its

neutralizing effect upon the human spirit. In this way a person's spirit is freed to become the ruling influence again in the thoughts and intentions of their heart. The scrutiny of this living Sword-Logos detects every possible disease, discerning the body's deepest secrets where joint and bone-marrow meet. Heb 4:13, The entire person is thoroughly exposed to his scrutinizing gaze. (Psa 139:2, You know the deepest impulse of my thoughts.))

24 I would urge those of you in Thyatira who do [1]not embrace this Jezebel influence, as well as the ones who perhaps feel that they might be missing out on something by not studying the so-called 'deep things of Satan', to embrace what your hearts resonate with! I'm not giving you anything that will burden you in any way! *(The words [1]**ou echo**, not in echo; not in sync with her distorted teachings. Sin-consciousness is the seat of [2]**satanas** - the accuser! The word [3]**loipoi** from **leipo**, to be left out - those who feel that they are excluded from certain practices or privileges. The word [4]**baros**, weight or burden is also used in Galatians 6:2, "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." And in the Mirror it reads, "The law of the Christ-life distinguishes your spirituality; taking the weight off someone's shoulders is fulfilling the law of Christ. The message of grace removes all law-related burdens such as guilt, suspicion, inferiority, shame and sin-consciousness.)*

25 [1]Lay hold of that which your hearts [2]bear witness to [3]until you fully grasp the scope and understand the most conclusive significance of [4]my coming! *(The word [1]**kratesate** from **krateo** is in the Aorist Imperative suggesting, "get it over and done with!" Again the word [2]**echo** is used, to hold, to resonate. The word [3]**achri**, until, from **akron**, the farthest bounds, uttermost parts, end, highest, extreme - related to the word **akmen**, extremity, climax, acme, highest degree. The verb [4]**hekso** from **heko** to have come, is the Aorist active subjunctive which is the mood of probability. The time of the action of the subjunctive mood is relative to the time of the main verb, which in this case is - **echete**, present active indicative of **echo**, "that which your hearts resonate with." Heart resonance is certain! As in 2 Corinthians 3:2 "...known and read by all!" Or in the Mirror, "You are our*

Epistle written within us, an open letter speaking a global language; one that everyone can read and recognize as their mother tongue!" If the subjunctive mood is used in a purpose or result clause, then the action should not be thought of as a possible result, but should be viewed as a definite outcome that will happen as a result of another stated action.)

26 Seeing my victory as your victory makes you the overcomer. By embracing the [1]completeness of my works as your [2]treasure, you realize my authority in you to posses the nations. *(See verse 23 - the [1]success of my works is to your credit. The wrords, αχρι τελους **achri telous** suggest, taking my words to its full conclusion. The word [2]**tereo** means to value, to treasure, to guard with great care. See Psalm 2: 7,8 [also verse 9 as referenced in the next verse, 27] You are my son, today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. Paul quotes Psalm 2 in Acts 13:33 when he preaches the resurrection of Jesus and in Ephesians 2:5 and Colossians 3:1-3 he celebrates our co-begotteness! Also Peter announces that we were born anew when Jesus was raised from the dead! 1 Peter 1:3. The word [2]**exousia**, often translated authority has two components, **ek**, out of, source and **eimi**, I am! The preposition [3]**epi** suggests continuous influence upon, from a position of authority.)*

27 You will [1]shepherd the nations with a royal scepter and shatter [2]their 'alienated mindsets' like a potter's vessel of clay. *(He quotes Psalm 2:9, You shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Sadly the Hebrew Masoretic Text uses the word* **עער** ***RAA*** *- to be bad, be evil; to be displeasing; to be injurious; to be wicked; to do an injury or hurt; to be mischief; instead of the same sounding word,* **הער** **[1]*RA'AH*** *with a **Hay** at the end and not an **Ayin**, which means **to shepherd**! Also in the Septuagint, the Greek word ποιμανεῖς [1]**poimaneis** is used! You shall feed them as a shepherd nurtures his flock. With reference to the [2]alienated mindsets that ruled the nations see Numbers 24:17, "A scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab!" (mindset!) The Shepherd's staff was never intended to beat up the sheep but to protect and*

free them from any possible threat! See Rev 19:15.
*See **Extended Notes on The Rod of Iron at the end of the Chapter.**)*

28 In the same way that my shepherding mission is [3]sourced in the Father I have extended it to you! I also give you the [2]Morning Star! *(I've attached part of the previous verse here; the Greek word, [1]**para**, with the genitive, indicating source or origin, close and immediate proximity, intimate connection, union. See 2 Peter 1:19, "Take my word as one would take a lamp at night; the day is about to dawn for you in your own understanding. When the [2]Morning Star appears, you no longer need the lamp; this will happen shortly on the horizon of your own hearts!" Rev 22:16 I am Jesus. I sent my shepherd-messenger to be witness of these things to you before the churches; confirming to them that I am the Root and offspring of David, the radiant Morning Star! See my notes on **The "Fallen Star" is The bright Morning Star,** at the end of Rev 9.**)**

29 Now listen up with your inner ears! Hear with understanding what the Spirit is saying to the Ekklesia! *(See 1 Corinthians 2:13, "The impact of our words are not confined to the familiar wisdom of the world taught by human experience and tradition, but communicated by seamless spirit resonance, combining spirit with spirit.")*
Revelation Chapter 2 Extended Notes:
The Son of Man is the Son of God
Food Offered to Idols
The Rod of Iron
The Son of Man is the Son of God
Rev 1:13 And encircled by the lamp-stands there was one who appeared to be of human offspring, a son of man! He was wearing a long robe with a golden girdle round his chest.
Rev 1:14 His head of hair was luminous white, like wool covered in fresh, shiny snow and his eyes were ablaze with fire. *(Resembling the Ancient of days! See Daniel 7:9 and Dan 10:6. His body also was like beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet alike in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.)*

Rev 1:15 His feet looked like brilliant bronze fashioned in a furnace and his voice was like the sound of many cascading waterfalls. *(Triumphant in the fiery furnace of the altar/cross!)*
Rev 2:17 Your victory is secured in your hearing the word of the Spirit addressing the Ekklesia - feast on the revelation of the hidden manna in the Ark *[which prophetically pointed to the Messiah - the mystery that was hidden for ages and generations is Christ in you!]* **I also give you a little white pebble used in the courts of justice, signifying your acquittal - take it as your secret source of strength in the midst of accusation - it has your new name on it! No one knows you by this name, until you [1]realize your own identity reflected in it!** *(This beautifully reminds of Simon's encounter in Math 16 - "Blessed are you Simon, son of Jonah for flesh and blood has not known that the son of man is indeed the son of God! Now that you know who I am, allow me to introduce you to you! Your real name, as son of God, is* ***Petros*** *- little stone - son of* ***Petra*** *[the Rock] - yes! You're a chip of the old block! See notes at the end of this chapter on* ***The Son of Man is the Son of God!*** *Also my notes on John 1:12 - Our grasping [*[1]***lambano***] is simply the awakening to the fact that our genesis is already completed in the* ***Logos****. [See John 1:3] The* ***Logos*** *is the source; everything commences in him. He remains the exclusive Parent reference to their genesis. There is nothing original, except the Word. We are his offspring. [see Acts 17:28]. "He has come to give us understanding to know him who is true and to realize that we are in him who is true." [1 John 5:20].)*
The white stone - ***psēphon leukēn****, is an old word for pebble - from* ***psaō****, to rub - which was used in courts of justice; black pebbles for condemning, white pebbles for acquitting. The only other use of the word in the N.T. is in Act 26:10, where Paul speaks of "depositing his pebble" -* ***katēnegka psēphon*** *- or casting his vote. The white stone with one's name on it was used to admit one to entertainments and also as an amulet or charm. In this instance it could also refer to the Lord's name written on it - see Rev. 3:12. There is also an allusion here to conquerors in the public games, who were not only conducted with great pomp into the city to which they belonged, but had a white stone given to them, with their name inscribed on it; which badge entitled them, during their whole life, to be maintained at the public expense. See Pind., Olymp. vii. 159, and the Scholia there; and see the collections in Wetstein, and Rosenmuller's note. These were called tesserae among the Romans, and of these there were several kinds.*

Rev 2:18 Write also to the leader of the Ekklesia in Thyatira; the [1]Son of God with eyes ablaze and [2]feet shining like burnished bronze says, *(Here Jesus introduces himself as the Son of God! John sees him as the son of man in Rev 1:13; And encircled by the lamp-stands there was* ***one who appeared to be of human offspring, a son of man!*** *Clothed with a long robe and with a golden girdle round his chest." See Notes on The Ekklesia at the end of Chapter 1.*

Here, as in Rev 1:15, his feet looked like brilliant, burnished bronze fashioned in a furnace. As the Lamb of God who presented his body in sacrifice on the Bronze Altar, he descended into mankind's deepest darkness and triumphantly led mankind out into a place where the enemies of the human race are made our footstool! See Heb 1:13; "You are the extension of my right hand, my executive authority; take your position and witness how I make your enemies a place upon which you may rest your feet." Also 1 Cor 15:25; His dominion is destined to subdue all hostility and contradiction under his feet. (The lowest part of the human body will equally share in this victory. "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool." [Ps 110:1] Jesus is Lord of Lords; in his victory mankind is restored to lordship; "I say you are gods, all of you are sons of the Most High" [Ps 82:6 RSV].) Mt 22:42-45.

See **John 5:18 This was fuel for the fire of Jewish zeal in their determination to execute Jesus! Not only did he break their Sabbath, but now he has gone beyond all extremes! He calls God his own Father - who does he think he is - God's equal?**

John 5:19 Jesus explained to them with utmost certainty that whatever they see the Son does, mirrors the Father - he does not act independent of his Father - the Son's gaze is fixed in order to accurately interpret and repeat what he sees his Father does! The one reveals the other without compromise or distraction! *(The incarnation does not interrupt what the Word was from the beginning - face to face with God!)*

John 5:20 For the Father and the Son are [1]best of friends! They have no secrets; the Father gladly lets his Son in on everything he does and will continue to show him works of most significant proportions, which will astound you! *(The Father loves [[1]phileo] the Son with fondness.)*

John 5:21 For just as the Father awakens people from their death-sleep and revitalizes them with Zoe-life, even so it pleases the Son to awaken

people to life!
John 5:22 For the Father judges no-one but has given all judgment to the Son!
John 5:23 The Father's desire is that all may value the son with the same honor wherewith they esteem him - there is no distinction - to dishonor the Son is to dishonor the Father.
John 5:24 Most certainly do I say unto you that this is the vital transition from dead religion into the very life of the ages - embrace the Son's word with the same persuasion as you would the Father's and you will not know any judgment - the Son gives voice to the Father! *(He is the Father's Word made flesh.)*
John 5:25 Oh how I desire for you to get this! The prophetic hour has come! This is the moment for the dead to hear the voice of the Son of God - C'mon! Hear and live!
John 5:26 The [1]very self existence within the Father is what he has bestowed upon the Son in order for the Son to [2]radiate the same Zoe-life. *(The word [1]hosper from hos, in that manner; and per , an enclitic particle significant of abundance [thoroughness], that is, emphasis; much, very or ever. The word [2]echo, to have possession of, reminds of the English word echo; thus to resonate, radiate.)*
John 5:27 The Father has also given the Son of man [1]authentic authority to execute judgment on mankind's behalf! *(The word [1]exousia, often translated authority has two components, ek, out of, source and eimi, I am!)*
John 5:28 Do not be alarmed by this, but the hour is coming when those in the [1]graves will hear his voice! *(No-one who ever lived will escape the extent of his righteous judgment! Those who have [1]forgotten who they are will hear his incarnate voice! The word for grave, [1]**mnēmeion**, memory, suggests a remembrance! Like David prophesies in Psalm 22 when he sees the cross-crisis [**krisis** - judgment] a thousand years before it happens! His conlclusion in verse 27 sums up the triumph of God's resolve! "All the ends of the earth shall [1]remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him!" See 1 Corinthians 15:21,22 The same mankind who died in a man was raised again in a man. In Adam all died; in Christ all are made alive.)*

Food Offered to Idols

Rev 2:20 It disturbs me that you accommodate the typical Jezebel influence, a self-appointed Prophetess who teaches and seduces my [1]devoted friends into participating in an [2]idolatrous sacrificial system by eating food offered to [3]idols and fornicating with her foreign ideas about God. *(The word [1]**doulos**, bond-servant or slave; also a devoted friend, from **deo**, to be bound to another in friendship or marriage. The word [2]**eidōlothuton**, from **eidolon** and **thuo**, to slay in sacrifice. The word [3]**eidolon** where we get the word idol from means image or likeness - this is the theme of the Bible and redemption; the image and likeness of God revealed and redeemed in human form! **Idolatry is a projection of an image of one's own making.** Idolatry is the crux of religion - it is expensive business since your idol is like a slot machine at the casino! It remains hungry and it is wired to bite and bankrupt you!*

To appreciate this statement, "eating food offered to idols", one needs to understand the significance of meals in NT context. Your mind consumes thoughts like you eat food - just as food becomes flesh so do words become incarnate! By teaching pagan philosophies to the church where they feast on food offered to idols there is a direct rejection of the New Covenant symbolized in our every meal as a celebration of the incarnation! Jesus as the Lamb of God introduced the New Covenant meal where his incarnate body and shed blood turns the prophetic word of God into our true sustenance! See 1 Corinthians 11:23-34 in the Mirror: Your every meal makes the mandate of his coming relevant and communicates the meaning of the New Covenant. "This cup holds the wine of the New Covenant in my blood; you celebrate me every time you drink with this understanding!" [From now on our meals are meaningful. We celebrate the fact that the incarnation reveals our redemption; the promise became a person. He redeemed our original value, identity, and innocence; he died our death and defines the life we now live. He fulfills the theme of Scripture: the sufferings of the Messiah and the subsequent glory! [1 Pet 1:10, 11]) In John's gospel chapter 6 he reminds us about the economy of Jesus' ministry; he knew very well the pivotal significance of his appointment with the ultimate Passover where he would lay down his life as the Lamb of God to be slaughtered by his own creation for their salvation. John 6:5 when Jesus saw the multitude arrive, he said to Phillip, How do you think we are going to feed all these

people? John 6:6 This wasn't a trick question, but simply to engage their faith; he already knew exactly what he was going to do! Jesus was not about to be distracted by the enormity of his mission where his body would be broken at the highest price in order to feed the multitudes of mankind with the true bread from heaven! Just like in Chapter 24 of Luke - the picture of a meal always translates into incarnation language - bread becomes flesh! John 6:7 Phillip immediately concluded that this was impossible to do and far beyond a budget of any reasonable calculation; two hundred days wages could never buy enough for each person in the crowd to even get a little morsel of bread! Mankind cannot redeem themselves! Again, Jesus leads the conversation into a different dimension - like with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman - he points to a different source; not related to external reasoning or challenges to be met with personal contributions of our own toil or labor to define or defend ourselves but simply accessing the Father's limitless resources within. He has come to free our minds from the restrictions of a dimension that could never truly define us! He dramatically and very intentionally disengages us with every effort of our own to save ourselves! Our salvation is beyond our budget! BUT WAIT!! What about the little lad!? For unto us a child is born remember!

John 6:31 How do you compete with Moses? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness - as it is written - He gave them bread from heaven to eat. *(The rabbis quoted Psalm 72:16 to prove that the Messiah, when he comes, will outdo Moses with manna from heaven. Robertson's Word Pictures.*

Ps 72:16 "There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like the cedars of Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. KJV [A handful of corn - five loaves here and in the following year's Passover Jesus' own body would be the bread broken on the mount of Golgotha!]

Deuteronomy 8:3 And he treated you gently in the wilderness of your unbelief and fed your hunger there with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know; that he might make you know that mankind does not live by the bread of their own labor, but that the life of our design hungers to be completely sustained by that Word which proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD. [Some translations say, "humbled you" but in 2 Samuel 22:36 the Hebrew word **הנע** *ANAH is translated, "Thou hast given*

*me the shield of thy salvation, and thy **gentleness** made me great." The Hebrew word* **לוכ** *KOL, often translated, "every" actually means the whole; the word in its most complete context - which clearly points to the INCARNATION!] He divorced them from that which does not satisfy!*
You freed us from our slavery and led us gently like a shepherd through the wilderness of our own unbelief and made known to us our authentic hunger not for the bread we labor for but for the word which mirrors our joint-genesis and eternal oneness!)
John 6:32 Jesus reminded them that it wasn't Moses who gave them the bread from heaven - My Father is the one who gives the real bread from heaven!
John 6:33 For the bread from God that comes down from heaven is that which gives life to the entire world!
John 6:34 They said, Oh Lord, this is the bread we crave! Give us this bread!
John 6:35 Jesus said, I am the bread of life! He that comes face to face with me shall never hunger and he who finds his faith resting in me shall never thirst!
1 Cor 10:16 When we share a meal together we declare our association in Christ! Every time we drink from the same cup, we communicate the language of the covenant of grace, which is what our fellowship is all about. The wine we drink is our participation in what the blood of Christ represents. *(You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot [1 Pet 1:18, 19]. He redeemed our original value and transparent innocence!)* **The bread we break celebrates our participation in the incarnation! The prophetic promise became flesh in his person; we are jointly declaring that in the revelation of our inclusion in his death and resurrection we are now the visible body of Christ.**
1 Cor 10:17 The single loaf of bread that we all partake of represents the fact that although there are many of us, there is only one Christ! By eating together from that one bread we are declaring that we are one body in Christ and that he is incarnated in each one of us! *(Our "many-ness" becomes "one-ness;" Christ doesn't become fragmented in us. Rather, we become unified in him. — The Message)*
1 Cor 10:18 Let us consider the context of the prophetic type of the

sacrificial system of Israel; those who ate the sacrificed animals were partners in the same altar.
1 Cor 10:19 Now by this I am not saying that there is any magical power in a sacrifice made to an idol; an idol is nothing more than a mere figment of the imagination. The meat offered to an idol is just meat like any other barbecue!
Cor 1 10:20 The difference between Israel and the Gentile nations is in the prophetic type that Israel's sacrifices pointed to; a sacrifice offered to demons points to nothing and holds no advantage to you. I mean why would you associate with anything that reduces you to less than what you are! *(The only significance in the Jewish sacrificial system was in its pointing to the Messiah; both the promise and the person of the Messiah points to the redemption of mankind's original identity and innocence!)*
1 Cor 10:21 You cannot celebrate the Lord in one meal and then devote yourselves to pagan worship the next time you eat! Every time you drink and eat you [1]co-echo your union in Christ! *(In our every communion, even in our daily meals, we co-echo "I am!" To partake comes from [1]**metecho**; with **meta** meaning together with, and **echo** meaning to echo what God spoke to us in Christ; like the word **metanous**, NOT repentance (re-penance); but to join thoughts about something; to co-know with God; to agree with God about you.)*
1 Cor 10:22 God is not in a tug of war with demons or our obsession with religious rituals! He has no competition. He is I am! *(Even the Jews, who continued their sacrificial rituals after Christ was sacrificed as God's Passover Lamb, were presenting their offerings to pagan gods and not to God! There remains no further spiritual relevance in the practice of Jewish rituals, including the Sabbaths and the annual feasts!)*
1 Cor 8:1 You have also asked me questions about whether believers are free to eat food offered to idols. We are free to hold to our own convictions about what to eat and what not to eat; but ultimately it is not about who wins the diet debate, but about sincerely loving people.
1 Cor 8:2 Let love define your convictions and not mere head knowledge.
1 Cor 8:3 Loving God *(and your fellow human)* **is so easy when you understand that he knows you! Let God's knowledge of you inspire your love for him and your fellow human.**
1 Cor 8:4 By making a fuss about eating food offered to idols gives idols

undue prominence; they are nothing so why make something out of nothing! We know that there is only one God and that he has no competition!
1 Cor 8:5 There is a lot of talk about other gods and demonic powers operating on earth as well as in the heavenly realm; obviously they seem to be empowered by people's belief in them and conversation about them; so there seem to be many gods "lording" it over people.
1 Cor 8:6 This does not make them competition to God; we know that for us there is only one God who is the source of all things; there is only one authority, the Lord Jesus Christ. All things exist because of him; we owe our very being to him. He alone gives context and reference to our lives.
1 Cor 8:7 However not everyone realizes this; there are some believers who are convinced that idols are real, so for them to hear that we say that it's okay to eat food offered to idols presents a massive problem to their conscience.
1 Cor 8:8 Your diet preference certainly does not improve your standing before God; whether you eat meat or not.
1 Cor 8:9 The point is not about how justified you feel in your freedom to eat what you like, but how considerate you are not to be a stumbling block to someone else.
Rev 14:15 Another shepherd-messenger appeared out of the most holy place of the temple and with a loud voice addressed the One seated upon the cloud, saying, "Thrust forth your pruning hook, your hour has come - this is your moment to reap for the earth's harvest is ready."
(See John 4:31 In the mean while his disciples were urging him to take some food. John 4:32 But he said, "I am feasting on food you cannot see!" John 4:33 His disciples were baffled, "Who brought him anything to eat?" John 4:34 Jesus told them, "My food is to fulfil the desire of him who commissioned me and to leave no detail undone!" John 4:35 The bread you labor for takes four months from the day you sow the seed until it ripens in the ear, doesn't it? This is not the food that I am talking about. The fruit of your own toil and performance will never satisfy permanently; from now on, look at yourselves and everyone else differently; see them through your Father's eyes and you will know that they too are ripe and ready to discover how fully included they are in my finished work. They are perfectly mirrored in me! (A harvest is ripe when the seed in the ear matches the seed that was

sown! My mission is to reveal and redeem the image and likeness of God in human form!) John 4:36 This harvest reveals how both he who sows and he who reaps participate in the same joy of the life of the ages!)

The Rod of Iron

Rev 2:26 Seeing my victory as your victory makes you the overcomer. By embracing the [1]completeness of my works as your [2]treasure, you realize my authority in you to posses the nations. *(See verse 23 - the [1]success of my works is to your credit. The wrords, αχρι τελους achri telous suggest, taking my words to its full conclusion. The word [2]**tereo** means to value, to treasure, to guard with great care. See Psalm 2: 7,8 [also verse 9 as referenced in the next verse, 27] You are my son, today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. Paul quotes Psalm 2 in Acts 13:33 when he preaches the resurrection of Jesus and in Ephesians 2:5 and Colossians 3:1-3 he celebrates our co-begotteness! Also Peter announces that we were born anew when Jesus was raised from the dead! 1 Peter 1:3. The word [2]**exousia**, often translated authority has two components, **ek**, out of, source and **eimi**, I am! The preposition [3]**epi** suggests continuous influence upon, from a position of authority.)*

Rev 2:27 You will [1]shepherd the nations with a royal scepter and shatter [2]their 'alienated mindsets' like a potter's vessel of clay. *(He quotes Psalm 2:9, You shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Sadly the Hebrew Masoretic Text uses the word* **עער *RAA*** *- to be bad, be evil; to be displeasing; to be injurious; to be wicked; to do an injury or hurt; to be mischief; instead of the same sounding word,* **[1] הער*RA'AH*** *with a **Hay** at the end and not an **Ayin**, which means **to shepherd**! Also in the Septuagint, the Greek word ποιμανεῖς [1]**poimaneis** is used! You shall feed them as a shepherd nurtures his flock. With reference to the [2]alienated mindsets that ruled the nations see Numbers 24:17, "A scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab!" (mindset!) The Shepherd's staff was never intended to beat up the sheep but to protect and free them from any possible threat!*

To appreciate it's prophetic context, see LXX [Septuagint] rendering of Psa 2:2, The rulers of the world order have set themselves up against the Christ; Psa 2:3, "Let us break apart their chains and cast off their yokes."

From the heavens, however, the LORD breaks out in laughter and says [6-9], "I was appointed under him as King on Zion, my holy hill. Announcing the decree of the LORD: He said to me, You are my son, ***today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.*** *You shall shepherd them with a rod of iron, and dash them ['their distorted mindsets'] in pieces like a potter's vessel."*

In Acts 13, Luke records the launch of Paul's missionary journeys from Antioch. This is where he and Barnabas established the first church. He gives powerful context to Psalm 2 in recording the impact of the gospel in Paul and Barnabas' ministry into the Gentile world. Paul clearly sees the prophetic context of Psalm 2 as pointing to mankind's co-begottenness in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead! This revelation will conquer the nations! He preaches the resurrection of Jesus and quotes Psalm 2:9.

Also in his discourse with the Greek Philosophers in Acts 17, Paul reminds them that their own writings record the fact that we live and move and have our being in God and that we are indeed his offspring.

See Isaiah 9:2-4 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them light shone. Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased its joy; they rejoice before thee as with joy at the harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast broken ***as on the day of Midian!*** *Remember Gideon's strategy of hiding lamps in clay jars when they defeated the mighty Midians who out-numbered them by far! Bonsai mindsets have trapped the nations of the world for centuries! But this is the day where the mystery that was hidden in clay pots for ages and generations shall be revealed! Christ in the nations is the hope and desire of the nations! He is what heaven and earth were waiting for! All flesh shall see it together! Haggai 2:6,7; Colossians 1:27; Isa 40:5 In Acts 13:47 Paul quotes Isaiah 49:6 in the context of his ministry, "For so the Lord has commissioned us, saying, 'I have set you to be a light for the nations, that you may bring salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth!'" For unto us a child is born! .... Father of the ages, Prince of peace! ... And of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore. The zeal of the LORD*

of hosts will do this! Isa 9:6,7. Revelation 11:15, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Master and of his Anointed, and he shall reign forever and ever."
Rev 19:15 And from his mouth proceeds a sharp sword - the words of his utterance cuts to the core of the heart of the nations and he shall shepherd them with an iron scepter. And on his own he will tread out the winepress of the [1]intensity of the passion of the sovereign God of the universe. *(See my comments in Rev 2:16 on the imagery of the Sword.*
The words, ***tou thumou tes orges tou theo****, speaks of the intensity of the passion of God, with the word thumos, passion, and the word often translated wrath,* ***orge****, meaning strong desire - as a reaching forth or excitement of the mind, from the word,* ***oregomai****, meaning to stretch one's self out in order to touch or to grasp something.*
See my commentary notes in Rev 2:26,27 ***at the end of Revelation chapter 2*** *with reference to Ps 2:7,8,9 on* ***the Rod of Iron****.*
See commentary notes at the end of chapter 19, on ***The Shepherd-King of the Nations!***
Commentary notes at the end of this chapter 19, on ***the winepress of the passion of God.***
Also my further commentary at the end of Rev 22:16,21 on the Root Of Jesse Isaiah 11:1-10.*)*

Chapter 3

1 And to the messenger of the Ekklesia in Sardis write: he who holds the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars in resonance says, I see your toil, but there is a big difference between dead works and vibrant life!

2 [1]Awake from your slumber! [2]Get a firm grip on what little life you have left in you! Your work does not [3]mirror my finished work. *(The word [1]****gregoreuo****, to be vigilant from* ***egeirō*** *to arouse from sleep. The word*

*[2]**steiritzo**, means to turn resolutely in a certain direction; to confirm with steadfast resolve. The word [3]**eponopion**, in full view - face to face as in a mirror.)*

3 Remember therefore what it felt like when you first heard and [1]embraced the word as your own! It was like discovering a priceless [2]treasure! Now [3]make up your mind once and for all! [4]Why should I surprise you like a thief and break into your space whilst you are fast asleep and not even anticipating my [5]intimate intent; not knowing the moment of my [5]visitation? *(The word [1]**eilephas** from **lambano** is in the perfect tense, meaning, what you received as a permanent deposit. The word [2]**tereo** means to treasure. The word wrongly translated, 'repent' from Latin, re-pennance is **metanoia** - to think with me. Here [3]**metanoesan,** is in the Aorist imperative - meaning, "Engage your thoughts with my thoughts once and for all - get it over and done with!" From **metanoia**, **meta** together with and **nous** mind, thought. The word [4]**ean** suggests, if perhaps, in case you were not alert, you would not anticipate the intimacy of my presence. The word [5]**heko** means to be present - to approach one with intimate intent. The Hebrew idiom, like a thief in the night, refers to the surprise element; this is in reference to one of the traditions of the Jewish marriage practices as celebrated in the 1st century, where the Groom comes to "retrieve" his Bride at an unexpected moment. This is to be looked for with joyful expectation. See extended **Thoughts on "Thief in the Night"** at the end of the chapter.)*

4 Yet you do have a few [1]individual names in Sardis who have not forgotten their true identity and [2]soiled their garments - they are those who walk with me in [3]innocence and who mirror the reference of their [4]worth to be equal to my estimate of them. *([1]Individual names - see significance of a name in John 1:41. He immediately fetched his own brother Simon, telling him, "We've found the Messiah" which in Greek means, "the Christ." [Aramaic was the spoken language and Greek the academic language in which the New Testament was written.] John1:42*

*When he introduced him to Jesus, he gazed intently at him and said, you are Simon the son of Jonah; you will be known as Mr. Rock. [The Hebrew word **yona**, means dove. The word **kaleo** means to surname, to identify by name. **Kefas** is the Aramaic for **Petros**, a stone or chip of rock - a chip of the old block! See Matthew 16:13 - 18. This conversation beautifully reminds of the Song of Songs in chapter 2:14 "Oh my dove [**yona**], in the clefts of the rock, in the crevice of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and your face is comely. The crevice of the cliff is the address and home of the rock pigeon! The birds have nests!]*

*The word [2]**moluno**, from **melas**, black ink; to soil, suggests a garment soiled with the stains of their own attempts to define their own worth and identity through personal effort and religious discipline. Isa 64:6 We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like filthy rags.*

*The word, [3]**leukos** means, light, bright, brilliant from whiteness, dazzling white - a display of innocence. The word [4]**axios** means having the weight of another thing of like value, worth as much. See Extended Thoughts on **"Your God-identity"** at the end of the chapter.)*

5 Everyone who sees their victory in me, I will clothe in white [3]garments - and they will realize that I am not in the business of fulfilling their law and performance based fears by [1]blotting out their names from the Book of Life! Instead, I am the one who endorses their identity face to face before my Father and his [2]Shepherd-messengers.

*(This language is taken from the [1]custom of registering the names of persons in a list, roll, or catalogue. In Jewish tradition there was a prevailing fear that your name might be blotted out of the Book of Life if your behavior did not please God. The word often translated, messenger or shepherd-messenger, [2]**aggelos** from **ago** to lead as a shepherd leads and **agele** a herd of cattle or company of people.*

*[3]Garments: **himation** the upper garment, the cloak or mantle. See **Extended Notes on the Lamb's Book of Life** at the end of Chapter 17. Also **Extended Notes on our God-identity** at end of this chapter.)*

6 Now listen up with your inner ears! Hear with understanding what the Spirit is saying to the Ekklesia!

7 And to the messenger of the Ekklesia of [1]Philadelphia write: I am the Holy and True One! I hold the key of David as prophesied in [1]Isaiah 22:22! Yes, I [2]unlock the mysteries of the heavenly dimension and no one can shut the door! And I lock the entrance and none *(of the old mindsets)* **can access it!** *([1]**Philadelphos**, from **philos**, fondness; friendship, and **adelphos**, the same womb; immediate family; kinfolk; household. [2]Isaiah 22:22 And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. The word [2]**anoigo** from **ana** upwards and **agoo**, to lead! Also Ezek 34:23 Then I will place one shepherd over them, my servant David, and he will take care of them and be their shepherd.)*

8 I am fully aware of your efforts in doing the work of the ministry! I want you to see something, I [1]have given you a doorway right in front of you that has been fully opened into the heavenly dimension! Nothing can possibly close it again! Even when you had very little strength you have treasured my word and have not contradicted my name! *(I have given you, [1]**dedoka**, Perfect Active Indicative of **didomi**, denotes an action that has been completed in the past and the results of the action are continuing on in this moment, in full effect. Rev 4:1 I want you to see something! Oh wow! What I see takes my breath away! A wide-open door in the heavenly realm! The first thing I heard was this voice addressing me! It was distinct and clear like the sound of a trumpet; it captured my attention, inviting me to enter. "Come up here and I will show you how everything coincides with what you have already seen!")*

9 Behold, the Jewish disguise will be exposed to be the synagogue of Satanas. They have [1]sourced their [2]gatherings in [3]accusation but now [4]I give them to you and will cause them to come [5]face to face with you in fellowship in acknowledgment of my love which I have bestowed

upon you! *(The preposition* [1]***ek*** *always points to source or origin; the* [2]***synagogue****, [gathering] of* [3]***satanos*** *[accuser]. "*[4]*I give them to you!" In the language of Isa 45:14 and Isa 60:14. The word often translated worship,* [5]***proskuneo****, from* ***pros****, face to face and* ***kuneo****, which I would like to believe to be a derivation of* ***koinonia****, joint-participation; rather than* ***kuon*** *which means dog. I know, some tried to connect the idea of a dog licking its master's hand, which then became a possibility of kissing. I prefer a divine face to face koinonia encounter to define true worship! Although, I do believe that dogs, often referred to as man's best friend because of the very nature of their devotion to their master, has its Greek root connected -* ***koinonia*** *is a friendship word to begin with and in it is therefore possible to see its etymological link. See Extended commentary on the word* ***proskuneo*** *at the end of the Mirror.)*

10 You have greatly [1]valued the prophetic word which came to fulfilment in what [2]I endured. I will also [1]guard you with great care, empowering you to stand strong [3]in the midst of the troubled times that are about to come upon the [4]inhabited world to scrutinize the [5]dwellers of the earth. *(The word* [1]***tereo*** *means to value, to treasure, to guard with great care;* ***ton logon tes hupomones mou****, the word of my patience! "For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross and despised the shame!" Heb.12:2; Isaiah 53:11. The preposition* [3]***ek*** *here implies, not a keeping from temptation, but a keeping in temptation, as the result of which they shall be delivered out of its power. The words* [4]***oikoumene*** *and* [5]***katoikeo*** *both suggest the established society of the day versus the habitation of God where the lordship of the life of our design will reign under the King of kings and the Lord of lords.)*

11 Do not let tough times make me seem distant from you! I am at hand - see my nearness, not my absence. And don't let temporal setbacks diminish your own authority either! Remember that you call the shots; you wear the crown. My crown endorses your crown. *(Lit. Let nothing take your crown! Rev 1:5; He is the King of kings and Lord of lords! Not King of slaves! Rev 19:16. See Psalm 103:4 He redeems his life*

from the Pit and weaves a crown for him out of loving-kindness and tender mercies.)

12 It is in your individual, continual association with your [1]victory in me that I will make you to be like a [2]strong pillar in the inner shrine of God's sanctuary, supporting the entire structure of my God-habitation within you! A place to be your permanent abode 'from whence you will never have to depart. And I will engrave upon you [3]the name of my God, also the name of the [4]city *[the bride!]* **of my God, the new Jerusalem that descends from heaven; as well as [5]my own new Name!**

*(The words [1]**ho nikoon**, are the Present Active Participle form of the verb **nikao** to emphasize a continual or habitual victory. Philadelphia was a city of earthquakes - the [2]strong column or pillar in the temple structure resembles the strength of God's habitation in the midst of conflict and challenging times.*

*[3]My Father's Name, John 5:43, I have come in my Father's Name! John 12:28 Father, glorify your Name! **Abba Father**!*

*Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy [4]**city**, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, **prepared as a bride adorned for her husband**. In John 7:37,38 when Jesus speaks of waters gushing forth out of your innermost being, he says that you are the city! You are the bride! God's redeemed society!*

*Psa 87:3 Glorious things are spoken of you, Oh **city** of God - "This one and that one were born in her" Psa 87:7 Singers and dancers together say, "All my springs of joy are in you! There is no greater glory to pursue but to know that all my springs of joy are in you!*

*Rev 19:16 On his robe and on his thigh **he has a name inscribed**, [5]**King of kings and Lord of lords**. My crown endorses your crown! Rev 1:5*

Of all the seven churches Philadelphia had the longest duration of prosperity as a Christian city. It still exists as a Turkish town under the name of Allah Shehr, City of God. One of the mosques is believed by the native Christians to have been the gathering-place of the church addressed in Revelation. One solitary pillar of high antiquity remains. Vincent.

See Extended Thoughts on the City-Bride at the end of the chapter.)

13 Now listen up with your inner ears! Hear with understanding what the Spirit is saying to the Ekklesia!

14 And to the [1]Shepherd of the Ekklesia in [2]Laodicea write: he who speaks is [3]the amen; he is the ultimate [4]evidence and the one who defines [5]faith; he personifies the [6]truth; [7]she is the very [8]source of God's creation. *(The word often translated shepherd-messenger or messenger, [1]**aggelos** has two components, **ago** to lead as a shepherd leads and **agele** a herd of cattle or company. [2]**Laodikeia** from **laos** and **dikea,** thus the righteousness of the people - their claim to fame was their self-righteousness. See verse 17. The word [3]**amen** is from a Hebrew word, **âman** meaning support, confirmation, faithful, certainty, reliable, uphold, nourish; foster-parent, nurse; also a word used for pillars, supporters of the door. This one is the sustainer and fulfilment of all that God has spoken. Literally, "The one who speaks is the [3]Amen, the [4]Testimony, the [5]Faith, the [6]Truth, and the [7]Source of Creation!" The two components of the word translated truth, [6]**alethinos** are **ha,** negative and **lanthano**, hidden, thus unveiled. [7]While the rest of the sentence is masculine, the phrase, "Source of Creation," **ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως** is in the Feminine Gender.*
*The word [8]**arche**, suggests commencement or beginning, from **archomai**, to rehearse from the beginning! See John 1:1 To go back to the very beginning is to find the Word already present there; face to face with God. The Word is I am; God's eloquence echoes and concludes in him. The Word equals God. John 1:2 The beginning mirrors the Word face to face with God. John 1:3 The Logos is the source; everything commences in him. He remains the exclusive Parent reference to their existence. There is nothing original, except the Word! The Logic of God defines the only possible place where mankind can trace their genesis.*
See also Isaiah 40:18 To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness compare with him? 40:19 The idol! a workman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold, and casts for it silver chains. 40:21 Have you not

*known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you **from the beginning**? The Septuagint reads, **ἐξ ἀρχῆς - eks arches** - sourced in the beginning.)*

15 I am familiar with your works and you remind me of the typical situation in Laodicea! How I wish that your lives were like the cold, refreshing waters of Colossae or like the waters of the healing thermal springs of Hierapolis! But they are neither cold nor hot! *(By the time the waters arrive via the aqueducts in Laodicea.)*

16 This is what really disappoints: when you anticipate a refreshing cool drink but instead get a mouthful of lukewarm sulphur-tasting water, you would naturally spit it out! *(There is no substitute for living from the source. Compromise could never suffice! This metaphor has been drawn from the water supply of the city, which was lukewarm, in contrast to the hot springs at nearby Hierapolis - [6 miles north] and the cold, refreshing waters from Colossae [11 miles east]. Laodicea had aqueducts connecting it to these sources. The imagery of the Laodicean aqueduct suggests not that "hot" is good and "cold" is bad, but that both hot and cold water are useful, whereas lukewarm water is emetic. Hierapolis became a healing center where doctors used the thermal springs as a treatment for their patients. Laodocea is called by Ramsay "the City of Compromise!" This again highlights the danger of a mixed message, not drawn directly from the source but, en-route, mingled with one's own ideas, efforts and performance - just like Paul warning the Galatians about a little leaven, leavening the entire lump of dough!)*

17 As your name suggests, you are experts in [1]justifying yourselves, you are convinced that you have all your ducks in a row - your plumbing is sorted, your trade and economy are thriving industries - you think that you are completely independent. Yet you have no idea of how bankrupt you really are! Your entire economy is flawed since you are trading with "Monopoly money"! It is fake currency - your [2]scales are [3]rigged! If only you knew how desperately in need you are of someone to show you tender compassion and mercy! I mean, look at

you! On the outside you may appear to be standing tall and proud in your self-righteousness but in reality you are in a pitiful state! You are like a [4]crouching, cringing beggar! Your [5]smoke-screen has blinded your view! You think you're hiding in your fancy brand-name clothes but you don't realize how [6]naked and exposed you are! *([1]**Laodikeia** from **laos** and **dikea,** thus the righteousness of the people. Their claim to fame was their self-righteousness. The word [2]**talaipōros** occurs only twice in the New Testament - Rom 7:24, Rev - and both times it is translated wretched!? It has two components, **talanton**, which is the word for the scale of a balance; that which is weighed, a talent, and **poros** which is a trade word. See **emporos**, [**en** + **poros**] a merchant, trader! The word **poros** derives from **peira**, to test as in testing the weight of a thing. A talent of silver weighed about 100 pounds (45 kg) and a talent of gold weighed about 200 pounds (91 kg) The Hebrew word for a scale of balances is the word, **azan** which literally means to broaden out the ears with cupped hands, weighing words; to give undivided attention to. From '**ôzen** ear. [3]Rigged scales ie. gold not thoroughly refined - see v 18. Two of their most famous and successful products were an ear ointment from spice nard and eye-salve made from "Phrygian powder" mixed with oil. They seem to have the monopoly on this strategic trade-route; yet, while their ear salve and eye ointment medicines were in unique demand they themselves suffered from hearing and seeing wrong! The word [4]**ptochos** means to cringe or crouch like a beggar. The word [5]**tuphlos**, smoky eyes, blind, from **tuphoo,** to envelop with smoke. The word [6]**gumnos** means naked. See Isa 64:6 all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. They fade like a leaf, instead of covering our nakedness they emphasize our shame! Rev 3:4.*

Situated near Colossae and Hierapolis, the great road from the coast to the inner country passed through the middle of Laodicea - the city was the doorkeeper to the great eastern highway and central trade-route of the Roman Empire from Ephesus to the east. The city was renowned for three main industries: A banking center for the province of Asia Minor, including a gold exchange; The textile center where glossy, black wool was woven into garments called trimata that were prized in the Roman world; The location of a major medical school known worldwide and where an eye salve called Phyrigian powder was made from a local stone. The leading city in the valley during the first century, Laodicea was destroyed by an

earthquake in AD 60. According to Roman writer Tacticus, Rome offered to pay for the city to be rebuilt, but the people declined, saying that they were wealthy enough to restore their own city; this coincides with John's writing!)

18 I invite you to talk business with me! Come, [1]let us resolve this together! I want to make you really rich! I advise you [2]to buy gold [3]from me! Gold that is thoroughly refined in the fire - not the flawed currency of your own trade! We're not talking a mixture here! No dross! And from now on, buy your clothing from me; white garments - not the blended brand of your own making! Clothe yourself completely with these and there will be not even a [4]hint of shame! For your eyes, buy [5]eye-salve from me to [6]anoint your eyes so that you may clearly see yourself in Christ! *(The word [1]**sumbouleo** from **sun**, jointly, together and **bouleo** to reason, to resolve. [2]Come and buy from me! heaven's currency is to "pay" attention! To cup your ears! See commentary in verse 17! This transaction reminds of Isa 55:1 "Ho, every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and the finest wheat without money and without price. Isa 55:2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? [In Hebrew the word for grain and buying or selling is the same - רבשׁ **shâbar** - crushed grain.] Hearken diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in fatness. Isa 55:3 Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. [3]"From me, **'par' emou - para** closest possible proximity of nearness.*

*[4]**No shame**! See Gen 3:7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons. Gen 3:9 GOD called to the Man: "Where are you?" Gen 3:10 He said, "I heard you in the garden and I was ashamed because I was naked. And I hid. [Note, God wasn't hiding from them!]*

*The word [5]**kollourion** is the name for a famous Phrygian powder for the eyes made in Laodicea**.** To anoint, [6]**enchrisai**, from **en**, in and **chriō**, Christ.)*

19 It is with [1]affection that I address every one of you, whoever you are. I would [2]earnestly persuade you as a parent would [3]instruct and nurture their children: [4]eagerly [5]acquaint yourselves with all that I have in mind for you. *(The word [1]**phileo**, is a friendship word and suggests fondness and affection; [2]**enlencho** means to encourage, convince, to persuade. This is a quote from Proverbs 3:12 for the LORD reasons convincingly with him whom he loves, as a father communicates with the son in whom he delights. Here the Hebrew word, **yâkach** is used, which in this context suggests to reason together; see Isa also 1:18. The word [3]**paideuo** means to nurture and train a child; [4]**tzeleuo** from **zelos** - means to be fervently eager; to have strong feelings of excitement. The word often translated 'repentance' is actually [5]**metanoeo** which has nothing to do with penance! It means to join thoughts about something; to co-know.)*

20 You have shut me out in your self-righteousness, but behold, here I stand knocking at the door! If anyone recognizes my voice and lets me in, I am so ready to join you for a feast! Yes, I will dine with you and you with me! *(Song of Songs 5:2 I was asleep, but my heart was awake. It is the voice of my beloved who knocks: "Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled; for my head is filled with dew, and my hair with the dampness of the night." Rev 3:3 Remember therefore what it felt like when you first heard and embraced the word as your own! It was like discovering a priceless treasure! Now make up your mind once and for all! Why should I surprise you like a thief and break into your space whilst you are fast asleep and not even anticipating my intimate intent, not knowing the moment of my visitation?*
See John 6:58 also Rev 2:20 on the significance of meals as wells as the extended commentary at the end of Rev 2.
It is characteristic of John to note the sayings of Christ which express the reciprocal relations of himself and his followers. See Joh 6:56; Joh 10:38; Joh 14:20; Joh 15:4, Joh 15:5; Joh 17:21, Joh 17:26. Compare John 14:23. Vincent's Word Studies.)

21 And everyone's personal triumph will be celebrated together with me, by being jointly seated together in my Kingship! It is on exactly the same basis of [1]my victory celebration and my joint seatedness with my Father in his throne-room! *(Note the words, [1]**hōs kagō enikēsa** where **enikesa** is the first Aorist Active Indicative of **nikaō**, to conquer; looking back on the victory as over in the past. A.T. Roberston compares this to John 16:33 where before the Cross Jesus says **egō nenikēka ton kosmon** which is in the perfect active tense, emphasizing the abiding effect of the victory!)*

22 Now listen up with your inner ears! Hear with understanding what the Spirit is saying to the Ekklesia!
Revelation Chapter 3 Extended Notes:
Thief in the Night
Our God-identity
The City-Bride
Thief in the Night
Rev 3:3 Remember therefore what it felt like when you first heard and [1]embraced the word as your own! It was like discovering a priceless [2]treasure! Now [3]make up your mind once and for all! [4]Why should I surprise you like a thief and break into your space whilst you are fast asleep and not even anticipating my [5]intimate intent; not knowing the moment of my [5]visitation? *(The word [1]**eilephas** from **lambano** is in the perfect tense, meaning, what you received as a permanent deposit. The word [2]**tereo** means to treasure. The word wrongly translated, 'repent' from Latin, re-pennance is **metanoia** - to think with me. Here [3]**metanoesan,** is in the Aorist imperative - meaning, "Engage your thoughts with my thoughts once and for all - get it over and done with!" From **metanoia**, **meta** together with and **nous** mind, thought. The word [4]**ean** suggests, if perhaps, in case you were not alert, you would not anticipate the intimacy of my presence. The word [5]**heko** means to be present - to approach one with intimate intent. The Hebrew idiom, like a thief in the night, refers to the surprise element; this is in reference to one of the traditions of the Jewish marriage practices as celebrated in the 1st century, where the Groom comes*

to "retrieve" his Bride at an unexpected moment. This is to be looked for with joyful expectation.
See 1 Thessalonians 5:2- 10 in the Mirror Bible! You know for yourselves from experience how the day of the Lord suddenly dawns like a thief in the night!
Acts 9:3 Now as he journeyed he approached Damascus, ***and suddenly a light from heaven flashed about him.*** *2 Corinthians 4:6 For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. Isaiah 9:2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. John 1:9 A new day for mankind has come. The authentic light of life that illuminates everyone was about to dawn in the world!*
1 Thess 5:3 The systems of this world of darkness and unbelief, which held the masses under their pseudo-sway of make-belief peace and security shall suddenly be broken into, like travail upon a woman with child, and none of their captives shall remain under their claim! *(The gates of Hades shall not prevail! From ha + eido, not to see.)*
1 Thess 5:4 You are no longer in darkness; there are no daunting surprises waiting for you like a thief in the night!
1 Thess 5:5 All of you are begotten of light, the Day of the Lord is your true parent! Neither night nor darkness have any claim on you!
1 Thess 5:6 Live alert and you will not become intoxicated by the indifference of others.
1 Thess 5:7 Sleeping and drunkenness are typical things people do at night, but now the day of the Lord has dawned within us and has put an end to the slumbering effect and intoxication of the practices of darkness.
1 Thess 5:8 So let us clothe ourselves with day-garments, protecting our sober seeing by having our hearts fully guarded by the breastplate of love-inspired faith, and having our minds encircled, like a helmet, with an expectation which is consistent with what salvation declares!
1 Thess 5:9 For God did not set us up for disappointment; he is not teasing us with desires that we desperately reach for but cannot attain to! He has brought us to a place where we are surrounded by the poetry of what salvation communicates in the lordship of Jesus Christ. *(The word often translated, wrath, is the word* ***orge****, from* ***oregomai*** *which*

means to stretch oneself out with strong and passionate desire.)
1 Thess 5:10 The fact that he died our death is equally valid to those who are awake to its effect or still fast asleep in their indifference to it; we are together destined to live in the closest possible association with him! *(The word **hama** is a particle of union denoting close association.)*
Our God-identity
Rev 3:4 Yet you do have a few [1]individual names in Sardis who have not forgotten their true identity and [2]soiled their garments - they are those who walk with me in [3]innocence and who mirror the reference of their [4]worth to be equal to my estimate of them. *([1]Individual names - see significance of a name in John 1:41 He immediately fetched his own brother Simon, telling him, "We've found the Messiah" which in Greek means, "the Christ." (Aramaic was the spoken language and Greek the academic language in which the New Testament was written.) John1:42 When he introduced him to Jesus, he gazed intently at him and said, you are Simon the son of Jonah; you will be known as Mr. Rock. (The Hebrew word **yona**, means dove. The word **kaleo** means to surname, to identify by name. **Kefas** is the Aramaic for **Petros**, a stone or chip of rock - a chip of the old block! See Matthew 16:13 - 18. This conversation beautifully reminds of the Song of Songs in chapter 2:14 "Oh my dove [**yona**], in the clefts of the rock, in the crevice of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and your face is comely. The crevice of the cliff is the address and home of the rock pigeon! The birds have nests!*
*The word [2]**moluno**, from **melas**, black ink; to soil, suggests a garment soiled with the stains of their own attempts to define their own worth and identity through personal effort and religious discipline. Isa 64:6 We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like filthy rags. The word, [3]**leukos** means, light, bright, brilliant from whiteness, dazzling white - a display of innocence.*
*The word [4]**axios** means having weight, having the weight of another thing of like value, worth as much.)*
1 John 3:9 To discover one's authentic sonship in God, is to discover true freedom from sin. We are born of him and his seed remains in us; this is the only possible reference to sober up the mind from the intoxicating influence of deception. *(The incorruptible seed of our Father carries the exact pattern of the authentic life of our design! Jesus calls the*

*Devil [**diabolos** - fallen mindset], the father of lies.)*
John 8:31 Jesus then said to those Jews who were believing in him, "To take my word to its complete conclusion and then to abide in seamless union with its logic is to truly be my disciples. *(Here, he is not referring to some future "red-letter-edition Bible" highlighting his "words"; Jesus is speaking about the Logos defining his "I-am-ness", face to face with God before time was, then documented in prophetic language in ancient Scripture and now unveiled in incarnate human form, as in a mirror.)*
John 8:32 In this abiding you will fully know the truth about who you are and this knowing will be your freedom.
John 8:35 The difference between the slave and the son is that the slave only works there; for the son the father's house is home! *(John 14:2 What makes my Father's house home, is your place in it! If this was not the ultimate conclusion of my mission why would I even bother to do what I am about to do if it was not to prepare a place for you? I have come to persuade you of a place of seamless union where you belong. What Jesus is about to accomplish in his death and resurrection will forever shift the idea of religious works and pretense and performance from the typical slave-mentality to the freedom and reality of sonship!)*
John 8:36 With the freedom found in sonship there is [1]no pretense! *(Free indeed! The word, [1]**ontoos**, indeed, is the opposite to that which is pretended.)*
John 8:44 You are the offspring of a [1]fallen mindset and you desire to prove its diabolic parenthood in your willingness to execute its cravings. This "cast down" mindset is what kills the [2]anthropos since the beginning - *[it violently opposes the idea of the image and likeness of God in human form.]* **The diabolos mindset cannot abide the truth. There is no connection with truth - lying is its [3]language; in fact, the diabolos is the father of lies! The intention was to kill mankind's awareness of their god-identity.** *(The word, [1]**diabolos**, Devil, has two components, **dia**, because of or through, and **ballo**, to cast down; thus referring to the cast down condition mankind suffered in association with Adam's fall. The diabolos is a man-slayer, [2]**anthrōpoktonos** from **anthropos** and **kteinoo** to kill. The word for the human species, male or female is **anthropos**, from **ana**, upwards, and **tropos**, manner of life; character; in*

like manner. See John 1:51, 2:25. The word [3]***lalia*** *means dialect or language.)*

John 8:56 Your father Abraham was leaping with joy to see my day! What he saw made him exceedingly glad!

John 8:57 Then the Jews said, "Ha! You're not even fifty years old and you claim to have seen Abraham!"

John 8:58 "Most certainly do I say unto you that before Abraham was born, I am!" *(See note on John 1:1 Three times in this sentence John uses the imperfect of* ***eimi,*** *namely* ***ane,*** *to be, which conveys no idea of origin for God or for the Logos, but simply continuous existence, "I am." Quite a different verb* ***egeneto,*** *"became," appears in John 1:14 for the beginning of the Incarnation of the Logos. The incarnation is not the origin of Jesus, neither of us!. See the distinction sharply drawn in John 8:58, "before Abraham was [born,* ***genesthai*** *from* ***ginomai****] I am." The word* ***eimi****, I am; the essence of being, suggesting timeless existence. See 1 Pet 1:16.)*

Two chapters later Jesus addresses the same audience again:

John 10:30 My Father and I are one!"

John 10:31 This filled the Jews with renewed rage and they picked up stones to stone him.

John 10:32 Then Jesus questioned them saying, "I have openly shown you many good works confirming my union with my Father; for which one of these works do you stone me?"

John 10:33 They said, "We are not stoning you for something that you have done but for what you have just said! You blasphemed God! You are a mere man and you make yourself equal with God? *(The penalty for blasphemy was death by stoning - Leviticus 24:16)*

John 10:34 Jesus said, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said you are gods?' *Here Jesus quotes from Psa 82:6 I say, "You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you!"*

What does it mean to build your house upon the rock? "Son of man, I say you are Rock; you're a chip of the old block - the son of man is the son of God!" Dig deep = Gaze deeply, intently into the mirror likeness of the face of your birth! Luke 6:48; James 1:18,23-25; Isaiah 51:1; Deuteronomy 32:18 Living your life from who you are in Christ [Grace] beats living your life from who you are in Adam [law of works] by far! Plus it is storm-proof!

See **Romans 9:33 The conclusion of the prophetic reference pointed towards the rock as the spirit identity of human life. In Messiah, God**

has placed his testimony of mankind's identity in front of their eyes, in Zion, the center of their religious focus, yet, blinded by their own efforts to justify themselves, they tripped over him. But those who recognized him by faith, as the Rock from which they were hewn, are freed from the shame of their sense of failure and inferiority. *(See Deuteronomy 32:18, "you have forgotten the Rock that birthed you…", and in Isaiah 51:1, "Look to the Rock from which you were hewn." It is only in him that mankind will discover what they are looking for. "Who is the son of man?" Mankind's physical identity is defined by their spiritual origin, the image and likeness of God, "I say you are Petros, you are Rock, and upon this rock - the revelation that the son of man is the son of God, I will build my Ekklesia! [See Matthew 16:13-19]. Mankind's origin and true identity is preserved and revealed again in the Rock of ages. The term, "rock" in those days represented what we call the "hard drive" in computer language; the place where data is securely preserved for a long time. Rock fossils carry the oldest data and evidence of life.)*

Galatians 1:19 During this time I did not see any of the other Apostles except James, the younger brother of Jesus. *(Saul (Paul), Peter (Kefas) and James shared a vital revelation; all three of them discovered their original identity beyond their natural birth: "From now on, we no longer know anyone according to the flesh", says Paul in 2 Cor 5:16. "Simon son of Jonah, flesh and blood did not reveal to you that as the son of man, I am the Christ, the Son of God; now that you know who I am, allow me to introduce you to you! I say that you are Rock, a chip of the old block. [Mt 16:17, 18] James speaks about the effect of the Word as discovering the reflection of the face of our birth as in a mirror there! Rescuing us from our forgetfulness! "We have forgotten what manner of people we are!"*

In David's dramatic account of the cross in Psalm 22, a thousand years BC, he concludes with this most significant statement, "The ends of the earth shall remember, and turn to the Lord; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him! " And again in the next Psalm, 23, he says, "By the waters of reflection, my soul remembers who I am!" Now I can go through the valley of the shadow of death and fear no evil!

One of the greatest teachers in the Celtic world, John Scotus Eriugena in ninth-century Ireland, also taught that Christ is our memory. We suffer from the "soul's forgetfulness," he says. Christ comes to reawaken us to our true nature. He is our epiphany. He comes to show us the face of God. He comes

to show us also our face, the true face of the human soul. This leads the Celtic tradition to celebrate the relationship between nature and grace. Instead of grace being viewed as opposed to our essential nature or as somehow saving us from ourselves, nature and grace are viewed as flowing together from God. They are both sacred gifts. The gift of nature, says Eriugena, is the gift of "being"; the gift of grace, on the other hand, is the gift of "well-being." Grace is given to reconnect us to our true nature. At the heart of our being is the image of God, and thus the wisdom of God, the creativity of God, the passions of God, the longings of God. Grace is opposed not to what is deepest in us but to what is false in us. It is given to restore us to the core of our being and to free us from the unnaturalness of what we are doing to one another and to the earth.
-from Christ of the Celts
The Hebrew word in Gen 3:24, **דפה *hâphak*** *is a primitive root; meaning to turn about; by implication to change, to return, to be converted, turn back. Also in the Septuagint the same thought is communicated in the Greek word,* ***strephō****, which is the strengthened from the base of* ***tropay****; to turn around or reverse: - convert, turn again, back again, to turn self about. The Sword would always point back to mankind's original identity. In Luke 15 the prodigal son returns to himself - Plato is quoted by Ackerman [Christian Element in Plato] as thinking of redemption as coming to oneself!)*

Garments of identity

Rev 3:5 *Everyone who sees their victory in me will I clothe in white garments - and they will realize that I am not in the business of fulfilling their law and performance based fears by blotting out their names from the Book of Life! Instead I am the one who endorses their identity face to face before my Father and his shepherd-messengers.*
See extended notes at the end of chapter 17 on ***The Lamb's Book of Life and Mankind's Redeemed Identity.***

[3]Garments: ***himation*** *the upper garment, the cloak or mantle*
*Romans 4:21 Abraham's confidence was his dress-code; he knew beyond doubt that the power of God to perform was equal to his promise. (****plerophoreo****, from* ***plero*** *to be completely covered in every part, +* ***phoreo****, to wear garments or armor; traditionally translated to be completely persuaded. His faith was his visible identity and armor; he wore his persuasion like he would his daily garments.)*

Colossians 3:9 That old life was a lie, foreign to our design! Those garments of disguise are now thoroughly deleted us in our understanding of our union with Christ in his death and resurrection. We are no longer obliged to live under the identity and rule of the robes we wore before, neither are we cheating anyone through false pretensions. (The garments an actor would wear define his part in the play but cannot define him.) Col 3:10 We stand fully identified in the new creation renewed in knowledge according to the pattern of the exact image of our Creator. Col 3:11 The revelation of Christ in us gives identity to the individual beyond anything anyone could ever be as a Greek or a Jew, American or African, foreigner or famous, male or female, king or pawn. From now on everyone is defined by Christ; everyone is represented in Christ. (In seeing him not just recorded in history but revealed in us, we discover the face of our birth as in a mirror! [Jas 1:18]) Col 3:12 You are the product of God's love; he restored you to his original thought. You belong to him exclusively. It is like changing garments. Now that you have gotten rid of the old, clothe yourselves with inner compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience, (Just like you were once identified by your apparel, the characteristics of these qualities define you now.) Col 3:13 upholding one another in positive expectation. If anyone finds fault with another, restore that person to favor, remembering how the Lord's forgiveness has transformed our lives. Col 3:14 Wear love like a uniform; this is what completes the picture of our oneness

1 Thess 5:8 So let us clothe ourselves with day-garments, protecting our sober seeing by having our hearts fully guarded by the breastplate of love-inspired faith, and having our minds encircled, like a helmet, with an expectation which is consistent with what salvation declares!)

The City-Bride

Just like Babylon is not a city in the symbolic language of Revelation, it is a fallen-mindset society; so the New Jerusalem is not a city but the redeemed society of mankind! The Bride of Christ! In John 7:37,38 when Jesus speaks of waters gushing forth out of your innermost being, he says that you are the city! You are the bride! God's redeemed society!

Rev 3:12 It is in every individual's continual association with their victory in me that I will make them to be like a strong pillar in the Inner Shrine of God's sanctuary supporting the entire structure of my

God-habitation within you! A place to be your permanent abode where you will never depart from. And I will engrave upon them the name of my God, also the name of the city *[the Bride!]* of my God, the new Jerusalem that descends from heaven; as well as my own new Name!
Rev 21:2 And I saw her, in spotless magnificence, the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, descending out of the heavens; having been fully prepared as a bride and beautifully adorned for her husband.
Psa 87:3 Glorious things are spoken of you, Oh city of God - "This one and that one were born in her"
Psa 87:7 Singers and dancers together say, "All my springs of joy are in you!" *There is no greater glory to pursue but to know that all my springs of joy are in you!*
Rev 19:16 On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, [5]King of kings and Lord of lords.
Rev 1:5 His crown endorses our crown!
John 7:37 On the final day, the crescendo of the eight-day Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus stood up and proclaimed with a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come and stand face-to-face with me and drink! *(John again employs the word pros in order to emphasize the face-to-face fellowship we are invited into.)*
John 7:38 In your belief that I am what the Scriptures are all about you will discover uniquely for yourself, face to face with me, that I am what you are all about and rivers of living waters will gush out of your innermost being!" *(Jesus addresses the individual; you singular. Here John records how Jesus witnessed the eighth day, the great and final day of the Feast of Tabernacles, when, according to custom, the High Priest would draw water from the Pool of Siloam with a golden jar, mix the water with wine, and then pour it over the altar while the people would sing with great joy from Psalm 118:25-26, See also the entire Psalm 118 which was obviously what Jesus reminded himself of and also Isaiah 12:3; "Therefore with joy shall we draw water from the wells of salvation!" Then, Jesus, knowing that he is the completeness of every prophetic picture and promise, cried out with a loud voice: "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink! If you believe that I am what the Scriptures are all about, you will discover that you are what I am all about, and rivers of living waters will gush from your innermost being!" The Siloam tunnel – a winding tunnel carved into the rock, leading* ***from the spring of Gihon to the Pool of***

Siloam *in the* ***city*** *of Jerusalem! Dating from the time of Hezekiah [800 BC] or earlier, it was an aqueduct that effectively replaced the Middle Bronze Age channel. Gihon derives from the Hebrew* ***Giha*** *which means* ***gushing forth!***

Rev 19:7 This is the climax of the ages! Celebrate his glory with ecstatic joy and extreme delight, for the wedding feast of the Lamb has come! The day didn't catch her by surprise! His bride has prepared herself appropriately! She is ready and fully [1]fit for the occasion! *(The word, [1]****hetoimasen****, is in the Aorist Active Indicative tense pointing to what has already happened. This word derives from an old word,* ***heteos****, fitness. She has gotten herself ready! Verse 8 tells us how she did it!*

See Revelation 14! Rev 14:4 These boldly exhibit the first fruit of the Lamb's doing. Here we have blameless innocence on display and redefined. What the law of performance failed to do, the Lamb did! They are pure and unblemished in their close association with the Lamb - purchased and rescued out of the grip of an enslaved, fallen mankind; representing the entire human race as first fruits to God and the Lamb. These 'first fruit redeemed ones' have witnessed mankind's joint association in the full range of the Lamb's journey. They are all marriageable maidens with their virginity intact! Their default settings are fully rebooted! Also Rev 16:15 Be wide awake; my coming to you should not be like a thief who suddenly breaks into your space, unannounced! Guard your apparel lest you feel exposed and embarrassed about your nakedness like Adam and Eve did when they traded their awareness of their I-am-ness and their sweet communion with me for the fruit of the I-am-not-tree ! [See Gen 3:9 And Jehovah God called to the man and said to him, Where are you? Gen 3:10 And he said, I have heard Your sound in the garden, and I was afraid, for I am naked, and I hid myself. Gen 3:11 And He said, Who told you that you were naked?)

Rev 19:8 She [1]was given the finest linen wherewith she clothed herself; there she stands, wrapped in radiant white - dressed in [2]spotless, saintly innocence. *(The verb,* ***edothe*** *from* ***didomi****, was given, Aorist Passive Indicative. The word innocence, [2]****dikaiōma*** *stems from the word* ***dike****, two parties finding likeness in each other. Dike is also the root for the word* ***dikaiosune****, righteousness. Sadly, many translations have it completely wrong here! This is not the righteous "deeds" of the Saints! This*

innocence gives testimony to the merits of the Redeemer. Paul says in Php 3:9, "And be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but what is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Zech 3:4 And the shepherd-messenger said to those who were standing before him, "Remove the filthy garments from him." And to him he said, "Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with righteousness" - Aramaic Targum.
Rev 7:13, Then one of the elders asked me if I knew who these masses of people all dressed in white, were. Rev 7:14 I said, "No Mister, I don't; would you please explain this to me?" He answered, "This is co-raised mankind, brought out of their extreme claustrophobic spaces where they were trapped in. They have plunged their stained priestly garments in the blood of the Lamb and they were made white." (The verb ***erchomenoi*** *is the present Passive Participle of* ***erchomai*** *- to come - in the nominative case - they are the brought out ones. Traditionally translated the great tribulation but literally, their extreme claustrophobic spaces -* ***tes thlipseos tes megales*** *- in the genitive case, possession, "of"; also origin or separation, "from." The word* ***plunō*** *is a prolonged form of an obsolete* ***pluō****, to "flow"; to "plunge", that is, launder clothing: - wash. Note, it was not their suffering that gave them their standing or their white garments - it was the suffering of the Lamb.)*
Rev 7:15 Standing free and forgiven in their redeemed innocence and union, face to face before the throne of God, they are fully engaged, day and night in their priestly service of worship in the inner sanctuary. The One seated upon the throne is their tabernacle - he shelters them with his presence.)
Rev 19:9 And he instructed me to record this in writing: Oh the [1]blessedness of this bliss which is the supreme celebration of the union of the ages! You have individually been [2]identified by name and invited to the Lamb's supper concluding in the ultimate wedding feast! This is the Grand Finale in the [3]unveiling of God's word. *(The word, [1]****makarios****, usually translated, blessed, suggests a special intensity of delight. It is another beatitude (****makarioi****) like that in Rev 14:13 [fourth of the seven in the book]*
*The verb, κεκλημενοι [2]****kekelemenoi*** *is a Perfect Passive Participle of* ***kaleo****, to identify by name, to surname. The Passive Participle describes a state*

that exists at the time coincident with that of the leading verb as a result of action completed prior to the time of the main verb, [in previous verse] ***edothe*** *from didomi, was given [v8] which is in the Aorist Passive Indicative. The Perfect Participle endorses the fact that this is a standing invitation! See the extended notes on* ***ekklesia*** *at the end of chapter 1. The word,* [3]***alethinos****, from* ***alethes****; from the negative particle,* ***a*** *and* ***lanthanō****, to lie hidden; thus, that which is unveiled truth.*

This is not a wedding where you are invited simply because you're a friend of a friend of the Groom or the Bride - or a distant second cousin to a relative of a relative on someone's mother's side! No! You're the Bride!!!!! Math 26:26-29 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for the many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

Isaiah 54:5 For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is his Name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called.

The Prostitute becomes the Bride!

Hosea 2:19, And I will betroth you to me for ever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy.

Hosea 1:2, "The LORD said to Hosea, 'Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom.'"

In Hosea 3:1, after Gomer had left Hosea and was living in immorality, the Lord commanded Hosea to find her and buy her back!

Hos 2:14 "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her.

Hos 2:15 And there I will give her vineyards, and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt.

Hos 2:16 "And in that day, says the LORD, you will call me, 'My husband,' and no longer will you call me, 'My Baal.'

Hos 2:17 For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be mentioned by name no more.

Hos 2:18 And I will make for you a covenant on that day with the

beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the creeping things of the ground; and I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land; and I will make you lie down in safety.
Hos 2:19 And I will betroth you to me for ever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy.
Hos 2:20 I will betroth you to me in faithfulness; and you shall know the LORD.
Hos 2:21 "And in that day, says the LORD, I will answer the heavens and they shall answer the earth;
Hos 2:22 and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil, and they shall answer Jezreel;
Hos 2:23 and I will sow him for myself in the land. And I will have pity on Not pitied, and I will say to Not my people, 'You are my people'; and he shall say, 'Thou art my God.'"
Isaiah saw the new Jerusalem-Bride in the context of the powerful prophetic salvation poetry recorded in Isa 52,53 and 54.
Isa 52:1 Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city. *(Addressing the city of Jerusalem in the feminine singular in Hebrew. Through the feminine form of the command 'awake!' and 'put on', as well as the feminine singular possessive and objective pronoun endings on the words 'your strength', 'your beauty' and 'in you'.)*

Chapter 4

1 [1]Talking about our co-seatedness, I want you to see something! Oh wow! What I see takes my breath away! A [2]wide-open door in the heavenly realm! The first thing I heard was this voice addressing me! It was distinct and clear, like the sound of a trumpet; it captured my attention, inviting me to enter. "Come up here and I will show you how everything [3]coincides with what you have already seen!" *(I saw (**eidon**) second Aorist Active Indicative of **horaō**. Behold (**idou**) exclamation of vivid emotion as John looked, "With this I saw!"Most translations would*

*translate **meta tauta** with, "after this" The word [1]**meta** however refers to, with this; coinciding with this! [Our co-seatedness and enjoying feasting together with him! v 20 and 21 from the previous chapter. Rev 3:21 And everyone's personal triumph will be celebrated together with me, by being jointly seated together in my Kingship! On exactly the same basis of my victory celebration and my joint-seatedness with my Father in his throne!] Robertson suggests that it is a change in the panorama, not chronology.*
*The word [2]**eneogmene** is the Perfect Passive Participle of **anoigō** to open, from **ana**, upwards and **ago**, to lead; as in Rev 3:8 [door of opportunity] and Rev 3:20 [door of the heart] A dimension of limitless possibilities open, right in front of my eyes! The Passive Participle describes a state that exists at the time coincident with that of the leading verb as a result of action completed prior to the time of the main verb, behold! Thus John witnessed the opening of the door. The Perfect Tense denotes an action which is completed in the past, but the effects of which are regarded as continuing into the present. The verb [3]**genesthai** is not the future of the verb to be; it is the Aorist Infinitive where the thought is not the prophetic, but the necessity of the inevitable consequence as a result of the crucified and risen Christ! John again, as in verse 1, employs the verb, **ginomai**, to beget, in the Aorist Infinitive tense, **genesthai**, which indicates prior completion of an action in relationship to a point in time. Greek infinitives could have either a Present or Aorist form. The contrast between the two forms was not necessarily one of time, it is a difference of aspect. The Present Infinitive was used to express progressive or imperfective aspect. It pictures the action expressed by the verb as being in progress. The Aorist Infinitive however does not express progressive aspect. It presents the action expressed by the verb as a completed unit with a beginning and end.)*

2 So here I am, immersed in this unrestricted space of spirit ecstasy. As the vision opens I immediately notice the throne and One seated upon it. *("Having accomplished purification for sins he sat down!" His throne is proof of mankind's redeemed innocence! This unveiling is central to the throne-theme. See Heb 1:1-4 in the Mirror!*
The bold imagery is linked to the following familiar passages in Jewish Scriptures, 1Kings 22:19; Isa 6:1; Eze 1:26-28; Dan 7:9)

3 The One seated upon the throne appeared to reflect multi earthy-color patterns like that of a Jasper stone and the blood-red color of sardion, with the entire throne wrapped in a rainbow radiance of emerald greens. *(Gr.* ***sardion****, from a root meaning "red", a gem of a blood-red color. It was called "sardius" because it came from Sardis in Lydia. It was also one of the precious stones in the high priest's breastplate [Ex. 28:17; 39:10]. "A radiance of emerald" -* ***smaragdinos*** *is a transparent precious stone noted especially for its light green color.)*

4 And coiled into a complete circle around the throne were twenty four thrones with twenty four [1]presbyterians seated upon the thrones. They were enwrapped in white with [2]victor's wreaths of gold crowning their heads! Their minds were co-enthroned in the authority of the throne engulfing them in their co-seatedness! *(In the symbolic language of Revelation, we have a circle of people representing the entire human race. [1]Typo drawn again from the Jewish* ***suneidron*** *- a co-seatedness around the throne - the 24* ***presbuterians*** *or [1]Elders picture the twelve prophetic Patriarchs and the twelve Apostles, here as two dispensations merged into one, now fully representing the entire Ekklesia. The word* ***kuklothen*** *is the adverb from* ***kuklo****; to form a circle, that is, all around; from* ***kulioō****, a rolling together. From the base of* ***kuma****, from* ***kuō****, to swell [with young], that is, bend, curve; a billow, as bursting or toppling: - thus, a wave; through the idea of circularity. The word* ***[2]stephanos****, is a victor's wreath.*

Much of what John saw, reflected in the Jewish mind as familiar prophetic pointers and symbols. See the prophetic imagery in Ezekiel 1:1-28. The symbolic pictures John sees of judgment would immediately remind his typical Jewish audience of their prophets imaginary of judgment. This time the slaughtered and risen Lamb brings brand new context! Israel's unfaithfulness is met and eclipsed by God's faithfulness. The Lamb's death and resurrection confronts every idea of judgment that was mankind's due.)

5 And [1]proceeding out of the throne, there were flashes of lightning and the sound of thunderous voices. Also the seven Spirits of God, with their [2]gazes fixed upon the throne appeared to be like flaming torches ablaze with light. *(Proceed [1]**ekporeuontai**. Graphic historical Present tense. The word [2]**enopion** suggests eye to eye contact within the closest possible proximity of one another. Rev 1:4 Ez 1:13,14.)*

6 The throne was located in what appeared to be a sea of transparent glass, like crystal! And as if [1]fused into one with the throne and [2]engulfing it from all sides, I saw four Living Beings, all eyes, gazing ahead and behind! *(See Ex 24:10 and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. The word, [1]**mesos** in the midst of; from **meta** - suggests an immediate closeness as in an inseparable union. The word [2]**kuklō**, encircle. Ez 1:4 and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber.)*

7 The first Living Being resembled a Lion and the second a [1]Young Animal, the third Living Being had the countenance of a [2]Human, and the fourth looked like an Eagle in full flight! *(The word [1]**moschos**, a tender juicy shoot, a sprout; a delicate young animal - typically of a young animal for sacrifice - the idea was that the younger the sacrifice the more its innocence was emphasized! Heb 9:12, Heb 9:19.*
*The word for the [2]human species, male or female is **anthropos**, from **ana**, upwards, and **tropos**, manner of life; character; in like manner. See John 1:51.*
These four faces beautifully picture the completeness of salvation! The Lion who becomes the Scapegoat-Sacrifice in a Human face now ascends in resurrection language on Eagle wings! See Isaiah 40:30,31.)

8 And the four Living Beings each had six wings pointing upwards, these wings were rotating continually in a full circle. They had eyes everywhere, engaging with their complete horizon within and without!

Day and night they continued without pause to proclaim, Holy! Holy! Holy is the God whose Lordship is the supreme authority over all things, whose I-am-ness defines time - present, past and future. *(See my commentary note on Rev 1:4. The origin of the word* ***hagios****, translated, holy, can be connected to the ancient* ***yagios*** *having the Hindo-European root* ***yag-****, that means "to give honor")*

9 And [1]whenever the Living Beings would [2]repeat their [3]esteem of his glorious reputation and worth and the [4]inexhaustible goodness of the grace of the One seated upon the throne, the One whose life spans across the [5]perpetuity of the ages, *(The indefinite temporal clause* ***hotan****, meaning whensoever and the future active indicative [2]****dōsousin*** *- to give, to present - rather than the more common second Aorist Active Subjunctive* ***dōsin****, communicate the notion of repetition rather than unbroken continuance, "whenever they give." [Robertson] The word [3]****doxa*** *implies esteem, reputation; from* ***dokeo****, to form an opinion. The word often translated thanksgiving, [4]****eucharistia*** *from* ***eucharistos*** *- is a word that again has 2 components,* ***eu****, good; well done and* ***charis****, benevolence, grace. The [5]perpetuity of the ages -* ***eis tous aionas toon aionoon****.)*

10 then the twenty four representatives of the entire co-enthroned, co-seated Ekklesia would descend from their thrones and prostrate themselves in the awesome presence of him who [1]forever sits enthroned; the One whose life spans the perpetuity of the ages! And they would worship him and cast their crowns before the throne saying, *(The tense of the word, [1]****kathemenon****, the seated one, suggests the one who forever owns the throne! Present, Participle, genitive - possession, "of"; also origin)*

11 "Our Lord and our God! You are worthy to take the glory and the honor for the dynamic competence displayed in every detail of all of creation! Yes, everything owes their existence to your resolve and for your pleasure we were created!" *(See Col 1:16 Everything that is begins*

in him whether in the heavenly realm or upon the earth, visible or invisible, every order of justice and every level of authority, be it kingdoms or governments, principalities or jurisdictions; all things were created by him and for him.
Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. KJV
Heb 2:10 He towers in conspicuous prominence far above all things. He is both their author and their conclusion.)

Chapter 5

1 And I saw the One seated upon the throne holding a scroll in the open palm of his right hand; it was written on both sides and sealed with seven signet stamps. *(See Eze 2:9. These seals were typical signet stamps in clay or wax to authenticate a document.)*

2 Then I saw a very powerful [1]Shepherd-messenger heralding with a loud voice, "Is there anyone anywhere who would claim the right to open the scroll and break its seven seals!?" *(The word often translated shepherd-messenger or messenger, [1]**aggelos** has two components, **ago** to lead as a shepherd leads and **agele** a herd of cattle or company.)*

3 And no-one in the heavenly realm or upon the earth or in the underworld was eligible to open the scroll or even see a hint of what was written therein. *(See 1 Cor 2:7-9)*

4 I felt terribly heartbroken and cried inconsolably at the thought that there seemed to be no-one entitled to open the scroll in order to interpret it!

5 Then one of the elders said unto me, "You need not weep anymore! Look! The Lion has conquered! He who is of the tribe of Judah, the root of David! His victory qualifies him to open the scroll and to break its seven seals!" *(**Idou enikesen** Behold! He has conquered! **ho leon, ho ek tes phules Jodah, he ritza David**, The Lion who is out of the tribe of Judah, the root of David. Rev 3:7 I hold the key of David as prophesied in Isaiah 22:22*
See Gen 49:9 Judah is a lion's whelp; Gen 49:10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. Gen 49:11 Binding his foal to the vine and his ass's colt to the choice vine,

he washes his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes. See ***my comments on the root of Jesse Rev 22:16.)***

6 So I looked to see the Lion, and there - as if fused into one with the throne and in unison with the four Living Beings - taking center stage in the midst of the elders, I saw a little Lamb, alive and standing - even though it seemed to have been violently butchered in sacrifice! It had seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven Spirits of God having been sent out to accomplish his bidding in all the earth. *(You cannot see the Lion until you see the Lamb! Mankind's redeemed innocence is the authority of the throne of the Kingdom of God.*
The word [1]***mesos,*** *in the midst; from* ***meta*** *- suggests an immediate closeness as in an inseparable union. The word* [2]***arnion****, is the diminutive from* ***aren****; thus a lambkin. The verb* [3]***esphagmenon****, indicates violence, butchery - also the sacrificial word. Exodus 12:6.*
Interesting prophetic pointer to the slain Lamb of God! The Lion of Judah! See Gen 49:6 Oh my soul, come not into their council; Oh my spirit, be not joined to their company; for in their anger they slay men, as if they are slaying an animal in their wantonness! And then 3 verses on, Gen 49:9 Judah is a lion's whelp; and :10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah!
Isa 52:10 The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. Isa 52:14 As many were astonished at him—his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the sons of men— Isa 52:15 so shall he startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which has not been told them they shall see, and that which they have not heard they shall understand. Psa 22:27 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him.)

7 The Lamb [1]came and [2]at once took it out of the right hand of the One seated upon the throne! *(The use of the Greek tenses create a vivid dramatic picture of the actual scene;* [1]***elthen*** *[Aorist] and* [2]***eilephen*** *which is in the perfect tense of the verb,* ***lambano****, to take, receive, grasp.*

Alternating the perfect tense with the Aorist, is very graphic. [Vincent] Then in the next verse it is back to the narrative Aorist tense.)

8 The moment he [1]took the scroll, the four Living Beings and the twenty four elders bowed down in worship in their priestly offices before the little Lamb. Each one had a [2]stringed instrument and a typical temple [3]vessel, a broad shallow saucer of pure gold, filled with incense - in the context of this imagery their praise represented the prayers and worship of the masses of Saints - and every single one realized how sanctified they were because of the Lamb. *(Here John again resumes the narrative Aorist tense, [1]**elaben**. The imagery is from the typical tabernacle and temple service. The word [2]**kitharos** [guitar] harp was a triangular shaped stringed instrument with 7 and later 10 strings traditionally associated with joy and gladness in worship [Psa 33:2; Psa 98:5] Then each one of the elders also had a [3]**phialas chrusas**, a golden fire-pan specifically designed to receive the sweet smelling frankincense which was lighted with coals from the brazen altar, where the sacrifice has just been presented in the outer court and then proceeded to offer it on the golden altar before the veil. See Luk 1:10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense.)*

9 And they sang a new [1]song saying, "We proclaim your excellent worth! You are the only one in the universe entitled to open the scroll and break its seals, since you were slaughtered in sacrifice and [2]in your blood redeemed mankind's authentic identity [3]in God. You rescued them [4]from everything that could possibly define society before and brought them out of the confines of their dwarfed mindsets. This includes the entire spectrum of people-groupings: our [5]tribal identities, our [6]language-specific dialect preferences, our [7]political and religious associations, as well as every form of [8]racial identity! *(An [1]**ode** is poem praising or glorifying an individual, describing their nature intellectually as well as emotionally. Greek odes were originally poetic pieces performed with musical accompaniment.*

*In the sentence, "in your blood" John uses the preposition [2]**en**, in. It is used Hebraistically of the price; the value of the thing purchased being contained in the price. [Vincent] And redeemed [2]in God; τῷ Θεῷ - the Dative case also points to location "in" [the words τῷ Θεῷ, too Theo, in or to God, are most likely added by copyists] Textual Commentary by Bruce Metzger.*
Jesus said in Math 13:44, that the man who found the treasure in the agricultural field, sold all he had and bought the entire field! He did not buy from the thief - a thief never becomes owner; his priceless blood was shed to persuade mankind of their worth! Heb 6:16,17.
*The word, **hemas**, "us", in "He redeemed **us**", is not in the original text! Thus, we are not a select group of individuals that are redeemed; this is mankind redeemed out of whatever it was that defined them before! The preposition **ek**, is used here; thus, [4]out of everything tribal, dialect-related, political etc. - [4]**ek pases** [5]**phules kai** [6]**gloosses kai** [7]**laou kai** [8]**ethnous.** The word [5]**phule** from **phuo** to beget - tribe - immediate family-ties; blood relatives; [6]**glōssa**, mother-tongue dialect; [7]**laos**, a people group, any specific segment of society; [8]**ethnos**, race; Hebrew **goy**, non-Jewish, in the racial Jewish mind it included the masses of the heathen nations.*
Seven times human society is addressed in the most all-inclusive fashion, with a like grouping of words for all mankind of all races and nations; - here in Rev 5:9, then also Rev 7:9, Rev 10:11, Rev 11:9 Rev 13:7; Rev 14:6 and Rev 17:15.)

10 And you have made [1]them unto God a realm of royalty to reign upon the earth as priests! *(Again, not, ἡμᾶς, us; but αὐτοὺς, them! Also, not, we shall reign (βασιλεύσομεν basileusomen), but, βασιλεύουσιν basileuousin, they reign! They are the redeemed human race as a whole - redeemed to reign as kings and priests, after the order of Melchizedek! The Christ life rules! See Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 7:14-24)*

11 Then I saw [1]wave upon wave of innumerable angelic shepherd-messengers [1]engulfing the throne and the elders and the Living Beings and I heard singing! It was a mass choir of [2]multiple millions! *(The*

*word [1]**kuklo**, encircle, from **kuma**, a swelling wave; which also connects with the etymological value of the word **muriades**, from **meu**, like in waves of the sea. Countless [2]myriads - literally ten thousands times ten thousands and thousands of thousands! The largest number named in Ancient Greek was the myriad, myriad [written MM] or hundred million. In his Sand Reckoner, Archimedes of Syracuse used this quantity as the basis for a numeration system of large powers of ten, which he used to count grains of sand!*
According to PIE, the etymology of the word myriad has been variously connected to meu- "damp" in reference to the waves of the sea and to Greek myrmex μύρμηξ, "ant", in reference to their swarms. Proto-Indo-European [PIE] is the linguistic reconstruction of the common ancestor of the Indo-European languages, the most widely spoken language family in the world.)

12 In their full capacity they exploded in song, proclaiming in unison, "The Lamb's worth is now fully [1]realized! [2]Having been slain in sacrifice, the power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing [3]belong to him!" *(The word [1]**labein**, to have taken/realized, from **lambano**, to take, to grasp, to reveive; here in the Aorist Infinitive tense, which indicates prior completion of an action in relationship to a point in time. The word [3]**esphagmenon** is the Perfect Passive Participle of the verb, **sphazō**, to slay in sacrifice. It is used to describe a state that exists at the time coincident with that of the leading verb as a result of action completed prior to the time of the main verb. The basic thought of the perfect tense is that the progress of an action has been completed and the results of the action are continuing on, in full effect. In other words, the progress of the action has reached its culmination and the finished results are now in existence.)*

13 At that point the entire universe burst out in praise! I heard every created being in the heavenly realm and upon the earth and under the earth and upon the ocean and everything within all these spheres, declaring to the One seated upon the throne and to the Lamb: "The

most [1]articulate language, the admiration, the supreme magnificence, the might until the ages of the ages!" *(The word [1]**eulogia**, from **eu**, good, well done, and **logos**; thus, polished language; such language which is artfully adapted to captivate the hearer: fair speaking, fine speeches.)*

14 To which the four Living Beings added their endorsement and the elders prostrated themselves before the throne in silent worship!
(This is the conclusion of the ages and the theme wherein the entire book of Revelation unfolds!)

Chapter 6

1 When I saw the little Lamb open one of the seals, the [1]first Living Beings roared with a thunderous voice, [2]Come forth! *([1]The one with the appearance of a lion. The word, [2]**erchou**, "Come!" is the Present middle imperative of **erchomai**, but with exclamatory force. In the mighty roar of the Lion, the victory of the slain and risen little Lamb is announced.)*

2 I looked and saw a white horse, mounted by an archer. And a victor's wreath was given to him. He arrived as Conqueror and to establish his victory! *(In Zec 6:1-8 we have red, black, white, and grizzled bay horses like the four winds of heaven, ministers to do God's will. White seems to be the color of victory - the white horse of the Persian Kings - like the white horse typically ridden by the Roman conqueror in a triumphant procession.*
*Conquering -**nikōn** - present active Participle of **nikaō**. And to conquer - **kai hina nikēsēi** - purpose clause with **hina** and the first Aorist active subjunctive of **nikaō**. The Aorist tense here points to certain victory. A Participle is considered a "verbal adjective". A Participle can be used as a 'substantive' to take the place of a noun. The subjunctive mood indicates probability or objective possibility. The action of the verb will possibly*

happen, depending on certain objective factors or circumstances. It is oftentimes used in conditional statements (i.e. 'If...then...' clauses) or in purpose clauses. However if the subjunctive mood is used in a purpose or result clause, then the action should not be thought of as a possible result, but should be viewed as a definite outcome that will happen as a result of another stated action.)

3 When the Lamb opened the second seal I heard the [2]second Living Being say, "Proceed!" *(This time it is the voice of the [2]young animal of sacrifice.)*

4 And a flame-red horse appeared and its rider had been given the mission to remove peace from the earth - resulting in people scapegoating and butchering one another - he was given a large knife. *(Addressing mankind's political structures. Here the little Lamb willingly faces the butcher's knife to be murdered by his own creation. Reminding of the Levitical priesthood of sacrifice; also representing the political crisis that mankind plunged into. See Gen 49:5 Simeon and Levi are brothers; weapons of violence are their swords. Gen 49:6 Oh my soul, come not into their council; Oh my spirit, be not joined to their company; for in their anger they slay a man, and in their wantonness they hamstring oxen. In John 14:27 Jesus says, "My peace I give unto you; not the kind of peace the world gives." In the brutal murder of Jesus on the cross, the slaughtered Lamb collided victoriously with every principality of darkness and accusation sourced in the fallen mindset-system of mankind's societies and religions, and in his death and resurrection, he disengaged the very basis of their fragile, pseudo-peace, founded on compromised and corrupt values as represented in their political and religious agendas. The Prince of peace established a peace based on mankind's redeemed identity, innocence and value and not on hidden agenda-driven, performance-based laws of shame and accusation.)*

5 When he opened the third seal the Living Being with the Human face said, "Proceed!" And this is what I saw, behold, this time it is a

black horse and its rider held the beam of a scale of balances in his hand. *(Addressing mankind's poverty stricken economy.)*

6 What I heard sounded like the four Living Beings were speaking with one voice saying, one denarius *[a day's wage]* **will buy a [1]measure of wheat or three measures of barley and [2]no restrictions will be placed on wine and oil.** *(A measure, a* ***choenix*** *of corn for a man's daily supply. Barley was the food of the poor. No restrictions will be placed on wine and oil -* ***μὴ ἀδικήσῃς****! The word [2]****adikea*** *from* ***a****, not and* ***dikay****, two parties finding likeness in each other - the stem for righteousness,* ***dikaiosune*** *- where* ***dikay*** *reminds of the Greek goddess of Justice typically portrayed holding a scale of balances in her hand! In Lamb's death and resurrection, even the poorest of the poor must have equal access to bread and wine! In times of poverty the first things that cannot be afforded would be the luxury of wine and oil! And here, in the face of death, the eternal covenant is celebrated! The covenant currency is not affected by the economy of the world-system)*

7 And when the little Lamb opened the fourth seal I heard the fourth Living Being, the Eagle in full flight, announce, "Proceed!" *(The Eagle reminds of the resurrection - the one who has fallen, exhausted, will entwine with the Lord and mount up with eagle wings, run and not be weary, walk and not faint! Isa 40:31)*

8 I looked and saw a horse which appeared to have the color of tender green grass; its rider's name was Death and Hades was its close companion. And they were given the authority to destroy a quarter of the earth by sword, famine, disease, and wild beasts. *(Addressing mankind's appointment with death and Hades. Four possible causes of death are mentioned, war, famine, disease or wild beasts. Each one of these could be responsible for one quarter of the world's population to die which suggests the death of the entire human race! See 2 Cor 5:14 - I am convinced, that if one has died for all - then all died! See Heb 9:26 But Jesus did not have to suffer again and again since the fall of the world; the*

single sacrifice of himself in the fulfillment of history now reveals how he has brought sin to naught. [God's Lamb took away the sins of the world!] Heb 9:27 The same goes for everyone: a person dies only once, and then faces judgment. Heb 9:28 Christ died once and faced the judgment of the entire human race! His second appearance [in his resurrection] has nothing to do with sin, but to reveal salvation for all to fully embrace him.)

9 And when he opened the fifth seal I saw underneath the altar the souls of those slain in sacrifice because of the word of God and their testimony. *(Addressing the murdered prophets. Matthew 23:37 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.")*

10 Their voices were loud and urgent! How long, our holy and true [1]Husband, will you not judge and balance the scales of justice in the shedding of innocent blood? Are we mere scapegoats in the futile sacrificial system of the rest of the earth-dwellers!? *(The word **despotes** from **deo**, binding as in wedlock and **posis**, husband. The word **ekdikea** from **ek**, source and **dikay**, two parties finding likeness in each other - the stem for righteousness, **dikaiosune** - where **dikay** reminds of the Greek goddess of Justice typically portrayed holding a scale of balances in her hand.)*

11 Then white robes were given to each and every one of them! Mankind's redeemed innocence is about to be announced! "Whilst you briefly rest with your [1]faces turned upwards in expectation, you will be rejuvenated in the awareness of the [2]fulfilment of the prophetic word! Your fellows, co-included in the sufferings of the Christ *[even his murderers]* **are about to be revealed as your friends; they too are equally included in the slain Lamb of God!"** *(And there was given to each one white robes, and it was said to them that they may rest themselves yet a little time, till may be fulfilled also their fellow-servants and their brethren, who are about to be killed—even as they. Young's Literal Translation." One has died for all, therefore all have died! 2 Cor 5:14.*

*"While you briefly rest with your faces turned upwards" [[1]**anapauō**, **ana**, upwards and **pauo**, rest; also refresh, far more than mere rest, rejuvenation. The English expression "rest up" is close to the idea of the Greek compound **anápauō**.] This suggests a resting in the awareness of the significance of their lives and death in prophetic context; the word of your testimony pointing to my day. The word, [2]**pleroo** is in the Aorist Passive Subjunctive, suggesting the inevitable fulfilment of that which the prophetic word pointed to. In the slaughtered Lamb's death, God dramatically brings closure to every definition of sacrifice - he takes mankind's appointment with death and judgment out of the equation and introduces resurrection life to be our true portion. See 1 Pet 1:10,11 In all of their conversation there was a constant quest to determine who the Messiah would be, and exactly when this will happen. They knew with certainty that it was the spirit of Christ within them pointing prophetically and giving testimony to the sufferings of the Christ and the subsequent glory. Rev 7:9)*

12 When he opened the sixth seal, there was a massive earthquake, the sun was in mourning, wearing black sackcloth and the entire moon became like blood! *(Just like it was during the crucifixion! A lunar eclipse is possible at Passover - lunar eclipse of April 3, AD 33 was a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy of the moon being turned to blood quoted by the Apostle Peter at Pentecost (Acts 2:15–21) - a totally eclipsed moon often has a red appearance, and hence could be called a blood moon.)*

13 And the stars of heaven fell on the earth just like the figs of a winter tree which a strong wind scatters to the ground to ripen. *(The word, **olunthos**, "winter-figs" or, such as grow under the leaves and do not ripen at the proper season, but hang upon the trees during the winter and falls off the tree in Spring - good intentions under the system of the law of works will fall to the ground like unripe fruit!*
*Jesus used the fig tree [Mar 13:28] as a sign of the end of the world's long winter. "Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land, and I will shake all nations, **and the desire of all nations shall come**; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." Hag 2:6-7.*

Isaiah 34:4 All the host of heaven shall rot away, and were rolled up like a scroll. All their host shall fall, as leaves fall from the vine, like leaves falling from the fig tree. (RSV)
See Colossians 2:15 In him dying mankind's death, he defused every possible claim of accusation against the human race and thus made a public spectacle of every rule and authority in God's brilliant triumph, demonstrated in him. The voice of the cross will never be silenced! (The horror of the Cross is now the eternal trophy of God's triumph over sin! The cross stripped religion of its authority to manipulate mankind with guilt. Every accusation lost its leverage to blackmail the human race with condemnation and shame!)

14 The sky was split apart and rolled up like a scroll! *(History was split in a before and after Christ! He is the fullness of time! The prophetic scroll was fulfilled! And every geographic location was challenged to re-align!*
Albert Barnes suggests that thrones and dynasties long established would be overthrown; institutions that seemed to be fixed and permanent were abolished; a new order of things would rise…)

15 And all the kingdoms of the earth were suddenly on equal terms. The great and most influential people, the highest ranked military commanders, the wealthiest business personalities, the high and mighty; everyone from the freeborn down to the lowest ranked slave were all equal. They all ran for cover into the dens and caves,

16 pleading with the mountains and the hills to cover and protect them! "Hide us from the face of the One seated upon the throne and from the [1]reach of the Lamb!" *(The word, [1]**orge**, means excitement of mind, from the word, **orgeomai**, meaning to stretch one's self out in order to touch or to grasp something, to reach after or desire something. See Hebrews 4:3, Hear the echo of God's cry though the ages, "Oh! If only they would enter into my rest." (Some translations read, "As I have sworn in my wrath" derived from **orge**, meaning passionate desire, any strong outburst of emotion. "Oh! If only they would enter into my rest.") Just like Adam and Eve who went into hiding to escape their perceptions of Papa's*

judgment!
Psa 139:7 Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your face? Psa 139:8 If I go up to heaven, You; if I make my bed Sheol, behold, You! [Literal translation by Jay P. Green Sr.]
Hos 10:8 Also, the high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed. The thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars. [Their sacrificial system has failed them!] And they shall say to the mountains, "Cover us!" and to the hills, "Fall on us!")

17 For the great day of his [1]passion [2]has already arrived and who would have imagined it would be possible for anyone [3]to be positioned in a place of innocence? *(The word **orgay** to desire (as a reaching forth or excitement of the mind), that is, (by analogy) passion and only by implication often translated punishment: - anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath. The word [2]**elthen**, Aorist active indicative of **erchomai**, to come. The word [3]**stathenai** is the Aorist Passive Infinitive of **histēmi**, to stand, also to be placed in a balance, to weigh; in the presence of others, in the midst, before judges, before members of the Sanhedrin, to cause a person or a thing to keep his or its place, be kept intact (of family, a kingdom), to escape in safety, to establish a thing, cause it to stand, to uphold or sustain the authority or force of anything, to set or place in a balance, to weigh: money to one (because in very early times before the introduction of coinage, the metals used to be weighed) continue safe and sound, stand unharmed, of quality, one who does not hesitate, does not waiver)*

Chapter 7

1 In this setting I saw four Angelic shepherd-messengers [1]positioned on the four corners of the earth and they restrained the four winds - so that the wind would not blow upon the earth, the sea or even a single tree! *(The perception of all earth dwellers of the time was that the planet was flat and square! So the four corners of the earth were not factual but*

merely to communicate a symbolic picture and principle within their perceptions - as also the idea of an under world! See the four spheres already referenced in Gen 1:2, and the earth being without form and empty, and darkness on the face of the deep, [abussos - LXX] and the Spirit of God moving gently on the face of the waters. Also in Ps 135:6 Whatever the LORD pleases he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and the Abyss. Or in the LXX it is Ps 134:6.
*The word, [1]**estotas** is the perfect Participle of **histemi**, to stand, also, to set or place in a balance, to weigh. Ezekiel 43:2 And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the east; and the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with his glory. Matthew 24:31 and he will send out his shepherd-messengers with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his blueprint likeness from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. The word, **eklegomai**, traditionally associated with the idea of election, has two components, **ek**, a preposition that indicates source or origin and **lego**, meaning to communicate ideas; thus, the original blueprint-word, the **logos**; see John 1:1-3 and 12. The word becomes flesh in the fruit you eat! The many are called, [**kaleo**] but few are "chosen" **eklegomai** thus, The masses are defined by my name but few realize their origin in me! Matt 22:14.)*

2 And I saw another Angelic shepherd-messenger ascending from the East with the rising sun - *(Every daybreak is a picture of the resurrection - coming up out of the region of the night of "the under-world")* **he had the signet ring of the living God and cried out with a loud voice addressing the four angels who had been given the task of [1]disrupting the harmony of the earth and sea!** *(The word, [1]**hadikeo** from **ha**, as a negative particle and **dikeo** which speaks of that which engages two parties in likeness. Thus, with the negative it suggests a disruption of harmony. Note **anabainonta** ascending - compare 10:1 **katabainonta**, descending.)*

3 Commanding them not to disrupt the harmony of the earth, sea or trees until the bond-servants of God are [1]sealed between the eyes. *(To seal between the eyes, **sphragizō** to make an inscription or impression by a*

seal, a signet ring; between the eyes - the focus of attention; ***epi tōn metōpōn*** *- old word* ***meta, ōps****.)*

4 And I heard the number of those embossed with the impression of God's signet ring; one hundred and forty four thousand - representing the entire tribal system of Israel; they were all sealed with God's signet ring between their eyes! *(This sealing is an act of God's mercy in signifying salvation for all of Israel to see and understand what happened in the death, descent into the underworld and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the enthroned Lamb of God. The number 12 is symbol for totality; then it is squared and multiplied by one thousand for more emphasis The number 144,000 is a positive integer - Latin, integer, literally, "untouched," whole, entire, i.e. a whole number. As a reminder to his Jewish audience of the prophetic significance of their escape from slavery and how they were protected from the plagues in Egypt - so now they are protected.)*

5 Of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed;

6 of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed;

7 of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed;

8 of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed and of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.

9 At this moment I saw a massive throng of people, impossible to count, standing tall and innocent - every one of them [1]dressed in white with palm branches in their hands; they have [1]escaped everything that could possibly define them as a non-Jewish, Gentile world! In fact, every sphere of society was there - including the entire spectrum of people-groupings; all tribal identities with their unique language-specific dialect preferences, they were all present facing the throne and the Lamb as the people of the planet! *(Amazing how, in the previous verses of this chapter, the tribes of Israel are associated with a very specific "number", emphasizing the prophetic detail of the entire Jewish nation. But here, John sees a massive throng of people, impossible to count! In Israel there is a prophetic voice of God's intention to release the blessing of the single SEED of God's faith through Abraham and bless all the nations of the earth! "Count the stars, count the sand!"*

*The word [1]**stolay**, is the white outer garment worn by kings, priests, and persons of rank. The palm branches and the white robes are signs of the celebration of victory and joy. The preposition [1]**ek**, points to source or origin; mankind was delivered out of their national, geographical and historical identities! Seven times in the book of Revelation human society is addressed in the most all-inclusive fashion, with a similar grouping of words. Rev 5:9, here in Rev 7:9, Rev 10:11, Rev 11:9, Rev 13:7, Rev 14:6 and Rev 17:15. Also note Rev 5:13 and Rev 11:15. See Extended Notes on Israel at the end of Rev 20.*

I looked again and saw a huge crowd, too huge to count. Everyone was there—all nations and tribes, all races and languages. And they were standing, dressed in white robes and waving palm branches, standing before the throne and the Lamb. The Message)

10 Then I heard the masses shouting as if with one thundering voice saying, "Our salvation is secure in our God who is seated upon the throne and endorsed in the Lamb's doing!"

11 And the multitude of Angelic shepherd-messengers engulfing the throne together with the elders and the four Living Beings fell on their faces before the throne and they worshiped God. *(Rev 5:11 Then I saw*

*wave upon wave of innumerable Angelic shepherd-messengers engulfing the throne and the elders and the living beings and I heard singing! It was a mass choir of multi millions! 5:12 In their full capacity they exploded in song, proclaiming in unison, "The Lamb's worth is now fully realized! Having been slain in sacrifice, the power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing belong to the Lamb!" 5:13 At that point the entire universe burst out in praise! I heard every created being in the heavenly realm and upon the earth and under the earth, and upon the ocean and everything within all these spheres, declaring to the One seated upon the throne and to the Lamb: "The most [1]articulate language, the admiration, the supreme magnificence, the might until the ages of the ages!" (The word [1]**eulogia**, from **eu**, good, well done, and **logos**; thus polished language; such language which is artfully adapted to captivate the hearer: fair speaking, fine speeches.) 5:14 To which the four Living Beings added their endorsement and the elders fell down in silent worship!)*

12 They added their Amen to confirm everything declared by the masses of mankind, they then proclaimed in the most reverent adoration *[this time voicing each of the seven attributes of their admiration of God in separate feminine articles, thus acknowledging her Majesty, the Holy Spirit]* **her [1]most eloquent language, her [2]magnificence, her [3]unveiling of wisdom's mysteries, her [4]extravagant generosity, her [5]preciousness and infinite worth, her [6]dynamic and her [7]strength are [8]located in our God, spanning across the ages of eternity!** *(The word [1]**eulogia**, from **eu**, good, well done, and **logos**; thus polished language; such language which is artfully adapted to captivate the hearer: fair speaking, fine speeches; the [2]**doxa** - in the sacred writers always of a good or favorable opinion, the admiration, the supreme magnificence; the [3]**sophia**, wisdom, clarity; extravagant generosity, [4]**eucharistia** - from **eu**, well and **charitsomai**, to give freely; the word [5]**timay**, speaks of honor, preciousness and worth; [6]**dunamis**, dynamic, power; **ischus** strength, ability and might. Located in God - [8]**to theo hemoon** - Dative - indirect object, "to"; also location "in")*

13 Then one of the elders asked me if I knew who these masses of people all [1]dressed in white were. *(The word [1]**stolay**, is the white outer garment worn by kings, priests, and persons of rank.)*

14 I said, "No Mister, I don't; would you please explain this to me?" He answered, "This is [1]co-raised mankind, brought out of their [2]extreme claustrophobic spaces that they were trapped in. They have [3]plunged their stained priestly garments in the blood of the Lamb and they were made white." *(The verb [1]**erchomenoi** is the present Passive Participle of **erchomai** - to come - in the nominative case - the brought out ones. Traditionally translated the great tribulation but literally, their extreme claustrophobic spaces - [2]**tes thlipseos tes megales** - in the genitive case, possession, "of"; also origin or separation, "from." The word [3]**plunō** is a prolonged form of an obsolete **pluō**, to "flow"; to "plunge", that is, launder clothing: - wash. Note, it was not their suffering that gave them their standing or their white garments - it was the suffering of the Lamb.)*

15 Standing free and forgiven in their redeemed innocence and union, face to face before the throne of God, they are fully engaged, day and night in their priestly service of worship in the inner sanctuary. The One seated upon the throne is their tabernacle; he shelters them with his presence.

16 Here there is no memory of hunger or thirst nor a scorching sun to plague them! *(Isa 49 is fulfilled! See Isa 49:6 "I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." The tribes of Judah as prophetic pointer to the entire population of the planet are gathered as one in worship!" Isa 49:10 "They shall not hunger or thirst, neither scorching wind nor sun shall smite them, for he who has pity on them will lead them, and by springs of water will guide them.")*

17 For the little Lamb who occupies the center stage of the throne will shepherd them and lead them beside living springs of water and God

shall [1]blot out every hurtful memory of the tears they have cried! *(The word, [1]**exaleipho**, comes from **ek**, out of, and **aleipho**, with **a,** as a particle of union, and **liparos**, to grease, to leave a stain; scars of hurtful experiences were like grease stains stored in memory.*
A similar scene is set here to mirror the historic deliverance of Israel out of slavery in the build-up to the first prophetic Passover - this time the dramatic symbolic pictures reflect on the final Passover and the slain Lamb on the throne addressing and bringing closure and conclusion to the many ideas of judgment so deeply entrenched in Jewish consciousness. ***Their stories and symbolic prophetic pictures are repeated again and again, waging war against their perceived reasonings and philosophies portrayed in their own historic priesthood and altar services.***
The number seven brings out the varied forms as well as their essential oneness; whether the "seven Spirits of God"; the "seven churches," the "seven horns" and "seven eyes" of the Lamb, the "seven seals," the "seven trumpets", and the "seven bowls.")

Chapter 8

1 When he opened the seventh seal there was a solemn pause; a silence in the heavens which lasted for half an hour. *(In sharp contrast to the thundering voices of praise and adoration there is a sudden silence. As if all of heaven is holding their breath! The word silence **siōpaō** from **sigē** and **pao** to rest/pause.*
See Isa 52:13 in the Septuagint, Ἰδοὺ Idou - Behold! συνήσει suniesei from suniemi, to understand; as in two rivers flowing together! [carrying in it the idea of the Incarnation - the word made flesh - "In the Scriptures it is written about me!"]. Thus, he shall be full of understanding; ***ὁ παῖς μου*** *ho pais mou - my boy - kai hupsothesetai he shall be exalted/elevated [proclaiming his resurrection!], kai doxasthesetai sphorda, and decorated with exceedingly great esteem. Note the LXX reads,* ***my boy*** *and not "servant" which is only in Masoretic Hebrew text. The MSS dates a*

thousand years later than the LXX. Isa 52:14 As many were astonished at him—his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the sons of men— Isa 52:15 so shall he startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which has not been told them they shall see, and that which they have not heard they shall understand.
Hab 2:20 The Lord is in his temple; let all the earth be silent before his face!
There is here, and in the following verses, a strong allusion to different parts of the temple worship. *The silence here refers to this fact - while the priest went in to burn incense in the holy place, all the people continued in silent prayer without till the priest returned. See Luk 1:10. The Shepherd-messenger mentioned here appears to execute the office of priest. Adam Clarke*
The symbolic significance of half an hour gives emphasis to this specific moment - Jesus often made reference to his hour when he spoke about the culmination of his mission. The silence in prayer and contemplation here, was to allow the impact of the moment to reinforce and impress the awareness of the worshipper.)

2 And my eyes were fixed on the seven shepherd-messengers before the face of God and they were given seven trumpets. *(Probably the same as those called the seven Spirits which are before his throne, Rev 1:4)*

3 Then another shepherd-messenger arrived with a golden [1]censer for frankincense and [2]took charge of the [3]altar in priestly fashion. Much [4]perfume was given to him and this would be burned as a sweet smelling fragrance upon the golden altar before the throne to represent the [5]prayers of every single saint. *(The word [1]**libanōtos** refers to the gum exuding from a frankincense tree; also the censer for burning the frankincense with the coals from the brazen altar of sacrifice. The verb [2]**estathē** is the ingressive first Aorist Passive of **histēmi** (intransitive), "took his place." - was positioned; **epi tou [3]thusiastēriou** - took up his priestly position over **the altar**. This was a preparation peculiar to the day of expiation. "On other days it was the custom of the priest to take fire from*

the brazen altar in a silver censer, but on the great Day of Atonement the high priest took the fire from the great altar in a golden censer; and when he was come down from the great altar, he took [4]***incense*** *from one of the priests, who brought it to him, and went with it to the golden altar; and while he offered the incense the people prayed without in silence. " Sir Isaac Newton.*

The following words are all connected to the idea of sacrifice - ***thusiastērion*** *- the place of sacrifice - altar - from* ***thusia****, sacrifice, from* ***thuo****, to slay and burn the sacrifice;* ***thumiama****, the smoke or in the Greek mind, the soul of the sacrifice;* ***thumos*** *passion. All the Romansch languages derive their word for smoke, or smoking,* ***fumar*** *from* ***thumos****. Also the word perfume originates from the same idea. Much perfume was given him,* [4]***thumiamata****, again the sweet smelling, favorable fumes from the sacrifice is implied.*

The word translated prayer is [3]***proseuchomai****, from* ***pros****, face to face and* ***eu****, well done, good and possibly* ***echo****, to hold or echo - thus, face to face resonance of that which is good!)*

4 And thus the smoke of the fragrant perfume infused with the silent prayers of the entire community of Saints, rose before God out of the hand of the priestly ministry of the shepherd-messenger.

5 Then the shepherd-messenger took the golden censer for frankincense and filled it with burning coals from the altar and cast it upon the earth. And the burning coals became thunder and voices and lightning shaking the earth like an earthquake! *(The altar is central in the vision of the Lamb that was slain - the triumph of the cross is unveiled, in redeeming mankind's innocence. This reminds of Isaiah 6:6 when one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, snatched with tongs from the altar. Then flew one of the seraphim to me, having in his hand a burning coal which he had taken with tongs from the altar. Isaiah 6:7 And he touched my mouth, and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin forgiven."*

The fire from the altar is the source to all the symbolic fiery pictures of the extent of the judgment that the Lamb faced as scapegoat of the human race.

*In the following scenes where the seven trumpets are sounded, every known sphere of the universe is pictured: the **earth** with its green trees and fields of grass; then the **ocean** both with its hidden life within as well as the trade ships upon the seas. Then the burning star falling from heaven upon the rivers and their sources - from where their waters gush forth - [waters gushing from innermost being!] Then the sun moon and stars in the **heavenly sphere** are struck and darkness ensues upon the earth. Every external source of light is taken away in order to usher in the new day dawning within. Rev 21:23 "The city doesn't need any sun or moon to give it light because the glory of God gave it light. The Lamb was its lamp." Even the smoke rising from the **bottomless pit** [under-world] clearly reveals that the fire from the altar had its effect there! The Lamb descended into the lowest parts of the earth when he set the captives free and led them as his trophies in his triumphant procession on high! Eph 4:8-10. The entire known world is addressed in the slain and risen Lamb. The old things have passed away, behold everything has become new. "An earthquake takes place because of fault lines - a great shifting is taking place along the fault-lines of people's thinking", says Kay Fairchild. See also Isaiah 55:9,10,11.)*

6 And the seven shepherd-messengers with the trumpets got ready to blow them.

7 The first trumpeted and it became hail which fell on the earth like fire-balls dipped in blood. And a third of the earth and a third of the trees and every green blade of grass were consumed in the fire! *(Like the plague of hail and fire in Exo 9:24. The first four trumpets are very much like the plagues in Egypt, this one like a semitropical thunderstorm [Swete] with blood like the first plague. Exo 7:17, Exo 9:24. Robertson.*
As it was in Pharaoh's day, stubborn minds that were set in their perceptions had to be convinced - the 144,000 were sealed and therefore protected from harm - yet they were witnesses of the prophetic/historic fate of Pharaoh, now repeated in dramatic fashion in front of their eyes to persuade them of the prophetic picture of deliverance from slavery which was now concluded in the Lamb's death burial and resurrection to be celebrated for ages upon ages by the entire universe! Rev 5:13)

8 The second shepherd-messenger trumpeted and a volcanic fiery mass the size of a big mountain was flung into the sea and a third of the ocean became blood. *(Like the Nile in the first plague - Exo 7:20*
Mountain, in prophetic language, signifies a kingdom Jer 51:25 also Zech 4:7 What are you, Oh great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain; and he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!'"; I will stretch out my hand against you, and roll you down from the crags, and make you a burnt mountain; Rev 17:15 And he said to me, "The waters that you saw, where the harlot is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.
The third part is a symbolic expression of a representative portion of the whole. As within the Triune God, the Son fully represents the Father and the Holy Spirit - so every individual member of the trinity is fully represented and reflected in the other.)

9 And a third of all the living creatures in the ocean died. And a third of the ships perished.

10 And the third shepherd-messenger trumpeted and a great burning star, like a lamp, fell out of heaven and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, including their sources.

11 And the name of the star was "Loathsomely Bitter" and a third of the waters became intoxicated and bitter and caused many to die. *(The bitter taste that sin leaves was dealt with on the cross where Jesus felt our thirst and tasted the vinegar mixed with gall. Also reminds of the prophetic Jewish custom by eating matza and bitter herbs during Passover to commemorate the conclusion of their bitter slavery. See Exodus 12:8, That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. They were to eat the whole lamb. Wormwood - **ἄψινθος** - Hebrew, **la'ănâh**, gall bitter, associated with judgment. Compare these scriptures, Matt. 27:34; Psalm 69:21 They also gave me gall for food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. With*

reference to Deut 29:18; Jer 9:15; Jer 23:15; Lam 3:15; Lam 3:19; Amos 5:7; Amos 6:12.)

12 When the fourth shepherd-messenger blew his trumpet, one-third of the sun, the moon and the stars were struck so that there was no light for one-third of the day and one-third of the night. *(The eclipse here is only partial and is kin to the ninth Egyptian plague. Exo 10:21)*

13 Then I saw an eagle fly in the heavenly sphere and heard it announce with a loud voice to the earth dwellers that three more woes were about to be revealed in the sounding of the remaining three trumpets! *(The purpose of these woes were to uncover the crisis in people's lives and lead them to* ***metanoia*** *- to see what God saw in the Lamb's triumph. Where every woe is turned into praise and rejoicing! Psalm 30:11 You have turned my mourning into dancing for me. You have removed my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness!)*

Chapter 9

1 When the [1]fifth shepherd-messenger blew his trumpet, I saw a [2]star that had fallen to earth from the sky. The star was given the key to the shaft into the fathomless depths of the Abyss. *(The [1]symbolic value of the number five is divine grace. Jesus is the bright [2]Morning Star Rev 2:28 and Rev 22:16 I am Jesus. I sent my shepherd-messenger to be witness of these things to you before the churches; confirming to them that I am the Root and offspring of David, the radiant Morning Star! Also 2 Pet 1:19 For us the appearing of the Messiah is no longer a future promise but a fulfilled reality. Now it is your turn to have more than a second-hand, hearsay testimony. Take my word as one would take a lamp at night; the day is about to dawn for you in your own understanding. When the Morning Star appears, you no longer need the lamp; this will happen shortly on the*

horizon of your own hearts. In his death, Jesus conquered the underworld and he has the keys; no-one else does! Rev 1:18. See Philippians 2:6-10 His being God's equal in form and likeness was official; his Sonship did not steal the limelight from his Father! Neither did his mankind distract from the deity of God! Phil 2:7 His mission however, was not to prove his deity, but to embrace our mankind. Emptied of his reputation as God, he fully embraced our physical human form; born in our resemblance he identified himself as the servant of the human race. His love enslaved him to us!
See Notes on ***The Fallen Star is The Morning Star*** *at the end of this chapter.)*

2 He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and smoke came out of the shaft like the smoke from a large [1]furnace. The smoke darkened the sun and the atmosphere. *(The smoke is evidence of the fire from the altar of worship which was lit by the coals from the brazen altar - the prophetic picture of the cross where the Lamb of God was slaughtered - Rev 8:5. The word [1]****kaminos*** *is an old word for a smelting-furnace; Rev 1:15, "His feet were like a brilliant bronze fashioned in a furnace!" In contrast to the feet of mingled iron and clay of the image Daniel saw in Dan 2:38. The army of God is set to swallow up the consciousness of good and evil in people's minds!*
The natural light was veiled and even the atmosphere was filled with smoke for the moment while the effect of Jesus' presence in our hell was released.
Notes on ***The bottomless pit*** *at the end of this chapter.)*

3 And locusts with the sting of scorpions came out of the smoke. *(OT imagery to remind of how God brought Israel out of slavery in Egypt to now take the slave-mindset of "Egypt" out of us! Also Joel 2. Rev 16 - the seven vessels line up with seven of the ten plagues.)*

4 They were not allowed to [1]disrupt the vegetation but only target the people whose foreheads were not marked - those whose thoughts were not synced with God's thoughts about them. *(To emphasize the symbolic meaning of these apparent locusts it is clearly stated that, unlike normal grasshoppers, these do not go for vegetation, their mission was to conquer*

the mindset of unbelief in the people - Num 13:33 - "we were like grasshoppers in our own eyes!" This is a dangerous and destructive mindset! Although appearing to be locusts they were armed for battle. The "hurting" is the word, ***adikeo*** *which suggests a disruption - out of sync with the life of one's design - so the "army" coming out of the Abyss now enforces the victory of the Lamb upon those who couldn't see or believe it before. The word* ***metopon*** *- the space between the eyes; forehead - focus.)*

5 They were not to kill these, but would [1]harass and test them for five months with the annoying pain of a scorpion sting. *(The word [1]****basanizō****, old verb, to test metals from* ***basis*** *- to get to the bottom of a thing; to torment. The interval from Passover to Tabernacles is five months. Where Passover is the graphic picture of total deliverance out of slavery, the Feast of Tabernacles is a reminder of a forty year, detour journey of unbelief in the wilderness where an entire generation died in unbelief by not possessing the promised land because their leaders taught them to believe a lie about themselves! See Num 13:33 and Joshua 2:11. Although they were rescued from slavery they remained slaves in their estimate of themselves - the typical grasshopper-mentality! Now this mindset has turned on them and becomes their own worst nightmare! Acts 26:14 And I heard a voice speaking to me, and saying in the Hebrew dialect, Saul, Saul why do you persecute Me? It is hard for you to kick against the prods!)*

6 This would drive them so mad that they would wish to die but there would be no escape, death was nowhere to be found! *(Their own death would not deliver them!)*

7 The locusts had the appearance of trained battle horses; their faces seemed almost human and it looked like they were wearing golden crowns. *(Their own unbelief seemed to haunt them and made them feel trapped in their own minds.)*

8 Their antennae compared to a woman's long hair and they had teeth like a lion! *(There is an Arabic proverb in which the antennae of locusts are*

compared to a girls' hair.)

9 They wore metal armor - their wings made a fearful sound - like countless horses and chariots at full charge!

10 Their tails were like a scorpion's tail with its [1]sting giving them the ability to disorientate people for five months. *(This reminds of Paul's conversion encounter - "it hurts to kick against the goads!" Same Greek word, [1]**kentron** - also 1 Cor 15:55 Oh death where is your sting? Oh grave, where is your victory? 15:56 The sting of death is sin; the strength of sin is the law. [It was sin that made death so frightening and law-code guilt that gave sin its leverage. — The Message])*

11 Their reigning king was the shepherd-messenger of the bottomless pit; his name in Hebrew was [1]Abaddon and in Greek, Apollyon - the One who breaks the bonds! *([1]Abaddon from **abad**, to wander away, - we all like sheep have gone astray. He found us and delivered us from our abandonment. He left no stone unturned in seeking and finding every single lost sheep! He went into the most extreme depths of our lostness and hell! He is called the Searcher of those who have wandered away! See 2 Cor 2:15, This parade of victory is a public announcement of the defeat of the religious systems and structures based on the law of works. Just like it is in any public game where the victory celebration of the winning team is an embarrassment for the losing team. The death of evil is announced in resurrection life! The word, **apollumi**, is derived from **apo**, away from, and **luo**, to loosen, to undo, to dissolve. The message we communicate is a fragrance with an immediate association; to darkness, it is the smell of doom [the death of death] See also my comment on John 3:16. Also 1 John 3:8, Sin's source is a fallen mindset, from the beginning! For this purpose the son of God was revealed! His mission was to undo [**apollumi**] the works of the Devil! The word, **diabolos**, from **dia**, because of and **ballo**, to cast down. Isaiah 54:16)*

12 This was the conclusion of the first of three painfully powerful initiatives to persuade those whose thoughts were not sealed and in sync with God's belief in them. Two more were on their way! *(Rev 11:14)*

13 Then the sixth shepherd-messenger blew his trumpet and I heard what seemed like one voice proceeding out of the four horns of the golden altar before the face of God. *(The altar of incense positioned before the now, torn veil of the most holy place between the table of the bread and the golden lamp-stand with the blossoming almonds.)*

14 The voice from the four horns of the altar instructed the sixth shepherd-messenger to release the four shepherd-messengers from their confinement to the great Euphrates river. *(The number four represents the entire universe - the so-called four "corners" of the earth, the earth itself, the oceans, the under-world and then the heavenly sky-dimension. The meaning of the Euphrates is sweet water; the good and abounding river.)*

15 And the four shepherd-messengers were released from their confinement and time of preparation to bring to a conclusion the death of one third of mankind. This all pointed to the specific hour which was prophetically contained in the Jewish calendar. Zooming out into their holy days, months and years. *(Every annual prophetic picture in their feasts, repeated on a monthly basis in the new moons, then on a weekly basis in every Sabbath, all culminated in the hour of the Lord! The only relevant death that contains and represents every other death was the one where Jesus died mankind's death - 2 Cor 5:14 / Heb 9:28)*

16 And I heard the number of the armies of the cavalry which amounted to two myriads of myriads which is two hundred million horsemen! *(This is an immense and unparalleled number of horsemen. Ten thousand* **x** *ten thousand is one hundred million; consequently the number here referred to would be 200 million. The Japanese also has a highest*

value of ten thousand and their next highest would be ten thousand times ten thousand which is a hundred million. Countless - 2 myriads - literally ten thousands times ten thousands and thousands of thousands! The largest number named in Ancient Greek was the myriad-myriad (written MM) or hundred million. In his Sand Reckoner, Archimedes of Syracuse used this quantity as the basis for a numeration system of large powers of ten, which he used to count grains of sand! According to PIE, the etymology of the word myriad has been variously connected to meu- "damp" in reference to the waves of the sea and to Greek myrmex (μύρμηξ, "ant") in reference to their swarms. Proto-Indo-European (PIE) is the linguistic reconstruction of the common ancestor of the Indo-European languages, the most widely spoken language family in the world.)

17 In my vision of the unparalleled number of horsemen and their horses, they appeared to be engulfed as if with breastplates of fire. It looked like the deep blue color of a [1]hyacinth flower or a jacinth gem stone or the blue flame of [2]burning sulphur and the horses had heads of lions. Fire, smoke and sulphur issued from their mouths. *(In the Greek mind the Hyacinth flower speaks of resurrection! Vincent writes in his word studies, [1]* ***Ὑάκινθος*** *- hyacinth is the name of a flower and also of a precious stone. The noun occurs only in Rev 21:20, and the adjective only here. According to classical Greek mythology, the flower sprang up from the blood of Hyacinthus, a beautiful Spartan youth, who was accidentally killed during a game of quoits. [When Hyacinth died, Apollo did not allow Hades to claim the youth; rather, he made a flower, the hyacinth, spring up from his spilled blood. Hyacinth was the tutelary deity of one of the principal Spartan festivals, the Hyacinthia, held every summer. The festival lasted three days, one day of mourning for the death of Hyacinth, and the last two celebrating his rebirth as Apollo Hyakinthios! - Wikipedia] It was thought by some that the letters AI, AI, ai ai - the exclamation of woe, could be traced on the petals, while others discovered the letter Y, the initial letter of Ὑάκινθος. The story of the slaying of Hyacinthus is told by Ovid.*
"Lo, the blood
Which, on the ground outpoured, had stained the sod,
Is blood no more. Brighter than Tyrian dye,
Like to the lily's shape a flower appears,

Purple in hue as that is silvery white.
Nor yet does such memorial content
Phoebus Apollo at whose word it rose.
Upon its leaves he writes his own laments,
And on the flower forever stands inscribed
AI, AI - ai ai"
"Metamorphoses," x., 175 sqq.

[2]***θειωδεις theiōdēs****, from* ***theios*** *and* ***eidos*** *, from* ***theion*** *godlike (neuter as noun, divinity): - divine, godhead. Also the word for sulphur; a yellow inflammable mineral substance found in quantities on the shores of the Dead Sea. This was also known as divine incense, because burning brimstone was regarded as having power to purify, and to ward off disease. Its medicinal values are well known even today. See notes on* ***the lake of fire*** *at the end of Rev 19.)*

18 These three plagues proceeding from their mouths were what caused the third of humans to die, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone coming out of their mouths.

19 Their inherent authority was located in their mouths and also in their tails which looked just like serpents, complete with heads. If the bite wasn't deadly enough they had a venomous back-up in the tail! *(The word often translated, authority is the word* ***exousia*** *from* ***ek****, denoting origin and* ***eimi****, I am - thus the seat of inherent I-am-ness. The horses had heads like lions - a lion's tail has a fluff of hair at the end which could make the tail look like a serpent. The serpent was the symbol of wisdom. These visions were all connected with the heavenly revelation of the lion of Judah who conquered mankind's crisis or judgment as the Lamb of God. Only a third of mankind was struck - the man Jesus the Christ represents the third party of the Triune God who dies mankind's death in his incarnate human body - the two thirds of mankind, symbolizing the majority initially not responding to the revelation of the Lamb in co-knowing their salvation unveiled in the genius of God.)*

20 The death of a third of the human race seemed to have had no effect on the rest of the peoples - they continued to create [1]their own gods and [2]demons of their imagination with any material they could afford, be it gold, silver, bronze, stone or wood - it didn't matter to them that these images couldn't see or hear or move. *(Worshiping ideas of your own imagination and making is the fruit of the wrong Tree. The thought that I'm not God's idea! The extreme graphic visions of judgment portrayed in the book of Revelation deals with layer after layer of mankind's hardened hearts and stubborn resistance to see the completeness of their redemption from the lies they believed about themselves and God. In this specific account of the 200 million strong cavalry on a mission to slay the human race, there seems to be no chance for anyone to escape! Yet two thirds of mankind remains totally indifferent to the judgment that fell on their fellows! [1]They seem to be inseparably attached to worshipping a distorted image of themselves - which is what idolatry is all about - an image of their own imagination, projecting their ideas of the g.o.d. of their own making - no mind shift taking place - no understanding that their own worst fears of judgment was thoroughly dealt with in the crucified Lamb of God who died their death and went into their hell and was gloriously raised into the embrace of the Father of the human race!)*

21 Neither was there any change in their views on murder, witchcraft, adultery or stealing. *(There is no alternate salvation! Mankind's philosophies and their willpower-, performance and fear-based life styles will never suffice! Even their witnessing every form of judgment that their law-based systems can imagine, cannot successfully convert their minds or behavior. See Isa 55:9,10 Your behavior reflects the fact that your thoughts contradict God's thoughts. The Incarnation will unveil how my Word saturates all flesh; just like the rain and the snow descend from heaven and saturate the soil, making it bring forth and sprout, so shall my Word be!)*

Revelation Chapter 9 Extended Notes:
The "Fallen Star" is The bright Morning Star
The Abyss
Idols and Demons

The "Fallen Star" is The bright Morning Star

Rev 9:1 When the [1]fifth shepherd-messenger blew his trumpet, I saw a [2]star that had fallen to earth from the sky. The star was given the key to the shaft into the fathomless depths of the Abyss. *(The [1]symbolic value of the number five is divine grace. Jesus is the bright [2]Morning Star Rev 2:28 and Rev 22:16 I am Jesus. I sent my shepherd-messenger to be witness of these things to you before the churches; confirming to them that I am the Root and offspring of David, the radiant Morning Star! Also 2 Pet 1:1:19 For us the appearing of the Messiah is no longer a future promise but a fulfilled reality. Now it is your turn to have more than a second-hand, hearsay testimony. Take my word as one would take a lamp at night; the day is about to dawn for you in your own understanding. When the Morning Star appears, you no longer need the lamp; this will happen shortly on the horizon of your own hearts.*

In his death, Jesus conquered the underworld and he has the keys; no-one else does! Rev 1:18. See Philippians 2:6-10 His being God's equal in form and likeness was official; his Sonship did not steal the limelight from his Father! Neither did his mankind distract from the deity of God! Phil 2:7 His mission however, was not to prove his deity, but to embrace our mankind. Emptied of his reputation as God, he fully embraced our physical human form; born in our resemblance he identified himself as the servant of the human race. His love enslaved him to us! Phil 2:8 And so we have the drama of the cross in context: the man Jesus Christ who is fully God, becomes fully man to the extent of willingly dying mankind's death at the hands of his own creation. He embraced the curse and shame of the lowest kind in dying a criminal's death. (Thus thru the doorway of mankind's death he descended into our hellish darkness.) Phil 2:9 From this place of utter humiliation, God exalted him to the highest rank. God graced Jesus with a Name that is far above every other name. The name of Jesus endorses his mission as fully accomplished! He is the Savior of the world! Titus 2:1. Philippians 2:10 What his name unveils will persuade every creature of their redemption! Every knee in heaven and upon the earth and under the earth shall bow in spontaneous worship! Eph 1:20 Do you want to measure the mind and muscle of God? Consider the force which he unleashed in Jesus Christ when he raised him from the dead and forever seated him enthroned as his executive authority in the realm of the heavens. Jesus is

God's right hand of power! He was raised up from the deepest dungeons of human despair to the highest region of heavenly bliss! [See Eph 2:5,6 & 4:8,9] Eph 1:21 Infinitely above all the combined forces of rule, authority, dominion or governments; he is ranked superior to any name that could ever be given to anyone of this age or any age still to come in the eternal future.

Numbers 24:17 I see him, but not here and now. I perceive him, but far in the distant future. A star will rise from Jacob; a scepter will emerge from Israel. It will crush the foreheads of Moab - [mindsets] Also Isa 9:2-4 For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast broken ***as on the day of Midian!*** *Remember Gideon's strategy of hiding lamps in clay jars when they defeated the mighty Midians who out-numbered them by far! Bonsai mindsets have trapped the nations of the world for centuries! But this is the day where the mystery that was hidden in clay pots for ages and generations shall be revealed! Christ in the nations is the hope and desire of the nations!*

Rev 22:16 I am Jesus. I sent my shepherd-messenger to be witness of these things to you before the churches; confirming to them that I am the Root and offspring of David, the radiant Morning Star! *(Rev 5:5 Then one of the elders said unto me, "You need not weep anymore! Look! The Lion has conquered! He who is of the tribe of Judah,* ***the root of David!*** *His triumph qualifies him to open the scroll and its seven seals!" Rev 5:6 So I looked to see the Lion, and there, as if fused into one with the throne and in unison with the four living beings, taking center stage in the midst of the elders, I saw a little Lamb, alive and standing even though it seemed to have been violently butchered in sacrifice! It had seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven Spirits of God having been sent out to accomplish his bidding in all the earth.*

*In Jesus, the prophetic word, which shone all along like a lamp in the night, becomes the radiant Morning Star, rising in our hearts, announcing the full unveiling of the day! When the Morning Star [****phōsphoros****] appears, you no longer need the lamp; this will happen shortly on the horizon of your own hearts. In his death Jesus conquered the underworld and he has the keys; no-one else does! Rev 1:17 Observing all this I fell at his feet like a dead man; then he laid his right hand on me and said, "Do not be afraid! I am the origin and conclusion of all things. Rev 1:18 And the Living One; I became dead and now, see, here I am alive unto the ages of the ages and I*

have the keys wherewith I have disengaged the gates of Hades and Death! See Isa 14:12, ***הֵילֵל heilel****, means "shining one" In the Greek,* ***phōsphoros*** *- bearer of light [Septuagint] Latin, Lucifer, bearer of light! Here in Isa 14 Babylon's rule is compared to the bright morning star - ushering in the rule of its day - which is the counterfeit image - Isa 14:14 "I will make myself like the Most High!" The fallen mindset-system is based on the idea that we are not image bearers of God - the Ophis lie in Genesis 5 - Adam and Eve have to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and poneros [hardships labor and annoyances] in order to become like God.*
The incarnate Jesus, the only true Morning Star descended into the deepest pits of mankind's hellish darkness and despair in their lost identity on his rescue mission to lead us out as God's trophies in his triumphant procession on high! Eph 4:8 See also Eph 2:5,6.
See Also Rev 12:7-10 and Rev 17:8,14)

The Abyss

Rev 9:1 When the [1]fifth shepherd-messenger blew his trumpet, I saw a [2]star that had fallen to earth from the sky. The star was given the key to the shaft into the fathomless depths of the Abyss. *(The [1]symbolic value of the number five is divine grace. Jesus is the bright [2]Morning Star Rev 2:28 and Rev 22:16 I am Jesus. I sent my shepherd-messenger to be witness of these things to you before the churches; confirming to them that I am the Root and offspring of David, the radiant Morning Star! Also 2 Pet 1:1:19 For us the appearing of the Messiah is no longer a future promise but a fulfilled reality. Now it is your turn to have more than a second-hand, hearsay testimony. Take my word as one would take a lamp at night; the day is about to dawn for you in your own understanding. When the Morning Star appears, you no longer need the lamp; this will happen shortly on the horizon of your own hearts. In his death, Jesus conquered the underworld and he has the keys; no-one else does! Rev 1:18. See Philippians 2:6-10 2:6 His being God's equal in form and likeness was official; his Sonship did not steal the limelight from his Father! Neither did his mankind distract from the deity of God! Phil 2:7 His mission however, was not to prove his deity, but to embrace our mankind. Emptied of his reputation as God, he fully embraced our physical human form; born in our resemblance he identified himself as the servant of the human race. His love enslaved him to us! Phil 2:8 And so we have the drama of the cross in context: the man Jesus Christ*

who is fully God, becomes fully man to the extent of willingly dying mankind's death at the hands of his own creation. He embraced the curse and shame of the lowest kind in dying a criminal's death. (Thus, through the doorway of mankind's death, he descended into our hellish darkness. Rev 9:1 and Eph 4:8-10.) Phil 2:9 From this place of utter humiliation, God exalted him to the highest rank. God graced Jesus with a Name that is far above every other name. (Eph 1:20 Do you want to measure the mind and muscle of God? Consider the force which he unleashed in Jesus Christ when he raised him from the dead and forever seated him enthroned as his executive authority in the realm of the heavens. Jesus is God's right hand of power! He was raised up from the deepest dungeons of human despair to the highest region of heavenly bliss! [See Eph 2:5,6 & 4:8,9] Eph 1:21 Infinitely above all the combined forces of rule, authority, dominion or governments; he is ranked superior to any name that could ever be given to anyone of this age or any age still to come in the eternal future. The name of Jesus endorses his mission as fully accomplished! He is the Savior of the world! Titus 2:11 The grace of God shines as bright as day making the salvation of mankind undeniably visible. See also Eph 3:15, Every family in heaven and on earth originates in him; his is mankind's family name and he remains the authentic identity of every nation.) Phil 2:10 What his name unveils will persuade every creature of their redemption! Every knee in heaven and upon the earth and under the earth shall bow in spontaneous worship! (See Isa 45:23 "My own life is the guarantee of my conviction, says the Lord, every knee shall freely bow to me in worship, and every tongue shall spontaneously speak from the same God-inspired source.") Phil 2:11 Also every tongue will voice and resonate the same devotion to his unquestionable Lordship as the Redeemer of life! Jesus Christ has glorified God as the Father of creation! This is the ultimate conclusion of the Father's [1]intent!)

Rev 9:2 He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and smoke came out of the shaft like the smoke from a large [1]furnace. The smoke darkened the sun and the atmosphere. *(The smoke is evidence of the fire from the altar of worship which was lit by the coals from the brazen altar - the cross where the Lamb of God was slaughtered - Rev 8:5. The word [1]**kaminos** is an old word for a smelting-furnace; Rev 1:15, "His feet were like a brilliant bronze fashioned in a furnace!" In contrast to the feet of mingled iron and*

clay of the image Daniel saw in Dan 2:38. The army of God is set to swallow up the consciousness of good and evil in people's minds!
The natural light was veiled and even the atmosphere was filled with smoke for the moment while the effect of Jesus' presence in our hell was released.)
Rev 11:7 In the conclusion of their testimony the "Beast" shall ascend out of the Abyss and shall overcome the two witnesses and kill them in battle. *(Jesus' death seemed an initial defeat to the prophetic purpose and significance sustained in the law and the Prophets.)*
Rev 11:8 And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city which spiritually represents Sodom and Egypt where our Lord was crucified. *(Clearly the city of Jerusalem is implicated here! The future Bride-city, the new Jerusalem [Rev 21:2] was just like Sodom and Egypt during the rule of the Prostitue/Beast of Babylon and in the genius of God's wisdom, their murder of Jesus became the salvation of the entire human race!)*
Rev 11:9 And those *[religious institutions]* **representing all the peoples in their various groupings, their tribes and cultures and languages of all the multitudes of the nations shall gaze upon the dead bodies of the two witnesses for three and a half days and they will not allow their bodies to be buried.**
Rev 11:10 And these earth dwellers *[earth-ruled mindsets]* **shall rejoice over them with great jubilation celebrating their deliverance from these two prophetic voices who challenged and frustrated their religious indulgences and beliefs. They will even send gifts to one another celebrating their apparent victory.**
Rev 11:11 With the eyes of all earth dwellers fixed upon them for three and a half days, suddenly, Spirit of life issuing out of God entered them and they stood upon their feet and great awe struck the earth dwellers as they beheld these things! *(In the resurrection of Jesus the prophetic significance of Jewish Scripture, represented by Moses and Elijah, revived!)*
Rev 20:1 And I witnessed a shepherd-herald descending out of the heavenly sphere and he had the key of the bottomless Abyss and a great chain over his hand. *(Eph 4:8,9 He who ascended in also he who descended into the lowest parts of the earth. Eph 4:9 The fact that he ascended confirms his victorious descent into the deepest pits of human despair. Rev 9:1 When the fifth shepherd-messenger blew his trumpet, I saw a star that had fallen to earth from the sky. The star was given the key to the*

shaft into the fathomless depths of the Abyss. [Jesus is the bright Morning Star Rev 2:28 and 22:16 I am the bright Morning Star! Also 2 Pet 1:1:19.)
Rev 20:2 And he overpowered the Dragon, in its every disguise as the old Serpent in the garden in Genesis, also called the Devil, or going under the name, Satan, and chained him up for a thousand years. *(From David to Jesus is a thousand years! Rev 3:7 I hold the key of David as prophesied in Isaiah 22:22! Yes, I unlock the mysteries of the heavenly dimension and no one can shut the door! And I lock the entrance and none [of the old mindsets] can access it!* ***The links in the chain****, are the prophetic words in the mouth of David and the Prophets till John the Baptist. These words already chained Satanas to the irreversible intention of God. Mat 12:29 Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house. See John 5:28 Do not be alarmed by this, but the hour is coming when those in the graves will hear his voice! [No-one who ever lived will escape the extent of his righteous judgment! Those who have forgotten who they are will hear his incarnate voice! The word for grave, mnēmeion, memory, suggests a remembrance! Like David prophesies in Psalm 22 when he sees the cross-crisis [krisis - judgment] a thousand years before it happens! His conclusion in verse 27 sums up the triumph of God's resolve! "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him!" See 1 Corinthians 15:21,22 The same mankind who died in a man was raised again in a man. In Adam all died; in Christ all are made alive.]*
Thus, in ***prophetic language****, every definition of the Satanas-system is already chained by the prophetic significance in Scripture recorded in the Psalms and the Prophets. The Spirit of Christ within them pointed to and concluded in the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. His death was the doorway into the very domain wherein mankind was held captive, to be freed and led out triumphantly as the Lamb's trophies! In* ***symbolic language****, the effect of Jesus' victory is compared to a thousand years. Against the very brief 3 days of his cross, descent into hell and resurrection, on the one hand as well as the very "brief" time of the Devil's apparent release on the planet!* ***See Extended Notes on The Thousand Years at the end of chapter 20.****)*
Job 11:7 "Do you think you can explain the mystery of God? Do you think you can diagram God Almighty?

Job 11:8 God is far higher than you can imagine, far deeper than the depths of Sheol,
Job 11:9 Stretching farther than earth's horizons, far wider than the endless ocean.
Job 26:5 "The souls of the dead tremble beneath the water, and so do the creatures living there.
Job 26:6 Sheol is naked in God's presence, and Abaddon has no clothing.
Job 26:7 He stretches out his heavens over empty space. He hangs the earth on nothing whatsoever.
Job 28:22 Abaddon and Death say, 'We have heard a rumor of it with our ears.'
Job 31:12 for that would be a fire which consumes unto Abaddon, and it would burn to the root all my increase.
Prov 15:11 Sheol and Abaddon lie open before the LORD how much more the hearts of men!
Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;
Gen 1:2 and the earth being without form and empty, and darkness on the face of the deep, *[abussos]* and the Spirit of God moving gently on the face of the waters. *(The word* ***ἄβυσσος abussos*** *- Abyss, the fathomless Deep.*
Ps 134:6 Whatever the LORD pleases he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and the abyss.
Romans 10:6 But faith finds its voice in something much closer to a person than their most disciplined effort to obey the law. Faith understands that Christ is no longer a distant promise; neither is he reduced to a mere historic hero. He is mankind's righteousness now! Christ is no longer hidden somewhere in the realm of heaven as a future hope. For the Jews to continue to ask God to send the Messiah is a waste of time! That is not the language of faith.
Rom 10:7 Faith knows that the Messiah is not roaming somewhere in the region of the dead. "Who will descend into the abyss to bring Christ back from the dead," is not the language of faith. *(Those who deny the resurrection of Christ would wish to send someone to go there and confirm their doubts, and bring back final proof that Jesus was not the Messiah. Faith announces a righteousness that reveals that mankind has indeed been co-raised together with Christ; the testimony of the risen Christ is*

confirmed in the heart and life of every believer.)
Rom 10:8 Faith-righteousness announces that every definition of distance in time, space, or hostility has been cancelled. Faith says, "The Word is near you. It is as close to you as your voice and the conviction of your heart." We publicly announce this message *(because we are convinced that it belongs to everyone).*
Rom 10:9 Now your salvation is realized! Your own [1]words echo God's voice. The unveiling of the masterful act of Jesus forms the words in your mouth, inspired by the conviction in your heart that God indeed raised him from the dead. *(In his resurrection, God co-raised us [Hos 6:2]. His resurrection declares our innocence [Rom 4:25]. Salvation is not reduced to a recipe or a "sinners prayer" formula; it is the spontaneous inevitable conversation of a persuaded heart! To confess, [1]**homologeo, homo,** the same thing +* ***logeo****, to say)*
Rom 10:10 Heart-faith confirms the fact of mankind's righteousness and ignites the kind of conversation consistent with salvation. *(He restored us to blameless innocence! It is impossible not to boldly announce news of such global consequence [Isa 40:9].)*
Rev 5:13 At that point the entire universe burst out in praise! I heard every created being in the heavenly realm and upon the earth and under the earth, and upon the ocean and everything within all these spheres, declaring to the One seated upon the throne and to the Lamb: "The most articulate language, the admiration, the supreme magnificence, the might until the ages of the ages!"
Idols and Demons
Rev 9:20 The death of a third of the human race seemed to have had no effect on the rest of the peoples - they continued to create their own gods and demons of their imagination with any material they could afford whether it be gold, silver, bronze, stone or wood - it didn't matter to them that these images couldn't see or hear or move. *(Dan 5:23 You have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see or hear or know, but the God in whose hand is your breath, and whose are all your ways, you have not honored.*
See Paul's discourse at the the Areopagus, **Acts 17:23 For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.**

Acts 17:24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by man,
Acts 17:25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all men life and breath and everything.
Acts 17:26 And he made from one every nation of men to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their habitation,
Acts 17:27 that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel after him and find him. Yet he is not far from each one of us;
Acts 17:28 for 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your poets have said, 'For we are indeed his offspring.'
Acts 17:29 Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the Deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, a representation by the art and imagination of man.
Paul reminds them of their own ancient writings and he quotes two of their well known philosophers: in 600BC Epimenedes wrote a song saying, "We live and move and have our being in God" and Aratus wrote in 300BC that we are indeed the offspring of God! Paul then announces to them that the God whom they worship in ignorance is not far from each one of us! He is not more Emmanuel to the Jew than what he is Emmanuel to the Gentile! Then, in the context of his Jewish background and personal encounter of the revelation of Jesus Christ Paul declares to them the Good News of mankind's redeemed innocence. "God has overlooked the times of ignorance and now is calling all of mankind everywhere to a radical mind-shift since he has prophetically fixed a day on which he would judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this [righteous judgment] he has given proof to all mankind by raising him from the dead." In Paul's understanding, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead includes mankind's co-resurrection and seals their acquittal and redeemed innocence.
Ps 135:15 The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of men's hands; Ps 135:16 they have mouths, but they say nothing; they have eyes, but they see nothing; Ps 135:17 they have ears, but they hear nothing; yea, there is no breath in their mouths. Ps 135:18 Those who make them are like them, everyone who is trusting in them.
The extreme graphic visions of judgment portrayed in the book of

Revelation deals with layer after layer of mankind's hardened and stubborn resistance to see the completeness of their redemption from the lies they believed about themselves and God. In this specific account of the 200 million strong cavalry on a mission to slay the human race, there seems to be no chance for anyone to escape! Yet two thirds of mankind remains totally indifferent to the judgment that fell on their fellows! They seem to be inseparably attached to worshipping a distorted image of themselves - which is what idolatry is all about - an image of their own imagination, projecting their ideas of the g.o.d. of their own making no mind shift taking place - no understanding that their own worst fears of judgment was thoroughly dealt with in the crucified Lamb of God who died their death and went into their hell and was gloriously raised into the embrace of the Father of the human race! See Isa 54

Also **Isa 40:18 To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness compare with him?**

Isa 40:19 The idol! A workman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold, and casts for it silver chains.

Isa 40:20 He who is impoverished chooses for an offering wood that will not rot; he seeks out a skilful craftsman to set up an image that will not move.

Isa 40:21 Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning?! Genesis 1:26,27.

According to this statement, Demons too are the invention and idea of man's own making. The word translated demon, ***daimōn****; from* ***daiō****, to distribute fortunes. The Greeks gave the word* ***daímōn*** *the same meaning as god. What they meant by the word; however, is still a conjecture. They may have related a demon with* ***daemmonas****, knowing or being experienced in a thing, or they may have derived the word from* ***daíomai****, meaning to assign or award one's lot in life (****diaítētai kai dioikemtai tōn ánthrōpōn****), the arbitrators or umpires and governors of mankind. They conceived of them as those who ruled and directed human affairs, not as a personality, but primarily as a destructive power. Thus they called the happy or lucky person* ***eudaímōn****, one who is favored by this divine power. The adjective,* ***daimónios****, was used for one who demonstrated power irrespective of whether it was saving or destructive. The Tragic Poets use* ***daímōn*** *to denote fortune or fate, frequently bad fortune, but also good fortune if the context represented it as such. Thus,* ***daímōn*** *is associated with the idea of a*

gloomy and sad destiny independent of a person, coming upon and prevailing over them. Consequently, ***daímōn*** *and* ***túchē****, luck, are often combined, and the doctrine of demons developed into signifying either a beneficent or evil power in the lives of people. — Zodhiates Complete Word Study Lexicon)*

Rev 2:20 It disturbs me that you accommodate the typical Jezebel influence, a self-appointed Prophetess who teaches and seduces my [1]devoted friends into participating in an [2]idolatrous sacrificial system by eating food offered to [3]idols and fornicating with her foreign ideas about God. *(The word [1]****doulos****, bond-servant or slave; also a devoted friend, from* ***deo****, to be bound to another in friendship or marriage. The word [2]****eidōlothuton****, from* ***eidolon*** *and* ***thuo****, to slay in sacrifice. The word [3]****eidolon*** *where we get the word idol from means image or likeness - this is the theme of the Bible and redemption; the image and likeness of God revealed and redeemed in human form!* ***Idolatry is a projection of an image of one's own making.*** *Idolatry is the crux of religion - it is expensive business since your idol is like a slot machine at the casino! It remains hungry and it is wired to bite and bankrupt you!)*

Rev 13:14 Deceiving the earth-dwellers, dazzling them with signs, whilst operating like a puppet on a string under the watchful eye of the Beast. The instruction was for the earth-dwellers to make an [1]idol-image of the "lamb" who was slain with a [1]knife and then revived again! *(The word [1]****eikon*** *means image or likeness - this is the theme of the Bible and Redemption; the image and likeness of God revealed and redeemed in human form! Idolatry is a projection of an image of one's own making. Idolatry is the crux of religion - it is expensive business since your idol is like a slot machine at the casino! It remains hungry and it is wired to bite and bankrupt you! The word,* ***machaira*** *is used for a large knife, used for killing animals typically in the slaying of a sacrifice. Religion has a life of its own - the idea was that since the Dragon has lost its accusation claim against the human race in the heavenlies, [Rev 12:8,9,10] it now had to find a pseudo, make-belief future existence in the icons of man's imagination.)*

1 John 5:19 We know that we have our origin in God; yet the whole world [1]lies trapped in the blindfold-mode of a lost identity; intoxicated

by the poneros system of a futile mentality of hardships labors and annoyances! *(The word **keimai** means to lie prostrate, outstretched; buried.)*

1 John 5:20 This is what has become distinctly clear to us: the [1]coming of the Son of God is God's mission accomplished! He is the incarnate Christ. The moment all of Scripture pointed to has arrived! The Son is [1]present! In him God has given us the greatest gift, [2]a mind whereby we may know him who is true; and in the same knowing, to find ourselves there in him who is true! Mankind is fully included and located in him, in his Son Jesus Christ; this means that whatever Jesus is as Son, we are. This is the true God; this is the life of the ages! *(The word [1]**heko** means to have come, to have arrived, to be present. John uses the word [2]**dianoian**; deep thought; with **dia** relating to the means by which we may know; a mind to know; compare metanoia, to know together with; an entwining of thought; the mind of Christ.*

Jesus said, you will know the truth as it is unveiled in me, and that will set you free!

The culmination of the gospel according to John is summed up in these verses: John 14:20 "In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me and I am in you!" Also 1 John 2:7 & 8, "what is true of him, is equally true of us. 1 John 4:17 "As he is, so are we in this world! Our lives are mirrored in him" as well as here in 1 John 5:20)

1 John 5:21 This defeats every image of our imagination that could possibly compete with the authentic likeness of our design! Darling children, distance yourselves from every substitute image, which is what idolatry is all about! *(The word [1]**eidolon,** often translated idol, refers to image or likeness.)*

In the symbolic language of the book of Revelation, the judgment of the Dragon, the Beast and the Whore; the counterfeit Trinity, is not a judgment against an entity, but against a corrupt mindset-system. A virus doesn't have a life of its own - it needs a host!

Microbiology Professor, Vincent Racaniello writes, "Life is 'an organismic state characterized by capacity for metabolism, growth, reaction to stimuli, and reproduction.' Viruses are not living things. Viruses are complicated assemblies of molecules, including proteins, nucleic acids, lipids, and carbohydrates, but on their own they can do nothing until they enter a

living cell. Without cells, viruses would not be able to multiply. Therefore, viruses are not living things."
1 Cor 8:4 By making a fuss about eating food offered to idols gives idols undue prominence; they are nothing so why make something out of nothing! We know that there is only one God and that he has no competition!
1 Cor 8:5 There is a lot of talk about other gods and demonic powers operating on earth as well as in the heavenly realm; obviously they seem to be empowered by people's belief in them and conversation about them; so there seem to be many gods "lording" it over people.
1 Cor 8:6 This does not make them competition to God; we know that for us there is only one God who is the source of all things; there is only one authority, the Lord Jesus Christ. All things exist because of him; we owe our very being to him. He alone gives context and reference to our lives.
*See my **notes on Armageddon** at the end of chapter 16.*

Chapter 10

1 Then I saw another super strong shepherd-messenger descending out of the heavenly realm clothed in a cloud. His head was crowned in a rainbow, his face was shining like the sun and his legs were like pillars of fire. *(The rainbow immediately reminds of the promise of God in Genesis 9:13, I have set my rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Jesus is the fulfilment of every promise.)*

2 He held a [1]small [2]open scroll in his hand. His right foot was on the sea and his left foot on land. *(The word, [1]**biblaridion** is the diminutive of **biblarion** (papyri), itself a diminutive of **biblion**. Again, like in Rev 9:15, where the hour contains the entire prophetic thought that pointed for generations to the specific year, month week and moment, now concluded in*

the Lamb. The slain and risen Lamb redeeming God's, image in incarnate, human form, is the theme, context and conclusion of Scripture. The verb ηνεωγμενον, ***eneogmenon*** *is the Perfect Passive Participle of* ***anoigō****, to open; thus, having been fully opened; from* ***ana****, upwards and* ***agoo****, to lead.)*

3 And he cried with a great voice which sounded like the roar of a lion. When he cried, the seven thunders spoke. *(Now, in the light of what the Lamb accomplished, the Lion of Judah's voice is heard!)*

4 I was about to record what I heard but was told by another voice from heaven not to, but rather to seal their sayings in silence. *(The prophetic picture sealed the mystery, anticipating the incarnation moment. Rev 10:11)*

5 Then I saw the shepherd-messenger standing victoriously on the sea and land lifting his hand to heaven.

6 He made a [1]solemn oath in him whose life spans the ages; in him who created the heaven, the earth and the sea – and everything in them: this is the conclusion of prophetic time! *(To swear an oath, [1]****omnuō*** *- [shoulder* ***omohyoid]*** *- the lifting of the hand [a shoulder action] signifying a higher authority. See Gen 14:22; also Deut 32:40, in which God is described as swearing by himself, compare Isa 45:23; Heb 6:13, 16-18. God, having no one greater to swear by, swore by himself, thus bringing an end to all dispute. Create [2]****ktizo****, to form from* ***ktaomai****, to marry a wife! See* ***Extended notes on the solemn Oath*** *at the end of the chapter.)*

7 In the days when the sounding of the seventh messenger's trumpet commences, the mystery of God will be fully realized in exact accordance with the [1]good news he announced to his servants the Prophets. *(Rev 11:15 [1]****euengelisen*** *- Good news!)*

8 And again I heard the voice addressing me out of heaven, telling me to go and take the little book that [1]was opened. *(This is of the narrative of Ezekiel, Eze 2:9-10; Eze 3:1-3. The little book - the broken morsel of bread - condensed into bite-size -the entire prophetic relevance of Scripture is fulfilled in this one man and this one act of righteousness! Jesus Christ and Him crucified and raised!*
*The word [1]**eneogmenon** is the Perfect Passive Participle of **anoigo,** from **ana**, upwards and **oigo** to open; thus having been opened. Its effect is constant.)*

9 I went and faced the messenger and asked him to hand me the little book; he instructed me to take it and devour it entirely. It would be bitter in the belly but sweet as honey in the mouth. *(Just like Jona was 3 days and 3 nights in the belly of the whale, so the son of man...!*
*The word, **kataphage**, is the Aorist Active Imperative [get it over and done with immediately] of the verb **katesthiō** to devour entirely. This reminds of Exodus 12:8, That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. They were to eat the whole lamb.)*

10 So I took the little book out of the shepherd-messenger's hand and ate it up entirely and it was indeed sweet in my mouth and became bitter in my belly. *(The eating of the word celebrates the incarnation.)*

11 And he said to me, "Necessity is laid upon you to now disclose with new insight the prophetic word again - this prophecy's time has come and is now relevant. You will declare it before many peoples and different nations and their kings in their specific mother-tongue language." *(This list of peoples occurs seven times in Revelation - See Rev 5:9.)*
Revelation Chapter 10 Extended Notes:
The Solemn Oath
The Solemn Oath

Rev 10:6 And made a [1]solemn oath in him whose life spans the ages. The one who [2]created the heaven, and everything in it; the earth and everything in it and the sea and everything in it - this is the conclusion of prophetic time! *(To swear an oath, [1]**omnuō** - [shoulder **omohyoid]** - the lifting of the hand [a shoulder action] signifying a higher authority. See Gen 14:22; also Deut 32:40, in which God is described as swearing by himself, compare Isa 45:23; Heb 6:13, 16-18. God, having no one greater to swear by, swore by himself! thus bringing an end to all dispute. Create [2]**ktizo**, to form from **ktaomai**, to marry a wife!*

Heb 6:16 It is common practice in human affairs to evoke a higher authority under oath in order to add weight to any agreement between parties, thereby [1]silencing any possibility of quibbling. *(The word [1]**peras**, means the end of all dispute; the point beyond which one cannot go.)*

Heb 6:17 In the same context we are confronted with God's eagerness to go to the last extreme in his dealing with us as heirs of his promise, and to cancel out all possible grounds for doubt or dispute. In order to persuade us of the unalterable character and finality of his resolve, he confined himself to an oath. The promise which already belongs to us by heritage is now also confirmed under oath. *[The prophetic Word is the promise; the Incarnate, crucified and risen Christ is the proof.]*

Heb 6:18 So that we are now dealing with two irreversible facts which make it impossible for anyone to prove God wrong. *(The promise of redemption sustained throughout Scripture and the fulfillment of that promise in Jesus. For many years we have 'window-shopped' the promises of God. Even the most diligent students of Scripture became so pre-occupied with the future that they missed the Messiah in their midst. John 5:39, 40. Jesus is the central theme of Scripture; He is the fullness of time; we are no longer dealing with a post-dated promise. Luke 4:21, Luke 24:27, 44-46.*

See also **Isa 45:23 I have sworn by myself; the word of my mouth has [2]begotten righteousness; this cannot be reversed! Every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall echo my oath!** *(See Rom 1:17. The Hebrew word* **אצי** ***Yatsa*** *can be translated, begotten like in Judges 8:30] [Thus, speak with the same certainty sourced in me!] The Hebrew word,* **עבש** ***Shaba*** *means to seven oneself, that is, swear - thus in the Hebrew mind, by*

repeating a declaration seven times one brings an end to all dispute! See also Philippians 2:10 & 11.)

Chapter 11

1 I was handed a measuring reed resembling a royal scepter and instructed to arise and measure the [1]inner sanctuary of God and the altar *[of incense]* **as well as those who worshiped in there.** *(He first introduces the Jewish believers to the new order: The royal scepter as measure speaks of the Melchizedek anointing upon the worshiper as the inner sanctuary of God. A temple, not made with hands. The mystery of the ages is Christ in you. The word [1]**naos**, inner sanctuary; the most holy place - see there the table and the daily bread, the golden lampstand, the golden altar of incense, the torn veil, the ark of covenant - the intimate, incarnate embrace in our eternal, redeemed union - we are measured in the Messiah. The order of Melchizedek, the reign of righteousness by faith, replaced the old Levitical order of righteousness by performance. The royal scepter of the Melchizedek-order is the measure of the new Covenant. See Rev 21:17*
*The root of the word Messiah also means to measure! Aramaic **misah** stem for Messiah* **מִישַׁח** *to anoint; to measure. Also the word, **xristos**, the Anointed one, from χρίω **chriō**, to smear or rub with oil, to anoint; to draw the hand over, to measure; from χείρ **cheir**, hand. [We still measure the height of horses by hand - ie. "A seventeen hand horse!"]*
The verb to smear, anoint - Late Hebrew, originally probably as Arabic to wipe or stroke with the hand [compare RS Semitic i. 215; 2nd ed., 283], anoint, Aramaic anoint; in Aramaic inscription see CISii.1. No.145, C, 1; Palmyrene oil VogNo.16; Ethiopic anoint, feast, dine DiLex 176; Assyrian mašâ—is measure; Aramaic id.; Arabic measurement, compare DlProl. 178 Frä282])

2 This measuring shall not include the outer court since it was given to the multitudes of Gentile nations who would be treading around the outskirts of the holy city for forty-two months. *(Before the Lamb was slain and raised, in the duration of the time of the unfolding of the prophetic word in the mouths of the two witnesses [Moses and Elijah] represented in the ministry of Jesus - the multitudes of mankind were "outside". See Notes on the Measure of the temple within the context of the 42 Months at the end of this chapter.)*

3 I will appoint my [1]two witnesses, [2]dressed in sackcloth, to make known my thoughts for one thousand, two hundred and sixty days! *([1]Moses and Elijah - spirit of prophecy - Luk 24:26,27 Moses and all the Prophets - Math 17 on the mountain - Moses and Elijah speaking about his death - the 2 olive trees and 2 candle sticks Zech 4 - what do you see? Golden candlestick and 2 olive trees - the word unto Zarubabel (the governor) - not by might - and Joshua the priest. King/Priest ministry. For the two witnesses see also Hebrews 6:13-20 Deut 19:15.*
See notes on the 2 Witnesses at the end of this chapter.)

4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands which stand before the Lord of the earth. *(Rom 11:17, Rom 11:24. In Zec 4:2, Zec 4:3, Zec 4:14 See the prophetic significance of the golden lampstand - the budding almond blossoms - Jer 1:12)*

5 And every form of [1]unrighteous dispute coming against them will be consumed as with fire by the authority of their utterance. Any conversation that would promote unrighteousness will be silenced. *(The word **adikeo**, out of sync; from **ha,** negative particle and **dikay**, two parties in harmony.)*

6 Their authority to stop the rain and turn water into blood and every other plague reminds of Elijah and Moses. *(The 2 witnesses are the law and the Prophets - no rain and every plague as witnessed under Moses in forcing Pharaoh's hand to release the slaves!)*

7 At the conclusion of their testimony the "Beast" shall ascend out of the Abyss and shall overcome the two witnesses and kill them in battle. *(Jesus' death seemed an initial defeat to the prophetic purpose and significance sustained in the law and the Prophets.)*

8 And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city which spiritually represents Sodom and Egypt where our Lord was crucified. *(Clearly the city of Jerusalem is implicated here! The future Bride-city, the new Jerusalem [Rev 21:2] was just like Sodom and Egypt during the rule of the Prostitute-Beast of Babylon and in the genius of God's wisdom, their murder of Jesus became the salvation of the entire mankind!)*

9 And those *[religious institutions]* **representing all the peoples in their various groupings, their tribes and cultures and languages of all the multitudes of the nations shall gaze upon the dead bodies of the two witnesses for three and a half days and they will not allow their bodies to be buried.**

10 And these earth dwellers *[earth-ruled mindsets]* **shall rejoice over them with great jubilation celebrating their deliverance from both of these prophetic voices who challenged and frustrated their religious indulgences and beliefs. They will even send gifts to one another celebrating their apparent victory.**

11 After three and a half days with the eyes of all earth dwellers fixed upon them, the Spirit of Life, which issues out of God, suddenly entered them and they stood upon their feet. Great awe struck the earth dwellers as they beheld these things. *(In the resurrection of Jesus the prophetic significance of Jewish Scripture, represented by Moses and Elijah, revived!)*

12 And they heard a great voice out of heaven bidding them to come up and they ascended into heaven transported in a cloud while their enemies looked on. *(In the ascension of Jesus the entire prophetic word, represented here by the two witnesses, endorsed mankind's co-resurrection and co-ascension! See Hos 6:2, after two days he will revive us; on the third day, he will raise us up! Also Eph 2:6, We are co-included in his resurrection. We are also co-elevated in his ascension to be equally present*

in the throne room of the heavenly realm where we are now co-seated with him in his executive authority.)

13 And in that same hour there was a massive earthquake which caused a tenth of the city to collapse. Seven thousand names were killed *(7000 names representing all the Jewish families - the entire Jewish population were represented in their two prophetic voices, Moses and Elijah, in the death and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah)*

14 Thus the second dramatic symbolic scene departed from view; the third was about to follow. *(Rev 9:12 This was the conclusion of the first of three painfully powerful initiatives to persuade those whose thoughts were not sealed and in sync with God's belief in them. Two more were on their way!)*

15 When the seventh shepherd-messenger sounded his trumpet, there was a massive crescendo of voices in the heavenly realm, saying, "The kingdom of the [1]cosmos has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign as king for all the ages of the ages." *(The word, [1]**kosmos** in the NT refers to the entire human family. Remember Rev 10:7 In the days when the sounding of the seventh messenger's trumpet commences, the mystery of God will be fully realized in exact accordance to the Good News he announced to his servants the Prophets. Already in Rev 7 we see the eventual outcome of what is portrayed here in ch 11 etc) Rev 7:9 At this moment I saw a massive throng of people, impossible to count, standing tall and innocent; everyone of them [1]dressed in white with palm branches in their hands; they have [1]escaped everything that could possibly define them as a non-Jewish, Gentile world! In fact, every sphere of society were there - including the entire spectrum of people-groupings; all tribal identities with their unique language-specific dialect preferences; they were all present facing the throne and the Lamb as the people of the planet! (Amazing how, in the previous verses of this chapter, the tribes of Israel are associated with a very specific "number", emphasizing the prophetic detail of the entire Jewish nation. But here, John sees a massive throng of people,*

impossible to count! In Israel there is a prophetic voice of God's intention to release the blessing of the single SEED of God's faith through Abraham and bless all the nations of the earth! "Count the stars, count the sand!"
*The word [1]**stolay**, is the white outer garment worn by kings, priests, and persons of rank. The palm branches and the white robes are signs of the celebration of victory and joy. The preposition [1]**ek**, points to source or origin; mankind was delivered out of their national, geographical and historical identities! See Extended Notes on Israel at the end of Rev 20.*
I looked again and saw a huge crowd, too huge to count. Everyone was there—all nations and tribes, all races and languages. And they were standing, dressed in white robes and waving palm branches, standing before the throne and the Lamb. The Message) Rev 7:10 Then I heard the masses shouting as if with one thundering voice saying, "Our salvation is secure in our God who is seated upon the throne and endorsed in the Lamb's doing!")

16 At that moment, the twenty four elders who were seated on their thrones face to face with God, fell down prostrate before him in adoration

17 and exclaimed: Our hearts are flooded with gratitude and the affection of your favor! We salute your Lordship oh God! You are the Supreme Authority over all things; your I-am-ness defines time - present, past and future. The [1]due dynamic of your [2]Royal-reign is forever established! *(The word translated due, [1]**eilepsas** from **lambano** is in the perfect active tense which suggests the continual effect of an action already completed in the past. The word **lambano** means to take what is one's own, one's due. Then the word **esbasileusas** from **basileuo**, to reign, is the Aorist active tense which speaks of a completed act. Both these tenses emphasize the permanence of God's rule. There was never a time where God's royal rule was in question. In giving himself as scapegoat to be murdered by his own creatures assumes a weakness that does not compromise his authority at all! In the genius of his wisdom he defeats the entire system of judgment under the law of performance, governing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The seeming frailty of the slain Lamb*

never compromised the authority of the Lion of Judah! 1 Cor 1:25 It seems so foolish that God should die mankind's death on the cross; it seems so weak of God to suffer such insult; yet mankind's wisest schemes and most powerful display of genius cannot even begin to comprehend or compete with God in his weakest moment on the cross.)

18 The culmination of mankind's wrath collided with your passion oh God - this is the critical moment where judgment is met in death! *(Jesus said, "When I am lifted up on the cross, I will draw all judgment unto me!")* **This is the anticipated moment and prize of your bond-friends, the Prophets, the Saints and everyone who were awed by your Name - both the insignificant and the prominent - this is the destruction of the corrupting virus in the earth!** *(In the symbolic language of the book of Revelation, the judgment of the Dragon, the Beast and the Whore; the counterfeit Trinity, is not a judgment against an entity, but against a corrupt mindset-system. A virus doesn't have a life of its own - it needs a host!*
Microbiology Professor, Vincent Racaniello writes, "Life is 'an organismic state characterized by capacity for metabolism, growth, reaction to stimuli, and reproduction.' Viruses are not living things. Viruses are complicated assemblies of molecules, including proteins, nucleic acids, lipids, and carbohydrates, but on their own they can do nothing until they enter a living cell. Without cells, viruses would not be able to multiply. Therefore, viruses are not living things."
See my notes on Armageddon at the end of chapter 16.)

19 And the innermost sanctuary of God's heavenly temple was laid bare, where the ark of the covenant was fully unveiled to be gazed upon with insight - and there were lightnings and thunderous voices and an earthquake and great hailstones! *(See Rev 15. Here is the context: Hebrews 9:3, The second veil led to the inner tent known as the Most Holy Place.*
Heb 9:4 Therein were the golden altar of incense, and the ark of the covenant. The box was completely covered in gold, both inside and out. In it were kept the golden jar with a sample of the miracle manna from the wilderness, as well as the budding staff of Aaron, [Moses' staff - but here referred to as Aaron's. When they first met with Pharaoh, Aaron's staff

turned into a snake - the symbol of Pharaoh's rule - and it swallowed the snake staffs of the Egyptian magicians] as also the two engraved tablets of stone with the ten commandments of the Covenant. [A"fire-pan" was for the purpose of carrying fire, in order to burn incense on the day of Atonement once a year in the ultimate place of worship. The word, kibotos, the wooden box, is the same word used for Noah's ark; the container of mankind's redemption. Gen 6:14 The manna prophetically pictured the true bread from heaven, not the bread that mankind's labor produces. John 4:35, 38.]

Heb 9:5 Hovering above and over the ark of the Covenant were the two cherubim, images of glory, intent upon the mercy seat that covered the box on which the blood was sprinkled once a year by the High Priest to cover the sins of the people. Every detail is significant but cannot be discussed at length in this writing. [The Hebrew word, kopher, means to cover (specifically with bitumen), figuratively to cover by legal and equal exchange in order to restore a previously disturbed balance. The rule was an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life, etc.]

The ark represented a place of mercy where atonement would be made. Innocence had to be achieved at a cost equal to the replacement value of the peace sought between the different parties. See also Genesis 6:14, where the same word denotes the covering of Noah's ark with pitch. The Cross cannot be taken out of the equation of atonement. The first animal sacrifice was when God used an animal's skin to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness.)

Revelation Chapter 11 Extended Notes:

The Measure of the temple

Two Witnesses Dressed in Sackcloth

The Inner Shrine

The Measure of the temple

The Incarnate Messiah is the measure of the temple! The Human Body is the sanctuary of God!

Rev 11:1 I was handed a measuring reed resembling a royal scepter and instructed to arise and measure the [1]inner sanctuary of God and the altar *[of incense]* **as well as those who worshiped in there.** *(He first introduces the Jewish believers to the new order: The royal scepter as measure speaks of the Melchizedek anointing upon the worshiper as the inner sanctuary of God. A temple, not made with hands. The mystery of the*

*ages is Christ in you. The word [1]**naos**, inner sanctuary; the most holy place - see there the table and the daily bread, the golden lampstand, the golden altar of incense, the torn veil, the ark of covenant - the intimate, incarnate embrace in our eternal, redeemed union - we are measured in the Messiah. The order of Melchizedek, the reign of righteousness by faith, replaced the old Levitical order of righteousness by performance. The royal scepter of the Melchizedek-order is the measure of the new Covenant.*
*The root of the word Messiah also means to measure! Aramaic **misah** stem for Messiah* **מִשַׁח** *to anoint; to measure. Also the word, **xristos**, the Anointed one, from χρίω **chriō**, to smear or rub with oil, to anoint; to draw the hand over, to measure; from χείρ **cheir**, hand. [We still measure the height of horses by hand - ie. "A seventeen hand horse!"]*
The verb to smear, anoint - Late Hebrew, originally probably as Arabic to wipe or stroke with the hand [compare RS Semitic i. 215; 2nd ed., 283], anoint, Aramaic anoint; in Aramaic inscription see CISii.1. No.145, C, 1; Palmyrene oil VogNo.16; Ethiopic anoint, feast, dine DiLex 176; [Assyrian mašâ—is measure; Aramaic id.; Arabic measurement, compare DlProl. 178 Frä282)
Rev 11:2 This measuring shall not include the outer court since it was given unto the multitudes who would be treading around the outskirts of the holy city for forty-two months. *(Before the Lamb was slain and raised, in the duration of the time of the unfolding of the prophetic word in the mouths of the two witnesses [Moses and Elijah] represented in the ministry of Jesus - the multitudes of mankind were outside the covenants of Israel.)*
Ephesians 2:12 During that time you were distanced from the Messianic hope; you had nothing in common with Israel. You felt foreign to the covenants of prophetic promise, living a life with nothing to look forward to in a world where God seemed absent.
Eph 2:13 But now, wow! Everything has changed; you have discovered yourselves to be located in Christ. What once seemed so distant is now so near; his blood reveals your redeemed innocence and authentic genesis.
Eph 2:14 It is in him that we are one and at peace with everyone; he dissolved every definition of division.
Eph 2:15 In his incarnation, he rendered the entire Jewish system of ceremonial laws and regulations useless as a measure to justify human

life and conduct. In that he died mankind's death all grounds for tension and hostility were entirely removed. The peace he proclaims reveals one new human race, created and defined in Christ, instead of two groups of people separated by their ethnic identity and differences.
Eph 2:16 Both parties are fully represented and equally reconciled to God in one human body through the cross. He reinstated the former harmony; all opposing elements were thus utterly defeated.
Eph 2:17 On that basis he made his public appearance, proclaiming the Good News of peace to the entire human race; both those who felt left out in the cold *(as far as the promises and covenants were concerned)***, as well as to those who were near all along** *(because of their Jewish identity)***.**
The measuring of the temple reminds of Ez 40-43 and Zec 2. In John 2:19, referring to his murder on the cross and his glorious resurrection, Jesus says, "Destroy this temple, and in 3 days will I raise it up!" His death and resurrection concludes the prophetic significance of the temple and shifts the focus to the human person as the temple-address of God. He does not dwell in buildings made by human hands. *Psa 74:2; Jer 10:16; Jer 51:19. We are the rod (the measure) of God's inheritance.*
Col 1:26 Mankind's most sought after quest, the mystery which has remained elusive and concealed for ages and generations, is now fully realized in our redeemed innocence.
Col 1:27 Within us, God is delighted to exhibit the priceless treasure of this glorious unveiling of Christ's indwelling in order that every person on the planet, whoever they are, may now come to the greatest discovery of all time and recognize Christ in them as in a mirror! He is the [1]desire of the nations and completes their every expectation! *(He is not hiding in history, or in outer space nor in the future, neither in the pages of Scripture, he is merely mirrored there to be unveiled within you. Mt 13:44, Gal 1:15, 16, 2 Cor 3:18, 2 Cor 4:4,7. This is huge! What God was now able to disclose in the Saints is immediately equally relevant in the nations! Christ in the nations is the hope of glory! This is the mystery of the ages! This is what we were waiting for [[1]Haggai 2:6,7])*
John 2:19 To which Jesus responded, "The temple will be completely demolished by you and in three days I will raise it up!"
John 2:21 They did not understand that the temple Jesus was pointing

to, was the human body. *(In him, the only true address of God was to be redeemed in human life in his resurrection! See Hosea 6:2 "After two days he will revive us, on the third day he will raise us up!" Also Ephesians 2:5 and 1 Peter 1:3; Acts 7:47-50 But it was Solomon who built a house for him. Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; as the Prophet says, 'heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool. What house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? Did not my hand make all these things?'*
The word ***hieros*** *speaks of the greater temple building with all its outer courts etc. whereas the word Jesus uses here is* ***naos****, referring to the inner sanctuary - this is also the word Paul uses in 1 Corinthians 6:19 "Do you not realize that your body by design is the sacred shrine of the Spirit of God!" This is the most sacred place in the universe! There is nowhere in eternity that can match this! See John 1:14 "And the Word became flesh and now resides within us! And 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you!"*
John 2:22 These words of Jesus as well as their significant prophetic connection with Scripture gave such clear context to the disciples when they later, after his resurrection, recalled all these things.
Col 1:19 The full measure of God's [1]happy delight in human life indwells him. *(Delightful intent, [1]**eudokeo**.)*
Col 2:9 All of [1]Deity [2]resides in him, in a human body! He proves that human life is tailor-made for God! *(The word, [1]**theotes**, godhead/deity, is feminine. Jesus gives detailed expression of what the Father, Son and Spirit is like, in human form. The word [1]**katoikeō** means to dwell in, to inhabit. While the expanse cannot measure or define God, their exact likeness is displayed in human skin. See Col 1:19, God is fully at home in him. Jesus exhibits God's [1]happy delight to be human.)*
Col 2:10 And you are in him! He is the [1]chief authority and [2]fountainhead of your being, [3]endorsing your completeness. *(The word, [1]**arche**, means chief in rank. The head - [2]**hē kaphalē.** God packaged completeness in "I am". The word, [3]**exousia**, is often translated authority; from,* ***ek*** *+* ***eimi****, originating out of "I am." The days are over where our lives were dictated to under the rule of the law of performance and an inferior identity.)*

Eph 4:7 Grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of the gift of Christ.
Eph 4:11 What God has in us is gift wrapped to the world...
Eph 4:13 ...Standing face-to-face in equal stature to the measure of the [1]completeness of Christ. *(The word, [1]**pleroma**, means a life filled to the brim with Christ, like a freight ship carrying its cargo.)*
Two Witnesses Dressed in Sackcloth
Rev 11:3 I will appoint my two witnesses, dressed in sackcloth, to make known my thoughts for one thousand, two hundred and sixty days! *(Moses and Elijah - spirit of prophecy - Luk 24:26,27 Moses and all the Prophets - Math 17 on the mountain - Moses and Elijah speaking about his death - the 2 olive trees and 2 candle sticks Zech 4 - what do you see? Golden candlestick and 2 olive trees - the word unto Zarubabel (the governor) - not by might - and Joshua the priest. King/Priest ministry.*
For the two witnesses see also Hebrews 6:13-20. Deut 19:15, At the mouth of two witnesses, shall the matter be established.
Rev 11:4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands which stand before the Lord of the earth. *(Rom 11:17, Rom 11:24. In Zec 4:2, Zec 4:3, Zec 4:14 See the prophetic significance of the golden lampstand - the budding almond blossoms - Jer 1:12)*
***John 8:15** You form your own judgment according to the flesh; I judge no-one.*
***John 8:16** And even if I do make a judgment, it is true since I am not making it up in my imagination or on my own accord, my record reflects the testimony of the Father who sent me.*
***John 8:17** That should settle it for you since it is written in your law that the testimony of two, is true! (This combined witness of two is not true just because they agree, unless true in fact separately. But if they disagree, the testimony falls to the ground. Deuteronomy 17:6; and Deut 19:15. - Robertson's Word Pictures)*
***John 8:18** I am witness to who I am and my Father himself also bears witness to me.*
Dressed in Sackcloth - the prophetic word in the law and prophets points to Jesus who took our mourning upon himself on the cross and in our hellish darkness. And having loosed our bonds he raised us in his triumphant joy!
Isa 58:5 Is such the fast that I choose, a day for a man to humble

himself? Is it to bow down his head like a rush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Will you call this a fast, and a day acceptable to the LORD?
Isa 58:6 "Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?
Isa 58:7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?
Isa 58:8 Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you, the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.
Isa 58:9 Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, Here I am. "If you take away from the midst of you the yoke, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,
Isa 58:10 if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.
Isa 58:11 And the LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your desire with good things, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.
Isa 58:12 And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in.
Psa 30:11 Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing; thou hast loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness!
The Inner Shrine
Rev 11:1 I was handed a measuring reed resembling a royal scepter and instructed to arise and measure the [1]inner sanctuary of God and the altar [of incense] as well as those who worshiped in there. *(He first introduces the Jewish believers to the new order: The royal scepter as measure speaks of the Melchizedek-anointing upon the worshiper as the inner sanctuary of God. A temple, not made with hands. The mystery of the ages is Christ in you. The word [1]**naos**, inner sanctuary; the most holy place - see there the table and the daily bread, the golden lampstand, the golden altar of incense, the torn veil, the ark of covenant - the intimate, incarnate embrace in our eternal, redeemed union - we are measured in the Messiah.*

The order of Melchizedek, the reign of righteousness by faith, replaced the old Levitical order of righteousness by performance. The royal scepter of the Melchizedek-order is the measure of the new Covenant.
The root of the word Messiah also means to measure! Aramaic ***misah*** *stem for Messiah* **חישמ** *- to anoint; to measure.)*
Rev 11:18 The culmination of mankind's wrath collided with your passion oh God - this is the critical moment where judgment is met in death! *(Jesus said, "When I am lifted up on the cross, I will draw all judgment unto me!")*
Rev And the innermost sanctuary of God's heavenly temple was laid bare where the ark of the covenant was fully unveiled to be gazed upon with insight - and there were lightnings and thunderous voices and an earthquake and great hailstones!
Rev 15:4 Who will not be awestruck by you oh Lord as they recognize their identity in your glorious name? All your work confirms the truth of who you are. You have no competition! Therefore all the nations will arrive at the same conclusion and they will worship you since your righteousness has been openly shown! *(Sing unto the Lord a new song, for he has done marvellous things! His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him the victory! The Lord has made known his salvation, his righteousness has he openly shown and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God! Psalm 98:1)*
Rev 15:5 And coinciding with this, I saw the inner shrine of the skin-tabernacle of testimony, with the veil wide open in the heavenly dimension. *(The prophetic skin-tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting is now redeemed in the Incarnation - the human body hosts this place of intimate encounter. See Ex 33:7 the tent of meeting* **דעוֹמֵ** *the moyed which is the Niphal [reflexive] of* **דע** *- od, with Ayin [o] as a picture of the eye, the d is a picture of the door. Combined these mean "see the door". As coming to a tent a tent of meeting and entering in. A place, time or event that is repeated again and again - in the reflexive form. In the Septuagint the Greek word* ***marturion*** *is used - that which gives evidence - testimony. So the tent of meeting is the tent of testimony! Rev 11:19)*
Here is the context:
Hebrews 9:3 The second veil led to the inner tent known as the Most Holy Place.
Heb 9:4 Therein were the golden altar of incense, and the ark of the

covenant. The box was completely covered in gold, both inside and out. In it were kept the golden jar with a sample of the miracle manna from the wilderness, as well as the budding staff of Aaron, *[Moses' staff - but here referred to as Aaron's - when they first met with Pharaoh Aaron's staff turned into a snake - the symbol of Pharaoh's rule, and swallowed the snake staffs of the Egyptian magicans]* **as also the two engraved tablets of stone with the ten commandments of the Covenant.** *(A golden "fire-pan" was for the purpose of carrying fire, in order to burn incense on the day of Atonement once a year in the ultimate place of worship. The word, kibotos, the wooden box, is the same word used for Noah's ark; the container of mankind's redemption. Gen 6:14 The manna prophetically pictured the true bread from heaven, not the bread that mankind's labor produces. John 4:35, 38.)*

Heb 9:5 Hovering above and over the ark of the Covenant were the two cherubim, images of glory, intent upon the mercy seat that covered the box on which the blood was sprinkled once a year by the High Priest to cover the sins of the people. Every detail is significant but cannot be discussed at length in this writing. *(The Hebrew word,* ***kopher****, means to cover (specifically with bitumen), figuratively to cover by legal and equal exchange in order to restore a previously disturbed balance. The rule was an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life, etc.*

The ark represented a place of mercy where atonement would be made. Innocence had to be achieved at a cost equal to the replacement value of the peace sought between the different parties. See also Genesis 6:14, where the same word denotes the covering of Noah's ark with pitch. The Cross cannot be taken out of the equation of atonement. The first animal sacrifice was when God used an animal's skin to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness.)

Heb 9:6 In the context of this arrangement the priests performed their daily duties, both morning and evening. *(The daily duties included their dress and preparations, baptisms, sacrificial offerings, lighting and trimming, removing the old Showbread and replacing it with fresh bread, and sprinkling the blood of the sin offerings before the veil of the sanctuary.)*

Heb 9:7 The routine was interrupted only once a year, when the High Priest alone would enter the second tent, the most sacred place of worship, with the blood sacrifice for his own and the people's

accumulated errors.
Heb 9:8 Already in this arrangement the Holy Spirit indicated that there was a yet more sacred way, beyond the first tent, that was still to be opened. While the first pattern was still being upheld, its fulfillment in truth could not yet commence.
Heb 9:9 The tabernacle pattern of that time was an analogy of the hitherto imperfect system in which the gifts and sacrifices presented failed completely to cleanse the conscience of the worshipper.
Heb 9:10 All these external rituals pertaining to food and drink and the various ceremonial baptisms and rules for bodily conduct were imposed upon them until the anticipated time of restoration; the foretold moment when [1]all that was crooked would be made straight and restored to its natural and original condition. *(This word, [1]**diothosis**, is only used in this one place in the New Testament; what was crooked will be made thoroughly straight, restoring to its natural and normal condition something which in some way protrudes or has gotten out of line, as broken or misshapen limbs.)*
Heb 9:11 But now Christ has made his public appearance as High Priest of a perfect tabernacle. The good things that were predicted have arrived. This new tabernacle does not derive from its shadow type, the previous man-made one. It is the reality. *(The restoration of God's original dwelling place in human life is again revealed!)*
Heb 9:12 As High Priest, his permission to enter the Holy Place was not secured by the blood of beasts. By his own blood he obtained access on behalf of the human race. Only one act was needed for him to enter the most sacred place of grace and there to institute a ransom of perpetual consequence. *(The perfection of the redemption he secured needs no further sacrifice. There are no outstanding debts; there is nothing we need do to add weight to what he has accomplished once and for all. The only possible priesthood activity we can now engage in is to continually bring a sacrifice of the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his Name; no blood, just fruit, even our acts of self-sacrifice, giving of time and money, etc. are all just the fruit of our constant gratitude!)*
Heb 9:13 The blood of beasts and the ashes of the burnt sacrifice of a heifer could only achieve a very temporal and surface cleansing by being sprinkled on the guilty. *(The word for heifer, is damalis, from damatzo, to tame; this was the most dear and expensive sacrifice. She was a*

strong, pristine, spotless female calf, she was raised as a family pet; "A Little Princess!" This was the best that the law-system could present; yet, no inner purging of conscience was possible; only the sense of temporal relief; whilst knowing that the entire process would have to be repeated again and again! In this arrangement, God addressed the dilemma of our sin consciousness; the deep-seated stain that it had left needed to be thoroughly exposed, and then brought to closure. The shadow system with its imperfections, as a possible means of obtaining a lasting and meaningful sense of innocence, had to be exhausted; ultimately proving that no sacrifice that anyone can bring at any expense of their own, could possibly match the sacrifice of God giving himself as scapegoat to the human race in order to persuade us that his love for us would go to the scandalous extreme, where we are finally confronted with the fact that it is not in a sacrifice that we bring where God's mind is favorably influenced towards us; but in the shocking sacrifice of himself, where he forever, in the most radical language, impact our ideas and thoughts about the Father, Son and Spirit's estimate of us. There is nothing dearer in the universe to them, but our redeemed innocence and our individual value realized! See Collossians 2:14,15 in the Mirror Bible.)

Heb 9:14 How much more effective was the blood of Christ, when he presented his own flawless life through the eternal Spirit before God, in order to purge your conscience from its frustration under the cul-de-sac rituals of the law. There is no comparison between a guilt and duty-driven, dead religious system, and the vibrancy of living your life free from a sin-consciousness! This is what the new testament priesthood is all about! *(Dead works, nekros ergon. A dead, religious-routine system can never compete with the resurrected Christ now realized in you.)*

Heb 9:15 As fully representing mankind, Jesus's death brought an end to the old, and introduced the New Testament. He thus redeemed us from the transgressions recorded under the first Covenant and identified us as heirs; qualifying us to participate in the full inheritance of all that he obtained on our behalf. *(The concept of a mediator, mesites, in this analogy, is not a go-between, as if Jesus had to change the Father's mind about us; it was our minds that needed to be persuaded! Jesus did not save us from God; he is fully God and fully man, and in him mankind is most completely represented. See Galatians 3:20; also Hebrews 6:16-20)*

Heb 9:16 For a will to take effect the person who made it must be dead.

Heb 9:17 Before the testator dies the will is merely a future promise with no immediate benefit to anyone.
Heb 9:18 Even the first Covenant required a death for its actualization; the blood of the animal sacrifice represented that death.
Heb 9:19 After Moses uttered the detailed requirements of the law in the hearing of all the people, he would take the blood of calves and of goats, mix it with water and, dipping a bunch of hyssop bound with scarlet wool into the blood-basins, sprinkle the blood on the book and upon the people.
Heb 9:20 While performing this cleansing ritual, Moses would solemnly declare, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has made binding upon you."
Heb 9:21 The same blood was then also sprinkled on the tabernacle, and on all the furniture and ministry utensils.
Heb 9:22 Thus, according to the law, all purging was by means of blood; forgiveness was specifically associated with the shedding of blood. *(The idea of closure to the particular case was communicated in the death of an innocent victim. The blood symbolizes this currency. The word translated forgiveness, or remission is the word aphiemi, from apo, away from, and hieimi an intensive form of eimi, I am; thus forgiveness is in essence a restoring to your true 'I-am-ness.' The injury, insult, shame, hostility or guilt would no longer define the individual.)*
Heb 9:23 If the methods of the law were only a shadow prefiguring the heavenly reality, the fulfillment of these examples surely requires a stronger and more efficacious sacrifice.
Heb 9:24 In Christ we have so much more than a type reflected in the tabernacle of holy places set up by human hands. He entered into the heavenly sphere itself, where he personally represents mankind face to face with God.
Heb 9:25 Neither was it necessary for him to ever repeat his sacrifice. The High Priests under the old shadow system stood proxy with substitute animal sacrifices that had to be offered every year.
Heb 9:26 But Jesus did not have to suffer again and again since the [1]fall of the world; the [2]single sacrifice of himself in the fulfillment of history now reveals how he has brought sin to naught. *(The word, [1]katabole, means cast down. [2]God's Lamb took away the sins of the world!)*
Heb 9:27 The same goes for everyone: a person dies only once, and then

faces judgment.
Heb 9:28 Christ died once and faced the judgment of the entire human race! His second appearance *[in his resurrection] has nothing to do with sin,* **but to reveal salvation for all to [1]fully embrace him.** *(To fully embrace, [1]apekdechomai, from apo, away from [that which defined me before] and ek, out of, source; and dechomai, to take into ones hands to accept whole-heartedly, to fully embrace. In his resurrection he appeared as Savior of the world! Sin is no longer on the agenda, for the Lamb of God has taken away the sins of the world! Jesus Christ fulfilled mankind's destiny with death! [1 Cor 15:3-5, Rom 4:25, Acts 17:30, 31.])*

Chapter 12

1 Suddenly a spectacular symbolic image appears in the sky! A woman clothed in sunlight with a shining moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head! *(The day the Prophets pointed to has dawned, clothed with the sun, reigning over the night - about to give birth to the child! S/s 6:10 [The chorus of young women] Who is this young woman? She looks like the dawn. She is beautiful like the moon, pure like the sun, awe-inspiring like those heavenly bodies.)*

2 She was in the agony of labor; crying out with birth pangs. *(Such vivid imagery of the prophetic Word, the Logos, as a woman, about to give birth to Jesus, who now faces the cross also in the agony of fulfilling his mission - knowing that he has come for this hour! His victorious death and descent into hell and glorious resurrection would re-boot mankind into newness of life! "We were born anew when he was raised from the dead!" John 12:27 My soul is exceedingly perplexed right now! What shall I say, "Father! Rescue me [1]out of the clutches of this hour!" No! This hour is the very culmination of my destiny!*
Isa. 9:6. For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful

Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace. Isa. 9:7. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from the latter time forth, even forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.)

3 Then another sign showed up in the sky - a monster sized red Dragon with seven heads and ten horns. The heads were wrapped in royal diadems. *(The picture of a multi headed Dragon appearing to devour the woman's seed is a typical prophetic narrative where the Messianic promise of salvation would crush the serpent's head as declared in Genesis 15:3)*

4 And with his tail he dragged a third of the stars and flung them upon the earth. He then positioned himself in front of the woman and threatened to devour the child as soon as it was born. *(The tail represents the false Prophets Isa 9:15, 16... the tail for those who lead this people lead them astray, and those who are led by them are swallowed up. See also Dan 8:10 The stars are the shepherd-messengers. Rev 1:20, but here they are the Shepherds of Israel who led Israel into rejecting the child. The third part is a symbolic expression of a representative portion of the whole. Man is also a triune being, spirit, soul and body - the third part referenced here could mean the soul part which would include the mindset, which would then suggest that the Jewish leadership were entangled by the multi-headed Dragon into a mindset of a lower fallen order. Not realizing or acknowledging that Jesus was indeed the child to be born as the savior of the world. Ez 34.)*

5 And she gave birth to a boy who was about to shepherd all the nations with a royal scepter of steel. And immediately the child was raptured to be face to face with God and his throne. *(Rev 2:27 - also my commentary note there. You will [1]shepherd them with a royal scepter and that [[3]mindset which ruled the nations] shall be shattered like a potters [2]vessel of clay. Remember a shepherd's staff was to defend the sheep*

against thieves and wild animals - it wasn't used to hurt the sheep!
More literally, "that when she was delivered he might devour her child." Professor Milligan says: "In these words we have the Dragon doing what Pharaoh did to Israel [Exo 1:15-22], and again and again, in the Psalms and the Prophets, Pharaoh is spoken of as the Dragon [Psa 74:13; Isa 27:1; Isa 51:9; Eze 29:3]. Nor is it without interest to remember that Pharaoh's crown was wreathed with a Dragon [the asp or serpent of Egypt], and that just as the eagle was the ensign of Rome, so the Dragon was that of Egypt. Hence the significance of Moses' rod being turned into a serpent.")

6 And the woman escaped into the wilderness to a safe place prepared for her where she was nourished by [1]them for 1,260 days. *(The prophetic Word is protected and sustained for the entire duration of Jesus' ministry. The plural form points to the [1]triune God; Elohim, inseparably one with their Word. This is 42 months or three and one-half years. This verse again displaying various prophetic dimensions completes the story of Mary going to Egypt with Joseph and baby Jesus and staying there approximately three and a half years until Herod was dead who was seeking to kill the child. Also the fact that Jesus' three and a half year ministry was a protected place - here the pregnant women represents the prophetic, incarnate word as the womb bearing the Promise, pointing to his death, victorious descent into hell and glorious resurrection where he led mankind into the new birth! "We were born anew, when Jesus was raised from the dead! 1 Peter 1:3. See Hosea 6:2 "After two days he will make us alive; on the third day he will raise us up!" Also Eph 2:5,6 and Eph 4:8,9.)*

7 Mikael and his shepherd-messengers led the war in the heavenly realm against the Dragon and his herding-heralds. *(Mikael means, "Who is like God?" The context of the onslaught against the human race has always been identity-related! The fruit of the "I-am-not tree system !" Jesus faced this temptation on mankind's behalf, "If you are the Son of God?" See John 10:30-36 Also my comments in Rev 17:8 and commentary at the end of Rev 16.)*

8 The Dragon's influence was totally demolished and rendered powerless - not a trace of its presence was found in the heavens! *(Principalities and powers were completely disarmed on the cross! Col 2:14,15 "And their place was not found" see Dan 2:35 - the little stone against whom the Gates of Hades shall not prevail - the Chip of the old Block demolished the pseudo man-made identity. There are numeral references to the same "once and for all war" in the heavens! It is however the same hour; the same event! Rev 16:13,14; Rev 17:13,14; 19:19; Rev 20:8.)*

9 So the great Dragon, the [1]ancient [2]ophis *[serpent],* **also known as the Devil or Satan - whose sole mission was to lead the entire inhabited world astray - was cast down to the earth-dimension, together with all his [3]herding-heralds.** *(The word [1]**archaios**, ancient, of old; from **arche**, from the beginning. As Jesus said that the Devil was a murderer "from the beginning" The Greek word, [2]**ophis** is translated serpent and comes from **optomai**, to gaze, in this case, to present a visual idea through illusion. John 8:44. He was stripped of his pseudo rank of authority see Col 2:14,15 he was made a public spectacle! Luke 10:18 And Jesus said to them, I saw Satan falling out of heaven like lightning! Also John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast down. [When I am lifted up on the cross. Jn 12:32] The word often translated angel, [3]**aggelos** has two components, **ago** to lead as a shepherd leads and **agele,** a herd of cattle or company.)*

10 Then I heard a very loud voice in the heavens announcing, This is the moment which the entire prophetic word pointed to and culminates in; it is the realization of mankind's salvation. The power of the kingdom of our God and its authority is endorsed in the I-am-ness of his Christ. The business of accusation is bankrupted. The 24/7 industry of condemning the brotherhood of mankind before the face of God has been annihilated. *(The word [1]**kategoros**, a name given to the Devil by the Rabbis, the one whose business is accusation, from **kata**, downward and **agora**, to trade; a word used for all kinds of business in the public arena. Luke 10:18. Also John 12:27 My soul is exceedingly perplexed right now!*

What shall I say, "Father! Rescue me [1]out of the clutches of this hour!" No! This hour is the very culmination of my destiny! [Greek preposition, [1]ek, out of; source; origin.]
John 12:28 "Father! Glorify your name!" And immediately there came a voice out of the heavenly realm saying, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again!"
John 12:29 The crowd heard the voice and said that it had thundered; others thought it was the voice of an shepherd-messenger.
John 12:30 Jesus replied, "This voice was not for my sake but for yours! (Signs are for unbelievers. 1 Corinthians 14:22)
John 12:31 This is the judgment of this world; it is the moment where the authority of the world-system is cast out! [The serpent's head is about to be crushed! Genesis 3:15; Colossians 2:14,15]
John 12:32 When I am [1]lifted up from the earth, I will draw [2]all unto me!
*([1]He would be lifted up on a cross, descend into the depths of our hell, then, according to the prophetic word in Hosea 6:2, after two days be lifted up as representative of the human race, out of the lowest parts of the earth and elevated to the highest heavens! Ephesians 4:8,9; see also Ephesians 2:5,6 and Colossians 3:1-3. [2]All things include all of mankind and their judgment. The subject of the sentence, as from the previous verse, is the judgment of the world - thus the primary thought here is that in his death, Jesus would draw all judgment upon himself and thereby forever redeem mankind's innocence! John 3:14; John 8:28; Act 2:33. 1 John 3:5 We have witnessed with our own eyes how, in the unveiling of the prophetic word, when he was lifted up upon the cross as the Lamb of God, he [1]lifted up our sins and broke its dominion and rule over us! [John 1:29 "Behold, the Lamb of God, who [1]takes away [**airo**] the sin of the world! The word [1]**airo** means to lift up.])*
John 12:33 This he said to point to the way in which he would die. [See John 19:15 - Lift him up! Lift him up! Crucify him!"])

11 Mikael and his shepherd-messengers *[representing the entire host of heaven - including all the multitudes previously mentioned]* **conquered the Dragon because of the blood of the little Lamb and the word of their testimony! They did not believe that the agape of life discovered in**

Christ can be threatened or [1]terminated in death! *(The blood of the Lamb brought closure to every possible accusation against the human race. This is the testimony of the prophetic word announcing the Good News throughout the ages. The word achri - the end; the idea of terminating. See* ***Extended Notes on the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ*** *at the end of chapter 20.)*

12 An [1]eruption of belly-laughter followed in the heavenlies and in all those inhabiting this realm. Woe to the land and sea for the Devil was cast down there in great embarrassment, seeing that his time has run out! *(The word, [1]**euphraino**, jubilant rejoicing, from **eu**, well done; extravagantly good; and **phren**, the midriff or diaphragm, the innermost parts of the heart. This makes Paul's appeal in Col 3:1-3 so relevant! Engage your minds with heavenly dimension realities and not with the earthbound soul realm. See Notes on Armageddon, Rev 16.)*

13 As soon as the Dragon realized that he had lost his supposed position in the heavenlies and was now confined to the earth realm, he pursued the woman who birthed the male child.

14 But the woman was given very large eagle wings with which to fly away to her safe place in the wilderness where she would be pampered for a time and times and half a time out of sight of the serpent. *(Beyond the reach of Ophis! 1260 days; 3 and a half years which points to the uninterrupted extent of Jesus' ministry.)*

15 Then waters flooded out of the mouth of the serpent in an attempt to drown the woman *[the prophetic voice unveiling the Christ]* **in his devilish conversation.**

16 But the earth rescued the woman by opening its mouth and gulped down the entire river proceeding from the Dragon's mouth. *(In his death, burial and decent into the lowest parts of the earth. See Eph 4:8,9.*

Note, like in Rev 12:9, the words for the Serpent-system are interchanged, including the Dragon, Satan, Devil and also in 12:10, the Accuser, Kategoros, whose business is the industry of accusation.)

17 The fact that the woman escaped his pursuit extremely infuriated the Dragon, so he turned his attention to contend with the remnant of her seed who treasured [1]the completeness of God's fulfilled purpose echoing the [2]testimony of Jesus! *(The word [1]**entole**, which is often translated commandment or precept, has two components: **en**, in and **telos**, from **tello**, to set out for a definite point or goal; the point aimed at as a limit, that is, by implication, the conclusion of an act or state, the result; the ultimate or prophetic purpose. Strong's 5056 See 1 John 2:3 Mirror Bible) The [2]testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Rev 19:10. See **Extended Notes on the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ** at the end of chapter 20.)*

Revelation Chapter 12 Extended Notes:

Notes on Ophis, the old Serpent

Notes on Ophis, the old Serpent

2 Cor 11:3 I am concerned for you that you might [1]pine away through the [2]illusion of separation from Christ and that, just like Eve, you might become [3]blurry-eyed and [4]deceived into believing a lie about yourselves. The temptation was to exchange the truth about our completeness *(I am)* **with the idea of incompleteness** *(I am not)* **and shame; thinking that perfection required your toil and all manner of wearisome labor!** *(The word, [1]**phteiro**, means to pine or waste away, to whither. Any idea of separation causes one to whither away in loneliness! The word [2]**haplotes** from **hama**, a particle of union, and **pleko**, to braid or plait together; sometimes translated, simplicity or unmixed. The Greek word, [3]**ophis** is translated serpent, from **optomai**, to gaze, in this case, **to present a visual idea through illusion**. The word [4]**exapataō** from **ek,** source + **apateo**, apathy is the source of deception, to be without faith, believing a lie about yourself! Heb 4:6 Israel died in the wilderness because of their unbelief. [Both Adam and Israel believed a lie about themselves. Num 13:33, Josh 2:11, 2 Cor 4:4.] The word [5]**panourgia**, from the words, **pas**,*

*all, and **ergon**, work or toil, where your entire existence is reduced to wearisome labor. This word is often translated, cunning or craftiness. See also 2 Cor 4:2 "We have renounced hidden agendas [employing a little bit of the law in an attempt to "balance" out grace]; we have distanced ourselves from any obscure craftiness to manipulate God's word to make it mean what it does not say!")*

Rev 12:7 Mikael and his shepherd-messengers led the war in the heavenly realm against the Dragon and his herding-heralds. *(Mikael means, "Who is like God?" The context of the onslaught against the human race has always been identity-related! The fruit of the "I-am-not tree system !" Jesus faced this temptation on mankind's behalf, "If you are the Son of God?" See John 10:30-36 Also my comments on being "earthbound" in Rev 17:8 and 16:16.)*

Rev 12:8 The Dragon's influence was totally demolished and rendered powerless - not a trace of its presence was found in the heavens! *(Principalities and powers were completely disarmed on the cross! Col 2:14,15 "And their place was not found" see Dan 2:35 - the little stone against whom the Gates of Hades shall not prevail - the Chip of the old Block demolished the pseudo man-made identity. There are numeral references to the same "once and for all war" in the heavens! It is however the same hour; the same event! Rev 16:13,14; Rev 17:13,14; 19:19; Rev 20:8.)*

Rev 12:9 So the great Dragon, the [1]ancient [2]ophis *[serpent],* **also known as the Devil or Satan - whose sole mission was to lead the entire inhabited world astray - was cast down to the earth-dimension, together with all his [3]herding-heralds.** *(The word [1]**archaios**, ancient, of old; from **arche**, from the beginning. As Jesus said that the Devil was a murderer "from the beginning" The Greek word, [2]**ophis** is translated serpent and comes from **optomai**, to gaze, in this case, to present a visual idea through illusion. John 8:44. He was stripped of his pseudo rank of authority see Col 2:14,15 he was made a public spectacle! Luke 10:18 And Jesus said to them, I saw Satan falling out of heaven like lightning! Also John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast down. [When I am lifted up on the cross. Jn 12:32.] Also John 3:14 [This is my mission: See the prophetic relevance - this is how the veil will be removed!] Remember how Moses lifted up the serpent [**ophis**] in the*

wilderness even so the Son of man will be lifted up!)
Rev 12:10 Then I heard a very loud voice in the heavens announcing, This is the moment which the entire prophetic word pointed to and culminates in; it is the realization of mankind's salvation. The power of the kingdom of our God and its authority is endorsed in the I-am-ness of his Christ. The business of accusation is bankrupted. The 24/7 industry of condemning the brotherhood of mankind before the face of God has been annihilated. *(The word [1]**kategoros**, a name given to the Devil by the Rabbis, the one whose business is accusation, from **kata**, downward and **agora**, to trade; a word used for all kinds of business in the public arena.*
Luke 10:18. Also John 12:27 My soul is exceedingly perplexed right now! What shall I say, "Father! Rescue me [1]out of the clutches of this hour!" No! This hour is the very culmination of my destiny! (Greek preposition, [1]ek, out of; source; origin.)
John 12:28 "Father! Glorify your name!" And immediately there came a voice out of the heavenly realm saying, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again!"
Rev 12:13 As soon as the Dragon realized that he had lost his supposed position in the heavenlies and was now confined to the earth realm, he pursued the woman who birthed the male child.
Rev 12:14 But the woman was given very large eagle wings with which to fly away to her safe place in the wilderness where she would be pampered for a time and times and half a time out of sight of the serpent. *(Beyond the reach of Ophis! 1260 days; 3 and a half years which points to the uninterrupted extent of Jesus' ministry.)*
Rev 12:15 Then waters flooded out of the mouth of the serpent in an attempt to drown the woman *[the prophetic voice unveiling the Christ]* **in his devilish conversation.**
Rev 12:16 But the earth rescued the woman by opening its mouth and gulped down the entire river proceeding from the Dragon's mouth. *(In his death, burial and decent into the lowest parts of the earth. See Eph 4:8,9. Note, like in Rev 12:9, the words for the Serpent-system are interchanged, including the Dragon, Satan, Devil and also in 12:10, the Accuser, Kategoros, whose business is the industry of accusation.)*
John 3:14 *(This is my mission: See the prophetic relevance - this is how the*

veil will be removed!) **Remember how Moses lifted up the [1]serpent in the wilderness even so the son of man will be lifted up!** *(John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; John 12:32 and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all judgment unto me." John 12:33 He said this to show by what death he was to die. Revelation 12:9. John 3:13 and 14 are most significant since they point to the very essence of the Mission of Jesus - the co-begotteness of the human race now redeemed in our co-crucifixion and co-resurrection on the third day into newness of life! 1 Peter 1:3. The word serpent in the Greek is [1]**ophis**. See Extended Notes on **Ophis**, the old Serpent at the end of Revelation chapter 12.)*

John 3:15 In the same prophetic pattern, I will be lifted up for all to see and be equally persuaded in the echo of the life of the ages now redeemed within them!

Rev 20:2 And he overpowered the Dragon, in its every disguise as the old Serpent in the garden in Genesis, also called the Devil, or going under the name, Satan, and chained him up for a thousand years. *(From David to Jesus is a thousand years! Rev 3:7 I hold the key of David as prophesied in Isaiah 22:22! Yes, I unlock the mysteries of the heavenly dimension and no one can shut the door! And I lock the entrance and none [of the old mindsets] can access it!* ***The links in the chain****, are the prophetic words in the mouth of David and the Prophets till John the Baptist. These words already chained Satanas to the irreversible intention of God. Mat 12:29 Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.* ***See Extended Notes on The Thousand Years at the end of chapter 20.****)*

Chapter 13

1 As I stood upon the sand of the seashore, I saw a ferocious Beast emerging out of the waters. It had ten horns and seven heads and every horn was wrapped in royal diadems. And written upon its heads were

slanderous, blasphemous names. *(Have you ever wondered why the name Jesus, not Buddha, Mohammed or Elvis Presley or any other influential name in history or modern times, is the name that is most commonly used as a swear word? See Eph 3:15 Every family in heaven and on earth originates in him; his is mankind's family name and he remains the authentic identity of every nation. Also Eph 1:21, God has given Jesus a Name that is beyond comparison above any other name in the heavenly realm or upon the earth for all time and eternity! The salvation that he worked is the greatest source of frustration and embarrassment to the religious systems of this world. What the Name of Jesus represents puts religion out of business!*
The imagery reminds of Dan 7:3. See also Rev 17:8. This "wild Beast from the sea," as in Dan 7:17, Dan 7:23)

2 This wild animal looked like a leopard with the powerful paws of a [1]bear and the mouth of a lion. And the Dragon gave its assumed power to the Beast; also its throne and great authority. *([1]**arktos**, bear, from **arkeo**, to be possessed of great strength. throne, from **thrao** to sit; a stately seat. The Satanas-system is what empowers religion.)*

3 One of its heads appeared to be [1]slain then it miraculously revived and was restored to health again. The entire human race was mesmerized by this. *(Here the "Christian-Religion" is represented by the same multi-headed Beast - mimicking the slain and resurrected Lamb - Only John uses the word, [1]**sphatzo**, which speaks of a brutal slaying. Four times in the book of Revelation he employs this word with direct reference to the slain Lamb of God, and once in 1 John 3:12 in reference to Cain's [1]killing of his brother Abel. See my commentary notes there.*
There is no saving power or relevance in a death and resurrection-belief that fails to see mankind's co-inclusion in the same event. In the mind and belief of God, an inseparable association exists, where, together with Jesus, mankind died and the same human race was co-revived and co-raised! Hosea 6:2 After two days he will revive us on the third day he will raise us up! This happened while we were still dead in our sins and trespasses. Eph 2:5,6.)

4 They all worshiped both the Dragon who gave its power to the Beast as well as the Beast itself. Convinced that it had no equal and that it was invincible. *(The Dragon is the source-system of accusation empowering the Beast of the religion of performance and self-effort with its inevitable fruit of judgment and condemnation.)*

5 The Beast, was given a loud, boastful and blasphemous mouth for the duration of forty two months. *(See v 2, The Dragon gave its assumed power to the Beast; also its throne and great authority. Forty and two months - **mēnas tesserakonta kai duo** - accusative of extent of time. This period is also mentioned in Dan 7:25 and Dan 12:7. It occurs in three forms in Revelation, forty-two months, here; **1260 days**, Rev 11:3; Rev 12:6; **time, times and half a time** or **3-1/2 years**, Rev 12:14 and so in Daniel. This symbolic period is is the duration of the sojourn of the woman in the wilderness, as well as the duration of the prophesying of the two witnesses, which is the culmination of the law and the prophets in the 3 and a half years of Jesus' ministry - from his baptism to his crucifixion. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. Dan 9:27. The middle of the week - 3 and a half days prophetically pointing to the 3 and a half years of Jesus' ministry.)*

6 It hurled its accusations in God's face, while blaspheming his Name and tabernacle and those dwelling in the heavenlies. *(The words, [1]**pros ton theon** positions the Accuser to now face God's image and likeness incarnate in human form, since there was no trace of accusation present in the heavenlies, having been thoroughly expelled from any further presence or relevance in the heavenly sphere. [Rev 12:8-10] The significance of heaven endorsing the tabernacle of God on earth - in both its prophetic symbolism as well as its tangible unveiling in incarnate human life, is now the target of accusation and every blasphemous utterance of this Beast who takes its authority from Mr. Accusation himself!*
*And them that dwell in heaven; **kai tous en too ouranoo skenountas** - in*

contrast to those whose minds are still trapped in earthbound-mode! See verse 8)

7 And it was given the mission to wage war against [1]those who have discovered their wholeness in Christ and to conquer them and to dominate the entire spectrum of people-groupings; every tribe, tongue and nation. *(The word, [1]**hagios**, saints, refers to wholeness of body soul and spirit - see 1 Cor 1:30. The words remind of Dan 7:21,22,23. Where there seemed to be no escape from the Beast's rule. However, the fact that the Beast failed in its mission is already celebrated in Rev 5:13 as well as in Rev 7:9 At this moment I saw a massive throng of people, impossible to count, standing tall and innocent; everyone of them dressed in white with palm branches in their hands; they have [1]escaped everything that could possibly define them as a non-Jewish, Gentile world! In fact, every sphere of society were there - including the entire spectrum of people-groupings; all tribal identities with their unique language-specific dialect preferences; they were all present facing the throne and the Lamb as the people of the planet! [The preposition [1]**ek**, points to source or origin; mankind was delivered out of their national, geographical and historical identities! Seven times in the book of Revelation human society is addressed in the most all-inclusive fashion, with a similar grouping of words. Rev 5:9, Rev 7:9, Rev 10:11, Rev 11:9, here in Rev 13:7, Rev 14:6 and Rev 17:15. Also note Rev 5:13 and Rev 11:15.])*

8 The plan was to engage the entire [1]earthbound population of the planet to worship the Beast. *(The counterfeit "slain and risen lamb")* **This would endorse the idea** *(of religion)* **that there were individuals, since the [3]fall of the [4]cosmos, whose [2]names were not included in the [5]slain Lamb's Book of Life.** *(The word [1]**katoikeō** from **kata**, down and **oikeo**, to dwell or set up home - thus, to be earthbound. Paul invites us to engage our thoughts with resurrection realities and to see ourselves co-raised and seated together with Christ in heavenly places! Col 3:1-3. Rev 17:8 also Rev 16:16.*
In the context of verse 6, clearly the target of the "blasphemy" was to insult

and interrogate the [2]Name! See Eph 3:15 Every family in heaven and on earth originates in him; his is mankind's family name and he remains the authentic identity of every nation. The entire industry of accusation is about the blatant blasphemy of the name that reveals and redeems mankind's original identity.

"The Book of Life" - this language is taken from the custom of registering the names of persons in a list, roll, or catalogue. In Jewish tradition there was a prevailing fear that your name might be blotted out of the Book of Life if your behavior did not please God. See Ex 32:32 Here the suggestion is that some names were not even written in the Lamb's Book of Life to begin with! See also Rev 17:8, ...the ones whose names have not been written in the Book of Life from the fall of the world." This idea would obviously boost the Calvinistic deception of election, that if you're not "chosen", you're doomed - which is a ridiculous contradiction to the entire context and conclusion of the Gospel! See notes on The Book of Life at the end of chapter 17.

*The word [5]**esphagmenou** is the Perfect Passive Participle of the verb, **sphazō**, to slay in sacrifice. The Perfect Participle is used to describe a state that exists at the time as a result of action completed prior to the time of the main verb. The basic thought of the perfect tense is that the progress of an action has been completed and the results of the action are continuing on, in full effect. In other words, the progress of the action has reached its culmination and the finished results are now present.*

*The word, [4]**kosmos** in the NT refers to the entire human family and their social structures. The word often translated foundation, **kataballo**, from **kata** and **ballo**, meaning "to fall away, to put in a lower place," instead of **themelios**, meaning "foundation" [see Ephesians 2:20; also Rev 21:14,19]; thus, I translated it "the fall of the world," instead of "the foundation of the world." The entire "Fall" was a falling away in our minds from our true identity as image and likeness bearers of Elohim. Just like Eve, were we all deceived to believe a lie about ourselves, which is the fruit of the "I-am-not-tree ". We all, like sheep have gone astray. [Isa 53:6]*

See 1 Peter 1:20 He was always destined in God's prophetic thought; God knew even before the fall of the world order that his son would be the Lamb, to be made manifest in these last days, because of you! [You are the reason Jesus died and was raised!])

9 Now listen up with your inner ears!

10 Here is something for [1]those who have discovered their wholeness in me to patiently ponder and perceive by faith! Being taken [2]captive by the spear and killed by the sword made death a doorway into the very domain in which mankind was held captive - *[now to be led out triumphantly as the Lamb's trophies!] (The word, [1]**hagios**, saints, refers to wholeness of body soul and spirit - see 1 Cor 1:30 and Rom 1:7. The word [2]**aichmalōtizō** from **aichme**, spear and **halosis**, to capture, thus, to arrest at spear point. See John 18:3, "Judas was given a Roman military cohort of about 600 soldiers to accompany him; they came together with temple officers from the chief priests and Pharisees with torches, lanterns and their weapons."*

*Paul sees captive mankind taken captive in the death, descent into hell and resurrection and ascension of the incarnate Word, the man Jesus Christ. See Psalm 68:18, which Paul quotes in Eph 4:8, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and repossessed his gifts in man, in order that even the backsliding, the headstrong, the wayward, the rebellious may rest; or may now inhabit - Oh Jahweh God. (The Hebrew word, **shakan**, שָׁכַן means to inhabit.)*

*In the Septuagint, this Psalm is Ps 67:19 and reads, **anebes eis hupsos, echmaloteusas aichmalosian elabes domata en anthropo** - "You ascended on high taking captive captivity and repossessed your gifts in man." See Ephesians 2:6, We are also elevated in his ascension to be equally welcome in the throne room of the heavenly realm where we are now seated together with him in his authority. We were born anew in his resurrection. 1 Pet 1:3, Hos 6:2.*

*See Mirror Bible Eph 4:8 "Scripture confirms that he led us as trophies in his triumphant procession on high; he [1]repossessed his gift (likeness) in human form. Paul quotes from Ps 68:18, which is verse 19 in the Hebrew text, You ascended on high, you led captivity captive [in your resurrection from the dead] [1]**lakachta mattanoth baadam**, you have taken gifts in human form, in Adam. [The gifts which Jesus Christ distributes to us he has*

received in us, in and by virtue of his incarnation. Commentary by Adam Clarke.])

11 Then I saw another wild animal; this one emerged out of the earth - it had two horns and resembled a young Lamb, yet it had a Dragon's voice. *(The counterfeit "trinity" emerges - the one mirroring the other - the Dragon Accuser, the seven-headed sea-monster of religion with its leading role player, the head that was slain but became alive again and now the Dragon clothed in a lamb's-disguise)*

12 Even though it had the appearance of the Lamb, it operated under the same authority as the previous Beast - under the watchful eye of the Dragon! *[Counterfeit-Christianity as a religion is a wolf in sheep's clothing!]* **It is the same old Dragon in a Lamb's disguise! It's mission was to engage the [1]earthbound dwellers to worship the counterfeit - the slaughtered animal that was restored to life out of its death.** *(The historic relevance of the death and resurrection of the Lamb is in the revelation of mankind's co-inclusion - Jesus died our death and went into our hell and we were co-quickened in his resurrection and are co-seated together with him in heavenly places!*
*Again John employs the word [1]**katoikeō** from **kata**, down and **oikeo**, to dwell or set up home - thus to be earthbound. Rev 13:8.*
*Matthew 7:15 "Beware of false Prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." In his sight - **enōpion autou**. In the eye of the first Beast who gets his authority from the Dragon - Rev 13:3)*

13 It had the power to mesmerise the masses with great signs - even fire falling out of the sky, *(Reminds of Pharaoh's magicians. 1 Cor 1:22 The Jews crave signs [to confirm their doubts] while the Greeks revel in philosophical debate! [Both groups are addicted to the same soul realm.] The supernatural is not proof of faith - Israel witnessed the supernatural for 40 years, day and night but an entire generation died in unbelief, failing to possess the promise, by believing a lie about themselves! See Num 13:33 and Joshua 2:11.)*

14 deceiving the earth-dwellers, dazzling them with their magic whilst operating like a puppet on a string under the watchful eye of the Beast. The instruction was for the earth-dwellers to make an [1]idol-image of this "lamb" who was slain with a [1]knife and then revived again! *(The word [1]**eikon** means image or likeness - this is the theme of the Bible and redemption; the image and likeness of God revealed and redeemed in human form! Idolatry is a projection of an image of one's own making. Idolatry is the crux of religion - it is expensive business since your idol is like a slot machine at the casino! It remains hungry and it is wired to bite and bankrupt you! The word, **machaira** is used for a large knife, used for killing animals typically in the slaying of a sacrifice. Religion has a life of its own - the idea was that since the Dragon has lost its accusation claim against the human race in the heavenlies, [Rev 12:8,9,10] it now had to find a pseudo, make-belief, future existence in the icons of man's imagination.)*

15 This lamb-like Beast *[resembling the typical Christian religion]* **gave its man-made mirror image breath and a voice to speak and threaten to kill all who would not worship the image.**

16 Its mission was to mirror-imprint its character upon everyone's hands and minds in order to manipulate what they think and do. *(So what is the mark of the Beast all about? The Greek word translated mark, is the word **charagma**, a stamp, an imprinted mark from **charax** or **charaktēr**, just like in Hebrew 1:1-3, the son radiates the **character** of the Father. Either the character of the Father or the character of the fallen mind will influence our actions (hand) because it is what engages our thoughts (forehead). Just like in Isaiah 55:8-11 where God says, "Your thoughts are not my thoughts; therefore your ways are not my ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.....but my word will incarnate, and saturate earth (flesh) just like the rain and the snow cancel the distance between heaven and earth! Instead of the thorn, the fir and instead of the brier, the*

myrtle! This explains the first part of Isa 55 - Ho! Everyone who is thirsty - disappointed in their own efforts to buy that which cannot be purchased with the currency of their own achievement; desperate to escape the sense of unworthiness, lack and condemnation; paying any price in the hope to become [what they in reality already are by design!] This is the basis of the mindset of the "I-am-not tree-system!" Isa 55:1 Your thirst drives you to the waters but you have no money; I urge you to buy without your currency and drink priceless wine and eat the finest wheat [ἄνευ ἀργυρίου καὶ τιμῆς [perceived value] οἴνου καὶ στέαρ - Ps 147:3 -Sept He satisfies you with the finest of the wheat.] Your painful and wearisome labor adds no value to your life! Hear me! Incline your ears! I want to honor and indulge you with that which truly satisfies! This is the bread your soul craves; this is your true sustenance!
Adam Clarke comments, "Why should ye be so zealously attached to a doctrine from which your souls derive neither comfort nor nourishment?")

17 The intent was clear: to control the world markets by manipulating people's minds and behavior with the idea of the original sin, with its typical symptoms: "I am not defined by my being, I am defined by my doing. Therefore, I need to achieve this and buy that to define me!" Failure- and sin-consciousness would be the currency of the entire religious industry! No one could buy or sell without being identified by the character, name and number-code *[password]* **of their idol, the Beast - the make-belief slain and raised to life lamb with the Dragon's voice!** *(The entire industry of religion was based on the currency of sin-consciousness. The business of accusation [Satanas] flourishes in an environment of sin-consciousness. See John 2:13 Jesus then went up to Jerusalem in time for the Jewish Passover. John 2:14 When Jesus went into the temple he was shocked to find scores of traders selling their sacrificial items, cattle, sheep and doves. Even their money brokers were comfortably set up in the sanctuary. (The business of sin-consciousness has taken over the mindset of religion - until Jesus arrives.) 2:15 Then with a whip that he plaited of small strands, he drove everyone with their sheep and oxen out of the temple and overturned the tables of the money brokers so that their money went flying all over the place. (Jesus dramatically reveals that his Father has no delight in our religious sacrificial systems and its sin-*

conscious currencies. The word σχοῖνος - schoinos, from skenos, tabernacle or skin - leather thongs - this is a profound prophetic picture of his own broken skin that would become the whip to drive out sin-consciousness from our minds - the ultimate cleansing of the temple - the sanctuary of God within us! 1 Peter 1:18,19.) 2:16 He also drove the dove traders out with, "How dare you turn my Father's house into a shopping mall?")

18 This riddle demands solving! Now put your mind to it, here is the clue: calculate the number of the Beast and see how it points directly to the number of mankind - it is a trinity of sixes! *(The numerical value of human life is 6 - Man-made religion is a mindset dominated by knowing oneself and others according to the flesh - the trinity of sixes is the mark of the counterfeit trinity that is defeated in the unfolding of the Lamb's triumph. In the imagery that follows, in the next chapter, John sees how the triune religious counterfeit system, the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet are thoroughly stripped of their influence and dominion and brought to naught.*
The name Ἰησοῦς Jesus is expressed by the number 888. I = 10; η = 8; σ = 200; ο = 70; υ = 400; σ = 200.
Written in full, heksakosioi, εξακοσιοι = 600, heksekonta, εξηκοντα = sixty and hex, εξ = 6 or, χ = 600; ξ = 60; ς' = 6 Thus χξς = 666 Vincent makes the following observation, χς' the name of Christ abridged, and ξ the emblem of the serpent, so that the sublimated sense is the Messiah of Satanas.)
Revelation Chapter 13 Extended Notes:
Counterfeit-Christianity as a religion is a wolf in sheep's clothing!
The Mark of The Beast - the currency of sin-consciousness
An Open heaven
Counterfeit-Christianity - A wolf in sheep's clothing!
Counterfeit Christianity is not a specific denomination; its a veiled perception of mankind's authentic origin and redeemed identity and innocence! See Paul's take here in 2 Cor 4:3 If our message seems vague to anyone, it is not because we are withholding something from certain people! It is just because some are so stubborn in their efforts to uphold an outdated system that they don't see it! They are all equally found in Christ but they prefer to remain lost in the cul-de-sac

language of the law!

2 Cor 4:4 The survival and self-improvement programs of the [1]religious systems of this world veil the minds of the unbelievers; exploiting their ignorance about their true origin and their redeemed innocence. The veil of unbelief obstructs a person's view and keeps them from seeing what the light of the gospel so clearly reveals: the [2]glory of God is the image and likeness of our Maker redeemed in human form; this is what the gospel of Christ is all about. *(The god of this [1]**aion**, age, refers to the religious systems and governing structures of this world. The unbelief that neutralized Israel in the wilderness was the lie that they believed about themselves; "We are grasshoppers, and the 'enemy' is a giant beyond any proportion!" [Num 13:33, Josh 2:11, Heb 4:6] "They failed to possess the promise due to unbelief." The blueprint [2]**doxa**, glory of God, is what Adam lost on mankind's behalf. [See Eph 4:18])*

Rev 13:3 One of its heads appeared to be [1]slain then it miraculously revived and was restored to health again. The entire human race was mesmerized by this. *(Here the "Christian-Religion" is represented by the same multi-headed Beast - mimicking the slain and resurrected Lamb - Only John uses the word, [1]**sphatzo**, which speaks of a brutal slaying. Four times in the book of Revelation he employs this word with direct reference to the slain Lamb of God, and once in 1 John 3:12 in reference to Cain's [1]killing of his brother Abel. See my commentary notes there.*

There is no saving power or relevance in a death and resurrection-belief that fails to see mankind's co-inclusion in the same event. In the mind and belief of God, an inseparable association exists, where, together with Jesus, mankind died and the same human race was co-revived and co-raised! Hosea 6:2 After two days he will revive us on the third day he will raise us up! This happened while we were still dead in our sins and trespasses. Eph 2:5,6.)

Rev 13:11 Then I saw another wild animal; this one emerged out of the earth - it had two horns and resembled a young lamb; yet it had a Dragon's voice. *(The counterfeit "trinity" emerges - the one mirroring the other - the Dragon Accuser, the seven-headed sea-monster of religion with its leading role player, the head that was slain but became alive again and now the Dragon clothed in a lamb's-disguise)*

Rev 13:12 Even though it had the appearance of the lamb, it operated under the same authority as the previous Beast - under the watchful eye of the Dragon! *[Counterfeit-Christianity as a religion is a wolf in sheep's clothing!]* **It's the same old Dragon in a lamb's disguise! It's mission was to engage the [1]earthbound dwellers to worship the counterfeit - the slaughtered animal that was restored to life out of its death.** *(The historic relevance of the death and resurrection of the Lamb is in the revelation of mankind's co-inclusion - Jesus died our death and went into our hell and we were co-quickened in his resurrection and are co-seated together with him in heavenly places!*

*Again John employs the word [1]**katoikeō** from **kata**, down and **oikeo**, to dwell or set up home - thus to be earthbound. Rev 13:8.*

*Matthew 7:15 "Beware of false Prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." In his sight - **enōpion autou**. In the eye of the first Beast who gets his authority from the Dragon - Rev 13:3)*

Rev 13:13 It had the power to mesmerise the masses with apparent great signs - even fire falling out of the sky. *(1 Cor 1:22 The Jews crave signs [to confirm their doubts] while the Greeks revel in philosophical debate! [Both groups are addicted to the same soul realm.] The supernatural is not proof of faith - Israel witnessed the supernatural for 40 years, day and night but an entire generation died in unbelief, failing to possess the promise, by believing a lie about themselves! See Num 13:33 and Joshua 2:11.)*

Rev 13:14 Deceiving the earth-dwellers, dazzling them with signs, whilst operating like a puppet on a string under the watchful eye of the Beast. The instruction was for the earth-dwellers to make an [1]idol-image of the "lamb" who was slain with a [1]knife and then revived again! *(The word [1]**eikon** means image or likeness - this is the theme of the Bible and redemption; the image and likeness of God revealed and redeemed in human form! Idolatry is a projection of an image of one's own making. Idolatry is the crux of religion - it is expensive business since your idol is like a slot machine at the casino! It remains hungry and it is wired to bite and bankrupt you! The word, **machaira** is used for a large knife, used for killing animals typically in the slaying of a sacrifice. Religion has a life of its own - the idea was that since the Dragon has lost its accusation claim*

against the human race in the heavenlies, [Rev 12:8,9,10] it now had to find a pseudo, make-belief future existence in the icons of man's imagination.)

Rev 13:15 This lamb-like Beast *[resembling the typical Christian religion]* **gave its man-made mirror image breath and a voice to speak and threaten to kill all who would not worship the image.**

Rev 13:16 Its mission was to mirror-imprint its character upon everyone's hands and minds in order to manipulate what they think and do.

The deception of the religious structures of the world which engaged mankind with a counterfeit trinity, playing out in counterfeit "worship" based on a counterfeit identity, and an economy, built upon the business of fake, "what's-in-it-for-me-friendship" and adulterous fornication. Her harlotry intoxicated all the nations, even the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her; and the merchants of the earth became rich from the power of her make-belief luxury.

Mankind became snared in the perverted harlotry system of religion and by the Lamb's doing is now dramatically redeemed to the bliss of the romance of the ages!

Rev 12:9 So the great Dragon, the [1]ancient [2]ophis *[serpent],* **also known as the Devil or Satan - whose sole mission was to lead the entire inhabited world astray - was cast down to the earth-dimension, together with all his [3]herding-heralds.** *(The word [1]**archaios**, ancient, of old; from **arche**, from the beginning. As Jesus said that the Devil was a murderer "from the beginning" The Greek word, [2]**ophis** is translated serpent and comes from **optomai**, to gaze, in this case, to present a visual idea through illusion. John 8:44. He was stripped of his pseudo rank of authority see Col 2:14,15 he was made a public spectacle! Luke 10:18 And Jesus said to them, I saw Satan falling out of heaven like lightning! Also John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast down. [When I am lifted up on the cross. Jn 12:32] The word often translated angel, [3]**aggelos** has two components, **ago** to lead as a shepherd leads and **agele,** a herd of cattle or company.)*

Rev 12:10 Then I heard a very loud voice in the heavens announcing, This is the moment which the entire prophetic word pointed to and culminates in; it is the realization of mankind's salvation. The power of

the kingdom of our God and its authority is endorsed in the I-am-ness of his Christ. The business of accusation is bankrupted. The 24/7 industry of condemning the brotherhood of mankind before the face of God has been annihilated. *(The word [1]**kategoros**, a name given to the Devil by the Rabbis, the one whose business is accusation, from **kata**, downward and **agora**, to trade; a word used for all kinds of business in the public arena.)*

Rev 17:2 She engaged the kings of the earth with her harlotry intoxicating the earth dwellers with the wine of her passion and fornication.

Rev 17:3 The messenger then carried me into a desert place *[in total contrast to the hustle and bustle of the busy trade routes of the oceans and the rivers]* **I was transported there in spirit and saw a Woman seated upon a [1]scarlet colored Beast; with [2]blasphemous, insulting names written all over them like a label revealing the content of their [3]cargo. The Beast had seven heads and ten horns.** *(For reference to the same Beast, Rev 13:1-10 and its second Partner in verse 11, 12, the Lamb with the Dragon's voice, later called the False Prophet and here, the Harlot. Together in their alliance with the Dragon they form the Counterfeit Trinity. Also Rev 17:12)*

Rev 19:20 And the Beast and the miracle working Puppet Partner, the False Prophet were arrested and cast into the lake ablaze with sulphur. These two were the ones, empowered by the Dragon to amaze and deceive those who were tattooed in their heads and hands with the character of the Beast and paying religious homage to its image. *(The word [1]**theion**, Sulphar, from **theios**, godlike (neuter as noun, divinity): - divine, godhead. sulphur is a yellow inflammable mineral substance found in quantities on the shores of the Dead Sea. This was also known as divine incense, because burning brimstone was regarded as having power to purify, and to ward off disease. Its medicinal values are well known even today.*

Rev 14:8-20 In the imagery here, John sees how the triune religious counterfeit system, the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet are thoroughly stripped of their influence and dominion and brought to naught. The False Prophet is mentioned in Rev 16:13 (KJV) "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the Dragon, and out of

the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the False Prophet." Here in Rev 19:20 and also in Rev 20:10 The Devil, who led them astray will be hurled into the lake of fire and brimstone where his puppet partners, the Beast and the False Prophet have already been confined to. Day and Night they will be the subject of God's touchstone for the ages of the ages - the very atmosphere of the entire universe will be thoroughly fumigated from any evidence of Satanas. (See my notes on the Touchstone in Rev 14:10) Rev 13:11 Then I saw another wild animal; this one emerged out of the earth - it had two horns and resembled a young lamb; yet it had a Dragon's voice. [The counterfeit "trinity" emerges - the one mirroring the other - 1/ the Dragon-Accuser; 2/ the seven headed sea-monster of religion with its leading role player, the head that was slain but became alive again; 3/ and now, here, the Dragon clothed in a lamb's-disguise; later called, the false Prophet.]) See extended ***Notes on The lake of fire*** *at the end of this chapter.)*

Rev 15:2 Then I saw something that looked like an ocean on fire; its liquid waters became a solid surface like transparent glass [1]molded in its heat. Standing tall in triumph on top of the glassy sea, with their God-harps, were the redeemed ones who [2]emerged victorious [3]out of the grasp and claim of the false trinity-system of religious indoctrination - the Beast, its image, its character imprint and its password name and number-code. *(The word [2]****nikoontas*** *is the Present Participle of* ***nikao****, to conquer; the Present Participle describes an action thought of as simultaneous with the action of the main verb, [1]****memigmenen*** *- a victory having been forged in fire, which is the Perfect Passive Participle of* ***mignumi****, to mingle, to mix. The Perfect Tense denotes an action which is completed in the past, but the effects of which are regarded as continuing into the present.*

A reminder of the prophetic picture of Israel walking as it were on dry land through the ocean of waters when God led them out of Pharaoh's claim!

The preposition ***ek*** *denotes origin - here, clearly pointing to the fact that these have escaped the tyranny of slavery to the corrupt religious system of a false identity.*

This is the transaction of the ages, where the Lamb that was slain enters the market place where slaves are sold and he redeems mankind – purchases us back out of the hands of the claim of accusation – ***Satanas*** *– the Dragon ,*

the Beast of religion, the false Prophet – mankind is redeemed from the idolatry of centuries of devotion to an image of their own making, reflecting a lost identity. The transaction-idea is to persuade our minds of our redeemed value. Jesus didn't buy us back from the Devil! A thief never becomes owner! Ps 22:27 and Ps 24:1)

Rev 15:3 This song of the redeemed echoes the song of Moses, God's servant and the song of the Lamb, singing: "The things you do are spectacular and amazing, Lord God Almighty. Righteousness and truth are your trademarks! You are the King of the ages and of the Nations." *(See my commentary note to this verse.)*

In the genius of God, the scandal of the cross, revealed in the extremities of the Lamb's suffering as the scapegoat of the human race, disengaged every principality and pseudo mindset of opposition to the revelation of the Romance of the ages.

The Mark of The Beast - the currency of sin-consciousness

Rev 13:15 This lamb-like Beast *[resembling the typical counterfeit Christian religion]* **gave its man-made mirror image breath and a voice to speak and threaten to kill all who would not worship the image.**

Rev 13:16 Its mission was to mirror-imprint its character upon everyone's hands and minds in order to manipulate what they think and do. *(So what is the mark of the Beast all about? The Greek word translated mark, is the word* ***charagma****, a stamp, an imprinted mark from* ***charax*** *or* ***charaktēr****, just like in Hebrew 1:1-3, the son radiates the* ***character*** *of the Father. Either the character of the Father or the character of the fallen mind will influence our actions (hand) because it is what engages our thoughts (forehead). Just like in Isaiah 55:8-11 where God says, "Your thoughts are not my thoughts; therefore your ways are not my ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.....but my word will incarnate, and saturate earth (flesh) just like the rain and the snow cancel the distance between heaven and earth! Instead of the thorn, the fir and instead of the brier, the myrtle! This explains the first part of Isa 55 - Ho! Everyone who is thirsty - disappointed in their own efforts to buy that which cannot be purchased with the currency of their own achievement; desperate to escape the sense of unworthiness, lack and condemnation; paying any price in the hope to become [what they in reality already are by design!] This is the basis of the mindset of the "I-am-not tree-system!" Isa 55:1 Your*

thirst drives you to the waters but you have no money; I urge you to buy without your currency and drink priceless wine and eat the finest wheat [ἄνευ ἀργυρίου καὶ τιμῆς [perceived value] οἴνου καὶ στέαρ - Ps 147:3 - Septuagint: He satisfies you with the finest of the wheat.] Your painful and wearisome labor adds no value to your life! Hear me! Incline your ears! I want to honor and indulge you with that which truly satisfies! This is the bread your soul craves; this is your true sustenance!
Adam Clarke comments, "Why should ye be so zealously attached to a doctrine from which your souls derive neither comfort nor nourishment?")
Rev 13:17 The intent was clear: to control the world markets by manipulating people's minds and behavior with the idea of the original sin, with its typical symptoms: "I am not defined by my being, I am defined by my doing. Therefore, I need to achieve this and buy that to define me!" Failure- and sin-consciousness would be the currency of the entire religious industry! No one could buy or sell without being identified by the character, name and number-code *[password]* **of their idol, the Beast - the make-belief slain and raised to life lamb with the Dragon's voice!** *(The entire industry of religion was based on the currency of sin-consciousness. The business of accusation [Satanas] flourishes in an environment of sin-consciousness. See John 2:13 Jesus then went up to Jerusalem in time for the Jewish Passover. John 2:14 When Jesus went into the temple he was shocked to find scores of traders selling their sacrificial items, cattle, sheep and doves. Even their money brokers were comfortably set up in the sanctuary. (The business of sin-consciousness has taken over the mindset of religion - until Jesus arrives.) 2:15 Then with a whip that he plaited of small strands, he drove everyone with their sheep and oxen out of the temple and overturned the tables of the money brokers so that their money went flying all over the place. (Jesus dramatically reveals that his Father has no delight in our religious sacrificial systems and its sin-conscious currencies. The word σχοῖνος - schoinos, from skenos, tabernacle or skin - leather thongs - this is a profound prophetic picture of his own broken skin that would become the whip to drive out sin-consciousness from our minds - the ultimate cleansing of the temple - the sanctuary of God within us! 1 Peter 1:18,19.) 2:16 He also drove the dove traders out with, "How dare you turn my Father's house into a shopping mall?")*
Rev This riddle demands solving! Now put your mind to it, here is the clue: calculate the number of the Beast and see how it points directly to

the number of mankind - it is a trinity of sixes! *(The numerical value of human life is 6 - Man-made religion is a mindset dominated by knowing oneself and others according to the flesh - the trinity of sixes is the mark of the counterfeit trinity that is defeated in the unfolding of the Lamb's triumph. In the imagery that follows, in the next chapter, John sees how the triune religious counterfeit system, the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet are thoroughly stripped of their influence and dominion and brought to naught.*
The name Ἰησοῦς Jesus is expressed by the number 888. I = 10; η = 8; σ = 200; ο = 70; υ = 400; σ = 200.
Written in full, heksakosioi, εξακοσιοι = 600, heksekonta, εξηκοντα = sixty and hex, εξ = 6 or, χ = 600; ξ = 60; ϛ' = 6 Thus ***χξϛ*** *= 666. Vincent makes the following observation,* ***χϛ*** *' the name of Christ abridged, and* ***ξ*** *the emblem of the serpent.*
The Christ image in man is flawed by the veiled mind introduced by the Serpent's deception of the "I am not- idea"!

1 John 3:8 Sin's source is a [1]fallen mindset, from the beginning! For this purpose the Son of God was revealed! His mission was to undo the works of the Devil! *(The word,* ***diabolos****, from* ***dia****, because of and* ***ballo****, to cast down.)*

1 John 3:9 To discover one's authentic sonship in God, is to discover true freedom from sin. We are born of him and his seed remains in us; this is the only possible reference to sober up the mind from the intoxicating influence of deception. *(The incorruptible seed of our Father carries the exact pattern of the authentic life of our design! Jesus calls the Devil, the father of lies.*

1 John 3:12 Cain's [1]killing of his brother Abel, is in such contrast to this! His motivation was clearly [2]sourced in the [3]poneros tree-system; his idea of Divine [4]favor was to count on his own works as being superior to his brother's faith righteousness. *(Immediately after the fall, Adam named the woman Eloyim gave him, Eve, [in Hebrew* ***Chawah****, and in Greek,* ***Zoe****.] He thus co-echoes and reinforces the prophetic word that* ***Eloyim*** *gave him: Life in the face of death! "The seed of the woman, shall crush the deceiver's head!" The fallen mindset shall be destroyed! So here, in their two sons, we have the first generation of fallen mankind confronted with their personal pursuit of a lost identity and a lost sense of value and*

favor. Caleb's motivation was clearly sourced [[2]***ek**, *out of, origin] in the* ***diabolos*** *[cast down], which is so typical of the* [3]***poneros*** *tree-system. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil [****poneros****] represents mankind's lost sense of identity and righteousness, where the global pursuit of mankind would now be their constant effort to achieve righteousness by means of their own works. This inevitably leads to disappointment where shame replaces innocence, and union and fellowship are lost. The word evil,* ***poneros****, suggests to be full of hardships, labors and annoyances. Gen 3:19 "In the sweat of your face shalt you eat your bread." The sacrifice of Cain is exactly that! It represents his trust in the fruit of his own toil to gain him a* [4]*favorable [****charin****] standing with God.*

We have the prophetic picture of a scapegoat repeated here in Genesis 4. Not only in the sacrifice that Abel brought; but also in him being murdered by his brother! Just like we would one day murder our brother Jesus! In Genesis 3, Eloyim did not clothe Adam with the skin of an animal because of a divine need to be appeased, but because of their unconditional love for Adam; they spoke the language of Adam's own judgment: Adam, not Eloyim, was embarrassed about his nakedness. The clothing was not to make Eloyim look at Adam differently, but to make Adam feel better about himself! And ultimately it was to prepare Adam for the unveiling of the mystery of mankind's redemption in the incarnation. Here Deity would clothe themselves in human skin in a Son, and the Lion of Judah, would become the Lamb of God, in order to free our minds to re discover his image and likeness in our skin! Revelation 5:5,6.

Only John uses the word, [1]***sphatzo****, which speaks of a slaying. Four times in the book of Revelation he employs this word in the context of the slain Lamb of God.*

See also Hebrews 11:4, "It was faith that made the difference between the sacrifices of Abel and Cain, and confirmed Abel's righteousness. God bore witness to righteousness as a gift rather than a reward! Even though he was murdered, his faith still has a voice today."

Philo a Hellenistic Jewish philosopher says, that in the dispute between Cain and Abel, Abel attributed all things to God, and Cain ascribed everything to himself; so that the controversy was about grace and works. [Philo lived c. 25 BCE – c. 50 CE]

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents a fallen identity; the

thought that likeness with God could be earned through good intentions, rather than realizing the gift of life that already defines his image and likeness in us.)

Heb 8:12 This knowledge of me will never again be based on a sin-consciousness. My act of mercy, extended in Christ as the new Covenant, has removed every possible definition of sin from memory!

(God's memory of our sins was not what needed to be addressed in the redemption of our innocence. God did not have a problem with sin-consciousness, we had! He wasn't hiding from Adam and Eve in the garden; they were hiding from him! What needed to be addressed were our perceptions of a judgmental God, which were the inevitable fruit of the "I-am-not tree system " and mentality.

Revenge, judgment, guilt, condemnation, inferiority, shame, regret, suspicion etc. could not be treated lightly; they are the enemies of romance! If rules could do it, then the law would be our opportunity to save ourselves, simply by making the correct decisions! If willpower could save us then Moses would be our savior! But, alas! "The good that I want to do I cannot!" See Rom 7

The scapegoat system would be introduced to somehow address and attempt to manage the consequences of sin. The typical "eye for and eye, tooth for a tooth" scenario would be substituted with the idea of a scapegoat. And so, every system of sacrifice carried some significance, but only as far as it pointed to its weaknesses in dealing with the root of the problem, and the need for a better solution! We needed more than forgiveness of our sins; we needed a savior who could rescue us from our sinfulness! This was not merely a means whereby we could get rid of the cobwebs; the spider needed to be killed! The "pay now, sin later-system" had a very real sell-by date!

See Heb 10:2 & 3, Had it been possible to present the perfect offering that had the power to successfully remove any trace of a sin-consciousness, then the sacrificial system would surely have ceased to be relevant. But in the very repetition of these ritual sacrifices the awareness of guilt is reinforced rather than removed.

God does not demand sacrifice; he provides the sacrifice! The ultimate sacrifice for sins would never be something we did, or brought to God, to appeal to him; but the shocking scandal of the cross, is the fact that mankind is confronted with the extravagant, embarrassing proportions of the love of their Maker; he would go to the most ridiculous extreme to

finally convince us of his heart towards us! In order to persuade us of our worth to him, he speaks the most severe scapegoat language: "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world!" This completely disarms religion! Suddenly there is nothing that we can do to persuade God about our sincere intentions; this is God persuading us of his eternal love dream!)

"Why the other tree and why the temptation in the Garden?"

I think the picture that we are presented with in the garden of Sabbath abundance, and of the 2 trees and the temptation, presents us inevitably with the full scope of our design! We are not robots who are to simply respond to our Maker in remote control fashion.

To give ultimate context to the setting of paradise beauty, we were presented with the opportunity to consciously and spontaneously fellowship with our invisible Maker and to explore the dynamics of our own being there; and from that place of knowing that we are known we would reflect what we discover in fellowship union and intimacy in Eloyim and in one another! We were designed to explore the limitless dimensions of our being as referenced in our Source.

The temptation was to follow the suggestion of an alternative idea that maybe we are not perfect by design; maybe, we thought, even Eloyim knew that we are not really what they had in mind, and would therefore feel threatened by our knowledge of good and evil; maybe that is the reason they didn't want us to eat of the fruit of the "other" tree, we reasoned!

The alternative tree gives us the opportunity to engage an alternative system, whereby we have to now prove to ourselves, and to one another, as well as to our own ideas of deity (religion) that we can manage and possibly master our own being and destiny, independent of our Source!

The quest to prove my I-am-ness would now become my constant drive; instead of finding and celebrating me in fellowship with my Maker and my fellow human being, and also in my harmonious co-existence with paradise nature, I have to now strive for it in the fruit of my own efforts to become something I already am by design, perfect and esteemed.

And so we have exchanged Eloyim's perfect approval of us, based on their perfect knowledge of us, for our imperfect knowledge of ourselves and of one another, proved by the inevitable evidence in our disappointment with ourselves and with one another.

The "I am not-tree-system" would continually be re-enforced by feelings of

shame, guilt, inferiority and competing, which sadly brings with it every shade of hostility and frustration and the corruption that our history and societies have borne such horrid witness to.
The law expresses and confirms the existence of these systems and their dominance in societies and philosophies for many centuries.
The love of God, the Engineer of our being, demonstrated in the unveiling of our inclusion in the death, decent into hell, the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, reveals that we are rescued from the lies that we have believed about ourselves, about our Maker and about one another! We are presented with a brand new beginning! The old things have passed away! Behold, everything has become new! 2 Corinthians 5:14-21.
See also 1 Peter 1:18,19 It is clear to see that you were ransomed from the futile, fallen mindset that you inherited from your fathers, not by the currency of your own labor, represented by the fluctuating values of gold and silver, and the economy of your religious efforts; but you were redeemed with the priceless blood of Christ; he is the ultimate sacrifice; spotless and without blemish. He completes the prophetic picture! [In him God speaks the most radical scapegoat language of the law of judgment, and brings final closure to a dead and redundant system! In Psalm 40:6,7, it is clearly stated that God does not require sacrifices or offerings! Jesus is the Lamb of God! He collides victoriously with the futile sacrificial system whereby offerings are constantly made to the pseudo, moody, monster gods of our imagination! This is the scandal of the cross! God does not demand a sacrifice that would change the way he thinks about mankind; he provides the sacrifice of himself in Christ in order to forever eradicate sin-consciousness from our minds and radically change the way we think about our Maker, one another and ourselves! [Sin-consciousness is in essence a works-based consciousness.]
Now immediately engage your thoughts with the reality of your co-seatedness in Christ in the highest dominion of life, and discover there the bliss of your redeemed innocence and your eternal oneness! Colossians 3:1-4)

Notes on An Open heaven

“Jesus has united heaven and earth, the life of God and human life in himself. Just as it was planned before the time of the ages.” Dr Baxter Kruger.

Rev 3:7 And to the messenger of the Ekklesia of [1]Philadelphia write, I

am the Holy and True one! I hold the key of David as prophesied in [1]Isaiah 22:22! Yes, I [2]unlock the mysteries of the heavenly dimension and no one can shut the door! And I lock the entrance and none *(of the old legalistic mindsets)* **can access it!** *([1]**Philadelphos**, from **philos**, fondness; friendship, and **adelphos**, the same womb; immediate family; kinfolk; household. [2]Isaiah 22:22 And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. The word [2]**anoigo** from **ana** upwards and **agoo**, to lead! Also Ezek 34: 23 Then I will place one shepherd over them, my servant David, and he will take care of them. He will take care of them and be their shepherd.)*

Rev 3:21 And everyone's personal triumph will be celebrated together with me, by being jointly seated together in my Kingship! On exactly the same basis of [1]my victory celebration and my joint seatedness with my Father in his throne! *(Note the words, [1]**hōs kagō enikēsa** where **enikesa** is the first Aorist Active Indicative of **nikaō**, to conquer; looking back on the victory as over in the past. A.T. Roberston compares this to John 16:33 where before the Cross Jesus says **egō nenikēka ton kosmon** which is in the perfect active tense, emphasizing the abiding effect of the victory!)*

Rev 3:22 Now listen up with your inner ears! Hear with understanding what the Spirit is saying to the Ekklesia! *(Paul prays in Eph that the eyes of our understanding will be flooded with light that we may see our co-seatedness!)*

Rev 4:1 [1]Talking about our co-seatedness, I want you to see something! Oh wow! What I see takes my breath away! A [2]wide-open door in the heavenly realm! The first thing I heard was this voice addressing me! It was distinct and clear, like the sound of a trumpet; it captured my attention, inviting me to enter. "Come up here and I will show you how everything [3]coincides with what you have already seen!" *(I saw **(eidon)** second Aorist Active Indicative of **horaō**. Behold **(idou)** exclamation of vivid emotion as John looked, "With this I saw!"Most translations would translate **meta tauta** with, "after this" The word [1]**meta** however refers to, with this; coinciding with this! [Our co-seatedness and enjoying feasting together with him! v 20 and 21 from the previous chapter. Rev 3:21 And*

everyone's personal triumph will be celebrated together with me, by being jointly seated together in my Kingship! On exactly the same basis of my victory celebration and my joint-seatedness with my Father in his throne!] Robertson suggests that it is a change in the panorama, not chronology.

*The word [2]**eneogmene** is the Perfect Passive Participle of **anoigō** to open, from **ana**, upwards and **ago**, to lead; as in Rev 3:8 [door of opportunity] and Rev 3:20 [door of the heart] **A dimension of limitless possibilities open, right in front of my eyes!** The Passive Participle describes a state that exists at the time coincident with that of the leading verb as a result of action completed prior to the time of the main verb, behold! Thus John witnessed the opening of the door. The Perfect Tense denotes an action which is completed in the past, but the effects of which are regarded as continuing into the present. The verb **genesthai** is not the future of the verb [1]to be; it is the Aorist Infinitive where the thought is not the prophetic, but the necessity of the inevitable consequence as a result of the crucified and risen Christ! John again, as in verse 1, employs the verb, **ginomai**, to beget, in the Aorist Infinitive tense, **genesthai**, which indicates prior completion of an action in relationship to a point in time. Greek infinitives could have either a Present or Aorist form. The contrast between the two forms was not necessarily one of time, it is a difference of aspect. The Present Infinitive was used to express progressive or imperfective aspect. It pictures the action expressed by the verb as being in progress. The Aorist Infinitive however does not express progressive aspect. It presents the action expressed by the verb as a completed unit with a beginning and end.)*

Rev 4:2 So here I am, immersed in this unrestricted space of spirit ecstasy. As the vision opens I immediately notice the throne and One seated upon it. *("Having accomplished purification for sins he sat down!" His throne is proof of mankind's redeemed innocence! This unveiling is central to the throne-theme. See Heb 1:1-4 in the Mirror!)*

Rev 4:4 And coiled into a complete circle around the throne were twenty four thrones with twenty four [1]Presbyterians seated upon the thrones. They were enwrapped in white with [2]victors' wreaths of gold crowning their heads! Their minds were co-enthroned in the authority of the throne engulfing them in their co-seatedness! *(In the symbolic language of Revelation, we have a circle of people representing the entire human race. [1]Typo drawn again from the Jewish **suneidron** - a co-*

seatedness around the throne - the 24 ***presbuterians*** *or [1]Elders picture the twelve prophetic Patriarchs and the twelve Apostles, here as two dispensations merged into one, now fully representing the entire Ekklesia. The word* ***kuklothen*** *is the adverb from* ***kuklo****; to form a circle, that is, all around; from* ***kulioō****, a rolling together. From the base of* ***kuma****, from* ***kuō****, to swell [with young], that is, bend, curve; a billow, as bursting or toppling: - thus, a wave; through the idea of circularity. The word* ***[2]stephanos****, is a victor's wreath.*

Much of what John saw, reflected in the Jewish mind as familiar prophetic pointers and symbols. See the prophetic imagery in Ezekiel 1:1-28. The symbolic pictures John sees of judgment would immediately remind his typical Jewish audience of their prophets imaginary of judgment. This time the slaughtered and risen Lamb brings brand new context! Israel's unfaithfulness is met and eclipsed by God's faithfulness. The Lamb's death and resurrection confronts every idea of judgment that was mankind's due.)

Rev 13:8 The plan was to engage the entire [1]earthbound population of the planet to worship the Beast. *(The counterfeit "slain and risen lamb")* **This would endorse the idea** *(of religion)* **that there are individuals whose names were not included since the fall of the [2]cosmos in the slain Lamb's Book of Life!** *(The word* ***[1]katoikeō*** *from* ***kata****, down and* ***oikeo****, to dwell or set up home - thus, to be earthbound. Paul invites us to engage our thoughts with resurrection realities and to see ourselves seated together with Christ in heavenly places! Col 3:1-3. The word,* ***[2]kosmos*** *in the NT refers to the entire human family and their social structures.)*

The "earthbound-dilemma" of mankind is addressed in the Incarnate Christ. *(See notes on Armageddon at the end of Chapter 16)*

See **John 1:50 Jesus said, "So you believe because I say I saw you sitting under the fig tree? You haven't seen anything yet!**

John 1:51 Truly I say unto you, Nathaniel *[singular]***, because of who I am, you** *[plural - You-manity - all the families in heaven and on earth]* **will surely see this communication between the heavenly sphere and earth thrown wide [1]open and the Angelic shepherd-messengers of God ascending and descending upon the Incarnate son of man. heaven and earth meet in the Incarnate one!** *(In him every definition of separation and distance is cancelled! Isaiah 55:10,11 "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not there without saturating the earth*

[all flesh], so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it. The prophetic word was destined to become flesh; every nook and cranny of human life is saturated in the incarnation! The word ***aneogota****, Perfect Active Participle Accusative Masculine Singular, 2nd Conjugation-form; the one who has led us upwards - from* ***anoigō, ana****, upwards and* ***agoo****, to lead! Jesus reminds Nathaniel of Genesis 28:12-14 And Jacob dreamt that there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it! And Jahweh said to him, I am Elohim of Abraham, your seed shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and your descendants have all the families of the earth been blessed!)*

Rev 19:11 Then, in my vision, heaven opened and I saw a white horse appear; and the name of the one seated upon the horse is Faithful and True. Righteousness spans the range of his judgment and warfare. *(Ephesians 3:15 also Ephesians 1:3 Let's celebrate God! He lavished every blessing heaven has upon us in Christ! See Ephesians 4:8-10, Scripture confirms that he led us as trophies in his triumphant procession on high; he repossessed his gift (likeness) in human form. (Also Ephesians 2:6, We are also elevated in his ascension to be equally welcome in the throne room of the heavenly realm where we are now seated together with him in his authority. Quote from the Hebrew text, Ps 68:18, thou hast taken gifts in human form, in Adam.*

[The gifts which Jesus Christ distributes to us he has received in us, in and by virtue of his incarnation. Commentary by Adam Clarke.]

Ephesians 4:9 The fact that he ascended confirms his victorious descent into the deepest pits of human despair. (See John 3:13, "No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, even the son of man." All mankind originate from above; we are ***anouthen****, from above. [See James 1:17, 18]) Ephesians 4:10 He now occupies the ultimate rank of authority from the lowest regions where he stooped down to rescue us to the highest authority in the heavens, having executed his mission to the full. (Fallen mankind is fully restored to the authority of the authentic life of their design. [Psa 139:7,8, Where can I go where your Spirit is absent? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You! If I make*

my bed in Sheol, You!])

From the religious Monster in camouflage, the counterfeit "lamb" who desires to manipulate and control the business of buying and selling with a counterfeit currency of a fear and performance based alliance to its stamped image and inscription on their foreheads and hands, to the true Lamb of God who ransomed the human race with the currency of his self-giving agape and shed blood, revealing their inherent worth, based on Elohim's image and inscription entwined in their inner person!

Col 3:1 See yourselves co-raised with Christ! Now ponder with persuasion the consequence of your co-inclusion in him. Relocate yourselves mentally! Engage your thoughts with throne room realities where you are co-seated with Christ in the executive authority of God's right hand.

Col 3:2 Becoming affectionately acquainted with throne room thoughts will keep you from being distracted again by the earthly *(soul-ruled)* **realm.** *("Set your minds upon the things that are above and not upon the things below!" RSV. Whatever you face in your daily lives, acquaint yourselves with the greater reality! The things that are above! Do not engage the energy of the things that are below! Also note Romans 1:18, where the word* ***katecho*** *is used - to echo downwards is the opposite to* ***anoche****, to echo upwards - Romans 2:4 and Romans 3:26. Also 2 Corinthians 4:18 "We are not keeping any score of what seems so obvious to the senses on the surface; it is fleeting and irrelevant; it is the unseen eternal realm within us which has our full attention and captivates our gaze!" A renewed mind conquers the space previously occupied by worthless pursuits and habits.*

The awakening to and engaging in Spirit dimension is not a gradual evolving into spirit awareness – it is not in any way time related – it's as immediate as one's next breath and as refreshing as plunging into a cool pool of mountain water on a hot summers day and as all-consuming as falling head over heels in love! It eclipses night and day; time and season.

Just like the earth is eclipsed by galaxies of planets, moons and stars of innumerable quantities and mind-boggling dimensions, so, the sphere of our visible world is eclipsed in Spirit dimension beyond all comparison!

The "heavens" are far more spectacular in every definition, than a mere distant, geographical location, somewhere in Outer Space! It spans the horizons of Eternity; the ages of the ages are engulfed here and yet closer to us than our breath or thought!
Heavenly places are not located in "Outer Space"! It is living from within! Use your GPS! God's Positioning is our Seamless union!
Jesus did not point to the sky when he gave the address of the kingdom of God; he said, "The kingdom of God is within you!" Luke 17:21
Also Math 13:44 The Kingdom of heaven is the treasure, buried, redeemed and now revealed in the field!
2 Cor 4:6 The light source is founded in the same God who said, "Light, be!" And light shone out of darkness! He lit the lamp in our understanding so that we may clearly recognize the features of his likeness in the face of Jesus Christ reflected within us. *(The same God who bade light shine out of darkness has kindled a light in our hearts, whose shining is to make known his glory as he has revealed it in the features of Jesus Christ. — Knox Translation)*
2 Cor 4:7 And now, in the glow of this glorious light and with unveiled faces we discover this treasure where it was hidden all along, in these frail skin-suits made of [1]clay. We did not invent ourselves; we are God's idea to begin with and the dynamic of his doing and amazing engineering! *(The word translated earthen vessel or clay jar is the word [1]**ostrakinos** from **ostrakon** "oyster"! It is a great visual picture of how we carry a very valuable pearl within us. The cosmetic value of the clay pot can never compete with the treasure it holds. There is so much more to you than what meets the eye! "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in an agricultural field, which a man found and covered up; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys the entire field." In order to redeem our minds from the lies that we believed about ourselves, God invested all that he has in the redeeming of our original value! See 1 Peter 1:18,19. He rescued the life of our design. Our inner life hosts this treasure. Jesus said in John 7:37,38, "If you believe that I am what the Scriptures are all about, you will know that you are what I am all about and rivers of living water will gush out of **your innermost being!**")*
2 Cor 4:8 We often feel completely hemmed in on every side but our inner space remains unrestricted; when there seems to be no way out, we escape within!

*See my **notes on Earthbound vs. Heavenly Dimension Realities** at the end of Revelation Chapter 16 [**Armageddon**])*

2 Pet 1:3 By his divine engineering he gifted us with all that it takes to live life to the full, where our ordinary day to day lives mirror our devotion and romance with our Maker. His intimate knowledge of us introduces us to ourselves again and elevates us to a position where his original intention is clearly perceived!

2 Pet 1:5... Familiarize yourselves with every ingredient that faith unfolds! See there how elevated you are, and from within this position *(of your co-seatedness in Christ),* **enlightened perspective will dawn within you.**

See Notes on Armageddon at the end of Chapter 16

Chapter 14

1 Oh wow! You've got to see this! The little Lamb, standing on mount Zion and with him a hundred and forty four thousand*(s)* **with the Lamb's Name and the Name of his Father written on their foreheads.** *(Sonship redeemed! Heb 1:1-3. Note the 144,000's in plural, representing the symbolic value that includes the entire prophetic significance of the Jews as well as the prophetic context of their representing the entire human race. In you, all the nations of the earth will bless themselves. See Extended Notes at the end of this chapter,* ***From Mt Sinai to Mt Zion!****)*

2 And I heard a voice emerge from the heavens. It was like the sound of a thunderous torrent of cascading waterfalls. Then arose a choir of voices accompanied by stringed instruments which sounded like harps. *(The word* ***κιθαρῳδός - kithardos****, is from* ***κιθάρα - kithara****, a [guitar] harp - a triangular shaped stringed instrument with 7 and later 10 strings traditionally associated with joy and gladness in worship [Psa 33:2; Psa 98:5] and* ***ῳδός - odos****, a singer. Rev 5:8-13)*

3 There was a strange yet familiar newness to their song; almost as if it was reflected in the face of the throne and echoed in the faces of the living creatures and the elders - a song which could not be taught or learned. It is the song of the redeemed - represented here in the 144,000*(s)* **who were [1]bought from the claim and clutches of the earth.** *(The word [1]****agoratso****, to buy in a typical market context -* ***apo tes ges****, away from the earth. Just when it seemed that no one could buy or sell any longer unless they were worshipping the Beast, [Rev 13] a transaction takes place in a superior currency and realm that frees the human race from their slavery! Just like in the prophetic picture of Israel's freedom from Pharaoh! Isa 29:13 And the Lord said: "Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment of men learned by repetition.)*

4 These boldly exhibit the [3]first fruit of the Lamb's doing! Here we have blameless innocence on display and redefined. What the law of performance failed to do, the Lamb did! They are pure and unblemished in their [1]close association with the Lamb - [2]purchased and rescued out of the grip of an enslaved, fallen mankind; representing the entire human race as first fruits to God and the Lamb! These 'first fruit redeemed ones' have witnessed mankind's joint association in the [4]full range of the Lamb's journey. They are all marriageable maidens with their virginity intact! Their default settings are fully rebooted! *(The word, [1]**akolouthentes** is the Present Participle in the Nominative case of **akoloutheo,** with **a** from **hama** as a particle of union and **keleuthos** - a road; thus, travel companions; to be in the same way with, that is, to accompany closely - to be in immediate association with someone. The present Participle describes an action thought of as simultaneous with the action of the main verb, which, in this case is [2]**egorasthesan** which is the Aorist Passive indicative of **agorazō**, to go to market, that is to purchase; specifically to redeem: - buy, redeem. Thus in the Aorist Passive it means, having been redeemed - redemption is a done deal!The word [3]**aparchē** means first fruit. See 1 Cor 15:20 However this very moment the risen Christ represents everyone who has ever died; exactly like the first fruit represents the complete harvest. 1 Cor 15:21 The same mankind who died in a man was raised again in a man. 1 Cor 15:22 In Adam all died; in Christ all are made alive.*

*The words, [4]**hopou an hupagei** - mean whithersoever he travels - the comprehensive range of his journey! From being the Logos, face to face with God before time was and announced as the slain Lamb and Messiah since the fall of the world; throughout every Messianic, prophetic record of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms, to the incarnate man Jesus the Christ; in his life, ministry, message and betrayal, his trial, his crucifixion, his burial, his descent into hell, his triumph there and in his taking captivity captive in his resurrection and glorious ascent and leading mankind as his trophies into the throne room where we are now co-seated together with him! See **Extended Notes on the 144,000 Virgins** at the end of this chapter.)*
***In the imagery that follows, John sees how the triune religious counterfeit system, the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet are thoroughly stripped of their influence and dominion and brought to naught**.*

5 This is not make-believe or wishful-thinking! No trace of deceit nor any form of blemish was found in their conversation.

6 And I saw another shepherd-messenger soaring in mid heaven - this messenger was the carrier of the grandest news of the ages. His mission was to announce these glad tidings of everlasting proportion to every single nation, tribe, language and people grouping on the earth! *(Seven times human society is addressed in the most all-inclusive fashion, with a like grouping of words for all mankind of all races and nations; - Rev 5:9, then also Rev 7:9, Rev 10:11, Rev 11:9 Rev 13:7; here in Rev and Rev 17:15.)*

7 In a great voice he declared, "Be awestruck with the amazingness of God! Give him glory! The hour of his judgment has come! He is the Maker of the heavenly realm, the earth, the sea and the fountains of the waters." *(See John 12:31-33)*

8 And a second shepherd-messenger followed with more good news! Babylon the great city has crashed! She who sold herself as a prostitute to all the nations and intoxicated them with the wine of her passion will never fly again. *(The language is an echo of Isa 21:9, "Babylon has fallen! It has fallen! All the idols they worship lie shattered on the ground." Jer 51:8 Babylon will suddenly fall and be shattered.)*

9 Then a third shepherd-messenger followed and announced with a loud voice that whoever worships the counterfeit lamb and its image and receives its character in their thoughts and deeds,

10 will drink the wine of God's passion, undiluted with water but intensified with spices in his cup - they shall be tested as one tests gold or silver with a [1]touchstone; with fire and brimstone in the immediate

presence of the Lamb and of [2]those who have discovered their wholeness mirrored in him - the dross of their deception will be exposed and cleansed! *(Note the words,* ***tou kekerasmenou akratou*** *- this is a powerful oxymoron, "the mixed unmixed." See Psa 75:8 For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, with foaming wine, well mixed; and he will pour a draught from it, and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs.*

*The word [1]**basanizō** means to test (metals) by the touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the color of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal - a piece of fine-grained dark schist or jasper formerly used for testing alloys of gold by observing the color of the mark which they made on it - thus, a standard or criterion by which something is judged or recognized. The blood of Jesus is the currency! 1 Pet 1:18,19.*

*The fiery brimstone - **theion** - is divine incense, because burning brimstone was regarded as having power to purify, and to ward off disease - the [1]cup he drank on the cross is the touchstone! "What shall I say? Father remove this cup from me? NO! For this hour I have come!" The word, [2]**hagios**, saints, refers to wholeness and harmony of spirit, soul and body - see 1 Cor 1:30 and Rom 1:7. See my **Extended Notes on the lake of fire** at the end of chapter 19.)*

11 Those worshipping the counterfeit Beast and its image who receive its mark and name as their identity will have nowhere to hide, day or night; the smoke that rises from their [1]testing, will evidence their cleansing for all ages. *(The mindset of a counterfeit religious system has no future! The message of the cross is the [1]touchstone that will forever bear testimony to the triumph of the Lamb. See commentary in previous verse on the Touchstone.)*

12 This calls for the patient steadfastness of [1]those who have discovered their wholeness in Christ - to treasure [2]the completeness of God's finished work and the faith of Jesus. *(See 1 John 2:3 Mirror Bible The word, [1]**hagios**, saints, refers to wholeness and harmony of spirit, soul*

and body - see 1 Cor 1:30. The word [2]***entole****, which is often translated commandment or precept, has two components:* ***en****, in and* ***telos****, from* ***tello****, to set out for a definite point or goal; the point aimed at as a limit, that is, by implication, the conclusion of an act or state, the result; the ultimate or prophetic purpose. Strong's 5056)*

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write: Blessed are they who, from now on, see their death in union with the Lord - his death is their death. Their wearisome labor follows them into this death bringing closure to their efforts to do what his death alone accomplished!

14 And I looked, and behold, I saw a white cloud and One who mirror reflects the Son of Man with his head crowned in a golden wreath of victory. He was seated upon the cloud and in his hand he held a razor sharp pruning-hook. *(See extended notes on the Son of Man is the Son of God at the end of Chapter 2.)*

15 Another shepherd-messenger appeared out of the most holy place of the temple and with a loud voice addressed the One seated upon the cloud, saying, "Thrust forth your pruning hook, your hour has come - this is your moment to reap for the earth's harvest is ready." *(See John 4:31-36.)*

16 And the One seated upon the cloud completed the earth's wheat harvest with a single sweep of his sickle! *(The gathering of the full harvest of both the wheat as well as the wine, endorses the dawn of the New Covenant pictured in his broken body and shed blood.)*

17 And another shepherd-messenger appeared from the most holy place, the Tabernacle located in the heavenly realm; he too had a sharp pruning-hook-type sickle.

18 Yet another messenger emerged from the altar of burnt offering - this one was in charge of the fire of the altar. He cried with a loud voice telling the messenger with the sharp pruning hook to thrust forth his sickle and gather the vintage since the earth's grapes were bursting with ripeness!

19 And he swung his sickle and gathered the vintage of the earth and cast it into the winepress of God's great [1]passion. *(The word [1]**thumos** speaks of the passion of Christ as the sacrificed Lamb! See Extended Notes on **The winepress of the passion of God** at the end of chapter 19.)*

20 And the wine-press was trodden outside the city, and the blood that flowed out of the winepress was as deep as a horses' bridle and it flooded a thousand stadia. *(See Hebrews 13:12 According to the prophetic pattern, Jesus, as the final sin sacrifice, was slain outside the city walls. The symbolic depth of a horse's bridal and 1000 Greek stadia speak of the completeness and universality of the world-wide impact of the blood covenant of Jesus. The typical greek Stadion was 600 Greek feet. [Aprox 160 meters.]*
Isa 63:2,3 "Why is Your apparel red and your garments like one who treads in the wine press? I have trodden the wine trough alone.
*See Colossians 2:14 His body nailed to the cross hung there as the document of mankind's guilt; in dying our death he cancelled the detailed hand-written record which testified against us. Every stain on our conscience, reminding of the sense of failure and guilt, was thus fully blotted out. Col 2:15 In him dying mankind's death, he defused every possible claim of accusation against the human race and thus made a public spectacle of it in God's brilliant triumph, demonstrated in him. The voice of the cross will never be silenced! (The horror of the Cross is now the eternal trophy of God's triumph over sin! The cross stripped religion of its authority to manipulate mankind with guilt. Every accusation lost its leverage to blackmail the human race with condemnation and shame! The word, **apekduomai**, is translated from **apo**, away from, and **ekduo**, to be stripped of clothing; to disarm; the religious facade that disguised the law of works as a means of defining a person's life, was openly defeated. Same*

*word used in Col 3:9. The dominance of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil [**poneros**, hard work and labor] was ended. The word, **deikmatizo**, means to exhibit in public. The word, **parresia**, comes from **pas**, all and **rheo**, outspokenness, pouring forth speech. Mirror Bible*
"The slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's Cross. He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets." — The Message)
Revelation Chapter 14 Extended Notes:
From Mt Sinai to Mt Zion!
144,000 Virgins!
From Mt Sinai to Mt Zion!
Rev 14:1 Oh wow! You've got to see this! The little Lamb, standing on mount Zion and with him a hundred and forty four thousands with the Lamb's Name and the Name of his Father written on their foreheads. *(Sonship redeemed! Heb 1:1-3)*
Compare Hebrews 12:18 - 29
Heb 12:18 We are not talking of a visible and tangible mountain here, one spectacularly ablaze in a setting of dark blackness and tempestuous winds. *(Witness the vivid contrast between the giving of the law and the unfolding of grace; the exclusiveness of the one and the all inclusive embrace of the other. The dramatic encounter of Moses on the mountain is by far exceeded by the mountaintop experience to which we are now welcomed and co-elevated to through Jesus Christ! Mankind is fully represented and co-seated together with Christ in heavenly places! [Eph 2:5, 6, Hos 6:2])*
Heb 12:19 Shrill trumpet sounds and a thunderous voice uttering human language. This filled the people with such terror that they begged for silence!
Heb 12:20 Beast and human alike felt threatened and excluded from that terrible mountain!
Heb 12:21 Even Moses, the representative of the people, was extremely terrified. He was shivering and shaking. Who could approach God and live? How impossible it seemed to find favor with such a 'terrifying' God!
Heb 12:22 By contrast, we have been welcomed to an invisible mount Zion; the city of peace *(Jerusalem),* the residence of the living God, the

festive assembly of an innumerable Angelic host!
Heb 12:23 We are participating in a mass joint-celebration of heavenly and earthly beings; the Ekklesia-church of the firstborn mirror-inscribed in the heavenlies. *(Our original identity, Ekklesia, from ek, a preposition that always denotes origin, and kaleo, meaning to identify by name, to surname], is endorsed by Jesus, patterned in him, the first born from the dead.)*
Heb 12:24 Jesus is the spokesman and arbitrator of the New Testament order. His blood signature sanctions mankind's innocence. This is a complete new language that communicates better things, in that it is the very substance of what was communicated in the shadow-type message of the blood sacrifice that Abel brought. *(Abel's faith was a prophetic introduction to the sacrificial shadow system of the Old Covenant. Heb 11:4 It was faith that made the difference between the sacrifices of Abel and Cain, and confirmed Abel's righteousness. God bore witness to righteousness as a gift rather than a reward! Even though he was murdered, his faith still has a most relevant prophetic voice.*
Heb 12:25 If Jesus is the crescendo of God's final message to mankind, you cannot afford to politely excuse yourself from this conversation. Consider the prominent place that Moses plays in the history of Israel: if you think that Moses or any of the Prophets who spoke with authority on earth deserve honor, how much more should this word that God declared from heaven concerning our sonship, and our redeemed innocence revealed in the Messiah himself, deserve our undivided attention!
Heb 12:26 When he introduced the prophetic shadow of what was to come *(the Law system)***, his voice visibly shook the earth.** *(Ex 19:18.) But now the Messiah has come (he is the desire of the nations; he is what heaven and earth were waiting for [Hag 2:6,7])* **The voice of God** *(articulated in Christ's birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection)* **has rocked not only the systems on the earth, but also every unseen principality in the heavens, to their very foundations!**
Heb 12:27 In the words of the Prophet, "Yet once more will I shake every unstable system of man's effort to rule himself." God clearly indicates his plan to remove the old and replace it with the new. The second shaking supersedes any significance in the first shaking. Then it was a physical quaking of the earth; now the very foundations of every

man-made system was shaken to the core while the heavens were impacted by the announcement of his permanent rule on earth as it is mirrored in heaven.
Heb 12:28 We are fully associated in this immovable Kingdom; an authority that cannot be challenged or contradicted. Our participation echoes grace *(and not law-inspired obedience)* **as we accommodate ourselves to God's delight, yielding in awe to his firm embrace.** *(The word, euaresto, means well pleasing, to accommodate yourself to God's delight.)*
Heb 12:29 His zeal for us burns like fire. *[Deut 4:24])*
Gal 4:22 The law records the fact that Abraham had two sons: one by a slave girl, the other by a free woman.
Gal 4:23 The one is produced by the flesh *(the DIY-tree)***, the other by faith** *(the promise).*
Gal 4:24 There is a parallel meaning in the story of the two sons: they represent two systems, works and grace.
Gal 4:25 Sinai is an Arabian rocky mountain named after Hagar, *(outside the land of promise).* **Its association with the law of Moses mirrors Jerusalem as the capital of Jewish legalism. Hagar is the mother of the law of works.**
Gal 4:26 But the mother from above, the true mother of mankind is grace, the free Jerusalem; she is the mother of the promise.
Gal 4:27 For it is written, "Rejoice oh childless one! Erupt in jubilee! For though you have never known travail before, your children will greatly outnumber her who was married!" *(Married to the law. Isaiah 54:1)*
Gal 4:28 We resemble Isaac: we are begotten of faith, the promise is our parent.
Gal 4:29 Just as when the flesh child persecuted the faith child, so now these Jerusalem Jews in their Christian disguise seek to harass you;
Gal 4:30 however, Scripture is clear: "Expel the slave mother and her son; the slave son cannot inherit with the free son." *(In exactly the same way, rid your minds radically from the slave mother and child mentality. Light dispels darkness effortlessly.)*
Gal 4:31 Realize whose children we are my Family: we are not children of the slave-mother, the law, but children of the free mother; we are begotten of grace!

Psa 50:2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth.
Then in the context of this Psalm Elohim say - do not engage me with blood sacrifices engage me with the fruit of your lips, announcing by Todah the perfection of beauty that shines forth out of Zion - a and I will show you, your salvation Jeshua!
144,000 Virgins!
From the religious Monster in camouflage, the counterfeit "lamb" who desires to manipulate and control the business of buying and selling with a counterfeit currency of a fear and performance based alliance to its stamped image and inscription on their foreheads and hands, to the true Lamb of God who ransomed the human race with the currency of his self-giving Agape and shed blood, revealing their inherent worth, based on Elohim's image and inscription entwined in their inner person!
Rev 14:1 Oh wow! You've got to see this! The little Lamb, standing on mount Zion and with him a hundred and forty four thousands with the Lamb's Name and the Name of his Father written on their foreheads. *(Sonship redeemed! Heb 1:1-3. Note the 144,000's in plural, representing the symbolic value that includes the entire prophetic significance of the Jews as well as the prophetic context of their representing the entire human race. In you, all the nations of the earth will bless themselves. See Extended Notes at the end of this chapter,* ***From Mt Sinai to Mt Zion!****)*
Rev 14:2 And I heard a voice emerge from the heavens. It was like the sound of a thunderous torrent of cascading waterfalls. Then there arose a choir of voices accompanied by stringed instruments which sounded like harps. *(The word* ***κιθαρῳδός - kithardos****, is from* ***κιθάρα - kithara****, a [guitar] harp - a triangular shaped stringed instrument with 7 and later 10 strings traditionally associated with joy and gladness in worship [Psa 33:2; Psa 98:5] and* ***ᾠδός - odos****, a singer. Rev 5:8-13)*
Rev 14:3 There was a strange yet familiar newness to their song; almost as if it was reflected off the throne and echoed in the faces of the living creatures and the elders - a song which could not be taught or learned. It is the song of the redeemed - represented here in the 144,000*('s)* **who were [1]bought from the claim and clutches of the earth.** *(The word [1]****agoratso****, to buy in a typical market context -* ***apo tes ges****, away from the earth. Just when it seemed that no one could buy or sell any longer unless*

they were worshipping the Beast, [Rev 13] a transaction takes place in a superior currency and realm that frees the human race from their slavery! Just like in the prophetic picture of Israel's freedom from Pharaoh! Isa 29:13 And the Lord said: "Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment of men learned by repetition.)

Rev 14:4 These boldly exhibit the [3]first fruit of the Lamb's doing! Here we have blameless innocence on display and redefined. What the law of performance failed to do, the Lamb did! They are pure and unblemished in their [1]close association with the Lamb - [2]purchased and rescued out of the grip of an enslaved, fallen mankind; representing the entire human race as first fruits to God and the Lamb! These 'first fruit redeemed ones' have witnessed mankind's joint association in the [4]full range of the Lamb's journey. They are all marriageable maidens with their virginity intact! Their default settings are fully rebooted! *(The word, [1]**akolouthentes** is the Present Participle in the Nominative case of **akoloutheo,** with **a** from **hama** as a particle of union and **keleuthos** - a road; thus, travel companions; to be in the same way with, that is, to accompany closely - to be in immediate association with someone. The present Participle describes an action thought of as simultaneous with the action of the main verb, which, in this case is [2]**egorasthesan** which is the Aorist Passive indicative of **agorazō**, to go to market, that is to purchase; specifically to redeem: - buy, redeem. Thus in the Aorist Passive it means, having been redeemed - redemption is a done deal! The word [3]**aparchē** means first fruit. See 1 Cor 15:20 However this very moment the risen Christ represents everyone who has ever died; exactly like the first fruit represents the complete harvest. 1 Cor 15:21 The same mankind who died in a man was raised again in a man. 1 Cor 15:22 In Adam all died; in Christ all are made alive.*

*The words, [4]**hopou an hupagei** - mean whithersoever he travels - the comprehensive range of his journey! From being the Logos, face to face with God before time was and announced as the slain Lamb and Messiah since the fall of the world; throughout every Messianic, prophetic record of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms, to the incarnate man Jesus the Christ; in his life, ministry, message and betrayal, his trial, his crucifixion, his burial, his descent into hell, his triumph there and in his taking captivity*

captive in his resurrection and glorious ascent and leading mankind as his trophies into the throne room where we are now co-seated together with him!
The symbolic "virginity" of the 144,000('s), had nothing to do with the law of their performance but their discovery of their inclusion in the Lamb's doing. See Romans 3:9 It is common knowledge that sin holds sway over both Jew and Greek alike. [Just like disease would show the same symptoms regardless of someone's nationality.] Romans 3:10 Scripture records that within the context of the law, no-one succeeds to live a blameless life. [Psalm 14:1-3, They are corrupt and they do abominable deeds, there is none that does good. They have all gone astray, they are all alike corrupt; there is none that does good, no, not one. RSV]." In Genesis 18, Abraham intercedes for Sodom and Gomorrah, "If there perhaps are 50 righteous people, will you save the city on their behalf?" He continues to negotiate with God, until he's down to, "perhaps ten?"..."there was none righteous, no not one ..." This argument is building up to the triumphant conclusion of the fact that there is indeed no distinction; the same people who fell short of the glory of God are now justified through God's work of grace in Christ. If mankind was 100% represented in Adam, then they are equally 100% represented in Christ! [Rom 3:21-24]. Also Romans 9:29 The Lord of the multitudes preserved for us a Seed, to rescue us from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. [From Hebrew, ***tzaba, tsabaoth****], a mass of people. The remnant represents the one Seed that would rescue the mass of mankind! The single grain of wheat did not abide alone! [See John 12:24] Romans 5:18-19 states, "The conclusion is clear: it took just one offense to condemn mankind; one act of righteousness declares the same mankind innocent! The disobedience of the one exhibits mankind as sinners; the obedience of another exhibits mankind as righteous!")*
In the imagery that follows, John sees how the triune religious counterfeit system, the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet are thoroughly stripped of their influence and dominion and brought to naught*.*
14:5 This is not make-believe or wishful-thinking! No trace of deceit nor any form of blemish was found in their conversation.
14:6 And I saw another shepherd-messenger soaring in mid heaven - this messenger was the carrier of the grandest news of the ages. His mission was to announce these glad tidings of everlasting proportion to every single nation, tribe, language and people grouping on the earth!

(Seven times human society is addressed in the most all-inclusive fashion, with a like grouping of words for all mankind of all races and nations; - Rev 5:9, then also Rev 7:9, Rev 10:11, Rev 11:9 Rev 13:7; here in Rev 14:6 and Rev 17:15.)

14:7 In a great voice he declared, "Be awestruck with the amazingness of God! Give him glory! The hour of his judgment has come! He is the Maker of the heavenly realm, the earth, the sea and the fountains of the waters." *(This announcement echoes Jesus' declaration in John 12:31 This is the judgment of this world; it is the moment where the authority of the world-system is cast out! [The serpent's head is about to be crushed! Genesis 3:15; Colossians 2:14,15] John 12:32 When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all judgment to me! (He would be lifted up on a cross, descend into the depths of our hell, then, according to the prophetic word in Hosea 6:2, after two days be lifted up as representative of the human race, out of the lowest parts of the earth and elevated to the highest heavens! Ephesians 4:8,9; see also Ephesians 2:5,6 and Colossians 3:1-3. 'All' includes all of mankind and their judgment. The subject of the sentence, as from the previous verse, is the judgment of the world - thus the primary thought here is that in his death, Jesus would draw all judgment upon himself! John 3:14; John 8:28; Act 2:33. 1 John 3:5 We have witnessed with our own eyes how, in the unveiling of the prophetic word, when he was lifted up upon the cross as the Lamb of God, he lifted up our sin and broke its dominion and rule over us! [John 1:29 "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away [airo] the sin of the world! The word* ***airo*** *means to lift up.]) John 12:33 This he said to point to the way in which he would die. See John 19:15 - "Lift him up! Lift him up! Crucify him!")*

Chapter 15

1 The next symbolic picture I saw in the heavens was again a fantastic spectacle. I saw seven Angelic shepherd-messengers representing the completeness and finality of the passion of God in concluding every detail of the final seven symbolic plagues. *(Reminding of some of the*

same plagues which convinced Pharaoh to free Israel from slavery, which again, prophetically points to the judgment that Jesus suffered on mankind's behalf.)

2 Then I saw something that looked like an ocean on fire; its liquid waters became a solid surface like transparent glass [1]molded in its heat. Standing tall in triumph on top of the glassy sea, with their God-harps, were the redeemed ones who [2]emerged victorious [3]out of the grasp and claim of the false trinity-system of religious indoctrination - the Beast, its image, its character imprint and its password name and number-code. *(The word [2]**nikoontas** is the Present Participle of **nikao**, to conquer; the Present Participle describes an action thought of as simultaneous with the action of the main verb, [1]**memigmenen** - a victory having been forged in fire, which is the Perfect Passive Participle of **mignumi**, to mingle, to mix. The Perfect Tense denotes an action which is completed in the past, but the effects of which are regarded as continuing into the present.*
A reminder of the prophetic picture of Israel walking as it were on dry land through the ocean of waters when God led them out of Pharaoh's claim!
*The preposition **ek** denotes origin - here, clearly pointing to the fact that these have escaped the tyranny of slavery to the corrupt religious system of a false identity.*
*This is the transaction of the ages, where the Lamb that was slain enters the market place where slaves are sold and he redeems mankind – purchases us back out of the hands of the claim of accusation – **Satanas** – the Dragon , the Beast of religion, the false Prophet – mankind is redeemed from the idolatry of centuries of devotion to an image of their own making, reflecting a lost identity. The transaction-idea is to persuade our minds of our redeemed value. Jesus didn't buy us back from the Devil! A thief never becomes owner! Ps 22:27 and Ps 24:1 See my Notes on Counterfeit Religion - the Wolf in Sheep's clothing at the end of Rev 13.)*

3 This song of the redeemed echoes the song of Moses, God's servant and the song of the Lamb, singing: "The things you do are spectacular and amazing, Lord God Almighty. Righteousness and truth are your

trademarks! You are the King of the ages and of the Nations. *(In the prophetic drama of the first Pascha, celebrating freedom from slavery, the people are suddenly faced with a replay, as it were, of an old enemy that still seems undefeated and unwilling to let them go! Plus the circumstances of a flooded river blocking their way, all seems to play into the hands of the enemy; then Moses is told that, what seems as a setback, God will turn into the final defeat of every threat or claim of Pharaoh! "These Egyptians you see today, you will never see again!" Ex 14:13 And Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. Ex 14:14 The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be still." Ex 14:15 The LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. Ex 14:16 Lift up your shepherd staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go on dry ground through the sea." That which could drown and destroy you, becomes your pedestal of triumph; the cross of humiliation becomes the greatest elevation!*

Then the triumphant song of Moses is recorded: Exo 15:1,2 I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and its rider he has thrown into the sea. The LORD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him; God is my Father and I will exalt him.

Exo 15:11 Who compares with you, Oh LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awe-inspiring in glorious deeds, working wonders?

Please note, Egypt only serves here as a prophetic picture! They are not "the Enemy!" The enemy is whatever mindset enslaves one to an inferior life to the life of our design! Israel and Egypt are all equally included in the Lamb's triumph and Agape of God! Rev 7:9.

Deut 32:3,18 I will proclaim the name of the LORD. Ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock, his work is perfect. Even though we have forgotten that we are his workmanship - we have forgotten the Rock that has begotten us... [see Isa 51:1, "Look to the Rock from which you were hewn and the quarry from which you were cut!"]

David echoes the Lamb's song in conclusion to his graphic, prophetic picture of the cross in Psalm 22 and in verse 27 he sings, "The ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord!" And in his shepherd song,

David sings in Psalm 23, By the waters of reflection my soul remembers who I am!" And in the next song, Ps 24:1 he proclaims: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell in it!")

4 Who will not be awestruck by you oh Lord as they recognize their identity in your glorious Name? All your work confirms the truth of who you are. You have no competition! Therefore all the nations will arrive at the same conclusion and they will worship you since your righteousness has been openly shown!" *(Sing unto the Lord a new song, for he has done marvellous things! His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him the victory! The Lord has made known his salvation, his righteousness has he openly shown and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God! Psalm 98:1)*

5 And coinciding with this, I saw the inner shrine of the skin-tabernacle of testimony, with the veil wide open in the heavenly dimension. *(The prophetic skin-tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting is now redeemed in the Incarnation - the human body hosts this place of intimate encounter. See Ex 33:7 the tent of meeting* **דעוֹמֵ** *the moyed which is the Niphal [reflexive] of* **דע** *- od, with Ayin [o] as a picture of the eye, the d is a picture of the door. Combined these mean "see the door". As coming to a tent a tent of meeting and entering in. A place, time or event that is repeated again and again - in the reflexive form. In the Septuagint the Greek word* ***marturion*** *is used - that which gives evidence - testimony. So the tent of meeting is the tent of testimony! Rev 11:19)*

6 And the seven shepherd-messengers - representing the seven wounds - proceeded out of the inner shrine arrayed in spotlessly clean linen, shining with the radiant brightness of a precious stone and with golden girdles wrapped around their chests.

7 And one of the four living creatures gave each of the shepherd-messengers a typical temple golden fire-pan; a broad shallow saucer of pure gold, [1]filled with the coals from the bronze altar where the Lamb

was sacrificed - this is the passion of God. These golden fire-pans were loaded with the entire meaning of the sacrifice! *(A golden "fire-pan" was for the purpose of carrying fire, in order to burn incense on the day of Atonement once a year in the ultimate place of worship. Filled,* ***γέμω gémō****, to be full, from* ***γόμος gómos****, load; cargo. The word* ***thumos****, passion from* ***thuo****, to sacrifice, immolate, to slay; the killing of the paschal lamb. The words* ***phialas chrusas****, refer to a golden fire-pan specifically designed to receive the sweet smelling frankincense which was lighted with coals from the brazen altar, where the sacrifice has just been presented in the outer court and then offered on the golden altar before the veil.*
The Latin word ***fumos*** *to smoke originates from* ***thumos****. However, thumos does not mean fumes or smoke. In fact, many of our modern translations give us something totally different. Today, θυμος is translated as "the soul" or something along the lines of the "breath of life". The Greeks believed that their soul was a smoke or a breath that floated within their body. We have images given by ancient philosophers who describe the soul dispersing as a smoke would. By the time of Classical Greece, the word meaning "to sacrifice" was the Greek verb θυω (thuo) from θυμος and is therefore another etymology for Latin's fumus which comes from the Greek words for both soul and sacrifice. θυω is meant to describe any sacrifice that is specifically done by cremation. They were releasing their souls through fire, creating smoke. In the ancient Greek mind, smoke represents the soul of the sacrifice.*
Thus the English word for fumes and the origin of the word to smoke in Romance Languages comes from the ancient Greek words for soul and sacrifice. See these interesting notes on the etymology of the words translated, smoke and sacrifice. https://amarnaletters.wordpress.com/tag/greek/)

8 The atmosphere of the inner shrine was saturated with the glorious presence of God's power! The doxa and dunamis of God, manifested in the fire, were carried in these golden fire-pans from the altar and it filled the temple with its smoke. No one was able to enter the inner shrine until the seven wounds of the seven messengers were completed. *(See Ex 19:18 And Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a*

kiln, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.
Exo 19:10 And the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments, Exo 19:11 and be ready by the third day; for on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.)
See the Context of Revelation 15 in Hebrews chapter 9. Also my commentary note in Rev 11:19

Chapter 16

1 Then I heard the sound of a loud voice coming out of the inner shrine, commanding the seven shepherd-messengers to pour out upon the earth the weight of the passion of God which had been loaded onto the golden fire-pans they received from the brazen altar of sacrifice. *(A golden "fire-pan" was for the purpose of carrying fire, in order to burn incense on the day of Atonement once a year in the ultimate place of worship. Rev 8:3 This was a preparation peculiar to the day of expiation. "On other days it was the custom of the priest to take fire from the brazen altar in a silver censer, but on the great Day of Atonement the high priest took the fire from the great altar in a golden censer; and when he was come down from the great altar, he took incense from one of the priests, who brought it to him, and went with it to the golden altar; and while he offered the incense the people prayed without in silence." Sir Isaac Newton.*
The source of every reference to fire in the Book of Revelation would always be from the Brazen Altar of sacrifice, symbolizing the Cross where the Lamb of God died mankind's death.
See Extended Notes on ***the Brazen Altar of Sacrifice*** *at the end of this chapter.)*

2 And the first one departed and poured the contents of his golden fire-pan upon the earth and it broke out in terrible and grievous sores upon all those who worshiped the image and bore its mark. *(Reminding*

of the sixth Egyptian plague. The broken distorted body - Jesus was wounded by our transgressions.)

3 And the second one poured out his golden fire-pan upon the sea and its waters became like blood which killed every living soul in the sea. *(The death of the old fallen mindset.)*

4 And the third did the same to the rivers and fountains which all became like blood. *(Every single water source will give testimony to the covenant sealed in the shed blood of the Lamb!)*

5 Then I heard the shepherd-messenger who interprets the message in the waters say, "Righteous are you in the conclusion of your judgment. Your I-am-ness defines time - present, past and future." *(There is nothing in prophetic time, past, present or future that distract from God's supreme purpose and ultimate conclusion of redemption - no trace of any definition of Satanas, sin-consciousness or accusation will ever interfere with the sweet bliss of eternal companionship to be celebrated in the romance of the ages.)*

6 Since they are the ones who poured out the blood of the Saints and the Prophets you gave them blood to drink as their [1]due. *(The word [1]**axios** - having the weight of another thing of like value - the message of the blood! The blood of Jesus speaks of better things! See Heb 12:24 See also my Extended commentary on the Blood at the end of the book.)*

7 And I heard the Altar speak again, in the same language of the song of Moses and the Lamb, "Oh Lord God you certainly hold sway over all things! Righteousness and truth are your trademarks in every detail of judgment!" *(Oh Lord God, the Almighty - **kurie ho theos ho pantokratōr**. Just as in Rev 15:3 in the Song of Moses and of the Lamb, See Deut 32:4 "Ascribe greatness to our God the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways just. A God of faithfulness and without injustice; righteous and*

truth is he. In God's act of righteousness in which the human race was acquitted and justified, God spoke the language of the highest courts of Justice, having had no-one greater to swear by, he swore by himself, thus, making it impossible for his resolve not to be fulfilled, thereby ending all possible grounds for dispute! See Hebrews 6:13-19.)

8 And the fourth shepherd-messenger poured out his golden fire-pan upon the sun giving it authority to scorch mankind with its heat as in a fiery furnace.

9 And mankind's minds were fried in the heat of their own 'natural' light *(the sun, symbolic of how their stubborn mindsets of their own making were placed in the furnace to remove the dross from the gold.)* **They, just like in Pharaoh's day, continued to blaspheme the name of God who had the authority over these plagues. They did not show any change of heart towards God to acknowledge his thoughts about them as unveiled in Christ.**

10 And the fifth shepherd-messenger poured the content of his golden fire-pan upon the throne of the Beast and it turned the lights off - his entire kingdom was in a black-out and people were gnawing their tongues in anguish and distress.

11 They cursed and blasphemed God of heaven out of the agony of their sores and still refused to change their minds about their doings.

12 And the 6th shepherd-messenger poured out the coals from his golden fire-pan upon the great river of Euphrates so that its sweet water dried up, turning the riverbed into a highway of invasion for the kings of the east.

13 Then I witnessed three unclean spirits - which had the appearance of frogs - coming out of the mouths of the "triune" Dragon, Beast and

False Prophet.

14 They are spirits of [1]demons, doing [2]signs - which advertise the great day of conflict to all the kings of the earth, trying to make them gather their combined forces and bring them – and the whole world – to the battle on that great day of God the Almighty. *(The word translated demon, [1]**daimōn**; from **daiō**, to distribute fortunes. See extended notes at the end of Rev 9 on Idols and Demons. The word [2]**sēmainō**, symbolic imagery; signify; to picture; to portray. There are numeral references to the same "once and for all war" in the heavens! It is however the same hour; the same event! Rev 12:7; Rev 17:13,14; Rev 19:19; Rev 20:8.)*

15 Oh, that you would awaken to my intention! Why must I come to you like a thief who suddenly breaks into your space, unannounced! Guard your apparel lest you feel exposed and embarrassed about your nakedness - just like Adam and Eve when they traded their awareness of their I-am-ness and our sweet communion for the fruit of the alternative tree! *(See Gen 3:9 And Jehovah God called to the man and said to him, Where are you? Gen 3:10 And he said, I have heard Your sound in the garden, and I was afraid, for I am naked, and I hid myself. Gen 3:11 And He said, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat? Rev 3:18 I invite you to talk business with me! Come, let us resolve this together! I want to make you really rich! I advise you to buy gold from me! Gold that is thoroughly refined in the fire! Not the flawed currency of your own trade! We're not talking a mixture here! No dross! And from now on, buy your clothing from me; white garments; not the blended brand of your own making! Clothe yourself completely with these and there will not even be a hint of shame! For your eyes, buy eye-salve [kollourion] from me to anoint your eyes so that you may clearly see yourself in Christ! See my note on Why the other Tree in 1 John 3:12)*

16 And the frog demons worked as one, gathering the kings of the earth together in a place with a Hebrew name, Armageddon. *(The three unclean spirits working as one - **sunēgagen** - second Aorist active*

*indicative of **sunagō**, singular. See Rev 16:13 - these are the extension of the same counterfeit trinity.)*

17 The seventh shepherd-messenger poured his golden fire-pan into the atmosphere. A loud voice came from the throne in the inner shrine, and said, "It is irreversibly done!" *(**gegonen**, perfect active indicative - Its effect will never diminish!)*

18 This ignited flashes of lightning with the roaring voices of thunder and a massive earthquake such as has never been felt since the beginning of human existence upon the earth. There was never anything remotely like it. The earth rocked, rolled and rumbled.

19 And the great city split into three portions and the cities of the nations fell and Babylon the great was remembered in the cup of God's [1]great passion and [2]desire to bring everything to conclusion. *(The word [1]**thumos**, passion and [2]**orge** from **oregomai**, to stretch one's self out in order to touch or to grasp something, to reach after with intense desire. The third part is a symbolic expression of a representative portion of the whole. Here, the counterfeit Trinity, represented in the Whore-City Babylon, is divided and conquered.)*

20 All islands vanished and not a trace of the mountains could be found. *(There was nowhere to hide on the planet from the far reaching conclusion of God's finished work in Christ; neither a remote island nor even a mountain remained in place. Islands represent the religious, political and social isolation of people groupings; mountains represent the social structures of influence.)*

21 The entire economy fell - like massive hail stones the size of talents cast down from the heavens upon the people of the earth and they blasphemed God because of the hail for the plague was most intense! *(The word, **talantiaios**, talent of gold or silver, from **talanton**, the scale of*

balances.)

At the close of Chapter 16, we reached the end of the three great series of judgments, - the series of the seven Seals, the seven Trumpets, and the seven Vessels. It cannot surprise us, however, that at this point other visions of judgment are to follow. Already we had reached the end at Rev 6, then again at the end of Rev 11; yet on both occasions the same general subject was immediately afterwards renewed, and the same events were again presented to us, though in a different aspect and with heightened coloring. [Expository Bible.]

Revelation Chapter 16 Extended Notes:

Notes on the Brazen Altar

Armageddon - Earthbound vs. Heavenly Dimension

Notes on the Brazen Altar

Rev 16:1 Then I heard the sound of a loud voice coming out of the inner shrine, commanding the seven shepherd-messengers to pour out upon the earth the weight of the passion of God which had been loaded onto the golden fire-pans they received from the brazen altar of sacrifice. *(A golden "fire-pan" was for the purpose of carrying fire, in order to burn incense on the day of Atonement once a year in the ultimate place of worship. Rev 8:3 This was a preparation peculiar to the day of expiation. "On other days it was the custom of the priest to take fire from the brazen altar in a silver censer, but on the great Day of Atonement the high priest took the fire from the great altar in a golden censer; and when he was come down from the great altar, he took incense from one of the priests, who brought it to him, and went with it to the golden altar; and while he offered the incense the people prayed without in silence." Sir Isaac Newton.*

The source of every reference to fire in the Book of Revelation would always be from the Brazen Altar of Sacrifice, symbolizing the Cross where the Lamb of God died mankind's death. See my ***Extended notes on the lake of fire*** *at the end of chapter 19*

In each of these plagues we have a graphic symbolic picture of the extent of the Lamb's suffering - wounded by mankind's plagues - see Isaiah 53.

There is a likeness between the seven trumpets and the seven vessels in some things, especially in the first four; for as the first four trumpets affect the earth, the sea, the fountains, and rivers of water, and the sun, so the first four vessels are poured out on the same, and that in the same order. Earth

and sea represent mankind's natural life and habitat, sustained by water and sunlight.
There is in many of these vessels an allusion to the plagues of Egypt; in the first, Rev 16:2 to the plague of boils, Exo 9:8 in the second and third, Rev 16:3 to that of turning the waters of Egypt into blood, Exo 7:19 in the fourth, Rev 16:10 to the darkness that was over all the land of Egypt, Exo 10:21 and in the fifth there is a manifest reference to the frogs that distressed the Egyptians, Exo 8:5 and in the seventh, to the plague of hail, Exo 9:23 and they have much the same effect, even the hardening of those on whom they fall, being far from being brought to a change of heart by them, Rev 16:9.
Again and again, the obstinate slave-mindsets of the earth-dwellers are addressed in graphic judgmental imagery, in order to overcome and persuade every single individual to awaken them out of slumber to see the triumph of the Lamb on their behalf! The coals from the brazen altar, then the altar of incense and worship at the torn veil, gives new context to everything! The symbolic vessels contain the interpretation and implication of the sacrificed Lamb. As in Isaiah 52:10 "The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." Isaiah 52:14-15 "Just as many were astonished at you—so was he marred in his appearance, more than any human and his form beyond that of human semblance—so will he startle many nations. Kings will shut their mouths because of him; for what had not been told them, they will see and what they had not heard, they will understand."
Yet, initially, we, mankind, esteemed him not! He had no form or comeliness that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. We thought he was stricken by God! Not realizing that in the drama of the ages, the Son of God presented himself as mankind's scapegoat to be butchered by his own creation! Isa 53:3 He was despised and rejected by his own people; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.
Isa 53:4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; ***yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted****. (See verse 10 in the Septuagint! No! It did not "please the Lord to bruise him!!" The Lord desires to cleanse his wounds - and in the offering of his life as sacrifice he shall see his seed afar off! See verse 11 - the joy that is set before him! The offspring is the fruit of the travail of his soul! Heb 12:2, for the joy that was*

set before him endured the cross, despising the shame!)
Isa 53:5 But he was wounded by our transgressions, he was bruised by our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and by his stripes we are healed.
Isa 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jaweh gave him for our sins. (The Septuagint renders it. Κύριος παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ἡμῶν Kurios paredōken auton tais hamartiais hēmōn - 'The Lord gave him for our sins. See Rom 4:25 - He was handed over because of our sins - he was raised because of our redeemed innocence!)
Isa 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.
Isa 53:8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken by the transgression of my people?
He was not bruised by God, but by the very mankind he was about to redeem!
You may ask, "But what about Isaiah 53:10!?" [It pleased the Lord to "crush" him!] Translators of the New Revised Standard Version say in their footnotes to this verse: "Meaning of Hebrew uncertain." The Septuagint [Greek version] of this verse, written 200 years before Jesus, by 70 Hebrew and Greek scholars [with access to much older manuscripts than what we have today;] have rendered the Hebrew text as follows: "The Lord desires to purify him of the plague!" This can also be translated, "The Lord desires to cleanse his wounds!" The word, ***plege*** *means a wound. [The Septuagint is 1000 years older than the Masoretic text from which our Old Testament is translated!]*

Armageddon - Earthbound vs. Heavenly Dimension

In the symbolic language of the book of Revelation people's perception of the world is four dimensional: heaven, earth, the ocean and the deep underworld [including under the ocean Eze 28:8; Rev 5:13. The idea of all earth dwellers of the time was that the planet was flat and square! So the four corners of the earth were not factual but merely to communicate a symbolic picture and principle within their perceptions - as also the idea of an under world. See the four spheres already referenced in Gen 1:2, and the earth being without form and empty,

and darkness on the face of the deep, [abussos - LXX] and the Spirit of God moving gently on the face of the waters. Also in Ps 135:6 Whatever the LORD pleases he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and the Abyss. Or in the LXX it is Ps 134:6.

Armageddon pictures the battle between the lower, earthbound thought patterns and the elevated, heavenly thoughts of God. Col 3:1-3; Rev 17:8.

The "earthbound-dilemma" of mankind is addressed in the Incarnate Christ.

Rev 16:16 And the frog demons worked as one, gathering the kings of the earth together in a place with a Hebrew name, Armageddon. *(The natural Topography and history of the land are used symbolically to describe a significant spiritual principle. "Bounded as it is by the hills of Palestine on both north and south, it would naturally become the arena of war between the* ***low-landers*** *who trusted in their chariots, and the Israelite* ***highlanders*** *of the neighboring heights. To this cause mainly it owes its celebrity, as the battle-field of the world, which has, through its adoption into the language of Revelation, passed into an global proverb. If that mysterious book proceeded from the hand of a Galilean fisherman, it is the more easy to understand why, with the scene of those many battles constantly before him, he should have drawn the figurative name of the final conflict between the hosts of good and evil, from the 'place which is called in the Hebrew tongue Harmagedon'" (Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine").*

The scene of a the struggle of good and evil is suggested by that battle plain of Esdraelon, which was famous for two great victories, of Barak over the Canaanites, and of Gideon over the Midianites; and for two great disasters, the deaths of Saul and Josiah. Hence in Revelation a place of great slaughter, the scene of the great triumph of the Lamb over every definition of an enemy in mankind's minds. The RSV translates the name as Har-Magedon, i.e. the hill (as Ar is the city) of Megiddo. Thus Armageddon pictures the battle between the lower earthbound thought patterns and the thoughts of God. Har , mountain or a range of hills and megiddon - a gathering of a crowd - a rendezvous.)

Rev 17:8 The brutal Beast you saw is a [1]"has been" from the beginning - it indeed has no real existence - yet it seems to make "a come back" as if emerging out of the Abyss only to dissolve again into perdition.

Meanwhile the minds of those blinded by their [2]earthbound perceptions continue to be mesmerized by its apparent relevance. They are the ones whose identities are not [3]based upon the Lamb's Book of Life. They do not yet see that their original identity was redeemed in the Lamb." *(The words, ἦν καὶ οὐκ ἔστι [1]**en kai ouk esti**, meaning, to be and not to be; with the verb **en** being the Imperfect Indicative of **eimi**, I am - another meaning of the imperfect indicative is to refer to unreal (counterfactual) situations in present or past time.*
*This is in total contrast to the One who is I am; who always was and will continually be the accompanying One. An antithesis to "**ho ēn kai ho ōn**" of Rev 1:4.)*
Rev 11:16 At that moment, the twenty four elders who were seated on their thrones face to face with God, fell down prostrate before him in adoration
Rev 11:17 and exclaimed: Our hearts are flooded with gratitude and the affection of your favor! We salute your Lordship oh God! You are the Supreme Authority over all things; your I-am-ness defines time - present, past and future. The [1]due dynamic of your [2]Royal-reign is forever established! *(The word translated due, [1]**eilepsas** from **lambano** is in the perfect active tense which suggests the continual effect of an action already completed in the past. The word **lambano** means to take what is one's own, one's due. Then the word **esbasileusas** from **basileuo**, to reign, is the Aorist active tense which speaks of a completed act. Both these tenses emphasize the permanence of God's rule. There was never a time where God's royal rule was in question. In giving himself as scapegoat to be murdered by his own creatures assumes a weakness that does not compromise his authority at all! In the genius of his wisdom he defeats the entire system of judgment under the law of performance, governing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The seeming frailty of the slain Lamb never compromised the authority of the Lion of Judah! 1 Cor 1:25 It seems so foolish that God should die mankind's death on the cross; it seems so weak of God to suffer such insult; yet mankind's wisest schemes and most powerful display of genius cannot even begin to comprehend or compete with God in his weakest moment on the cross.)*
Rev 11:18 The culmination of mankind's wrath collided with your passion oh God - this is the critical moment where judgment is met in

death! *(Jesus said, "When I am lifted up on the cross, I will draw all judgment unto me!")* **This is the anticipated moment and prize of your bond-friends, the Prophets, the Saints and everyone who were awed by your Name - both the insignificant and the prominent - this is the destruction of the corrupting virus in the earth!** *(In the symbolic language of the book of Revelation, the judgment of the Dragon, the Beast and the Whore; the counterfeit Trinity, is not a judgment against an entity, but against a corrupt mindset-system. A virus doesn't have a life of its own - it needs a host!*
Microbiology Professor, Vincent Racaniello writes, "Life is 'an organismic state characterized by capacity for metabolism, growth, reaction to stimuli, and reproduction.' Viruses are not living things. Viruses are complicated assemblies of molecules, including proteins, nucleic acids, lipids, and carbohydrates, but on their own they can do nothing until they enter a living cell. Without cells, viruses would not be able to multiply. Therefore, viruses are not living things."
See also Rev 18:20)
Ephesians 6:12 People are not the enemy, [whether they be husbands, wives, children, or parents, slaves, or bosses. They might host hostile, law inspired thought patterns through their unbelief or ignorance but,] to target one another is to engage in the wrong combat. We represent the authority of the victory of Christ in the spiritual realm. We are positioned there *[in Christ]***; we [1]confront the mind games and [2]structures of darkness, religious thought patterns, governing and conditioning human behavior.** *(The word, [1]**pros**, face to face; towards. The word, [2]**poneros** is often translated as evil; this word is described in Thayer's Lexicon as full of annoyances, hardships and labor, which is exactly what the DIY law-system of works produce!*
1 Cor 15:24 The complete conclusion in his work of redemption is celebrated in his yielding the full harvest of his reign to God the Father, having [1]brought to naught the law of works which supported every definition of dominion under the fall, including all [2]principalities, all [3]authority and every [4]dynamic influence in society. *(He brought to naught the law of works, [1]**katargeo**, from **kata**, meaning intensity, and **argos**, meaning labor; thus free from all self-effort to attempt to improve*

*what God has already perfected in Christ. All principalities, [2]**arche**, or chief ranks, i.e., kings, governors; this includes any governing system whereby one is ranked above the other on the basis of their performance or preference. All authority, [3]**exousia**, comes from **ek**, denoting origin and **eimi**, I am; in this case, because of what I can do I am defined by what I can do better than you; therefore, I have authority over you. Every dynamic influence in society, [4]**dunamis**, means power, in this case, willpower. Every government structure in society will be brought under the dominion of grace where the Christ life rules.*

The kingdom of God is the dominion of the Christ life in human form, where righteousness is based on who we are and not on what we do; who we are by God's doing and not who we are by our own doing; right being and not merely right acting. Where the law of works was duty and guilt driven; the law of faith is love driven. [Rom 3:27, Gal 5:6, 2 Cor 10:12] when they measure themselves by one another, and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding.)

John 1:50 Jesus said, "So you believe because I say I saw you sitting under the fig tree? You haven't seen anything yet!

John 1:51 Truly I say unto you, Nathaniel [singular], because of who I am, you [plural - You-manity - all the families in heaven and on earth] will surely see this communication between the heavenly sphere and earth thrown wide [1]open and the Angelic shepherd-messengers of God ascending and descending upon the Incarnate son of man. heaven and earth meet in the Incarnate one! *(In him every definition of separation and distance is cancelled! Isaiah 55:10,11 "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not there without saturating the earth [all flesh], so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it. The prophetic word was destined to become flesh; every nook and cranny of human life is saturated in the incarnation! The word **aneogota**, Perfect Active Participle Accusative Masculine Singular, 2nd Conjugation-form; the one who has led us upwards - from **anoigō, ana**, upwards and **agoo**, to lead! Jesus reminds Nathaniel of Genesis 28:12-14 And Jacob dreamt that there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it! And Jahweh said to*

him, I am Elohim of Abraham, your seed shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and your descendants have all the families of the earth been blessed!
"Jesus has united heaven and earth, the life of God and human life in himself. Just as it was planned before the time of the ages." Dr Baxter Kruger.)
Rev 19:11 Then, in my vision, heaven opened and I saw a white horse appear; and the name of the one seated upon the horse is Faithful and True. Righteousness spans the range of his judgment and warfare. *(Ephesians 3:15 also Ephesians 1:3 Let's celebrate God! He lavished every blessing heaven has upon us in Christ! See Ephesians 4:8-10, Scripture confirms that he led us as trophies in his triumphant procession on high; he repossessed his gift (likeness) in human form. (Also Ephesians 2:6, We are also elevated in his ascension to be equally welcome in the throne room of the heavenly realm where we are now seated together with him in his authority. Quote from the Hebrew text, Ps 68:18, thou hast taken gifts in human form, in Adam. [The gifts which Jesus Christ distributes to us he has received in us, in and by virtue of his incarnation. Commentary by Adam Clarke.]*
Ephesians 4:9 The fact that he ascended confirms his victorious descent into the deepest pits of human despair. (See John 3:13, "No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, even the son of man." All mankind originate from above; we are ***anouthen****, from above. [See James 1:17, 18])*
Ephesians 4:10 He now occupies the ultimate rank of authority from the lowest regions where he stooped down to rescue us to the highest authority in the heavens, having executed his mission to the full. (Fallen mankind is fully restored to the authority of the authentic life of their design. [Psa 139:7,8, Where can I go where your Spirit is absent? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You! If I make my bed in Sheol, You!])
Rev 12:7 Mikael and his shepherd-messengers led the war in the heavenly realm against the Dragon and his herding-heralds. *(Mikael means, "Who is like God?" The context of the onslaught against the human race has always been identity-related! The fruit of the "I-am-not tree system !" Jesus faced this temptation on mankind's behalf, "If you are the Son of*

God?" See John 10:30-36)

Rev 12:8 The Dragon's influence was totally demolished and rendered powerless - not a trace of its presence was found in the heavens! *(Principalities and powers were completely disarmed on the cross! Col 2:14,15 "And their place was not found" see Dan 2:35 - the little stone against whom the Gates of Hades shall not prevail - the Chip of the old Block demolished the pseudo man-made identity. There are numeral references to the same "once and for all war" in the heavens! It is however the same hour; the same event! Rev 16:13,14; Rev 17:13,14; 19:19; Rev 20:8.)*

Rev 12:9 So the great Dragon, the [1]ancient [2]ophis *[serpent],* **also known as the Devil or Satan - whose sole mission was to lead the entire inhabited world astray - was cast down to the earth-dimension, together with all his [3]herding-heralds.** *(The word [1]**archaios**, ancient, of old; from **arche**, from the beginning. As Jesus said that the Devil was a murderer "from the beginning" The Greek word, [2]**ophis** is translated serpent and comes from **optomai**, to gaze, in this case, to present a visual idea through illusion. John 8:44. He was stripped of his pseudo rank of authority see Col 2:14,15 he was made a public spectacle! Luke 10:18 And Jesus said to them, I saw Satan falling out of heaven like lightning! Also John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast down. [When I am lifted up on the cross. Jn 12:32])*

Rev 12:12 An [1]eruption of belly-laughter followed in the heavenlies and in all those inhabiting this realm. Woe to the land and sea for the Devil was cast down there in great embarrassment, seeing that his time has run out! *(The word, [1]**euphraino**, jubilant rejoicing, from **eu**, well done; extravagantly good; and **phren**, the midriff or diaphragm, the innermost parts of the heart. This makes Paul's appeal in Col 3:1-3 so relevant! Engage your minds with heavenly dimension realities and not with the earthbound soul realm.)*

Rev 12:13 As soon as the Dragon realized that he had lost his supposed position in the heavenlies and was now confined to the earth realm, he pursued the woman who birthed the male child.

Rev 12:14 But the woman was given very large eagle wings with which to fly away to her safe place in the wilderness where she would be pampered for a time and times and half a time out of sight of the

serpent. *(Beyond the reach of Ophis! 1260 days; 3 and a half years which points to the uninterrupted extent of Jesus' ministry.)*
Rev 12:15 Then waters flooded out of the mouth of the serpent in an attempt to drown the woman *[the prophetic voice unveiling the Christ]* **in his devilish conversation.**
Rev 12:16 But the earth rescued the woman by opening its mouth and gulped down the entire river proceeding from the Dragon's mouth. *(In his death, burial and decent into the lowest parts of the earth. See Eph 4:8,9. Note, like in Rev 12:9, the words for the Serpent-system are interchanged, including the Dragon, Satan, Devil and also in 12:10, the Accuser, Kategoros, whose business is the industry of accusation.)*
Rev 12:17 The fact that the woman escaped his pursuit extremely infuriated the Dragon, so he turned his attention to contend with the remnant of her seed who treasured [1]the completeness of God's fulfilled purpose echoing the [2]testimony of Jesus! *(The word [1]**entole**, which is often translated commandment or precept, has two components: **en**, in and **telos**, from **tello**, to set out for a definite point or goal; the point aimed at as a limit, that is, by implication, the conclusion of an act or state, the result; the ultimate or prophetic purpose. Strong's 5056 See 1 John 2:3 Mirror Bible) The [2]testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Rev 19:10. See **Extended Notes on the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ** at the end of chapter 20.)*
Rev 13:6 It hurled its accusations in God's face, while blaspheming his Name and tabernacle and those dwelling in the heavenlies. *(The words, [1]**pros ton theon** positions the Accuser to now face God's image and likeness incarnate in human form, since there was no trace of accusation present in the heavenlies, having been thoroughly expelled from any further presence or relevance in the heavenly sphere. [Rev 12:8-10] The significance of heaven endorsing the tabernacle of God on earth - in both its prophetic symbolism as well as its tangible unveiling in incarnate human life, is now the target of accusation and every blasphemous utterance of this Beast who takes its authority from Mr. Accusation himself!*
*And them that dwell in heaven; **kai tous en too ouranoo skenountas** - in contrast to those whose minds are still trapped in earthbound-mode! See verse 8)*
Rev 13:7 And it was given the mission to wage war against those who

have discovered their wholeness in Christ and to conquer them and to dominate the entire spectrum of people-groupings; every tribe, tongue and nation. *(The words remind of Dan 7:21,22,23. Where there seemed to be no escape from the Beast's rule. However, the fact that the Beast failed in its mission is already celebrated in Rev 5:13 as well as in Rev 7:9 At this moment I saw a massive throng of people, impossible to count, standing tall and innocent everyone of them dressed in white with palm branches in their hands; they have escaped everything that could possibly define them as a non-Jewish Gentile world! In fact, every sphere of society were there - including the entire spectrum of people-groupings; tribal identities with their unique language-specific dialect preferences; they were all present there facing the throne and the Lamb as the people of the planet!)*

Rev 13:8 The plan was to engage the entire [1]earthbound population of the planet to worship the Beast. *(The counterfeit "slain and risen lamb")* **This would endorse the idea** *(of religion)* **that there were individuals, since the [3]fall of the [4]cosmos, whose [2]names were not included in the [5]slain Lamb's Book of Life.** *(The word [1]**katoikeō** from **kata**, down and **oikeo**, to dwell or set up home - thus, to be earthbound. Paul invites us to engage our thoughts with resurrection realities and to see ourselves co-raised and seated together with Christ in heavenly places! Col 3:1-3. Rev 17:8 also Rev 16:16.*

In the context of verse 6, clearly the target of the "blasphemy" was to insult and interrogate the [2]Name! See Eph 3:15 Every family in heaven and on earth originates in him; his is mankind's family name and he remains the authentic identity of every nation. The entire industry of accusation is about the blatant blasphemy of the name that reveals and redeems mankind's original identity.

"The Book of Life" - this language is taken from the custom of registering the names of persons in a list, roll, or catalogue. In Jewish tradition there was a prevailing fear that your name might be blotted out of the Book of Life if your behavior did not please God. See Ex 32:32 Here the suggestion is that some names were not even written in the Lamb's Book of Life to begin with! See also Rev 17:8, ...the ones whose names have not been written in the Book of Life from the fall of the world." This idea would obviously boost the Calvinistic deception of election, that if you're not "chosen", you're doomed - which is a ridiculous contradiction to the entire

context and conclusion of the Gospel! See notes on The Book of Life at the end of chapter 17.

*The word [5]**esphagmenou** is the Perfect Passive Participle of the verb, **sphazō**, to slay in sacrifice. The Perfect Participle is used to describe a state that exists at the time as a result of action completed prior to the time of the main verb. The basic thought of the perfect tense is that the progress of an action has been completed and the results of the action are continuing on, in full effect. In other words, the progress of the action has reached its culmination and the finished results are now present.*

*The word, [4]**kosmos** in the NT refers to the entire human family and their social structures. The word often translated foundation, **kataballo**, from **kata** and **ballo**, meaning "to fall away, to put in a lower place," instead of **themelios**, meaning "foundation" [see Ephesians 2:20; also Rev 21:14,19]; thus, I translated it "the fall of the world," instead of "the foundation of the world." The entire "Fall" was a falling away in our minds from our true identity as image and likeness bearers of Elohim. Just like Eve, were we all deceived to believe a lie about ourselves, which is the fruit of the "I-am-not-tree ". We all, like sheep have gone astray. [Isa 53:6]*

See 1 Peter 1:20 He was always destined in God's prophetic thought; God knew even before the fall of the world order that his son would be the Lamb, to be made manifest in these last days, because of you! [You are the reason Jesus died and was raised!])

Rev 13:12 Even though it had the appearance of the lamb, it operated under the same authority as the previous Beast - under the watchful eye of the Dragon! *[Counterfeit-Christianity as a religion is a wolf in sheep's clothing!]* **It's the same old Dragon in a lamb's disguise! It's mission was to engage the [1]earthbound dwellers to worship the counterfeit - the slaughtered animal that was restored to life out of its death.** *(The historic relevance of the death and resurrection of the Lamb is in the revelation of mankind's co-inclusion - Jesus died our death and went into our hell and we were co-quickened in his resurrection and are co-seated together with him in heavenly places!*

*Again John employs the word [1]**katoikeō** from **kata**, down and **oikeo**, to dwell or set up home - thus to be earthbound. Rev 13:8.*

*Matthew 7:15 "Beware of false Prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." In his sight - **enōpion***

autou. *In the eye of the first Beast who gets his authority from the Dragon - Rev 13:3)*

Rev 19:19 And I saw the Beast in alliance with the kings of the earth muster their armies to engage a [1]once and for all war against the One seated on the horse and his army! *(The idea of a once and for all war is implied by the Aorist Infinitive tense of the verb,* ***poiesai****. [Weymouth] This is the Aorist active Infinitive which indicates prior completion of an action in relationship to a point in time. Greek infinitives could have either a present or Aorist form. The contrast between the two forms was not necessarily one of time, it is a difference of aspect. The present Infinitive was used to express progressive or imperfective aspect. It pictures the action expressed by the verb as being in progress. The Aorist Infinitive however does not express progressive aspect. It presents the action expressed by the verb as a completed unit with a beginning and end.*

This is an important fact since there are numeral references to the same "once and for all war" in the heavens! It is however the same hour; the same event! Rev 12:7; Rev 16:13,14; Rev 17:13,14; Rev 20:8.)

Rev 20:8 And his obvious strategy would be to deceive the nations on a global scale including the four corners of the earth by assembling Gog and Magog in war; their number is as the sand of the sea. *(Again, every traditional Jewish concept of judgment is addressed. Gog and Magog is now brought into the conversation, since Jewish eschatology viewed Gog and Magog as enemies to be defeated by the Messiah, which will usher in the age of the Messiah. "Then Eldad and Modad [brothers of Moses] both prophesied together, and said, 'In the very end of time Gog and Magog and their army shall come up against Jerusalem, and they shall fall by the hand of the King Messiah; they shall be slain by the flame of fire which shall proceed from under the throne of glory, and afterwards all the dead of Israel shall rise again to life, and shall enjoy the delights prepared for them from the beginning." Quote from the Jewish Targum. See reference in Num 11:26 and Ez 38:17.)*

Rev 20:9 They will spread across the earth and attempt to neutralize the "Queen Bee Bride" of the Lamb by surrounding and besieging God's Saints in the beloved city. Then fire will pour out of heaven and consume them. *(Again, the mindsets of satanic accusation are made a meal of - yet another reference to the great supper-feast celebrating the new covenant and the conclusion of the old.)*

Eph 2:5 This is how grace rescued us: while we were yet in that state of deadness and indifference in our [1]deviations, we were co-quickened together with Christ! We had nothing to do with it. By [2]grace you are - having been saved! Grace defines us and interprets our salvation. *(The word often translated, trespasses, παράπτωμα* ***paraptoma*** *from* ***para*** *close proximity and* ***pipto****, to descend from a higher place to a lower; to stop flying,* ***petomai****, to fly. Losing altitude speaks of mankind's fallen mindset. Col 3:1-3. The sentence,* ***[2]χάριτί ἐστε σεσῳσμένοι*** *- literally translates, "By grace you are - having been saved!" We had no contribution to our salvation! God's Master-Plan unfolded in the mystery of the gospel declaring our joint inclusion in Christ's death and resurrection. This is the mystery of grace, God reveals us in Christ! Now we may know, even as we have always been known! 1 Cor 13:12. Of God's doing are we in Christ! 1 Cor 1:30. God saw us in Christ, in his death and resurrection before we saw ourselves there! He declared mankind's co-resurrection with Christ 800 BC. This is the only scripture in the entire Old Testament that specifically mentions the third day resurrection and it includes us! "After two days he will revive us, on the third day, he will raise us up!" Hosea 6:2)*

Eph 2:6 We are co-included in his resurrection. We are also co-elevated in his ascension to be equally present in the throne room of the heavenly realm where we are co-seated with him in his executive authority. We are fully represented in Christ Jesus. *(We have wasted so much time trying to get there, when "there" is where we are to begin with! Our joint position in Christ defines us; this can never again be a distant goal to reach through religious devotion or striving, but our immediate location. Col 3:1-3)*

Eph 2:7 *(In a single triumphant act of righteousness God saved us from the "guttermost" to the uttermost. Here we are now, revealed in Christ in the highest possible position of bliss! If mankind's sad history could not distract from the extravagant love of God,)* **imagine how God is now able for timeless perpetuity** *(the eternal future)* **to exhibit the trophy of the wealth of his grace demonstrated in his kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. Grace exhibits excessive evidence of the success of the cross.**

Eph 4:8 Scripture confirms that he led us as trophies in his triumphant procession on high; he [1]repossessed his gift *(likeness)* **in human form.** *(See Ephesians 2:6, We are also elevated in his ascension to be equally*

welcome in the throne room of the heavenly realm where we are now seated together with him in his authority. Quote from the Hebrew text, Ps 68:18, ***[1]lakachta mattanoth baadam****, you have taken gifts in human form, in Adam. [The gifts which Jesus Christ distributes to us he has received in us, in and by virtue of his incarnation. Commentary by Adam Clarke.] We were born anew in his resurrection. 1 Pet 1:3, Hos 6:2.)*

Eph 4:9 The fact that he ascended confirms his victorious descent into the deepest pits of human despair. *(See John 3:13, "No one has ascended into heaven but he who [1]descended from heaven, even the son of man." All mankind originate from above; we are* ***[1]anouthen****, from above [see Jas 1:17, 18].)*

Eph 4:10 He now occupies the ultimate rank of authority from the lowest regions where he stooped down to rescue us to the highest authority in the heavens, having executed his mission to the full. *(Fallen mankind is fully restored to the authority of the authentic life of their design. [Psa 139:7,8 Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend to heaven, You! If I make my bed in Sheol, You!] Eph 1:21)*

See my rendering of Ephesians 6 on ***Spiritual Warfare.*** *Also 2 Cor 10:3-6*

Thoughts on spiritual warfare: ***Speak tenderly to Jerusalem; and cry to her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned!*** *[Isa 40:2]*

The Message translation: " ... the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's Cross. He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets." [Col 2:14, 15])

Spiritual warfare teachings are a popular distraction that many modern-day churches engage in! It preaches a defeated Devil back into business! Pharaoh was taken out of the equation when Israel was delivered out of Egypt! They then became their own worst enemy by continuing to believe a lie about themselves! [See Num 13:33 and Josh 2:11]

James says that a double-minded person deceives himself!

Neither Jesus or anyone of the Acts church ever marched around towns to bind so-called "strong men" or poured oil over buildings or places!

Any teaching that distracts from the success of the cross is a waste of time to pursue. The only possible way we can delay the glory that follows the

cross is by underestimating what happened there when Jesus died and cried: "It is finished!"
Jesus, grilled by the Pharisees on when the kingdom of God would come, answered; "The kingdom of God doesn't come by counting the days on the calendar." [The Message.] - The kingdom of God is within you! Luke 17:20.)

2 Cor 10:4 The dynamic of our strategy is revealed in God's ability to disengage mindsets and perceptions that have held people captive in pseudo fortresses for centuries!

2 Cor 10:5 Every lofty idea and argument positioned against the knowledge of God is cast down and exposed to be a mere invention of our own imagination. We [1]arrest every thought that could possibly trigger an opposing threat to our redeemed identity and innocence at spear point! The calibre of our weapon is empowered by the revelation of the ultimate consequence of the obedience of Christ. *(The obedience of Christ dwarfs the effect of the disobedience of Adam into insignificance! See Romans 5:12-21. The word* ***aichmalōtizō*** *from* ***aichme****, spear and* ***halosis****, to capture, thus, to arrest at spear point.)*

2 Cor 10:6 Our ears are fine tuned to [1]echo the voice of [3]likeness that resonates within us. We are [2]acquainted with the articulate detail of the [4]authentic language of our origin. *(The word [1]****echo****, means to hold or embrace; the word [2]****hetoimos****, is from an old noun* ***heteos*** *(fitness) which means adjusted, ready, prepared. The word [3]****ekdikeō*** *from* ***ek****, denoting origin +* ***dike****, two parties finding likeness in each other. The word [4]****parakoē*** *from* ***para,*** *originating from, +* ***akouo****, to hear.)*

2 Cor 12:7 In sharp contrast to these spiritual revelations, the physical pain that I suffered and my severe discomfort momentarily distracted me. It was as if the old mindset of accusation *(Satan)* **persuaded me that this affliction was actually God's way of keeping me humble.** *(Note that it was not a messenger from God, but from Satan! The word,* ***satanas*** *means accuser! By these revelations of extreme proportions and consequence Paul understood that we are indeed co-seated together with Christ in heavenly places. In his resurrection he already elevated us beyond any claim of accusation. See Hosea 6:2 and Ephesians 2:5,6. We cannot get any more elevated into the bliss of our redeemed innocence than discovering our joint-seatedness with Christ in the throne room ! Colossians 3:1-3)*

2 Cor 12:8 I almost believed this lie and even implored the Lord three times to remove the thorn from my flesh.
2 Cor 12:9 Finally it dawned on me that grace is God's language; he doesn't speak "thorn-langauge"! He said to me, "My grace [1]elevates you, to be fully content." And now, instead of being overwhelmed with a sense of my own weakness, he overwhelms me with an awareness of his strength! Oh what [2]bliss to rejoice in the fact that in the midst of my frailties I encounter the dynamic of the grace of God to be my [3]habitation! *(The word [1]**arkeo,** content, stems from the word **airo** which means to elevate. The word [2]**hedista** from **hedeos**, means pleasure. The word [3]**episkenoo** has two components: **epi**, continuous influence upon and **skenoo**, to encamp, to reside in a tent; the noun, **skenos** reminds of the English word skin! Paul suggests that God's grace fits you like a skin! One feels most at home in the consciousness of his grace!)*
2 Cor 12:10 I now enjoy a [1]delightfully different frame of mind when I encounter things that would normally make me feel frail, whether it be from insults or when I am in situations where [2]I'm forced to do things with my arms twisted behind my back; whether I am persecuted or feel squeezed into [3]claustrophobic spaces. Because of Christ, every time that I encounter weakness I escape into the strength of my [4]I am-ness! *(The word, [1]**eudokeo** is a compound word from, **eu**, well done, beautiful, and **dokeo**, to form an opinion. The word [2]**anagkē** to bend the arm like when your arm is locked behind your back, where your own efforts to clear or save yourself are completely neutralized. The word [3]**stenochōria**, means a narrowness of place. The word [4]**eimi**, is the verb, I am.)*
James 3:2 It is common habit to [1]descend from a higher place *(of faith)* **to a lower** *(of the senses)***, especially in conversation. However, if you want to be in perfect charge of your whole person, the best place to begin is to take charge of your tongue.** *(To reflect the word that confirms your true genesis [Jas 1:18, 19]. The word, [1]**peripipto**, comes from, **peri**, meaning surrounded + **pipto**, from **petomai**, meaning to fly; thus, to descend from a higher place to a lower, to stop flying.)*
James 3:3 With bit and bridle we are able to direct the strong body of a horse; it's the little bit in the mouth that makes the difference!

James 3:4 Consider the effect of a small rudder on a large ship, when the seasoned captain skillfully steers that vessel on a straight course contrary to fierce winds and weather.
James 3:5 As small a member the tongue might be it can make great claims. A little fire can go out of control and consume a large forest!
James 3:6 A tongue can strike like lightning and turn the harmony of your world into chaos; one little member can stain the whole body. It can disrupt the pattern of your design, taking its spark from the smoldering garbage heaps of [1]Gehenna. *([1]The garbage heap outside Jerusalem, commonly related to hell.* ***Gehenna****, is the Latin word;* ***Geenas*** *is the Greek word used for the Hebrew "****Valley of Hinnom****," which is modern day* ***Wadi er-Rababi****. A fiery place for the disposal of waste matter from the city of Jerusalem. The "Valley of Hinnom" lies outside of ancient Jerusalem. Thus to slander someone is to reduce that person to rubbish.)*
James 3:7 From tigers to eagles, cobras to dolphins, humans have succeeded to curb the wild nature of beasts and birds, reptiles and sea creatures.
James 3:8 Yet no-one can tame a tongue; no-one can restrain the evil in its fatal venom. *(The law of works operated by willpower cannot match the effect of the law of perfect liberty! Mirror likeness ignites true freedom to utter that which is precious!)*
James 3:9 We can say beautiful things about God the Father but with the same mouth curse a fellow human made in his mirror likeness. *(The point is not what the person did to deserve the insult. The point is that people are image and likeness bearers of God by design! True worship is to touch someone's life with the same devotion and care you would touch Jesus himself; even if the other person seems a most unlikely candidate.)*
James 3:10 My friends, a blessing and a curse cannot originate from the same source. *(Discovering our true source brings true freedom. [Jam 1:17,18])*
James 1:5 The only thing you could possibly lack is wisdom. *(One might sometimes feel challenged beyond the point of sanity)* **however, make your request in such a way that you draw directly from the [2]source** *(not filtered through other opinions)***. God is the origin and author of wisdom; he [1]intertwines your thoughts with good judgment. His gifts are available to all, without regret.** *(The word, [1]****haplos****, from ha, particle of*

*union; **hama**, together with + **pleko**, meaning to plait, braid, weave together. See Luke 11:34 "The eye is the lamp of the body; if the eye is single the whole body is full of light!" Entwining our eyes with Papa's eyes is what enlightens our entire being! Which is exactly what the word* **הוק** ***Kawa*** *in Hebrew means in Isa 40:31 they that entwine with the Lord's thoughts mount up with wings like eagles! We are wired by design to entwine! Also Matthew 6:22, "If your eye is entwined with light your whole body will be full of light." See 2 Cor 1:12. Wisdom that comes from above remains unaffected by the contradictions of the senses. The word, [2]**didomi**, to give, to be the author or source of a thing — Wesley J. Perschbacher.)*

See Notes on An Open heaven at the end of Rev 13

*See my comment on Rev 20:3, This is a clear announcement of what happened in Jesus' descent into hell where he defeated the reign and claim of darkness in the HQ of mankind's deepest pits of despair and then, in his resurrection he co-raises the entire human race into a place of joint-reigning with him from the heavenlies! Now here on earth where it all plays out, every enemy is placed under his feet! See Hosea 6:2, Eph 2:5,6 and Eph 4:8-10, also Col 2:14,15. See Extended **Notes on the Thousand Years** at the end of chapter 20.*

Heb 2:8 God's intention was that human life should rule the planet. He subjected everything without exception to his control. Yet, looking at the human race, it does not seem that way at all.

Heb 2:9 But what is apparent, is Jesus *(but now God spoke to us in a Son ... [Heb 1:1-3])* **Let us then consider him in such a way, that we may clearly perceive what God is saying to mankind in him. In the death he suffered, he descended for a brief moment below the lowest ranked shepherd-messenger, in order to taste the death of the entire human race, and in doing so, to fulfill the grace of God and be crowned again** *(as a man, representing all mankind)* **with glory and highly esteemed honor.**

Heb 2:10 He [1]towers in conspicuous prominence far above all things. He is both their author and their conclusion. He now summons every son of his, through a perfected salvation, to his own glory. The extent of the suffering he bore is the measure of the perfection of the salvation over which he presides.

Chapter 17

1 And one of the seven messengers with the seven golden temple vessels approached me and called me to come and see the judgment of that notorious prostitute who sat enthroned upon the many trade routes of the waters - both the rivers and seas. *(Same language repeated in Rev 21:9 And one of the seven shepherd-messengers, having the seven vessels being filled with the seven last wounds, came to me and spoke with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife!" The Prostitute Society of Babylon [the "Old Jerusalem" is set up against the Bride-society - the New Jerusalem.])*

2 She engaged the kings of the earth with her harlotry, intoxicating the earth dwellers with the wine of her passion and fornication.

3 The messenger then carried me into a desert place *[in total contrast to the hustle and bustle of the busy trade routes of the oceans and the rivers]* **I was transported there in spirit and saw a woman seated upon a [1]scarlet colored Beast; with [2]blasphemous, insulting names written all over them like a label revealing the content of their [3]cargo. The Beast had seven heads and ten horns.** *(For reference to the same Beast, Rev 13:1-10 and its second Partner in verse 11, 12, the Lamb with the Dragon's voice, later called the False Prophet and here, the Harlot. Together in their alliance with the Dragon they form the Counterfeit Trinity. Also Rev 17:12*
*The word [1]**kokkinos** refers to the crimson or scarlet color which was produced from the berry of the "ilex coccifera"; these "berries" are the clusters of the eggs of a female insect, the "kermes" [resembling the cochineal)] and when collected and pulverized produces a red which was used in dyeing scarlet cloth. The color is so steadfast that it was one of the most difficult dyes to remove from clothing. So when Isaiah compares our sins leaving its stubborn stain upon our consciences, he says in Isa 1:18 "Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool."*

Again the [2]blasphemy and insults against the Name is emphasized. See my comments in Rev 13:1.
*Rev 15:7, These golden fire-pans were loaded with the entire meaning of the sacrifice! Filled, γέμω **gémō**, to be full, from γόμος [3]**gómos**, load; cargo.)*

4 The woman was draped in purple and scarlet fabric, festooned and sprinkled with golden glitter and ornaments. She was elaborately decorated with gold, precious stones and pearls, holding a golden [1]cup in her hand which was brimming with defiling obscenities and the stench of her impurities. *(Again the surface, make-belief beauty and apparent splendor cannot hide her true filthy character - like the white washed tombs Jesus compared the religious system to. "Hypocrites! For you are so careful to clean the outside of the [1]cup [**poterion**] and the dish, but inside you are filthy - full of greed and self-indulgence! You are like beautifully decorated tombs on the outside, desperately trying to hide the stench of decaying corpses within." Math 23:25, 27. βδελυγματων [2]**bdelugma** derivative of **bdeo** - to stink.*
*The Harlot represents the counterfeit [1]cup [**poterion**] of covenant to the cup of the Lord.*
1 Corinthians 10:16 The cup [ποτήριον - potērion] of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?
1 Corinthians 10:21 Ye cannot drink the cup [ποτήριον - potērion] of the Lord, and the cup [ποτήριον - potērion] of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.
1 Corinthians 11:25 After the same manner also the cup, [ποτήριον - potērion] when he had supped, saying, This cup [ποτήριον - potērion] is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink in remembrance of me.
The covenant cup of the Lord communicates the redeemed life of our design incarnate in our person and fellowship and celebrated in our every meal!)

5 The words written upon her forehead exposed her mystery identity: 'Babylon the Great, the Mother of the Whores and the filth of the

earth.' *(Roman harlots wore a label with their names on their brows - Seneca, Rhet. I. 2. 7; Juvenal VI. 122f.)*

6 The woman I saw was intoxicated with the blood of the [1]Saints and the blood of [2]those who bore the testimony of Jesus. This left me mesmerized, pondering what I saw, desiring to understand the context of it all. *(The cup she drank represented her opposition to everything that the blood of Jesus communicates. She was intoxicated with the thought that accused, sinful mankind could be reckoned blameless Saints by the blood of the Lamb. Rev 7:9,13 &14. Also Rev 12:11 Mikael and his shepherd-messengers [representing the entire host of heaven - including all the multitudes previously mentioned in revelation] conquered the Dragon because of the blood of the little Lamb and the word of their testimony!*
*Also Rev 16:19 And the great city split into three portions and the cities of the nations fell and Babylon the great was remembered in the cup of God's [1]great passion and [2]desire to bring everything to conclusion. [The word [1]**thumos**, passion and [2]**orge** from **oregomai**, to stretch one's self out in order to touch or to grasp something, to reach after with intense desire.])*

7 And the shepherd-messenger said to me, "Why were you so perplexed? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and the Beast carrying her; also the meaning of his seven heads and ten horns.

8 The brutal Beast you saw is a [1]"has been" from the beginning - it indeed has no real existence - yet it seems to make "a come back" as if emerging out of the Abyss only to dissolve again into perdition. Meanwhile the minds of those blinded by their [2]earthbound perceptions continue to be mesmerized by its apparent relevance. They are the ones whose identities are not [3]based upon the Lamb's Book of Life. They do not yet see that their original identity was redeemed in the Lamb." *(The words, ἦν καὶ οὐκ ἔστι [1]**en kai ouk esti**, meaning, to be and not to be; with the verb **en** being the Imperfect Indicative of **eimi**, I am - another meaning of the imperfect indicative is to refer to unreal (counterfactual) situations in present or past time.*

*This is in total contrast to the One who is I am; who always was and will continually be the accompanying One. An antithesis to "**ho ēn kai ho ōn**" of Rev 1:4.*

*οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς The earthbound ones. The word [2]**katoikeō** from **kata**, down and **oikeo**, to dwell or set up home - thus, to be earthbound. Remember how Paul invites us to engage our thoughts with resurrection realities and to see ourselves seated together with Christ in heavenly places! Eph 2:5,6. Also Col 3:1-3. Since you are raised together with Christ, engage your thoughts with "throne-room realities" [the things that are above - relevant to your co-setedness] and not with things below - "soul-room realities"! As in Rev 16:16, where Armageddon pictures the battle between the lower earthbound thought patterns and the thoughts of God. Revelation 13:8 The "earthbound" perception is in essence an identity crisis - knowing oneself and one another merely "according to the flesh" as Paul says in 2 Cor 5:16.*

*Note, the preposition, [3]**epi,** upon, as in continuous influence upon! An "earthbound-identity" is based upon the "Fallen Mindset, the fruit of the wrong Tree - the I-am-not Tree! And not [3]upon the Lamb's Book of Life!*

*The word often translated foundation, **kataballo**, from **kata** and **ballo**, meaning "to fall away, to put in a lower place," instead of **themelios**, meaning "foundation" [see Ephesians 2:20; also Rev 21:14,19]; thus, I translated it "the fall of the world," instead of "the foundation of the world." The entire "Fall" was a falling away from our identity as image and likeness bearers of Elohim. Just like Eve, were we all deceived to believe a lie about ourselves, which is the fruit of the "I-am-not-tree ". We all, like sheep have gone astray. [Isa 53:6]*

*See extended notes at the end of the chapter on **The Lamb's Book of Life**.*

*Also **notes on Armageddon** at the end of Rev 16 and Notes on the **lake of fire** at the end of Rev 19.)*

9 Here is understanding for the inquiring mind: the seven heads, or mindsets, upon which the woman was seated represent seven mountains, or typical social structures, found within the city context. *(Many cities besides Rome can boast of their seven hills: also Constantinople, Brussels, and especially Jerusalem. These social structures could typically include the essential building blocks of society, i.e. Family,*

Education, Religion, Business, Government, Arts/Entertainment and the Media.)

10 These seven social rulers represent five fallen structures, another current *(at the time of writing)* **and another, which is still to come for a very brief spell.** *(The influence of all these typical social spheres under the control of the Harlot, are equally defeated in the Lamb's victory.*
The mindset that the Trinity of Beasts operate in is like a virus hosted by political leaders and their followers - infiltrating societies with its predictable symptoms.
There are also interesting historical parallels - Of the first seven kings, five had come at the time of writing - Julius Caesar, Augustus, Tiberius, Gaius, and Claudius - one was currently in power [Nero, the number values of his name calculated 666] and one had not yet come [Galba], but would only remain a little time [six months.])

11 And the "has been" - Beast is the eighth *(the rider on the horse - which is the woman in this symbolic scene);* **she is part and parcel of the seven and dissolves into perdition.**

12 The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received rule until they come to power with the Scarlet Beast for a brief hour to fight against the Lamb. *(The "ten horns" on the seven-headed monster suggests that the horns are closely related and connected to the same head or mindset of the same animal. [Rev 12:9 The great Dragon, the ancient ophis [serpent] also known as the Devil or Satan, together with all his herding-heralds. Also Rev 13:11 Then I saw another wild animal; this one emerged out of the earth - it had two horns and resembled a young lamb; yet it had a Dragon's voice. (The counterfeit "trinity" emerges - the one mirroring the other - the Dragon Accuser, the seven-headed sea-monster of religion with its leading role player, the head that was slain but became alive again and now the Dragon clothed in a lamb's-disguise) Rev 13:12 Even though it had the appearance of the lamb, it operated under the same authority as the previous Beast - under the watchful eye of the Dragon! [Counterfeit-Christianity as a religion is a wolf in sheep's clothing!] It's the same old*

Dragon in a lamb's disguise! It's mission was to engage the [1]earthbound dwellers to worship the counterfeit - the slaughtered animal that was restored to life out of its death.] Also Rev 17:3.
See my extended Commentary at the end of this chapter on ***End Times.****)*

13 These rulers were in full agreement to hand over their authority to the Beast. *(At the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, former enemies became allies as they banded together against the Lamb see Luke 23:12 That day Herod and Pilate became friends--before this they had been enemies. Ps 83:5 With one mind they plot together; they form an alliance against you.)*

14 These join forces in that hour to wage war against the Lamb but the Lamb defeats them since he is the Lord of lords and the King of kings. And sharing with him in his victory are his [1]kindred, the ones who recognize their [2]origin in this conversation; they are now of the same [3]persuasion. The Lamb led them into freedom from their lost identity, and their doubts. *(The words* ***[1]kletoi*** *from* ***kaleo****, to surname;* ***kai [2]eklektoi*** *from* ***ek*** *source and* ***legomai*** *from* ***lego****, to speak - the Lamb is the* ***logos****, the conversation of God, mankind is his audience;* ***kai [3]pistoi****, the persuaded ones. Mankind is joint sharer in the Lamb's triumph and glory! They are the kindred of the Lamb, having their origin in the word that was from the beginning face to face with God [John 1:1,14] and the recipients of God's faith. There are numeral references to the same "once and for all war" in the heavens! It is however the same hour; the same event! Rev 12:7; Rev 16:13,14; Rev 19:19; Rev 20:8. See extended Notes on* ***The Triumph of The Lamb*** *at the end of the chapter.)*

15 The same messenger who addressed me earlier to come and see the judgment of that notorious prostitute - the one who sat enthroned upon the many trade routes of the waters, both the rivers and seas - proceeded to explain to me that the waters I saw represent the entire spectrum of people-groupings and tribal identities with their unique language-specific dialect preferences. *(These are the very masses of mankind that were redeemed by the blood of the Lamb as referenced earlier*

*in the book, every sphere of society were there - **laoi kai ochloi eisin kai ethnē kai glōssai** - Rev 10:11 And he said to me, "Necessity is laid upon you to now disclose with new insight the prophetic word again - this prophecy's time has come and is now relevant and you will declare it before many peoples and different nations and their kings in their specific mother tongue language." - This list of peoples occurs seven times in Revelation with a like grouping of words for all mankind, of all races and nations; - Rev 5:9, Rev 7:9, Rev 10:11, Rev 11:9 Rev 13:7; Rev 14:6 and here in 17:15.*
*See Ezekiel 43:2 And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the east; and the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with his glory. Matthew 24:31 and he will send out his shepherd-messengers with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his blueprint likeness from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. The word, **eklegomai**, traditionally associated with the idea of election, has two components, **ek**, a preposition that indicates source or origin and **legomai** from **lego**, to speak, meaning to communicate ideas; - the Lamb is the **logos**, the language and conversation of God; mankind is his audience thus, the original blueprint-word, the **logos**; see John 1:1-3 and 12. Matt 22:14, The many are called, [**kaleo**] but few are "chosen" **eklegomai,** thus, The masses are defined by my name while few yet realize their origin in me!)*

16 In realizing their defeat by the Lamb, the ten horns which you saw on the Beast will turn against the prostitute with furious hatred and will strip her of all her decorations, expose her nakedness, consume her flesh and burn her body. *(Again, John sees a counterfeit drama to the slaying of the Lamb of God; here, the figurehead of the religious corrupt system, the great whore, is sacrificed and her flesh is eaten by her previous colleagues, clients and supporters. This reminds of Jesus' conversation about eating his flesh and drinking his blood as remembered in the Last Supper. See Mirror Bible)*

17 This happened according to God's strategic plan as he gave them a mind to be united against the woman and to give their kingdom to the Beast until his word would be fulfilled. *(See Col 2:15 In him dying*

mankind's death, he [1]defused every possible claim of accusation against the human race and thus made a public [2]spectacle of every [3]rule and authority in God's brilliant triumph, demonstrated in him. The [4]voice of the cross will never be silenced! (The horror of the Cross is now the eternal trophy of God's triumph over sin! The cross stripped religion of its authority to manipulate mankind with guilt. Every accusation lost its leverage to blackmail the human race with condemnation and shame! The word, ***[1]apekduomai****, is translated from* ***apo****, away from, and* ***ekduo****, to be stripped of clothing; to disarm; the religious facade that disguised the law of works as a means of defining a person's life, was openly defeated. Same word used in Col 3:9. The dominance of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil [****poneros****, hard work and labor] was ended. The word,* ***[2]deikmatizo****, means to exhibit in public. See [3]commentary below of the words* ***arche****, rule and* ***exousia****, authority. The word,* ***[4]parresia****, comes from* ***pas****, all and* ***rheo****, outspokenness, pouring forth speech.)*
"He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets." — The Message)

18 The woman you saw is the great city which dominated the kings of the earth. *(The Prostitute city-society of Babylon stands in contrast to the Bride of Christ as the New Jerusalem.*
Just like Babylon is not a city in the symbolic language of Revelation, it is a "fallen", distorted-mindset-society; so the New Jerusalem is not a city but the redeemed society of mankind! The Bride of Christ!
Babylon has fallen! *See extended notes at the end of this chapter.)*
Revelation Chapter 17 Extended Notes:
The Lamb's Book of Life - Mankind's Redeemed Identity
End Times!
The Triumph of the Lamb
Babylon has fallen!
The Lamb's Book of Life - Mankind's Redeemed Identity
Rev 3:5 Everyone who sees their victory in me, will I clothe in white garments - and they will realize that I am not in the business of fulfilling their law and performance based fears, by blotting out their

names from the Book of Life! Instead, I am the one who endorses their identity face to face before my Father and his shepherd-messengers.
Rev 20:12 And I saw everyone who ever died, small and great, standing before God. And the books were opened. And another book was opened! The Book of Life. The first volume of books represented mankind's judgment based on their own works, versus the Book of Life which celebrates the triumph of the Lamb!
Rev 20:15 And [1]everything that was not written in the Book of Life was poured into the lake of fire. *(The Greek, εἴ τις οὐχ εὑρέθη ἐν τῇ βίβλῳ τῆς ζωῆς γεγραμμένος - with,* ***ei tis****, meaning everything or everyone - but, what is cast into the symbolic lake ablaze with brimstone is not a person but a mindset! A distorted perception of identity!*
The authentic ID of human life is defined in the Book of Life - or the Tree of Life, representing the redeemed life of our design, versus the alternative Tree of the knowledge of good and evil, representing mankind's identity under scrutiny and questioned. The "I am not-Tree" heads up the System of a Works and Performance Based Philosophy. To have your name written in the Book of Life simply suggests that you discover your identity there in the Zoe-life redeemed by the Lamb. You may have only known yourself according to the flesh, as Simon, the son of Jonah, while you really are Petros! Mr. Rock, you are a chip of the old Block! Every evidence of an inferior identity will be cast into the lake of sulphur burning away the dross to reveal the gold! Any idea of an identity outside of the Book of Life, is dissolved! The Lamb's Book of Life and not the law of personal performance, defines us!)
Rev 17:8 ...Meanwhile the minds of those blinded by their earthbound perceptions continue to be mesmerized by its apparent relevance. They are the ones who are convinced that their names were not even included in the Lamb's Book of Life to begin with. *(The idea of a Book of Life is taken from the custom of registering the names of persons in a list, roll, or catalogue. In Jewish tradition there was a prevailing fear that your name might be blotted out of the Book of Life if your behavior did not please God. See Ex 32:32.*
Here the suggestion is that some names were not even written in the Lamb's Book of Life to begin with! This idea would obviously boost the Calvinistic deception of election, that if you're not "chosen", you're doomed - which is a ridiculous contradiction to the entire context and conclusion of the

Gospel!
See Matthew 24:31 And he will send out his shepherd-messengers with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his blueprint likeness from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. The word, eklegomai, traditionally associated with the idea of election, has two components, ek, a preposition that indicates source or origin and lego, meaning to communicate ideas; thus, the original blueprint-word, the logos; see John 1:1-3 and 12. The many are called, [kaleo, to surname] but few are "chosen" eklegomai thus, The masses are defined by my name but few yet realize their origin in me! Matthew 22:14
Your in-Christness is not the result of a lucky draw! Calvinism lied to you! Neither is it the result of your "choice" to follow Jesus! Something doesn't become true by popular vote! Or by our beliefs! If it wasn't true to begin with, we are wasting our time trying to "believe" it true! Faith happens to you when you encounter the Good Announcement!
Of God's doing are we IN CHRIST... (1 Cor 1:30) For "evangelical theology", to miss the meaning of mankind's inclusion IN CHRIST, before they knew it or believed it, is to completely miss the point of the death, descent into hell, resurrection and ascension of Jesus! This would make Jesus irrelevant and reduce the salvation of the human race to their own fate managed by institutionalized religion, attaching mere sentimental value to an historic Jesus who died and rose again. By dying our death as fully God and fully man, once and for all (not for a "select few!"), death became the doorway, whereby Jesus would enter into our hell and deepest darkness and sense of lostness and loneliness as a result of the lies we believed about ourselves - to triumphantly lead us out as his trophies and relocate us face to face with the Father of the universe! Eph 4:7,8 and 9 See Mirror Bible! All this happened while we were still dead in our trespasses and sins! Eph 2:5,6 Co-quickened, co-raised, co-seated in his Executive authority [his right hand] Now ponder Colossians 3:1-3 and engage your thoughts with throne room realities!
Rev 12:7 Mikael and his shepherd-messengers led the war in the heavenly realm against the Dragon and his herding-heralds. *(The Hebrew name* ***Mikael*** *means, "Who is like God?"* ***The context of the onslaught against the human race has always been image and likeness-identity related!*** *Mankind's sense of lost identity is the fruit of the "I-am-not tree system !" Jesus faced this temptation on mankind's behalf, where the*

*Devil [Diabolos - through the Fall] tempts Jesus' identity with,"If you are the Son of God..." Jesus rebukes Satan [the Accuser] and sends it off into smithereens. Matt 4:6,10 The leverage of the Satanas-System is an identity challenge. "Who do people say that I, the son of man, am?" The question Jesus asks in Math 16:13 underlines the focus of his mission; "If you discover who I am, you discover who you are!" He is about to redeem mankind's lost sense of sonship and identity! Illiterate Simon answers, "Jesus, you, the son of man, are the Messiah, the son of God!" Then Jesus immediately endorses him, "Simon, son of Jonah, "Now that you know who I am, allow me to introduce you, to you! You are Peter! [Petros in the Greek means Rock! Actually it means, little rock and Petra, upon which Jesus builds his Ekklesia, means Rock! So, son of man, you are Mr. Rock, a Chip of the old Block! We have forgotten the Rock from which we were hewn! Deut 32:18. "You who seek God and pursue righteousness, here is your clue! "Look to the Rock from which you were hewn!" Isa 51:1. Then Jesus makes this remarkable statement, that on this Rock [the revelation of mankind's true sonship, redeemed], he would build his **Ekklesia** [from **ek**, origin and **kaleo**, to surname; original identity] and the gates of **Hades** will not prevail against you! [The word, **Hades**, from the negative particle, **ha**, and **eido** to see] The blindfold mode of the human race will not prevail against the revelation of the son of man as the offspring of God - this is the triumph of the Ekklesia! Rev 2:7. [The term, "son of" surnames someone! So the word, Ekklesia, translated, church, literally points to the Source unveiling mankind's true surname!] So, if what we call church today is not about the unveiling of mankind's true, redeemed Identity, its not the Ekklesia that Jesus is building! [**Revelation 7:9** where mankind was delivered out of their national, geographical and historical identities!]*
*See Extended Notes on **The Son of Man is the Son of God** at the end of chapter 2*
*Also in the beautiful encounter of Jesus and the Samaritan woman in John chapter 4, the source-identity of mankind beautifully unfolds! **John 4:6** The well which Jacob dug was still in operation. Since it was already midday and Jesus felt exhausted and thirsty from their day and a half walk, [40 miles from Aenon] he decided to wait at the well while his disciples would go into the village to buy food. (Having left the Place of Springs, Aenon early the previous morning, one can just imagine how Jesus' mind drifted to the fountain theme!) John 4:7 When a local Samaritan woman finally*

arrived to draw water, Jesus immediately asked her for a drink.
John 4:9 *The Samaritan woman obviously anticipated this request and was ready with her response, "You are a Jew, aren't you? So why would you expect to get anything for free from a Samaritan woman?" Within the politics of the day, Jews looked down upon the Samaritans and had no dealings with them. (She knew very well how strategically en-route this precious well was and what political leverage it gave her over weary Jewish travellers!)* ***John 4:10*** *(Jesus was not at all intimidated or embarrassed by her political stance; he didn't allow his awareness of his weariness and desperate thirst, as well as an obvious opportunity to negotiate for a quick fix-drink, to distract from his Person and mission - instead of associating himself with the Jews as a mere Jew and endorsing the Samaritan's 'inferior' political identity, he immediately engaged her with a far superior conversation. He escaped the temptation to see himself or the lady reduced to a lesser identity. He knew who he was and what his mission was all about, as the Messiah of mankind - by seeing himself he was able to see her in the same light. What he had to offer was not for sale!) He looked her in the eye and said, "If you could see the generosity of God's gift, you would perceive who I am! (I am so much more than a Jewish man and you are so much more than a Samaritan woman!) So here I am asking you for a drink when you should be asking me and I would give you the water of life for free!* ***John 4:11*** *(Just like Nicodemus in the previous chapter, she struggles to determine which source Jesus was pointing to!) Sir, you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep! How would you reach this living water?)*

Rev 12:8 The Dragon's influence was totally demolished and rendered powerless - not a trace of its presence was found in the heavens! *(Principalities and powers were completely disarmed on the cross! Col 2:14,15 "And their place was not found" see Dan 2:35 - the little stone against whom the Gates of Hades shall not prevail - the Chip of the old Block demolished the pseudo man-made identity. There are numeral references to the same "once and for all war" in the heavens! It is however the same hour; the same event! Rev 16:13,14; Rev 17:13,14; 19:19; Rev 20:8.)*

Rev 12:9 So the great Dragon, the [1]ancient [2]ophis *[serpent],* **also known as the Devil or Satan - whose sole mission was to lead the entire inhabited world astray - was cast down to the earth-dimension,**

together with all his [3]herding-heralds. *(The word [1]**archaios**, ancient, of old; from **arche**, from the beginning. As Jesus said that the Devil was a murderer "from the beginning" The Greek word, [2]**ophis** is translated serpent and comes from **optomai**, to gaze, in this case, to present a visual idea through illusion. John 8:44. He was stripped of his pseudo rank of authority see Col 2:14,15 he was made a public spectacle! Luke 10:18 And Jesus said to them, I saw Satan falling out of heaven like lightning! Also John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast down. [When I am lifted up on the cross. Jn 12:32])*

Rev 12:10 Then I heard a very loud voice in the heavens announcing, This is the moment which the entire prophetic word pointed to and culminates in; it is the realization of mankind's salvation. The power of the kingdom of our God and its authority is endorsed in the I-am-ness of his Christ. The business of accusation is bankrupted. The 24/7 industry of condemning the brotherhood of mankind before the face of God has been annihilated. *(The word [1]**kategoros**, a name given to the Devil by the Rabbis, the one whose business is accusation, from **kata**, downward and **agora**, to trade; a word used for all kinds of business in the public arena.*

Luke 10:18. Also John 12:27 My soul is exceedingly perplexed right now! What shall I say, "Father! Rescue me [1]out of the clutches of this hour!" No! This hour is the very culmination of my destiny! (Greek preposition, [1]ek, out of; source; origin.)

John 12:28 "Father! Glorify your name!" And immediately there came a voice out of the heavenly realm saying, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again!"

Rev 13:6 It hurled its accusations in God's face, while blaspheming his Name and tabernacle and those dwelling in the heavenlies. *(The words, [1]**pros ton theon** positions the Accuser to now face God's image and likeness incarnate in human form, since there was no trace of accusation present in the heavenlies, having been thoroughly expelled from any further presence or relevance in the heavenly sphere, as clearly announced in the previous chapter. [Rev 12:8-10] The significance of heaven endorsing the tabernacle of God on earth - in both its prophetic symbolism as well as its tangible unveiling in incarnate human life, is now the target of accusation and every blasphemous utterance of this Beast who takes its authority from Mr.*

Accusation himself, the personification of the Satanas-system!
And them that dwell in heaven; ***kai tous en too ouranoo skenountas*** *- in contrast to those whose minds are still trapped in earthbound-mode!*
See my Extended ***Notes on the Battle between the Earthbound and Heavenly perspective*** *at the end of Rev 16*
Also Extended ***Notes From Mt Sinai to Mt Zion*** *at the end of Rev 14*
Rev 20:12 And I saw everyone who ever died, small and great, standing before God. And the books were opened. And another book was opened! The Book of Life. The first volume of books represented mankind's judgment based on their own works, versus the Book of Life which celebrates the triumph of the Lamb!
John 5:21 For just as the Father awakens people from their death-sleep and revitalizes them with zoe-life, even so it pleases the Son to awaken people to life!
John 5:22 For the Father judges no-one but has given all judgment to the Son!
John 5:25 Oh how I desire for you to get this! The prophetic hour has come! This is the moment for the dead to hear the voice of the Son of God - C'mon! Hear and live!
John 5:27 The Father has also given the Son of man [1]authentic authority to execute judgment on mankind's behalf! *(The word [1]exousia, often translated authority has two components, ek, out of, source and eimi, I am!)*
John 5:28 Do not be alarmed by this, but the hour is coming when those in the [1]graves will hear his voice! *(No-one who ever lived will escape the extent of his righteous judgment! Those who have [1]forgotten who they are will hear his incarnate voice! The word for grave, [1]****mnēmeion****, memory, suggests a remembrance! Like David prophesies in Psalm 22 when he sees the cross-crisis [****krisis*** *- judgment] a thousand years before it happens! His conclusion in verse 27 sums up the triumph of God's resolve! "All the ends of the earth shall [1]remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him!" See 1 Corinthians 15:21,22 The same mankind who died in a man was raised again in a man. In Adam all died; in Christ all are made alive.)*
1 John 5:17 [1]Disharmony in relationship is [2]unlike the true rhythm of

your being. The deception of a distorted image will [3]not face death again! *(The word unrighteousness, [1]**adikia**, from **a**, negative or without and **dikia**, indicating two parties finding likeness in each other; thus relationship in conflict. The root of sin is to believe a lie about yourself. The word sin, is the word [1]**hamartia**, from **ha**, negative or without and **meros**, portion or form, thus to be without your allotted portion or without form, pointing to a disorientated, distorted, bankrupt identity; the word **meros**, is the stem of **morphe**, as in 2 Corinthians 3:18 the word **metamorphe**, with form, which is the opposite of **hamartia** - without form. Sin is to live out of context with the blueprint of one's design; to behave out of tune with God's original harmony. See Deuteronomy 32:18, "You have forgotten the Rock that begot you and have gotten out of step with the God who danced with you!" Hebrew, **khul** or **kheel**, to dance. The root of sin is to believe a lie about yourself. Sin is not unto death or, sin will not [3]face [**pros**] death - this is the whole point of the gospel! Jesus as Savior of the world; the Lamb of God took away the sins of the world; he died mankind's death. See Hebrews 9:27,28 The same goes for everyone: a person dies only once, and then faces judgment. Christ died once and faced the judgment of the entire human race! His second appearance has nothing to do with sin, but to reveal salvation for all to [1]fully embrace him. See 2 Corinthians 2:15 We are a sweet savor of Christ unto God evident in everyone we meet. The fragrance of Christ is recognized in all unto salvation. The same gospel that announces the fragrant victory of Christ declares the odor of death; the defeat of destruction in everyone! [This parade of victory is a public announcement of the defeat of the religious systems and structures based on the law of works. Just like it is in any public game where the victory celebration of the winning team is an embarrassment for the losing team. The death of evil is announced in resurrection life! The word, **apollumi**, is derived from **apo**, away from, and **ollumi**, to destroy, to ruin.] The message we communicate is a fragrance with an immediate association; to darkness, it is the smell of doom [the death of death]; to life it is the familiar fragrance of life itself. We are not competing with those who have added their price tag to the gospel. Our conversation has its source in Christ; we communicate from the transparent innocence of a face to face encounter with God. [The law of personal performance or **kapeleuo**, meaning retail; which is a gospel with a price tag.] Revelation 20:15 also my Extended*

Notes on the lake of fire and the Second Death at the end of Revelation 19.)
1 John 5:18 What was made absolutely [1]clear *[in the incarnate Christ]* **is that whoever is begotten of God cannot be a [2]distorted image of God! Likeness begets likeness. Jesus did not come to reveal the "otherness" of God, but his likeness in human form. There is nothing wrong with mankind's design, neither with their salvation! To [1]see one's true revealed and now redeemed genesis in God, is to treasure the person you really are by his divine engineering and to remain [4]unstained in your thoughts by [3]the "I am not-Tree system." The [3]idea that I am not the expression of his image and likeness can no longer [4]attach itself to my thoughts, neither do I allow it to ignite its destructive cycle of self-righteousness or depression! The system of this world is based on a mentality of separation, which is marked by [3]hardships annoyances and labors! It becomes an all consuming and most exhausting lifestyle of having to prove oneself in every relationship and a futile striving for recognition; with its inevitable results of disappointment, condemnation, rejection and pretense.** *(John begins the 3 sentences in verse 18,19 & 20 with he verb [1]**oidamen** which is the Perfect Active tense of [1]**eido**, to see, to observe, to pay attention, perceive, to know as an eye-witness. The Perfect Indicative Active tense denotes an action which is perfected or completed in the past, but the effects of which are regarded as continuing into the present. A distorted image is what the word [2]**hamartia** suggests; from **ha**, negative and **meros**, portion or form; thus without form. The word [3]**poneros,** often translated evil, refers to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil [**poneros**] which is the fruit of a lost fellowship, identity, value and innocence. Through hardships, labors and annoyances mankind has strived for generations in vain, to redeem themselves from their own judgment and their illusions of separation. This concludes in a judgment based on performance. Which is the opposite to an opinion of approval based on value! The word [4]**haptomai** means to fasten itself to, or to cling to something; from **hapto** to kindle a fire; to ignite.*
If there is indeed nothing wrong with mankind's design or redemption, there can only be one problem, we are thinking wrong! See Isaiah 55:8,9; "Your thoughts are not my thoughts, therefore your ways are not my ways!" Also Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the

LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." Isaiah 55:9,10 Just like the rain and the snow bridges the distance between heaven and earth and cancels the drought, so shall my word be, it shall cancel distance and drought and saturate the earth (flesh); every nook and cranny of human life shall be filled in the Incarnation! The word became flesh and indwells us! In the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has brought final closure to the rule of the "I am not Tree-system." The idea of God's absence as well as every definition of distance and separation was canceled. Jesus is God's mind made up about you-manity! He is not more Emmanuel to the Jew than what he is to the Gentile. See John 1:14 Suddenly the invisible eternal Word takes on visible form - the Incarnation on display in human life as in a mirror! In him, and now confirmed in us! The most accurate tangible display of God's eternal thought finds expression in human life! The Word became a human being; we are his address; he resides in us! He captivates our gaze! The glory we see there is not a religious replica; he is the authentic begotten Son. The glory (that we lost in Adam) returns in fullness! Only grace can communicate truth in such complete context!)

1 John 5:19 We know that we have our origin in God; yet the whole world [1]lies trapped in the blindfold-mode of a lost identity; intoxicated by the poneros system of a futile mentality of hardships labors and annoyances! *(The word **keimai** means to lie prostrate, outstretched; buried.)*

1 John 5:20 This is what has become distinctly clear to us: the [1]coming of the Son of God is God's mission accomplished! He is the incarnate Christ. The moment all of Scripture pointed to has arrived! The Son is [1]present! In him God has given us the greatest gift, [2]a mind whereby we may know him who is true; and in the same knowing, to find ourselves there in him who is true! Mankind is fully included and located in him, in his Son Jesus Christ; this means that whatever Jesus is as Son, we are. This is the true God; this is the life of the ages!

1 John 5:21 This defeats every image of our imagination that could possibly compete with the authentic likeness of our design! Darling children, distance yourselves from every substitute image, which is what idolatry is all about! *(The word [1]**eidolon,** often translated idol, refers to image or likeness. Isa 40:18-21 To whom then will you liken God, or*

what likeness compare with him? The idol? A workman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold, and casts for it silver chains. He who is impoverished chooses for an offering wood that will not rot; he seeks out a skilful craftsman to set up an image that will not move. Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you ***from the beginning****? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? Remember your beginning! You are God's idea - the Engineer of the Universe imagined you! Gen 1:26; Col 1:15; Col 2:9,10.*

Act 17:28-31 For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your poets have said, 'For we are indeed his offspring.' Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the Deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, a representation by the art and imagination of human origin. The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he compels all of mankind everywhere to awaken to their redeemed identity and innocence!)

The word [1]***eikon*** *means image or likeness - this is the theme of the Bible and redemption; the image and likeness of God revealed and redeemed in human form! Idolatry is a projection of an image of one's own making. Idolatry is the crux of religion - it is expensive business since your idol is like a slot machine at the casino! It remains hungry and it is wired to bite and bankrupt you!*

Romans 1:25 Truth suppressed *(Rom 1:18)* **became twisted truth. Instead of embracing their Maker as their authentic identity, they preferred the deception of a distorted image of their own making, religiously giving it their affection and worship. The true God is the blessed God of the ages. Hey! He is not defined by our devotion or indifference!** *(And all this because they traded the true God for a fake god, and worshiped the god they made instead of the God who made them. Message)*

Rom 1:26 By being confused about their Maker they became confused about themselves.

In order to now manage the inevitable feelings of failure, guilt, inferiority, condemnation and judgment, the idea of a scapegoat emerged whereby slain animals are sacrificed to appease angry deities of their imagination. This "pay now and sin later" or "sin now and pay later"- idea became the illusion of religion! The sense of relief and self-justification presents a very lucrative and marketable commodity! These ritual sacrifices and the feasts that followed became extravagant indulgences of food, alcohol and

licentiousness of every sort!
It is within the background of this pagan mindset that the typical scapegoat-language is adopted in both the Torah and the prophetic writings (including David's Psalms) whereby the promised Messiah is dynamically introduced as the Savior of mankind. Jesus did not come to "conveniently manage" our sins and sense of failure; he came to obliterate our sinfulness and sin-consciousness, bringing closure to a warped identity and mindset that we inherited from our fathers and in his resurrection he re-booted us and raised us into newness of life!
Hebrews 10:2 Had it been possible to present the perfect offering that had the power to successfully remove any trace of a sin-consciousness, then the sacrificial system would surely have ceased to be relevant.
Heb 10:3 But in the very repetition of these ritual sacrifices the awareness of guilt is reinforced rather than removed.
Heb 10:4 The conclusion is clear: animal sacrifices failed to remove anyone's sinfulness or their sin-consciousness.
Heb 10:5 So when Jesus, the Messiah, arrives as the fulfillment of all the types and shadows, he quotes Psalm 40:6-8, and says, "In sacrifices and offerings God takes no pleasure; but you have ordained my incarnation!"
Jesus Christ is revealed as both the Engineer and the Savior of the cosmos. *The word,* ***kosmos*** *in the NT refers to the entire human family.*
John 1:3 The Logos is the source; everything commences in him. He remains the exclusive Parent reference to their existence. There is nothing original, except the Word! The Logic of God defines the only possible place where mankind can trace their origin. *(All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. KJV)*
Also Colossians 1:13 He rescued us from the [1]dominion of darkness *(the sense-ruled world, dominated by the law of performance)* **and relocated us into the kingdom where the love of his Son rules.** *(Darkness is not a force, it is the absence of light. [See Eph 4:18] A darkened understanding veiled the truth of our redeemed design from us. 2 Cor 4:4. What "empowered" darkness was the lie that we believed about ourselves! The word, [1]****exousia****, sometimes translated authority, is from* ***ek****, origin or source, and* ***eimi****, I am. Thus, I was confused about who I am until the day that I heard and understood the grace of God in truth, as in a mirror. See 2 Corinthians 3:18, John 1:12,13.)*

Col 1:15 In him the image and likeness of God is made visible in human form in order that every one may recognize their true origin in him. He is the firstborn of every creature. *(What darkness veiled from us he unveiled. In him we clearly see the mirror reflection of our original life. The son of his love gives accurate evidence of his image in human form. God can never again be invisible!)*

Col 1:16 Everything that is begins in him whether in the heavenly realm or upon the earth, visible or invisible. *(He gives detailed likeness and image to the invisible God, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father! John 14:9. I and the Father are one! John 10:30. Jesus reveals the Father in a way that confronts any religious man-made idea of God! He reverses the entire idea of man's appeal to an angry God! This is the loving Father appealing to his wayward children to come home! Instead of demanding a sacrifice, he gives himself as the Lamb to be the ultimate and final sacrifice! This is the mystery of the cross, "one has died for all, therefore all have died! He does not act independent of his Father, "God was in Christ when he reconciled mankind to himself!" 2 Cor 5:14-21)*

Col 1:19 The full measure of everything God has in mind for mankind indwells him.

See 1 Peter 1:18-21

1 John 3:8 Sin's source is a [1]fallen mindset, from the beginning! For this purpose the Son of God was revealed! His mission was to undo the works of the Devil! *(The word, **diabolos**, from **dia**, because of and **ballo**, to cast down.)*

1 John 3:9 To discover one's authentic sonship in God, is to discover true freedom from sin. We are born of him and his seed remains in us; this is the only possible reference to sober up the mind from the intoxicating influence of deception. *(The incorruptible seed of our Father carries the exact pattern of the authentic life of our design! Jesus calls the Devil, the father of lies.*

John 8:31 Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, John 8:32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." John 8:36 So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. John 8:44 You are of your father the Devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks from his own distorted opinion; for

he is a liar and the father of lies.
His intention was to kill mankind's awareness of their god-identity.
John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad." John 8:57 The Jews then said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?" John 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." Two chapters later Jesus addresses the same audience again: John 10:30 I and the Father are one." John 10:31 The Jews took up stones again to stone him. John 10:32 Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of these do you stone me?" John 10:33 The Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we stone you but for blasphemy; because you, being a man, make yourself God." John 10:34 Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, you are gods'? John 10:35 If he called them gods to whom the word of God came [and Scripture cannot be broken], John 10:36 do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?
Here Jesus quotes from Psa 82:6 I say, "You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you! What does it mean to build your house upon the rock? "Son of man, I say you are Rock; you're a chip of the old block - the son of man is the son of God!" Dig deep = Gaze deeply, intently into the mirror likeness of the face of your birth! Luke 6:48; James 1:18,23-25; Isaiah 51:1; Deuteronomy 32:18 Living your life from who you are in Christ [Grace] beats living your life from who you are in Adam [law of works] by far! Plus it is storm-proof!)
1 John 3:10 There is a very visible and vast difference between living one's live from your God identity, or from a fallen mindset; the [1]diabolos-fruit has nothing in common with [2]righteousness; neither does it know anything about brotherly love. *(The children of the Devil; here translated the [1]**diabolos**-fruit; the typical fruit that the fallen mindset bears. Righteousness, [2]**diakaiosune**, from **dike**, two parties finding likeness in each other.)*
1 John 3:11 Our love for one another was the topic of conversation from the start! God had nothing less in mind than a loving family!
1 John 3:12 Cain's [1]killing of his brother Abel, is in such contrast to this! His motivation was clearly [2]sourced in the [3]poneros tree-system; his idea of Divine [4]favor was to count on his own works as being

superior to his brother's faith righteousness. *(Immediately after the fall, Adam named the woman Eloyim gave him, Eve, [in Hebrew* ***Chawah****, and in Greek,* ***Zoe****.] He thus co-echoes and reinforces the prophetic word that* ***Eloyim*** *gave him: Life in the face of death! "The seed of the woman, shall crush the deceiver's head!" The fallen mindset shall be destroyed! So here, in their two sons, we have the first generation of fallen mankind confronted with their personal pursuit of a lost identity and a lost sense of value and favor. Caleb's motivation was clearly sourced [*[2]***ek****, out of, origin] in the* ***diabolos*** *[cast down], which is so typical of the* [3]***poneros*** *tree-system. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil [****poneros****] represents mankind's lost sense of identity and righteousness, where the global pursuit of mankind would now be their constant effort to achieve righteousness by means of their own works. This inevitably leads to disappointment where shame replaces innocence, and union and fellowship are lost. The word evil,* ***poneros****, suggests to be full of hardships, labors and annoyances. Gen 3:19 "In the sweat of your face shalt you eat your bread." The sacrifice of Cain is exactly that! It represents his trust in the fruit of his own toil to gain him a* [4]*favorable [****charin****] standing with God.*

We have the prophetic picture of a scapegoat repeated here in Genesis 4. Not only in the sacrifice that Abel brought; but also in him being murdered by his brother! Just like we would one day murder our brother Jesus! In Genesis 3, Eloyim did not clothe Adam with the skin of an animal because of a divine need to be appeased, but because of their unconditional love for Adam; they spoke the language of Adam's own judgment: Adam, not Eloyim, was embarrassed about his nakedness. The clothing was not to make Eloyim look at Adam differently, but to make Adam feel better about himself! And ultimately it was to prepare Adam for the unveiling of the mystery of mankind's redemption in the incarnation. Here Deity would clothe themselves in human skin in a Son, and the Lion of Judah, would become the Lamb of God, in order to free our minds to re discover his image and likeness in our skin! Revelation 5:5,6.

Romans 1:18 God's [1]passionate persuasion is uncovered from heavens perspective in sharp [2]contrast to the foolishness of [3]people who [4]suppress and conceal the truth about their redeemed innocence while they continue to embrace an [5]inferior reference of themselves. *(The righteousness of God that is endorsed in the heavens is so different to the*

*counterfeit, earthly reference that blindfolds people in their own unrighteousness. The word often translated wrath, [1]**orge**, means desire - as a reaching forth or excitement of the mind, passion. The preposition [2]**epi** means over, above, across, against, continuous influence upon; I translated it here as contrast. The word for the [3]human species, male or female is **anthropos**, from **ana**, upwards, and **tropos**, manner of life; character; in like manner. The word [4]**katecho**, to echo downwards is the opposite of **anoche**, to echo upward; see Romans 2:4 and Rom 3:26. In Colossians 3:2 Paul encourages us to engage our thoughts with things above [God's belief], and not below [law of works]. The word [5]**adikia**, unrighteousness, is the opposite of **dikay**, two parties finding likeness in each other; thus, without harmony. The law reveals how guilty and sinful mankind is, while the gospel reveals how forgiven and restored to their original blueprint we are. See 2 Corinthians 4:4)*

Rom 1:19 For this reason God is not a stranger to anyone; whatever can be known of God is [1]apparent in human form. God has revealed it in the very core of their design which bears witness within their own conscience!

People are not born Christians, yet every person ever born comes from God! God says in Jeremiah 1:5 "I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb!" We are God's idea: we began in God! We are born into a world where we are bombarded with many diverse cultural and traditional mindsets, most of which directly stems from the Tree of the knowledge of good and evil system, which is the fallen mindset system which says you are not...you have to strive to become! People who do gross things do it from believing a lie about themselves and not knowing the truth of their incredible design as image bearers of God! James says in Js 3:9, We can say beautiful things about God the Father but with the same mouth curse a man made in his mirror likeness. The point is not what the man did to deserve the curse! A doctor doesn't slap his patient and command him to stop coughing! You may have the flu but you never become the flu! True worship is to touch someone's life with the same devotion and care you would touch Jesus himself; even if the other person seems a most unlikely candidate. Multitudes of people are living in the darkness of ignorance, not knowing the truth of the integrity of their design and their redeemed value and innocence!

The adventure of the Christian life is to declare what we have discovered to be true about every single person! Jesus says that when we discover that the son of man is indeed the son of God then the gates of Hades *(from ha + eido, not to see)* **will crumble and the prisoners of darkness will be free to discover themselves in him!**

End Times!

The Day Of The Lord - The Fullness of Time - The Hour Has Come!

Rev 1:10 I was in a spiritual trance where I witnessed the [1]Day of the Lord - I heard a loud voice [2]behind me, clear and distinct, like the sound of a trumpet! *(The [1]Day of the Lord is the very day to which the prophetic voice of the Spirit of Christ pointed - Jesus the Messiah, is the fulfillment of this Day!*

*The word [2]**opiso** points to that which is behind in place and time. The fact that John hears a word **behind him** is so significant! It means that what he hears already happened within its prophetic context! This reminds of the incident recorded in Genesis 22:7 & 8 where Abraham was asked by Isaac, "We have the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham answered, "God will provide a lamb for the burnt offering, Son." Then, in Gen 22:13, we read that Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, **behind him** was a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns! Jesus refers to this in John 8:56-58 when he says, "Abraham saw my day!" And, "Before Abraham was, I am!")*

Rev 22:13 I am the Alpha and the Omega - the initiator and the conclusion; the genesis and completeness. *(The union of **Alpha** and **Omega**, in Greek, makes the verb **αω**, I breathe. And in Hebrew the union of the first and last letter in their alphabet, **Aleph** and **Tau** makes **תא, *et***, which the Rabbis interpret of the first matter out of which all things were formed, [see Gen 1:1] This is untranslatable in English but, says Rabbi Aben Ezra, "it signifies the substance of the thing!" The revelation of Jesus as the Alpha and Omega is the one in whom we live, and move, and have our being! He is indeed closer to us than the air we breathe! Don't waste a day waiting for another day! I am the initiator and the **eschatos**. Eschatology is defined in my I-am-ness.)*

The most profound future information pales in significance in the light of what has already happened to mankind in Christ! *Religion thrives on two lies, distance and delay; Jesus cancelled both. Every possible definition*

of distance was cancelled on the cross. "Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; every crooked place shall be made straight and every rough place smooth! And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together!" [Isa 40:4,5] Every excuse that anyone could have to feel separated from God was deleted in Chris..

A delegation of Greeks arrive in Jerusalem to "see" Jesus:

John 12:23 Jesus, immediately understanding the prophetic significance of the moment, knew that he, the Messiah, was who all the nations were longing for and answered, "The hour is here for the Son of man to be glorified! *[Jesus studied Scripture as in a mirror - he knew that "in the book, it is written about me!" Haggai 2:7 and the desire of the nations shall come…See Col 1:27.]*

John 12:24 Most certainly shall the single grain of wheat fall into the earth and die - if it doesn't die it remains alone - but in its death it produces much fruit. *The hour that has come represents the culmination of all that was prophetically pointed to as recorded in Scripture - the combined forces of darkness.* **1 Pet 1:10 This salvation which you now know as your own, is the theme of the prophetic thought; this is what intrigued the Prophets' minds for generations and became the object of their most diligent inquiry and scrutiny. They knew all along that mankind's salvation was a grace revelation, sustained in their prophetic utterance!** *(Salvation would never be by personal achievement or a reward to willpower-driven initiative! The law of works would never replace grace!)*

1 Pet 1:11 In all of their conversation there was a constant quest to determine who the Messiah would be, and exactly when this will happen. They knew with certainty that it was the spirit of Christ within them pointing prophetically and giving testimony to the sufferings of the Christ and the subsequent glory. *(Whatever glory was lost in Adam, would be redeemed again in Jesus Christ!)*

1 Pet 1:12 It was revealed to them that this glorious grace message that they were communicating pointed to a specific day and person beyond their own horizon and generation; they saw you in their prophetic view! This [1]heavenly announcement had you in mind all along! They proclaimed glad tidings to you in advance, in the Holy Spirit, commissioned from heaven; the shepherd-messengers themselves longed to gaze deeply into its complete fulfilment. *(Peter uses the word,*

[1]anaggello, where the preposition, ana, points upwards to the source of the announcement.)

1 Pet 1:13 How amazing is that! Jesus is what the scriptures are all about; and you are what Jesus is all about! Now wrap your minds around that! This unveiling is [1]what tied up all the loose ends that would trip you and frustrate your seamless transition from the old to the new! The revelation of Jesus is no longer a future expectation! Do not allow the old mindset of a future tense glory to intoxicate you and distract you from the relevance of this moment! Stop pointing to a future Messiah! You're it! You are who the Prophets pointed to! You are the fruit of his sufferings; you are the glorious resurrection generation! Fully engage your [2]minds with the consequence of this grace in the revelation of Jesus Christ! He [3]completes your every [4]expectation! *(The word [1]anazosamenoi, to gird up, is an Aorist Participle, which translates, "having girded up the loins of your mind, be sober!" The word [2]dianoia, suggests deep contemplation, thinking something thoroughly through in order to reach a sober conclusion! Then Peter writes, [3]teleios [4]elpisate, this is the completeness of every expectation! See Colossians 1:27.*

In one act of righteousness, God removed every possible definition of distance and delay! Every excuse that we could have to feel separated from God was cancelled! This is what the Prophets saw: "Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the crooked places shall be made straight, even the rough places shall be made smooth. And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." Isaiah 40:4,5)

1 Pet 1:14 Your [1]accurate hearing is what distinguishes you as the resurrection generation; the days of being driven by every [2]desperate, distorted passion of your former ignorance are over! The [3]fashions and patterns of a redundant system are no longer relevant! *(The word, [1]upoakoo is often translated, obedience, from upo, meaning under, as in under the influence of, and akoo, to hear. In the context of this chapter, Peter urges us to hear accurately what was communicated in the prophetic word concerning the life of our design, now rebooted into newness by our*

joint resurrection with Jesus Christ! The word, [2]epithumia, translates, desire, craving, longing, desire for what is forbidden, lust. The word, [3]suschēmatizō, from sun, union, and schema, pattern; a typical template.)

1 Pet 1:15 The one whose [1]idea you are to begin with, designed you to radiate his image and likeness; he is the true pattern of your beingness! So, [2]be who you are in realizing the exact detail of your genesis! You are [3]whole and in perfect harmony; seamlessly one with him! *(The word [1]kaleo, to define by name; to surname. The word [2]genethete, referring to genesis, or birth, is in the Aorist, Passive, imperative case; the distinction between the Aorist imperative and the present imperative is one of aspect, not tense. Thus, to get something over and done with! The word, [3]hagios, holy, separate from common condition and use. See Hebrews 10:14-16)*

1 Pet 1:16 On the very account that what is written in prophetic Scripture, *(and echoed in your innermost being)***, already mirrors the life of your design, you are free to be who you are. As it is written, "I am, therefore you are! I am wholly separated unto you, and invite you to explore the same completeness of your being in me!"** *(The word, grapho, to engrave, often refers to the prophetic writings, Old Testament Scripture. The appeal of truth is confirmed in the resonance within us due to the echo of that which is already written in our innermost being by design! "Did not our hearts ignite within us while he opened to us the scriptures! Luke 24:27,32,44,45. The Textus Receptus uses the word **genesthe**, instead of **esesthe**, from **eimi**, as in the Westtcott & Hort text. This makes a massive difference! So, instead of ginomai, to become, it is the word, **esesthe**, I am! See note in John 1:1 Three times in this sentence John uses the active indicative imperfect form of the verb **eimi,** namely **aen [ἦν]** to be, [in the beginning 'was' the Word etc...] which conveys no idea of origin for God or for the Logos, but simply continuous existence, "I am." Quite a different verb **egeneto,** "became," appears in John 1:14 for the beginning of the Incarnation of the Logos. The Word 'became' flesh. The incarnation is not the origin of Jesus. See the distinction sharply drawn in John 8:58, "before Abraham was [born, **genesthai** from **ginomai**] I am." The word **eimi**, I am; the essence of being, suggesting timeless existence. You did not begin in your mother's womb. You began in God's I-am-ness! You are the most magnificent idea that the Engineer of the Universe has ever had! "I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb!" Jer 1:5. In him we live*

and move and have our being! Acts 17:28.)
1 Pet 1:17 Now since you are defined in your Father, who does not judge anyone on face value, but always only according his work; *(his finished work in Christ)* **wherever you find yourself located geographically or emotionally, return to your 'at home-ness' in him; you are not defined by your circumstances.** *(The word anastrepho, suggests a radical returning; literally a turning upside down! Actually ana, means upwards - so, it's actually a turning downside up!)*
1 Pet 1:18 It is clear to see that you were ransomed from the futile, fallen mindset that you inherited from your fathers, not by the currency of your own labor, represented by the fluctuating values of gold and silver, and the economy of your religious efforts;
1 Pet 1:19 but you were redeemed with the priceless blood of Christ; he is the ultimate sacrifice; spotless and without blemish. He completes the prophetic picture! *(In him God speaks the most radical scapegoat language of the law of judgment, and brings final closure to a dead and redundant system! In Psalm 40:6,7, it is clearly stated that God does not require sacrifices or offerings! Jesus is the Lamb of God! He collides victoriously with the futile sacrificial system whereby offerings are constantly made to the pseudo, moody, monster gods of our imagination! This is the scandal of the cross! God does not demand a sacrifice that would change the way he thinks about mankind; he provides the sacrifice of himself in Christ in order to forever eradicate sin-consciousness from our minds and radically change the way we think about our Maker, one another and ourselves! [Sin-consciousness is in essence a works-based consciousness.] God did not clothe Adam with the skin of an animal because of a divine need to be appeased, but because of their unconditional love for Adam; they spoke the language of Adam's own judgment: Adam, not God, was embarrassed about his nakedness. The clothing was not to make God look at Adam differently, but to make Adam feel better about himself! And ultimately it was to prophetically prepare Adam for the unveiling of the mystery of mankind's redemption in the incarnation. Here Deity would clothe themselves in human skin, in a son; and the Lion of Judah would become the Lamb of God in order to free our minds to re-discover his image and likeness in our skin! See 1 Peter 1:2.)*
1 Pet 1:20 He was always destined in God's prophetic thought; God knew even before the fall of the world order that his Son would be the

Lamb, to be made manifest in these last days, because of you! *(You are the reason Jesus died and was raised! The word, kataballo, meaning "to fall away, to put in a lower place," instead of themelios, meaning "foundation" [see Eph 2:20]; thus, translated "the fall of the world," instead of "the foundation of the world." The entire "Fall" was a falling away in our minds from our true identity as image and likeness bearers of Elohim. Just like Eve, were we all deceived to believe a lie about ourselves, which is the fruit of the "I-am-not-tree ". We all, like sheep have gone astray. [Isa 53:6] The word* ***eschatos*** *means extreme; last in time or in space; the uttermost part, the final conclusion.* ***What God said about 'you-manity' in Jesus defines eschatology!)***

1 Pet 1:21 He is the conclusive cause of your belief in God. Seeing then how perfectly you fit into the scheme of things, it is no wonder that your faith in God's act of raising Jesus from the dead becomes the glorious reference to your own new birth! The glory that God gave Jesus by raising him from the dead, is the conclusion of everything that your faith longed for! *(This is the redeemed glory that the Prophets pointed to! Hos 6:2 "After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up!" Isaiah 40:5 "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together!")*

1 Pet 1:22 As a result of your accurate hearing of the unveiled truth, and through the agency of the Spirit, you have engaged your souls fully with the purifying effect of your inclusion in his glorious work of redemption. *(See commentary note in 1 Peter 1:14. The same Spirit of Christ who spoke from within the Prophets of old, now endorses truth within your spirit!)*

1 Pet 1:23 This co-resurrection-new-birth does not compare to the fading qualities of that which is produced by the perishable seed of the carnal works- and performance-based mindsets. The indestructible living seed of the word of God conceives resurrection life within you; this life is equal to its source. *(The word, meno means, abiding in seamless union, or, to remain the same.*

You are giving stature to the rise of a new person; a new resurrection generation of a people who are coming out of obscurity into his marvelous light!)

1 Pet 1:24 "All flesh is grass, and all its glory is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades,

1 Pet 1:25 but the word of our God is [1]risen for ever. This word is the [2]exact same message of the glad tidings announced by the Prophets and now proclaimed unto you! *(Peter again quotes from Isaiah 40, this time verse 6 and 8. The Hebrew word [1]**Qum**, means to rise up; like in Hosea 6:2, "After two days he will revive us, on the third day, he will raise us up!" Isaiah 40:6,8; also see note on 1 Pet 1:13. The word [2]**meno** is used in the Septuagint and also here in the Greek text, Peter uses the word, **meno**, to remain the same; to continue to be present.)*

See also **Galatians 4:1 Infant heirs have no more say than a slave, even though they own everything!** *(The best deal the law could possibly broker confirmed mankind's slavery to sin.)*

Gal 4:2 He would remain under domestic supervision and house rules until the date fixed by his father for his official graduation to the status of sonship.

Gal 4:3 This is exactly how it was with us; we were kidnapped as it were into infancy and confined to that state through the law. *(An inferior mindset as a result of Adam's fall.)*

Gal 4:4 But then the day dawned; the most complete culmination of time! *(Everything predicted was concluded in Christ!)* **The son arrived, commissioned by the Father; his legal passport to the planet was his mother's womb. In a human body exactly like ours he lived his life subject to the same scrutiny of the law.**

2 Cor 1:14 To some extent you have already understood that our joy is mirrored in one another. The day of the Lord Jesus Christ is no longer a distant promise but a fulfilled reality. *(The word, **kathaper**, often translated, exactly as, comes from **kata**, meaning according to and **per**, which is an enclitic particle significant of abundance and thoroughness which comes from the word, **peiro**, meaning to pierce. The use of the Latin enclitic relates to a word that throws an accent back onto the preceding word, which is here translated as mirrored.*

*The "day of the Lord Jesus Christ," is **hemera**, which is a specific and measured period. Eastern usage of this term differs from our western usage. Any part of a day is counted as a whole day, hence the expression, "three days and three nights," does not mean literally three whole days, but at least one whole day plus part of two other days.*

The day of the Lord Jesus is the theme of Scripture as in 1 Peter 1:10; this

was what the Prophets were studying and desiring to know. The content of their message always pointed to the day and the person where the promise of redemption would be realized. The sufferings of the Messiah would redeem and release the glory of God's image and likeness in human life; the glory that Adam lost on behalf of the human race, returns. In Acts 17:31, "In the resurrection, God gave proof to the redeemed innocence of mankind; the "day and the person" prophesied was fulfilled in Jesus." Jesus gives context to this day in John 14:20, "In that day you will know that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you.")

Hebrews 11:1 Persuasion confirms confident expectation and proves the unseen world to be more real than the seen. Faith celebrates as certain what hope visualizes as future. *(The shadow no longer substitutes the substance. Jesus is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of everything the Prophets foretold. The unveiling of Christ in human life completes mankind's every expectation. Col 1:27.)*

Romans 4:17 When God changed Abram's name to Abraham, he made a public statement that he would be the father of all nations. *(Genesis 17:5) Here we see Abraham faced with God's faith; the kind of faith that resurrects the dead and calls things which are not (visible yet) as though they were. Rom 4:18 Faith gave substance to hope when everything seemed hopeless; the words, "so shall your seed be" conceived in him the faith of fatherhood. (Abraham's case here pictures the hopelessness of fallen mankind, having lost their identity, and faced with the impossibility to redeem themselves.)*

Rev 14:15 Another shepherd-messenger appeared out of the most holy place of the temple and with a loud voice addressed the one seated upon the cloud, saying, "Thrust forth your pruning hook, your hour has come - this is your moment to reap for the earth's harvest is ready." *(See John 4:31 In the mean while his disciples were urging him to take some food. John 4:32 But he said, "I am feasting on food you cannot see!" John 4:33 His disciples were baffled, "Who brought him anything to eat?" John 4:34 Jesus told them, "My food is to fulfil the desire of him who commissioned me and to leave no detail undone!" John 4:35 The bread you labor for takes four months from the day you sow the seed until it ripens in the ear, doesn't it? This is not the food that I am talking about. The fruit of your own toil and performance will never satisfy permanently; from now on, look at yourselves and everyone else differently; see them through your*

Father's eyes and you will know that they too are ripe and ready to discover how fully included they are in my finished work. They are perfectly mirrored in me! (A harvest is ripe when the seed in the ear matches the seed that was sown! My mission is to reveal and redeem the image and likeness of God in human form!) 4:36 This harvest reveals how both he who sows and he who reaps participate in the same joy of the life of the ages!)

Revelation 14:6 And I saw another shepherd-messenger soaring in mid heaven - this messenger was the carrier of the grandest news of the ages. His mission was to announce these glad tidings of everlasting proportion to every single nation, tribe, language and people grouping on the earth!

Rev 14:7 In a great voice he declared, "Be awestruck with the amazingness of God! Give him glory! The hour of his judgment has come! He is the Maker of the heavenly realm, the earth, the sea and the fountains of the waters." *(This announcement echoes in Jesus' declaration in John 12:31 This is the judgment of this world; it is the moment where the authority of the world-system is cast out! [The serpent's head is about to be crushed! Genesis 3:15; Colossians 2:14,15] 12:32 When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all judgment to me! (He would be lifted up on a cross, descend into the depths of our hell, then, according to the prophetic word in Hosea 6:2, after two days be lifted up as representative of the human race, out of the lowest parts of the earth and elevated to the highest heavens! Ephesians 4:8,9; see also Ephesians 2:5,6 and Colossians 3:1-3. All things include all of mankind and their judgment. The subject of the sentence as from the previous verse is the judgment of the world - thus the primary thought here is that in his death, Jesus would draw all judgment upon himself! John 3:14; John 8:28; Act 2:33. 1 John 3:5 We have witnessed with our own eyes how, in the unveiling of the prophetic word, when he was lifted up upon the cross as the Lamb of God, he lifted up our sins and broke its dominion and rule over us! [John 1:29 "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away [airo] the sin of the world! The word* ***airo*** *means to lift up.]) John 12:33 This he said to point to the way in which he would die. See John 19:15 - Lift him up! Lift him up! Crucify him!")*

Rev 14:8 And a second shepherd-messenger followed with more good news! Babylon the great city has crashed! She who sold herself as a prostitute to all the nations and intoxicated them with the wine of her passion will never fly again. *(The language is an echo of Isa 21:9, Jer*

51:7 and Jer 51:8. Babylon was used for Rome in late Jewish writings; see also 1 Pet 5:13)

In the imagery that follows, John sees how the effect of the triune religious counterfeit of the Dragon, the Beast and the fake slain and risen lamb disguised as the great prostitute of Babylon is thoroughly stripped of their influence and dominion and brought to naught.

Rev 14:9 Then a third shepherd-messenger followed and announced with a loud voice that whoever worships the counterfeit lamb and its image and receives its character in their thoughts and deeds,

14:10 will drink the wine of God's passion, undiluted with water but intensified with spices in his cup - they shall be tested as one tests gold or silver with a [1]touchstone; with fire and brimstone in the immediate presence of the Lamb and of [2]those who have discovered their wholeness mirrored in him - the dross of their deception will be exposed and cleansed! *(Note the words,* ***tou kekerasmenou akratou*** *- this is a powerful oxymoron, "the mixed unmixed." See Psa 75:8 For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, with foaming wine, well mixed; and he will pour a draught from it, and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs.*

*The word [1]**basanizō** means to test (metals) by the touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the color of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal - a piece of fine-grained dark schist or jasper formerly used for testing alloys of gold by observing the color of the mark which they made on it - thus, a standard or criterion by which something is judged or recognized. The blood of Jesus is the currency! 1 Pet 1:18,19.*

The fiery brimstone - ***theion*** *- is divine incense, because burning brimstone was regarded as having power to purify, and to ward off disease - the [1]cup he drank on the cross is the touchstone! "What shall I say? Father remove this cup from me? NO! For this hour I have come!" The word, [2]**hagios**, saints, refers to wholeness and harmony of spirit, soul and body - see 1 Cor 1:30 and Rom 1:7.)*

John 5:27 The Father has also given the son of man authentic authority to execute judgment on mankind's behalf! *(The word exousia, often translated authority has two components, ek, out of, source and eimi, I am!)*

John 5:28 Do not be alarmed by this, but the hour is coming when

those in the graves will hear his voice! *(No-one who ever lived will escape the extent of his righteous judgment! Those who have forgotten who they are will hear his incarnate voice! The word for grave, mnēmeion, memory, suggests a remembrance! Like David prophesies in Psalm 22 when he sees the cross-crisis [krisis - judgment] a thousand years before it happens! His conclusion in verse 27 sums up the triumph of God's resolve! "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him!" See 1 Corinthians 15:21,22 The same mankind who died in a man was raised again in a man. In Adam all died; in Christ all are made alive.)*

John 5:29 And they will come forth out of their graves - for those who have engaged themselves with that which is beneficial, it will be a resurrection to life - and for those who have done that which is worthless, it will be a resurrection unto judgment. *(In the context of John chapter 6:28 and 29 the work that is required is not a duty to be performed but a gift to be embraced - If our own good behavior could earn us salvation then there would be no point in Jesus dying our death! - This would be in conflict with the essence and crux of the gospel! It reminds of 2 Corinthians 5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body!" Now read this verse in the Mirror - 2 Corinthians 5:10 For we have all been thoroughly scrutinized in the judgment of Jesus. We are taken care of and restored to the life of our design, regardless of what happened to us in our individual lives, whatever amazing or meaningless things we encountered in the body. (See 5:14,16. We are mirrored in his life; his life reflects ours, not as an example for us but of us. See 2 Corinthians 3:18. The word,* ***phaneroo****, means to render apparent, to openly declare, to manifest. Paul uses the Aorist Passive Infinitive tense* ***phanerothenai****, not referring to a future event. The Aorist Infinitive presents the action expressed by the verb as a completed unit with a beginning and end. The word,* ***bematos****, comes from* ***bayma****, means footprint, also referring to a raised place mounted by steps, or a tribunal, the official seat of a judge The word,* ***komitzo****, comes from* ***kolumbos****, meaning to tend, to take care of, to provide for, to carry off from harm. Paul's reference was not about how much abuse and affliction he suffered, neither was it the many good times he remembered that defined him; "I am what I am by the grace of God!" If we are still to be judged for good or bad deeds that we performed in the*

body, then the judgment that Jesus faced on mankind's behalf was irrelevant. Galatians 2:21 I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing! NIV
John 6:39 My Sender's desire is for me to rescue every single individual - [1]this is his gift to me - that I will lose [2]no detail of mankind's original identity mirrored in me! My rescuing mission will conclude in their joint-resurrection! This is the [3]completeness of time! *(This is his gift to me, [1]**ho dedoke moi**. The phrase, [2]**hina pan apoleso ex auto**, meaning, that I should lose nothing out of it. In the eschatology/conclusion/fullness of time - [3]**te eschate hemera** - This phrase occurs only in John - See John 6:39, 6:40, 6:44, 6:54. Also John 4:23 The end of an era has arrived - the future is here! Whatever prophetic values were expressed in external devotional forms and rituals are now eclipsed in true spirit worship from within - face to face with the Father - acknowledging our genesis in him - this is his delight! The Father's desire is the worshiper more than the worship!)*
Eph 1:10 In the [1]economy of the fullness of time, everything culminates in Christ. All that is in heaven and all that is on earth is reconciled in him. Jesus is the [2]consummation of the ages!
Heb 10:37 Time becomes insignificant once the promise is realized. Remember how the promise of his imminent appearance was recorded in Scripture. *(The arrival of Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise and the realizing of righteousness by faith, as Habakkuk prophesied. [Hab 2:2-4.] He is the fullness of time. [Gal 4:4])*
1 Thess 2:19 We expect nothing less in the context of the gospel than you enjoying a face to face encounter in the [1]immediate presence of our Lord Jesus Christ! This is our delight and wreath of honor! *(The word [1]**parousia** speaks of the immediate presence of the Lord! From **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and **eimi,** I am! There is not even a hint of judgment or punishment in this word! Please do not believe everything you read in Strongs! "G3952 parousia from the present Participle of G3918; a being near, that is, advent; often, return; specifically*

of Christ to punish Jerusalem, or finally the wicked."!!??)
See *Notes on The Day Of The Lord i*n the introduction to Revelation.
Also *Extended Commentary Notes* at the end of the book - *Thoughts on Judgment and Resurrection.*
The Triumph of the Lamb
Rev 17:13 These rulers were in full agreement to hand over their authority to the Beast. *(At the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, former enemies became allies as the banded together against the Lamb see Luke 23:12 That day Herod and Pilate became friends--before this they had been enemies. Ps 83:5 With one mind they plot together; they form an alliance against you.)*
Rev 17:14 These join forces in that hour to wage war against the Lamb but the Lamb defeats them since he is the Lord of lords and the King of kings. And sharing with him in his victory are his kindred, the ones who recognizes their origin in this conversation, they too are now of the same persuasion.
The Lamb led them into freedom from their lost identity, and their doubts. See Hebrews 1:1 Throughout ancient times God spoke in many fragments and glimpses of prophetic thought to our fathers. Now, this entire conversation has finally dawned in sonship. Suddenly what seemed to be an ancient language falls fresh and new like the dew on the tender grass! He is the sum total of every utterance of God. He is whom the Prophets pointed to and we are his immediate audience! [The word ***eschatos*** *means extreme; last in time or in space; the uttermost part, the final conclusion. What God said about 'you-manity' in Jesus defines eschatology!] Hebrews 1:2 In sonship, God declares the Incarnate Word to be the heir of all things. He is, after all, the author of the ages. We have our beginning and our being in him. (Sonship endorses heirship! See Heb 6:16-18.) Hebrews 1:3 Jesus is the crescendo of God's conversation; he gives context and content to the authentic thought. Everything that God had in mind for mankind is voiced in him. Jesus is God's language. He is the radiant and flawless expression of the person and intent of God. He mirrors God's character and exhibits his every attribute in human form. He is the voice of God announcing our redeemed innocence. This voice is the dynamic that sustains the entire cosmos. He is the force of the universe upholding everything that exists as the executive authority of God, enthroned in the boundless measure of his majesty. ["Having accomplished purification of sins, he sat down ..." His*

throne is proof of mankind's redeemed innocence!]
Revelation 12:7 Mikael and his shepherd-messengers led the war in the heavenly realm against the Dragon and his herding-heralds. *(The Hebrew name **Mikael** means, "Who is like God?" The context of the onslaught against the human race has always been their identity-crisis as image and likeness bearers of God! The fruit of the "I-am-not tree system !" See John 10:30-36)*
Rev 1:5 and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the Prince of the kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood.
Rev 11:15 When the seventh shepherd-messenger sounded his trumpet, there was a massive crescendo of voices in the heavenly realm, saying, "The kingdom of the cosmos has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign as king for all the ages of the ages." *[Remember Rev 10:7 In the days when the sounding of the seventh messenger's trumpet commences, the mystery of God will be fully realized in exact accordance to the Good News he announced to his servants the Prophets - **euengelisen** - Good news!] The word, **kosmos** in the NT refers to the entire human family and their social structures.*
Already in chapter 7 we see the eventual outcome of what is portrayed here in chapter 11. **Rev 7:9 At this moment I saw a massive throng of people, impossible to count, standing tall and innocent everyone of them dressed in white with palm branches in their hands; they have escaped everything that could possibly define them as a non-Jewish Gentile world! In fact, every sphere of society were there - including the entire spectrum of people-groupings; tribal identities with their unique language-specific dialect preferences; they were all present there facing the throne and the Lamb as the people of the planet!** *(Amazing how, in the previous verses the tribes of Israel are associated with a very specific "number" when it comes to the prophetic detail of the entire Jewish nation as a prophetic voice of God's intention in Abraham to release the blessing of the single SEED of God's faith and bless all the nations of the earth! Count the stars, count the sand!!! The preposition **ek**, points to source or origin; mankind was delivered out of their national, geographical and historical identities! The palm branches and the white robes are signs of the celebration of victory and joy. The word **stolay**, is the white outer garment worn by kings, priests, and persons of rank.*

I looked again. I saw a huge crowd, too huge to count. Everyone was there —all nations and tribes, all races and languages. And they were standing, dressed in white robes and waving palm branches, standing before the throne and the Lamb. The Message)

Rev 7:10 Then I heard the masses shouting as if with one thundering voice saying, "Our salvation is secure in our God who is seated upon the throne and endorsed in the Lamb's doing!"

Colossians 2:14 His body nailed to the cross hung there as the [3]document of mankind's guilt; in dying our death he [1]cancelled the detailed [2]hand-written [3]record which testified against us. Every [1]stain on our conscience, reminding of the sense of failure and guilt, was thus fully blotted out. *(The word, [1]**exaleipho**, comes from **ek**, out of, and **aleipho**, with **a,** as a particle of union, and **liparos**, to grease, to leave a stain; guilt, as well as all hurtful memories were like grease stains upon the conscience. In N.T. only here and Rev 3:5; 7:17; 21:4 and in Acts 3:19 "Be awakened in your minds and fully converted to face the fact of your redeemed innocence - your sins have been thoroughly blotted out!" Plato used it of blotting out a writing. The word, [2]**cheirographon**, translates as hand-written. The word, [3]**dogma**, comes from **dokeo**, a thought pattern; thus thought patterns engraved by human experience of constant failure to do what the law required. In his personal handwriting mankind endorsed their own death sentence. The hands of fallen mankind struck the body of Jesus with the blows of their religious hatred and fury when they nailed his bloodied body to the tree; they did not realize that in the mystery of God's economy, Jesus became the scapegoat of the entire human race! [Isaiah 53:4, 5] See notes on Heb 8:12. "The slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's Cross." —The Message)*

Col 2:15 In him dying mankind's death, he [1]defused every possible claim of accusation against the human race and thus made a public [2]spectacle of every [3]rule and authority in God's brilliant triumph, demonstrated in him. The [4]voice of the cross will never be silenced! *(The horror of the Cross is now the eternal trophy of God's triumph over sin! The cross stripped religion of its authority to manipulate mankind with guilt. Every accusation lost its leverage to blackmail the human race with condemnation and shame! The word, [1]**apekduomai**, is translated from **apo**,*

*away from, and **ekduo**, to be stripped of clothing; to disarm; the religious facade that disguised the law of works as a means of defining a person's life, was openly defeated. Same word used in Col 3:9. The dominance of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil [**poneros**, hard work and labor] was ended. The word, [2]**deikmatizo**, means to exhibit in public. See [3]commentary below of the words **arche**, rule and **exousia**, authority. The word, [4]**parresia**, comes from **pas**, all and **rheo**, outspokenness, pouring forth speech.*

"He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets." — The Message

*Commentary note for 1 Corinthians 15:24, The complete conclusion in his work of redemption is celebrated in his yielding the full harvest of his reign to God the Father, having brought to naught the law of works which supported every definition of dominion under the fall, including all **principalities**, all authority and every dynamic influence in society. [He brought to naught the law of works, **katargeo**, from **kata**, meaning intensity, and **argos**, meaning labor; thus free from all self effort to attempt to improve what God has already perfected in Christ. All principalities, [3]**arche**, or chief ranks, i.e., kings, governors; this includes any governing system whereby one is ranked above the other on the basis of their performance or preference. All authority, [3]**exousia**, comes from **ek**, denoting origin and **eimi**, I am; in this case, because of what I can do I am defined by what I can do better than you; therefore, I have authority over you. Every dynamic influence in society, **dunamis**, means power, in this case, willpower. Every government structure in society will be brought under the dominion of grace where the Christ-life rules.]*

In 1 Corinthians 2:7-8, We voice words of wisdom that was hidden in silence for timeless ages; a mystery unfolding God's Masterful plan whereby he would redeem his glory in mankind. Neither the politicians nor the theologians of the day had a clue about this mystery [of mankind's association in Christ]; if they did, they would never have crucified the Lord whose death redeemed our glory!)

Heb 2:8, 1 Cor 15:25,27 His dominion is destined to subdue all hostility and contradiction under his feet. (The lowest part of the human body will equally share in this victory. "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool." [Ps 110:1] Jesus is Lord of Lords; in his victory mankind is restored to lordship; "I say you are gods,

all of you are sons of the Most High." [Ps 82:6 RSV].)

Rev 2:25 [1]Lay hold of that which your hearts [2]bear witness to [3]until you fully grasp the scope and understand the most conclusive significance of [4]my coming!

Rev 2:26, Seeing my victory as your victory makes you the overcomer. By embracing the [1]completeness of my works as your [2]treasure, you realize my authority in you to posses the nations. *(See verse 23 - the [1]success of my works is to your credit. The wrords, αχρι τελους achri telous suggest, taking my words to its full conclusion. The word,* ***tereo*** *means to treasure, to guard. See Psalm 2:7,8 [also verse 9 as referenced in the next verse, 27] You are my son, today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. Paul quotes Psalm 2 in Acts 13:33 when he preaches the resurrection of Jesus and in Ephesians 2:5 and Colossians 3:1-3 he celebrates our co-begotteness! Also Peter announces that we were born anew when Jesus was raised from the dead! 1 Peter 1:3. The word [2]****exousia****, often translated authority has two components,* ***ek****, out of, source and* ***eimi****, I am! The preposition [3]****epi*** *suggests continuous influence upon, from a position of authority.)*

Rev 2:27 You will [1]shepherd the nations with a royal scepter and shatter [2]their 'alienated mindsets' like a potter's vessel of clay. *(He quotes Psalm 2:9, You shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Sadly the Hebrew Masoretic Text uses the word* ***עער RAA*** *- to be bad, be evil; to be displeasing; to be injurious; to be wicked; to do an injury or hurt; to be mischief; instead of the same sounding word, [1]****הערRA'AH*** *with a* ***Hay*** *at the end and not an* ***Ayin****, which means* ***to shepherd****! Also in the Septuagint, the Greek word ποιμανεῖς [1]****poimaneis*** *is used! You shall feed them as a shepherd nurtures his flock. With reference to the [2]alienated mindsets that ruled the nations see Numbers 24:17, "A scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab!" (mindset!) The Shepherd's staff was never intended to beat up the sheep but to protect and free them from any possible threat!*
See ***Extended Notes on The Rod of Iron at the end of Chapter 2.****)*

Rev 2:28, In the same way that my shepherding mission is [3]sourced in

the Father I have extended it to you! I also give you the [2]Morning Star! *(I've attached part of the previous verse here; the Greek word, [1]**para**, with the genitive, indicating source or origin, close and immediate proximity, intimate connection, union. See 2 Peter 1:19, "Take my word as one would take a lamp at night; the day is about to dawn for you in your own understanding. When the [2]Morning Star appears, you no longer need the lamp; this will happen shortly on the horizon of your own hearts!" Rev 22:16 I am Jesus. I sent my shepherd-messenger to be witness of these things to you before the churches; confirming to them that I am the Root and offspring of David, the radiant Morning Star! See my notes on **The "Fallen Star" is The Bright Morning Star,** at the end of Rev 9.)*

Rev 2:29, Now listen up with your inner ears! Hear with understanding what the Spirit is saying to the Ekklesia! *(See 1 Corinthians 2:13 The impact of our words are not confined to the familiar wisdom of the world taught by human experience and tradition, but communicated by seamless spirit resonance, combining spirit with spirit.)*

Rev 5:5, Then one of the elders said unto me, "You need not weep anymore! Look! The Lion has conquered! He who is of the tribe of Judah, the root of David! His victory qualifies him to open the scroll and to break its seven seals!" *(**Idou enikesen** Behold! He has conquered! **ho leon, ho ek tes phules Jodah, he ritza David**, The Lion who is out of the tribe of Judah, the root of David. Rev 3:7 I hold the key of David as prophesied in Isaiah 22:22*

See Gen 49:9 Judah is a lion's whelp; Gen 49:10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. Gen 49:11 Binding his foal to the vine and his ass's colt to the choice vine, he washes his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes.)

Rev 5:6, So I looked to see the Lion, and there, as if fused into one with the throne and in unison with the four Living Beings, taking center stage in the midst of the elders, I saw a little Lamb, alive and standing even though it seemed to have been violently butchered in sacrifice! It had seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven Spirits of God having been sent out to accomplish his bidding in all the earth. *(You cannot see the Lion until you see the Lamb! Mankind's redeemed innocence is the authority of the throne of the Kingdom of God.*

Rev 5:11, Then I saw [1]wave upon wave of innumerable Angelic shepherd-messengers [1]engulfing the throne and the elders and the Living Beings and I heard singing! It was a mass choir of [2]multi millions! *(The word [1]**kuklo**, encircle, from **kuma**, a swelling wave; which also connects with the etymological value of the word **muriades**, from **meu**, like in waves of the sea. Countless [2]myriads - literally ten thousands times ten thousands and thousands of thousands! The largest number named in Ancient Greek was the myriad, myriad (written MM) or hundred million. In his Sand Reckoner, Archimedes of Syracuse used this quantity as the basis for a numeration system of large powers of ten, which he used to count grains of sand!*

According to PIE, the etymology of the word myriad has been variously connected to meu- "damp" in reference to the waves of the sea and to Greek myrmex (μύρμηξ, "ant") in reference to their swarms. Proto-Indo-European (PIE) is the linguistic reconstruction of the common ancestor of the Indo-European languages, the most widely spoken language family in the world.

Rev 5:12 In their full capacity they exploded in song, proclaiming in unison, "The Lamb's worth is now fully [1]realized! [2]Having been slain in sacrifice, the power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing [3]belong to him!" *(The word [1]**labein**, to have taken/realized, from **lambano**, to take, to grasp, to reveive; here in the Aorist Infinitive tense, which indicates prior completion of an action in relationship to a point in time. The word [3]**esphagmenon** is the Perfect Passive Participle of the verb, **sphazō**, to slay in sacrifice. It is used to describe a state that exists at the time coincident with that of the leading verb as a result of action completed prior to the time of the main verb. The basic thought of the perfect tense is that the progress of an action has been completed and the results of the action are continuing on, in full effect. In other words, the progress of the action has reached its culmination and the finished results are now in existence.)*

Rev 5:13, At that point the entire universe burst out in praise! I heard every created being in the heavenly realm and upon the earth and under the earth, and upon the ocean and everything within all these spheres, declaring to the One seated upon the throne and to the Lamb:

"The most [1]articulate language, the admiration, the supreme magnificence, the might until the ages of the ages!" *(The word [1]**eulogia**, from **eu**, good, well done, and **logos**; thus, polished language; such language which is artfully adapted to captivate the hearer: fair speaking, fine speeches.)*

It is almost unspeakable that of all the themes God could choose from to celebrate the central authority of the throne Room, he chose the Lamb! Our redeemed innocence is the theme of the throne of heaven, forever!

Babylon has fallen!

Rev The woman you saw is the great city which dominated the kings of the earth. *(The Prostitute city-society of Babylon stands in contrast to the Bride of Christ as the New Jerusalem.)*

The repeat of the same scene recorded in **Revelation 14:6 And I saw another shepherd-messenger soaring in mid heaven - this shepherd was the carrier of good news and his mission was to announce these glad tidings of everlasting proportions to every single nation, tribe, language and people grouping of the earth!**

Revelation 14:7 In a great voice he declared, "Be awestruck with the amazingness of God! Give him glory! The hour of his judgment has come! He is the Maker of the heavenly realm, the earth, the sea and the fountains of the waters." *(This announcement echoes in Jesus' declaration in John 12:31 This is the judgment of this world; it is the moment where the authority of the world-system is cast out! [The serpent's head is about to be crushed! Genesis 3:15; Colossians 2:14,15] John 12:32 When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all judgment to me! [The subject of the sentence as from the previous verse is the judgment of the world.] He would be lifted up on a cross, descend into the depths of our hell, then, according to the prophetic word in Hosea 6:2, after two days be lifted up as representative of the human race, out of the lowest parts of the earth and elevated to the highest heavens! Ephesians 4:8,9; see also Ephesians 2:5,6 and Colossians 3:1-3. John 3:14; John 8:28; Act 2:33. 1 John 3:5 We have witnessed with our own eyes how, in the unveiling of the prophetic word, when he was lifted up upon the cross as the Lamb of God, he lifted up our sins and defeated its dominion and rule over us! [John 1:29 "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away [airo] the sin of the world! The word airo means to lift up.]) John 12:33 This he said to point to the way in which he*

would die. See John 19:15 - Lift him up! Lift him up! Crucify him!")
Revelation 14:8 And a second shepherd-messenger followed with more good news! Babylon the great city crashed and will never fly again! She who sold herself as a prostitute to all the nations and intoxicated them with the wine of her passion. *(The language is an echo of Isa 21:9, "Babylon has fallen! It has fallen! All the idols they worship lie shattered on the ground." Jer 51:8 "Babylon will suddenly fall and be shattered." Babylon was used for Rome in late Jewish writings; see also 1 Pet 5:13) In the imagery that follows, [in Rev 15-17] John sees how the effect of the triune religious counterfeit of the Dragon, the Beast and the fake slain and risen lamb disguised as the great prostitute of Babylon is thoroughly stripped of their influence and dominion and brought to naught.*
The same announcement of the utter defeat of Babylon continues in Chapter 18...
Rev 18:2 He announced in a thunderous voice, The great Babylon is utterly crushed!

Chapter 18

1 With this I saw another shepherd-messenger descending out of the heavenly sphere with blazing light beaming out of him. The light lit up the earth with the brightness of his glorious presence.

2 He announced in a thunderous voice, The great Babylon is utterly crushed - it has become a ghost town of demons, haunted by every unclean spirit, held in it like in a cage for eerie, spooky birds.

3 The masses of mankind became intoxicated with the wine of her passion and adultery while their kings flirted with her and the travelling traders of the world made their wealth with the powerful lure of her attractions."

4 And I heard another voice saying out of the heavens, Come on out of the grasp of her deception! You are my people; you have nothing in common with her distortions and need not participate in her plagues.

5 Her perverted twistedness of God's image in you has piled up and polluted every square inch of earth and sky. God cannot tolerate the presence of the unrighteousness she represents. *(First Aorist (prophetic) active indicative of* ***mnēmoneuō****, remember or tolerate, here with the accusative (a****dikēmata****, unrighteousness) instead of the genitive - thus, not her unrighteousness, but the unrighteousness that she represents.)*

6 The Lamb's suffering dealt a double blow to the whore and Beast-system! The counterfeit cup she had mixed turned on her and proved to be her defeat. *(Give back to her as also she gave back to you, and double to her double, according to her works. In the cup which she mixed, mix to her double. LITV*
Their apparent initial victory in the brutal unjust trial and crucifixion of the Lamb turned against their tyranny in double measure - not only were they outwitted in his death, when the document of mankind's guilt in the scarred body of Jesus was nailed to the cross, whereby every possible claim against the human race was nullified, but in his resurrection God presented the receipt, documenting the justification and redeemed righteousness of the entire human race!
This reminds of what the Prophet Isaiah saw, Isa 40:2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.
The judgment that sin has bought in its hellish torment as inevitable consequence upon mankind is now atoned for in double proportions in the Lamb's suffering and in the reversal of the lamb's judgment brought upon all principalities and powers.)

7 This is a complete reversal of her self-inflated glory and luxurious lifestyle to the exposure of her falsehood - like when metal is [1]tested with a touchstone and proves to be fool's gold - and gladness is turned into sorrow. You said in your heart, I am established as a queen and not a widow - I will not know grief. *(The word [1]torment* ***basanismos*** *from* ***basanizō****, to test metals by the touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the color of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal - a piece of fine-grained dark schist or jasper formerly used for testing alloys of gold by observing the color of the mark which they made on it - thus, a standard or criterion by which something is judged or recognized. The cup Jesus drank on the cross is the touchstone! "What shall I say? Father remove this cup from me? NO! For this hour I have come!")*

8 Her calamity strikes in one day - death, sorrow and starvation - her entire dynasty is burnt to ashes in the fire of the passionate judgment of the Lord God. *(See Isa 47:8 Now therefore hear this, you lover of pleasures, who sit securely, who say in your heart, "I am, and there is no one besides me; I shall not sit as a widow or know the loss of children":*
Isa 47:9 These two things shall come to you in a moment, in one day; the loss of children and widowhood shall come upon you in full measure, in spite of your many sorceries and the great power of your enchantments.
All of her "offspring" are rescued out of her sway.)

9 And the kings of the earth, the executives of the mindsets of the Beastly system, her faithful fornicating friends and clients, are weeping and wailing bitterly while the smoke of her burning rises.

10 They stand completely detached from her, embarrassed by their association with her in her [1]exposed, pretentious identity, crying, Alas! Alas! The mighty city of Babylon is doomed in one hour! *(Repeat note of verse 7; The word [1]torment* ***basanismos*** *from* ***basanizō****, to test metals by the touchstone)*

11 Also the money-power emperors of the world who control the global trade-routes, the merchants and economists were wailing and mourning because the judgement on her caused the loss of all their clients - no one buys their cargo anymore! The touchstone currency of God has exposed the fake currency system of the world economy! *(Rev 17:15)*

12 Suddenly no one shows any interest in their most precious cargo of gold, silver, rare gems, pearls, fine linen fabrics, purple, silk, scarlet, all kinds of scented wood, ivory carvings and articles, expensive hard woods, bronze, iron and marble.

13 The list goes on and on! Cinnamon, spices, incense, perfume, frankincense, wine, olive oil, flour, wheat, cattle, sheep, horses, wagons and slaves. No buyers!

14 The entire economy crashed! None of the sought after seasonal fruits or any delicacy associated with their luxurious living were available any longer. Not even a trace of these could be found!

15 The once mighty merchants and money brokers who gleaned their wealth from her, were standing afar off, afraid and disorientated. They weep and wail bitterly since the touchstone currency of their economy has been exposed as fake!

16 Alas the great model city of the world is doomed! Dressed to perfection in the most expensive and elegant fashion. Draped in purple and scarlet fabric, festooned and sprinkled with golden glitter and ornaments; she was elaborately decorated with gold, precious stones and pearls.

17 In a brief moment all this pomp has come to nothing! The great shipping tycoons of the world, their workforce and clients all stood in bewilderment, witnessing from afar the ruin of their entire enterprise as it went up in smoke!

18 They wept bitterly in lament, "Who would have thought that this great city of unequaled prominence could come to nothing!"

19 In their sense of hopelessness and bafflement they cast dust upon their heads as if to wrap their minds around the ultimate reduction of their vibrant life to lifeless dust! They are weeping and wailing in shock for the great city which has fallen! "Oh what a shame that the famous icon of prosperity who made every ship owner rich is now [1]left utterly desolate in just one hour!" *(The word [1]**eremos**, desolate; also used of a woman neglected by her husband, from whom the husband withholds himself. The whore-city is now bereft of all her lovers.)*

20 A [1]deep sense of relief is felt in the heavens as all the Saints, the Apostles and the Prophets celebrate how God caused the whore's judgment of others to be her own judgment. *(The word [1]**euphrainō**, to be delighted, **eu** plus **phren** - innermost being; - ἔκρινεν τὸ κρίμα ὑμῶν ἐξ αὐτῆς literally, has judged your judgment out of her - what she has judged concerning you.)*

21 And a huge shepherd-messenger lifted a stone like a massive millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, so shall Babylon the great city be hurled into the ocean and not a single trace of her existence shall ever be found again! *(Math 18:6 but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.)*

22 Never again will the festive sound of harpists, singers, flautists and trumpeters be heard in you. Not even a trace of any art or creative skills and crafts will remind of days gone by! The familiar grinding sound of the millstone will be silent forever.

23 Not even a hint of a candlelight or any lamp will ever bear testimony to your forgotten night-life again. The voice of the bridegroom and bride will forever be silent in you. Her merchants were the great untouchable tycoons of the world who seduced all the nations with her pharmaceutical potions and spells.

24 The blood of the Prophets and the Saints and very one [1]slaughtered in the scapegoat-sacrificial system of the world order were evidenced in her. *(The word, [1]**sphazō** is the verb used of the slain Lamb.)*

Chapter 19

1 With this I heard a great multitude singing as with one voice in the heavens, saying Hallelujah! Salvation, glory and power belongs to our God! *(The Great Hallel (a title for Psalms 113-118) is sung chiefly at the feasts of the Passover and Tabernacles. In this context, John reminds his Israeli audience of triumphant praise as the voice celebrating the great Salvation wrought at the Passover of the Lamb of God who has become our permanent Tabernacle and habitation! The days of wandering around in a wilderness, outside of the Promise, are forever over! Also, in leading up to* ***the great wedding feast of the Lamb****, this introduction of the praises sung during Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles, are most significant. See commentary notes on* ***the City-Bride*** *at the end of this chapter.)*

2 For every one of his [1]judgments are established in righteousness and truth. He has sentenced the great Harlot-system who has caused the world to [2]shrivel up and pine away with the poison of her prostitution and vindicated the blood of his servants out of her hand. The spell of her judgment upon the earth was broken! *([1]John's Jewish audience here are familiar with the fact, and are reminded, that Ps 89:14 as well as Ps 97:2 speak of righteousness and truth being the foundation/habitation of his throne! Rev 15:3 Righteousness and truth are your trademarks!*

*The word, [2]****phteiro****, means to pine or waste away, to whither. Any idea of separation causes one to whither away in loneliness! Prostitution can never substitute true marriage! See 2 Cor 11:2 I feel a divine jealousy for you! I have as it were been the groomsman who wooed you to belong solely to your one husband and presented you as a pure bride to Christ. 2 Cor 11:3 I am concerned for you that you might pine away through the illusion of separation from Christ and that, just like Eve, you might become blurry-eyed and deceived into believing a lie about yourselves. The temptation was to exchange the truth about our completeness [I am] with the idea of incompleteness [I am not] and shame; thinking that perfection required your toil and all manner of wearisome labor! [Again the word,* ***phteiro****, is used, meaning to pine or waste away, to whither. Any idea of separation causes one to whither away in loneliness! The word* ***haplotes*** *from* ***hama****, a*

*particle of union, and **pleko**, to braid or plait together; sometimes translated, simplicity or unmixed. The Greek word, **ophis** is translated serpent and comes from optomai, to gaze, in this case, to present a visual idea through illusion. The word **exapataō** from **ek,** source + **apateo**, apathy is the source of deception, to be without faith, believing a lie about yourself! Heb 4:6 Israel died in the wilderness because of their unbelief. [Both Adam and Israel believed a lie about themselves. Num 13:33, Josh 2:11, 2 Cor 4:4.] The word **panourgia**, from the words, **pas**, all, and **ergon**, work or toil, where your entire existence is reduced to wearisome labor. This word is often translated, cunning or craftiness. See also 2 Cor 4:2 "We have renounced hidden agendas [employing a little bit of the law in an attempt to "balance" out grace]; we have distanced ourselves from any obscure craftiness to manipulate God's word to make it mean what it does not say!"])*

3 Yet again they would say, Hallelujah! For the smoke of her destruction rises up as a trophy-testimony for all times and ages.

4 And the twenty four elders and the four living creatures fell on their faces in worship to God upon the throne, saying, Amen; Hallelujah!

5 And a voice proceeded from the environment of the throne saying, [1]recount the amazing stories of God's praise to all his bond-servants small and great, everyone who is awed by him! *(The verb, [1]**aineō** from **ainos**, story; thus, tell the story. See Phil 4:8 Study stories that celebrate life - **epainos**, commendable, praise worthy, from **epi**, indicating continuous influence upon, and **ainos**, story.)*

6 Then I heard the voice of an innumerable mass of people exploding like a thunderous torrent of mighty cascading waterfalls, bellowing, Hallelujah! The Lord our God has claimed his kingdom and established his sovereign rule over everything!

7 This is the climax of the ages! Celebrate his glory with ecstatic joy and extreme delight, for the wedding feast of the Lamb has come! The day didn't catch her by surprise! His bride has prepared herself appropriately! She is ready and fully [1]fit for the occasion! *(The word, [1]**hetoimasen**, is in the Aorist Active Indicative tense pointing to what has already happened. This word derives from an old word, **heteos**, fitness. She has gotten herself ready! Verse 8 tells us how she did it! See my extended notes on **the City-Bride** at the end of this chapter.)*

8 She [1]was given the finest linen to clothe herself; there she stands, wrapped in radiant white - dressed in [2]spotless, saintly innocence. *(The verb, **edothe** from **didomi**, was given, Aorist Passive Indicative. The word innocence, [2]**dikaiōma** stems from the word **dike**, two parties finding likeness in each other. Dike is also the root for the word **dikaiosune**, righteousness. Sadly, many translations have it completely wrong here! This is not the righteous "deeds" of the Saints! This innocence gives testimony to the merits of the Redeemer. Paul says in Php 3:9, "And be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but what is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Zech 3:4 And the shepherd-messenger said to those who were standing before him, "Remove the filthy garments from him." And to him he said, "Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with righteousness." Aramaic Targum. See my extended notes on **the City-Bride** at the end of Rev 3.)*

9 And he instructed me to record this in writing: Oh the [1]blessedness of this bliss which is the supreme celebration of the union of the ages! You have individually been [2]identified by name and invited to the Lamb's supper, concluding in the ultimate wedding feast! This is the Grand Finale in the [3]unveiling of God's word. *(This is not a wedding where you are invited simply because you're a friend of a friend of the Groom or the Bride - or a distant second cousin to a relative of a relative on someone's mother's side! No! You're the Bride!*

*The word, [1]**makarios**, usually translated, blessed, suggests a special*

*intensity of delight. It is another beatitude (**makarioi**) like that in Rev 14:13 [fourth of the seven in the book]*
*The verb, κεκλημενοι [2]**kekelemenoi** is a Perfect Passive Participle of **kaleo**, to identify by name, to surname. The Passive Participle describes a state that exists at the time coincident with that of the leading verb as a result of action completed prior to the time of the main verb, [in previous verse] **edothe** from didomi, was given [v8] which is in the Aorist Passive Indicative. The Perfect Participle endorses the fact that this is a standing invitation! See the extended notes on **ekklesia** at the end of chapter 1. The word, [3]**alethinos**, from **alethes**; from the negative particle, **a** and **lanthanō**, to lie hidden; thus, that which is unveiled truth.*
*Just like Babylon is not a city in the symbolic language of Revelation, it is a "fallen", distorted-mindset-society; so the New Jerusalem is not a city but the redeemed society of mankind! The Bride of Christ! Rev 17:18. See my extended notes on **the City-Bride** at the end of this chapter.)*

10 I was so overwhelmed that I fell down at his feet to worship him; he immediately asked me to see him as a fellow bond-servant and a fellow brother, jointly echoing the testimony of Jesus! Worship God, he said, the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy! This wedding is the entire culmination of the prophetic word!

11 Then, in my vision, heaven opened and I saw a white horse appear; the Name of the one seated upon the horse is Faithful and True. Righteousness spans the range of his judgment and warfare. *(See notes on the **Open heaven** at the end of chapter 13.)*

12 And his eyes were like flashing flames of fire. His head was adorned with many royal diadems. He has a Name written upon him which he alone understands; no one recognizes him by that name. *(The Jews knew God as the "unpronounceable Name, and therefore called him, **HaShem** - **משה** The Name! See my commentary on Rev 1:4*
They could not connect this most sacred Name to the Messiah-Christ, JESUS , born in Bethlehem, condemned and crucified by them!"
John 1:11 It was not as though he arrived on a foreign planet; he came to

his own, yet his own did not recognize him. (The Jews should have been the first to recognize him!)
Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.
*"...and you shall call his Name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." See Jeremiah 23:6 "In his days Judah will be saved, [**yâsha'**, a primitive root; properly to be open, wide or free, that is, (by implication) to be safe; causatively to free or succor, defend, deliver (-er), help, preserve, rescue, be safe, bring (having) **salvation, Savior**), get victory.] And Israel will dwell securely. And **this is his Name** by which he will be called:* **יהוה - *Jaweh our righteousness."***
The One with eyes ablaze as in Rev 1:14 and Rev 2:17,18, also Rev 3:12...And I will engrave upon them the name of my God, also the name of the city [the bride!] of my God, the new Jerusalem that descends from heaven; as well as my own new Name!
*See extended **notes on the hidden Name at the end of the chapter**)*

13 The robes he wore were dipped in blood and his [1]Name has always been the Word of God! *(He is the Logos that was before time was; the completeness of prophecy, the Incarnate One! See John 1:1-3,14. See **Notes on the Hidden Name** at the end of this chapter.)*

14 And heaven's armies followed him, on white horses; they were dressed in the finest, dazzling white linen.

15 And from his mouth proceeds a sharp sword - the words of his utterance cuts to the core of the heart of the nations and he shall shepherd them with an iron scepter. And on his own he will tread out the winepress of the [1]intensity of the passion of the sovereign God of the universe. *(See my comments in Rev 2:16 on the imagery of the Sword.*
*The words, **tou thumou tes orges tou theo**, speaks of the intensity of the passion of God, with the word thumos, passion, and the word often translated wrath, **orge**, meaning strong desire - as a reaching forth or excitement of the mind, from the word, **oregomai**, meaning to stretch one's self out in order to touch or to grasp something.*

See my commentary notes in Rev 2:26,27 ***at the end of Revelation chapter 2*** *with reference to Ps 2:7,8,9 on* ***the Rod of Iron****.*
See commentary notes at the end of this chapter 19, on ***The Shepherd-King of the Nations!***
Commentary notes at the end of this chapter 19, on ***the winepress of the passion of God.)***

16 And a Name is written on his robe and thigh: King of kings and Lord of lords! *(Psa 45:3 Gird your sword upon your thigh, Oh, mighty one, in your glory and majesty!*
Revelation Rev 3:11 Do not let tough times make me seem distant from you! I am at hand - see my nearness, not my absence. And don't let temporal setbacks diminish your own authority either! Remember that you call the shots; you wear the crown. My crown endorses your crown. Rev 3:12, And I will engrave upon the individual the name of my God, also the name of the city [the bride!] of my God, the new Jerusalem that descends from heaven; as well as my own new Name! [2]My Father's Name, John 5:43, I have come in my Father's Name! John 12:28 Father, glorify your Name! Abba Father!
See Psalm 103:4 He redeems his life from the Pit and weaves a crown for him out of loving-kindness and tender mercies.
Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband;
Psa 87:3 Glorious things are spoken of you, Oh city of God - "This one and that one were born in her" Psa 87:7 Singers and dancers together say, "All my springs of joy are in you!)

17 Then I saw another shepherd-Herald standing in the luminous light of the sun. With a loud voice he invited all the birds of the sky to flock together for the great supper of God. *(Another symbolic reference to the Last [Final] Supper - the Lamb's flesh and blood introduce the New Covenant where every judgment is concluded and the Incarnate Word is now our feast - his flesh is bread indeed and becomes our flesh his blood is drink indeed and becomes our blood - celebrated in every meal me have. His broken body pictures the broken body of the human race - one died for all, therefore, all died! 2 Cor 5:14.)*

18 Come feast on the flesh of all mankind! The flesh of kings and the flesh of the high ranking captains, the flesh of the mighty men, the flesh of the horses and their riders; all flesh, slave and free, both the prominent and the least. *(This reflects on Ezekiel 39:17 As for you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD: Speak to the birds of every sort and to all beasts of the field, 'Assemble and come, gather from all sides to the sacrificial feast which I am preparing for you, a great sacrificial feast upon the mountains of Israel, and you shall eat flesh and drink blood. Eze 39:20 And you shall be filled at my table with horses and riders, with mighty men and all kinds of warriors,' says the Lord GOD. Eze 39:21 "And I will set my glory among the nations; and all the nations shall see my judgment which I have executed, and my hand which I have laid on them.*
See extended notes on ***The great Supper of God*** *at the end of the chapter.)*

19 And I saw the Beast in alliance with the kings of the earth muster their armies to engage in a [1]once-and-for-all war against the One seated on the horse and his army! *(The idea of a once-and-for-all war is implied by the Aorist Infinitive tense of the verb,* ***poiesai****. [Weymouth] This is the Aorist active Infinitive which indicates prior completion of an action in relationship to a point in time. Greek infinitives could have either a present or Aorist form. The contrast between the two forms was not necessarily one of time, it is a difference of aspect. The present Infinitive was used to express progressive or imperfective aspect. It pictures the action expressed by the verb as being in progress. The Aorist Infinitive however does not express progressive aspect. It presents the action expressed by the verb as a completed unit with a beginning and end.*
This is an important fact since there are numeral references to the same "once and for all war" in the heavens! It is however the same hour; the same event! Rev 12:7; Rev 16:13,14; Rev 17:13,14; Rev 20:8.)

20 And the Beast and the miracle working Puppet Partner, the False Prophet were arrested and cast into the lake ablaze with sulphur. These two were the ones who were empowered by the Dragon to amaze and deceive those who were tattooed in their heads and hands with the

character of the Beast and make them pay religious homage to its image. *(The word* ***[1]theion****, Sulphar, from* ***theios****, godlike (neuter as noun, divinity): - divine, godhead. sulphur is a yellow inflammable mineral substance found in quantities on the shores of the Dead Sea. This was also known as divine incense, because burning brimstone was regarded as having power to purify, and to ward off disease. Its medicinal values are well known even today.*
Rev 14:8-20 In the imagery here, John sees how the triune religious counterfeit system, the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet are thoroughly stripped of their influence and dominion and brought to naught. The False Prophet is mentioned in Rev 16:13 (KJV) "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the Dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the False Prophet." Here in Rev and also in Rev 20:10 The Devil, who led them astray will be hurled into the lake of fire and brimstone where his puppet partners, the Beast and the False Prophet have already been confined to. Day and Night they will be the subject of God's touchstone for the ages of the ages - the very atmosphere of the entire universe will be thoroughly fumigated from any evidence of Satanas. (See my notes on the Touchstone in Rev 14:10) Rev 13:11 Then I saw another wild animal; this one emerged out of the earth - it had two horns and resembled a young lamb; yet it had a Dragon's voice. [The counterfeit "trinity" emerges - the one mirroring the other - 1/ the Dragon-Accuser; 2/ the seven headed sea-monster of religion with its leading role player, the head that was slain but became alive again; 3/ and now, here, the Dragon clothed in a lamb's-disguise; later called, the false Prophet.]) See extended ***Notes on The Lake of Fire*** *at the end of this chapter.)*

21 The One seated upon the horse, with the sword that proceeded from his mouth, has slain the allies of the Beast and its puppet False Prophet, the kings and their hosts, while all the fowls of the air feasted on their flesh. *(The word,* ***rhomphaia*** *a large, long sword; used in Luk 2:35, where Simon prophesies over Mary: "and a sword will pierce through your own soul also, then the thought processes, reasonings and dialogues of many hearts will be uncovered."*
This word is used 6 times in Revelation, Rev 1:16, Rev 2:12, Rev 2:16, Rev

6:8, Rev 19:15, Rev 19:21
See also Hebrews 4:12 The message God spoke to us in Christ, is the most life giving and dynamic influence in us, cutting like a surgeon's scalpel, sharper than a soldier's sword, piercing to the deepest core of human conscience, to the dividing of soul and spirit; ending the dominance of the sense realm and its neutralizing effect upon the human spirit. In this way a person's spirit is freed to become the ruling influence again in the thoughts and intentions of their heart. The scrutiny of this word detects every possible disease, discerning the body's deepest secrets where joint and bone-marrow meet.)

Revelation Chapter 19 Extended Notes:

The Hidden Name

The Shepherd-King of the Nations!

The Winepress of the Passion of God & The Great Supper

The Lake of Fire and the Second Death

The Hidden Name

Rev 19:11 Then, in my vision, heaven opened and I saw a white horse appear; and the Name of the one seated upon the horse is Faithful and True. Righteousness spans the range of his judgment and warfare.

Rev 19:12 And his eyes were like flashing flames of fire. His head was adorned with many royal diadems. He has a Name written upon him which he alone understands, no one recognizes him by that name. *(The Jews knew God as the "unpronounceable Name, and therefore called him, HaShem -* **משה** *The Name! See my commentary on Rev 1:4, ... him who [2]is I am; he always [3]was and [4]will continually be the accompanying one...This phraseology is purely Jewish, and taken from the Tetragrammaton. The Four Letters referring to the unpronounceable Name of God -* ***YHVH*** *-* **הוהי** *- Jaweh "Existing"* **הוהי** *includes in itself all time, past, present, and future. Hidden in this word are three words,* **היה** *hajah, was,* **הוה** *havah, is, and* **היהי** *jahjah, shall be***.** *They could not connect this most sacred Name to the Messiah-Christ, JESUS, born in Bethlehem, condemned and crucified by them!"*

John 1:11 It was not as though he arrived on a foreign planet; he came to his own, yet his own did not recognize him. *(The Jews should have been the first to recognize him!)*

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

John 1:45 Phillip immediately went looking for Nathaniel and told him the news! We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Torah and he whom the Prophets announced when they spoke about Jesus, *[the Savior]* **the son of Joseph from Nazareth.** *(See Deuteronomy 18:15, "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among you, from your brethren-him you shall heed. Deut 18:18 I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. Genesis 49:10, The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and you shall call his name Immanuel. Also Isaiah 53:1-12; Isaiah 9:6,7 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this. Daniel 9:24-27; Jeremiah 23:5-6. See also Joh 5:39,40 You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. John 5:46, 47 If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?")*

John 1:46 To which Nathaniel answered, "How does Nazareth fit into the picture of God's promised goodness? Phillip said to him, "Come and see for yourself!" *(The τι αγαθον, 'what good thing?' of Nathaniel refers to Scriptures like Jeremiah 33:14 & 15 Behold, the days come, says the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring forth for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. Also Micah 5:2 But you, Oh Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are the least among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Nathanael's question seems to imply, that not Nazareth, but Bethlehem, was to be the birth-place of the Messiah.) John 1:47 When Jesus saw Nathaniel approach him, he*

made the following observation, "Now here is a man of Israel, in whom there is no guile!" (Note the wisdom of Jesus, instead of engaging Nathaniel in a doctrinal debate around the Scriptures, he endorses him!) John 1:48 Nathaniel was surprised! How can you possibly know me if we have never met? Jesus answered him, "Long before Phillip spoke to you, I saw you under the fig tree!"

Math 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was this way, Mary was betrothed to Joseph, yet before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.

Math 1:19 But Joseph, her husband to be, being just, and not willing to make her a public example, he purposed to put her away secretly.

Math 1:20 And as he thought upon these things, behold, the shepherd-messenger of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take to you Mary as your wife. For that in her is fathered of the Holy Spirit.

Math 1:21 And she shall bear a son, and you shall call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Mat 1:22 Now all this happened so that might be fulfilled that which was spoken of the LORD by the prophet, saying,

Math 1:23 "Behold, the virgin shall conceive in her womb, and will bear a son. And they will call his name Emmanuel," which being interpreted is, God with us.

Iēsoús *is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word,* ***Yeshua****,* **עושי** *meaning Yah[weh] is the Savior!*

See **Jeremiah 23:4 I will put shepherds over them. Those shepherds will take care of them. My sheep will no longer be afraid or terrified, and not one of them will be missing," declares Yaweh.**

Jer 23:5 "Behold, the days come, declares Yaweh, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute the verdict of righteousness in the earth.

Jer 23:6 In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is the Name that he will be given: Jaweh, Our Righteousness. *["In his days Judah will be saved, [yâsha', Ya[weh is Savior] And Israel will dwell securely. And this is his name by which he will be called:* **ונקדצ הוהי** *-* ***Jaweh our righteousness."***

The One with eyes ablaze as in Rev 1:14 and Rev 2:17,18, also **Rev 3:12...And I will engrave upon them the name of my God, also the**

name of the city *[the bride!]* **of my God, the new Jerusalem that descends from heaven; as well as my own new Name!**
Rev 2:17 Your victory is secure in your hearing the word of the Spirit addressing the Ekklesia - feast on the revelation of the hidden manna in the Ark *[which prophetically pointed to the Messiah - the mystery that was hidden for ages and generations is Christ in you!]* **I also give you a little white pebble used in the courts of justice, signifying your acquittal - take it as your secret source of strength in the midst of accusation - it has your new name on it! No one knows you by this name, until you [1]realize your own identity reflected in it!** *(This beautifully reminds of Simon's encounter in Math 16 - "Blessed are you Simon, son of Jonah for flesh and blood has not known that the son of man is indeed the son of God! Now that you know who I am, allow me to introduce you to you! Your real name, as son of God, is* ***Petros*** *- little stone - son of* ***Petra*** *[the Rock] - yes! You're a chip of the old block! See notes at the end of this chapter on* ***The Son of Man is the Son of God!*** *Also my notes on John 1:12 - Our grasping [*[1]***lambano***] is simply the awakening to the fact that our genesis is already completed in the* ***Logos****. [See John 1:3] The* ***Logos*** *is the source; everything commences in him. He remains the exclusive Parent reference to their Genesis. There is nothing original, except the Word. We are his offspring. [see Acts 17:28]. "He has come to give us understanding to know him who is true and to realize that we are in him who is true." [1 John 5:20].)*
The royal diadems on his head and the Name written upon him, are in such contrast to **Rev 13:1 As I stood upon the sand of the sea shore I saw a ferocious Beast emerging out of the waters. It had ten horns and seven heads and every horn was wrapped in royal diadems. And written upon its heads were slanderous, blasphemous names.** *(Have you ever wondered why the name Jesus, not Buddha, Mohammed or Elvis Presley or any other influential name in history or modern times, is the name that is most commonly used as a swear word?*
Eph 3:15 Every family in heaven and on earth originates in him; his is mankind's family name and he remains the authentic identity of every nation.
Eph 1:20 Do you want to measure the mind and muscle of God? Consider the force which he unleashed in Jesus Christ when he raised him from the dead and forever seated him enthroned as his executive authority in the realm of the heavens. Jesus is God's right hand of

power! He was raised up from the deepest dungeons of human despair to the highest region of heavenly bliss! *[See Eph 2:5,6 & 4:8,9]*
Eph 1:21 Infinitely above all the combined forces of rule, authority, dominion or governments; he is ranked superior to any name that could ever be given to anyone of this age or any age still to come in the eternal future.
Eph 1:22 I want you to see this: he subjected all these powers under his feet. He towers head and shoulders above everything. He is the head;
Eph 1:23 the [1]Ekklesia is his body. The completeness of his being that fills all in all resides in us! God cannot make himself more visible or exhibit himself more accurately. *(The word, [1]**Ekklesia**, comes from **ek**, a preposition always denoting origin, and **klesia** from **kaleo**, to identify by name, to surname; thus the "church" is his redeemed image and likeness in human form.)*
The salvation that he worked is the greatest source of frustration and embarrassment to the religious systems of this world. What the Name of Jesus represents puts religion out of business!
Rev 19:13 The robes he wore were dipped in blood and his [1]Name has always been, the Word of God! *(He is the Logos that was before time was; the completeness of prophecy, the Incarnate One! See John 1:1-3,14.*
*His blood stained garments have always borne his Name in the prophetic conversation of God. Psalm 22:16..."they have pierced my hands and feet— Psa 22:17 I can count all my bones—they stare and gloat over me; Psa 22:18 they divide my garments among them, and for my raiment they cast lots. κέκληται τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ. The word, [1]**kekletai** from **kaleo**, to surname**,** is in the perfect Passive tense which denotes an action which is completed in the past, but the effects of which are regarded as continuing into the present without end. Nothing that happens in time could possibly intercept this act of God's redemptive genius.*
See Isa 63:1 Who is this that comes from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah, he that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, announcing vindication, mighty to save." Isa 63:2 Why is thy apparel red, and thy garments like his that treads in the wine press? Isa 63:3 "I have trodden the wine press alone, and from the peoples no one was with me; I trod them in my [1]face [anger] and trampled them in my [2]passion; their lifeblood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have

stained all my raiment. (In my face [1]aph אף - Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew dictionary [BDB] Definition: nostril, nose, face. The word, [2]chêmâ' אמח - BDB Definition, heat; from yâcham מחי - BDB Definition: to be hot, conceive. Isa 63:4 For the year of my redeemed has come. gâ'al, BDB Definition: to redeem, act as kinsman-redeemer, avenge, revenge, ransom, do the part of a kinsman; by marrying brother's widow to beget a child for him, to redeem from slavery, to redeem land. In Leviticus 25 the word "redeem" is used over a dozen times in connection with the Jubilee year. The Jubilee was a special year-long Sabbath that occurred once every forty-nine years. Prophetically pointed to the Sabbath substance in the ***"tetelestai"*** *finished work of Jesus on the cross!)*

Rev 19:16 And a Name is written on his robe and thigh, King of kings and Lord of lords! *(According to Vincent, The writing across the breast from shoulder to shoulder reminds of the cross where the Lamb's victory was secured. The historian, Herodotus [440BC] describes a figure of a Pharaoh, Sesostris, bearing across the breast from shoulder to shoulder the inscription written in the sacred character of Egypt: "With my own shoulders I conquered this land" (ii., 106)*

Rev 3:11 Do not let tough times make me seem distant from you! I am at hand - see my nearness, not my absence. And don't let temporal setbacks diminish your own authority either! Remember that you call the shots; you wear the crown. My crown endorses your crown. *[Rev 1:5]*

Rev 3:12, And I will engrave upon the individual the name of my God, also the name of the city *[the bride!]* **of my God, the new Jerusalem that descends from heaven; as well as my own new Name!** *[My Father's Name, John 5:43, I have come in my Father's Name! John 12:28 Father, glorify your Name! Abba Father!])*

Phil 2:8 And so we have the drama of the cross in context: the man Jesus Christ who is fully God, becomes fully man to the extent of willingly dying mankind's death at the hands of his own creation. He embraced the curse and shame of the lowest kind in dying a criminal's death. *(Thus, through the doorway of mankind's death, he descended into our hellish darkness. Rev 9:1 and Eph 4:8-10.)*

Phil 2:9 From this place of utter humiliation, God exalted him to the highest rank. God graced Jesus with a Name that is far above every other name.

Phil 2:10 What his name unveils will persuade every creature of their redemption! Every knee in heaven and upon the earth and under the earth shall bow in spontaneous worship! *(See Isa 45:23 "My own life is the guarantee of my conviction, says the Lord, every knee shall freely bow to me in worship, and every tongue shall spontaneously speak from the same God-inspired source.")*

Phil 2:11 Also every tongue will voice and resonate the same devotion to his unquestionable Lordship as the Redeemer of life! Jesus Christ has glorified God as the Father of creation! This is the ultimate conclusion of the Father's [1]intent! *(The word [1]**doxa,** intent, opinion, often translated, glory. Rev 5:13 And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein, saying, "To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!" Also my commentary note on Rom 14:11. Paul, here quotes Isaiah 45:23 See verse 20,22,& 23 "Face me and **be** saved all the ends of the earth! [Note, '**Be saved**!' Not 'become saved!'] I am God; your idols are figments of your invention and imagination!" Isa 45:23 "I have sworn by myself; the word of my mouth has begotten righteousness; this cannot be reversed!" (The Hebrew word, **אצי** ***Yatsa*** can be translated, begotten like in Judges 8:30) "Every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall echo my oath!" (Thus, speak with the same certainty sourced in me! The Hebrew word, **עבש** ***Shaba*** means to seven oneself, that is, swear - thus in the Hebrew mind, by repeating a declaration seven times one brings an end to all dispute! See Heb 6:13.16,17.)*

The Shepherd-King of the Nations!

Rev 19:15 And from his mouth proceeds a sharp sword - the words of his utterance cuts to the core of the heart of the nations and he shall shepherd them with an iron scepter. And on his own he will tread out the winepress of the intensity of the passion of the sovereign God of the universe. *(See my commentary notes at the end of Rev 2 with reference to Ps 2:7,8,9 on the **Rod of Iron**.)*

Rev 2:27 You will [1]shepherd the nations with a royal scepter and shatter [2]their 'alienated mindsets' like a potter's vessel of clay. *(He quotes Psalm 2:9, You shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Sadly the Hebrew Masoretic Text uses the word* **עער** ***RAA*** *- to be bad, be evil; to be displeasing; to be injurious; to be*

wicked; to do an injury or hurt; to be mischief; instead of the same sounding word, [1] ***רעה RA'AH*** *with a* ***Hay*** *at the end and not an* ***Ayin****, which means* ***to shepherd****! Also in the Septuagint, the Greek word ποιμανεῖς* [1]***poimaneis*** *is used! You shall feed them as a shepherd nurtures his flock. With reference to the* [2]*alienated mindsets that ruled the nations see Numbers 24:17, "A scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab!" (mindset!) The Shepherd's staff was never intended to beat up the sheep but to protect and free them from any possible threat!)*

Rev 11:15, When the seventh shepherd-messenger sounded his trumpet, there was a massive crescendo of voices in the heavenly realm, saying, "The kingdom of the [1]cosmos has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign as king for all the ages of the ages." *(Remember Rev 10:7 In the days when the sounding of the seventh messenger's trumpet commences, the mystery of God will be fully realized in exact accordance to the Good News he announced to his servants the Prophets. Already in Rev 7 we see the eventual outcome of what is portrayed here in Rev 11 etc) Rev 7:9 At this moment I saw a massive throng of people, impossible to count, standing tall and innocent everyone of them dressed in white with palm branches in their hands; they have escaped everything that could possibly define them as a non-Jewish Gentile world! In fact, every sphere of society were there - including the entire spectrum of people-groupings; tribal identities with their unique language-specific dialect preferences; they were all present there facing the throne and the Lamb as the people of the planet! (Amazing how, in the previous verses the tribes of Israel are associated with a very specific "number" when it comes to the prophetic detail of the entire Jewish nation as a prophetic voice of God's intention in Abraham to release the blessing of the single SEED of God's faith and bless all the nations of the earth! Count the stars, count the sand!!! The preposition* ***ek****, points to source or origin; mankind was delivered out of their national, geographical and historical identities! The palm branches and the white robes are signs of the celebration of victory and joy. The word* ***stolay****, is the white outer garment worn by kings, priests, and persons of rank.*

I looked again. I saw a huge crowd, too huge to count. Everyone was there —all nations and tribes, all races and languages. And they were standing, dressed in white robes and waving palm branches, standing before the

throne and the Lamb. The Message)
*Rev 7:10 Then I heard the masses shouting as if with one thundering voice saying, "Our salvation is secure in our God who is seated upon the throne and endorsed in the Lamb's doing!" The word, [1]**kosmos** in the NT refers to the entire human family and their social structures.)*
Rev 11:16 At that moment, the twenty four elders who were seated on their thrones face to face with God, fell down prostrate before him in adoration
Rev 11:17 and exclaimed: Our hearts are flooded with gratitude and the affection of your favor! We salute your Lordship oh God! You are the Supreme Authority over all things; your I-am-ness defines time - present, past and future. The [1]due dynamic of your [2]Royal-reign is forever established! *(The word translated due, [1]**eilepsas** from **lambano** is in the perfect active tense which suggests the continual effect of an action already completed in the past. The word **lambano** means to take what is one's own, one's due. Then the word **esbasileusas** from **basileuo**, to reign, is the Aorist active tense which speaks of a completed act. Both these tenses emphasize the permanence of God's rule. There was never a time where God's royal rule was in question. In giving himself as scapegoat to be murdered by his own creatures assumes a weakness that does not compromise his authority at all! In the genius of his wisdom he defeats the entire system of judgment under the law of performance, governing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The seeming frailty of the slain Lamb never compromised the authority of the Lion of Judah! 1 Cor 1:25 It seems so foolish that God should die mankind's death on the cross; it seems so weak of God to suffer such insult; yet mankind's wisest schemes and most powerful display of genius cannot even begin to comprehend or compete with God in his weakest moment on the cross.)*
Rev 11:18 The culmination of mankind's wrath collided with your passion oh God - this is the critical moment where judgment is met in death! *(Jesus said, "When I am lifted up on the cross, I will draw all judgment unto me!")* **This is the anticipated moment and prize of your bond-friends, the Prophets, the Saints and everyone who were awed by your Name - both the insignificant and the prominent - this is the destruction of the corrupting virus in the earth!** *(In the symbolic language of the book of Revelation, the judgment of the Dragon, the Beast*

and the Whore; the counterfeit Trinity, is not a judgment against an entity, but against a corrupt mindset-system. A virus doesn't have a life of its own - it needs a host!
Microbiology Professor, Vincent Racaniello writes, "Life is 'an organismic state characterized by capacity for metabolism, growth, reaction to stimuli, and reproduction.' Viruses are not living things. Viruses are complicated assemblies of molecules, including proteins, nucleic acids, lipids, and carbohydrates, but on their own they can do nothing until they enter a living cell. Without cells, viruses would not be able to multiply. Therefore, viruses are not living things."
See my ***notes on Armageddon*** *at the end of chapter 16.)*

The Winepress of the Passion of God & The Great Supper

Rev 19:15 And from his mouth proceeds a sharp sword - the words of his utterance cuts to the core of the heart of the nations and he shall shepherd them with an iron scepter. And on his own he will tread out the winepress of the [1]intensity of the passion of the sovereign God of the universe. *(The words,* ***tou thumou tes orges tou theo****, speaks of the intensity of the passion of God, with the word* ***thumos****, passion, and the word often translated wrath,* ***orge****, meaning strong desire - as a reaching forth or excitement of the mind, from the word,* ***oregomai****, meaning to stretch one's self out in order to touch or to grasp something. See Hebrews 4:3 Hear the echo of God's cry though the ages, "Oh! If only they would enter into my rest." (Sadly most translations read, "I have sworn in my wrath that they will never enter into my rest!" The word, wrath is derived from* ***orge****, meaning passionate desire, any strong outburst of emotion. The text doesn't say "they will never enter my rest!" Both the Septuagint and the Hebrew text quoted here from Ps 94:11 in the Septuagint, which is Ps 95:11 in the Hebrew, read, "Oh that they would enter into my rest!" Greek* ***ei*** *and Hebrew,* **אִם im.**
For ***the sword of his mouth****, Rev***elation 2:16 I urge you to come to your senses immediately! The sword of my mouth will swiftly wage war against this type of conversation.** *(Cutting to the division of soul and spirit - see Hebrews 4:12 The message God spoke to us in Christ, is the most life giving and dynamic influence in us, cutting like a surgeon's scalpel, sharper than a soldier's sword, piercing to the deepest core of human conscience, to the dividing of soul and spirit; ending the dominance of the sense realm and its neutralizing effect upon the human spirit. In this way a person's spirit is*

freed to become the ruling influence again in the thoughts and intentions of their heart. The scrutiny of this word detects every possible disease, discerning the body's deepest secrets where joint and bone-marrow meet. [The moment we cease from our own efforts to justify ourselves, by yielding to the integrity of the message that announces the success of the Cross, God's word is triggered into action. What God spoke to us in sonship (the incarnation), radiates his image and likeness in our redeemed innocence. [Heb 1:1-3] This word powerfully penetrates and impacts our whole being; body, soul and spirit.)

Compare Rev 14:10 - 20

Rev 14:10 will drink the wine of God's passion, undiluted with water but intensified with spices in his cup - they shall be tested as one tests gold or silver with a [1]touchstone; with fire and brimstone in the immediate presence of the Lamb and of [2]those who have discovered their wholeness mirrored in him - the dross of their deception will be exposed and cleansed! *(Note the words,* ***tou kekerasmenou akratou*** *- this is a powerful oxymoron, "the mixed unmixed." See Psa 75:8 For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, with foaming wine, well mixed; and he will pour a draught from it, and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs.*

*The word [1]**basanizō** means to test (metals) by the touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the color of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal - a piece of fine-grained dark schist or jasper formerly used for testing alloys of gold by observing the color of the mark which they made on it - thus, a standard or criterion by which something is judged or recognized. The blood of Jesus is the currency! 1 Pet 1:18,19.*

*The fiery brimstone - **theion** - is divine incense, because burning brimstone was regarded as having power to purify, and to ward off disease - the [1]cup he drank on the cross is the touchstone! "What shall I say? Father remove this cup from me? NO! For this hour I have come!" The word, [2]**hagios**, saints, refers to wholeness and harmony of spirit, soul and body - see 1 Cor 1:30 and Rom 1:7. See my **Extended Notes on the Lake of Fire** at the end of chapter 19.)*

Rev 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write, Blessed are they who from now on see their death in union with the Lord - his

death is their death and their wearisome labor follows them into this death bringing closure to their efforts to do what his death alone accomplished!
Rev 14:14 And I looked, and behold, I saw a white cloud and one who mirror reflects the Son of Man with his head crowned in a golden wreath of victory, seated upon the cloud and in his hand he held a razor sharp pruning-hook.
Rev 14:15 Another shepherd-messenger appeared out of the most holy place of the temple and with a loud voice addressed the one seated upon the cloud, saying, "Thrust forth your pruning hook, your hour has come - this is your moment to reap for the earth's harvest is ready." *(See John 4:31 Meanwhile his disciples were urging him to take some food. John 4:32 But he said, "I am feasting on food you cannot see!" John 4:33 His disciples were baffled, "Who brought him anything to eat?" John 4:34 Jesus told them, "My food is to fulfil the desire of him who commissioned me and to leave no detail undone!" John 4:35 The bread you labor for takes four months from the day you sow the seed until it ripens in the ear, doesn't it? This is not the food that I am talking about. The fruit of your own toil and performance will never satisfy permanently; from now on, look at yourselves and everyone else differently; see them through your Father's eyes and you will know that they too are ripe and ready to discover how fully included they are in my finished work. They are perfectly mirrored in me! (A harvest is ripe when the seed in the ear matches the seed that was sown! My mission is to reveal and redeem the image and likeness of God in human form!) John 4:36 This harvest reveals how both he who sows and he who reaps participate in the same joy of the life of the ages!)*
Rev 14:16 And the one seated upon the cloud completed the earth's wheat harvest with a single sweep of his sickle! *(The gathering of the full harvest of both the wheat as well as the wine pictures the new covenant of his broken body and shed blood.)*
Rev 14:17 And another shepherd-messenger appeared from the most holy place, the Tabernacle located in the heavenly realm; he too had a sharp pruning-hook-type sickle.
Rev 14:18 Yet another messenger emerged from the altar of burnt offering this one was in charge of the fire of the altar and cried with a loud voice telling the messenger with the sharp pruning hook to thrust forth his sickle and gather the vintage since the earth's grapes were

bursting with ripeness!
Rev 14:19 And he swung his sickle and gathered the vintage of the earth and cast it into the winepress of God's great passion. *(The word* ***thumos*** *speaks of the passion of Christ as the sacrificed Lamb!)*
Rev 14:20 And the wine-press was trodden outside the city, and the blood that flowed out of the winepress was as deep as a horses' bridle and it flooded a thousand stadia. *(See Hebrews 13:12 According to the prophetic pattern, Jesus, as the final sin sacrifice, was slain outside the city walls. The symbolic depth of a horse's bridal and 1000 Greek stadia speak of the completeness and universality of the world-wide impact of the blood covenant of Jesus. The typical greek Stadion was 600 Greek feet. [Aprox 160 meters.]*
Isa 63:2,3 "Why is Your apparel red and your garments like one who treads in the wine press? I have trodden the wine trough alone.
See **Colossians 2:14 His body nailed to the cross hung there as the document of mankind's guilt; in dying our death he cancelled the detailed hand-written record which testified against us. Every stain on our conscience, reminding of the sense of failure and guilt, was thus fully blotted out.**
Col 2:15 In him dying mankind's death, he defused every possible claim of accusation against the human race and thus made a public spectacle of every rule and authority in God's brilliant triumph, demonstrated in him. The voice of the cross will never be silenced! *(The horror of the Cross is now the eternal trophy of God's triumph over sin! The cross stripped religion of its authority to manipulate mankind with guilt. Every accusation lost its leverage to blackmail the human race with condemnation and shame!*
"He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets." — The Message
Rev 8:3 ...The following words are all connected to the idea of sacrifice - thusiastērion - the place of sacrifice - altar - from thusia, sacrifice, from thuo, to slay and burn the sacrifice; thumiama, the smoke or in the Greek mind, the soul of the sacrifice; thumos passion. All the Romansch languages derive their word for smoke, or smoking, fumar from thumos. Also the word perfume originates from the same idea. Much perfume was given him, thumiamata, again the sweet smelling, favorable fumes from the sacrifice is implied.

Isaiah 25:6 The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, And refined, aged wine. Isa 25:7 And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, Even the veil which is stretched over all nations. Isa 25:8 He will swallow up death for all time, And the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces, And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken….Holman Christian Standard Bible

On this mountain He will destroy the burial shroud, the shroud over all the peoples, the sheet covering all the nations; International Standard Version)

Rev 16:19 And the great city split into three portions and the cities of the nations fell and Babylon the great was remembered in the cup of God's [1]great passion and [2]desire to bring everything to conclusion. *(The word [1]**thumos**, passion and [2]**orge** from **oregomai**, to stretch one's self out in order to touch or to grasp something, to reach after with intense desire. The third part is a symbolic expression of a representative portion of the whole. Here, the counterfeit Trinity, represented in the Whore-City Babylon, is divided and conquered.)*

Rev 17:4 The woman was draped in purple and scarlet fabric, festooned and sprinkled with golden glitter and ornaments; she was elaborately decorated with gold, precious stones and pearls. Holding a golden [1]cup in her hand, brimming with defiling obscenities, and the stench of her impurities. *(Again the surface, make-belief beauty and apparent splendor cannot hide her true filthy character - like the white washed tombs Jesus compared the religious system to. "Hypocrites! For you are so careful to clean the outside of the [1]cup [**poterion**] and the dish, but inside you are filthy - full of greed and self-indulgence! You are like beautifully decorated tombs on the outside, desperately trying to hide the stench of decaying corpses within." Math 23:25, 27. βδελυγματων [2]**bdelugma** derivative of **bdeo** - to stink.*

*The Harlot represents the counterfeit [1]cup [**poterion**] of covenant to the cup of the Lord.*

1 Corinthians 10:16 The cup [ποτήριον - potērion] of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

1 Corinthians 10:21 Ye cannot drink the cup [ποτήριον - potērion] of the

Lord, and the cup [ποτήριον - potērion] of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.
1 Corinthians 11:25 After the same manner also the cup, [ποτήριον - potērion] when he had supped, saying, This cup [ποτήριον - potērion] is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink in remembrance of me.
The covenant cup of the Lord communicates the redeemed life of our design incarnate in our person and fellowship and celebrated in our every meal!)
Rev 17:5 The words written upon her forehead, exposed her mystery identity: 'Babylon the Great, the Mother of the Whores, and the filth of the earth.' *(Roman harlots wore a label with their names on their brows - Seneca, Rhet. I. 2. 7; Juvenal VI. 122f.)*
Rev 17:6 The woman I saw was intoxicated with the blood of the [1]Saints and the blood of [2]those who bore the testimony of Jesus - *[the cup she drank represented her opposition to everything that the blood of Jesus communicates.]* **This left me mesmerized, pondering what I saw, desiring to understand the context of it all.** *(She was intoxicated with the thought that accused, sinful mankind could be reckoned blameless Saints by the blood of the Lamb. Rev 7:9,13 &14. Also Rev 12:11 Mikael and his shepherd-messengers [representing the entire host of heaven - including all the multitudes previously mentioned in revelation] conquered the Dragon because of the blood of the little Lamb and the word of their testimony!*
Rev 18:6 The Lamb's suffering dealt a double blow to the whore and Beast-system! The counterfeit cup she had mixed turned on her and proved to be her defeat. *(Give back to her as also she gave back to you, and double to her double, according to her works. In the cup which she mixed, mix to her double. LITV*
Their apparent initial victory in the brutal unjust trial and crucifixion of the Lamb turned against their tyranny in double measure - not only were they outwitted in his death, when the document of mankind's guilt in the scarred body of Jesus was nailed to the cross, whereby every possible claim against the human race was nullified, but in his resurrection God presented the receipt, documenting the justification and redeemed righteousness of the entire human race!
This reminds of what the Prophet Isaiah saw, Isa 40:2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her

sins.
The judgment that sin has bought in its hellish torment as inevitable consequence upon mankind is now atoned for in double proportions in the Lamb's suffering and in the reversal of the lamb's judgment brought upon all principalities and powers.)
Rev 18:7 This is a complete reversal of her self-inflated glory and luxurious lifestyle to the exposure of her falsehood - like when metal is [1]tested with a touchstone and proves to be fool's gold - and gladness is turned into sorrow. You said in your heart, I am established as a queen and not a widow - I will not know grief. *(The word [1]torment* ***basanismos*** *from* ***basanizō****, to test metals by the touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the color of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal - a piece of fine-grained dark schist or jasper formerly used for testing alloys of gold by observing the color of the mark which they made on it - thus, a standard or criterion by which something is judged or recognized. The cup Jesus drank on the cross is the touchstone! "What shall I say? Father remove this cup from me? NO! For this hour I have come!")*
Rev 18:8 Her calamity strikes in one day - death, sorrow and starvation - her entire dynasty is burnt to ashes in the fire of the passionate judgment of the Lord God. *(See Isa 47:8 Now therefore hear this, you lover of pleasures, who sit securely, who say in your heart, "I am, and there is no one besides me; I shall not sit as a widow or know the loss of children":*
Isa 47:9 These two things shall come to you in a moment, in one day; the loss of children and widowhood shall come upon you in full measure, in spite of your many sorceries and the great power of your enchantments. All of her "offspring" are rescued out of her sway.)
Rev 18:9 And the kings of the earth, the executives of the mindsets of the Beastly system, her faithful fornicating friends and clients, are weeping and wailing bitterly while the smoke of her burning rises.
Rev 18:10 They stand completely detached from her, embarrassed by their association with her in her [1]exposed, pretentious identity, crying, Alas! Alas! The mighty city of Babylon is doomed in one hour! *(Repeat note of verse 7; The word [1]torment* ***basanismos*** *from* ***basanizō****, to test metals by the touchstone)*

Rev 18:11 Also the money-power emperors of the world who control the global trade-routes, the merchants and economists were wailing and mourning because the judgement on her caused the loss of all their clients - no one buys their cargo anymore! The touchstone currency of God has exposed the fake currency system of the world economy! *(Rev 17:15)*

Rev 18:18 They wept bitterly in lament, "Who would have thought that this great city of unequalled prominence could come to nothing!"

Rev 18:19 In their sense of hopelessness and bafflement they cast dust upon their heads as if to wrap their minds around the ultimate reduction of vibrant life to lifeless dust! Weeping and wailing in shock for the great city which has fallen! "Oh what a shame that the famous icon of prosperity who made every ship owner rich are now [1]left utterly desolate in just one hour!" *(The word [1]**eremos**, desolate; also used of a woman neglected by her husband, from whom the husband withholds himself. The whore-city is now bereft of all her lovers.)*

Rev 18:20 A [1]deep sense of relief in the heavens as all the Saints and the Apostles and the Prophets celebrate how God caused the whore's judgment of others to be her own judgment. *(The word [1]**euphrainō**, to be delighted, **eu** plus **phren** - innermost being; - ἔκρινεν τὸ κρίμα ὑμῶν ἐξ αὐτῆς literally, has judged your judgment out of her - what she has judged concerning you.)*

Rev 18:21 And a huge shepherd-messenger lifted a stone like a massive millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, so shall Babylon the great city be hurled into the ocean and not a single trace of her existence shall ever be found again! *(Math 18:6 but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.)*

Rev 18:24 The blood of the Prophets and the Saints and very one [1]slaughtered in the scapegoat-sacrificial system of the world order were [2]vindicated in her destruction. *(The word, [1]**sphazō** is the verb used of the slain Lamb. The word, [2]**eurisko**, to find conclusive evidence by scrutiny.)*

Notes on The great Supper of God.

Rev 19:9 And he instructed me to record this in writing: Oh the

[1]blessedness of this bliss which is the supreme celebration of the union of the ages! You have individually been [2]identified by name and invited to the Lamb's supper concluding in the ultimate wedding feast! This is the Grand Finale in the [3]unveiling of God's word. *(The word, [1]**makarios**, usually translated, blessed, suggests a special intensity of delight. It is another beatitude (**makarioi**) like that in Rev 14:13 [fourth of the seven in the book]*

*The verb, κεκλημενοι [2]**kekelemenoi** is a Perfect Passive Participle of **kaleo**, to identify by name, to surname. The Passive Participle describes a state that exists at the time coincident with that of the leading verb as a result of action completed prior to the time of the main verb, [in previous verse] **edothe** from didomi, was given [v8] which is in the Aorist Passive Indicative. The Perfect Participle endorses the fact that this is a standing invitation! See the extended notes on **ekklesia** at the end of chapter 1. The word, [3]**alethinos**, from **alethes**; from the negative particle, **a** and **lanthanō**, to lie hidden; thus, that which is unveiled truth.*

This is not a wedding where you are invited simply because you're a friend of a friend of the Groom or the Bride - or a distant second cousin to a relative of a relative on someone's mother's side! No! You're the Bride!!!!!

Math 26:26-29 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for the many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

Hosea 2:19, And I will betroth you to me for ever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy. Isaiah 54:5 For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called.

The Prostitute becomes the Bride! See Hosea 1:2, "The LORD said to Hosea, 'Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom.'" In Hosea 3:1, after Gomer had left Hosea and was living in immorality, the Lord commanded Hosea to find her and buy her back!)

Rev 19:17 Then I saw another shepherd-herald standing in the

luminous light of the sun; with a loud voice he invited all the birds of the sky to flock together for the great supper of God. *(Another symbolic reference to the Last [Final] Supper - the Lamb's flesh and blood introduce the New Covenant where every judgment is concluded and the Incarnate Word is now our feast - his flesh is bread indeed and becomes our flesh his blood is drink indeed and becomes our blood - celebrated in every meal me have. His broken body pictures the broken body of the human race - one died for all, therefore, all died! 2 Cor 5:14.)*

Rev 19:18 Come feast on the flesh of all mankind! The flesh of kings and the flesh of the high ranking captains, the flesh of the mighty men, the flesh of the horses and their riders; all flesh, slave and free, both the prominent and the least. *(This reflects on Ezekiel 39:17 As for you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD: Speak to the birds of every sort and to all beasts of the field, 'Assemble and come, gather from all sides to the sacrificial feast which I am preparing for you, a great sacrificial feast upon the mountains of Israel, and you shall eat flesh and drink blood. Eze 39:20 And you shall be filled at my table with horses and riders, with mighty men and all kinds of warriors,' says the Lord GOD. Eze 39:21 "And I will set my glory among the nations; and all the nations shall see my judgment which I have executed, and my hand which I have laid on them.*

Rev 6:15 And the kingdoms of the earth and their great and most influential people in high standing in society, also the highest ranked military commanders, along with the wealthiest business personalities, the high and mighty, everyone from the lowest ranked slave to the freeborn were suddenly on equal terms and facing the same predicament! They all ran for cover into the dens and caves,

Rev 6:16 pleading with the mountains and the hills to cover and protect them! "Hide us from the face of the One seated upon the throne and from the [1]reach of the Lamb!" *(The word, [1]**orge**, means excitement of mind, from the word, **orgeomai**, meaning to stretch one's self out in order to touch or to grasp something, to reach after or desire something. See Hebrews 4:3, Hear the echo of God's cry though the ages, "Oh! If only they would enter into my rest." (Some translations read, "As I have sworn in my wrath" derived from **orge**, meaning passionate desire, any strong outburst of emotion. "Oh! If only they would enter into my rest.") Just like Adam and Eve who went into hiding to escape their perceptions of Papa's judgment!*

Psa 139:7 Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your face? Psa 139:8 If I go up to heaven, You; if I make my bed Sheol, behold, You!
Hos 10:8 Also, the high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed. The thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars. [Their sacrificial system has failed them!] And they shall say to the mountains, Cover us! And to the hills, Fall on us!)

Rev 6:17 For the great day of his [1]passion [2]has already arrived and who would have imagined that it would be possible for anyone [3]to be positioned in a place of innocence? *(The word **orgay** to desire (as a reaching forth or excitement of the mind), that is, (by analogy) passion and only by implication often translated punishment: - anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath. The word [2]**elthen**, Aorist active indicative of **erchomai**, to come. The word [3]**stathenai** is the Aorist Passive Infinitive of **histēmi**, to stand, also to be placed in a balance, to weigh. in the presence of others, in the midst, before judges, before members of the Sanhedrin, to cause a person or a thing to keep his or its place, be kept intact (of family, a kingdom), to escape in safety, to establish a thing, cause it to stand, to uphold or sustain the authority or force of anything, to set or place in a balance, to weigh: money to one (because in very early times before the introduction of coinage, the metals used to be weighed) continue safe and sound, stand unharmed, of quality, one who does not hesitate, does not waiver.)*

John 2:3 When Mary learned that they had run out of wine, she informed Jesus.

John 2:4 He responded with, "Well Ma'am, that's their problem - or do you want me to steal the show here at somebody else's wedding, when my hour of fulfilling my mission has not yet come? *(Religion has run out of wine – Jesus lived aware of his mission which was to redeem and restore the joyous celebration of the union and Romance of the ages – marrying mankind and divinity! While he is the true joy and wine of the party, he fully understood what it would cost him to drink the cup of mankind's injustice and violence on the cross! See John 12:27 "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, for this purpose I have come to this hour.)*

1 Cor 11:23 The night in which the Lord Jesus was betrayed, he took

bread

1 Cor 11:24 and gave thanks; breaking the bread into portions, he said, "[1]Realize your association with my death, every time you eat, remember my body that was broken for you!" *(Meaning [1]take, grasp,* ***lambamo****, to take what is one's own, to associate with one's self.)*

1 Cor 11:25 He did exactly the same with the cup after supper and said, "This cup holds the wine of the New Covenant in my blood; you celebrate me every time you drink with this understanding!" *(From now on our meals are meaningful. We celebrate the fact that the incarnation reveals our redemption; the promise became a person.*

He redeemed our original value, identity, and innocence; he died our death and defines the life we now live. He fulfills the theme of Scripture: the sufferings of the Messiah and the subsequent glory! [1 Pet 1:10, 11])

1 Cor 11:26 Your every meal makes the [1]mandate of his [2]coming relevant and communicates the meaning of the New Covenant. *(Whether you eat or drink, you are declaring your joint inclusion in his death and resurrection, confirming your redeemed innocence. Some translations read, "until I come..." The word translated until is, [1]****achri****, from* ***akmen****, which means extremity, conclusion, the present time; Jesus is the conclusion of prophetic time! The word [2]****erchomai****, to come is in the the Aorist Subjunctive Mood,* ***elthe,*** *which is similar to the Optative expressing a wish. The Mood of the Greek verb expresses the mode in which the idea of the verb is employed. Thus, we are communicating the desire to have all people realize the meaning of the New Covenant. See 2 Peter 1:19 "For us the appearing of the Messiah is no longer a future promise but a fulfilled reality. Now it is your turn to have more than a second-hand, hear-say testimony. Take my word as one would take a lamp at night; the day is about to dawn for you in your own understanding. When the Morning Star appears, you no longer need the lamp; this will happen shortly on the horizon of your own hearts.")*

The Lake of Fire and the Second Death

When the imagery of the Lake of Fire is introduced, it suggests a judgment, whereby every possible trace of both the source [the counterfeit Trinity system], as well as the effect in the recipients [their distorted perceptions and mindsets], are forever consumed.

Every single person who ever dies in ignorance, indifference or unbelief, is

immediately confronted with and mirrored in the once and for all death and resurrection of Jesus. This is pictured here in the lake of burning sulphur, cleansing and purifying like in a furnace; separating the gold from the dross in the mindsets of the masses.
For those who awaken to their redeemed innocence in this life there is no judgment in the Second Death.
Rev 2:11 Now listen up with your inner ears! Hear with understanding what the Spirit is saying to the Ekklesia - *(those who discover their identity in me)* **he that triumphs** *(in their fearless embrace of my resurrection life)* **will know that there is no judgment in the second death.** *(Remember the One talking is the One "who became dead and was restored to life", and said, "**Behold in death I will personally crown you with life! In my death, I redefined your death."**) See Hebrews 9:25-28.*
***As representative of the human race, Jesus Christ fulfilled mankind's destiny with death and judgment!** [1 Cor 15:3-5, Rom 4:25, Acts 17:30, 31.] Note: Jesus did not come to condemn the world. The Father judges no one for he has handed over all judgment to the Son, who judged the world in righteousness when he took their judgment in his own body.*
John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; this is the moment where the ruler of the world-system is conclusively cast out!
John 12:32 When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all unto me! *(The subject of the sentence, as from the previous verse, is the judgment of the world - thus the primary thought here is that in his death, Jesus would draw all judgment upon himself and thereby forever redeem mankind's innocence!)*
John 12:33 This he said to point to the way in which he would die.
Rev 20:14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. *(The Second Death is not to distract from the once and for all death that Jesus died, but to endorse it. In the lake of fire, Death and Hades are eradicated from memory. The first death is the once and for all death that Jesus died, representing the global death of humankind. Jesus' death took mankind's death in Adam, out of the equation! [Rom 5:12; Heb 9:27,28; 2 Cor 5:14-17] The idea of the Second Death has to do with the fact that the revelation of everyone's inclusion in the death of Jesus, has not yet dawned on some - so it will take a crisis, often, their own death, to immediately engage them with the symbolic cleansing [from their ignorance and unbelief] represented by the lake of burning sulphur, purifying like in a*

furnace, separating the gold from the dross-mindsets. This is the ultimate awakening to the success of the cross - the realizing that even Death and Hades itself died in Jesus' death! It is indeed the death of Death.)
He thus broke the spell of the supposed claim of judgment and death over the Adamic race. The significance of the implications of Jesus' death cannot be exaggerated! It reaches into the entire past, present and future of human history!
Heb 2:15 As a fellow human, he re-defined death and delivered them from the lifelong dread of death. *(He brought final closure to the idea of judgment, which is what the system of works is all about. Heb 9:27,28. Evil is not immortal, love is.)*
1 John 4:17 So now, with us awakening to [1]our full inclusion in this love union, everything is perfect! Its completeness is not compromised in contradiction. Our [2]confident conversation [3]echoes this fellowship even in the face of [4]crisis; because, as he is, so are we in this world - our lives are mirrored in him. We are as blameless in this life as Jesus is! This perfect love union is the source of our confidence whenever we [5]face the scrutiny of contradiction. *(This place of seamless union is the perfection of Agape - **en toutoo teteleotai he agape meth'hemoon**; notice, the word [1]**meth'hemoon**, together with us; from **meta**, together with and **hemoon**, us; to be included in the same togetherness. The word [2]**parresia**, from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, and **rheo**, to pour forth; to flow freely, suggesting unreservedness in speech; bold utterance, confidence. The word, [3]**echo**, to hold, like sound is held in an echo; to resonate. The word [4]**krisis** is often translated, judgment. So, the [5]day of judgment, "in the face of crisis", can be translated, "facing the scrutiny of contradiction in our daily lives.")*
1 John 4:18 Fear cannot co-exist in this love realm. The perfect love union that we are talking about expels fear. Fear holds on to an expectation of crisis and judgment *[which brings separation]* **and interprets it as due punishment** *[a form of karma!]* **It echoes torment and only registers in someone who does not yet realize the completeness of their love union** *[with the Father, Son and Spirit and with one another.]*
1 John 4:19 We love because he loved us first! *(We did not invent this fellowship; we are invited into the fellowship of the Father and the Son!)*

1 Cor 15:54 What was spoken in Isaiah 25:8 is finally realized even in our physical death: "Death is swallowed up in victory!"
1 Cor 15:55 Oh death where is your sting? Oh grave, where is your victory?
1 Cor 15:56 The sting of death is sin; the strength of sin is the law. *(It was sin that made death so frightening and law-code guilt that gave sin its leverage. — The Message)*
1 Cor 15:57 Your victory is not a maybe; because of the magnanimous doing of Jesus Christ, it is a given! *(But now in a single victorious stroke of Life, all three—sin, guilt, death—are gone, the gift of our Master, Jesus Christ. Thank God! — The Message)*
The picture of a lake ablaze with sulphur, also portrays a persuasion in conversation where the success of the cross, in disarming principalities and powers, is endorsed.
1 Thess 4:18 The fact that we are all deeply connected in the same source of our 'beingness' causes us to be constantly engaged in this conversation with one another. *(Within this conversation, every possible definition of Sin, Judgment, Death, Hades, Satan, Devil, Demon, Dragon, Beast and False Prophet-Prostitute is addressed and dissolved and thus rendered irrelevant.)*
Rev 17:14 These join forces in that hour to wage war against the Lamb, but the Lamb defeats them since he is the Lord of lords and the King of kings. And, sharing with him in his victory, are his kindred, recognizing their origin in this conversation; they too are now of the same persuasion. The Lamb led them into freedom from their lost identity, and their doubts.
Col 1:13 He rescued us from the dominion of darkness *(the sense-ruled world, dominated by the law of performance)* **and relocated us into the kingdom where the love of his Son rules.**
The lake ablaze with sulphur represents the environment of a faith fellowship in the authority of light, where the reign of Agape dissolves the dominion of darkness. This is the picture Jesus painted in Matthew 16 when he spoke about his Ekklesia, founded in the discovery that the son of man is indeed the Son of God and in this understanding of mankind's sonship, the Gates of Hades would be disengaged and imprisoned mankind be set free. Jesus builds his *Ekklesia* *[from **ek**, origin and **kaleo**, to surname; original identity]* **and the gates of *Hades***

will not prevail against you! *[The word,* ***Hades****, from the negative particle,* ***ha****, and* ***eido*** *to see]* **The blindfold mode of the human race will not prevail against the revelation of the Son of man as the offspring of God - this is the triumph of the Ekklesia! "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" Luke 24:32.**

Remember that all the symbolic pictures of fire, referenced in the book of Revelation comes from the same source, the brazen altar, the prophetic picture of the cross - each one of the elders also had a phialas chrusas, a golden fire-pan specifically designed to receive the sweet smelling frankincense which was lighted with coals from the brazen altar, where the sacrifice has just been presented in the outer court and then the sweet smelling frankincense was offered on the golden altar before the veil. Exo 30:1 "You shall make an altar to burn incense upon; of acacia wood shall you make it and overlay it with pure gold." The Acacia *(from its scourging thorns):* **-** ***שִׁטָּה shittah****, from* ***שׁטשׁ shôṭêt****, to pierce; to flog; a goad: - scourge.* **The symbolic use of the acacia wood in the building of the prophetic altar before the veil presents us with powerful imagery of the crucifixion!**

Rev 8:5 Then the shepherd-messenger took the golden censer for frankincense and filled it with burning coals from the altar and cast it upon the earth. And the burning coals became thunder and voices and lightning shaking the earth like an earthquake! *(The altar is central in the vision of the Lamb that was slain - the triumph of the cross is unveiled, in redeeming mankind's innocence. "Having accomplished purification of sins, he sat down ..." His throne is proof of mankind's redeemed innocence! Heb 1:3.*

This reminds of Isaiah 6:6 Then flew one of the Seraphim to me, having in his hand a burning coal which he had taken with tongs from the altar. Isaiah 6:7 And he touched my mouth, and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; ***your guilt is taken away, and your sin forgiven.****" Zechariah 3:9 For behold, upon the stone which I have set before Joshua, upon a single stone with seven facets [eyes], I will engrave its inscription, says the LORD of hosts, I will remove the guilt of the earth in a single day. Isa 66:8 Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall a land be born in one day? Shall a nation be brought forth in one moment? Hos 6:2 After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live*

before him. Acts 17:31, Rom 4:25, 1 Pet 1:3, Eph 2:5,6.
In Zechariah chapter 3 Jesus/Joshua is vividly portrayed as the High Priest on trial and condemned by the Accuser. Representing Jerusalem, the Bride, he is plucked out of the fire and every Satanic accusation is silenced! The guilt of the earth is removed in a single day! The filthy garments are stripped off him and he is clothed from head to toe in Royal robes! Rev 5:5,6 I saw a little Lamb, alive and standing even though it seemed to have been violently butchered in sacrifice! It had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out to accomplish his bidding in all the earth.
In the following scenes where the seven trumpets are sounded, every known sphere of the universe is pictured: The ***earth*** *with its green trees and fields of grass; then the* ***ocean,*** *both with its hidden life within, as well as the trade ships upon the seas. Then the burning star descending from* ***heaven*** *upon the rivers and their sources - from where their waters gush forth - [waters gushing from innermost being!] Then the sun moon and stars in the heavenly sphere are struck and darkness ensues upon the earth. Every external source of light is taken away in order to usher in the new day dawning within. Rev 21:23 "The city doesn't need any sun or moon to give it light because the glory of God gave it light. The Lamb was its lamp." Even the smoke rising from the* ***bottomless pit*** *[the symbolic "under-world"] clearly reveals that the fire from the altar had its effect there! The Lamb descended into the lowest parts of the earth when he set the captives free and led them as his trophies in his triumphant procession on high! Eph 4:8-10. The entire known world is addressed in the slain and risen Lamb. The old things have passed away, behold* ***everything*** *has become new. An earthquake takes place because of fault lines - a great shifting is taking place along the fault-lines of people's thinking! Isa 55:9,10,11)*
In the imagery that follows, John sees how the Triune religious counterfeit system, the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet are thoroughly stripped of their influence and dominion and brought to naught*.*
Rev 18:21 And a huge shepherd-messenger lifted a stone like a massive millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, so shall Babylon the great Prostitute-City, be hurled into the ocean and not a single trace of her existence shall ever be found again! *(See Math 18:6, But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble, it would be better for*

him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. The context is clearly about the offence and judgment that the legalistic mindset brings - if your hand, foot or eye offends you [causes you to stumble], cut it off and pluck it out in order to escape ***burning in Gehenna****! This was obviously a familiar comparison to judgment. Jesus graphically and almost sarcastically points to the inability of the law of works to save us from judgment! The hand, foot or eye are not the culprits; the mindset is! Note also that here, the depths of the sea is used on par with the fires of Gehenna - the idea was to emphasize a judgment that will ultimately, in the full comprehension of the human race, of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and their co-inclusion in it, as well as their awakening to their joint-seatedness in the throne of God, bring a final end to the threat and existence of evil.*

The garbage heap outside Jerusalem, commonly related to hell, ***Gehenna****, is the Latin word;* ***Gehenas*** *is the Greek word used for the Hebrew "****Valley of Hinnom****," which is modern day* ***Wadi er-Rababi****. A fiery place for the disposal of waste matter from the city of Jerusalem. The "Valley of Hinnom" lies outside of ancient Jerusalem.)*

Rev 19:20 And the Beast and the miracle working Puppet Partner, the False Prophet were arrested and cast into the lake ablaze with [1]sulphur. These two were the ones, empowered by the Dragon to amaze and deceive those who were tattooed in their heads and hands with the character of the Beast and paying religious homage to its image. *(The word* ***[1]theion****, Sulphar, from* ***theios****, godlike (neuter as noun, divinity): - divine, godhead. sulphur is a yellow inflammable mineral substance found in quantities on the shores of the Dead Sea. This was also known as divine incense, because burning brimstone was regarded as having power to purify, and to ward off disease. Its medicinal values are well known even today.)*

Rev 13:11 Then I saw another wild animal; this one emerged out of the earth - it had two horns and resembled a young lamb; yet it had a Dragon's voice. *(The counterfeit "Trinity" emerges - the one mirroring the other - 1/ the Dragon-Accuser; 2/ the seven-headed sea-monster of religion with its leading role player, the head that was slain but became alive again; 3/ and now, here, the Dragon clothed in a lamb's-disguise; later called, the False Prophet.)*

Rev 14:8 And a second shepherd-messenger followed with more good

news! Babylon the great city has crashed! She who sold herself as a prostitute to all the nations and intoxicated them with the wine of her passion will never fly again. *(The language is an echo of Isa 21:9, "Babylon has fallen! It has fallen! All the idols they worship lie shattered on the ground." Jer 51:8 Babylon will suddenly fall and be shattered. See Notes on Babylon's fall at the end of chapter 17.)*

Rev 14:9 Then a third shepherd-messenger followed and announced with a loud voice saying that whoever worships the counterfeit lamb and its image and receives its character in their thoughts and deeds,

Rev 14:10 will drink the wine of God's passion, undiluted with water but intensified with spices in his cup - they shall be tested as one tests gold or silver with a [1]touchstone; with fire and brimstone in the immediate presence of the Lamb and of [2]those who have discovered their wholeness mirrored in him - the dross of their deception will be exposed and cleansed! *(Note the words,* ***tou kekerasmenou akratou*** *- this is a powerful oxymoron, "the mixed unmixed." See Psa 75:8 For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, with foaming wine, well mixed; and he will pour a draught from it, and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs.*

*The word [1]**basanizō** means to test (metals) by the touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the color of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal - a piece of fine-grained dark schist or jasper formerly used for testing alloys of gold by observing the color of the mark which they made on it - thus, a standard or criterion by which something is judged or recognized. The blood of Jesus is the currency! 1 Pet 1:18,19.*

The fiery brimstone - ***theion*** *- is divine incense, because burning brimstone was regarded as having power to purify, and to ward off disease - the [1]cup he drank on the cross is the touchstone! "What shall I say? Father remove this cup from me? NO! For this hour I have come!" The word, [2]**hagios**, saints, refers to wholeness and harmony of spirit, soul and body - see 1 Cor 1:30 and Rom 1:7.)*

Rev 14:11 Those worshipping the counterfeit Beast and its image and receive its mark and name as their identity will have nowhere to hide, day or night; the smoke that rises from their [1]testing, will evidence their cleansing for all ages. *(The mindset of a counterfeit religious system*

has no future! The message of the cross is the [1]touchstone that will forever bear testimony to the triumph of the Lamb.)

Rev 20:8 And his obvious strategy would be to deceive the nations on a global scale including the four corners of the earth by assembling Gog and Magog in war; their number is as the sand of the sea. *(Again, every traditional Jewish concept of judgment is addressed. Gog and Magog is now brought into the conversation, since Jewish eschatology viewed Gog and Magog as enemies to be defeated by the Messiah, which will usher in the age of the Messiah. "Then Eldad and Modad [brothers of Moses] both prophesied together, and said, 'In the very end of time Gog and Magog and their army shall come up against Jerusalem, and they shall fall by the hand of the King Messiah; they shall be slain by the flame of fire which shall proceed from under the throne of glory, and afterwards all the dead of Israel shall rise again to life, and shall enjoy the delights prepared for them from the beginning." Quote from the Jewish Targum. See reference in Num 11:26 and Ez 38:17.*

There are numeral references to the same "once and for all war" in the heavens! It is however the same hour; the same event! Rev 12:7; Rev 16:13,14; Rev 17:13,14; Rev 19:19.

See Extended Notes on Israel at end of Rev 20.)

Rev 20:9 They will spread across the earth and attempt to neutralize the "Queen Bee Bride" of the Lamb by surrounding and besieging God's Saints in the beloved city. Then fire will pour out of heaven and consume them. *(Again, the mindsets of Satanic accusation and judgments are made a meal of - yet another reference to the great supper-feast celebrating the new covenant and the conclusion of the old. The fire from the altar of the slain Lamb of God consumes every definition of Israel's and indeed, mankind's perceived enemies.)*

Rev 20:10 The Devil, who led them astray will be hurled into the lake of fire and brimstone where his puppet partners, the Beast and the False Prophet have already been confined to. Day and Night they will be the subject of God's touchstone for the ages of the ages - the very atmosphere of the entire universe will be thoroughly fumigated from any evidence of Satanas.

Rev 20:11 And I saw a huge white throne and it was as if heaven and earth fled away from the presence of the One seated upon the throne and its place was never found again. *(This means that there is no*

*accusation in the heavens or upon the earth that could possibly stand in the presence of the Lamb, the One seated upon the throne of the judgment of righteousness – his throne gives testimony to mankind's redeemed acquittal! See Hebrews 1:3 "Having made purification for sins he sat down!" There exists no evidence that could be brought from any sphere or dimension that could possibly testify against the human race - Acts 17 The God of creation has overlooked the times of ignorance and now urgently persuades all of mankind everywhere to awaken in their understanding to the fact of their innocence – he appointed a day and a person and on that day and in that person God would judge he world in righteousness and of this he has given proof by raising Jesus from the dead! The resurrected Jesus is the official receipt and verdict confirming mankind's redeemed innocence! Romans 4:25. Rev 20:4; also Mat 19:28 Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the [1]rebooting of mankind, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. See the word, [1]**paliggenesia**, suggests a complete restoration to the original, in modern terms, rebooted. From **palin**, again by repetition and **genesis**, source. Only used here and in Titus 3:5 Salvation is not a reward for good behavior. It has absolutely nothing to do with anything that we have done. God's mercy saved us. The Holy Spirit endorses in us what happened to us when Jesus Christ died and was raised! When we heard the glad announcement of salvation it was like taking a deep warm bath! Our minds were [1]thoroughly cleansed and re-booted into [2]newness of life! (The word [1]**paliggenesia** suggests a complete restoration to the original, in modern terms, rebooted. The word [2]**anakainosis**, from **ana**, upwards, and **kainosis**, newness, speaks of a fresh upward focus; a re-engaging with heavenly thoughts. See Col 3:1-3; also 1 Thess 1:5. We realized that we were indeed co-included, co-crucified, and co-raised and are now co-seated together with Christ in heavenly places! [See 2 Cor 5:14-21; Hosea 6:2; Eph 2:5, 6; and 1 Pet 1:3])*

Rev 20:12 And I saw everyone who ever died, small and great, standing before God. And the books were opened. And another book was opened! The Book of Life. The first volume of books represented mankind's judgment based on their own works, versus the Book of Life which celebrates the triumph of the Lamb! *(Rev 3:5 Everyone who sees their victory in me will I clothe in white garments - and they will realize*

that I am not in the business of fulfilling their law and performance based fears by blotting out their names from the Book of Life! Instead I am the one who endorses their identity face to face before my Father and his shepherd-messengers. [This language is taken from the custom of registering the names of persons in a list, roll, or catalogue. In Jewish tradition there was a prevailing fear that your name might be blotted out of the Book of Life if your behavior did not please God. See ***Extended Notes on the Lamb's Book of Life*** *at the end of Chapter 17.)*

Rev 20:13 Every domain where the dead was held, yielded them up to be judged according to his work. Everyone was there; the sea yielded up its dead also Death and Hades yielded up their dead.

Rev 20:14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Rev 20:15 And [1]everything that was not written in the Book of Life was poured into the lake of fire. *(The Greek, εἴ τις οὐχ εὑρέθη ἐν τῇ βίβλῳ τῆς ζωῆς γεγραμμένος - with,* ***ei tis****, meaning everything or everyone - but, what is cast into the symbolic lake ablaze with brimstone is not a person but a mindset! A distorted perception of identity!*

The authentic ID of human life is defined in the Book of Life - or the Tree of Life, representing the redeemed life of our design, versus the alternative Tree of the knowledge of good and evil, representing mankind's identity under scrutiny and questioned. The "I am not-Tree" heads up the System of a Works and Performance Based Philosophy. To have your name written in the Book of Life simply suggests that you discover your identity there in the Zoe-life redeemed by the Lamb. You may have only known yourself according to the flesh, as Simon, the son of Jonah, while you really are Petros! Mr. Rock, you are a chip of the old Block! Every evidence of an inferior identity will be cast into the lake of sulphur burning away the dross to reveal the gold! Any idea of an identity outside of the Book of Life, is dissolved! The Lamb's Book of Life and not the law of personal performance, defines us!

See ***Extended Notes on the Lamb's Book of Life*** *at the end of Chapter 17. Also my Extended Commentary Notes at the end of the Mirror- Thoughts on Judgment and Resurrection.)*

It is almost unspeakable that of all the themes God could choose from to celebrate the central authority of the throne Room, he chose the Lamb! Our redeemed innocence is the theme of the throne of heaven, forever!

Rev 2:23 The offspring of these 'mindsets', conceived in your licentious idolatry has no future! I will cause it [1]to utterly perish! And every Ekklesia shall [2]know that I scrutinize the hidden thoughts of the heart. And I will expose every single work of your own doing as judged in my work. *(See verse 26 - my works vs your works. To [1]kill in death is a very strong expression,* ***apokteuno en thanato****. The symbolic significance of killing the children of the church's idolatrous adultery in death can only be understood in the context of the unveiling of Jesus the Christ who already died mankind's death and in that death brought final closure to the offspring of mankind's guilt-ridden mindsets that we have inherited from our world systems which were founded in the fruit of the "I-am-not tree system". He thus broke the spell of the claim of judgment and death over the Adamic race. This signifies the death of death. The significance of the implications of Jesus' death cannot be exaggerated! It reaches into the entire past, present and future of human history! The word [2]****ginosontai*** *is the future ingressive punctiliar middle of* ***ginosko****, 'we shall certainly come to know', this confirms the theme of the book of Revelation! The unveiling of Jesus Christ and his finished work will most definitely complete God's purpose of redeeming mankind's lost sense of sonship, value, innocence, identity and royalty in the earth!)*

Rev 21:8 The fear-driven and unbelieving, those having become rotten to the core; sex peddlers and sorcerers, idolaters and deceivers, their measure is the lake burning with brimstone; this is the second death.

Rom 6:11 This reasoning is equally relevant to you. [1]Calculate the cross; there can only be one logical conclusion: he died your death; that means you died to sin, and are now alive to God. Sin-consciousness can never again feature in your future! You are in Christ Jesus; his Lordship is the authority of this union. *(We are not being presumptuous to reason that we are in Christ! "[1]Reckon yourselves therefore dead to sin" The word, [1]****logitsomai****, means to make a calculation to which there can only be one logical conclusion. [See Eph 1:4 and 1 Cor 1:30].*

Philippians 2:8 And so we have the drama of the cross in context: the man Jesus Christ who is fully God, becomes fully man to the extent of willingly dying mankind's death at the hands of his own creation. He embraced the curse and shame of the lowest kind in dying a criminal's death. *(Thus, through the doorway of mankind's death, he descended into*

our hellish darkness. Rev 9:1 and Eph 4:8-10.)

Phil 2:9 From this place of utter humiliation, God exalted him to the highest rank. God graced Jesus with a Name that is far above every other name. *(Eph 1:20 Do you want to measure the mind and muscle of God? Consider the force which he unleashed in Jesus Christ when he raised him from the dead and forever seated him enthroned as his executive authority in the realm of the heavens. Jesus is God's right hand of power! He was raised up from the deepest dungeons of human despair to the highest region of heavenly bliss! [See Eph 2:5,6 & 4:8,9] Eph 1:21 Infinitely above all the combined forces of rule, authority, dominion or governments; he is ranked superior to any name that could ever be given to anyone of this age or any age still to come in the eternal future. The name of Jesus endorses his mission as fully accomplished! He is the Savior of the world! Titus 2:11 The grace of God shines as bright as day making the salvation of mankind undeniably visible. See also Eph 3:15, Every family in heaven and on earth originates in him; his is mankind's family name and he remains the authentic identity of every nation.)*

Phil 2:10 What his name unveils will persuade every creature of their redemption! Every knee in heaven and upon the earth and under the earth shall bow in spontaneous worship! *(See Isa 45:23 "My own life is the guarantee of my conviction, says the Lord, every knee shall freely bow to me in worship, and every tongue shall spontaneously speak from the same God-inspired source.")*

Phil 2:11 Also every tongue will voice and resonate the same devotion to his unquestionable Lordship as the Redeemer of life! Jesus Christ has glorified God as the Father of creation! This is the ultimate conclusion of the Father's [1]intent! *(The word [1]**doxa,** intent, opinion, often translated, glory. Rev 5:13 And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein, saying, "To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!" Also my commentary note on Rom 14:11. Paul, here quotes Isaiah 45:23 See verse 20,22,& 23 "Face me and **be** saved all the ends of the earth! [Note, '**Be saved**!' Not 'become saved!'] I am God; your idols are figments of your invention and imagination!" Isa 45:23 "I have sworn by myself; the word of my mouth has begotten righteousness; this cannot be reversed!" (The Hebrew word, **אצי *Yatsa*** can be translated, begotten like in Judges 8:30) "Every knee shall bow to me and every tongue*

shall echo my oath!" (Thus, speak with the same certainty sourced in me! The Hebrew word, ***עבשׁ Shaba*** *means to seven oneself, that is, swear - thus in the Hebrew mind, by repeating a declaration seven times one brings an end to all dispute! See Heb 6:13.16,17.)*

Rev 17:8 The brutal Beast you saw is a [1]"has been" from the beginning - it indeed has no real existence - yet it seems to make "a come back" as if emerging out of the Abyss only to dissolve again into perdition. Meanwhile the minds of those blinded by their [2]earthbound perceptions continue to be mesmerized by its apparent relevance. They are the ones whose identities are not [3]based upon the Lamb's Book of Life. They do not yet see that their original identity was redeemed in the Lamb." *(The words, ἦν καὶ οὐκ ἔστι [1]**en kai ouk esti**, meaning, to be and not to be; with the verb **en** being the Imperfect Indicative of **eimi**, I am - another meaning of the imperfect indicative is to refer to unreal (counterfactual) situations in present or past time.*

*This is in total contrast to the One who is I am; who always was and will continually be the accompanying One. An antithesis to "**ho ēn kai ho ōn**" of Rev 1:4.)*

In the symbolic language of the book of Revelation, the judgment of the Dragon, the Beast and the Whore; the counterfeit Trinity, is not a judgment against an entity, but against a corrupt mindset-system. A virus doesn't have a life of its own - it needs a host!

Microbiology Professor, Vincent Racaniello writes, "Life is 'an organismic state characterized by capacity for metabolism, growth, reaction to stimuli, and reproduction.' Viruses are not living things. Viruses are complicated assemblies of molecules, including proteins, nucleic acids, lipids, and carbohydrates, but on their own they can do nothing until they enter a living cell. Without cells, viruses would not be able to multiply. Therefore, viruses are not living things.")

See **Ephesians 6:12 People are not the enemy,** *[whether they be husbands, wives, children, or parents, slaves, or bosses. They might host hostile, law inspired thought patterns through their unbelief or ignorance but,]* **to target one another is to engage in the wrong combat. We represent the authority of the victory of Christ in the spiritual realm. We are positioned there** *[in Christ]***; we [1]confront the mind games and [2]structures of darkness, religious thought patterns, governing and**

conditioning human behavior. *(The word, [1]**pros**, face to face; towards. The word, [2]**poneros** is often translated as evil; this word is described in Thayer's Lexicon as full of annoyances, hardships and labor, which is exactly what the DIY law-system of works produce!)*

1 Cor 15:24 The complete conclusion in his work of redemption is celebrated in his yielding the full harvest of his reign to God the Father, having [1]brought to naught the law of works which supported every definition of dominion under the fall, including all [2]principalities, all [3]authority and every [4]dynamic influence in society. *(He brought to naught the law of works, [1]**katargeo**, from **kata**, meaning intensity, and **argos**, meaning labor; thus free from all self-effort to attempt to improve what God has already perfected in Christ. All principalities, [2]**arche**, or chief ranks, i.e., kings, governors; this includes any governing system whereby one is ranked above the other on the basis of their performance or preference. All authority, [3]**exousia**, comes from **ek**, denoting origin and **eimi**, I am; in this case, because of what I can do I am defined by what I can do better than you; therefore, I have authority over you. Every dynamic influence in society, [4]**dunamis**, means power, in this case, willpower. Every government structure in society will be brought under the dominion of grace where the Christ life rules.*

The kingdom of God is the authority of the Christ life in ordinary, day to day life, where righteousness is based on who we are and not on who we are trying to impress. The law of works is duty and guilt driven, whereas the law of faith is love driven. [Rom 3:27, Gal 5:6. Also 2 Cor 10:12 When they measure themselves by one another, competing and comparing, they are without understanding.)

It is most significant to consider Paul's reasoning when he declares, I have determined to know nothing within you, except Jesus Christ, and him crucified! 1 Cor 2:2 My [1]mind is fully made up about you! The only possible way in which I can truly [2]know you, is in the light of God's mystery, which is [3]Christ in you! Jesus died mankind's death on the cross and thus brought final closure to any other basis of [1]judgment! *(The word, [1]krino, to judge, to determine, to deem in a forensic sense, here, in the Aorist Tense, **ekrina**, which suggests a once and for all*

completed act. The Aorist tense presents an occurrence in summary, viewed as a whole from the outside, almost like a snapshot of the action.
Paul makes a very bold and radical statement, confining his ministry focus to "know" the full scope and consequence of the revelation of mankind's redeemed innocence as communicated in the cross of Jesus Christ! This is the essence of the mystery of God! "For I determined to [2]know [- [2]eido, to see, to perceive] nothing in you except Jesus Christ and him crucified." Paul continues to unfold the mystery of our redeemed oneness! In the previous chapter, he concludes that we are in Christ by God's doing; here he clearly points to [3]Christ in us! [As Jesus declared in John 14:20]
2 Cor 3:4 Christ is proof of our persuasion about you before God.
2 Cor 1:18 God's certainty is our persuasion; there is no maybe in him!
2 Cor 1:19 The son of God, Jesus Christ, whom I, Paul, Sylvanus and Timothy boldly announced in you, is God's ultimate yes to mankind. Jesus is God's yes to You! Human life is associated in all that he is. In God's mind, there exists not even a hint of hesitation about this!
See also **2 Cor 5:14,16 I am convinced that if one died for all, then all died! Therefore, from now on, I no longer know anyone from a human point of view!** *Also Gal 1:16 and Col 1:27.)*
John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in my Father, you are in me and I am in you! *(Note that it is not our knowing that positions Jesus in the Father or us in them, or the Spirit of Christ in us! Our knowing simply awakens us to the reality of our redeemed oneness! Gold does not become gold when it is discovered but it certainly becomes currency!*
Gal 1:16 This is the heart of the gospel that I proclaim; it began with an unveiling of his Son [1]in me, freeing me to announce the same sonship [2]in the masses of non-Jewish people. I felt no immediate urgency to compare notes with those who were familiar with Christ from a mere historic point of view. *(The Greek text is quite clear: "It pleased the Father to reveal his Son in me in order that I may proclaim him in the nations!" The words,* ***en emoi****, translate as "in me," and* ***en ethnos*** *translate as in the Gentile nations, or the masses of non Jewish people! Not "among" the Gentiles as most translations have it. Later, when Barnabas is sent to investigate the conversion of the Greeks in Acts 11, instead of reporting his findings to HQ in Jerusalem, he immediately finds Paul, knowing that Paul's gospel is the revelation of the mystery of Christ in the*

nations [see Col 1:27]. No wonder then that those believers were the first to be called Christians, or Christ-like Anointed ones!)

Jesus Christ confirms that the son of man is the son of God. "Call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father who is in heaven." [Mt 23:9] Paul reminds the Greek philosophers in Acts 17 that we live and move and have our being in God; mankind is indeed the offspring of God. He is quoting from their own writings, Epimenedes 600 BC and Aratus, 300 BC. The incorruptible seed of sonship is as much present in every person as the seed is already in all soil, even in the desert, waiting for the rain to awaken and ignite its life!

"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, so shall my word be that proceeds from my mouth, it shall not disappoint my purpose, it shall saturate the soil and cause it to bring forth and sprout. Instead of the thorn the cyprus and instead of the brier the myrtle!" [Isa 55:8-11, 13]

In Matthew 13:44, Jesus says that the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in an agricultural field! There is more to the field than what meets the eye!

In 2 Corinthians 4:4, 7 Paul says that we have this treasure in earthen vessels! But the god of this world has blindfolded our minds through unbelief [believing a lie about ourselves, Num 13:33] to keep us from seeing the light of the gospel revealing the glory of God in the face of Christ who is the image of God, as in a mirror!

When Jesus speaks of the sinner he speaks of him as the lost sheep, coin, or son. [Lk 15] You cannot be lost unless you belong! The inscription and image did not disappear from the coin when it was lost. How can we praise God and with the same mouth curse a person made in his image? [James 3:9 and Luke 20:20-26] Mankind has forgotten what manner of people they are by design; we are the image and likeness bearer of our Maker; this is exactly what Jesus came to reveal and redeem.

We may now behold him with unveiled faces as in a mirror and be immediately transformed [in our understanding] into his likeness. From the glory [opinion] of the flesh to the glory [opinion] of God. Legalistic religion kept the veil in place; the proclaiming of the liberating truth of the Good News, removes the veil! The "ugly duckling" didn't need a face-lift or lessons on how to fake the swan life! It only needed to know the truth about itself to be free indeed.)

See also **2 Cor 13:5 I implore you to [1]examine faith for yourselves in order to test what it is that you really believe. Faith is so much more than the mere veneer of a superstitious belief in a historic Christ; faith is about realizing Jesus Christ in you, in the midst of contradiction! Just [2]as ore is placed into a crucible, where the dross is separated from the gold in a furnace, come to the conclusion for yourselves of his indwelling! Should it appear to you that Christ is absent in your life, look again, you have obviously done the test wrong!** *(You cannot measure temperature with a ruler! Paul uses the word, [1]**peiratzo**, to examine closely, from **peira,** to pierce; a test to determine the hidden value of something; also from the word **peras**, which speaks of extremity or the furthest boundary. Faith is not a veneer to cover up potential depression or disappointment when faced with trying times! Note that Paul is not speaking about you putting your beliefs to the test; but you testing **the** faith for yourself! There is only one valid faith, not what we believe about God or about ourselves, but what God believes about us! Paul wants you to discover for yourselves what God believes about you. God is persuaded about Christ indwelling you, now he wants you to be equally persuaded! Then he uses the word, [2]**dokimatzo**, as in the testing of metals. Self-examination has nothing to do with finding hidden sins and flaws in you; it is all about realizing Christ in you! **The object of the furnace is not to reveal the dross, but the gold!** Christ himself is the proof of faith, he is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1. The test of truth is foolproof! See verse 8. Truth is not threatened by our scrutiny! See also* **2 Corinthians 4:18 We are not keeping any score of what seems so obvious to the senses on the surface, it is fleeting and irrelevant; it is the unseen eternal realm within us that has our full attention and captivates our gaze! 2 Corinthians 4:7 We have discovered this treasure where it was hidden all along, in these frail skin-suits made of clay.**

1 Corinthians 1:6 You certainly have the testimony of Christ evidenced in you. *[You possess full knowledge and give full expression because in you the evidence for the truth of Christ has found confirmation. — NEB]*

See **1 Pet 1:7 This will help you in those difficult times: think of your belief as something much more precious than any possible evaluation of gold; remember that fire does not destroy the metal, it reveals it! Now**

even gold is an inferior comparison to faith! Gold as a currency has only temporal and unpredictable value; it fluctuates as the market changes. Now, in the same way that fire reveals gold, your faith in the midst of contradiction, makes Jesus Christ visible and gives much reason to testimony [1]stories worth telling. This is what has permanent [2]value, and *the price is fixed.)*

See **John 5:27 The Father has also given the son of man [1]authentic authority to execute judgment on mankind's behalf!** *(The word [1]exousia, often translated authority has two components, ek, out of, source and eimi, I am!)*

John 5:28 Do not be alarmed by this, but the hour is coming when those in the [1]graves will hear his voice! *(No-one who ever lived will escape the extent of his righteous judgment! Those who have [1]forgotten who they are will hear his incarnate voice! The word for grave, [1]mnēmeion, memory, suggests a remembrance! Like David prophesies in Psalm 22 when he sees the cross-crisis [krisis - judgment] a thousand years before it happens! His conclusion in verse 27 sums up the triumph of God's resolve! "All the ends of the earth shall [1]remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him!" See 1 Corinthians 15:21,22 The same mankind who died in a man was raised again in a man. In Adam all died; in Christ all are made alive.)*

John 5:29 And they will come forth out of their graves - for those who have engaged themselves with that which is beneficial, it will be a resurrection to life - and for those who have done that which is worthless, it will be a resurrection unto judgment. *(In the context of John chapter 6:28 and 29 the work that is required is not a duty to be performed but a gift to be embraced - John 6:28 They immediately wanted the recipe! Tell us then what we must do in order to accomplish God's work? John 6:29 This is the work of God; your belief in the One whom he has sent! (Even your ability to believe is God's work! Realizing your authentic sonship on exhibit in Jesus is God's gift to you and cannot be earned! How can your labor compete with what God's rest celebrates as complete!)*

If our own good behavior could earn us salvation then there would be no point in Jesus dying our death! - This would be in conflict with the essence and crux of the gospel! It reminds of 2 Corinthians 5:10 which reads in the

*RSV as follows, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body!" Now read this verse in the Mirror Bible - 2 Corinthians 5:10 For we have all been thoroughly scrutinized in the judgment of Jesus. We are taken care of and restored to the life of our design, regardless of what happened to us in our individual lives, whatever amazing or meaningless things we encountered in the body. The word, [1]**phaneroo**, means to render apparent, to openly declare, to manifest. Paul uses the Aorist Passive Infinitive tense **phanerothenai**, not referring to a future event. The Aorist Infinitive presents the action expressed by the verb as a completed unit with a beginning and end. The word, **bematos**, comes from **bayma**, means footprint, also referring to a raised place mounted by steps, or a tribunal, the official seat of a judge The word, **komitzo**, comes from **kolumbos**, meaning to tend, to take care of, to provide for, to carry off from harm. Paul's reference was not about how much abuse and affliction he suffered, neither was it the many good times he remembered that defined him; "I am what I am by the grace of God!" If we are still to be judged for good or bad deeds that we performed in the body, then the judgment that Jesus faced on mankind's behalf was irrelevant. Galatians 2:21 I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing! NIV [See also 2 Cor 5:14,16. We are mirrored in his life; his life reflects ours, not as an example for us but of us. As well as 2 Corinthians 3:18 The days of window-shopping are over! Now, with unveiled faces we are gazing at the glory of the Lord as in a mirror and metaporhe happens - image and likeness awakens within us!])*

In their encounter of the risen Jesus, hidden from them at first, on their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus, their response revealed the impact of the conversation Jesus had when he pointed to himself in Scripture - in the writings of Moses and the prophets - suddenly, familiar text lit up in their hearts! "Did not our hearts ignite within us!" When the "Stranger" joined them that evening around the dinner table, he took the bread and broke it, and their eyes were opened and they recognized him! Every meal celebrates the Incarnation!

In **John 6:32 Jesus reminds the Jews that, it wasn't Moses who gave them the bread from heaven - My Father is the one who gives the real bread from heaven!** *(The manna was a prophetic pointer to the Messiah!)*

John 6:33 For the bread from God that comes down from heaven is

that which gives life to the entire world! *(Mankind is designed, not to define life by the bread-harvest of their own labor, but by daily feasting on* ***every Word*** *that proceeds from God's mouth, mirrored in its most complete language, the Incarnation. The Hebrew word translated,* ***every****, is the word,* ***כֹּל·Kohl*** *from* ***כָּלַל Kalal*** *which means complete - thus, the word in its most complete context, which is the Incarnation, the Word that is face to face before God from before time was, is now made flesh, radiating the invisible Father's character and image in human form, as in a mirror! The incarnation is the global language of the Planet! Paul says in 2 Cor 3:2,3, The living Epistle is known and read by all mankind in their mother-tongue language.)*

John 6:34 They said, Oh Lord, this is the bread we crave! Give us this bread! *See notes on John 12, verses 19-25 "Look! The entire world is running after him!" He is indeed the desire of the Nations!*

John 6:35 Jesus said, I am the bread of life! He that comes face to face with me shall never hunger and he who finds his faith resting in me shall never thirst!

John 6:36 But even though you have seen me, you are not persuaded. *(You might be happy with the healings and be entertained by the signs, but still you fail to understand who I am! I'm not here to impress you with me! I'm here to persuade you about you! Your sonship is what I am all about! And the only way that I can persuade you about you is to take you with me into your death and darkness and overcome your fear and hell and birth you again into newness of life in my resurrection!)*

John 6:37 Everyone whom the Father has given me will come [1]face to face with me! And here, mirrored in me they will see that I am not the Judge! I will not cast anyone out! *(The preposition pros, is used here again as in John 1:1.)*

John 6:38 For I have stepped down out of heaven, not to make a name for myself! I did not come to become a mere historic hero! I have come to communicate the resolve of him who sent me! *(I am here to demonstrate to you how persuaded my Father is about you!)*

John 6:39 My Sender's desire is for me to rescue every single individual - [1]this is his gift to me - that I will lose [2]no detail of mankind's original identity mirrored in me! My rescuing mission will conclude in their joint-resurrection! This is the [3]completeness of time! *(This is his gift to*

*me, [1]**ho dedoke moi**. The phrase, [2]**hina pan apoleso ex auto**, meaning, that I should lose nothing out of it. In the eschatology/conclusion/fullness of time - [3]**te eschate hemera** - This phrase occurs only in John - John 6:39, 6:40, 6:44, 6:54. Also John 4:23 The end of an era has arrived - the future is here! Whatever prophetic values were expressed in external devotional forms and rituals are now eclipsed in true spirit worship from within - face to face with the Father - acknowledging our genesis in him - this is his delight! The Father's desire is the worshiper more than the worship!)*

John 6:40 And this is the desire of my Father, that everyone who [1]sees the Son, through his eyes, and finds the conclusion of *(eis)* **their persuasion in him, will resonate** *(echo)* **the life of the ages! And I will [2]raise him up in the [3]final day!** ***(Jesus speaks here of mankind's joint resurrection in his resurrection as the final day!*** *The word [1]**theōreo** means to gaze attentively. See Hosea 6:2 After two days he will revive us; [2]on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him. The word [3]**eschatos** means extreme; last in time or in space; the uttermost part, the final conclusion. What God said about 'you-manity' in their co-resurrection in Jesus, defines eschatology! Heb 1:1-3; Eph 2:5,6. See Rev 20:5 on **the First Resurrection**.)*

John 6:41 The religious Jews were no longer paying any attention - they were shocked and offended at the idea that he said he was the bread from heaven!

John 6:42 They reasoned that since they knew his parents to be Joseph and Mary, he had no valid claim to any heavenly Source!

John 6:43 Then Jesus addressed them saying, Your murmuring and reasoning amongst yourselves will continue to veil me from you. *(Knowing me from a human point of view will not satisfy your quest.)*

John 6:44 No one is forcing you to believe - it is the Father who sent me who draws you to see me [1]face to face - only once you've seen how in the mystery of God I mirror you, will you understand that I will co-raise you in the grand-finale of my mission! *(The word [1]**pros** is used again, face to face. This happened exactly as Hosea prophesied 800 BC, "After two days he would revive us! On the third day, he would raise us up!")*

John 6:45 It is written in the Prophets that every single individual will

be taught of God. To hear the Father's instruction concerning me, is to come [1]face to face with me. *(The word [1]**pros** is used again. See Isaiah 54:13; Jeremiah 31:34 And no longer shall each man teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Mica 4:1-4)*

John 12:19 The Pharisees were perplexed about this and said, "Look, we are gaining no ground against him! The entire world is running after him!"

John 12:20 There were also a number of Greeks who came to worship at the feast because of the rumors they have heard.

John 12:21 They approached Phillip who was from Bethsaida in Galilee and asked him, "Sir, we would be delighted to see Jesus. Is there perhaps any chance that you could introduce us to him?" *(He had a Greek name and the Greeks may have seen Philip in Galilee where there were many Greeks)*

John 12:22 Phillip went and told Andrew and the two of them told Jesus.

John 12:23 Jesus, immediately understanding the prophetic significance of the moment, knew that he, the Messiah, was who all the nations were longing for and answered, "The hour is here for the Son of man to be glorified!" *[Jesus studied Scripture as in a mirror - he knew that "in the book, it is written about me!" Haggai 2:7 and the desire of the nations shall come…See Col 1:27.]*

John 12:24 Most certainly shall the single grain of wheat fall into the earth and die - if it doesn't die it remains alone - but in its death it produces much fruit.

John 12:25 To hold on desperately to a mere life defined by the soul realm is to lose it; but to abandon the soul substitute for the real deal is to observe your spiritual life which is the life of the ages.

1 Thess 2:19 We expect nothing less in the context of the gospel than you enjoying a face to face encounter in the [1]immediate presence of our Lord Jesus Christ! This is our delight and wreath of honor! *(The word [1]**parousia** speaks of the immediate presence of the Lord! From **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung*

from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and ***eimi,*** *I am! There is not even a hint of judgment or punishment in this word! Please do not believe everything you read in Strongs! "G3952 parousia from the present Participle of G3918; a being near, that is, advent; often, return; specifically of Christ to punish Jerusalem, or finally the wicked."!!??)*

1 Thess 4:13 I do not want you to be ignorant concerning those who seem to be fast asleep in their indifference and unbelief. There is no need for you to grieve as if they are beyond hope! *(See 1 Cor 15:51 [1]Ponder this mystery, I want to show you something that you have never seen before: [2]everyone will awaken out of sleep; we will [3]all experience exactly the same change. (In other words, [1]**idou musterion**, Look! A Mystery! And [2]**pantes ou koimethesometha, means** no one will sleep; and [3]**pantes de allangesometha**; everyone will be changed.)*

1 Thess 4:14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and that he fully represents and includes even those who have not awoken unto him yet. God will [1]lead them to realize that they are in Jesus. *(The word [1]**ago** means to lead as a shepherd leads his sheep. See 1 Corinthians 1:30, Ephesians 1:4.)*

1 Thess 4:15 We give voice to the word of the Lord; we are God's wake-up call to them that are asleep! We are exhibiting the [1]immediate tangible presence of the Lord and shall not [2]exclude them! *(The word [1]**parousia** means immediate presence. See my comment in 1 Thessalonians 2:19. See the use of the word [2]**phthanō,** to prevent, to hinder or exclude, also in 2 Corinthians 10:14, Our ministry to you is proof that there are no geographic limitations which could possibly exclude you from the gospel of Jesus Christ! See also 1 Thessalonians 3:12, "We can already see how the Lord causes the love we have for you to dynamically impact each of you and burst its banks to flood the entire world!" The people who dwelt in darkness have seen a great light! The true light that enlightens everyone has come! And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together!)*

1 Thess 4:16 The Lord will personally step out of the invisible heavenly realm into our immediate visible horizon with an inciting shout, announcing his triumphant reign in the trumpet-like billowing voice of

God; and even the dead will rise from their sleep, since they too are included in Christ!
1 Thess 4:17 In the wake of their arising we will all be gathered into a large dense multitude of an innumerable throng of people, united as one, like the particles of water in a cloud, and we will encounter the Lord in the very air we breathe and so shall we continually celebrate our I-am-ness in our union with him. *(This is the moment redemption declares, where Deity and mankind are married. The Bride and her Groom are united!)*
1 Thess 4:18 The fact that we are all deeply connected in the same source of our 'beingness' causes us to be constantly engaged in this conversation with one another.
When Mother Teresa was asked what motivates her to go out into the streets of Calcutta in the odd hours of the night, her reply revealed her mission, "I go to minister to my Lord in his most disturbing disguises!"
In Romans 12, Paul gives significant context to the idea of heaping coals of fire on your enemy's head to confirm the principle under discussion in this commentary on the lake of fire!
Rom 12:9 Love without any hidden agenda. Utterly detest evil; be glued to good.
Rom 12:10 Take tender care of one another with fondness and affection; esteem one another's unique value.
Rom 12:11 Do not allow any hesitation to interrupt the rhythm of your zeal; capture the moment; maintain the boiling-point intensity of spirit devotion to the Lord.
Rom 12:12 Delight yourself in the pleasure of [1]expectation; prayer prevails victoriously under pressure. *([1]**elpis**, to anticipate, usually with pleasure.)*
Rom 12:13 Purpose with resolve to treat strangers as Saints; pursue and embrace them with fondness as friends on equal terms of fellowship. Make yourself useful in the most practical way possible.
Rom 12:14 Continue to speak well even if someone wants to take advantage of you; bless and do not blame when you feel exploited.
Rom 12:15 Do not merely act the role in someone else's gladness or grief; feel with them in genuine joy and compassion.
Rom 12:16 Esteem everyone with the same respect; no one is more important than the other. Associate yourself rather with the lowly than

with the lofty. Do not distance yourself from others in your own mind. *("Take a real interest in ordinary people."— JB Phillips)*
Rom 12:17 Two wrongs do not make a right. Never retaliate; instead, cultivate the attitude to [1]anticipate only beauty and value in every person you encounter. *([1]**pronoew,** to know in advance.)*
Rom 12:18 You have within you what it takes to be everyone's friend, regardless of how they treat you. *(See Romans 1:16, 17. Also Matthew 5:44, 45.)*
Rom 12:19 Do not bother yourselves to get even, dear ones. Do not let anger or irritation distract you; [1]that which we have in common with one another *(righteousness)* **must set the pace. Scripture confirms that the Lord himself is the [1]revealer of righteousness.** *([1]**ekdikeo**, from **ek**, a preposition denoting origin, and **dikeo,** two parties finding likeness in one another. That which originates in righteousness sets the pace in every relationship.)*
Rom 12:20 "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink." These acts of kindness will be like heaping coals of fire on his head and certainly rid him of the dross in his mind and win him as a friend. *(A refiner would melt metal in a crucible and intensify the process by heaping coals of fire on it [Prov 25:21,22]. This is good strategy; be sensitive to the needs of your enemies. God sees gold in every person. Hostility cannot hide our true value. He won us while we were hostile towards him [see also Rom 5:8, 10]. His kindness led us to the radical awakening of our minds! [Rom 2:4].)*
Rom 12:21 Do not let evil be an excuse for you to feel defeated, rather seize the opportunity to turn the situation into a victory for good.
Paul continues in 1 Cor 3:12 Imagine the contrast in building materials, one builds with gold, silver and precious stones, while another uses wood, hay and stubble. *(By comparison, the teaching of the cross and its glorious effect in human life is like building with gold, silver, and precious stones, whereas the wisdom of this world system based upon religious good works and not faith is like building with wood, hay, and stubble which is fuel for fire!)*
1 Cor 3:13 Everyone's work shall be tested in the scrutiny of real life; it shall be made apparent as in broad daylight just as gold is tested in fire: what you live will either burn like stubble or shine like gold. *(The*

revelation of mankind's co-crucifixion and co-resurrection with Christ is the gold of the gospel!)
1 Cor 3:14 If what you teach is based on the revelation of the success of the cross it will certainly be confirmed in the heat of contradiction.
1 Cor 3:15 Obviously to witness the fruit of one's labor go up in smoke would be devastating, even though you escape with your own life!
1 Cor 3:16 Realize that your life is God's building; his sanctuary, designed for his permanent abode. His Spirit inhabits you! *(He designed every cell in your body to accommodate and express him.)*
1 Cor 3:17 Just like fire would burn away the dross, any defilement of God's temple would be destroyed in order to preserve human life as his permanent sanctuary.
John 3:22 From there Jesus and his followers went to the region of Judea and spend some [1]bonding-time together - [2]immersed in conversation. *(The word [1]**diatribo** carries the idea of a road well travelled; tarrying together - the text says and there he baptized - yet in chapter 4:2 John comments that Jesus himself did not baptize anyone. The word [2]**baptitso** means to immerse; for what it is worth, I thought to reflect on the bonding and cleansing that takes place in conversation, "You are already made clean by the word which I have spoken to you." Jn 15:3. I'm not disputing the fact that water baptism as a cleansing ritual is the context here; but Jesus' baptism shifts the emphasis from the prophetic water symbol to a baptism into words and spirit thoughts. He knows and communicates that his baptism into mankind's death, as the Lamb of God, is what John's prophetic baptism pointed to in the first place.)*
John 3:25 Some of the disciples of John were disputing with a Jew, who was probably baptized by the disciples of Jesus. They debated about the meaning of these purifying rituals - comparing notes as to which baptism would be the most significant between Jesus and John's. *(See Hebrews* **6:2 All the Jewish teachings about ceremonial washings** *(baptisms)***, the laying on of hands** *(in order to identify with the slain animal as sacrifice)***, and all teachings pertaining to a sin consciousness, including the final resurrection of the dead in order to face judgment, are no longer relevant.** *(All of these types and shadows were concluded and fulfilled in Christ, their living substance. His resurrection bears testimony to the judgment that he faced on mankind's behalf and the*

freedom from an obstructive consciousness of sin that he now proclaims. [Rom 4:25; Acts 17:31; Jn 12:31-33] Jesus said, "and when I am lifted up on the cross, I will draw all judgment unto me!" [Heb 9:28])

John 3:26 They anxiously informed John that the one who was with him beyond the Jordan, whose life and mission he endorsed and bore witness to, is now attracting everyone to him - his baptism could put them out of business!

John 3:27 To which John responded, well, he obviously has heaven's backing, so let's not be jealous; everything we have is a gift!

Eph 5:26 Christ is the voice of God's language, immersed in this conversation, his love words bathe us and remove from us every stain of sin.

Eph 5:27 This intimate language presents the church *(his restored image and likeness)* **to himself, to his delightful approval without any distraction or reminder of a blemished past; no wrinkle or scar of sin's abuse remains; she stands before him in immaculate innocence.** *(1 Kings 6:7)*

Chapter 20

1 And I witnessed a shepherd-herald descending out of the heavenly sphere and he had the key of the bottomless Abyss and a great chain over his hand. *(Eph 4:8,9 He who ascended is also he who descended into the lowest parts of the earth. Eph 4:9 The fact that he ascended confirms his victorious descent into the deepest pits of human despair. Rev 9:1 When the fifth shepherd-messenger blew his trumpet, I saw a star that had fallen to earth from the sky. The star was given the key to the shaft into the fathomless depths of the Abyss. [Jesus is the bright Morning Star Rev 2:28 and 22:16 I am the bright Morning Star! Also 2 Pet 1:1:19.]* ***See my Extended Notes on the Bottomless Pit at the end of chapter 9.****)*

2 And he overpowered the Dragon, in its every disguise as the old Serpent in the garden in Genesis, also called the Devil, or going under the name, Satan, and chained him up for a thousand years. *(From David to Jesus is a thousand years! Rev 3:7 I hold the key of David as prophesied in Isaiah 22:22! Yes, I unlock the mysteries of the heavenly dimension and no one can shut the door! And I lock the entrance and none [of the old mindsets] can access it!* ***The links in the chain****, are the prophetic words in the mouth of David and the Prophets till John the Baptist. These words already chained Satanas to the irreversible intention of God. Mat 12:29 Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.* ***See Extended Notes on The Thousand Years at the end of this chapter. Also Notes on Ophis, the old Serpent at the end of chapter 12.****)*

3 He then hurled him into the bottomless Abyss, shut him up and set a seal upon him, and thus made it impossible for him to continue to deceive the nations for the complete duration of the symbolic thousand years; he would then be let loose on the earth for a very brief moment. *(Not to deceive the nations, μη πλανηση* ***me planesey*** *in the Aorist active subjunctive which is based on the function of the mood; the subjunctive mood suggests probability. The time of the action of the subjunctive mood is relative to the time of the main verb[s], which in this case are εβαλεν* ***ebalen***

*[cast down] and εκλεισεν **ekleisen** [shut up] as well as εσφραγισεν **esphragisen** [sealed], all three in the Aorist Active Indicative. These are completed acts accomplished in the **tetelestai** of Jesus on the cross! The defeat of the diabolos-system is a sealed deal - its deception of the nations is only possible with their consent - Paul announces in Acts 17 that God has overlooked the times of ignorance and now implores all mankind wherever they are in space or time, to awaken to their redeemed innocence! (The word **metanoia,** does not mean "repentance" it suggests an awakening to the awareness of God's thoughts; from **meta**, together with and **nous**, mind or mental awareness.)*
The complete contrast of Jesus' resurrection is pictured here, Jesus tomb was secured with a large rock, then sealed and guarded by Roman soldiers; yet Jesus rose and came back with the keys of Death and Hades, the stone was rolled away and he stepped out Victor, leading mankind out as his trophies! What happened in the brief moment of Jesus' descent into the Abyss is paralleled against its enduring effect of chaining up the Devil for a symbolic thousand years.
*This is a clear announcement of what happened in Jesus' descent into hell where he defeated the reign and claim of darkness in the HQ of mankind's deepest pits of despair and then, in his resurrection he co-raises the entire human race into a place of joint-reigning with him from the heavenlies! Now here on earth where it all plays out, every enemy is placed under his feet! See Hosea 6:2, Eph 2:5,6 and Eph 4:8-10, also Col 2:14,15. See Extended **Notes on the Thousand Years** at the end of this chapter. Also my **notes on Armageddon** at the end of chapter 16.)*

4 And I saw thrones and those seated upon the thrones have been given judgment. They are the souls who didn't worship the Beast or its image, and did not take his mark in their foreheads or on their hands. The system of the Beast [1]axed them because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the Word of God, since they didn't fit into their religious mold! They are the living beings, joined together in the Christ life, reigning from their joint-seatedness in the throne of the Lamb for a thousand years. *(Rev 1:2 John gave accurate evidence to **the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ**, exactly as he saw it. [The Word of God, is the testimony of Jesus. The testimony of Jesus Christ is the context of the*

*prophetic word.] The word, [1]**pelekizō**, axe, to cut off, from **plassō**, to form, mold something from clay, wax, etc. - used of a potter - they would not be molded into a distorted image-mindset. Rev 21:1, also Mat 19:28 Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the rebooting of mankind, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. See the word, **paliggenesia**, suggests a complete restoration to the original, in modern terms, rebooted. From **palin**, again by repetition and **genesis**, source. Only used here and in Titus 3:5 See **Extended Notes on the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ** at the end of this chapter.)*

5 This is the first resurrection. *(The words, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" were added at a time when the church claimed to be fulfilling the thousand-year reign of Christ. The Sinaitic MS., remarkable as being the oldest as well as for its completeness and accuracy, is the only Greek authority on Revelation ante-dating the fifth century: and it does not contain the clause.*
*John 6:40 And this is the desire of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son, through his eyes, and finds the conclusion of (eis) their persuasion in him, will resonate (echo) the life of the ages! And I will raise him up in the final day! (**Jesus speaks here of mankind's joint resurrection in his resurrection as the final day!** The word **theōreo** means to gaze attentively. See Hosea 6:2 After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him. The word **eschatos** means extreme; last in time or in space; the uttermost part, the final conclusion. What God said about 'you-manity' in their co-resurrection in Jesus, defines eschatology! Heb 1:1-3; Eph 2:5,6.)*
See 1 Cor 15:13 If our co-resurrection is not proclaimed then the resurrection of Jesus from the dead is no longer relevant. 1 Cor 15:20 However this very moment the risen Christ represents everyone who has ever died; exactly like the first fruit represents the complete harvest. 1 Cor 15:21 The same mankind who died in a man was raised again in a man. 1 Cor 15:22 In Adam all died; in Christ all are made alive. The first [most significant] revelation of Jesus' resurrection is the fact that his resurrection is mankind's resurrection! See Hosea 6:2, "After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him." Paul

reveals in Ephesians 2:5,6 that, while we were dead in our sins and trespasses, God co-quickened us and co-raised us and co-seated us in heavenly places! In Colossians 3:1-3 Paul urges us to engage our thoughts with throne room realities, since we are raised together with Christ. See ***Extended Notes on the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ*** *at the end of this chapter.)*

6 Oh the [1]blessedness of this bliss, celebrated in the redeemed innocence of every single individual, discovering their inclusion in this first resurrection as their own - realizing that the second death has no bearing on them whatsoever - they will continue in their priesthood unto God and Christ and they will co-reign with him for a thousand years. *(The word, [1]**makarios**, usually translated, blessed, suggests a special intensity of delight. This is the fifth beatitude; Rev 1:3; Rev 14:13; Rev 16:15; Rev 19:9 and two more to come; Rev 22:7, Rev 22:14, seven in all. See* ***Extended notes on the thousand years*** *at the end of this chapter.)*

7 Their reign and priesthood will be fully established within the context of the vastness of this symbolic thousand year period. In sharp contrast then, only to emphasize the complete and utter defeat of the Satanas-system, he will be let loose very briefly, out of his prison. *(From the Abyss, the "Bottomless Pit-Underworld", where he was imprisoned when Jesus went there to free mankind. Jesus came back with the keys, remember! Rev 20:3.)*

8 And his obvious strategy would be to deceive the nations on a global scale including the four corners of the earth by assembling Gog and Magog in war; their number is as the sand of the sea. *(Again, every traditional Jewish concept of judgment is addressed. Gog and Magog is now brought into the conversation, since Jewish eschatology viewed Gog and Magog as enemies to be defeated by the Messiah, which will usher in the age of the Messiah. "Then Eldad and Modad [brothers of Moses] both prophesied together, and said, 'In the very end of time Gog and Magog and their army shall come up against Jerusalem, and they shall fall by the hand of the King Messiah; they shall be slain by the flame of fire which shall*

proceed from under the throne of glory, and afterwards all the dead of Israel shall rise again to life, and shall enjoy the delights prepared for them from the beginning." Quote from the Jewish Targum. See reference in Num 11:26 and Ez 38:17.
There are numeral references to the same "once and for all war" in the heavens! It is however the same hour; the same event! Rev 12:7; Rev 16:13,14; Rev 17:13,14; Rev 19:19. See Extended Notes on Israel at end of this chapter)

9 They will spread across the earth and attempt to neutralize the "Queen Bee Bride" of the Lamb by surrounding and besieging God's Saints in the beloved city. Then fire will pour out of heaven and consume them. *(Again, the mindsets of satanic accusation and judgments are made a meal of - yet another reference to the great supper-feast celebrating the new covenant and the conclusion of the old. The fire from the altar of the slain Lamb of God consumes every definition of Israel's and indeed, mankind's perceived enemies. See extended notes on the lake of fire, at the end of chapter 19.)*

10 The Devil, who led them astray will be hurled into the lake of fire and brimstone where his puppet partners, the Beast and the False Prophet have already been confined to. Day and Night they will be the subject of God's touchstone for the ages of the ages - the very atmosphere of the entire universe will be thoroughly fumigated from any evidence of Satanas. *(See my notes on the Touchstone in Rev 14:10; also on the lake of fire and brimstone at the end of chapter 19.)*

11 And I saw a huge white throne and it was as if heaven and earth fled away from the presence of the One seated upon the throne and its place was never found again. *(This means that there is no accusation in the heavens or upon the earth that could possibly stand in the presence of the Lamb, the One seated upon the throne of the judgment of righteousness – his throne gives testimony to mankind's redeemed acquittal! See Hebrews 1:3 "Having made purification for sins he sat down!" There exists no evidence that could be brought from any sphere or dimension that could*

*possibly testify against the human race - Acts 17 The God of creation has overlooked the times of ignorance and now urgently persuades all of mankind everywhere to awaken in their understanding to the fact of their innocence – he appointed a day and a person and on that day and in that person God would judge he world in righteousness and of this he has given proof by raising Jesus from the dead! The resurrected Jesus is the official receipt and verdict confirming mankind's redeemed innocence! Romans 4:25. Rev 20:4; also Mat 19:28 Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the [1]rebooting of mankind, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The word, [1]**paliggenesia**, suggests a complete restoration to the original, in modern terms, rebooted. From **palin**, again by repetition and **genesis**, source. Only used here in Mt 19:28 and in Titus 3:5)*

12 And I saw everyone who ever died, small and great, standing before God. And the books were opened. And another book was opened! The Book of Life. The first volume of books represented mankind's judgment based on their own works, versus the Book of Life which celebrates the triumph of the Lamb! *(Rev 3:5 Everyone who sees their victory in me will I clothe in white garments - and they will realize that I am not in the business of fulfilling their law and performance based fears by blotting out their names from the Book of Life! Instead I am the one who endorses their identity face to face before my Father and his shepherd-messengers. [This language is taken from the custom of registering the names of persons in a list, roll, or catalogue. In Jewish tradition there was a prevailing fear that your name might be blotted out of the Book of Life if your behavior did not please God.] See* ***Extended Notes on the Lamb's Book of Life*** *at the end of Chapter 17.)*

13 Every domain where the dead was held, yielded them up to be judged according to his work *[The work of Jesus].* **Everyone was there; the sea yielded up its dead also Death and Hades yielded up their dead.** *(The singular,* ***ὁ ἔργον αὐτός****, his work, rather than, plural, their works, is the text by Tischendorf. [See my notes on TEXT at the introduction to Revelation] Also note Rev 22:12 Behold! [again Aorist Imperative!] Now*

get the message, once and for all! I am come! There are no further delays! This is the hour the Prophets pointed to! And my reward is with Me, to give to each as his [the Lamb's] work is.)

14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. *(The Second Death is not to distract from the once and for all death that Jesus died, but to endorse it. In the lake of fire, Death and Hades are eradicated from memory. The first death is the once and for all death that Jesus died, representing the global death of humankind. Jesus' death took mankind's death in Adam, out of the equation! [Heb 9:27,28; 2 Cor 5:14-17] The idea of the Second Death has to do with the fact that the revelation of everyone's inclusion in the death of Jesus, has not yet dawned on some - so it will take a crisis, often, their own death, to immediately engage them with the symbolic cleansing [from their unbelief] represented by the lake of burning sulphur, purifying like in a furnace, separating the gold from the dross-mindsets. Rev 2:11 and Rev 20:6. See* ***Extended notes on the lake of fire*** *at the end of Chapter 19)*

15 And [1]everything that was not written in the Book of Life was poured into the lake of fire. *(The Greek, εἴ τις οὐχ εὑρέθη ἐν τῇ βίβλῳ τῆς ζωῆς γεγραμμένος - with,* ***ei tis****, meaning everything or everyone - but, what is cast into the symbolic lake ablaze with brimstone is not a person but a mindset! A distorted perception of identity!*
The authentic ID of human life is defined in the Book of Life - or the Tree of Life, representing the redeemed life of our design, versus the alternative Tree of the knowledge of good and evil, representing mankind's identity under scrutiny and questioned. The "I am not-Tree" heads up the System of a Works and Performance Based Philosophy. To have your name written in the Book of Life simply suggests that you discover your identity there in the Zoe-life redeemed by the Lamb. You may have only known yourself according to the flesh, as Simon, the son of Jonah, while you really are Petros! Mr. Rock, you are a chip of the old Block! Every evidence of an inferior identity will be cast into the lake of sulphur burning away the dross to reveal the gold! Any idea of an identity outside of the Book of Life, is dissolved! The Lamb's Book of Life and not the law of personal performance, defines us!

*See **Extended Notes on the Lamb's Book of Life** at the end of Chapter 17.)*
Revelation Chapter 20 Extended Notes:
The Thousand Years
The Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ
Extended Notes on Israel
The Thousand Years
The Satanas-system was cast into the Abyss, bound and sealed for a thousand years, then loosed for a very brief time.
Rev 20:2 And he overpowered the Dragon, in its every disguise as the old Serpent in the garden in Genesis, also called the Devil, or going under the name, Satan, and chained him up for a thousand years. *(From David to Jesus is a thousand years! While many of the Psalms are powerful and significant prophetic pointers to he Messiah, David's 22nd Psalm is a most stark and graphic prophetic picture of the crucifixion. The Psalm was written 1000 years BC and 700 years before crucifixion was even a known practice. Rev 3:7 I hold the key of David as prophesied in Isaiah 22:22. Yes, I unlock the mysteries of the heavenly dimension and no one can shut the door. And I lock the entrance and none [of the old mindsets] can access it.* ***The links in the chain, are the prophetic words*** *in the mouth of David and the Prophets till John the Baptist.* ***These words already chained Satanas to the irreversible intention of God.*** *Matt 12:29 Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house. See John 5:28 Do not be alarmed by this, but the hour is coming when those in the graves will hear his voice! [No-one who ever lived will escape the extent of his righteous judgment! Those who have forgotten who they are will hear his incarnate voice! The word for grave,* ***mnēmeion****, memory, suggests a remembrance! Like David prophesies in Psalm 22 when he sees the cross-crisis [krisis - judgment] a thousand years before it happens! His conclusion in verse 27 sums up the triumph of God's resolve! "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him!" See 1 Corinthians 15:21,22 The same mankind who died in a man was raised again in a man. In Adam all died; in Christ all are made alive.]*
Thus, in ***prophetic language****, every definition of the Satanas-system is already chained by the prophetic significance in Scripture recorded in the Psalms and the Prophets. The Spirit of Christ within them pointed to and*

concluded in the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. His death was the doorway into the very domain wherein mankind was held captive, to be freed and led out triumphantly as the Lamb's trophies! In ***symbolic language****, the effect of Jesus' victory is compared to a thousand years. Against the very brief 3 days of his cross, descent into hell and resurrection, on the one hand as well as the very "brief" time of the Devil's apparent release on the planet!*

Rev 20:3 He then hurled him into the bottomless Abyss, shut him up and set a seal upon him, and thus made it impossible for him to continue to deceive the nations for the complete duration of the symbolic thousand years; he would then be let loose on the earth for a very brief moment. *(Not to deceive the nations, μη πλανηση* ***me planesey*** *in the Aorist active subjunctive which is based on the function of the mood; the subjunctive mood suggests probability. The time of the action of the subjunctive mood is relative to the time of the main verb[s], which in this case are εβαλεν* ***ebalen*** *[cast down] and εκλεισεν* ***ekleisen*** *[shut up] as well as εσφραγισεν* ***esphragisen*** *[sealed], all three in the Aorist Active Indicative. These are completed acts accomplished in the* ***tetelestai*** *of Jesus on the cross! The defeat of the diabolos-system is a sealed deal - its deception of the nations is only possible with their consent - Paul announces in Acts 17 that God has overlooked the times of ignorance and now implores all mankind wherever they are in space or time, to awaken to their redeemed innocence! (The word* ***metanoia,*** *does not mean "repentance" it suggests an awakening to the awareness of God's thoughts; from* ***meta****, together with and* ***nous****, mind or mental awareness.)*

The complete contrast of Jesus' resurrection is pictured here, Jesus tomb was secured with a large rock, then sealed and guarded by Roman soldiers; yet Jesus rose and came back with the keys of Death and Hades, the stone was rolled away and he stepped out Victor, leading mankind out as his trophies! What happened in the brief moment of Jesus' descent into the Abyss is paralleled against its enduring effect of chaining up the Devil for a symbolic thousand years.

This is a clear announcement of what happened in Jesus' descent into hell where he defeated the reign and claim of darkness in the HQ of mankind's deepest pits of despair and then, in his resurrection, he co-raises the entire human race into a place of joint-reigning with him from the heavenlies! Now here on earth where it all plays out, every enemy is placed under his

feet! See Hosea 6:2, Eph 2:5,6 and Eph 4:8-10, also Col 2:14,15.
Eph 1:20 Do you want to measure the mind and muscle of God? Consider the force which he unleashed in Jesus Christ when he raised him from the dead and forever seated him enthroned as his executive authority in the realm of the heavens. Jesus is God's right hand of power! He was raised up from the deepest dungeons of human despair into the highest region of heavenly bliss!
Eph 1:21 Infinitely above all the combined forces of rule, authority, dominion or governments; he is ranked superior to any name that could ever be given to anyone of this age or any age still to come in the eternal future.
Eph 1:22 I want you to see this: he subjected all these powers under his feet. He towers head and shoulders above everything. He is the head;
Eph 1:23 the Ekklesia is his body. The completeness of his being that fills all in all resides in us! God cannot make himself more visible or exhibit himself more accurately. *(The word, **ekklesia**, comes from **ek**, a preposition always denoting origin, and **klesia** from **kaleo**, to identify by name, to surname; thus the "church" is his redeemed image and likeness in human form.)*
Col 2:14 His body nailed to the cross hung there as the document of mankind's guilt; in dying our death he cancelled the detailed hand-written record which testified against us. Every stain on our conscience, reminding of the sense of failure and guilt, was thus fully blotted out. *(The word, **exaleipho**, comes from **ek**, out of, and **aleipho**, with **a,** as a particle of union, and **liparos**, to grease, to leave a stain; guilt, as well as all hurtful memories were like grease stains upon the conscience. In N.T. only here and Rev 3:5; 7:17; 21:4, then also in **Acts 3:19** "Be awakened in your minds and fully converted to face the fact of your redeemed innocence - your sins have been thoroughly blotted out!" Plato used it of blotting out a writing. The word, **cheirographon**, translates as hand-written. The word, **dogma**, comes from **dokeo**, a thought pattern; thus thought patterns engraved by human experience of constant failure to do what the law required. In his personal handwriting mankind endorsed their own death sentence. The hands of fallen mankind struck the body of Jesus with the blows of their religious hatred and fury when they nailed his bloodied body to the tree; they did not realize that in the mystery of God's economy, Jesus became the scapegoat of the entire human race! [Isaiah 53:4, 5] See notes*

on Heb 8:12. "The slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's Cross." —The Message)

Col 2:15 In him dying mankind's death, he defused every possible claim of accusation against the human race and thus made a public spectacle of every rule and authority in God's brilliant triumph, demonstrated in him. The voice of the cross will never be silenced! *(The horror of the Cross is now the eternal trophy of God's triumph over sin! The cross stripped religion of its authority to manipulate mankind with guilt. Every accusation lost its leverage to blackmail the human race with condemnation and shame! The word,* ***apekduomai****, is translated from* ***apo****, away from, and* ***ekduo****, to be stripped of clothing; to disarm; the religious facade that disguised the law of works as a means of defining a person's life, was openly defeated. Same word used in Col 3:9. The dominance of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil [****poneros****, hard work and labor] was ended. The word,* ***deikmatizo****, means to exhibit in public. See commentary below of the words* ***arche****, rule and* ***exousia****, authority. The word,* ***parresia****, comes from* ***pas****, all and* ***rheo****, outspokenness, pouring forth speech.*

"He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets." — The Message)

We are living in "the very brief moment" of a defeated Devil let loose on the planet! Paul calls it "a slight, momentarily affliction" compared to the eternal weight of glory! See 2 Cor 4:17 We are fully engaged in an exceedingly superior reality; the extent and [1]weight of this glory makes any degree of suffering vanish into insignificance! The suffering is fleeting and ever so slight by comparison to the weight and enduring effect of this glory we participate in for all eternity. *(In Hebrew the word* **דבכ** *Kabod, means weight - this is also the word for glory - Paul reflects on this weight as the standard measure of everything that defines the glory of God! According to 2 Cor 3:18 mankind is his glory. This glory is the true currency of life. Paul reasons that by comparison, any size contradiction is dwarfed into insignificance and appears ever so slight when positioned against the enormity of the weight of glory that dwells within us.)*

2 Cor 4:18 We are not keeping any score of what seems so obvious to the senses on the surface; it is fleeting and irrelevant; it is the unseen eternal realm within us which has our full attention and captivates our gaze!.

Hebrews 2:7 He has made mankind all but equal to himself; he crowned them with his own glory and dignity, and appointed them in a position of authority over all the works of his hands." *(No shepherd-messenger can boast that. [Ps 8:4-6])*
Heb 2:8 God's intention was that human life should rule the planet. He subjected everything without exception to his control. Yet, looking at mankind, it does not seem that way at all.
Heb 2:9 But what is apparent, is Jesus *(but now God spoke to us in a son...Heb 1:2* ***ep' eschatou elalesen hemin en uio*** *- the sonship Jesus reveals and redeemed, is the conclusion of time!)* **Let us then consider him in such a way, that we may clearly perceive what God is saying to mankind in him. In the death he suffered, he descended for a brief moment below the lowest ranked shepherd-messenger, in order to taste the death of the entire human race, and in doing so, to fulfill the grace of God and be crowned again** *(as a man, representing all mankind)* **with glory and highly esteemed honor.**
Heb 2:10 He towers in conspicuous prominence far above all things. He is both their author and their conclusion. He now summons every son of his, through a perfected salvation, to his own glory. The extent of the suffering he bore is the measure of the perfection of the salvation over which he presides.
Rev 9:1 When the fifth shepherd-messenger blew his trumpet, I saw a star that had fallen to earth from the sky. The star was given the key to the shaft into the fathomless depths of the Abyss.
Rev 9:2 He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and smoke came out of the shaft like the smoke from a large [1]furnace. The smoke darkened the sun and the atmosphere. *(The smoke is evidence of the fire from the altar of worship which was lit by the coals from the brazen altar - the prophetic picture of the cross where the Lamb of God was slaughtered - Rev 8:5. The word* ***kaminos*** *is an old word for a smelting-furnace; Rev 1:15, "His feet were like a brilliant bronze fashioned in a furnace!" How lovely and powerfully equipped are the feet of them who proclaim Good News from the mountains! In contrast to the feet of mingled iron and clay of the image Daniel saw in Dan 2:38. The army of God is set to swallow up the consciousness of good and evil, the fruit of the "I-am-not-tree , in people's minds!*
The natural light was veiled and even the atmosphere was filled with smoke

for the moment while the effect of Jesus' presence in our hell was released.) See notes on ***The bottomless pit*** *at the end of chapter 9.)*

Rev 9:11 Their reigning king was the shepherd-messenger of the bottomless pit; his name in Hebrew was Abaddon and in Greek, Apollyon the One who breaks the bonds! *(Abaddon from abad, to wander away, - we all like sheep have gone astray. He did not leave a stone unturned in seeking and finding every single lost sheep! He went into the most extreme depths of our lostness and hell! He is called the Searcher of those who have wandered away! See 2 Cor 2:15 [This parade of victory is a public announcement of the defeat of the religious systems and structures based on the law of works. Just like it is in any public game where the victory celebration of the winning team is an embarrassment for the losing team. The death of evil is announced in resurrection life! The word,* ***apollumi****, is derived from* ***apo****, away from, and* ***luo****, to loosen, to undo, to dissolve.] The message we communicate is a fragrance with an immediate association; to darkness, it is the smell of doom [the death of Death] See also my comment on John 3:16 See 1 John 3:8 Sin's source is a fallen mindset, from the beginning! For this purpose the son of God was revealed! His mission was to undo the works of the Devil! (The word,* ***diabolos****, from* ***dia****, because of and* ***ballo****, to cast down. Isaiah 54:16)*

John 3:16 The entire cosmos is the object of God's affection! And he is not about to [1]abandon his creation - the gift of his Son is for mankind to realize their origin in him who mirrors their authentic birth - begotten not of flesh but of the Father! *[See John 1:13]* **In this persuasion the life of the ages echoes within the individual and announces that the days of regret and sense of lost-ness are over!** *(The KJV reads, Whoever [4]believes in him shall not [1]perish but have eternal life. The same word translated in the KJV to perish is translated in Luke 15 to be lost. In order to underline the value of the individual, Jesus tells the famous three parables in Luke 15 of the lost sheep, coin and son; now all found, safe and sound! In everyone he repeats the word [1]lost,* ***apollumi****, to lose, to emphasize the fact that you cannot be lost unless you belong - to begin with! The word [1]****apollumi****, also suggests a sense of uselessness; that which comes to ruin and amounts to nothing! In him we recognize our true beginning - as in the authentic original mold. See my commentary note to John 1:12. The word [4]****echo****, to hold, or embrace, as in echo. The word,*

[5]***kosmos*** *in the NT refers to the entire human family.)* **John 3:17 God has no intention to condemn anyone - he sent his Son, not to be the Judge but the Savior of the world.**

"It is important to note that parallels, patterns, symmetry and symbolism should never be used to form doctrine; they merely support the revelation of the Good News." [Scripture Reveal]

In this context it is compared to "the brief time" of the apparent resurgence of a defeated Devil's presence on the planet!

The word "thousand" appears 521 times in the King James Version Bible. ... "thousand," when in reference to time, is always used symbolically.

The number one thousand (1,000) symbolizes "immensity," "fullness of quantity" or "multitude." The number evokes a very long time according to most Bible passages. The number sometimes is used in a reference to paradise and everlasting happiness.

1 Chronicles 16:15 (KJV) – "Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations;"

Psalms 84:10 (KJV) – "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand."

Psalms 90:4 (KJV) – "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past,"

Psalms 105:8 (KJV) – "He hath remembered his covenant forever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations."

In Isaiah 60:22 during the prophesied Messianic time there will be an increase from 1 to 1000. "A little one shall become one thousand".

Psalms 50:10 we read – "For every Beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills."

The Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ

Rev 1:2 John gave accurate evidence to the word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ, exactly as he saw it. *(The Testimony of Jesus Christ is the context of the prophetic word. Col 3:4 The unveiling of Christ, as defining our lives, [1]immediately implies that, what is evident in him, is equally mirrored in you! The exact life on exhibit in Christ is now repeated in us. We are included in the same bliss and joined-oneness with him; just as his life reveals you, your life reveals him! The testimony of Jesus is what gives relevance and context to the Word of God. Jesus is what the scriptures are all about and you are what Jesus is all about!)*

Rev 19:10 For the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy.

1 Peter 1:11 The prophets knew with certainty that it was the Spirit of

Christ within them pointing prophetically and giving testimony to the sufferings of the Christ and the subsequent glory.
Just like the ore that carries the gold, the Bible contains the Word - the ore is not the gold, neither is the Bible the Word. Jesus is The Word. John 5:39.
John 1:1 To go back to the very beginning, is to find the Word already present there; face to face with God. The Word is I am; God's eloquence echoes and concludes in him. The Word equals God.
John 1:2 The beginning mirrors the Word face to face with God. *(Nothing that is witnessed in the Word distracts from who God is. "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father." [John 14:9] The Word that was from the beginning was not yet written nor spoken; it was simply face to face with God! The beginning declares the destiny of the Word, it would always only be who God is and conclude in God.)*
John 1:3 The Logos is the Source; everything commences in him. He remains the exclusive Parent reference to their existence. There is nothing original, except the Word! The Logic of God defines the only possible place where mankind can trace their genesis. *(All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. KJV See Colossians 1:16.)*
John 1:4 His life is the light that defines our lives. *(In his life mankind discovers the light of life.)*
John 1:5 The darkness was pierced and could not comprehend or diminish this light. *(Darkness represents mankind's ignorance of his redeemed identity and innocence [Isa 9:2-4, Isa 60:1-3, Eph 4:18, Col 1:13-15].)*
John 1:14 Suddenly the invisible, eternal Word takes on visible form - the Incarnation, on display in a flesh and blood Person, as in a mirror!
John 5:31 If this was just about me trying to make a name for myself then you can certainly reject my testimony as phony!
John 5:32 Yet there is someone else who endorses who I am and I recognize his testimony of me as absolutely true.
John 5:33 You cross examined John and he too gave testimony to the truth of who I am.
John 5:34 I do not draw my inspiration from your applause; I'm not here to win a few votes for a noble cause - I am on a rescue mission!
John 5:35 John was a man on fire, a bright beaming light and for a

brief moment you were jumping with joy in his radiance.
John 5:36 My testimony exceeds John's, since the work which my Father has ordained me to finish, gives ultimate context to my mission.
John 5:37 The Father himself who has sent me continues to bear witness to me; yet you are not familiar with his voice and did not discern his prophetic utterance throughout ancient times and therefore you could not recognize his image nor do you realize his appearance at this present time *[in the incarnate Word.]*
John 5:38 Your doubting him whom the Father has sent shows that you have not taken his word to its full conclusion.
John 5:39 You scrutinize the Scriptures tirelessly, assuming that in them you embrace the life of the ages - yet I am what the Scriptures are all about! *(Echo, to hold, embrace, resonate)*
John 5:40 Still you refuse to resort to me as the very Source of the life you seek. *(I echo the life of the ages within you!)*
John 8:13 The Pharisees took offence at this and responded with, "You assume things about yourself; how can you expect us to believe your record to be true?"
John 8:14 Jesus answered, "Whatever I declare concerning myself is absolutely true because I know where I am from and where I am going. You have no clue where I come from and therefore cannot discern my destiny.
John 8:15 You form your own judgment according to the flesh; I judge no-one.
John 8:16 And even if I do make a judgment, it is true since I am not making it up in my imagination or on my own accord, my reference reflects the testimony of the Father who sent me.
John 8:17 That should settle it for you since it is written in your law that the testimony of two is true! *(This combined witness of two is not true just because they agree, unless true in fact separately. But if they disagree, the testimony falls to the ground. Deuteronomy 17:6; and Deut 19:15. - Robertson's Word Pictures)*
John 8:18 I am witness to who I am and my Father himself also bears witness to me.
Heb 6:13 Since God had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself. He could give Abraham no greater guarantee but the integrity of his own Being; this makes the promise as sure as God is.

Heb 6:16 It is common practice in human affairs to evoke a higher authority under oath in order to add weight to any agreement between parties, thereby silencing any possibility of quibbling. *(The word peras, means the end of all dispute; the point beyond which one cannot go.)*
Heb 6:17 In the same context we are confronted with God's eagerness to go to the last extreme in his dealing with us as heirs of his promise, and to cancel out all possible grounds for doubt or dispute. In order to persuade us of the unalterable character and finality of his resolve, he confined himself to an oath. The promise which already belongs to us by heritage is now also confirmed under oath. *(The word* ***mesiteo*** *is used, interposed or mediated. Compare* ***mesites****, mediator, from* ***mesos****, midst. In the incarnation, God has positioned himself in the midst, of his creation. See Galatians 3:20 With Abraham there was no middleman; it was just God! [The Mosaic law required mediators [the Levitical priesthood] because it was an arrangement whereby mankind had a part and God had a part. Mankind's part was to obey the commandments and God's part was to bless. God's covenant with Abraham was a grace covenant pointing to the man Jesus Christ, in whom God himself would fulfil mankind's part and therefore needed no mediator apart from himself.*
The Word is the promise; the Incarnate, crucified and risen Christ is the proof. He desires to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose. RSV
Mankind was not redeemed from the Devil; a thief never becomes an owner; neither did Jesus do what he did to change his Father's mind about us! It was our minds that needed persuasion! God was not to be reconciled to his creation; God was in Christ when he reconciled the world to himself! 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)
Heb 6:18 So that we are now dealing with two irreversible facts which make it impossible for anyone to prove God wrong; thus our persuasion as to our redeemed identity is powerfully reinforced. We have already escaped into that destiny; our expectation has come within our immediate grasp! *(The promise of redemption sustained throughout Scripture and the fulfillment of that promise in Jesus. See John 8:13-18* ***John 8:17*** *That should settle it for you since it is written in your law that the testimony of two, is true! (This combined witness of two is not true just because they agree, unless true in fact separately. But if they disagree, the testimony falls to the ground. Deuteronomy 17:6; and Deut*

19:15. - Robertson. Also Rev 10:6 See notes on the Oath at the end of Rev 10)

Heb 6:19 Our hearts and minds are certain; anchored securely within the innermost courts of God's immediate Presence; beyond the *(prophetic)* **veil.**

Heb 6:20 By going there on our behalf, Jesus pioneered a place for us and removed every type of obstruction that could possibly distance us from the promise. In him we are represented for all time; he became our High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. We now enjoy the same privileged access he has. *(He said, "I go to prepare a place for you so that you may be where I am. On that day you will no longer doubt that I and the Father are one; you will know that I am in the Father and you in me and I in you!"[John 10:30, 14:3, 20])*

Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones and those seated upon the thrones have been given judgment. They are the souls who didn't worship the Beast or its image, and did not take his mark in their foreheads or on their hands. The system of the Beast [1]axed them because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the Word of God, since they didn't fit into their religious mold! They are the living beings, joined together in the Christ life, reigning from their joint-seatedness in the throne of the Lamb for a thousand years. *(Rev 1:2 John gave accurate evidence to* ***the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ****, exactly as he saw it. [The Word of God, is the testimony of Jesus. The testimony of Jesus Christ is the context of the prophetic word.] The word, [1]****pelekizō****, axe, to cut off, from* ***plassō****, to form, mold something from clay, wax, etc. - used of a potter - they would not be molded into a distorted image-mindset. Rev 21:1, also Mat 19:28 Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the rebooting of mankind, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. See the word,* ***paliggenesia****, suggests a complete restoration to the original, in modern terms, rebooted. From* ***palin****, again by repetition and* ***genesis****, source. Only used here and in Titus 3:5 See Notes on the thousand years.)*

Rev 3:11 Do not let tough times make me seem distant from you! I am at hand - see my nearness, not my absence. And don't let temporal setbacks diminish your own authority either! Remember that you call the shots; you wear the crown. My crown endorses your crown. *(Lit. Let nothing take your crown! Rev 1:5)*

Rev 6:9 And when he opened the fifth seal I saw underneath the altar the souls of those slain in sacrifice because of the word of God and their testimony. *(Addressing the murdered prophets. Matthew 23:37 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.")*
Rev 6:10 Their voice was loud and urgent! How long, our holy and true [1]Husband, will you not judge and balance the scales of justice in the shedding of innocent blood? Are we mere scapegoats in the futile sacrificial system of the rest of the earth-dwellers!? *(The word **despotes** from **deo**, binding as in wedlock and **posis**, husband. The word **ekdikea** from **ek**, source and **dikay**, two parties finding likeness in each other - the stem for righteousness, **dikaiosune** - where **dikay** reminds of the Greek goddess of Justice typically portrayed holding a scale of balances in her hand.)*
Rev 6:11 Then white robes were given to each and every one of them! Mankind's redeemed innocence is about to be announced! While you briefly rest with your [1]faces turned upwards, and be rejuvenated; until your prophetic word be [2]fulfilled! And your fellows, co-included in the sufferings of the Christ *[even his murderers]* **are about to be revealed as your friends who are themselves co-slain in the Lamb of God!** *("And there was given to each one white robes, and it was said to them that they may rest themselves yet a little time, till may be fulfilled also their fellow-servants and their brethren, who are about to be killed—even as they. Young's Literal Translation." One has died for all, therefore all have died! 2 Cor 5:14. "While you briefly rest with your faces turned upwards" [[1]**anapauō**, **ana**, upwards and **pauo**, rest; also refresh, far more than mere rest, rejuvenation. The English expression "rest up" is close to the idea of the Greek compound **anapauō**.] This suggests a resting in the awareness of the significance of their lives and death in prophetic context; the word of your testimony pointing to my day. The word, [2]**pleroo** is in the Aorist Passive Subjunctive, suggesting the inevitable fulfilment of that which the prophetic word pointed to. In the slaughtered Lamb's death, God dramatically brings closure to every definition of sacrifice - **he takes mankind's appointment with death and judgment out of the equation and introduces resurrection life to be our true portion.** See 1 Pet 1:10,11 In all of their conversation there was a constant quest to determine who the*

Messiah would be, and exactly when this will happen. They knew with certainty that it was the spirit of Christ within them pointing prophetically and giving testimony to the sufferings of the Christ and the subsequent glory. Rev 7:9)
See 1 Cor 15. ***The first [most significant] revelation of Jesus' resurrection is the fact that his resurrection is mankind's resurrection!*** *See Hosea 6:2, "After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him." Paul reveals in Ephesians 2:5,6 that, while we were dead in our sins and trespasses, God co-quickened us and co-raised us and co-seated us in heavenly places! In Colossians 3:1-3 Paul urges us to engage our thoughts with throne room realities, since we are raised together with Christ.*
Revelation 1:5 May this grace and peace of Jesus Christ overwhelm you! He is the first born from the dead and embodies the evidence and testimony of everything that God believes about you. He heads up the authority in which [1]we reign as kings on the earth. His crown endorses our crown! He always [2]loves us and [3]loosed us once and for all from the dominion of [4]sin in the shedding of his blood!
(We are crowned with the triumph of Jesus' resurrection. See 1 Pet 1:3. Ps 103:4 ***He redeems your life from the Pit and weaves a crown for you*** *out of loving-kindness and tender mercies. Psa 103:5 He satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.)*
Rev 1:6 He fashioned us a kingdom of priests unto his God and Father. The glory and the ruling authority of the ages belong to him through all time! Amen

Rev 1:7 Behold he comes with a [1]large dense multitude; an innumerable throng of people, united as one, like the particles of water in a cloud. Every eye will see him, not merely as observers, but they will perceive him for who he really is - even those who participated in his murder, when they pierced his hands and his side. Every single tribe of the earth will see him and weep greatly at the thought of their foolish rejection of him! This will surely be! *(The word [1]**nephos** is a cloud, a large dense multitude, a throng. 1 Thessalonians 4:16, The Lord will personally step out of the invisible heavenly realm into our immediate visible horizon with an inciting shout, announcing his triumphant reign in the trumpet-like billowing voice of God. Even the dead will rise from their*

sleep, since they too are included in Christ! 1 Thess 4:17, In the wake of their arising we will all be gathered into a large dense multitude; an innumerable throng of people, united as one, like the particles of water in a cloud, and we will encounter the Lord in the very air we breathe and so shall we continually celebrate our I-am-ness in our union with him. (This is the moment redemption declares, where Deity and mankind are married. The Bride and her Groom are united!) 1 Thess 4:18, The fact that we are all deeply connected in the same source of our 'beingness' causes us to be constantly engaged in this conversation with one another.)

Rev 1:8 The God who is Lord over all things says: I am the Alpha and the Omega - my I-am-ness defines time - I am present, past and future. *(The union of **Alpha** and **Omega**, in Greek, makes the verb **αω**, I breathe. And in Hebrew the union of the first and last letter in their alphabet, **Aleph** and **Tau** makes **תא** **et**, which the Rabbis interpret as the first matter out of which all things were formed, [see Gen 1:1]. The particle **et**, is untranslatable in English but, says Rabbi Aben Ezra, "it signifies the substance of the thing!" Jesus is the [1]**Alpha** and **Omega** in whom we live, and move, and have our being! He is indeed closer to us than the air we breathe! Don't waste a day waiting for another day!)*

Rev 1:9 I John am your brother and companion in tribulation - in the midst of which we are equally participating in the authority of the kingdom and steadfastness of Jesus Christ - I was on the Isle of Patmos because of the Word of God and because of the Testimony of Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:9 Now if it is reasonable for us to be readily persuaded by the evidence that people may lay out before us, how much more certainty is there in the evidence that God has so compellingly borne witness to concerning his Son!

1 John 5:10 Whoever shares in the same persuasion concerning the Son of God, has God's testimony confirmed within themselves.

1 Cor 1:6 You certainly have the testimony of Christ evidenced in you. *(You possess full knowledge and give full expression because in you the evidence for the truth of Christ has found confirmation. — NEB)*

Extended Notes on Israel

Rev 20:7 Their reign and priesthood will be fully established within the context of the vastness of this symbolic thousand year period. In sharp

contrast then, only to emphasize the complete and utter defeat of the Satanas-system, he will be let loose very briefly, out of his prison. *(From the Abyss, the symbolic "Bottomless Pit-Underworld", where he was imprisoned when Jesus went there to free mankind. Jesus came back with the keys, remember!)*

Rev 20:8 And his obvious strategy would be to deceive the nations on a global scale including the four corners of the earth by assembling Gog and Magog in war; their number is as the sand of the sea. *(Again, every traditional Jewish concept of judgment is addressed. Gog and Magog is now brought into the conversation, since Jewish eschatology viewed Gog and Magog as enemies to be defeated by the Messiah, which will usher in the age of the Messiah. "Then Eldad and Modad [brothers of Moses] both prophesied together, and said, 'In the very end of time Gog and Magog and their army shall come up against Jerusalem, and they shall fall by the hand of the King Messiah; they shall be slain by the flame of fire which shall proceed from under the throne of glory, and afterwards all the dead of Israel shall rise again to life, and shall enjoy the delights prepared for them from the beginning." Quote from the Jewish Targum. See reference in Num 11:26 and Ez 38:17.)*

Hosea 1:10 Yet the Israelites will be like the sand on the seashore, which cannot be measured or counted. In the place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' they will be called 'children of the living God.'

Genesis 22:17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.

Genesis 32:12 "For You said, 'I will surely prosper you and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which is too great to be numbered.'"

Rom 9:10 Rebecca and Isaac also conceived, consistent with the promise, to further prove the point of faith versus performance.

Rom 9:11 God spoke to Rebecca while the twins were still in the womb. Nothing distinguished them in terms of good looks or performance *(except the fact that the one would be born minutes before the other, which would give him 1st born preference, according to human tradition)***. It was recorded to emphasize the principle of [1]faith-identity as the ultimate value above any preference according to the flesh.** *(The word often translated as "election" is the word [1]**ekloge**, from **ek**, origin, source and*

lego *from* ***logos,*** *the word, see Jhn 1:1,14. Faith nullifies any ground the flesh has to boast in. Rom 3:27)*

Rom 9:12 She was told, "the elder shall serve the younger."

Rom 9:13 We would say that Esau had the raw deal; he was disliked while Jacob was favored. *(And the Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples, born of you, shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other; the elder shall serve the younger." [Gen 25:23].*

The two come out of the same mold; yet they represent two types of people: one who understands his true identity by faith and one who seeks to identify himself after the flesh. Again, the law of performance versus the law of faith is emphasized in order to prepare the ground for the promise-principle. Mankind's salvation would be by promise and not by performance; i.e. it would not be a reward for good behavior. No one will be justified by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; ***poneros****, "evil," full of hardships, annoyances and labor!)*

Rom 9:14 To say that God is unfair, is to miss the point.

Romans 9:24 Being Jewish or Gentile no longer defines us; God's faith defines us. *(He "called" us; kaleo, to identify by name, to surname.)*

Rom 9:25 Hosea voiced the heart of God when he said, "I will call a people without identity, my people, and her who was unloved, my Darling." *(Even Esau whom you said that I hated. [See v 13]. It was common among the Hebrews to use the terms "love" and "hatred" in this comparative sense, where the former implied strong positive attachment, and the latter, not positive hatred, but merely a less love, or the withholding of the expressions of affection [compare Gen 29:30-31; Lk 14:26].)*

Rom 9:26 He prophesies that the very same people who were told that they are not God's people, will be told that they are indeed the children of the living God.

Rom 9:27 Isaiah weeps for Israel: "You might feel lost in the crowd, because your numbers equal the grains of the sand of the sea, but God does not abandon the individual." Numbers do not distract God's attention from the value of the one. *("Isaiah maintained this same emphasis: If each grain of sand on the seashore were numbered and the sum labelled 'chosen of God,' They'd be numbers still, not names; salvation comes by individual realization. God doesn't just count us; he calls us by name. Arithmetic is not his focus." — The Message)*

Rom 9:28 For his word will perfect his righteousness without delay; his

word is poetry upon the earth. *(Jn 1:1,14; Rom 1:16,17.)*

Rom 9:29 The Lord of the [1]multitudes preserved for us a Seed, to rescue us from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. *(From Hebrew, [1]tzaba, (tsabaoth), a mass of people. [See note on Rom 3:10] In Genesis 18, Abraham intercedes for Sodom and Gomorrah, "If there perhaps are 50 righteous people, will you save the city on their behalf?" He continues to negotiate with God, until he's down to "perhaps ten?" " ... there was none righteous, no not one ... ." The remnant represents the one Seed that would rescue the mass of mankind! In Romans 5:17, "one man's obedience and act of righteousness, surpasses the effect of a multitude of sins!" If (spiritual) death saw the gap in one sin, and grabbed the opportunity to dominate mankind in Adam, how much more may we now seize the advantage to reign in righteousness in this life through that one act of Christ, who declared us innocent by his grace. Grace is superior in authority to the transgression! The single grain of wheat did not abide alone! [See John 12:24] Romans 5:18-19 states, "The conclusion is clear: it took just one offense to condemn mankind; one act of righteousness declares the same mankind innocent! The disobedience of the one exhibits mankind as sinners; the obedience of another exhibits mankind as righteous!")*

Rom 9:30 This means that the nations that stood outside and excluded, the very Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness through religious discipline of any kind, have stumbled upon this treasure of faith.

Rom 9:31 Yet Israel who sought to achieve righteousness through keeping the law, based upon their own discipline and willpower, have failed to do so.

Rom 9:32 How did they fail? Faith seemed just too good to be true. They were more familiar and felt more comfortable with their own futile efforts than what they did with faith. Their faith identity *(reflected in Christ)* **was a stone of offense.**

Rom 9:33 The conclusion of the prophetic reference pointed towards the rock as the spirit identity of human life. In Messiah, God has placed his testimony of mankind's identity in front of their eyes, in Zion, the center of their religious focus, yet, blinded by their own efforts to justify themselves, they tripped over him. But those who recognized him by faith, as the Rock from which they were hewn, are freed from the shame of their sense of failure and inferiority. *(See Deuteronomy*

32:18, "you have forgotten the Rock that birthed you…", and in Isaiah 51:1, "Look to the Rock from which you were hewn." It is only in him that mankind will discover what they are looking for. "Who is the son of man?" Mankind's physical identity is defined by their spiritual origin, the image and likeness of God, "I say you are Petros, you are Mr. Rock, a chip of the old block! [See Matthew 16:13-19]. Mankind's origin and true identity is preserved and revealed again in the Rock of ages. The term, "rock" in those days represented what we call the "hard drive" in computer language; the place where data is securely preserved for a long time. Rock fossils carry the oldest data and evidence of life.)

Rom 11:1 I want to make it clear that I am not saying that God rejected Israel, my own life bears witness to that, and I am as Jewish as you can get; you can trace me back to Benjamin and Abraham.

Rom 11:2 God did not push his people aside; his reference is his knowledge of them before they rejected him. Scripture accounts occasions where God had abundant reason to abandon Israel. Elijah hits out against them and lists their sins to persuade God to utterly cast them off. ***(proginosko*** *- to know in advance.)*

Rom 11:3 "Lord, they butchered your Prophets, and undermined your provision through the sacrificial altar; I am the only one left and scared to death." *(1 Kings 19:14.)*

Rom 11:4 Yet God answers him in a completely different tone, "You are counting wrong, you are not alone; I have seven times a thousand on reserve who have not bowed the knee to Baal. They have not exchanged me for a foreign owner." *(Seven times a thousand refers to an innumerable amount and not to an exact 7000 people. The Hebrew word "Baal" means owner, husband or master [1 Kings 19:18].)*

Rom 11:9 David sees how the very table of blessing has become a stumbling block to them through their ignorance. The table of the Lord is the prophetic celebration of the sacrificed Lamb, where God himself provides redemption according to the promise; yet therein they were trapped and snared and they stumbled by their own unbelief. Now their only reward is the table they set for themselves. *([See Ps 69]. Commentary by John Gill: "... the table may be called an altar." 'You put unclean bread on my altar. And you say, 'How have we made it unclean?' By your saying, the table of the Lord is of no value [Mal 1:7].*

The sacrifices offered up upon "the table;" their meat offerings and drink

offerings, and all others, likewise the laws concerning the differences of meats and indeed the whole ceremonial law which lay in meats and drinks and such like things; now the Jews are placing their justifying righteousness before God, in the observance of these rites and ceremonies, and imagining that by these sacrifices their sins are really expiated and atoned for; they neglected and submitted not to the righteousness of Christ, but went about to establish their own so that which should have led them to Christ became a handwriting of ordinances against them, and rendered Christ of no effect to them. Moreover, the sacred writings, which are full of spiritual food and divine refreshment, the prophecies of the Old Testament which clearly pointed out Christ, are not understood but misapplied by them, and proved a trap, a snare, and a stumbling block to them.)

Rom 11:10 This is the penalty of their disbelief; eyes that constantly fail to focus on the fact that Christ took their burdens and now their backs are still bending to the point of breaking under the strain of their own burdens.

Rom 11:11 Does this mean that the Jews are beyond redemption? Is their stumbling permanent? No! May it never be too late for them. Their failure emphasized the inclusion of the Gentile nations. May it only prove to be their wake-up call.

Rom 11:12 If their stumbling enriched the rest of the world and their lack empowered the Gentiles, how much more significant will their realizing their completeness be?

Rom 11:24 You were cut out of the unfruitful olive tree and were grafted into the stock of the original tree. How much more will these natural branches be grafted again into their original identity.

Rom 11:25 Do not be ignorant then of the mystery of their temporal exclusion; their blindness opened your eyes to the fullness of God's plan for the whole world.

Rom 11:26 Once the nations realize the full extent of their inclusion, then all Israel shall also be saved. Just as it is written prophetically, "There shall come a Deliverer out of Zion; he shall turn ungodliness away from Jacob.

Rom 11:27 For this is my covenant with them that I shall take away their sins." *("And as a Savior he will come to Zion, turning away sin from Jacob, says the Lord." [Isa 59:20] "And as for me, this is my agreement with them, says the Lord: my spirit which is on you, and my words which I*

have put in your mouth will not depart from your mouth, or from the mouth of your children, or from the mouth of your children's children, says the Lord, from now and for the ages to come." [Isa 59:21])

Rom 11:28 In your estimation they appear to be enemies of the gospel, but their Father's love for them has not changed. He knows their original worth.

Rom 11:29 For God's grace gifts and his persuasion of mankind's original identity are irrevocable. *(**kaleo** - to surname, to identify by name.)*

Rom 11:30 In days gone by, you did not believe God; yet in a sense Israel's unbelief opened the door for you to realize God's mercy.

Rom 11:31 Now you are returning the favor as it were; your testimony of his mercy extends an opportunity to them to turn from their unbelief and embrace mercy.

Rom 11:32 In God's calculation the mass of mankind is trapped in unbelief. This qualifies all mankind for his mercy.

Rom 11:33 Oh, how amazing is the depth of the wealth of God's wisdom and knowledge. The understanding of his judgements can only be sourced in a conversation that originates from above; also his ways are only accessible in the footprints of his thoughts. *(The word ἀνεξερεύνητος **anexereunētos** from **ana**, upwards and **exereunaō**, to search out [1 Pet 1:10] from **ek**, source, and **ereo**, to utter to speak - [only here and in Eph 3:8] Again the next word begins with the preposition **ana** - ἀνεξιχνίαστος **anexichniastos** from **ana**, upwards and **ek**, source and **ichnos**, a footprint. Sadly, both these words have been wrongly translated to suggest that it is impossible to explain God's decisions or to understand his ways! Sounds like Isa 55:8,9 until verse 10 comes to the rescue! "BUT! Just as the rain and the snow come down from heaven [from above] and saturate the soil, SO shall my Word be! The Incarnation is the key to undersatnding God's thoughts and his ways!)*

Chapter 21

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the age of the previous heaven and earth has passed away. Also the sea was no longer present. *(Isaiah 65:17 For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. See* ***Notes on the New heaven and Earth*** *at the end of this chapter.)*

2 And I saw her, in spotless magnificence, the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, descending out of the heavens; having been fully prepared as a bride and beautifully adorned for her husband. *(In total contrast to the symbolic religious Prostitute city of Babylon. In John 7:37,38 when Jesus speaks of waters gushing forth out of your innermost being, he says that you are the city! You are the bride! God's redeemed society! See notes on* ***The City-Bride*** *at the end of Chapter 3.)*

3 And a glorious announcement was heralded out of the throne, "Behold, God's tabernacle is with the human race!" He has taken up permanent residence in human [1]skin to be with them in the closest possible association of oneness. They are his own possession; his tribe and he is their God inseparably entwined with them. *(The word for tabernacle is σκηνή* ***skene*** *skin! Rev 7:15 Standing free and forgiven in their redeemed innocence and union, face to face before the throne of God, they are fully engaged, day and night in their priestly service of worship in the inner sanctuary.* ***The one seated upon the throne is their tabernacle - he shelters them with his presence.)***

4 He wipes every tear from their eyes and [1]blots out every hurtful memory! And death shall be no more. Nor any association with it; no more mourning and bitter weeping nor any reference to pain! For the former things have passed away! *(The word, [1]****exaleipho****, comes from* ***ek****, out of, and* ***aleipho****, with* ***a,*** *as a particle of union, and* ***liparos****, to grease, to leave a stain; scars of hurtful experiences were like grease stains stored in memory. Rev 7:16,17)*

5 And the one seated upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new! And he instructed me to write, because these words are true and to be relied on! *(Isa 43 :18 Do not remember former things, nor consider the things of old.)*

6 And he said to me, everything is now [1]fully accomplished. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the sum total of the entire prophetic conversation concerning mankind's redemption. I am both the origin and the conclusion of all things. Anyone thirsty can come and drink freely from the gift of the waters of life direct from its source! *(The word [1]**gegonan** from **ginomai**, to make or give birth is in the Perfect Active Indicative Tense denoting an action which is completed in the past, but the effects of which are regarded as continuing into the present. Isa 55:1 "Ho, every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and the finest wheat without money and without price. Isa 55:2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Hearken diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in fatness. Isa 55:3 Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.)*

7 The conquering one inherits all things and I will be God to him and he will be my son. *(This was said of Solomon - 2 Sam 7:13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. 7:14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. And applied to David later in Psa 89:26 He shall cry to me, 'Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation.' 89:27 And I will make him, the first-born [Jesus], the highest of the kings of the earth.)*

8 The [1]fear-driven and unbelieving, those having become [2]rotten to the core; sex peddlers and sorcerers, idolaters and deceivers, their measure is the [3]lake burning with brimstone; this is the Second Death. *([1]**deilos**, timid, from **doeis**, dread; an adjective derived from **deidō**, "fear-driven"*

*The word [2]**bdelussō**, to become rotten, abhorred, foul**;** from **bdelugma** derivative of **bdeo** - to stink.*
Rev 17:4 The woman was draped in purple and scarlet fabric, festooned and sprinkled with golden glitter and ornaments; she was elaborately decorated with gold, precious stones and pearls. Holding a golden chalice in her hand, brimming with defiling obscenities, and the stench of her impurities. [βδελυγματων bdelugma derivative of bdeo - to stink. Again the surface, make-belief beauty and apparent splendor cannot hide her true filthy character - like the white washed tombs Jesus compared the religious system to. "Hypocrites! For you are so careful to clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are filthy - full of greed and self-indulgence! You are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness." Math 23:25, 27.]
See Extended notes on the lake of fire and the Second Death at the end of chapter 19.)

9 And one of the seven angels, having the seven vessels being filled with the seven last wounds, came to me and spoke with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." *(The **numphē**, Bride, is placed in sharp contrast with the **pornē**, Harlot. See same setting in Rev 17:1; Also Rev 15:6 And the seven shepherd-messengers representing the seven wounds proceeded out of the inner shrine being arrayed in spotlessly clean linen shining with the radiant brightness of a precious stone and with golden girdles wrapped around their chests. Rev 15:7 And one of the four living creatures gave each of the shepherd-messengers a typical temple vessel; a broad shallow saucer of pure gold, filled with the coals from the bronze altar where the Lamb was sacrificed - this is the passion of God. These golden fire-pans were loaded with the entire meaning of the sacrifice! This golden saucer was for the purpose of carrying fire, in order to burn incense on the day of Atonement once a year in the ultimate place of worship.)*

10 He carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain, and pointed out to me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven

from God. *(See Ez 40:2. See same language in Rev 17:7)*

11 Possessing the glory of God her radiance resembled a very precious and flawless jasper stone, transparent like crystal.

12 She had an impressive high wall with twelve gates and the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel inscribed in them. *(See Eze 48:31 - 34 the gates of the city being named after the tribes of Israel.)*

13 From the east, three gates; from the north, three gates; from the south, three gates; and from the west, three gates.

14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations or thresholds to the gates, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb. *(See Ephesians 2:17 On that basis he made his public appearance, proclaiming the Good News of peace to the entire human race; both those who felt left out in the cold (as far as the promises and covenants were concerned), as well as to those who were near all along (because of their Jewish identity). Eph 2:18 Because of Christ both Jew and Gentile now enjoy equal access to the Father in one Spirit. Eph 2:19 The conclusion is clear; you are no longer frowned upon as a foreigner; you are where you belong and part of an intimate family. Eph 2:20 Your lives now give tangible definition to the spiritual structure, having been built into it by God upon the foundation that the Prophets and Apostles proclaimed. The first evidence of this building was Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. (He is the visible testimony to the restored image and likeness of God in human form.) Eph 2:21 In him everyone of us are like [1]living Lego blocks fitted together of the same fabric ([1]conversation), giving ever [2]increasing articulation to a global mobile [3]sanctuary intertwined in the Lord. (The word, [1]sunarmologeo, come from sun, meaning union, harmo meaning harmony, and logeo meaning conversation. The word, [2]auxano, means expanding with growth. The word, [3]naos, is translated as the most sacred dwelling*

space.) Eph 2:22 In him you are co-constructed together as God's permanent spiritual residence. You are God's address!)

15 And the one speaking with me had a golden reed wherewith to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.

16 And the city was structured in a perfect quadrangular cube. And he measured the city with the reed at twelve thousand stadia; its length and width and height are equal. *(As eight furlongs make a mile, the extent of the walls, therefore, must have been three hundred and seventy-five miles each. [1500 miles divided by 4] The symbolic picture emphasizes that its height, three hundred and seventy-five miles, suggests a fusion with the heavens, and is equal to its width and length. [Earth's atmosphere is about 300 miles.] The vertical dimensions equal the horizontal dimensions - the Bride-city's relationship with he Bridegroom in her fusion with heaven equally translates to her horizontal relationships on earth. A perfect cube like the Holy of Holies in Solomon's temple. 1Ki 6:19,20*
Adam Clarke suggests that the quadrangular form intimates its perfection and stability, for the square figure was a figure of perfection among the Greeks; αντρ τετραγωνος, the square or cubical man, was, with them, a man of unsullied integrity, perfect in all things.)

17 And he also measured its wall, a hundred and forty four cubits; his measure was the stature of a man which is the measure of the prophetic shepherd-messenger. *[The Incarnate Messiah]***.** *(Eph 4:13, ...to bring everyone into the realization of the fullness of the measure of Christ in them! The word,* ***xristos****, the Anointed one, from χρίω* ***chriō****, to smear or rub with oil, to anoint; to draw the hand over, to measure; from χείρ* ***cheir****, hand. [We still measure the height of horses by hand - ie. "A seventeen hand horse!"] See also the Hebrew for Messiah,* ***mashach****, to draw the hand over, to measure! [Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon, B Davidson.] In Jesus Christ, God has measured mankind innocent, he is the blueprint of our design! Christ in us defines us! He measures our identity, our sonship, our belonging, our value, our innocence and our royalty.*
See Isa 60:18 "You shall call your walls Salvation, **העושי** *yeshû'âh and your*

gates Praise." See Notes on ***The Measure of the temple*** *at the end of Chapter 11)*

18 And the structure of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like pure glass.

19 And the thresholds of every gate in the wall of the city was beautifully adorned with every precious stone: The first threshold, jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;

20 the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprasus; the eleventh, [1]hyacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. *(The twelve gems correspond closely with the twelve stones on the high priest's breastplate. Exo 28:17-20; Exo 39:10. The Hebrew term for the breastplate,* וֹשֶׁחֹ *(ḥōšen), appears to be named from its appearance, probably derived from the same source as Arabic (ḥasuna), meaning "to be beautiful" See Ez 28:12,13. See Notes on* ***The splendor of the Gates - the redeemed beauty of the Bride*** *at the end of this chapter.)*

21 And each one of the twelve gates were an individual giant pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold like transparent glass.

22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the supreme power vested in the Lamb, is its temple. *(The entire city is now one holy temple of God. We are made kings and priests. Rev 1:6. Rev 21:3 And a glorious announcement was heralded out of the throne, "Behold, God's tabernacle is with the human race!" He has taken up permanent residence in human skin to be with them in the closest possible association of oneness. Also Rev 7:15 The one seated upon the throne is their tabernacle - he shelters them with his presence. It is almost unspeakable that of all the themes God could choose from to celebrate the central authority of the throne Room, he chose*

the Lamb! Mankind's redeemed innocence is the theme of the throne of heaven, forever! "Having accomplished purification of sins, he sat down ..." His throne is proof of mankind's redeemed innocence! Heb 1:3.)

23 And the city had no need of the sun, nor of the moon, that they might shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it; the Lamb is its lamp.

24 And the nations will conduct their lives in the Lamb's light; and the kings of the earth bring their glory [their people] into her. *(Erasmus added τῶν σωζομένων, "of the ones saved" and so did innumerable editors, evidently following his authority without any further examination! Codex 1 dates from the 11th or 12th century, which Erasmus used in making his Greek text. The words, "of the ones saved" eventually became part of the Textus Receptus and were translated into the KJV and the NKJV. These words were not in the older manuscripts! Again a manipulation of the text in order to exclude the majority of the masses who didn't know or responded to the Good News! This reminds of a similar miss-translation of Isaiah 35:8 The highway in the wilderness will be called the Highway of holiness! It will be so obvious that no "unclean person" will miss it! Not even fools will get lost. This is their way of escape! Their salvation from the wilderness of their lostness! Isa 35:10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away! See the beautiful context! Isa 35:1 The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus Isa 35:2 it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. Isa 35:3 Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Isa 35:4 Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not! Behold, your God will come and save you." Isa 35:5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; Isa 35:6 then shall the lame man leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert!)*

25 And your gates will be open continually! Day or night they'll never be shut. *(See Isaiah 60:11; Zech 14:7)*

26 And they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into her. The nations will discover their redeemed, authentic doxa-identity and priceless value in the light of the Lamb! *(See commentary in the next verse.)*

27 And no-one classified as [1]common will enter into her, nor anyone making an abomination or a lie; but only the ones whose lives are defined in the Lamb's Book of Life. That which were common, abominable and the fruit of deception were all dealt with in the Lamb's doing! Now, the Lamb's Book of Life defines us and never again our own doing! *(The word **koinos**, to have all things in common; [Acts 2:44, Acts 4:32] reminds of the word, **koinonia**. But **koinos,** in this context, means common - non Jewish - often referring to the nations - See Acts 10:14 But Peter said, "No, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is **common** or unclean." Act 10:15 And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has cleansed, you must not call common." Also Acts 10:28, and he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit any one of another nation; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone **common** or unclean!"*
Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
Here John clearly records that the nations and their kings have been equally cleansed and embraced in innocence and are equally part of the Bride! Their old Jewish fears, perceptions and definitions have all been conclusively addressed!
Also Eph 3:14 Overwhelmed by what grace communicates, I bow my knees in awe before the Father.
Eph 3:15 Every family in heaven and on earth originates in him; his is mankind's family name and he remains the authentic identity of every nation.
Isaiah saw the new Jerusalem-Bride in the context of the powerful prophetic salvation poetry recorded in Isaiah 52,53 and 54.

Isa 52:1 Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. [Addressing the city of Jerusalem in the feminine singular in Hebrew.]
The Jewish narrative explains the entire context of the Gospel!)
Revelation Chapter 21 Extended Notes:
The New heaven and Earth
The Splendor of the Gates - the redeemed beauty of the bride
The New heaven and Earth
Rev 20:10 The Devil, who led them astray will be hurled into the lake of fire and brimstone where his puppet partners the Beast and the False Prophet have already been confined to. Day and Night they will be the subject of God's [1]touchstone for the ages of the ages - the very atmosphere of the entire universe will be thoroughly fumigated from any evidence of Satanas. *(See my notes on the [1]Touchstone in Rev 14:10)*
Rev 20:11 And I saw a huge white throne and it was as if heaven and earth fled away from the presence of the one seated upon the throne and its place was never found again. *(This means that there is no accusation in the heavens or upon the earth that could possibly stand in the presence of the Lamb, the One seated upon the throne of the judgment of righteousness – his throne gives testimony to mankind's redeemed acquittal. See Hebrews 1:3 "Having made purification for sins he sat down." There exists no evidence that could be brought from any sphere or dimension that could possibly testify against the human race - Acts 17 The God of creation has overlooked the times of ignorance and now urgently persuades all of mankind everywhere to awaken in their understanding to the fact of their innocence - he appointed a day and a person and on that day and in that person God would judge he world in righteousness and of this he has given proof by raising Jesus from the dead! The resurrected Jesus is the official receipt and verdict confirming mankind's redeemed innocence! Romans 4:25.* ***The entire universe now bears witness to mankind's redeemed innocence.***
Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones and those seated upon the thrones have been given judgment. They are the souls who didn't worship the Beast or its image, and did not take his mark in their foreheads or on their hands. The system of the Beast [1]axed them because of the Testimony of

Jesus and because of the Word of God, since they didn't fit into their religious mold! They are the living beings, joined together in the Christ life, reigning from their joint-seatedness in the throne of the Lamb for a thousand years. *(See **notes on the thousand years** at the end of Chapter 20. Rev 1:2 John gave accurate evidence to **the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ**, exactly as he saw it. [The Testimony of Jesus Christ is the context of the prophetic word.] The word, [1]**pelekizō**, axe, to cut off, from **plassō**, to form, mold something from clay, wax, etc. - used of a potter - they would not be molded into a distorted image-mindset. Rev 21:1, also Mat 19:28 Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the rebooting of mankind, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. See the word, **paliggenesia**, suggests a complete restoration to the original, in modern terms, rebooted. From **palin**, again by repetition and **genesis**, source.)*

Heb 12:22 By contrast, we have been welcomed to an invisible mount Zion; the city of peace *(Jerusalem)***, the residence of the living God, the festive assembly of an innumerable Angelic host!**

Heb 12:23 We are participating in a mass joint-celebration of heavenly and earthly beings; the [1]Ekklesia-church of the firstborn mirror-inscribed in the heavenlies. *(Our original identity, [1]**Ekklesia**, from **ek**, a preposition that always denotes origin, and **kaleo**, meaning to identify by name, to surname], is endorsed by Jesus, patterned in him, the first born from the dead.)*

Heb 12:24 Jesus is the spokesman and arbitrator of the New Testament order. His blood signature sanctions mankind's innocence. This is a complete new language that communicates better things, in that it is the very substance of what was spoken in the shadow-type message of the blood sacrifice that Abel brought. *(Abel's faith was a prophetic introduction to the sacrificial shadow system of the Old Covenant. Jesus is the substance of things hoped for! Heb 11:4 It was faith that made the difference between the sacrifices of Abel and Cain, and confirmed Abel's righteousness. God bore witness to righteousness as a gift rather than a reward! Even though he was murdered, his faith still has a most relevant prophetic voice.)*

Heb 12:25 If Jesus is the crescendo of God's final message to mankind,

you cannot afford to politely excuse yourself from this conversation. Consider the prominent place that Moses plays in the history of Israel: if you think that Moses or any of the Prophets who spoke with authority on earth deserve honor, how much more should this word that God declared from heaven concerning our sonship, and our redeemed innocence revealed in the Messiah himself, deserve our undivided attention!

Heb 12:26 When he introduced the prophetic shadow of what was to come *(the Law system)***, his voice visibly shook the earth.** *(Ex 19:18.)* **But now the Messiah has come** *(he is the desire of the nations; he is what heaven and earth were waiting for [Hag 2:6,7])* **The voice of God** *(articulated in Christ's birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection)* **has rocked not only the systems on the earth, but also every unseen principality in the heavens, to their very foundations!**

Heb 12:27 In the words of the Prophet, "Yet once more will I shake every unstable system of man's effort to rule himself." God clearly indicates his plan to remove the old and replace it with the new. The second shaking supersedes any significance in the first shaking. Then it was a physical quaking of the earth; now the very foundations of every man-made system was shaken to the core while the heavens were impacted by the announcement of his permanent rule on earth as it is mirrored in heaven.

Heb 12:28 We are fully associated in this immovable Kingdom; an authority that cannot be challenged or contradicted. Our participation echoes grace *(and not law-inspired obedience)* **as we [1]accommodate ourselves to God's delight, yielding in awe to his firm embrace.** *(The word, [1]**euaresto**, means well pleasing, to accommodate yourself to God's delight.)*

Heb 12:29 His zeal for us burns like fire. *(Deut 4:24)*

Isa 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Isa 9:7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

2 Cor 5:17 The old things have passed away, behold, everything has become new! 21:4 He wipes every tear from their eyes and [1]blots out every hurtful memory! And death shall be no more. Nor any association with it; no more mourning and bitter weeping nor any reference to pain! For the former things have passed away! *(The word, [1]**exaleipho**, comes from **ek**, out of, and **aleipho**, with **a,** as a particle of union, and **liparos**, to grease, to leave a stain; scars of hurtful experiences were like grease stains stored in memory.*

Rev 21:3 And a glorious announcement was heralded out of the throne, "Behold, God's tabernacle is with the human race!" He has taken up permanent residence in human skin to be with them in the closest possible association of oneness. They are his own possession; his tribe and he is their God inseparably entwined with them. *(Rev 7:15 Standing free and forgiven in their redeemed innocence and union, face to face before the throne of God, they are fully engaged, day and night in their priestly service of worship in the inner sanctuary.* ***The one seated upon the throne is their tabernacle - he shelters them with his presence.***

Rev 21:4 He wipes every tear from their eyes and [1]blots out every hurtful memory! And death shall be no more. Nor any association with it; no more mourning and bitter weeping nor any reference to pain! For the former things have passed away! *(The word, [1]**exaleipho**, comes from **ek**, out of, and **aleipho**, with **a,** as a particle of union, and **liparos**, to grease, to leave a stain; scars of hurtful experiences were like grease stains stored in memory. Rev 7:16 & 17.*

Isaiah 25:6 The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; a banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, and refined, aged wine. Isa 25:7 and on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, even the veil which is stretched over all nations. Isa 25:8 He will swallow up death for all time, And the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces, And he will remove the reproach of his people from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken….Holman Christian Standard Bible

And on this mountain, he will swallow up the burial shroud that enfolds all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations—

Isa 51:11 And the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy

and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.
observes Socrates, "How thrice happy those of mortals, who, having had these ends in view, depart to Hades; for to them alone is it given there to live; but to others, all things there are evil" ("Fragment"). And Euripides: "The dead, tearless, forgets his pains."
Rev 7:16 Here there is no memory of hunger or thirst or a scorching sun to plague them! *(Isa 49 is fulfilled! See Isa 49:6 "I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." The tribes of Judah as prophetic pointer to the entire population of the planet are gathered as one in worship!" Isa 49:10 "They shall not hunger or thirst, neither scorching wind nor sun shall smite them, for he who has pity on them will lead them, and by springs of water will guide them.")*
Rev 7:17 For the little Lamb who occupies the center stage of the throne will shepherd them and lead them beside living springs of water and God shall [1]blot out every hurtful memory of the tears they have cried! *(The word, [1]**exaleipho**, comes from **ek**, out of, and **aleipho**, with **a,** as a particle of union, and **liparos**, to grease, to leave a stain; scars of hurtful experiences were like grease stains stored in memory.*
A similar scene is set here to mirror the historic deliverance of Israel out of slavery in the build-up to the first prophetic Passover - this time the dramatic symbolic pictures reflect on the final Passover and the slain Lamb on the throne addressing and bringing closure and conclusion to the many ideas of judgment so deeply entrenched in Jewish consciousness. ***Their stories and symbolic prophetic pictures are repeated again and again, waging war against their perceived reasonings and philosophies portrayed in their own historic priesthood and altar services.***
The number seven brings out the varied forms as well as their essential oneness; whether the "seven Spirits of God"; the "seven churches," the "seven horns" and "seven eyes" of the Lamb, the "seven seals," the "seven trumpets", and the "seven bowls.")
Isaiah 25:6 The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; a banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, and refined, wine on the lees. Isa 25:7 And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, even the veil which is stretched over all nations. Isa 25:8 He will swallow up death for all time, And the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces, And he will remove the reproach of his people from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken....Holman

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And on this mountain, he will swallow up the burial shroud that enfolds all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations—
Isa 51:11 And the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.
Observes Socrates, "How thrice happy those of mortals, who, having had these ends in view, depart to Hades; for to them alone is it given there to live; but to others, all things there are evil" ("Fragment"). And Euripides: "The dead, tearless, forgets his pains."
Rev 21:5 And the one seated upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new! And he instructed me to write, because these words are true and to be relied on! *(See Isa 43 :18 Do not remember former things, nor consider the things of old.)*

Rev 21:6 And he said to me, everything is now [1]fully accomplished. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the sum total of the entire prophetic conversation concerning mankind's redemption. I am both the origin and the conclusion of all things. Anyone thirsty can come and drink freely from the gift of the waters of life direct from its source! *(The word [1]**gegonan** from **ginomai**, to make or give birth is in the Perfect Active Indicative Tense denoting an action which is completed in the past, but the effects of which are regarded as continuing into the present. Isa 55:1 "Ho, every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and the finest wheat without money and without price. Isa 55:2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Hearken diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in fatness. Isa 55:3 Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.)*

The Splendor of the Gates - the redeemed beauty of the bride

Rev 21:18 And the structure of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like pure glass.
Rev 21:19 And the thresholds of every gate in the wall of the city was beautifully adorned with every precious stone: The first threshold, jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;
Rev 21:20 the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh,

chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprasus; the eleventh, [1]hyacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. *See commentary note on [1]**Hyacinth** in Rev 9:17.*

Rev 21:21 And each one of the twelve gates were an individual giant pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold like transparent glass.

Rev 21:22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the supreme power vested in the Lamb, is its temple.

(The twelve gems correspond closely with the twelve stones on the high priest's breastplate. Exo 28:17-20; Exo 39:10. The Hebrew term for the breastplate, וֹשֶׁח (ḥōšen), describes its appearance, probably derived from the same source as Arabic (ḥasuna), meaning "to be beautiful" See Ez 28:12,13.

*See Exo 24:10 and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a pavement of **sapphire** stone, like the very heaven for its transparency.*

Isa 54:10 For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

*Isa 54:11 "O afflicted one, storm-tossed, and not comforted, behold, I will set your stones in beautiful colors, and **lay your foundations with sapphires**.*

Isa 54:12 I will make your pinnacles of rubies, and your gates of sparkling jewels, and all your walls of precious stones.

Isa 54:13 All your sons shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the prosperity of your sons.

Isa 54:14 In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near you.

Everything lost in Adam and Eve is now fully redeemed in the Bride.

A graphic narrative is recorded on the perfect beauty of mankind in the Garden of Eden and their fall from glory into the Prostitute-mindset-system of the DIY-Tree. See Ezek 28:12 "You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. Eze 28:13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, carnelian, topaz, and jasper, chrysolite, beryl, and onyx, sapphire, carbuncle, and emerald; and wrought in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. Eze 28:14 With an anointed guardian cherub I

placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. Eze 28:15 You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you. Eze 28:16 In the abundance of your ***trade*** *[See notes on the currency of sin-consciousness at the end of Rev 13] you were filled with violence, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and the guardian cherub drove you out from the midst of the stones of fire. Eze 28:17 Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. Eze 28:18 By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought forth fire from the midst of you; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all who saw you. Eze 28:19 All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more for ever." See Notes on the* ***lake of fire*** *at the end of Rev 19. Also my notes on* ***the Sword of the Lord****, Rev 2:16 and Rev 1:16 The Sword would always point back to mankind's original identity. The Hebrew word in Gen 3:24, [where the cherub with the flaming sword was positioned at the Eastern Gate of Eden]* ***דפה hâphak*** *is a primitive root; meaning to turn about; by implication to change, to return, to be converted, turn back. Also in the Septuagint the same thought is communicated in the Greek word,* ***strephō****, which is the strengthened from the base of* ***tropay****; to turn around or reverse: - convert, turn again, back again, to turn self about. In Luke 15 the prodigal son returns to himself - Plato is quoted by Ackerman [Christian Element in Plato] as thinking of redemption as coming to oneself!*

In symbolic language the judgment of the Dragon, the Beast and the Whore; the counterfeit Trinity, is not a judgment against an entity, but against a corrupt mindset-system. A virus doesn't have a life of its own - it needs a host!)

Chapter 22

1 And he pointed me to a river with crystal clear, living waters, flowing out of God's throne, endorsing the reign of the Lamb. *(Again this picture is taken from familiar Jewish prophetic narrative. Zec 14:7 And there shall be continuous day, no night; every evening will be a new morning. Zec 14:8 On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, it shall continue in summer as in winter. Zec 14:10 The land will stretch out spaciously around Jerusalem—to Geba in the north and Rimmon in the south, with Jerusalem towering at the center, and the commanding city gates—Gate of Benjamin to First Gate to Corner Gate to Hananel Tower to the Royal Winery—encircling the city. Zec 14:11 And they shall live in it. And there shall not again be a shutting in, but Jerusalem shall dwell safely. Zec 14:16 Then all the nations shall go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep* ***the Feast of Tabernacles****. And the LORD will become king over all the earth; on that day the LORD will be One and his Name One. See John 7:37 On* ***the last day of the feast [of Tabernacles]****, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. John 7:38 He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" Just like Babylon is not a city in the symbolic language of Revelation, it is a fallen-mindset society; so the New Jerusalem is not a city but the redeemed society of mankind! The Bride of Christ! In John 7:37,38 when Jesus speaks of waters gushing forth out of your innermost being, he says that you are the city! You are the bride! God's redeemed society!)*

2 The Tree of Life is the central theme throughout the City - right down the middle of the street, as well as on each side of the River, producing twelve varieties of ripe fruit, all year round. The [1]leaves of the Tree are for the healing of the nations. *(The leaves of the tree define the tree. This is where the remarkable process of photosynthesis takes place. With sunlight, the leaves convert carbon dioxide into oxygen.*
Again these beautiful pictures are reflections of Jewish prophetic writings... See Ez 47:12 "But the river itself, on both banks, will grow fruit trees of all kinds. Their leaves won't wither, the fruit won't fail. Every month they'll bear fresh fruit because the river from the Sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing."
See Genesis 3:22 on the Tree of Life, "Behold, The man, who ***was already***

created *like one of us, now also partook of the knowledge of the evil; [the idea of, "I am not who God says I am and created me to be;"] and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever in this "lost identity" state..." The text does not say, "he has now become like one of us!" The original Hebrew and the most authentic versions use the Perfect Tense,* ***hayah****, which is the* ***qal*** *stem, masculine, third person, active, and in the perfect form, and signifies was, not is. The Samaritan text, the Syriac, and the Septuagint, have the same tense. The Greek verb,* ***γέγονεν****, is the perfect active indicative tense of* ***ginomai****. See my commentary notes on 1 John 3:12 Thoughts on, "Why the other tree and why the temptation in the Garden?")*

3 There will be no memory of any [1]curse! God's throne, endorsing the reign of the Lamb will be the presence in her. Mankind's redeemed innocence is the central theme of the city! And they, his [2]bond-Bride, will [3]worship him for all eternity! *(See Gal 3:11 Habakkuk confirms conclusively that righteousness by God's faith is the only basis to life; this terminates any possible justification before God based on behavior. (Hab 2:4, 3:17-19) Gal 3:12 Law and faith have nothing in common! Law measures a person's doing and experience as defining their life. (Faith measures God's doing in redeeming his design in us, as defining our lives.) Gal 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the [1]****curse*** *as consequence of our failure to keep the law. In his cross he concentrated the total curse of the human race upon himself. In his abandoning himself to death, he absorbed and dissolved the horror of the curse in his own person. Scripture declares that anyone hanging on a tree embodies the curse. (Deut 21:23) Gal 3:14 This act of Christ released the blessing of Abraham upon the Gentiles! Now we are free to receive the blessing of the Spirit. (Righteousness by God's faith in the achievement of Christ, and not as a reward for our behavior. In the obedience of Christ Deuteronomy 28 is out-dated! [Rom 5:19, Eph 1:3] The mass of non-Jewish nations are equally included.)*
Again quoting from Jewish Scripture, Zech 14:11 And the city shall be inhabited, for there shall be no more [1]curse; Jerusalem shall dwell in security. RSV.
*The word, [2]****doulos****, slave from* ***deo****, to bind; also, to be bound together in*

wedlock.
*Here John intentionally employs the Jewish word for worship, [3]**latreuō**; to serve [in some contexts, for a wage; for hire,] but in the Jewish context describing their sacrificial service to God; See Paul's use in Acts 26:6 "And now for the hope of the promise having been made by God to the fathers; Acts 26:7 to which our twelve tribes hope to arrive, worshiping [**latreuo**] in earnestness night and day."*
*A Jew would be offended by the application of this term to Christian worship. In Philippians 3:3 Paul, however, takes this word and converts it to spirit worship, "We give "circumcision" its true spiritual meaning! Our worship [**latreuo**] is not defined by anything external that would even remotely resemble the law of works and religious rituals! We worship God in the certainty of our redeemed innocence and rejoice in the finished work of Jesus Christ. Faith-righteousness gives substance to spiritual worship; the flesh occupies the religious mind with its own futile efforts to attain to righteousness." Phil 3:3)*

4 And you will gaze upon him, face to face; recognizing every distinct detail of his divine features mirrored in you! His Name will find a face in you! *(The word [1]**metopon**, from **meta**, together with, and **ὤψ - ops**, countenance, face, forehead. Also Rev 3:12. See Psalm 17:15, As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied, beholding your form. Psalm 34:5 Look him in the face - you'll glisten with God. You'll gleam, your face'll scream, "GOD!" 2 Cor 3:18, "We've got our masks off; God's brilliance is bouncing off our faces! We're glowing from knowing!" Rob Lacey*
"The whole earth is full of his glory!" Isa 6:3.)

5 No more night! No lamps; not even sunlight required! Master God engulfs them with light. And in this light will they reign supreme for ever and ever! *("And the nations shall come to your light and their kings to the brightness of your rising!" Isaiah 60:3 "In your light do we see the light!" Psalm 36:9. Also 2 Cor 4:6.*
See also Rev 21:23 And the city had no need of the sun, nor of the moon,

that they might shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it; the Lamb is its lamp.)

6 And he said to me, "These words are certain and true; the Lord God of the spirits of the Prophets, has commissioned his shepherd-messenger to point his [1]bond-servants, to that, which according to all the prophetic pointers, was to inevitably have happened in a brief moment of time. *(A [1]bond servant is one who cleaves to his master out of no other obligation but total loving devotion.*

*This is a repeat of Revelation 1:1 Jesus Christ [1]unveiled! This is the revelation of God's [2]gift which was wrapped up [3]in him, in order to clearly illustrate to his bond-servants that, which according to prophetic pointers, [4]inevitably [5]was to have happened in a brief moment of time; this message was [6]vividly portrayed in symbolic pictures by his shepherd-herald, commissioned to communicate its mystery to his bond-servant John. (The word, [1]**apokalupsis** means an uncovering. The word [2]**didōmi** means to give; to furnish; to extend; to present. The word [3]**autoo** is the personal pronoun in the Dative case, indicating location in. The word [4]**dei** is from **deoo**, to bind; thus predictably, necessarily, inevitably. John employs the verb, [5]**ginomai**, to beget, in the Aorist Infinitive tense, **genesthai**, which indicates prior completion of an action in relationship to a point in time. Greek infinitives could have either a present or Aorist form. The contrast between the two forms was not necessarily one of time, it is a difference of aspect. The present Infinitive was used to express progressive or imperfective aspect. It pictures the action expressed by the verb as being in progress. The Aorist Infinitive however does not express progressive aspect. It presents the action expressed by the verb as a completed unit with a beginning and end. The word [6]**sēmainō**, to give a symbolic sign; signify; to picture; to portray. Symbolism and imagery play a significant role throughout the book. John would employ pictures that his mostly Jewish audience was already familiar with in their own prophetic writings.)*

7 Behold, I am not distant from you! I am at hand - see my closeness, not my absence! Blessed is the one who treasures the prophetic values of the Scriptures.*(Revelation 1:2,3 John gave accurate evidence to the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, exactly as he saw it. Blessed is the one who reads and those who hear with understanding the words of this prophetic enlightenment and treasure what is recorded in this writing; its time has come!)*

8 I, John am the one hearing and perceiving these things! I have indeed heard and seen! I fell prostrate in worship at the feet of the shepherd-messenger who showed me these things.

9 He immediately stopped me and said, "I want you to see something else! As a shepherd-messenger I am a joint bond-servant and brother of your family, the Prophets. We are all one family!" *(See also Rev 19:10)*

10 He told me not to seal this conversation in futuristic, prophetic language since it's time has come!

11 *[This is the final conclusion where mankind's self-help programs are brought to naught!]* **This is not about how [1]out of sync or righteous you are; neither about how soiled your garments or how squeaky clean and holy you are by your own efforts and standards! Those who are out of [1]sync, [2]so be it! Those whose garments are soiled [2]so be it! Those who are righteous and holy [2]so be it!** *(The word often translated, unrighteous, [1]**adike**, from **a**, negative and **dikay**, two parties in sync with one another; shared likeness - thus, **adike** means to be out of sync. Your own doing does not define you! It is the Lamb's doing that defines you! From beginning to end! He is your Alpha and Omega!*
*The [2]Aorist Imperative is employed here again and again, Let them be! [2]So be it! - and thus, very intentionally, emphasizes the fact that whatever it was that people based their moral condition on, was just that - now leave it there; don't try and change yourself - realize **once and for all** that its not*

your efforts that's gonna get it right! The distinction between the Aorist imperative and the present imperative is one of aspect, not tense. It's important to distinguish between tense [eg past, present, future] and aspect [eg completed, repeated, one-time, ongoing]. The Aorist Imperative points to a once and for all completed action, "Get it over and done with!")

12 Behold! *[again Aorist Imperative!]* **Now get the message, once and for all! I [1]am come! There are no further delays! This is the hour the Prophets pointed to! And my reward is with Me, to give to each as his** *[the Lamb's]* **work is.** *[The verb,* ***ερχομαι*** *erchomai, is in the Present Indicative Tense, I am come! Here John again repeats what the Prophets spoke concerning this time! [Isaiah 62:11] Behold, the LORD has made it to be heard to the end of the earth. Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold!* ***Your salvation comes****! Behold! His reward is [2]with himself, and* ***his work*** *[3]before him!] (The [2]Hebrew,* ***תּאָ, Aleph Tau,*** *are the first and last letters of their Alphabet just as* ***Alpha*** *and* ***Omega*** *are the first and last letters of the Greek Alphabet! My work is [3]before me, Hebrew,* ***pawneem*** *face to face! Same word in Psalm 16:11 In your "presence"* ***pawneem*** *is fullness of joy! There is definitely no reference here of man's work - the entire prophetic context of salvation points to the work of the Messiah! Note,* ***Your salvation is his work!*** *Isaiah 62:11. See 1 Peter 1:17 Now since you are defined in your Father, who does not judge anyone on face value, but always only according his work; (his finished work in Christ) wherever you find yourself located geographically or emotionally, return to your 'at homeness' in him; you are not defined by your circumstances. (The word* ***anastrepho****, suggests a radical returning; literally a turning upside down! Actually* ***ana****, means upwards - so its a turning downside up!)And to further emphasize the strong influence of the Hebrew text quoted here, the next verse continues with the same theme and further conclusion of the* ***Aleph Tau*** *and* ***Alpha Omega****!)*

13 I am the [1]Alpha and the Omega - the initiator and the [2]conclusion; the genesis and completeness. *(I am the entire Alphabet of God's conversation!* ***Ego to A kai to Ω , ho protos kai ho eschatos; arche kai telos!*** *The union of* ***Alpha*** *and* ***Omega****, in Greek, makes the verb* ***αω****, I*

breathe. And in Hebrew the union of the first and last letter in their alphabet, ***Aleph*** *and* ***Tau*** *makes* **תא,** ***et****, which the Rabbis interpret of the first matter out of which all things were formed, [see Gen 1:1] This is untranslatable in English but, says Rabbi Aben Ezra, "it signifies the substance of the thing!" The revelation of Jesus as the Alpha and Omega is the one in whom we live, and move, and have our being! He is indeed closer to us than the air we breathe! Don't waste a day waiting for another day! I am the initiator and the* ***eschatos****. Eschatology is defined in my I-am-ness.)*

14 Oh the [1]bliss and intense delight of those clothed in [2]washed garments - having realized the [3]authority of their redeemed innocence and identity; they have sourced their I-am-ness in the Tree of Life. This is their access thru the gates into the city. *(The word, [1]****makarios****, blessed, suggests a special intensity of delight. The King James Bible, using the Textus Receptus, reads, Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city - ποιουντες [do] τας εντολας [the commandments]; instead of the much older manuscripts which read πλυνοντες washed τας στολας garments. The variation here is clearly a deliberate change. The observation of the commandments elsewhere uses τηρειν terein, treasure not poiountes, do! The word translated authority, [3]****exousia****, from* ***ek****, source and* ***eimi****, I am.)*

15 *[In total contrast to this bliss, are the thirsty ones!]* **Those who love and live lies are outside the city gates like stray dogs. The sorcerers and their witchcraft, selling their bodies in prostitution; murderers, consumed by the business of idolatry.** *(To them the Spirit and the Bride say, COME!!! Rev 22:17)*

16 I am Jesus. I sent my shepherd-messenger to be witness of these things to you before the churches; confirming to them that I am the Root and offspring of David, the radiant Morning Star! *(Rev 5:5 Then one of the elders said unto me, "You need not weep anymore! Look! The Lion has conquered! He who is of the tribe of Judah,* ***the root of David!*** *His*

triumph qualifies him to open the scroll and its seven seals!" Rev 5:6 So I looked to see the Lion, and there, as if fused into one with the throne and in unison with the four living beings, taking center stage in the midst of the elders, I saw a little Lamb, alive and standing even though it seemed to have been violently butchered in sacrifice! It had seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven Spirits of God having been sent out to accomplish his bidding in all the earth.

*In Jesus, the prophetic word, which shone all along like a lamp in the night, becomes the radiant Morning Star, rising in our hearts, announcing the full unveiling of the day! Also Rev 9:1 When the fifth shepherd-messenger blew his trumpet, I saw a star that had fallen to earth from the sky. The star was given the key to the shaft into the fathomless depths of the Abyss. [The symbolic value of the number five is divine grace.] Jesus is the bright Morning Star Rev 2:28 and I am the bright Morning Star! Also 2 Pet 1:19 We have the prophetic word made more sure! RSV For us the appearing of the Messiah is no longer a future promise but a fulfilled reality. Now it is your turn to have more than a second-hand, hearsay testimony. Take my word as one would take a lamp at night; the day is about to dawn for you in your own understanding. When the Morning Star [**phōsphoros**] appears, you no longer need the lamp; this will happen shortly on the horizon of your own hearts. In his death Jesus conquered the underworld and he has the keys; no-one else does! Rev 1:17 Observing all this I fell at his feet like a dead man; then he laid his right hand on me and said, "Do not be afraid! I am the origin and conclusion of all things. Rev 1:18 And the Living One; I became dead and now, see, here I am alive unto the ages of the ages and I have the keys wherewith I have disengaged the gates of Hades and Death! See Isa 14:12, הֵילֵל **heilel**, means "shining one" In the Greek, **phōsphoros** - bearer of light - Septuagint - Latin, Lucifer, bearer of light! Here in Isa 14 Babylon's rule is compared to the bright morning star - ushering in the rule of its day - which is the counterfeit image - Isa 14:14 "I will make myself like the Most High!" The fallen mindset-system is based on the idea that we are not image bearers of God - the Ophis lie in Genesis 5 - we have to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and poneros [hardships labor and annoyances] in order to become like God.*

The incarnate Jesus, the only true Morning Star descended into the deepest pits of mankind's hellish darkness and despair in their lost identity on his rescue mission to lead us out as God's trophies in his triumphant procession

on high! Eph 4:8 See also Eph 2:5,6.)
See my notes on ***The "Fallen Star" is The bright Morning Star,*** *at the end of Rev 9. See my* ***Further comments on the root of Jesse. at the end of verse 21.)***

17 The Spirit and the Bride beckons, "Come!" And let everyone in whom this bold bidding resonates, extend the same urgent invitation, "Oh yes, come!" This is for the thirsty to come and quench their deepest longings by freely drinking from the water of life! *(Hear the prophetic echo in Isaiah's pleading in chapter 55:1 Ho, every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and the finest wheat without money and without price!*
Isa 55:2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Hearken diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in fatness.
Isa 55:3 Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.
Isa 55:4 Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.
Isa 55:5 Behold, you shall call nations that you know not, and nations that knew you not shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, and of the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.
Isa 55:6 "Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;
Isa 55:7 let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
Isa 55:8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the LORD.
Isa 55:9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.
Isa 55:10 "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not thither but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
Isa 55:11 so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not

return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it.
Isa 55:12 "For you shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
Isa 55:13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial, for an everlasting sign which shall not be cut off.")

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19 *[I wrote the following on my introduction page of the Mirror Bible, never realizing that this specific quote from Rev 22:18,19 carried so much controversy!] "Jesus is God's language and message to mankind. He is the context of Scripture. To add anything to his completed work in revealing and redeeming the image of God in human form, or take anything away from what God spoke to us in him, is to depart from the essence of the Gospel. 22:18, 19." See further comments below...)*

20 The One, responding to the bidding of the Bride, on a disillusioned mankind's behalf *[like the prodigal returning home in the return of Jesus from our lostness and darkness]* **says, yes! I am the evidence of your return! Without any delay!**
"Oh, you're so welcome Lord Jesus!", says the Bride! I can't wait to embrace you home, my Lord and my God!

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus is with everyone! *(Revelation ends with one final surprise, in the form of a textual variant in verse 21. Is grace declared to 'all the Saints' (NRSV text), or 'to all' (NRSV footnote)? The shorter reading is the more original! The words μετὰ πάντων,* ***meta pantoon****, with everyone is the original ending - some copyist felt more comfortable sneaking in another "conditional clause!" μετὰ τῶν ἁγίων,* ***meta toon hagion****, with "the Saints!")*
Further comments on the root of Jesse. Rev 5:5 and Rev 22:16 - *(Isa 11:1*

Then a shoot will come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from its roots will bear fruit.
Isa 11:2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him- the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and power, the Spirit of knowledge and godliness shall fill him;.
Isa 11:3 He will bear the awe of the LORD with joy. He will not judge acording to humqn standards by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear.
Isa 11:4 He will judge the poor justly. He will make fair decisions for the humble people on earth. He will touch the earth with a rod from his mouth. He will lift up ungodliness with the breath from his lips. (ana + aireo to lift up; Jn 1:29; 12:32.)
Isa 11:5 Justice will be the belt around his waist. Faithfulness and truth will be the belt around his hips.
Isa 11:6 Wolves will live with lambs. Leopards will lie down with goats. Calves, young lions, and year-old lambs will be together, and a little child shall lead them.
Isa 11:7 Cows and bears will eat together. Their young will lie down together. Lions will eat straw like oxen. (Symbolic language - all your enemies shall be reconciled!)
Isa 11:8 Infants will play near cobras' holes. Toddlers will put their hands into vipers' nests. (The triumph of the Lamb! Eph 2:11-22 See Luke 1:17 Mirror Bible)
Isa 11:9 They will not hurt or destroy anyone anywhere on my holy mountain. All the world will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD like water covering the sea.
Isa 10:10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, and he shall arise to rule over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust, and his rest shall be glorious. LXX)

Further comments on Rev 22:18,19...

It is a typical threat to copyists of the book, that they are not to add to or remove any of its words. Similar imprecations can be found scattered throughout the range of early Christian writings. Commentators disagree keenly about the words in Rev 22:18, Rev 22:19. Robert Charles rejects them as an interpolation and out of harmony with the rest of the book. [A critical and exegetical commentary on the Revelation of St. John by Charles, R. H. (Robert Henry), 1855-1931]

Revelation 22:18-19 assumes a settled text. You cannot disobey a prohibition against adding or taking away words when those words are uncertain to begin with.

There are about 200,000 variants in the 5300 manuscripts we have access to! These are not "errors" but variant readings, the vast majority of which are strictly grammatical; but according to the warning you dare not add or take away any! Any of which manuscripts are we talking about! And, Revelation is the book of the Bible with the most textual variants!

The first edition of the New Testament with a Greek text was prepared by Erasmus and published in 1516. For Revelation, he based his Greek text on a single manuscript, minuscule 1r (now numbered 2814 according to the new Gregory-Aland number) This manuscript, however, lacks the final verses of the book of Revelation, and in order to have a complete text, Erasmus retranslated these verses into Greek from the Latin. Elements of his retranslation survive in every edition of the so-called Textus Receptus, the standard text of the printed Greek New Testament until the nineteenth century...

Deliberate changes to the wording of the Book of Revelation itself were made to improve and clarify the force of its message. Here's one of many examples, see note on Rev 20:5 The words, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" were added at a time when the church claimed to be fulfilling the thousand-year reign of Christ. The Sinaitic MS., remarkable as being the oldest as well as for its completeness and accuracy, is the only Greek authority on Revelation ante-dating the fifth century: and it does not contain the clause.

Someone remarked, "If you're going to be cutting verses from the Bible, you should probably start with the one that's usually taken to threaten dire consequences for anyone who, er, cuts verses from the Bible!")

THOUGHTS ON JUDGMENT AND THE RESURRECTION

Continued from John 5:29 And they will come forth out of their graves - for those who have engaged themselves with that which is beneficial, it will be a resurrection to life - and for those who have done that which is worthless, it will be a resurrection unto [1]judgment. *The word [1]**krisis**, often translated, judgment, does not mean damnation or condemnation! Judging involves setting affairs right between different parties, deciding an issue, coming to a conclusion.*

The judgment of Jesus is the acquittal of the human race! "Surely he has

borne our iniquities!" Isaiah 53:4,5
Here is the Good News! Jesus boldly announces in John 12:31-33 ... Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all [judgment] to myself." He said this to show by what death he was to die. [Judgment is the subject of the sentence here]
John 16:11 The Holy Spirit will convince the world concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. [Just like Jesus and the Father - the Holy Spirit will not condemn the world but rather convince the world!]
Isaiah 25:7 And he will destroy on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations.
Isaiah 25:8 He will swallow up death for ever, and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth; for the LORD has spoken.
Isaiah 26;19 but your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy! Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead!
Hosea 6:2 After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up!
Ephesians 2:5 This is how grace rescued us: sin left us dead towards God, like spiritual corpses; yet in that state of deadness and indifference, God co-quickened us together with Christ. Sin proved how dead we were (the law confirmed it!) Grace reveals how alive we now are (the gospel announces it!) Before anyone but God believed it, he made us alive together with him and raised us up together with him. (We had no contribution to our salvation! God's master-plan unfolded in the mystery of the gospel declaring our joint inclusion in Christ's death and resurrection; God found us in Christ before he lost us in Adam! [Eph 1:4] In the economy of God, when Jesus died we died. God saw us in Christ, in his death and resurrection before we saw ourselves there! He declared our co-resurrection with Christ 800 BC [Hos 6:2]!) Eph 2:6 (As much as we were co-included in his death,) we are co-included in his resurrection. We are also elevated in his ascension to be equally present in the throne room of the heavenly realm where we are co-seated with him in his executive authority. We are fully represented in Christ Jesus. (Our joint position in Christ defines us; this can never again be a distant goal to reach through religious devotion or striving, but our immediate reference. Col 3:1-3) Eph

2:7 (In a single triumphant act of righteousness God saved us from the "guttermost" to the uttermost. Here we are now, revealed in Christ in the highest possible position of bliss! If mankind's sad history could not distract from the extravagant love of God, imagine how God is now able for timeless perpetuity (the eternal future) to exhibit the trophy of the wealth of his grace demonstrated in his kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. Grace exhibits excessive evidence of the success of the cross. Your salvation is not a reward for good behavior! It was a grace thing from start to finish; you had no hand in it. Even the gift to believe simply reflects his faith! (By grace you are! Saved by the gift of faith; grace reveals who we are, and the faith of God persuades us of it! You did not invent faith; it was God's faith to begin with! It is from faith to faith, [Rom 1:17] He is both the source and conclusion of faith. [Heb 12:2]) If this could be accomplished through any action of yours then there would be ground for boasting.
Romans 8:34 What further ground can there possibly be to condemn mankind? In his death he faced our judgment; in his resurrection he reveals our righteousness; the implications cannot be undone! He now occupies the highest seat of authority as the executive of our redemption in the throne room of God. (See v 1, also Rom 4:25.)
James 2:13 Judgment showed no mercy to those who do not walk in mercy, but mercy triumphs over judgment. (Those who walk in mercy walk in the law of liberty. [Gal 5:22, 23] There is no law against love. While judgment threatens condemnation, mercy interposes and prevails over judgment.)
*See 1 John 3:20 So, even if our own hearts would [1]accuse us of not really being true to ourselves, God is greater than our hearts and he has the full picture! His knowledge of us is not compromised. (This word, [1]**kataginosko** is only used three times in the NT, translated, to blame, or condemn. From **kata**, down and **ginosko**, to know; thus to know from below; from a fallen mindset perspective) 3:21 Beloved when we know what God knows to be true about us, then instead of condemning us, our hearts will endorse our innocence and [1]free our conversation before God. (The word [1]**parresia**, from **para**, a preposition indicating close proximity, and **rheo**, to pour forth; to flow freely, suggesting an unreservedness in speech; bold utterance.)*
Also 1 John 4:18,19 Fear cannot co-exist in this love realm. The perfect love union that we are talking about expels fear. Fear holds on to an expectation of crisis and judgment [which brings separation] and interprets

it as due punishment [a form of karma!] It echoes torment and only registers in someone who does not realize the completeness of their love union [with the Father, Son and Spirit and with one another.] We love because he loved us first! [We did not invent this fellowship; we are invited into the fellowship of the Father and the Son!])

Col 2:13 You were once spiritually dead, as confirmed in your constant failure, being bound to a lifestyle ruled by the [1]distorted desires of the flesh; but now God made you alive together with him and thus [2]graciously restored our innocence and dignity, having forgiven us all our [3]short fallings. *([1]The uncircumcision of the flesh, i.e., in the Greek, a life controlled by the sexual organs. God [2]graced us in Christ. The word translated, forgiven, [2]**charisamenos** from **charizomai** means he graciously restored our innocence and dignity! The word, [3]**paraptoma**, comes from, **para**, close proximity, sphere of influence and **pipto**, to stop flying, from **petomai**, to fly; thus, to fall from flight or to lose altitude.)*

Col 2:14 His body nailed to the cross hung there as the [3]document of mankind's guilt; in dying our death he [1]cancelled the detailed [2]hand-written [3]record which testified against us. Every [1]stain on our conscience, reminding of the sense of failure and guilt, was thus fully blotted out. *(The word, [1]**exaleipho**, comes from **ek**, out of, and **aleipho**, with **a,** as a particle of union, and **liparos**, to grease, to leave a stain; guilt, as well as all hurtful memories were like grease stains upon the conscience. In N.T. only here and Rev 3:5; 7:17; 21:4 and in Acts 3:19 "Be awakened in your minds and fully converted to face the fact of your redeemed innocence - your sins have been thoroughly blotted out!" Plato used it of blotting out a writing. The word, [2]**cheirographon**, translates as hand-written. The word, [3]**dogma**, comes from **dokeo**, a thought pattern; thus thought patterns engraved by human experience of constant failure to do what the law required. In his personal handwriting mankind endorsed their own death sentence. The hands of fallen mankind struck the body of Jesus with the blows of their religious hatred and fury when they nailed his bloodied body to the tree; they did not realize that in the mystery of God's economy, Jesus became the scapegoat of the entire human race! [Isaiah 53:4, 5] See notes on Heb 8:12. "The slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's Cross." —The Message)*

Col 2:15 In him dying mankind's death, he [1]defused every possible claim of accusation against the human race and thus made a public [2]spectacle of every [3]rule and authority in God's brilliant triumph, demonstrated in him. The [4]voice of the cross will never be silenced! *(The horror of the Cross is now the eternal trophy of God's triumph over sin! The cross stripped religion of its authority to manipulate mankind with guilt. Every accusation lost its leverage to blackmail the human race with condemnation and shame! The word, [1]**apekduomai**, is translated from **apo**, away from, and **ekduo**, to be stripped of clothing; to disarm; the religious facade that disguised the law of works as a means of defining a person's life, was openly defeated. Same word used in Col 3:9. The dominance of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil [**poneros**, hard work and labor] was ended. The word, [2]**deikmatizo**, means to exhibit in public. See [3]commentary below of the words **arche**, rule and **exousia**, authority. The word, [4]**parresia**, comes from **pas**, all and **rheo**, outspokenness, pouring forth speech.*

"He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets." — The Message

*See commentary for 1 Corinthians 15:24, The complete conclusion in his work of redemption is celebrated in his yielding the full harvest of his reign to God the Father, having brought to naught the law of works which supported every definition of dominion under the fall, including all **principalities**, all authority and every dynamic influence in society. [He brought to naught the law of works, **katargeo**, from **kata**, meaning intensity, and **argos**, meaning labor; thus free from all self effort to attempt to improve what God has already perfected in Christ. All principalities, [3]**arche**, or chief ranks, i.e., kings, governors; this includes any governing system whereby one is ranked above the other on the basis of their performance or preference. All authority, [3]**exousia**, comes from **ek**, denoting origin and **eimi**, I am; in this case, because of what I can do I am defined by what I can do better than you; therefore, I have authority over you. Every dynamic influence in society, **dunamis**, means power, in this case, willpower. Every government structure in society will be brought under the dominion of grace where the Christ-life rules.]*

In 1 Corinthians 2:7-8, We voice words of wisdom that was hidden in silence for timeless ages; a mystery unfolding God's Masterful plan

whereby he would redeem his glory in mankind. Neither the politicians nor the theologians of the day had a clue about this mystery [of mankind's association in Christ]; if they did, they would never have crucified the Lord whose death redeemed our glory!)"He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets." — The Message

Philippians 2:8 And so we have the drama of the cross in context: the man Jesus Christ who is fully God, becomes fully man to the extent of willingly dying mankind's death at the hands of his own creation. He embraced the curse and shame of the lowest kind in dying a criminal's death. (Thus, through the doorway of mankind's death, he descended into our hellish darkness. Rev 9:1 When the fifth shepherd-messenger blew his trumpet, I saw a star that had fallen to earth from the sky. The star was given the key to the shaft into the fathomless depths of the Abyss.)

Phil 2:9 From this place of utter humiliation, God exalted him to the highest rank. God graced Jesus with a Name that is far above as well as equally representative of every other name; (The word, uper, means above, also instead, or for the sake of). The name of Jesus endorses his mission as fully accomplished! He is the Savior of the world! Titus 2:11 The grace of God shines as bright as day making the salvation of mankind undeniably visible. See also Eph 3:15, Every family in heaven and on earth originates in him; his is mankind's family name and he remains the authentic identity of every nation.)

Phil 2:10 What his name unveils will persuade every creature of their redemption! Every knee in heaven and upon the earth and under the earth shall bow in spontaneous worship! (See Isa 45:23 "My own life is the guarantee of my conviction, says the Lord, every knee shall freely bow to me in worship, and every tongue shall spontaneously speak from the same God-inspired source." See my commentary note on Rom 14:11!)

Phil 2:11 Also every tongue will voice and resonate the same devotion to his unquestionable Lordship as the Redeemer of life! Jesus Christ has glorified God as the Father of creation! This is the ultimate conclusion of the Father's intent! (The word doxa, intent, opinion, often translated, glory. Rev 5:13 And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein, saying, "To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!" See my commentary note on Rom 14:11!)

Romans 5:8 Herein is the extremity of God's love gift: mankind was rotten to the core when Christ died their death.
*Romans 5:12 - 21 One person opened the door to sin. Sin introduced (spiritual) death. Both sin and (spiritual) death had a global impact. No one escaped its tyranny. Rom 5:13 The law did not introduce sin. Sin was just not pointed out yet. Rom 5:14 In the mean time (spiritual) death dominated from Adam to Moses, (2500 years before the law was given) no one was excluded; even those whose transgression was different from Adam's. The fact is that Adam's offense set sin into motion, and its mark was globally transmitted and stained the entire human race. Rom 5:15 The only similarity in the comparison between the offense and the gift, is that both Adam and Christ represent the masses; their single action therefore bears global consequence. The idea of death and separation that was introduced by one person's transgression is by far superseded by the grace gift lavished upon mankind in the one man Jesus Christ. (But God's free gift immeasurably outweighs the transgression. For if through the transgression of the one individual the mass of mankind have died, infinitely greater is the generosity wherewith God's grace, and the gift given in his grace which found expression in the one man Jesus Christ, have been bestowed on the mass of mankind.— Weymouth, 1912) Rom 5:16 The difference between the two men is further emphasized in that judgment and condemnation followed a single offense, whereas the free gift of acquittal and righteousness follows innumerable sins. Rom 5:17 If (spiritual) death saw the gap in one sin, and grabbed the opportunity to dominate mankind because of one, how much more may we now seize the advantage to reign in righteousness in this life through that one act of Christ, who declared us innocent by his grace. Grace is out of all proportion in superiority to the transgression. Rom 5:18 The conclusion is clear: it took just one offense to condemn mankind; one act of righteousness declares the same mankind innocent. ("We see then, that as one act of sin exposed the whole race of mankind to condemnation, so one act of perfect righteousness presents all mankind freely acquitted in the sight of God!" JB Phillips) Romans 5:19 The disobedience of the one [1]exhibits mankind as sinners; the obedience of another man exhibits mankind as righteous. ([1]**kathistemi**, to cause to be, to set up, to exhibit. We were not made sinners by our own disobedience; neither were we made righteous by our own obedience.) Rom 5:20 The presence of the law made no difference, instead it merely highlighted the offense; but where sin*

increased, grace superseded it. Rom 5:21 (Spiritual) death provided sin its platform and power to reign from, now grace has taken over sovereignty through righteousness to introduce unthreatened life under the Lordship of Jesus Christ over us.

*Hebrews 9:24 - 28 In Christ we have so much more than a type reflected in the tabernacle of holy places set up by human hands. He entered into the heavenly sphere itself, where he personally represents mankind face to face with God. Heb 9:25 Neither was it necessary for him to ever repeat his sacrifice. The High Priests under the old shadow system stood proxy with substitute animal sacrifices that had to be made once a year. Heb 9:26 But Jesus did not have to suffer again and again since the [1]fall of the world; the [2]single sacrifice of himself in the fulfillment of history now reveals how he has brought sin to nought. (The word, [1]**katabole**, means cast down. [2]God's Lamb took away the sins of the world!)*

*Heb 9:27 The same goes for everyone: a person dies only once, and then faces judgment. Heb 9:28 Christ died once and faced the judgment of the entire human race! His second appearance has nothing to do with sin, but to reveal salvation for all to [1]fully embrace him. (To fully embrace, [1]**apekdechomai**, from **apo**, away from [that which defined me before] and **ek**, out of, source; and **dechomai**, to take into ones hands to accept whole heartedly, to fully embrace. In his resurrection he appeared as Savior of the world! Sin is no longer on the agenda, for the Lamb of God has taken away the sins of the world! Jesus Christ fulfilled mankind's destiny with death! [1 Cor 15:3-5, Rom 4:25, Acts 17:30, 31.])*

Note: *(Jesus did not come to condemn the world. The Father judges no one for he has handed over all judgment to the Son, who judged the world in righteousness when he took their judgment in his own body. Now in his appearance in us, his body, his mission is to unveil the consequence of redemption through the Holy Spirit.*

Many Scriptures have been translated and interpreted with only a futuristic value and have consequently neutralized many, like the Jews, to diligently wait for the Messiah still to come. The Messiah has come once and for all as Messiah. Jesus appeared again after his resurrection and now his resurrection life in us as his body is the extension of his second appearance; God making his appeal to an already reconciled world to "be reconciled!" [Acts 3:26, 2 Cor 5:19, 20] The church continued to postpone the reality

that God introduced in Christ. We are now already fully represented in his blamelessness! The second coming as doctrine is not in context of these chapters at all! [See 1 Pet 1:10-13] The Aramaic word, ***maranatha****, means our Lord has come!*

*See also 1 Thessalonians 2:19 We expect nothing less in the context of the gospel than you enjoying a face to face encounter in the [1]immediate presence of our Lord Jesus Christ! This is our delight and wreath of honor! (The word [1]****parousia*** *speaks of the immediate presence of the Lord! From* ***para****, a preposition indicating close proximity, a thing proceeding from a sphere of influence, with a suggestion of union of place of residence, to have sprung from its author and giver, originating from, denoting the point from which an action originates, intimate connection; and* ***eimi,*** *I am! There is not even a hint of judgment or punishment in this word! Please do not believe everything you read in Strongs! "G3952* ***parousia*** *from the present Participle of G3918; a being near, that is, advent; often, return; specifically of Christ to punish Jerusalem, or finally the wicked."!!??))*

Because of images and idols of our own imagination of a schizophrenic, monster god, we have Bible translations to endorse that! If 2 Cor 5:10 points to a future judgment, then v 11 makes sense! "We persuade people by the terror of God!" Wow! And 3 verses later Paul is constrained by the love of Christ!? Jesus is the express image of God, the radiance of his beauty! He has made the invisible God visible! He is the Father of lights with whom there is no shadow due to compromise; there is no dark side to God! Paul is not one day motivated by the terror of God and the next day by his love!

2 Corinthians 5:14 The love of Christ [1]resonates within us and leaves us with only one conclusion: Jesus died mankind's death; therefore, in God's logic every individual simultaneously died. (The word, [1]sunecho, from sun, meaning together with and echo, meaning to echo, to embrace, to hold, and thus translated, to resonate. Jesus didn't die 99% or for 99%. He died mankind's death 100%! If Paul had to compromise the last part of verse 14 to read: "one died for all therefore only those who follow the prescriptions to qualify, have also died," then he would have had to change the first half of the verse as well! Only the love of Christ can make a calculation of such enormous proportion! The religious mind would question the extremity of God's love and perhaps prefer to add a condition or two to a statement like that! Seeing everyone equally valued and included in Christ does not lessen

one's passion to communicate Christ effectively, it greatly increases it!)
2 Cor 5:15 Now if all were included in his death they were equally included in his resurrection. This unveiling of his love redefines human life! Whatever reference we could have of ourselves outside of our association with Christ is no longer relevant.
2 Cor 5:16 This is radical, and our most defining moment! No label that could possibly previously identify someone carries any further significance! Even our pet doctrines of Christ are redefined. Whatever we knew about him historically or sentimentally is challenged by this conclusion. (By discovering Christ from God's point of view we discover ourselves and every other human life from God's point of view! Paul sees by revelation that what Jesus redeemed in every person brings absolute closure and death to any other reasoning and judgment we may have had of ourselves or anyone else for that matter! This is our ***metanoia*** *moment! "From now on therefore, we no longer know anyone according to the flesh, even though we once knew Christ from a human and religious point of view.")*
Romans 4:25 Here is the equation: his cross = our sins; his resurrection = our innocence! (Our sins resulted in his death; our righteousness resulted in his resurrection. His resurrection is the receipt to our acquittal. Why was Jesus handed over to die? Because of, ***dia****, our sins. Why was he raised from the dead? Because of,* ***dia****, we were justified! His resurrection reveals our righteousness! If we were still guilty after Jesus died, his resurrection would neither be possible nor relevant! This explains Acts 10:28 and 2 Corinthians 5:14 and 16. And in Acts 17:31, "because God had fixed a day on which he would judge the world righteous [innocent] by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given proof to all mankind by raising him from the dead.")*
Revelation 5:13 And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein, saying, "To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!"

THOUGHTS ON THE POWER OF THE BLOOD

What makes the blood of Jesus most powerfully significant is in what it communicates. His blood speaks of better things...

Heb 12:24 Jesus is the spokesman and arbitrator of the New Testament order. His blood signature sanctions mankind's innocence. This is a complete new language that communicates better things, in that it is the

very substance of what was spoken in the shadow-type message of the blood sacrifice that Abel brought. *(Abel's faith was a prophetic introduction to the sacrificial shadow system of the Old Covenant. Jesus is the substance of things hoped for! Heb 11:4 It was faith that made the difference between the sacrifices of Abel and Cain, and confirmed Abel's righteousness. God bore witness to righteousness as a gift rather than a reward! Even though he was murdered, his faith still has a most relevant prophetic voice.)*

Unlike the idea that the ultimate, most expensive sacrifice would perhaps persuade Deity to look differently and favorably upon sinful mankind, this is not Deity getting even with mankind in the typical language of "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" judgment; this is Deity reconciling mankind to themselves. Jesus did not do what he did to reconcile God with us; this is Father Son and Spirit clothed in human skin, lovingly and willingly going to the gruesome extreme of a ridiculously unfair trial by a human court, and the scandalous execution of innocent life, in order to persuade us most convincingly of their priceless esteem of us and their relentless love for us, and to forever rescue our minds from every definition of unworthiness and condemnation, and every sense of separation.

In the broken, bleeding body of Jesus, the incarnate Engineer of the universe, willingly dies mankind's death at the hands of his own creation in order to redeem our minds from the plague of a sin-consciousness that left us distanced and indifferent for ages and generations, stuck in the wilderness of our self-help religious and survival programs.

Heb 2:14 Being one with the children of God presupposes the fact that he lived and died in a body exactly like theirs; being as fully human as we are, he is qualified to remove the dominion of death that was introduced [1]as a result of Adam's fall. *(Had he done all this in a superhuman body, the implications of his life, death and resurrection would be irrelevant.)*

Heb 2:16 This is why it is so relevant to understand that Jesus did not arrive on the planet in an Angelic form *(or a Superman-suit);* **he embraced the seed of Abraham.**

Heb 2:18 He experienced mankind's temptation with the same intensity, and under the same scrutiny, and was therefore qualified to represent them with immediate effect. *(To run to their rescue. See Heb 4:15,16.)*

Hebrews 9:15 As [1]fully representing mankind, Jesus's death brought an end to the old, and introduced the New Testament. He thus redeemed us from the transgressions recorded under the first Covenant and identified us as heirs; qualifying us to participate in the full inheritance of all that he obtained on our behalf. *(The concept of a [1]mediator,* ***mesites****, in this analogy, is not a go-between, as if Jesus had to change the Father's mind about us; it was our minds that needed to be persuaded! Jesus did not save us from God; he is fully God and fully man, and in him mankind is most completely represented. See Galatians 3:20; also Hebrews 6:16-20)*

Hebrews 9:22 Thus, according to the law, all purging was by means of blood; [1]forgiveness was specifically associated with the shedding of blood. *(The idea of closure to the particular case was communicated in the death of an innocent victim. The blood symbolizes this currency.)*

1 Peter 1:18 It is clear to see that you were ransomed from the futile, fallen mindset that you inherited from your fathers, not by the currency of your own labor, represented by the fluctuating values of gold and silver, and the economy of your religious efforts;

1 Peter 1:19 but you were redeemed with the priceless blood of Christ; he is the ultimate sacrifice; spotless and without blemish. He completes the prophetic picture! *(In him God speaks the most radical scapegoat language of the law of judgment, and brings final closure to a dead and redundant system! In Psalm 40:6,7, it is clearly stated that God does not require sacrifices or offerings! Jesus is the Lamb of God! He collides victoriously with the futile sacrificial system whereby offerings are constantly made to the pseudo, moody, monster gods of our imagination! This is the scandal of the cross! God does not demand a sacrifice that would change the way he thinks about mankind; he provides the sacrifice of himself in Christ in order to forever eradicate sin-consciousness from our minds and radically change the way we think about our Maker, one another and ourselves! [Sin-consciousness is in essence a works-based consciousness.] God did not clothe Adam with the skin of an animal because of a divine need to be appeased, but because of their unconditional love for Adam; they spoke the language of Adam's own judgment: Adam, not God, was embarrassed about his nakedness. The clothing was not to make God look at Adam differently, but to make Adam feel better about*

himself! And ultimately it was to prophetically prepare Adam for the unveiling of the mystery of mankind's redemption in the incarnation. Here Deity would clothe themselves in human skin, in a son; and the Lion of Judah, would become the Lamb of God, in order to free our minds to re-discover his image and likeness in our skin! See 1 Peter 1:2.)

1 Peter 1:20 He was always destined in God's prophetic thought; God knew even before the [1]fall of the world order that his son would be the Lamb, to be made manifest in these last days, because of you! *(You are the reason Jesus died and was raised! The word, [1]**katabalo**, meaning "to fall away, to put in a lower place," instead of **themelios**, meaning "foundation" [see Eph 2:20]; thus, translated "the fall of the world," instead of "the foundation of the world.")*

1 Peter 1:21 He is the conclusive cause of your belief in God. Seeing then how perfectly you fit into the scheme of things, it is no wonder that your faith in God's act of raising Jesus from the dead becomes the glorious reference to your own new birth! The glory that God gave Jesus by raising him from the dead, is the conclusion of everything that your faith longed for! *(This is the redeemed glory that the Prophets pointed to! Hosea 6:2 "After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up!" Isaiah 40:5 "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together!")*

2 Corinthians 5:18 The idea of mankind's co-inclusion in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is entirely God's doing! To now realize that God has indeed brought final closure to the old and for us to see everything and everyone in this new light is to simply see what God has always known to be true about us in Christ; we are not debating human experience, opinion, or their contribution; this is exactly what God believes. In Jesus Christ, God [1]exchanged equivalent value to redeem us to himself. He went to the highest extreme in this act of reconciliation to persuade us of our original worth! This, God has given us as the mandate of our ministry. *(The word, [1]**katalasso**, translates as reconciliation; it is a mutual exchange of equal value. This transaction was not to buy us back from "the devil"; a thief never becomes an owner; it was God redeeming our minds from the lies that we believed about ourselves - reconciliation is the bold unveiling of the value of the hidden treasure in everyone! See 2 Cor 4:7 and Math 13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like*

treasure hidden in an agricultural field, which a man found and covered up; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys the entire field." There is so much more to you than what meets the eye!)

Hebrews 6:16 It is common practice in human affairs to evoke a higher authority under oath in order to add weight to any agreement between parties, thereby [1]silencing any possibility of quibbling. *(The word [1]**peras**, means the end of all dispute; the point beyond which one cannot go.)*

Hebrews 6:17 In the same context we are confronted with God's eagerness to go to the last extreme in his dealing with us as heirs of his promise, and to cancel out all possible grounds for doubt or dispute. In order to persuade us of the unalterable character and finality of his resolve, he [1]confined himself to an oath. The promise which already belongs to us by heritage is now also confirmed under oath. *(The word [1]**mesiteo** is used, interposed or mediated. Compare **mesites**, mediator, from **mesos**, midst. In the incarnation, God has positioned himself in the midst, of his creation. See Galatians 3:20 With Abraham there was no middleman; it was just God! [The Mosaic law required mediators [the Levitical priesthood] because it was an arrangement whereby mankind had a part and God had a part. Mankind's part was to obey the commandments and God's part was to bless. God's covenant with Abraham was a grace covenant pointing to the man Jesus Christ, in whom God himself would fulfil mankind's part and therefore needed no mediator apart from himself.*

The Word is the promise; the Incarnate, crucified and risen Christ is the proof. He desires to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose. RSV

Mankind was not redeemed from the devil; a thief never becomes an owner; neither did Jesus do what he did to change his father's mind about us! It was our minds that needed persuasion! God was not to be reconciled to his creation; God was in Christ when he reconciled the world to himself! 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

THOUGHTS ON THE WORD PROSKUNEO – often translated, worship.

See John 4:23 The end of an era has arrived - the future is here! Whatever prophetic values were expressed in external devotional forms and rituals are now eclipsed in true spirit worship from within, [1]face to

face with the Father - acknowledging our genesis in him - this is his delight! The Father's desire is the [1]worshipper more than the worship! *(The word often translated worship, [1]**proskuneo**, from **pros**, face to face and **kuneo**, which I would like to believe to be a derivation of **koinonia**, joint-participation; rather than **kuon** which means dog. I know, some tried to connect the idea of a dog licking its master's hand, which then became a possibility of kissing. I prefer a divine face to face koinonia encounter to define true worship! Although, I do believe that dogs, often referred to as man's best friend because of the very nature of their devotion to their master, has its Greek root connected - **koinonia** is a friendship word to begin with and in it is therefore possible to see its etymological link. This is the only reference to the noun [2]**proskunētēs**, worshipper, in the New Testament.)*

John 4:24 God is Spirit and not a holy mountain or a sacred city with man-made shrines! Return to your Source - the Father is our true fountainhead! *(You are not defined by your physical birth, your domestic life, your history, your culture or your religion!)*

Dr John Mastrogiovanni, Hebrew scholar and author of the wonderful book Melchizedek, wrote the following to me re my rendering of the word proskuneo.

"Keeping in mind that Hebrew men were writing the New Testament in Greek, their thought process was still Hebraic, not really Greek in the true cultural sense.

There is a Hebraism that John is using in my opinion.

I totally agree with you that John was not referencing a dog like that, and definitely not trying to suggest that we are as mere dogs wagging our tails licking Jesus' hand! Then you add that koinonia, joint-participation would be preferred as far as a root reference; which for some Greek scholars may try to take issue with. I do believe the Holy Spirit was showing you something here…

Caleb כלב in Hebrew means "dog". Why on earth would such a name be given to anyone, let alone a receiver of the Divine promise? Because in Hebrew NOTHING IS AS IT APPEARS. One of the principles of Hebraic/Spiritual Biblical interpretation is known as "Roots and Branches" this has little to do with verb roots and their child roots (though that is very important), rather it has to do with using a

physical reference (a branch) to describe a spiritual root. The entire Old Testament was first orally given, then written with that as the method and has been interpreted that way for almost 4000 years (this is a standard according to all Hebrew teachers from Israel). So when we apply this Hebraic logic, Caleb כלב is actually a contraction of two words, "כ" (the letter Kaf, which means LIKE) and "בל" (the word, Lev, which means HEART, by extension "ל" (Lamed) means THE HEART YOKED ABOVE, and "ב" (Beth) meaning HOUSE OF GOD. In short, "dog" (in John's Gopel's case) has nothing to do with what appears to be obvious in point of view of Greek translators and commentators; but the Hebraic notion of one having a LIKE HEART…A HEART YOKED ABOVE IN THE HOUSE OF GOD. Remember the discussion is where one would worship, the mountain or Jerusalem, Jesus says, neither, but makes reference to "spirit and truth" which would be the one with "like heart".

Caleb כלב was no dog in his behavior, he was a man with the like-heart of God. Thus the Greek reference to dog may not be erroneous in the Hebraic sense, BUT! The interpretation that most give from a Greek perspective about a dog licking from the hand, is the usual misunderstanding of Hebraic/Spiritual logic. This is why, in my opinion, such traditional views only add to this misconception of God that the Church world has had; the typical angry Schizophrenic God, who basically says, "I love you and if you don't love me back I'll send you to hell."

This is one of the reasons why I believe your MIRROR is important. Though your focus maybe in Greek and the New Testament, I really believe the Spirit is showing you things that are Spiritually sound, though at times with Thayer's and other Lexicons, one may run into a conflict with the "linguistic transition in logic" (not translation) due to Greek and Hebraic logic being so totally different.

The point being, you no longer need to say, "I would like to believe," and face criticism of the traditional point of view. You can now reference the Hebraic logic of the writer in his Greek linguistic usage of the words to validate your point. Regardless of what commentators say the root is, both can now be true koinonia and kuon; they actually mean the same thing in the Hebraic mind. Your point is accurate and

you can set a new standard by your usage of that verse." John Mastrogiovanni.

Francois grew up in a home where Jesus was loved and lived. His parents were in fulltime ministry in an interdenominational mission. His eldest brother Leon and his wife are missionaries in the Ukraine and Russia for many years.

Lydia and Francois met on the 25th of August 1974, while he was working with Youth For Christ. She was sixteen and he nineteen! The following year he studied Greek and Hebrew at the University of Pretoria for three years while Lydia completed her nursing training.

In 1978 Francois also spent a year with Youth with a Mission.

They married in January 1979 and are blessed with four amazing children, Renaldo, Tehilla, Christo and Stefan; a lovely son-in-law, Pieter Luttig and 2 most darling grandchildren, Nicola and Christiaan. They worked in fulltime mission for fourteen years, during which time they also pastored a church and led a training facility for more than 700 students over a five-year period.

They then left the ministry and for ten years did business mainly in the tourism industry. They built and managed a Safari Lodge in the Sabi Sand Game Reserve and eventually relocated to Hermanus where they started Southern Right Charters for boat-based whale watching.

In December 2000 Francois began to write the book, “God believes in You” which led to him being invited to speak at various Christian camps and churches.

They are now back in fulltime ministry since February 2004, and travel regularly abroad and into Africa as well as South Africa.

Francois has written several books in both English and Afrikaans, including God Believes in You, Divine Embrace, Done! and The Mystery Revealed.

He is currently passionately engaged in continuing with his translation of the Mirror Bible.

Portions of his work is being translated into several African languages as well as Chinese, Russian, Hungarian, German, French, Spanish, Polish, Portuguese, Dutch and Slovakian.

The Mirror is already completed in Spanish, Shona and Xhosa.

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