

## AN EXAMINATION OF THE “DISPENSATIONAL” SYSTEM OF THEOLOGICAL THOUGHT

(Your comments and questions are welcome)

(**Bold type** and underlining of scripture text have been added for emphasis)

(Outline of topics considered in this paper is on last two pages-168 and 169)

**While there are numerous systems of doctrine and practice, each having it's own coveted concepts that are zealously protected by its own advocates, this consideration will focus on the theological system of thought generally identified as “dispensational” premillennialism.**

**A dispensation** is a time period of God's administering His kingdom on the earth. Theologians have labeled several such time periods since the creation. In scripture we read: Ephesians 1:10-That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him: and at: Ephesians 3:2-If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: Both of these scripture passages are referring to God's administration of His kingdom under the **new covenant**, in this present age. We read at Galatians 4:4- But when the **fullness of the time** was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5-To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, 6-And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. In this Galatians passage, we learn that the “dispensation of the fullness of times” began when God sent His Son.

**Galatians 4:4 informs us that God's Son was made under the law.** The period prior to the advent of God's Son, Jesus Christ, God administered His kingdom in accordance with the precepts of His revealed law, the **old covenant**. For our purpose, this consideration will begin with God's promise to Abraham, and then continue through this age to include events and circumstances related to the second coming of the Lord Jesus.

**Premillennialism** is the view that the Lord returns prior to the one thousand years referred to in verses 1 through 10 of chapter 20 in the book of The Revelation. This writer understands **this timing** of the Lord's return to be according to the testimony of scripture. What will be at issue is the **meaning, application, and fulfillment** of those things spoken by the prophets in the Old Testament.

**Dispensationalists properly preface their discussion of prophecy with a discussion of the method or principle employed when interpreting prophetic scripture.** J. Dwight Pentecost, in his book entitled, Things To

Come, says: “While many diverse methods of interpreting the Scriptures have been propounded during the course of the history of interpretation, today there are but two methods of interpretation which have a vital effect on Eschatology: The allegorical and the grammatical-historical methods. The literal method is generally held to be synonymous with the grammatical-historical method and will be so used throughout this discussion.” J. Dwight Pentecost, Things To Come (Dunham Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1958, p.4). Further, on page nine of his book, he states: “**A. The definition of the literal method.** The literal method of interpretation is that method that gives to each word the same exact basic meaning it would have in normal, ordinary, customary usage, whether employed in writing, speaking or thinking. It is called the grammatical-historical method to emphasize the fact that the meaning is to be determined by both grammatical and historical considerations.”

**I will not elaborate on the “so-called” literal method of interpretation,** as those reading this paper will see how this method plays out from the references to the comments made by dispensationalists. Dispensationalists say that the allegorical method is one of spiritualizing scripture and is therefore unreliable for accurately interpreting scripture.

**A prominent expositor that employs the “literal method” of interpreting scripture has stated the following:** “In approaching the study of eschatology, the theology of Biblical prophecy, one is plunged immediately into a major division of divine revelation which is determinative in theology as a whole. Eschatology is the doctrine of last things, the word being derived from *eschatos*, meaning *last*, and *logos*, referring to theology as a rational science...Then he stated further, “The problem before us then is not one of demonstrating the validity of prophecy or the accuracy of the Scriptures. It is rather one of theological induction and interpretation of the revelation given in the Bible.” John F. Walvoord, *Israel In Prophecy*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962, p. 27).

**When Mr. Walvoord said, “determinative in theology as a whole”,** he means that one’s understanding of the meaning, application, and fulfillment of what the prophets have spoken will determine their interpretation of most, if not all, non-prophetic Scriptures. **There is another point in Mr. Walvoord’s comment that is suggestive of his approach to interpreting the Scriptures.** *The phrase, “theological induction” includes as a means of interpreting Scripture, reasoning from particular statements in scripture to general conclusions. However, allowing man’s natural reasoning process, when interpreting scripture, subjects one’s conclusions to their preferences, inadequate or inaccurate knowledge of scriptural facts, and other natural influences.* **The Apostle Paul addresses this problem at: 2 Corinthians 10:4-** (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds: 5-Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity **every thought** to the obedience of Christ:

The word “**imagination**” in verse 5 is the English translation of the Greek word *logismos* meaning “computation, i.e. (fig.) reasoning... (Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible). Paul is informing us that “**reasoning**” works against **the knowledge of God** and, therefore, must be cast down. *In verse 4 we learn that the enabling for casting down such reasoning and bringing every thought captive to the obedience of Christ is from God.*

The Apostle John gives instruction concerning **the means** by which each one of us can and must discern the truth revealed in the Scripture: I John 2: 26-These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. 27-But the **anointing that you have received** of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same **anointing** teacheth you of all things, and is **truth**, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

**Whether we are reading the scriptures or reading or hearing someone’s scripture commentary, it is by the Spirit’s ministry to us that we can perceive the truth.** (Other relevant scriptures: Eph.1:13-20; 4:11-24; 1 Jn.5:20;)

We cannot arrive at the accurate meaning of the prophecies in the Old Testament **by reasoning from the particulars** of what the prophets said, **to a general conclusion**. *God revealed to the writers of the New Testament the meaning, application, and fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. Thus, the New Testament provides the conclusion to what is written in the law and the prophets.* I do not expect anyone to accept what is stated in this paragraph apart from seeing that it is clearly supported by the scripture. Rather than cite supportive scripture at this point, such scripture will be presented as we proceed with an examination of the “dispensational” system of thought.

A leading advocate for the “dispensational” system of thought has written the following:

## MAJOR DIVISIONS OF THE DIVINE PROGRAM

“In order to approach the subject of eschatology intelligently, some principle of organization must be adopted in the interpretation of the broad and extensive field of Scriptural prophecy. Among a number of possibilities, two such principles may be mentioned by way of introduction.”

“First, the eschatological program of God may be considered in four major divisions: (1) The program for angels,...”[This division will be omitted for not being relevant to our consideration]. “(2) The program of God for Gentiles embodied in the broad provisions of God’s covenant with Adam and Noah and subsequently unfolded in the visions given to the Prophet Daniel in the book that bears his name. Included in God’s program for the Gentiles is provision for the salvation of those who turn to God in faith. (3) The divine program for Israel is unfolded in the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and new covenants and in large measure is unfolded as the principal subject of the Old Testament beginning in Genesis 12. It includes all of God’s dealings with

Israel in the past and predicts a consummation in the future, when a time of great tribulation will befall the nation. The time of tribulation will be followed by Israel's regathering, restoration, and glory in the millennial kingdom... (4) The divine program for the church unfolded in the New Testament, consisting in the divine program in the present age and its eschatological consummation in the translation of the church, its judgment, and reward. As presented in the New Testament, it falls into two broad areas: (a) the professing church, i.e. Christendom, destined to become a world religion of apostate character before its ultimate judgment by God at the second coming of Christ; (b) the calling out of the true church, the body of Christ, within the professing church, composed of Jew and Gentile alike on equal basis joined by the baptism of the Spirit, placed in Christ, born again of the Spirit of God, and indwelt by the triune God. The salvation and sanctification of those who form the body of Christ is the central purpose of God in this present age and in some sense suspends the progress of God's dealings with the Gentile nations and Israel until God's purpose for the church has been realized." John F. Walvoord, *Israel In Prophecy*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962, pp.28, 29)

As we learn from the above statement, dispensationalists divide God's prophetic program into four divisions: God's program for Angels, Gentiles, Israel, and the Church. The suggested program for Angels will not be included in this discussion as indicated above. While New Testament scriptures frequently refer to "Gentiles", and the Old Testament scriptures speak of "Nations", that God has a separate program for them, after the first advent of Christ, is not in evidence in my study of the scriptures. If anyone is interested in pursuing this point, Mr. Walvoord says that it is "embodied in the broad provisions of God's covenant with Adam and Noah", and also, in the book of Daniel. *If God made a covenant with Adam it would be in chapters one through five of the book of Genesis. God's covenant with Noah is in chapters six through ten of the book of Genesis. This covenant is that God will not again destroy the earth or all flesh with water-9:11, and the evidence of this covenant is a bow in the cloud-vs.12-17.*

God's program for Israel, as Mr. Walvoord says, is unfolded in the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and new covenants and is a major subject of the Old Testament. The "Palestinian" covenant that the writer refers to is more an amplification of the Abrahamic covenant's promise of a "land" in Canaan. However, *as we continue with scripture* it will become most apparent that *God's program for Israel* is also a major subject *of the New Testament*, wherein the dispensationalist's insistence upon an unending dividing wall between Jew and Gentile is *broken down*.

God's program for the church is explained in detail in the New Testament. Mr. Walvoord's claim that in the New Testament the church is presented as consisting of the "professing church" that is apostate and the "true church, the body of Christ, "within the professing church" is one of the

points that will be examined. ***When, in the scriptures, reference is made to the church, whether in the universal or the local context, it is referring to God's children, the body of Christ.*** While what we see scattered throughout America may often fit the dispensationalist concept of the local church, scripture is unequivocal in declaring that God's children must come out of that situation for God to dwell with them. (This claim is examined in some detail in the study topic entitled, The Church-It's Foundation, It's Future, and is available on the website).

**The Apostle Paul addresses “the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia”-(2 Corinthians 1:1) on this matter:**

**2 Corinthians 6:11-18**

11 O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.

12 Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels.

13 Now for a recompence in the same, (**I speak as unto my children,**) be ye also enlarged.

14 **Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers:** for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? **for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said,** I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Wherefore **come out** from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; **and I will receive you,**

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

**The apostate “world religion”** referred to by Mr. Walvoord on page four above, at or very near the end of this age, is referred to in scripture as Babylon, which means confusion. The Lord's people are admonished to come out of “her” as we read at: **Revelation 18:2**-And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. 3-For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. 4-And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **Come out of her, my people,** that ye **be not partakers** of her sins, and that ye **receive not of her plagues**. (See study paper concerning, “Babylon”, available on this website).

**As evidenced in the passage in 2 Corinthians,** the principle of Babylon is operative throughout this entire age and God's call is **to come out** that we might be a **functional family** in Christ. God's people “were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord”-1 Corinthians 1:9. **The point to be made is that when scripture speaks of the gathering of the church it is referring to the Lord's people and not to an assembly of believers and non-believers, often referred to as “true believers” and “mere professors”.** This

is not to say that one who does not believe is never or should not be present when the church is gathered. This is attested to at: **1 Corinthians 14:23**-If therefore the whole **church be come together** into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? 24-But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: 25-And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

This passage of scripture makes a clear distinction between **the church** and the one who **does not believe**.

**Another claim of the dispensational system of thought** that will be examined in this consideration is *that God's dealing with Israel is in some sense suspended until God's purpose with the church has been realized*. (The study topic entitled, Considerations Related To Interpreting Scripture, examines this claim in some detail).

**Mr. Walvoord further comments:** "...Fundamental to this whole point of view is the exegesis and interpretation of the Abrahamic covenant."

#### EXEGESIS OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

"The first statement of the covenant of God made with Abraham, given in Genesis 12:1-3, was originally delivered to Abraham while still in Ur of the Chaldees and is stated in these words: 'Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' God promised Abraham that subject to his obedience to the command to leave his own country and go to a land that God would show him, certain blessings would accrue to him."

**Mr. Walvoord gives a summation of the promises given by God in Genesis 12:1-3.**

"...the blessings falling on Abraham and his descendants would reach out unto all other families of the earth. Hence, an ordinary exegesis of the Abrahamic covenant in its original pronouncement involves (1) promises to Abraham; (2) promises to the nation, i.e., Israel; (3) promise of blessing to all nations, i.e., the Gentiles."

**Additional scriptures in Genesis are referenced to "enrich" the revelation in Genesis 12:1-3.**

"The prophecy of this Scripture is enriched by further revelation given later. In Genesis 12:7 God declared to Abraham: 'Unto thy seed will I give this land.' The promise of the land is reiterated in Genesis 13:14-17 where Abraham is exhorted to survey the land in all directions. In addition, Abraham's seed, destined to occupy the land, is described as being as numerous as the dust of the earth."

**“The dimensions of the land promised to the seed of Abraham are recorded in Genesis 15:18-20. The entire area from the river of Egypt unto the Euphrates river is given to Abraham and his posterity as a perpetual possession. Further details are given concerning the promise to Abraham in Genesis 17:1-8, including the fact that he would have a multitude of seed, and would be the father of many nations. In recognition of this his name is changed from Abram, meaning ‘exalted father,’ to Abraham, meaning ‘father of a multitude.’ It is further promised that he would be exceedingly fruitful (17:6) and that kings would descend from him. The covenant with Abraham is declared in verse seven to be everlasting and the promise of possession of the land forever is reiterated in verse eight. The Abrahamic covenant is subject to further elucidation in Genesis 22:15-18 after Abraham’s seed is limited to Abraham’s son Isaac in Genesis 21:12, in the words: ‘For in Isaac shall thy seed be called.’ Taking into consideration the fact that Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau, the promise is further limited to Jacob and his descendants in Genesis 28:13,14 in the revelation: ‘I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed: and thy seed shall be as the dust of the Earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee, and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.’ ” John F. Walvoord, *Israel In Prophecy*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962, pp.31-33).**

**Mr. Walvoord has presented God’s original command and promise to Abraham in Genesis chapter twelve, verses one through three, and then commented on further revelation that he says enriches this Genesis twelve prophecy. The portion of Mr. Walvoord’s summation of the passage in Genesis 12:3 quoted above on this page of this paper will be examined later.**

**On page 34 of his book, *Israel In Prophecy*, Mr. Walvoord comments: “Two major considerations confront the interpreter of the Abrahamic covenant: (1) Are these promises to be taken simply and literally, or are they to be interpreted in a non-literal or figurative sense? (2) Are the promises embodied in the Abrahamic covenant sovereignly given or are they contingent upon subsequent obedience on the part of Abraham and his seed? In brief, the issue is literal versus spiritualized interpretation, and the question of whether the covenant is conditional or unconditional.”**

**First, we will consider the conditional-unconditional question. In support of his view that the Abrahamic covenant is unconditional, Mr. Walvoord makes the following comments on pages 41, 42 and 43 of his book, *Israel In Prophecy*:**

- 1) “In several instances in Abraham’s life he was disobedient and in none of these instances did God withdraw the promise of the covenant. On other occasions when Abraham was obedient God reiterated the promise and added further details. But never was the promise made contingent upon later obedience.”**
- 2) “The evidence that the covenant with Abraham is unconditional should be understood as supporting the idea that the complete fulfillment of the covenant was rendered sure when God gave it to Abraham in the first place. By using the word unconditional, it is not intended to imply that there were no human**

contingencies, but rather that God took all these contingencies into consideration when He Made the promise.”

- 3) “The unconditional aspect of the Abrahamic covenant is confirmed by the fact that all of Israel’s covenants are unconditional except the Mosaic. In the statement of the covenant itself no conditions are itemized. When confirmations are given, while these sometimes arise from some act of obedience or devotion, it is not implied thereby that the covenant itself is conditioned.”
- 4) “Further, the covenant with Abraham was confirmed by the unqualified oath of God symbolized in the shedding of blood and passing between parts of the sacrifice as described in Genesis 15:7-21.”
- 5) “While circumcision was required to recognize an individual as being within the covenant, it is not made the *sine qua non* of the fulfillment of the covenant. In fact, the Abrahamic covenant was given before the rite of circumcision was introduced.”
- 6) “Not only was the covenant confirmed without conditions to Isaac and Jacob, but later it was reiterated to the people of Israel in times of disobedience and apostasy, the most notable case being that of Jeremiah, when the nation was promised that it would continue forever (Jeremiah 31:36).”
- 7) “The New Testament declares the Abrahamic covenant immutable (Hebrews 6:13-18).”

Mr. Walvoord expresses the view commonly held by “dispensationalists” that the unconditional quality of the Abrahamic covenant relates to the covenant’s certain fulfillment without any contingency regarding Abraham’s obedience or faithfulness, subsequent to his initial obedience. This point is evidenced in item 1) above by the statement: “But never was the promise made contingent upon later obedience”. Also in item 2), the statement: “complete fulfillment of the covenant was rendered sure when God gave it to Abraham in the first place”. The task in this examination is *to determine whether or not the evidence presented* in support of an unconditional covenant *withstands the scrutiny of scriptures* that are relevant to the assertion that the Abrahamic covenant is unconditional.

**In reference to item 1)**, even though Mr. Walvoord references no supportive scripture, does an instance(s) of Abraham’s disobedience, without God withdrawing the promise of the covenant, require that the covenant be unconditional? It chapter twelve of Genesis we learn that after Abraham entered the land of Canaan and came to Bethel and Hai, he built “an alter unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord”-v8. There was a famine in the land and Abraham went down into Egypt. After having some conflict with Pharaoh, he returned to the place where he had been in the beginning, *the place of the alter*, between Bethel and Hai, “and there Abraham called on the name of the Lord”-Genesis 13:3,4. *This is evidence that, if he was in disobedience,*



*Abraham repented and returned to the will of the Lord.* Scripture is quite clear that God grants forgiveness to those who repent of their sins-1 John 1:7-9.

**In item 2, reference to “The evidence”** apparently refers to the *alleged* disobedience in Item 1, and to supportive evidence, if any, in items 3 through 7.

**In item 3,** the statement that the unconditional aspect is confirmed “by the fact that all of Israel’s covenants are unconditional, except the Mosaic” is not supported by proof from scripture that the alleged fact is fact. Further, if in fact, all of Israel’s other covenants, except the Mosaic covenant, were unconditional, would that *necessarily require* the Abrahamic covenant be unconditional? It could also *be reasoned* that when a prominent covenant such as the Mosaic is conditional, this would constitute evidence that the Abrahamic covenant is necessarily conditional. *This is reasoning from a particular, alleged fact, to a general conclusion. This is not a means by which to determine the truth of scripture. This is an example of the mental activity by which opposing positions reason in support of their preconceived conclusions. The truth on any point of consideration can be found only by unbiased viewing of relevant scriptures.* (Concerning this matter, the reader might want to review the last paragraph of page two and the first three paragraphs of page three of this paper).

**The last dispensational argument in item 3:** “When confirmations are given, while these sometimes arise from some act of obedience or devotion, it is not implied thereby that the covenant itself is conditioned”. No scriptures are cited where such “confirmations are given”, however, there are two passages that may comply with the writer’s designation.

**Genesis 18:**17-And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; 18-**Seeing that** Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19-**For I know him, that he will** command his children and his household after him, and **they shall keep the way of the Lord,** to do justice and judgment; **that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.**

**It is not as the writer suggests,** “from some act of obedience or devotion” that it is implied that the covenant is conditional, but rather, **the Lord says** that He knows that Abraham *will do* these things that are stated in this passage, *that* the Lord *may do* the things that He (the Lord) has spoken concerning Abraham. *It is what the Lord says in this passage of scripture that informs us that God’s performance of His promises to Abraham are conditioned upon Abraham’s faithfulness in doing those things that please the Lord.*

**In item 4,** the writer says that the covenant with Abraham is confirmed by an “unqualified oath” symbolized by a ceremonial sacrifice described in Genesis 15:7-21.

**Genesis 15:7**-And he said unto him, I *am* the Lord that brought thee out of the Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. 8-And he said, Lord God, **whereby** shall I know that I shall inherit it? 9-And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. 10-And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another; but the birds divided he not. [The Lord then told Abraham that his seed will be a stranger in a land that is not theirs (Egypt) for four hundred years, and in the fourth generation they will come “hither again” (land promised to Abraham)]. 18-In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.

**Whether or not this sacrifice is equivalent to an “unqualified oath”**, it is a sacrifice that the Lord prescribed-v9 in response to Abraham’s question, “whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it” (“it” being the land). Certainly, the sacrifice was intended to give assurance concerning God’s promise of the land. Obviously, Mr. Walvoord reads more into the passage than assurance concerning the promise. This passage of scripture is not definitive in the matter of the covenant with Abraham being unconditional.

**In item 5 the writer is arguing against “circumcision” as an essential condition for the covenant to be fulfilled to and through Abraham.** He acknowledges that circumcision is “required to recognize an individual as being within the covenant”. The scripture addressing circumcision is:

**Genesis 17:9**-And God said unto Abraham, **Thou shalt keep my covenant** therefore, **thou, and thy seed** after thee in their generations. 10-This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, **between me and you and thy seed** after thee; **Every** man child among you shall be circumcised. 11-And **ye** shall circumcise the flesh of **your** foreskin: and it shall be **a token** of the covenant betwixt **me** and **you**. 12-and he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, **he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.** 13-He that is **born in thy house**, and he that is **bought with thy money**, must needs **be circumcised**: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for **an everlasting covenant**. 14-And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is **not circumcised**, that soul **shall be cut off from his people**; he hath **broken my covenant**.

Some significant points in this passage are:

- Those who are required to **keep** God’s covenant are “Thou” (Abraham), and “thy seed” (Abraham’s male descendants), and any male who belongs to Abraham, “which is not of thy seed”.
- Failure to be circumcised breaks the covenant between God: and Abraham, and Abraham’s seed, and those who belong to Abraham that are not of his seed.
- The consequences for breaking the covenant by not having been circumcised, is that one will “be cut off from his people”.
- Verse 11 is very specific concerning Abraham’s inclusion in this condition that God has placed within the terms of the covenant.

Abraham's circumcision is a token (evidence) of the covenant between Abraham and God. Abraham was circumcised at age 99.

**Mr. Walvoord offers additional support** for his argument by correctly stating that *the Abrahamic covenant was given before the rite of circumcision was introduced*. But also, the Abrahamic covenant was given before God provided to Abraham *additional details* regarding the dimensions of the land at Genesis 15:18, which addition Mr. Walvoord endorses as applicable to the covenant. He writes on pages 32 and 33 of his book, *Israel In Prophecy*, the following:

**“The dimensions of the land promised to the seed of Abraham are recorded in Genesis 15:18-20. The entire area from the river of Egypt unto the Euphrates river is given to Abraham and his posterity as a perpetual possession.”** Then he continues endorsing further details as applicable to the covenant: **“Further details are given concerning the promise to Abraham in Genesis 17:1-8”**. He then adds: **“The Abrahamic covenant is subject to further elucidation in Genesis 22:15-18...”**. *He only objects to further conditions*. The passage of scripture cited above from Genesis 17:9-14 *expresses in certain terms that Abraham's being circumcised was an essential condition to the fulfillment by God of His promises to and through Abraham. Clearly, any man who was uncircumcised, including Abraham, breached the covenant.*

**In item 6, the writer offers as support for the claim that the covenant with Abraham is unconditional:** **“Not only was the covenant confirmed without conditions to Isaac and Jacob, but later it was reiterated to the people of Israel in times of disobedience and apostasy...”** **Such confirmation to Isaac and Jacob, and the people of Israel** is after the covenant was finalized by an oath at Genesis 22:16-18. That the covenant was reiterated to Israel when in apostasy and disobedience is explained at: **Romans 9:22-What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23-And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, 24-Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.**

**In item 7, the writer comments in support of the dispensational claim that the Abrahamic covenant is without any conditions as it relates to Abraham, as follows:** **“the New Testament declares the Abrahamic covenant immutable (Hebrews 6:13-18).”**

**The Hebrews' passage reads: Hebrews 6:13-For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, 14-Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. 15-And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. 16-For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. 17-Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:**

**This passage in Hebrews 6:13-18, declaring the immutability of God’s promise to Abraham is quoting a passage of scripture in Genesis Chapter 22.** The context of the passage is God’s testing of Abraham’s faith by telling Abraham to, 2-“...Take now thy son, thine only *son* Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.” Abraham took Isaac and traveled to the mount in the land of Moriah where he built an altar and prepared to offer Isaac upon it. Isaac, seeing the fire and the wood, asked his father, 7-“...where is the lamb for the burnt offering? 8-“And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both together”. As Abraham proceeded to offer Isaac, 11-“And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am* I. 12-“And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: **for now I know that thou fearest God**, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son* from me. 15-“And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, 16-“And said, **By myself have I sworn**, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*: 17-“That **in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed** as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; 18-“And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”

**In the passage in the epistle to the Hebrews, verses 13 and 14 are cited from Genesis 22:16,17.** When Abraham offered Isaac on mount Moriah, God said, “because thou hast done this thing” that He swore by Himself that in blessing He would bless Abraham, and in multiplying He would multiply Abraham’s seed. The Hebrews’ passage at v-15 says, “And so **after he had patiently endured**, he obtained the promise.” Thus, we learn that the promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 was confirmed by an oath-Heb. 6:17. *However, it is important to note that the promise made at Genesis 12:1-3 was confirmed and finalized by an oath twenty-five plus years after it was made.*

**Abraham** was seventy-five years of age when he went into the land of Canaan-Gen.12:4-5. He was one hundred years old when Isaac was born-Gen. 21:5. Isaac was referred to as a “lad” in Genesis 22:12. *These scriptures inform us that twenty-five plus years had passed from the time that God had made His promise of a covenant with Abraham to the time that God finalized the covenant with an oath.*

**Mr. Walvoord emphatically declares, as noted on page 8 of this paper:**

1. “But never was the promise made contingent upon later obedience.”
2. “...the complete fulfillment of the covenant was rendered sure when God gave it to Abraham in the first place.”

**The scriptures** referenced above show to be inaccurate, this claim that the covenant with Abraham was not contingent upon later obedience. Blessing to

Abraham and his seed was because he continued to faithfully obey God-Gen. 22:16-18. “And so, **after** he had patiently endured, he **obtained** the promise.-Heb.6:15 ***And, God made the promise sure by finalizing it with an oath***,-Heb. 6:16-18 ***not when*** Abraham left his country, and his father’s house, and went to the land that God showed him, as Mr. Walvoord suggests concerning its immutability, but rather, ***as the scripture says***, “...for because thou hast done **this thing**, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed...And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast **obeyed** my voice”-Gen. 22:16-18.

**The dispensational contention** (2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph commencing on page 7 of this paper) is that the two major considerations when interpreting the Abrahamic covenant are: 1) Was the covenant **unconditional**, or was it **conditioned upon subsequent obedience** by Abraham and his seed; 2) Are the promises to be taken **literally** or are they to be interpreted in a **non-literal or figurative sense**? Having first considered the unconditional v. conditional question, we will proceed with **the manner** in which the Abrahamic covenant, and the other covenants, particularly, God’s covenant with David, and the new covenant that God made with Israel **can be correctly understood**.

**Much of the literature by dispensationalists concerning the prophecies in the Old Testament is written from the point of view of defending their “literal” approach against the “non-literal”, allegorical” or “spiritualizing” approach allegedly employed by the “covenant” or “amillennialist” theologians.** However, as mentioned on page 3 of this paper, *the writers of the New Testament revelation provide the only accurate explanation of the ultimate meaning, application and fulfillment of that which is prophesied in the Old Testament.* As we continue, the reader will have opportunity to determine the validity of such an approach.

**Those who recorded the revelation that constitutes the New Testament do not necessarily limit their explanation of a matter to just one of the covenants or to just one set of promises.** And, because this examination of the dispensational system of thought, primarily, will be with the New Testament scriptures, we will commence by, first, citing some of the Old Testament references to the **Davidic covenant** and the **new covenant**.

**Concerning God’s covenant with David, Nathan the prophet said:**

**II Samuel 7:**

8 ...Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, Israel:

9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great *men* that are in the earth.

10 Moreover I will appoint **a place** for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they **may dwell** in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime,

11 And as since the time that I commanded judges *to* be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the Lord telleth thee that **he will make thee an house**.

12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up **thy seed** after thee, which shall proceed **out of thy bowels**, and I will establish **his kingdom**.

13 **He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.**

14 **I will be his father, and he shall be my son**. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with **the rod of men**, and with the stripes of the children of men:

15 But **my mercy shall not depart away from him**, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

16 And **thine house and thy kingdom** shall be established **for ever** before thee: **thy throne shall be established for ever**.

17 According to all these words, and according to all this vision so did Nathan speak unto David.

19 And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O lord God; but thou has spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come, And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?

23 And what one nation in the earth *is* like thy people, *even like Israel*, whom God went to redeem for **a people to himself**, and **to make him a name**, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, *from* the nations and their gods?

24 For thou hast confirmed to thyself **thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever**; and thou, Lord, art become **their God**.

26 And let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of host *is* **the God over Israel**; and let the house of thy servant David be established before thee.

#### **Some significant points in this passage are:**

- God will build a house for David-v11.
- God will set up David's seed and establish his kingdom-12.
- This seed will build a house for God's name, and God will establish his kingdom *forever*-v13.
- Of this seed, it is said that, God will be his father, and he will be God's son-v14.
- If he commits iniquity, he will be chastened with the rod of men, and the stripes of men-v14. Psalms 89:28-36 expresses "if he commits iniquity" to be referring to "his children"-30.
- God's mercy will not depart from him-v15.
- His **house**, his **kingdom** and his **throne** will be **forever**-v16.

- Regarding **the house** that God said **He** would build David, David observed that God was speaking of this house **being far into the future**, and asked, "...is this the manner of man, O LORD"-v19.
- David will rule over God's people Israel-v8, and God will appoint Israel **a place** where they may dwell and be safe from those who would afflict them-v10.
- Israel, God redeemed to be **a people for Himself**, and to **make Him a name** -v23.
- Israel will be **a people unto the Lord** forever, and He will become **their God**-v24.

**The New Covenant has numerous references in the Old Testament. A few of these references that set forth the essential elements are:**

**Jeremiah 31:**

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

34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for **they shall all know me**, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will **forgive their iniquity**, and I will **remember their sin no more**.

**The elements of the new covenant expressed in this passage are:**

- The covenant is made with **the house of Israel**-v33.
- God will put His law in their **inward parts**, and write it **in their hearts**-v33.
- God will **be their God**, and they shall **be His people**-v33.
- His people shall all **know the Lord**-34.
- God will **forgive** their iniquity, and **remember their sin no more**-v34.

**The Prophet Ezekiel provides additional information concerning the new covenant:**

**Ezekiel 36:**

25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

26 A **new heart** also will I give you, and a **new spirit** will I put within you: and I will take away **the stony heart** out of your flesh, and I will give you **an heart of flesh**.

27 And I will put **my spirit** within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall **keep my judgments**, and **do them**.

28 And ye shall  **dwell in the land** that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

**Again, we observe the benefits to the Lord's people under God's administration of the new covenant:**

- They will **be cleansed**-v25.
- Receive **a new heart and a new spirit**; and, **the stony heart** will be replaced with **a heart of flesh**-v26.
- God will put **His Spirit** within, and cause them **to walk** in His statutes, and **to keep** His judgments-v27.
- They shall  **dwell in the land**, and **“be my people,”** and He will **“be your God”**-v28.

**The Prophet Joel provides further terms that are within the administration of the new covenant:**

**Joel 2:**

28 And it shall come to pass afterward, *that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh*; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

31 The **sun shall be turned into darkness**, and the **moon into blood**, **before** the great and the terrible **day of the LORD** come.

32 And it shall come to pass, *that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD* shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in **the remnant** whom the Lord shall call.

**Points to remember:**

- The Lord will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh-v28.
- Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord will be delivered-v32.
- Deliverance will be in *mount Zion* and **Jerusalem**-v32.
- This deliverance will be realized by *a remnant*-v32.
- The sun will be darkened, and the moon will be turned into blood *before* the “day of the Lord” *comes*-v31.

**Most, if not all, of these provisions and events within the new covenant are explained by the writers of the New Testament scriptures.**

**Now we will return to the examination of, first, the dispensational contention that “an ordinary exegesis of the Abrahamic covenant in its original pronouncement involves” promises to: 1) Abraham; 2) the nation, i.e., Israel; 3) all nations, i.e., the Gentiles.** (See page 6 of this paper) Also, dispensationalists view the expression “the seed of Abraham” as applying to three distinct categories of people: 1) the natural seed limited through Isaac and Jacob to the twelve tribes of Israel; 2) those **in Israel** who trust God, constituting a **spiritual seed**; 3) a spiritual seed who are Gentiles



that are **of faith**. These three categories for Abraham's seed are discussed on pages 35,36, and 37 of Mr. Walvoord's book, "Israel In Prophecy". Further reference is made to the **three categories** of seed in the following statement by Mr. Walvoord on page 38 of his book entitled, Israel In Prophecy: "**The threefold distinction, therefore, in the seed of Abraham provides a solid basis for understanding eschatology as a whole while maintaining the proper distinction between Israel and the church and between Abraham's physical seed and Gentiles.**"

**The Apostle Paul, in writing to the churches of Galatia, explains the ultimate meaning of "the seed of Abraham". We read at:**

### **Galatians 3, Verses 16 to 29**

[16] Now to Abraham and **his seed** were **the promises** made. He saith **not**, And to **seeds**, as of many; but **as of one**, **And to thy seed**, which is **Christ**.

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

[18] For if **the inheritance** be of the law, it is **no more of promise**: but God gave it to Abraham **by promise**.

[19] Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

[20] Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.

[21] Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

[22] But the scripture hath concluded **all under sin**, that the promise **by faith** of Jesus Christ might be given to **them that believe**.

[23] But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

[24] Wherefore the law was **our** schoolmaster to bring us **unto Christ**, that we might be justified **by faith**.

[25] But after that **faith is come**, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

[26] For ye are **all** the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

[27] For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ **have put on Christ**.

[28] There is **neither Jew nor Greek**, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are **all one in Christ Jesus**.

[29] And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and **heirs** according to **the promise**.

**The Apostle Paul is, with great emphasis, explaining that Abraham's seed to whom God made promises was in the singular, Christ. It was not, as those within the dispensational system of thought claim, "And to seeds, as of many", but rather, "as of one"-v16. In verse 17, we are told that the covenant, which was four hundred and thirty years prior to God giving the law**

to Moses, was confirmed in Christ at that time. This longstanding confirmation was in place because Christ was the seed to whom the promise was made. Further, in verse 19, we learn that the law was given because of transgressions until the seed (Christ), to whom the promise was made, **should come**.

**In verse 16, the phrase “And to thy seed,” followed by “which is Christ” is a verbatim quotation from several passages in the book of Genesis. Some examples:**

**Genesis 13:14** And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: **15** For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, **and to thy seed** for ever.

**Genesis 17:7** And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, **and to thy seed** after thee. **8** And I will give unto thee, **and to thy seed** after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

**The Apostle Paul**, in chapter three of the Galatians’ epistle, was explaining *that God’s promise of an inheritance in the land under God’s administration of the new covenant which is spiritual and eternal, was to Christ, and through Him to all who are God’s children by faith in Jesus Christ.*

**The Apostle Paul is explaining how it is that the inheritance is not of the law-Gal. 3:18**, but rather, *the scripture has concluded all under sin that the promise might be given to them that believe-v22*. Even those who were “kept under the law”, were by the law as their schoolmaster brought to Christ, that they might be justified by faith-vs23,24. Those who are God’s children by faith in Jesus Christ, whether they were Jew or Gentile, are all one in Christ, in whom there is neither Jew nor Gentile, but they are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise-vs26-29.

## **Galatians 4, Verses 1 to 11**

[1] Now I say, That **the heir**, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a **servant**, though he be lord of all;

[2] But is **under tutors and governors** until the time appointed of the father.

[3] Even so **we**, when we were children, were in bondage under **the elements of the world**:

[4] **But** when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made **under the law**,

[5] To **redeem** them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

[6] And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, **Abba, Father**.

[7] Wherefore thou art **no more a servant**, but **a son**; and if **a son**, then **an heir** of God through Christ.

[8] Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, **ye did service** unto them which by nature are no gods.

[9] **But now**, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, **how turn ye again** to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

[10] Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

[11] I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

**Here we learn that, before Christ came**, the children of Israel who were of faith in God were **heirs** even though they labored under all of the externalisms of ceremony and ritual that God had prescribed under the old covenant. *But when the “fullness of the time” was come, God sent the Lord Jesus to redeem them from that legal burden and to adopt them to be His sons. And, because they had become His sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into their hearts. Now they knew God as their Father, and being sons, they were no more related to as little children, for they have entered into the “earnest of our inheritance” as heirs of God through Christ.*

**In Christ**, these folks had been freed from the “weak and beggarly elements” of observing days, and months, and times, and years that they might know the riches of God’s glory under His administration **of the new covenant** that He had promised to Israel. In verse 9, Paul asks, how do you turn again to these things?

**The Apostle Paul writes to the “saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus”, with the same theme as in the Galatians’ passage referenced above.**

### **Ephesians 1, Verses 8 to 14**

[8] Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all **wisdom** and **prudence**;

[9] Having made known unto us **the mystery** of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

[10] That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are **in heaven**, and which are **on earth**; even in him:

[11] In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to **the purpose of him** who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

[12] That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

[13] In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that **holy Spirit of promise**.

[14] Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Here we learn that in the “**dispensation of the fullness of times**”, as referred to at Galatians 4:4, God has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence, (in the first instance, this would be God’s revelation to the writers of the New Testament) making known to them that which He had purposed to do at this time, and which was a **mystery** or unknown in the Old Testament. This new revelation is now revealed, that *in this age, the fullness of times*, God is gathering together **into one in Christ, all** who are **in heaven** and who are **on earth**. Some points to be noted in this passage are:

- It is **in Christ** that the promised inheritance **is realized**-v11.
- In verse 12, “**we**” who “first” trusted in Christ **refers to Jews**. The gospel began to be preached, **first to the Jews**, and then **later** it was taken to the Gentiles-Acts 13:46, Romans 1:16.
- In verse 13, “**ye**” refers to **the Gentiles**. And, after they believed they were also, as were the Jews, sealed or attested to with the promised Holy Spirit. And, the Holy Spirit is **the earnest** or a measured portion of **our inheritance** until the **full inheritance** is realized. Romans 8:23 relates the awaited time for the full inheritance to the “redemption of the body”.

**Dispensational thought views this present age as a time when God’s Old Testament program for Israel is interrupted or suspended while His program for the church is unfolded. This is evidenced in the following statements:**

“The Old Testament age, in which the purpose of God for Israel is stated in the covenants into which God entered and by which He is bound, closes with those purposes unrealized. After the death of Christ, God instituted a new divine program, not to replace the program for Israel, but to interrupt that divinely covenanted program.” J. Dwight Pentecost, Things To Come, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Dunham Publishing Company, 1958, p. 133)

“The salvation and sanctification of those who form the body of Christ is the central purpose of God in this present age and in some sense suspends the progress of God’s dealings with the Gentile nations and Israel until God’s purpose for the church has been realized. John F. Walvoord, Israel In Prophecy, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962, p. 29)

**On page 56 of, Israel In Prophecy, Mr. Walvoord makes an emphatic declaration concerning the continuing separation between Israel and Gentiles, and then attempts to support his assertion with a verse of scripture:**

“Not only is Israel regarded as a separate nation, but Gentiles as such are expressly excluded. In Ephesians 2:12: ‘Ye [Gentiles] were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.’ In the discussion which

follows it is important to note that Paul does not indicate that Gentiles come into these promises given to Israel, but rather pictures both Jew and Gentile as being joined in an entirely new entity, namely, the body of Christ.

We will place the Ephesians 2:12 verse in context by citing more of the text. This will afford the reader the opportunity to determine the accuracy of the writer's statement that, "In the discussion that follows it is important to note that Paul does not indicate that Gentiles come into these promises given to Israel..." It is agreed that Jew and Gentile are joined to form a new entity, the body of Christ. The question to be answered is whether or not this new entity is the realization by Israel of the covenants promised to Israel. And then, does the following passage of scripture clearly indicate that the Gentiles have been included in the covenants promised to Israel. In Ephesians chapter two, the broader text that explains verse 12 reads as follows:

### Ephesians 2, Verses 11 to 22

[11] Wherefore remember, that ye being **in time past** Gentiles in the flesh, who are called **Uncircumcision** by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

[12] That **at that time** ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and **strangers** from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

[13] **But now in Christ Jesus** ye who sometimes were far off are **made nigh** by the blood of Christ.

[14] For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the **middle wall of partition** between us;

[15] Having **abolished** in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

[16] And that he might reconcile both unto God **in one body** by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

[17] And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

[18] For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

[19] **Now therefore** ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but **fellowcitizens** with the saints, and of the household of God;

[20] And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being **the chief corner stone**;

[21] In whom all the building fitly framed **together** groweth unto **an holy temple in the Lord**;

[22] In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

**Some significant points to be noted in this passage are:**

- Paul, in addressing the saints at Ephesus-v1, is reminding them that **in time past, they were Gentiles in the flesh**, and were called uncircumcision by those (Jews) which were called the circumcision which is in the flesh-v11.
- Paul then points out to them that, **at that time** (in time past-v11), **being without Christ**, they were **aliens from the commonwealth of Israel**, and **strangers from the covenants of promise**-v12.
- In verses 13-18, the Apostle Paul explains to them, **“But now”**, through the Person and work of Christ: 1) they that were far off, (Gentiles) are **“made nigh”** (near); 2) made from **the two, one new man**, having removed the barrier that was between them (Jew and Gentile), the external system of offerings, sacrifices, and all the ceremony and ritual under the law; 3) **both** have been reconciled **in one body; both** have access by **one Spirit** unto the Father.
- Paul then gives **the conclusion** of what God has done in making Jew and Gentile **“one new man”, to be “one body”**, by saying, **“Now therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens”**-v19. The Gentiles are **no more strangers from-what**. Verse 12 says that “at that time” (“in time past”v11), they were “strangers from **the covenants of promise**” (refers to the covenants of promise that God had made with Israel), but “no more”. Paul also says, that they are no more **“foreigners”**. The Gentiles are **no more foreigners from-what**. Verse 12 says that they *were* **“aliens”** (or foreigners) from the **“commonwealth of Israel”**. *But no more!*
- The **foundation for this transition** from God’s administration of **His kingdom under the old covenant** to His administering of **His kingdom under the new covenant** is that which was **spoken by the prophets**, and **explained by the apostles** as being fulfilled to Jew and Gentile in **Christ who is “the chief cornerstone”**-v20.
- With the **distinction between Jew and Gentile being extinguished** in and through the Person and work of the Lord Jesus, God is now building upon **this foundation** “an **holy temple** in the Lord”. Further, this temple is being built for “an **habitation by God through the Spirit**”-21,22.

**This passage of scripture in Ephesians chapter two**, along with the passages of scripture in Galatians referenced above, provides a clear

declaration by the Apostle Paul that ***the covenants that God made with Israel have their fulfillment to Israel in and through the Person and work of Christ. And further, that the Gentiles have been included in these promises to Israel.*** The indwelling Spirit is ***the earnest or a measured portion of the inheritance*** until Christ returns and ***the inheritance is received in its fullness,*** as evidenced (near the bottom of page 19 of this paper) in the Ephesians' passage.

**In all that has been spoken by the prophets in the Old Testament, and by the apostles in the New Testament, when what is being spoken is related to forever, everlasting or without end, Christ and those related to Him through faith are in view.** The passage in chapter 3 of Galatians (on page 17 of this paper) *shows this to be the case in the covenant with Abraham. While there was a physical and temporal fulfillment to Israel under old covenant administration as recorded in the Old Testament, the spiritual and eternal aspect of the promise was to Christ as the seed of Abraham-v16. And, those persons who are in Christ by faith constitute the collective seed of Abraham-v29.*

The New Testament scriptures refer often to the covenants of promise that God made with Israel through the Old Testament prophets. In Galatians chapter 4, we are told that God sent His Son to “redeem them that were under the law”, that they might receive “the adoption of sons”-v4. And because they are sons, God sent forth **the Spirit** of His Son into their hearts-v6. This is the realization by **them** who were “under the law” (Jews) of a provision of **the new covenant** with Israel, wherein God promised, “And I will put **my spirit** within you”-Ezekiel 36:27. Also, in chapter 2 of Ephesians (on page 21 of this paper), is application of God's **covenant with David**, that David's seed: “He shall build an **house** for my name, and I will stablish **the throne of his kingdom for ever**”-2 Samuel 7:13, (on page 14 of this paper).. *While Solomon, David's son, built the temple that served as God's dwelling place with Israel during God's administering of the old covenant, under new covenant administration, Christ is David's seed who is building* “an holy temple unto the Lord”-Eph. 2:21, “for an holy habitation of God **through the Spirit**”-v22.

**The Apostle Peter explains David's prophecy from Psalms 16:8-11:  
Acts 2, Verses 29-32**

29 Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day.

30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up **Christ to sit on his throne**:

31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

**This scripture informs us that** God's promise to David, that David's throne would be established forever, is realized in Christ through resurrection. (For this promise to David see page 14 of this paper). ***This is another instance where the prophecies in the Old Testament are explained by the New Testament scriptures.*** When Jesus drove the moneychangers out of the temple, He introduced Israel to the transition from the old covenant economy to that of the new covenant. We read:

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

**Jesus is referring to a prophecy given by the Prophet Isaiah.** Jesus referred specifically to verse 7, but the broader text provides perspective.

### **Isaiah 56, Verses 1 to 8**

[1] Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

[2] Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

[3] Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree.

[4] For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant;

[5] Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.

[6] Also the sons **of the stranger**, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant;

[7] Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices **shall be accepted** upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

[8] The Lord GOD which gathereth **the outcasts of Israel** saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.

**Jesus tells the Jews that** there are others who will share equally with them: **John 10:14** I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine. 15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 And **other sheep** I have which are **not of this fold**: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be **one fold, and one shepherd**.

**In the gospel of Mark**, and in the passage in John's gospel, Jesus was ***introducing Israel to the realities of the administration of the new covenant that would soon be instituted by His death***-Hebrews 9:14-17. Also, when Jesus drove the money changers from the temple, we read at John 2:18 Then



answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? 19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy **this temple**, and in three days I will raise it up. 20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? 21 But he spake of the temple of his body. 22 When therefore he was **risen from the dead**, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

**In this scripture**, Jesus is introducing the Jews to the matter that the Apostle Paul was explaining in chapter 2 of Ephesians, that **Jews and Gentiles, who are of faith in Christ, are together growing into a temple in the Lord; and that they are built together for a dwelling place for God, through the Spirit**-vs.21, 22. **This is the temple that Paul declares to be the church, the body of Christ, over which Christ is the head**-Eph. 1:22, 23.

While in the commentary of proponents of the dispensational system of thought there is acknowledgement that Jew and Gentile are joined in one body in Christ, it is denied that this one body, that is the temple of God, is **the beginning of the realization of God's covenants promised to Israel**. The term "beginning" is used, for as we are informed in verses 13 and 14 of Ephesians chapter one, the Holy Spirit is the *earnest of our inheritance* until **the redemption** of the "purchased possession". (See pages 19 and 20 of paper) Even in light of the previously cited scriptures, dispensational thought contends that Israel and Gentiles each have a *separate program* outlined in the *Old Testament*, which programs are *interrupted* by God's program for the *church*. **This is illustrated by the following comments:**

"With this general introduction to the subject of the church as the body of Christ, the apostle unfolds its character as a mystery in the third chapter of Ephesians. Paul reveals that the doctrine of the church as the body of Christ was a subject of special revelation to him. (Ephesians 3:1-3). He states further that the truth of the church as the body of Christ, 'in other ages was not made (known) unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.'" The comment continues by saying, "In an effort to evade what seems to be the plain teaching of this passage of Scripture that the church is something new and the subject of new revelation, these verses have been interpreted by some as merely indicating additional truth rather than a new revelation. Seizing upon the word *as*, the thought is advanced that the truth concerning the church was revealed in the Old Testament but not in the same way as it is revealed now." John F. Walvoord, *The Church In Prophecy*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962 pp.45, 46).

**To make clear to the reader**, in this presentation, it is agreed that the church is "**something new** and the subject of **new revelation**". However, there are scriptures in the Old Testament, as referenced above in this paper, that do prophesy that the Lord's house will be a house of prayer for all people. The sons of strangers that join themselves to the Lord, God will

bring them to His holy mountain. The dispensational argument is that in **the Old Testament** there is absolutely no reference, even in the most general terms, to this temple that the apostle Paul describes in the epistle to the Ephesians. While Mr. Walvoord cites verses 5 and 6 in chapter 3 of Ephesians, the following is a broader reference to this text:

### **Ephesians 3, Verses 2 to 15**

[2] If ye have heard of the **dispensation** of the grace of God which is given me to youward:

[3] How that **by revelation** he made known unto me **the mystery**; (as I wrote afore in few words,

[4] Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

[5] Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy **apostles and prophets** by the Spirit;

[6] That the Gentiles should be **fellowheirs**, and of the **same body**, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

[7] Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

[8] Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

[9] And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

[10] To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold **wisdom of God**,

[11] According to the **eternal purpose** which he purposed **in Christ Jesus** our Lord:

[12] In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

[13] Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

[14] For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

[15] Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

#### **In this passage of scripture, note the following points:**

- Paul refers to the present time period as the “**dispensation of grace**”-v2.
- Paul refers to the “mystery” as the “mystery of Christ”-vs3 and 4.
- The mystery was not made known in other ages, as it is now made known to the apostles and prophets by the Spirit-v5.
- The mystery was that the Gentiles should be **fellow heirs**, of the **same body**, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel-v6. The thing that was unknown in the Old Testament was not that the Gentiles would have access to God’s house, but that the Gentiles

would share in **the promises** that God had made to **Israel**, which promises are realized in Christ, and by **an equality** with the Jews.

- In verse 9, Paul again stresses the thing that was unknown, not only the union of Jew and Gentile in Christ, but also **the fellowship** or **oneness** of such union.
- In what God has done for Jew and Gentile in Christ, by whom all things were created, **the wisdom** of God is made known by such a **unified body**, the church-v10.
- This is what God purposed in Christ Jesus **from all eternity**-v11.
- In Christ, the **whole family** in heaven and earth is named-v15.

**Further, on page 46 of, The Church In Prophecy**, Mr. Walvoord, continues: “**The contrast is not between degrees of revelation, but between that which was not revealed in the Old Testament but is now revealed unto the apostles and prophets of the New Testament.**” He then adds, “**In the Old Testament, Gentiles and Jews are distinguished beginning in Genesis 12 and continuing until the Day of Pentecost. Jews and Gentiles are never equated in the Old Testament, as the Jews are the chosen People in contrast to the Gentiles who are outside the covenant. This is brought out even in the context of Ephesians as, for instance, in 2:12 where the lot of the Jew and the Gentile is sharply contrasted.**” (A prior consideration of Ephesians 2:12 can be reviewed, beginning at the bottom of page 20 and through the top of page 23 of this paper). There are numerous scriptures in the Old Testament making reference to the Gentiles having **a future relationship** to God’s house and to Zion, two of which have been cited above. That Israel, **in Old Testament scriptures**, is a separate and covenanted people is not being questioned in this consideration. **However, the testimony of the New Testament scriptures is determinative in answering the two questions**, 1) are the **promises to Israel** being **realized by Israel in Christ**, in **this age**, which is the “fullness of time”; 2) are the Gentiles, **in this age, included in the promises** that God made to Israel. (The scriptures cited on pages 20 through 24 of this paper answer these two questions).

**Some additional New Testament scriptures that are relevant to these questions are:**

### **Matthew 3, Verses 11 to 17**

[11] I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but **he that cometh after me** is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: **he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost**, and with fire:

[12] Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

[13] **Then cometh Jesus** from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

[14] But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

[15] And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us **to fulfil all righteousness**. Then he suffered him.

[16] And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw **the Spirit of God** descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

[17] And lo a voice from heaven, saying, **This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.**

**John the Baptist knew that Jesus had come to Israel and would baptize them with the Holy Spirit-v11.**

### Acts 1, Verses 4 to 5

[4] And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for **the promise of the Father**, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

[5] For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

**In this scripture** Jesus tells His disciples to remain in Jerusalem until they are baptized with the Holy Spirit, “not many days hence”.

### John 7, Verses 37 to 39

[37] In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, **If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.**

[38] He **that believeth** on me, **as the scripture hath said**, out of his belly shall flow rivers of **living** water.

[39] (But this spake he **of the Spirit**, which they that **believe** on him should **receive**: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; **because** that Jesus was **not yet glorified.**)

**In this scripture**, Jesus informs the Jews that the Spirit will be given to them **that believe on Him**. However, the Spirit will not be given until He is glorified. (When He ascends to the Father) (See Acts 1:9)

### Acts 2, Verses 1 to 8, 12 to 24, 33

[1] And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

[2] And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

[3] And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

[4] And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, **as the Spirit** gave them utterance.

[5] And there were dwelling at Jerusalem **Jews**, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

[6] Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak **in his own language**.

[7] And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

[8] And how hear we every man **in our own tongue**, wherein we were born?

[12] And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, **What meaneth this?**

[13] Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

[14] But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men **of Judaea**, and all ye that dwell **at Jerusalem**, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

[15] For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

[16] **But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel:**

[17] And it shall come to pass **in the last days**, saith God, I will **pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh**: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

[18] And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

[19] And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

[20] The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

[21] And it shall come to pass, that **whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.**

[22] Ye men **of Israel**, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

[23] Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

[24] **Whom God hath raised up**, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

[33] Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, **he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.**

**Some significant points to be noted in this passage are:**

- When the day of Pentecost (the fiftieth day after Jesus had been resurrected), was come, God sent the promised Holy Spirit-vs1-2.
- All who were together in one accord (like-minded) and in one place, were **filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to **speak with other tongues**-vs2-4.
- At Jerusalem, there were **devout Jews out of every nation** who “marveled “ when they heard the folks who were from Galilee, speaking “**in our own tongue wherein we were born**” the

“wonderful works of God”. They were amazed and questioning one to another as to what this means-vs5-12.

- Peter then began to explain to these folks by telling them that this is **what the Prophet Joel had spoken**. Peter then quoted from Joel’s prophecy at Joel 2:28-32. This was the fulfillment of Joel’s words, “And it shall come to pass **in the last days**, saith God, ‘I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters **shall prophesy...**’-vs14-17. Peter also explained in this passage of scripture, in Acts chapter two, how David had prophesied of the resurrection of Christ, and then in verse 33, Peter explains that, Christ being exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has brought forth this that these **Jews, from all nations, now see and hear**. They were hearing them **on whom the Holy Spirit had been poured out, prophesy** concerning the wonderful works of God. We read at verse 41, that those **Jews who received** Peter’s word were about **three thousand** souls. Also, at Acts 4:4 about **five thousand** men who heard the word **believed**.

**Mr. Walvoord mentions** Joel’s prophecy in chapter 2, verses 28-32 in his book, *Israel In Prophecy*, as being **fulfilled in the millennium**. He does not mention **Peter’s explanation** of Joel’s prophecy in chapter 2 of Acts.

**J. Dwight Pentecost, in his book, Things To Come**, does **not** mention **Peter’s explanation**, in Acts chapter 2, of the Joel prophecy. However, in his book there are three references to the passage in Joel, in which he applies the prophecy to the time of the “tribulation” and to a “millennial kingdom”. On page 271 of his book, *Things To Come*, is this comment: “Thus, it should be clearly seen that even though the Spirit is not indwelling in the tribulation, He may still be operative in regeneration. Joel 2:28-32 relates the salvation of Israel to the ministry of the Holy Spirit before the second advent.” *This statement is based on the dispensational presupposition that God will be reinstating His program with Israel after a pre-tribulation rapture of the church.*

**On page 486 of, Things To Come**, the prophecy in Joel is applied to a “millennial kingdom”. “E. *The kingdom characterized by the fullness of the Holy Spirit. At the institution of the theocratic kingdom the prophecy of Joel will be fulfilled: And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit [Joel 2:28-29].*”

**On page 490 of, Things To Come**, is another application of Joel’s prophecy to the “millennial kingdom”. “V. *The fullness of the Spirit. Divine presence and enablement will be the experience of all who are in subjection to the*

**authority of the King (Joel 2:28-29)."** Numerous other Old Testament references are included besides the reference to Joel.

**The above comments** by Mr. Pentecost **necessarily** deny Peter's explanation that Joel's prophecy, as it relates to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, is being fulfilled in this age, beginning on the day of Pentecost.

**Dispensationalists are telling us that** the prophesied promises **to Israel** in the **Old Testament** will not be fulfilled **to Israel** until Christ returns and establishes David's throne **on this earth** during the one thousand years referred to at Revelation 20:4-6. ***Peter, James and Paul explain the fulfillment of such prophecies to be accomplished in and through the Person and work of Christ in this present "dispensation of the fullness of times" when God is gathering "together in one all things in Christ..."*** **Some additional New Testament scriptures addressing this matter are:**

### **1 Peter 1, Verses 1 to 3 and 8 to 12**

[1] Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, **to the strangers scattered** throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

[2] Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and **sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ**: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

[3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope **by the resurrection** of Jesus Christ from the dead,

[8] Whom having not seen, **ye love**; in whom, though now ye see him not, **yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory**:

[9] Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

[10] Of which salvation **the prophets have inquired and searched diligently**, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:

[11] Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was **in them** did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the **glory** that should follow.

[12] Unto whom it was revealed, that **not** unto themselves, but unto **us** they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

#### **Here we are told that:**

- The prophets prophesied of **the grace that should come to us**-v10.
- Their prophecies were by the Spirit of Christ, which was in them-v11.
- They searched concerning **what**, and at **what time** the Spirit did signify concerning **the sufferings of Christ** and the glory that

should follow-v11. *The glory that should follow* is expressed in verse 8.

- It was revealed **to them** that the things they ministered were not to themselves, but **to us**-12.
- The things that the prophets proclaimed are the subject matter of the **gospel** that was preached to **us (the church)** through the Holy Spirit-v12. *Notice that the prophets were not speaking of things that occur after Christ returns.*

### Acts 3, Verses 22 to 26

[22] For Moses truly said **unto the fathers**, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

[23] And **it shall come to pass**, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

[24] Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise **foretold of these days**.

[25] **Ye** are the children **of the prophets**, and **of the covenant** which God made with **our fathers**, saying unto Abraham, And in **thy seed** shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

[26] Unto **you first** God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

#### **Peter says:**

- Moses said to the fathers (Israelites), God would raise up a prophet (Christ) from among the brethren, similar to Moses, who would tell them things that they should hear-v22.
- It will **come to pass** that all who will **not** hear that prophet (Christ) will be destroyed (removed) from among the people-v23.
- **All the prophets** from Samuel forward have foretold these days (the present age)-v24.
- The people being addressed are the children (Jews) of the prophets, and it was **their fathers** with whom the covenant was made-v25.
- They are Abraham's physical seed through which Christ came to bless all the people on the earth-v25.
- God sent Jesus to the **Jew first**, that He might **bless the Jews** in "turning away every one of you **from his iniquities**"-26. This is one of the elements of the new covenant that God made with Israel-Jeremiah 31:34.

**It is significant to note** that all of the prophets from Samuel forward, prophesied of things that would occur in "these days" (the present age). This



is not the dispensational contention that the prophets in the Old Testament were speaking of things that will be realized during the one thousand years referred to in Revelation 20:4-6.

### Acts 5, Verses 26 to 32

[26] Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

[27] And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

[28] Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

[29] Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

[30] The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.

[31] Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

[32] And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

**God exalted Jesus to His right hand** to be a Prince and a Saviour **to Israel**. Again, it should be noted that “forgiveness of sins” is an element of the new covenant promised **to Israel**, and it was fulfilled to Israel when Jesus was exalted to the right hand of God.

**The Apostle Paul, like Peter**, declares that God’s promise through the prophets is to be *realized by Israel in this present age*.

### Acts 13, Verses 21 to 47

[21] And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years.

[22] And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

[23] Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus:

[26] Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and **whosoever** among you **feareth God,** to you is the word of **this salvation** sent.

[27] For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they **knew him not,** nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.

[32] And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that **the promise** which was made unto the fathers,

[33] God hath fulfilled the same **unto us** their children, in that he hath raised up

Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

**While Peter's ministry had been to the Jews**, the Lord had to prepare him to take the gospel to a company of the Gentiles. The following passage of scripture explains this interim change in Peter's ministry.

**First we read the Lord's instruction to the Gentile, Cornelius:**

### **Acts 10, Verses 1 to 6**

[1] There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,

[2] **A devout man**, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

[3] He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.

[4] And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, **What is it, Lord?** And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

[5] And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter:

[6] He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: **he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.**

**Cornelius sent some men to Joppa where Peter was located. As they came near to Joppa, we read the following regarding Peter:**

### **Verses 9 to 20**

[9] On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, **Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour:**

[10] And **he became very hungry**, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance,

[11] And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth:

[12] Wherein were **all manner of fourfooted beasts** of the earth, and **wild beasts**, and **creeping things**, and **fowls of the air**.

[13] And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.

[14] But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.

[15] And the voice spake unto him again the second time, **What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.**

[16] **This was done thrice:** and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

[17] Now while **Peter doubted in himself** what this vision which he had seen **should mean**, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate,

[18] And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.

[19] While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men

seek thee.

[20] Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

**When Peter arrived with the men where he met Cornelius, he talked with Cornelius:**

### **Verses 27 to 29**

[27] And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together.

[28] And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is **an unlawful thing** for a man that is **a Jew** to keep company, or come unto one of **another nation; but God hath shewed me** that I should not call **any man common or unclean.**

[29] Therefore came I unto you **without gainsaying**, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore **for what intent ye have sent for me?**

**Cornelius told Peter all that the Lord had said, and that he immediately sent for Peter.**

### **Verses 33 to 48**

[33] Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

[34] Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

[35] But in **every nation** he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, **is accepted with him.**

[36] The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)

[37] That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;

[38] How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

[39] And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

[40] Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;

[41] Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

[42] And he commanded us to preach **unto the people**, and to testify that it is **he** which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

[43] To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

[44] While Peter yet spake these words, **the Holy Ghost** fell on all them which heard the word.

[45] And **they of the circumcision** which believed **were astonished**, as many as came with Peter, because that **on the Gentiles also** was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

[46] For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

[47] Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

[48] And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

**Peter knew that the covenant that God made with Israel had fulfillment to Israel at the time of and in the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ, and giving of the Holy Spirit. What Peter had some hesitation with was God's inclusion of the Gentiles in the promise to Israel.** Recall that, at Acts 2:16-17, Peter explained the event at Pentecost by saying, “this is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel”, ... “I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh”. (See page 29 of this paper)

**When Peter returned to Jerusalem,** it is quite apparent that the Jews knew that the promised new covenant was fulfilled to them in Christ, but they questioned the propriety of Peter eating with Gentiles. However, after Peter rehearsed with them what had transpired at Joppa and at the house of Cornelius, their attitude changed. In this regard we read:

### **Acts 11, Verses 16 to 18**

[16] Then **remembered I** the word of the Lord, **how that he said,** John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

[17] Forasmuch then as God **gave them** the like gift **as he did unto us,** who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

[18] When they heard these things, they held their peace, **and glorified God,** saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

**Subsequent to Peter's ministering to the Gentiles** when he was called by the centurion named Cornelius, Paul and Barnabas, along with certain others went from Antioch to Jerusalem to consider the matter of circumcision. They met with the church, and the apostles and elders. Of the sect of the Pharisees, some contended that the Gentiles need to be circumcised in order to be saved. Peter said to those who were gathered:

### **Acts 15, Verses 7 to 18**

[7] And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that **a good while ago** God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

[8] And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy

Ghost, even as he did unto us;

[9] And put **no difference** between us and them, purifying their hearts **by faith**.

[10] Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

[11] But **we believe** that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

[12] Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

[13] And after they had held their peace, **James answered, saying**, Men and brethren, hearken unto me:

[14] Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

[15] And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

[16] **After this I will return**, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will **build again the ruins thereof**, and I will **set it up**:

[17] **That** the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and **all the Gentiles**, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

[18] Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

**Mr. Walvoord, in his book, Israel In Prophecy, pages 91 through 93, in** propounding the dispensational view that **the present age** is a time when God is fulfilling His purpose in the church, with God's program for Israel being postponed, comments on the above referenced scripture in Acts: "...The consummation of the prophecies regarding the kingdom therefore was postponed, but not cancelled. The kingdom on earth is consistently interpreted in a literal way and is not spiritualized in the narratives dealing with the subject in the gospels and Acts.

"One of the important passages in the New Testament bearing on this subject is found in Act 15:14-18. Here in the council in Jerusalem the question had been raised concerning the status of the Gentiles in the present age. It was difficult for the Jews to understand that for the time being the Gentiles should have a place of equality with Israel, in view of the many prophecies in the Old Testament which anticipated Israel's pre-eminence and glory. In the settlement of this problem it is recorded that James made the following address:" Mr. Walvoord then cites verses 14 through 18 from Acts chapter 15. After pointing out that this is a quotation from Amos 9:11,12, and that scholars have not agreed on the precise interpretation of this passage, he then comments on this passage in Acts as follows: "However, it seems that 'after these things I will return' refers to the return of Christ after the period of Gentile prominence which began in 606 B.C. and is destined to continue until the second coming. It is after these things—i.e., judgment on Israel, their scattering, and discipline—that Christ will return and build again the tabernacle or tent of David." In support of his interpretation of the passage in Acts 15, Mr. Walvoord quotes from Amos 9:14 where it is said that God will bring back the captivity of Israel, build the waste cities, and plant vineyards, etc. He then says, "In other words, the kingdom concerns itself with

the rule over the people of Israel in their ancient land which will be characterized by revival and restoration, exactly what we would expect by the reference to rebuilding the tent of David. This is further confirmed by the final verse of Amos 9: ‘And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be plucked up out of their land which I have given them, saith Jehovah thy God.’ In other words, the kingdom is related to the time when Israel will be regathered and be established in their ancient land.”

In this passage in the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of Acts, as Mr. Walvoord has said, verses 16 through 18, are quoting Amos 9:11,12. James, in citing the passage in Amos, **is applying the Amos passage to what Peter has said** regarding his having proclaimed the gospel to the Gentiles, and God having given them the Holy Spirit, even as God had done for the Jews. *And, that God had made no difference or distinction between Jew and Gentile, but also, purifying their (Gentiles) hearts by faith-vs7-9.*

James says, “Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit **the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.**”v14. James then says, “And to this [taking out of the Gentiles a people for His name] agree the words of the prophets, as it is written, After this I will return, and build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down...” In verse 17, James explains why God is setting up the tabernacle of David again. *It is that the residue of men (those remaining), and the Gentiles on whom God’s name is called, may seek after the Lord. This is a clear declaration by James that, now in this age, God is again building the tabernacle of David, including Jews and Gentiles.*

“**After this I will return**” does not suggest, as it “**seems**” to Mr. Walvoord, that the event of building the tabernacle of David will occur in the future when Christ returns. Rather, “**After this I will return**” is *James quotation of a prophecy expressed many hundreds of years before, when the prophecy was referring to a future event.* However, James says that *what Peter declared* concerning, “...how God at the first did visit **the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name**”v14, *is the building again the tabernacle of David.* James says, in referring to verse 14, “And **to this** agree the words of the prophets, as it is written”v15. James then quotes the Prophet Amos whose prophecy *includes Jews and the Gentiles* in the building again of the tabernacle of David.

At the middle of page 37 above, Mr. Walvoord comments: “The kingdom on earth is consistently interpreted in a literal way and is not spiritualized in the narratives dealing with the subject in the gospels and Acts.” To determine the accuracy of this statement, some of the “kingdom” passages in the gospels and the book of Acts will be observed.

Matthew 12: 28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

**Luke 17: 20** And when he was demanded **of the Pharisees**, when the **kingdom of God** should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh **not with observation**:

**21** Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is **within you**.

**John 3: 3** Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man **be born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

**4** Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

**5** Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and **of the Spirit**, he cannot enter into **the kingdom of God**.

**6** That which is **born of the flesh is flesh**; and that which is **born of the Spirit is spirit**.

**7** **Marvel not** that I said unto thee, Ye must be **born again**.

**John 18: 33** Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, **Art thou the King of the Jews?**

**34** Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

**35** Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?

**36** Jesus answered, **My kingdom** is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

**37** Pilate therefore said unto him, **Art thou a king then?** Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

**In Matthew**, Jesus' statement that *if He "cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then is the kingdom of God come unto you"*, necessarily means that the kingdom of God had come, and is a spiritual kingdom. Also in Luke, Jesus' statement that *the kingdom does not come with observation, but is within you suggests a spiritual kingdom, now present, and not future*. Jesus' statement in **John chapter 3** that, *except a person is born of the Spirit, they can neither see nor enter the kingdom of God is rather clear testimony that the kingdom of God is spiritual, and inhabited by those who are born of the Spirit*.

**In the passage in John chapter 18**, Jesus says, with definiteness, "**My kingdom is not of this world**". If His kingdom were of **this world**, being King, He would not die, as He said "then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews". Also, it was not the Father, but Satan who offered Jesus the kingdoms of **this world**-Matthew 4:8-9. Even if the nation of Israel had, as a nation, received Jesus as their king, He would still have been killed because *His kingdom is not of this world. David knew and spoke of Christ as the one who would sit on his throne, through death and resurrection*-Acts 2:25-32.

**Jesus' declaration that His kingdom is not of this world, is in full agreement with the apostle Paul's statement, "Now this I say brethren, that **flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God**; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption"-1 Corinthians 15:50. *Israel was always destined to share in a "spiritual" kingdom through resurrection of spirit, soul and body, and serve a resurrected King.* The following scriptures explain the situation of those who would not recognize such a king and kingdom for Israel.**

**John 12: 32** And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

**33** This he said, signifying what death he should die.

**34** **The people answered him,** We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth **for ever**: and **how sayest thou,** The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

**35** Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest **darkness** come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness **knoweth not** whither he goeth.

**36** While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

**When Jesus spoke of His being lifted up,** the understanding of these people was limited by the law, (Old Testament). In the **Old Testament,** the prophets had said that Christ would live forever. *Because these folks had not received the words of Jesus,* they were expecting Christ to live forever *in a natural body.* Jesus said that He did not come to destroy, but rather, that He came to fulfill the law and the prophets-Matthew 5:17.

**John 19:12** And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, **thou art not Caesar's friend**: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

**The assertion by these Jews that,** if Jesus is a king He is in competition with Caesar, evidences their lack of understanding that Jesus' "kingdom is not of **this world**".

**Continuing with the dispensational assertion,** that the kingdom on earth is interpreted in a **literal way** and is **not spiritualized** in the gospels and Acts, the Apostle Paul declares that the ministry that he has *received of the Lord* is to testify the "*gospel of the grace of God*", and he has been preaching the "*kingdom of God*". *He is presenting both phrases as one and the same message.*

**Acts 20:22** And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:

**23** Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.

**24** But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord



Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

**25** And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.

**By literal interpretation of the kingdom**, dispensationalists are referring to nations as geopolitical subdivisions on this earth, with Israel as the national instrument through which God administers His kingdom on this earth, which kingdom they refer to as the “millennial” kingdom. *However, the kingdom that the Apostle Paul refers to encompasses all, Jew and Gentile, who are God’s children by grace, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And, as evidenced in the previously cited scriptures, this kingdom is realized with the institution of the new covenant, in measure during this age, as the fulfilling of the prophecies proclaimed by the Old Testament prophets. In this regard, Paul further states:*

**Acts 26:20** But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and **at Jerusalem**, and throughout all the coasts **of Judaea**, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

**21** For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.

**22** Having therefore obtained help of God, **I continue unto this day**, witnessing both to small and great, saying **none other things** than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:

**23** That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto **the people**, and to **the Gentiles**.

**The apostle Paul further attests to the inclusion of the Gentiles in the promises to Israel:**

**Romans 15:25** But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

**26** For it hath pleased **them of Macedonia and Achaia** to make a certain **contribution** for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

**27** It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, **their duty** is also to minister **unto them** in carnal things.

**28** When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.

**The dispensational view, stated at the bottom of page 37 and the top of page 38, that “the kingdom concerns itself with the rule over the people of Israel in their ancient land which will be characterized by revival and restoration, exactly what we would expect by the reference to rebuilding the tent of David”, needs to be scrutinized by additional scripture. The epistle to the Hebrews explains the relationship of God’s dwelling with Israel under His administration of the old covenant, and His dwelling with His people under new covenant administration. We read at:**

**Hebrews 3:1** Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and **High Priest** of our profession, Christ Jesus;

**2** Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all **his house**.

**3** For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath buildd the **house** hath more honour than the house.

**4** For every **house** is buildd by some man; but he that built all things is God.

**5** And Moses verily was faithful in all **his house**, as a servant, **for a testimony** of those things which were **to be spoken after**;

**6** But Christ as a son over **his own house**; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

**Moses' house is the** "house of Israel" that the apostle Peter referred to at Acts 2:36, when he said, "Therefore let all the **house of Israel** know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ". This house is **"a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after"**. The word "testimony" is the English translation of the Greek word *marturion*, which means "something *evidential*, i.e. (Gen.) *evidence* given..." (Strong's Concordance) ***Christ as a Son over His own house is what Moses, as a servant in his house, bore testimony to***. This scripture is informing us that ***Moses' house was not God's ultimate dwelling***. However, Christ's house is Jew and Gentile being built together "for an holy habitation of God through the Spirit"-Ephesians 2:22. (See page 21 of this paper). ***This is God's dwelling place during this age, as the Spirit is "the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession"***. (See page 19 of this paper) ***When the inheritance is come to fullness, God's ultimate dwelling with His people, in His Son's house, will be realized***. **This eternal house is revealed at:**

**Revelation 21:2** And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as **a bride** adorned for her husband.

**3** And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the **tabernacle of God** is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be **his people**, and God himself shall be with them, and **be their God**.

**The above passage of scripture describes the fullness of our inheritance in the New Jerusalem, wherein we are His people and He is our God**. (See Jeremiah's prophesied new covenant, verse 33, on page 44 of this paper). **We will view another passage of scripture that describes the beginning, and the earnest of the inheritance, received in measure now, under God's administration of the new covenant that He made with Israel**.

**Hebrews 12:18** For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

**19** And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:

**20** (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast

touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:

**21** And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

**22** But ye are come unto **mount Sion**, and unto the **city of the living God**, the **heavenly Jerusalem**, and to an innumerable company of angels,

**23** To the general assembly and **church of the firstborn**, which are **written in heaven**, and **to God** the Judge of all, and to the spirits of **just men made perfect**,

**24** And **to Jesus** the mediator of **the new covenant**, and **to the blood** of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

**When Moses and Israel received the law**, they came to Mt. Sinai where God met with Moses and gave the law, *written on tables of stone*. God told Moses to instruct the people of Israel, as expressed in verses 18 through 20 above. *This pictures the old covenant administration under which things were external and physical, and where the consequences for disobeying God's will were immediate*. It is important to recognize that when we come to Christ through faith, we have come to the **mount of Zion**, and to the **New Jerusalem**, and to the **Church** of the firstborn. And, we have come **to God**, and **to Jesus** the mediator of **the new covenant**, and to the benefits of **the blood of Christ**. *This is the Zion and the Jerusalem of which the Prophet Joel said*, "And it shall **come to pass**, that whosoever shall call on the name of the lord **shall be delivered**: for in **mount Zion** and in **Jerusalem** shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in **the remnant** whom the Lord shall call"-Joel 2:32.

**The Apostle Paul was citing** the first portion of this verse in Joel when he said in Romans 10:13, "For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord **shall be saved**". In **verse 12** of the Romans' passage, Paul preceded this quotation by saying, "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him."

**The Apostle Paul distinguishes between the earthly Jerusalem that was under the old covenant administration, and the New Jerusalem, which is under the new covenant administration:**

**Galatians 4:21** Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

**22** For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one **by a bondmaid**, the other **by a freewoman**.

**23** But he who was of the bondwoman was born **after the flesh**; but he of the freewoman was **by promise**.

**24** Which things are an allegory: **for these are the two covenants**; the one from the **mount Sinai**, which gendereth **to bondage**, which is Agar.

**25** For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth **to Jerusalem which now is**, and is **in bondage** with her children.

**26** But Jerusalem which is above **is free**, which is **the mother of us all**.

**27** For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

**28** Now we, brethren, as **Isaac was**, are **the children of promise**.

**In the preceding Galatians passage, the apostle Paul is again explaining the two covenants.** As mentioned above, at mount Sinai Israel received God's law through Moses. *The Jerusalem "which now is", (the earthly Jerusalem, that ancient city of David), and the people identified with that city, are related to the law. The law brings people into bondage; for the law is weak through the flesh-Romans 8:3. However, the Jerusalem that is from above, the heavenly city, New Jerusalem is free and is the mother of us all, (People who are of faith in Christ).* This freedom is from the bondage of the law, *not that that there is anything wrong with the law, but rather, the problem between man and the law is one's weakness in the flesh to perform according to the righteousness demanded by the law-Romans 7:6-18. The law ceases to hold us in bondage as we learn to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*-Galatians 5:16-25; Romans 8:4.

**Ishmael, Abraham's son by Hagar,** was not the son that God promised to Abraham; *for Abraham moved apart from God's will* in bringing forth his son, Ishmael. Abraham was proceeding according to *the unenlightened wisdom of, and according to the desire of the flesh* to obtain a son. But, God personally instructed Abraham that Sarah would bear him the son that He had promised-Gen. 17:19. Because of her faith, Sarah received strength to conceive-Heb. 11:11. One son was born after the flesh, the other, Isaac, was born after the Spirit-Galatians 4:23. Sarah is "the freewoman", and the Jerusalem that is from above, the New Jerusalem, is free and is identified with Sarah, the freewoman-Galatians 4:26. Thus, we have here the eternal and spiritual Jerusalem that is God's eternal dwelling place with His people within His administering of the new covenant.

**This is the Zion and the Jerusalem in God's kingdom that He is now administering in accordance with the new covenant that He promised to Israel by the Prophet Jeremiah, which reads:**

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

**34** And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for **they shall all know me,** from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD; for I will **forgive their iniquity,** and I will **remember their sin no more.**

**The following are some New Testament scriptures referring to or applying the new covenant.**

**2 Corinthians 3: 2** Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

**3** Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be **the epistle of Christ** ministered by us,

written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:

5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

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

**Paul is addressing the church at Corinth, and *applying to the church that portion of the above referenced new covenant* in verse 33, which says, that the *law will be written in their hearts*.**

**Paul continues addressing the church at Corinth:**

**2 Corinthians 6:14** Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will **dwelt in them**, and **walk in them**; and I will **be their God**, and they shall **be my people**.

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

**Here Paul is applying to the church** that portion of verse 33 in Jeremiah that says, *He will be their God, and they shall be His people*. While this aspect of the new covenant *is realized in measure now, by the church, it is realized in its fullness after the return of the Lord Jesus*, as evidenced in Revelation 21:2-3, (See page 42 of this paper). Chapters 21 and 22 of the book of Revelation describe the New Jerusalem and events and circumstances related to it at Christ's return.

**In chapters 5 and 7 of the epistle to the Hebrews**, it is explained that the **Levitical Priesthood** in the Old Testament, which served under the law, made nothing perfect or complete. *This old covenant priesthood has been replaced by Christ, who has been made a priest forever after the similitude of Melchisedec*. Christ's priesthood is *unchangeable* in that He lives forever to make intercession for God's people. The priesthood *is just one of the changes* from God's administering of His kingdom in the old covenant economy, *which changes all rest in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus*. **In chapter 3 of Hebrews**, we viewed the scripture that declared *a change in God's house*, (See bottom of page 41 and top of page 42). Also, we have viewed

scripture that explains a change in “Jerusalem” under the new covenant that God made with Israel, (See middle of page 42 through page 44). **In chapter 8 there is further testimony concerning the priesthood and the house.**

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

**2** A minister of the sanctuary, and of **the true tabernacle**, which **the Lord pitched**, and **not man**.

**3** For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that **this man** have somewhat also to offer.

**4** For if he were **on earth**, he should not be a priest, seeing that **there are priests** that offer gifts **according to the law**:

**5** Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

**6** But now hath he obtained **a more excellent ministry**, by how much also he **is** the mediator of **a better covenant**, which was established upon **better promises**.

**7** For if that first covenant **had been faultless**, then should no place have been sought for the second.

**8** For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, **the days come**, saith the Lord, when I will make **a new covenant** with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

**9** Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

**In this passage, we are told that the “sum”** (a summation of what has been spoken in the preceding chapters) is:

- The high priest (Christ) **is in heaven** at the right hand of the throne of God-v1.
- He is a minister of **the true tabernacle**, and it is built **by the Lord rather than by man**-v2.
- The **service of the priests** who offered gifts according to the law was an **example and a shadow of the heavenly things**-vs3-5.
- **Now** the high priest (Christ) has a **superior ministry**, and He mediates **a better covenant** that is based on **better promises**-6.
- The Lord did not find satisfaction with His people under the old covenant, thus He declared **that the time would come** when He would make **a new covenant** with them-vs8-9.

**This passage of scripture in Hebrews chapter 8** continues by citing the passage in Jeremiah 31:33-34. (See near bottom of p. 44 of this paper)

**Chapter 9 of Hebrews commences by saying**, Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary-v1. This passage

continues by describing the contents of the tabernacle. It, also, explains that the interior of the tabernacle was *divided into two areas*. The first is called the sanctuary where the priests *did service daily*. The second area was called the “Holiest of all”, wherein the high priest entered once a year with blood that he offered for himself and for the people. **Verse 8 commences by making reference to this 2<sup>nd</sup> area, in the earthly tabernacle, called the “Holiest of all”.**

**Hebrews 9:8** The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

**9** Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to **the conscience**;

**10** Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them **until the time of reformation**.

**11** But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more **perfect tabernacle**, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

**12** Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained **eternal redemption for us**.

**13** For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

**14** How much more shall **the blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve **the living God**?

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

**Some of the significant points of this passage are:**

- The earthly tabernacle was a **“figure”** of the “true” tabernacle and served God’s purpose **until “the time of reformation”**, which time was that of the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ-vs9-11.
- The ceremony and ritual in the first tabernacle was a **continual service** because those offerings **could not satisfy the conscience**, but Christ’s **one time offering of His own blood**, and His entering in the Holy place in heaven provides eternal redemption-vs12-13.
- It is the offering of Christ **that satisfies God** concerning our sin, and by **understanding this**, our conscience is freed from **the need** to perform the service under the old covenant, which is dead works. *Now our service is to God who lives in us, in the Person of the Holy Spirit*-14, (See John 14:15-23).
- It is through this work of Christ who, by His death, instituted the new covenant, that there is redemption from the transgressions that were

under the old covenant of the law. Redemption from transgressions is an element of the new covenant (See near bottom p. 44). Through **the new covenant** He now mediates between man and God, making available to those **who are called**, the promise of **eternal inheritance-v15.**

**With the transition from God’s administering His kingdom under the old covenant to His administering His kingdom under the new covenant, there are several changes, some of which we have already observed in scripture, the house; the priesthood; Jerusalem and Zion. The Apostle Peter, whose ministry was primarily to the Jews-Galatians 2:7-9, speaks of such changes.**

**1 Peter 2:1** Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

**2** As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of **the word**, that ye may grow thereby:

**3** If so be ye have tasted that **the Lord is gracious.**

**4 To whom coming,** as unto **a living stone**, disallowed indeed of men, but **chosen of God**, and precious,

**5** Ye also, as **lively stones**, are built up **a spiritual house**, an **holy priesthood**, to offer up **spiritual sacrifices**, acceptable to God **by Jesus Christ.**

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

**7** Unto you therefore **which believe** he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made **the head of the corner**,

**8** And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

**9** But **ye are** a **chosen generation**, a **royal priesthood**, an **holy nation**, a **peculiar people**; that ye should shew forth **the praises of him** who hath called you out of **darkness** into his **marvellous light**:

**10** Which in time past **were not a people**, but are now **the people of God**: which **had not obtained mercy**, but now **have obtained mercy.**

**11** Dearly beloved, I beseech you as **strangers and pilgrims**, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

**12** Having your conversation honest **among the Gentiles**: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may **by your good works**, which they shall behold, **glorify God** in the day of visitation.

**In this passage of scripture, the Apostle Peter is explaining to these Jews who believe, that they have come to Christ, as a living stone who is rejected of men, but chosen of God-v4. And, in coming to Christ they are, as living stones, built up: 1) a spiritual house; 2) a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices-v5. Christ, as the chief corner stone that was laid in Zion, is the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy-Isaiah 28:16. Also, Christ’s being “the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner”-v7, is the fulfillment of the prophecy in Psalms 118:22. Christ, as the “chief**



corner stone” is the headstone of the foundation for the “holy **temple** of the Lord” that is the “**habitation** of God through **the Spirit**”, consisting of Jew and Gentile referred to at Ephesians 2:20-22.

**These brethren who believed on the chief corner stone that was laid in Zion, are: 1) a chosen generation; 2) a royal priesthood; 3) a holy nation; 4) a peculiar people-v9.** This is the realization of what God told Moses to say to “*the children of Israel*” at: **Exodus 19:5** Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

**6** And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto **the children of Israel.**

Some other references to a peculiar or special people are: Deut. 7:6 and 14:2.

**The scriptures referenced on pages 41 forward to this page 49, provide clear testimony that: 1) the covenant changes-Heb. 8:5-13; 2) the house changes-Heb. 3:1-6, 8:2, 9:11, 1 Pet. 2:5; 3) the priesthood changes-Heb. 7:12, 1 Pet. 2:5,9; 4) the sacrifice changes-Heb. 7:27, 13:15,16, 1 Pet. 2:5, Rom. 12:1; 5) Jerusalem changes-Gal. 4:22-28, Heb. 11:13-16, 12:22; 6) the people change-Eph. 1:10, 2:16, 3:5,6,15, 1 Pet. 2:9; 7) the nation changes-1 Pet. 2:9. *This is the “nation”* referred to in Matthew 21:42-44, that *will bring forth the fruits of the kingdom,* and *to which Jesus said He would give the kingdom.* Also, *Christ is the stone* that will break those who fall on it, and the stone that will grind to powder those on whom it falls.**

**Everything of the old covenant economy was: 1) a shadow, an example-Heb. 8:5, 10:1; 2) a testimony-Heb. 3:5; 3) a figure-Heb. 9:9,24; 4) a pattern-Heb. 9:23, until the time of reformation-9:10, when all came to fulfillment in Christ,** and is *eternal, everlasting, and forever in Him*-Heb. 9:11,12.

**In 1 Peter 2:9** referenced above, Peter said that as a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, *they should show forth the praises (or virtues) of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light.*

**A leading advocate of dispensational thought applies the last portion of 1 Peter 2:9 to the reward for the believer in eternity:**

“...it may be that the reward given to the believer is a capacity to manifest the glory of Christ throughout eternity. The greater the reward, the greater the bestowed capacity to bring glory to God. Thus in the exercise of the reward of the believer, it will be Christ and not the believer that is glorified by the reward. Capacities to radiate the glory will differ, but there will be no personal sense of lack in that each believer will be filled to the limit of his capacity to “show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light”. (1 Pet. 2:9)” J. Dwight

Pentecost, Things To Come, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Dunham Publishing Company, 1958, p.226).

**This scripture is in the context of living in the “here and now”.** The writer prefaces his claim with, “it may be”, and then *treats the claim as fact*, however, *there is no suggestion* that Peter is applying this verse of scripture to reward in eternity. As mentioned earlier in this paper (bottom of p. 2, and p. 3), *the reasoning process from particulars to a conclusion does not lead to the true meaning of the divine revelation of scripture.*

**Also, 1 Peter 2:10 above is explaining the above referenced passage in 1 Peter chapter 2, to be the fulfillment of a prophecy by the Prophet Hosea.**

**Hosea 1:8** Now when she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived, and bare a son.

**9** Then said God, Call his name Lo-ammi: **for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God.**

**10** Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; **and it shall come to pass**, that in the place where it was said unto them, **Ye are not my people**, there it shall be said unto them, **Ye are the sons of the living God.**

**11** Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be **gathered together**, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel.

**Hosea 2:19** And I will betroth thee unto me **for ever**; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in **righteousness**, and in **judgment**, and in **lovingkindness**, and in **mercies**.

**20** I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD.

**21** And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the LORD, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth;

**22** And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel.

**23** And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.

**The Lord told Hosea**, that because of Israel’s wickedness, the children of Israel are not my people. But, God also said *the day will come* when they will again *be the people of God*, and when they will *obtain mercy*. Peter declares that day to be “now”. In the Person and work of the Lord Jesus, who is *the “chief corner stone”*, the Jews that believe on Him have obtained *mercy* and are *His people*. And, as we have read in the previously referenced scriptures, in God’s mercy, He has included in *the promises to Israel* those *Gentiles who believe* on Christ. **The Apostle Paul, further confirms the fulfillment to the “circumcision” (Jews) the promises made “unto the fathers”, and that His mercy includes the Gentiles with His people:**

**Romans 15:8** Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

9 And that **the Gentiles** might glorify God for his mercy; **as it is written**, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye **Gentiles**, with **his people**.

11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye **Gentiles**; and laud him, all ye **people**.

12 And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a **root of Jesse**, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall **the Gentiles trust**.

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace **in believing**, that ye may abound **in hope**, through the power of **the Holy Ghost**.

**The following is a quotation of Pentecost's statement on page 450 of his book entitled "Things To Come", expressing the dispensational explanation of Romans 15:8:**

**"E. The theocratic message limited to Israel. The kingdom that was announced was announced only to Israel.**

**'These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand' [Matt. 10:5-7].**

**'I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel' [Matt. 15:24].**

**It is for this reason that Paul could say that 'Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promise made unto the fathers' (Rom. 15:8). There could be no universal blessings of the Abrahamic covenant applied to the Gentiles until Israel had experienced the realization of the theocratic kingdom, in which kingdom and in whose King the nations would be blessed."**

**What is being argued here is that, Paul's declaration in Romans 15:8 *will be realized* in the dispensationalist's conception of "a millennial kingdom" after Christ returns. The reasoning for this application of Paul's statement is that Jesus was sent to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel". Such reasoning fails to produce the "truth of God", in part because it rests on scripture that, *standing alone*, does not explain the matter at issue. *The issue being the period of time that Paul is referring to in Romans 15:8*. -As Paul continues in Romans chapter 15, he relates verses 8-12 to his present ministry to the Gentiles. (See verses 15 and 16) While Jesus' ministry was directed to the children of Israel, both His and the apostle's ministry was directed to the Jew first. We will review a few scriptures:**

**Acts 3:24** Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of **these days**.

**25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.**

26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

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

**Here we learn that** the prophets “foretold of *these days*”, not the days after Christ returns-Acts 3:24. The people that Peter is addressing are the children of the prophets (Jews)-v25, and it was to them (Jews) first, that God sent Jesus to bless them by turning them from their iniquities-v26. The Apostle Paul says that “the gospel of Christ”, which is the power of God for salvation to every one that believes, was to the Jew first, and then to the Greek (Gentile). (The reader might review pages 19 through 26 of this paper, wherein is explained the “mystery” which was not known to the prophets, “That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him”-Eph. 1:10).

**All of God’s promises to Israel through the prophets** are introduced by: 1) the covenant that God made with Israel through Moses; 2) the covenant with Abraham; 3) the covenant with David; and 4) the new covenant.

- The covenant through Moses reveals *God’s expectation and requirement for His people’s manner of living*, both from within the heart, and the outward behavior that necessarily attends the inward state. (This is expressed in Matt. 4:17 through Matt. 5:20).
- The covenant with Abraham establishes *the role of faith* as the essential and governing principle in the relationship between God and man. And, faith is the conditional element for receiving the inheritance with Christ. (On this point pages 6 through 16 might be reviewed).
- The covenant with David establishes *a house, a kingdom, and a throne* for the king.
- The new covenant *replaces the old covenant* with Moses by *personalizing*, and *providing* in and through Christ, *the means* for the *fulfillment* of the old covenant in the children of God-Matt.5:16 Let **your light** so shine before men, that they may see your **good works**, and **glorify your Father** which is in heaven.

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

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

**Romans 8:2** For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

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

**4** That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

All of these covenants have their *spiritual and eternal* realization in and through the Person and work of the Lord Jesus. Through most of this paper we have been viewing the New Testament explanation of what Moses and the prophets said should come. *This explanation is necessarily an unfolding of God's administering of the new covenant that He made with Israel.*

The dispensational view(s) of the new covenant and its application to the church, if any, is presented in Mr. Pentecost's book, entitled "Things To Come", on pages 118 through 125. (The new covenant as stated by the prophet Jeremiah at Jeremiah 31:33-34 is cited near the bottom of page 44 of this paper.)

"This covenant, then, has to do with the regeneration, forgiveness, and justification of Israel, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit with His subsequent ministries, Israel's regathering and restoration to the place of blessing, all founded on the blood of Jesus Christ."

### III. THE CHARACTER OF THE NEW COVENANT

"Once again the principle is observed that, like all Israel's covenants, this covenant is a literal and unconditional covenant. (1) It is called eternal in Isaiah 24:5; 61:8; Jeremiah 31:36, 40; 32:2:40; 50:5. (2) This covenant is a gracious covenant that depends entirely upon the 'I will' of God for its fulfillment, Jeremiah 31:33. It does not depend upon man. (3) This covenant amplifies the third great area of the original Abrahamic covenant, the area of 'blessing.' Inasmuch as this is only an amplification of the original Abrahamic covenant, which has been shown to be unconditional and literal, this covenant must be also. (4) This covenant is largely occupied with the question of salvation from sin and the impartation of a new heart. Salvation is solely the work of God. Thus the covenant that guarantees salvation to the nation Israel must be apart from all human agency and therefore unconditional."

In the first paragraph the writer's reference to the **salvation aspect** of the covenant is found in verse 34 of chapter 31 of Jeremiah where it says, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." The outpouring of the Holy Spirit is implied in verse 33, which states, "...I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts..." The outpouring of the Spirit is declared at Joel 2:28, and also, in several other Old Testament prophecies. Israel's regathering and restoration to the place of blessing *is founded on the blood of Jesus, as are all the benefits of the new covenant.* However, *the time of fulfillment of the new covenant* is at issue in this examination of dispensational thought, and is considered on pages 55 through 63.

In the above paragraph that addresses the character of the new covenant the writer presents several conclusions that need to be examined.

- 1) The writer's assertion that the new covenant is eternal conflicts with the dispensational conclusion that it is fulfilled in a millennial (1000

years) *kingdom*. The new covenant was instituted *by the death of the eternal Son of God* who was raised from the dead, and ascended to the right hand of the heavenly Father *to be a priest forever*-Heb. 7:17. His kingdom *is not of this world*-John 18:36. His kingdom can *be seen and entered into only by those who are born again of the Spirit*-John 3:3-7. *Flesh and blood cannot inherit* the kingdom of God-1 Corinth. 15:50. His kingdom is referred to in scripture as *the kingdom of God*, the *everlasting kingdom*-2 Pet. 1:11, the *kingdom of Christ and of God*-Eph. 5:5, the *kingdom of heaven*-Matt. 4:17. In proclaiming that the *“kingdom of heaven” is at hand, Jesus was preaching the “gospel” of the kingdom*-Matt. 4:23. This is *God’s kingdom* that He is *now* administering *under the new covenant*, and is in place *when the Lord Jesus returns*. Mr. Pentecost stated in the paragraph above that this covenant is literal, and indeed it is. *This is the literal interpretation of what Matthew, Peter and Paul have said.*

- 2) The writer asserts that this covenant is a *“gracious” covenant*. It is true that the fulfilling and the administering of this, and the other referenced covenants are by *the working of God, which is grace*. Also, the fulfilling and administering of the covenant does not depend on man. However, *a person’s access to the benefits of this covenant and all of God’s promises is through faith*, as the Apostle Paul has written regarding the covenant with Abraham, *“Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all*-Romans 4:16. Paul further states, *“THEREFORE being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God*-Romans 5:1-2.

**Faith is an inward posture toward God of devotion and commitment.**

God bestows grace on (works in and on behalf of) those persons who are in *this manner inwardly disposed toward Him*. The passage in chapter five of Romans is informing us that, *in Christ*, we stand, or are positioned *in the place of grace*, and that we access *that grace and it’s benefits* by faith, (being *inwardly devoted* and *committed to Him*). Also, the Romans 4:16 verse presents faith as the way of obtaining grace, *for both* those who are of the law (Jews) and for those who are not of the law (Gentiles). Because faith has a *volitional element*, grace is available to whosoever *will come* to the Lord. ( Faith is considered in some detail in the paper entitled, What Is Faith).

**This volitional element is expressed at:**

**John 1:11** He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

**12** :But as many as **received him**, to **them gave he power** to become the sons of God, *even to them that believe* on his name:

- 3) The writer states that the new covenant is an amplification of the Abrahamic covenant, ***“which has been shown to be unconditional”***, *therefore the new covenant must be unconditional also*. This is typical of the dispensationalist ***interpretive method of reasoning*** from an unproved conclusion, (that the covenant with Abraham is unconditional), to another conclusion that is not established with scripture. Concerning the claim that the covenant with Abraham is unconditional, (the reader may want to review pages 7 through 12, and the first few lines on page 13 of this paper).
- 4) Item (4), under the heading “The Character Of The New Covenant”, is continuing the contention that the new covenant is unconditional because it “guarantees salvation to the nation Israel” which is “solely the work of God”, and “must be apart from all human agency”. ***Again, this is simply reasoning that, because of the nature of Israel’s salvation, the new covenant that provides for forgiveness of sins is therefore unconditional***. Such a premise, either allows salvation for Israel ***apart from faith*** or, views faith as something that God, in His sovereignty, ***implants*** within the heart. The latter being a concept held in “reform theology”.

**On pages 120 and 121 of Mr. Pentecost’s book, Things To Come**, the dispensational view of the time of fulfillment of the new covenant is explained.

**“B. The time of the fulfillment of the New Covenant. It has been agreed that the time of the new covenant was future. It was always viewed as future when reference is made to it in the Old Testament prophecies. Hosea (2:18-20), Isaiah (55:3), Ezekiel (16:60,62; 20:37; 34:25-26) all spoke of it as future. It must be viewed as yet future, for this covenant can not be realized by Israel until God has effected her salvation and restoration to the land.”**

**“This covenant must follow the return of Christ at the second advent. The blessings anticipated in the covenant will not be realized until Israel’s salvation, and this salvation follows the return of the Deliverer.**

‘And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written. There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins’ [Rom. 11:26-27].”

**“The covenant referred to here must of necessity be the new covenant, for that is the only covenant expressly dealing with the removal of sins. And it is said to be actual after the coming of the Deliverer.”**

**“This covenant will be realized in the millennial age.”**

**In the first paragraph referenced in “B” above,** the writer informs us that, **“it has been agreed”** that the time of the new covenant is future. A fair question is, **“by whom has it been agreed”**. Other than dispensationalists, **there are many who do not agree** to such a futurist concept.

**The writer then explains** that the new covenant was viewed as future in the *Old Testament* references. This is an accurate assertion, however, **it does not support the claim that the new covenant is still future** after Christ’s death, **whereby it was instituted**-Heb. 9:15. The prophets in the Old Testament spoke of the new covenant as being future simply because it was future at the time of their prophecies.

**In the second paragraph above,** the futuristic view is supported by reasoning that the blessings of the new covenant cannot be realized “until Israel’s salvation, and this salvation follows the return of the Deliverer”. Then the writer quotes the above passage in Romans 11: 26-27. This scripture in Romans 11:26-27, wherein it refers to, “as it is written”, **is citing a prophecy by Isaiah** that spoke of the Redeemer coming to Zion, and to turn ungodliness from Jacob. The Apostle Paul is not declaring the coming of the Deliverer to be a future event, he is **simply citing this prophecy in its future tense as it was expressed by the Prophet Isaiah**. While the prophecy was an event that was still future when Isaiah spoke, **it does not require or even suggest** that the coming out of Zion a deliver to bring salvation to Israel **is still future**. Any objective, and unbiased literate person would readily make this observation. (The reader might review pages 42 and 43 of this paper concerning Zion and Jerusalem).

**Mr. Pentecost treats the Ro. 11:26-27 passage of scripture** as referring to Israel’s salvation from their sins, and it is. However, Mr. Walvoord says on page 112 of his book, *Israel In Prophecy*, concerning Ro. 11:26-27: **“Israel as a nation, or Israel as a whole shall be delivered from her enemies. The salvation in view is not that of freedom from the guilt of sin, but deliverance from persecution and trial.”** It is noteworthy that Mr. Walvoord rejects the “literal” meaning of **the words** of this scripture: “There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins.” **This is another example of two things:** 1) How readily the advocates of dispensational thought will ignore or revise *New Testament* scriptures when, to the interpreter, such scriptures do not support their preconceived system of thought; and 2) The diversity of interpretation of a specific scripture to arrive at their common, seemingly “sacred”, reasoned conclusion.

**In Romans 11:26, the statement,** “And so all Israel shall be saved:” can be accurately understood, not as a statement standing alone, but by viewing the



*context* in which the Apostle Paul is explaining *who is* and *who is not a Jew*, and *who is of Israel* and *who is not*. **Some of the relevant passages of scripture are:**

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

**Romans 2:28** For he is **not a Jew**, which is one **outwardly**; neither is that circumcision, **which is outward in the flesh**:

**29** But **he is a Jew**, which is one **inwardly**; and **circumcision is that of the heart**, in the **spirit**, and **not in the letter**; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

**Romans 3:1** What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?

**2** Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

**3** For **what if some did not believe?** **shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?**

**4 God forbid:** yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

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

**29** **Is he the God of the Jews only?** is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, **of the Gentiles also:**

**30** Seeing it is one God, which shall justify **the circumcision by faith**, and **uncircumcision through faith**.

**31** Do we then **make void the law through faith?** God forbid: yea, **we establish the law**.

**Romans 9:1** I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

**2** That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

**3** For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ **for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:**

**4** **Who are Israelites;** to whom pertaineth **the adoption**, and **the glory**, and **the covenants**, and the giving of the law, and **the service of God**, and **the promises;**

**5** Whose are the fathers, and of whom **as concerning the flesh Christ came**, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

**6** Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For **they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:**

**Romans 9:22** What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering **the vessels of wrath** fitted to destruction:

**23** And that he might make known the riches of his glory **on the vessels of mercy**, which he had **afore prepared unto glory**,

**24** Even us, whom he hath called, **not of the Jews only**, but **also of the Gentiles?**

**25** As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.

**26** And **it shall come to pass**, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called **the children of the living God**.

**27** Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, **Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:**

28 For he will **finish the work**, and **cut it short** in righteousness: because **a short work** will the Lord make **upon the earth**.

**Romans 11:1** I say then, **Hath God cast away his people?** God forbid. **For I also am an Israelite**, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

2 **God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew**. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? **I have reserved to myself** seven thousand men, **who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal**.

5 Even so then **at this present time** also there is **a remnant according to the election of grace**.

6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

7 **What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for**; but **the election hath obtained it**, and the rest were blinded

**In his letter to the saints at Rome**, the Apostle Paul is explaining that:

- ***The gospel (the good news) that the salvation*** “promised by the prophets in the holy scriptures” ***is realized*** in the Person and work of Christ-1:1-4.
- This salvation is to everyone *who believes*, however, it was proclaimed to the *Jew first*, and then to the Gentiles-1:16. (Even though Paul was sent to the Gentiles, throughout his entire ministry it was his practice to preach the gospel in the synagogues of the Jews-Acts 17:1-2.)
- ***Faith is the access to God’s grace*** by which Jews and Gentiles inherit the promises of God-4:16; 5:1-2.
- Being ***the natural posterity*** of Abraham, through Isaac and Jacob ***does not qualify*** one to inherit under the ***new covenant administration***, the promises spoken by the prophets. ***Only the Israelite who is of a circumcised heart that is by the Spirit qualifies as a Jew***-2:28-29. Recall that circumcision, that was ***outward in the flesh***, was commanded ***as a condition*** for participating in God’s covenant with Abraham, and the ***uncircumcised*** man-child would be ***cut off*** from his people. (See page 10 of this paper). Paul is explaining that ***under the new covenant*** those Jews who are ***not circumcised of heart*** are removed from God’s promises to Israel.
- This raises the question of ***what advantage then has the Jew*** (according to the flesh). The answer is that ***they were given the oracles*** (words) ***of God***. But even so, if some of the Jews ***do not believe***, their ***unbelief does not remove faith*** from being the Jew’s

access to God and His grace-3:1-4, which is the access for all men - 4:16.

- Even though the adoption, the covenants, and the promises were to Israel, and that it was through Israel, “as concerning the flesh”, that Christ came, the word of God is effectual to Israel in those who qualify as a Jew inwardly, for “***they are not all Israel who are of Israel***”-9:6.
- God is enduring with much longsuffering “the vessels of wrath” (those who do not believe) ***while He prepares*** “the vessels of mercy” (those who believe), to make known His glory. ***The vessels of mercy include not only the believing Jews, but also the Gentiles who believe***-9:22-24.
- The ***prophecy by the Prophet Hosea***-Hos. 2:23; 1:10, saying of Israel, ye are not “my people”, but they will be called “the children of the living God”, ***is fulfilled*** in those ***who are Jews inwardly by faith***-9:25-26.
- Isaiah’s prophecy concerning the children of Israel being in number as the sand of the sea, ***is fulfilled in a remnant***, for the Lord will ***finish His work*** and ***cut it short on the earth***-9:27-28.
- God has not cast off His people, ***for the Apostle Paul***, being an Israelite, presents himself ***as an example*** of those Jews that God ***foreknew*** and ***made election*** on the basis of ***faith***. A ***further example*** is ***the remnant*** in the days of Elijah who had remained ***faithful to God*** by not bowing to the image of Baal. With Paul as an example ***at the present time***, and ***the faithful remnant*** in Elijah’s day, ***at this present time*** there is ***a remnant*** according to the election of grace-11:1-5. ***Paul is of the remnant that inherits the promises***.
- In light of all this explanation, “What then?” which is to say, ***what is the conclusion of this matter*** concerning ***the salvation*** of the nation of Israel? ***Israel as a theocratic nation***, a political subdivision among the nations of this earth, as contended for in dispensational theology, ***has not obtained that which they seek after***. However, the ***elect Jews***, those who are ***circumcised in heart*** by the Spirit, such circumcision being ***by grace through faith***, ***have come*** to the covenants and promises made to Israel-11:7. ***Paul is among them***.
- On this basis of being ***a Jew inwardly***, ***not by being a Jew outwardly***-2:28-29, “***all Israel shall be saved***” by the Deliverer who came out of Zion to turn ungodliness from Jacob-11:25-26. “***For***

*they are not all Israel that are of Israel*"-9:6. A part of Israel will be blinded (by their unbelief) during this entire age-11:23-25.

**The statement by Mr. Pentecost referenced** (at the bottom of page 55 of this paper), is that: **"The covenant referred to here must of necessity be the new covenant, for that is the only covenant expressly dealing with the removal of sins. And it is said to be actual after the coming of the Deliver"**.

**"This covenant will be realized in the millennial age."**

**We will review the following scriptures, a few among the many, which explain the time when God fulfilled to Israel His promise of a Savior.**

**Matthew 3:1** In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

**2** And saying, **Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**

**Matthew 3:6** And were baptized of him in Jordan, **confessing their sins.**

**7** But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you **to flee from the wrath to come?**

**8** Bring forth therefore fruits meet **for repentance:**

**9** And think not to say within yourselves, **We have Abraham to our father:** for I say unto you, that God is able **of these stones** to raise up children unto Abraham.

**Luke 1:67** And his father Zacharias was **filled with the Holy Ghost**, and prophesied, saying,

**68** Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and **redeemed his people,**

**69** And hath raised up **an horn of salvation for us** in the house of his servant **David;**

**70** As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been **since the world began:**

**Luke 2:25** And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, **waiting for the consolation of Israel:** and **the Holy Ghost was upon him.**

**26** And it was revealed unto him **by the Holy Ghost**, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

**27** And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

**28** Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

**29** Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

**30** For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

**31** Which thou hast prepared before the face of **all people;**

**32** A light to lighten **the Gentiles**, and the glory of **thy people Israel.**

**33** And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

**34** And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for **the fall and rising again of many in Israel;** and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

**Luke 2:36** And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but **served God** with fastings and prayers night and day.

38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks **likewise** unto the Lord, and **spake of him** to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

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

45 Then **opened he their understanding**, that they might **understand the scriptures**,

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 And that **repentance and remission of sins** should be preached in his name among **all nations**, beginning at Jerusalem.

**Acts 2:36** Therefore let all **the house of Israel** know **assuredly**, that God hath made **that same Jesus**, whom ye have crucified, **both Lord and Christ**.

37 Now **when they heard this**, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

38 Then Peter said unto them, **Repent**, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ **for the remission of sins**, and ye shall receive **the gift of the Holy Ghost**.

39 For **the promise** is unto **you**, and to **your children**, and to **all that are afar off**, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

**Acts 3:22** For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you **of your brethren**, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed **from among the people**.

24 Yea, and **all the prophets** from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.

25 Ye are the children **of the prophets**, and **of the covenant** which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, **in turning away every one of you from his iniquities**.

**Acts 5:29** Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.

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

32 And **we are his witnesses** of these things; and so is also **the Holy Ghost**, whom God hath given to them **that obey him**.

**Acts 10:34** Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

35 But in **every nation** he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, **is accepted with him**.

36 **The word which God sent unto the children of Israel**, preaching peace **by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)**

**Acts 10:42** And he commanded us to preach unto **the people**, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

**43** To him give **all the prophets** witness, that through **his name** whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

**Acts 13:26** Men and brethren, **children of the stock of Abraham**, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.

**27** For they that dwell at **Jerusalem**, and **their rulers**, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read **every sabbath day**, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.

**Acts 13:32** And we declare **unto you** glad tidings, how that **the promise** which was made **unto the fathers**,

**33** God hath **fulfilled** the same unto **us their children**, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, **this day** have I begotten thee.

**Acts 26:6** And **now** I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers:

**7** Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, **hope to come.** For **which hope's sake**, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.

**Acts 26:21** For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.

**22** Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, **saying none other things** than those which **the prophets and Moses** did say should come:

**23** That **Christ should suffer**, and that he should be **the first** that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto **the people**, and **to the Gentiles.**

**The scriptures referenced immediately above, are declarations by: John The Baptist**-Matt. 3:1,6-9; **Zacharias** (father of John the Baptist)-Lu 1:67-70; **Simeon**-Lu 2:25-34; **Anna**-Lu 2:36-38; **Jesus**-Lu 24:44-47; **Peter**-Acts 2:36-39; 3:23-26; 5:29-32; 10: 34-36, 42-43; **Paul**-Acts 13:26-27, 32-33; 26:21-23. They are testifying that *the first advent* of Christ *fulfilled* the prophecies concerning Israel's salvation. The passages of scripture referenced above from Paul's letter to the Romans provide clear and unequivocal testimony that the promises to Israel are fulfilled in a "*remnant according to the election of grace*"-Ro. 11:5. Paul also informs us that, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but *the election* hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded"-Ro. 11:7. Israel, *as a geopolitical nation*, does not obtain salvation by the forgiveness of sins promised in the new covenant with Israel.

**The millennial age as the time of fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies to Israel** is the gravitational center for the dispensational system of thought. However, God's revelation to the writers of the New Testament *explains, not only the timing of those things spoken by the prophets*, but also the *application* and the *manner of fulfillment*, the *benefits to individuals* and *how* they participate in those benefits. But, *the focus* of the New Testament revelation concerning those things spoken by the prophets *is the Person* in whom those things *converge and reside*, and *from whom all of the benefits*

***proceed.*** God’s administering of the new covenant is not ***to any geopolitical nation*** as such, but rather, the herein referenced scriptures apply the promises ***to individuals*** who are of faith in Christ, from within the nation of Israel, and also, from within the Gentile nations.

**On page 121 of his book Mr. Pentecost** gives a dispensational conclusion of the time of fulfillment of the new covenant, and the reasoning that supports such conclusion. He writes, “**The conclusion, therefore, would be that this covenant, which was future in the time of the prophets, and was future in the New Testament, can only be realized following the second advent of Christ in the millennial age.**”

**It is accurate to say that** the new covenant was future ***in the time of the prophets***. The above referenced New Testament scriptures should enable the reader to determine if the new covenant has been realized ***in the present age***, or if it is ***still future***. This ***futuristic argument*** by dispensational advocates is based on ***their own explanation*** of the prophecies in the Old Testament, as opposed to ***the New Testament explanation*** of those prophecies. (The reader might want to review pages beginning in the middle of page 56 through page 61 of this paper).

**On page 121 of his book, Things To Come, Mr. Pentecost continues by considering** the relationship of the church to the new covenant.

**“1. There are three premillennial views as to the relation of the church to the new covenant made with Israel.**

- a. **The first view is that of Darby. He presented the view that there was one and only one new covenant in Scripture, made with the houses of Israel and Judah and to be realized at a future time, to which the church bears no relationship whatsoever. He writes:**

‘This covenant of the letter is made with Israel, not with us; but we get the benefit of it. ...Israel not accepting the blessing, God brought out the church, and the Mediation of the covenant went on high. We are associated with the Mediator. It will be made good to Israel by-and –by.’

**And again:**

‘The gospel is not a covenant, but the revelation of the salvation of God. It proclaims the great salvation. We enjoy indeed all the essential privileges of the new covenant, its foundation being laid on God’s part in the blood of Christ, but we do so in spirit, not according to the letter.’

**In the first comment by Darby,** it appears that he may have been as accomplished as a poet as he was as an expositor of the scriptures. His second comment is that “we enjoy indeed ***all*** the essential privileges of the new

covenant” because it is founded, **“on God’s part, in the blood of Christ”**, which is true. However, “on man’s part”, the benefits are realized, **only** through faith, and the faithfulness that always accompanies faith. And, if we in the church enjoy **all the essential privileges** expressed in Jeremiah 31:33 and 34, **and we do**, then: 1) The law is not written on tablets of stone, but rather, it is **written in our heart**; 2) God will be **our God**, and we will be **His people**; 3) We will **all know the Lord**, and ; 4) We will have **forgiveness of sins**. These are **all of the elements** that are expressed in the new covenant in chapter 31, and verses 33 and 34 of Jeremiah’s prophecy concerning the new covenant. The **New Testament** declares that all of these elements are realized within the church. Also, **the new covenant replaces the old covenant of the letter (law) by writing the letter (law) in one’s heart, and this by the indwelling Spirit**. To say that Israel will enter into the benefits of the new covenant **“according to the letter” is a denial of the very essence of the new covenant**, as the Apostle Paul said, “who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit, for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life”- 2 Cor. 3:6. (See page 15 of this paper).

**“It would thus seem to be Darby’s view that, in all its New Testament references, the new covenant is to be equated with the covenant of Jeremiah 31. In the New Testament it has no reference whatever to the church in this age, although the blessing of that covenant comes to others beside Israel now, since the blood was ‘shed for many.’ It will however, be fulfilled literally in the millennium.”**

**“b. The second view is that of Scofield. This view, more generally held than Darby’s view, says: ‘The New Covenant...secures the perpetuity, future conversion, and blessing of Israel...’ and it ‘...secures the eternal blessedness...of all who believe.’ Thus, according to this view, there is one new covenant with a two-fold application; one to Israel in the future and one to the church now.”**

**“This view places the church under the new covenant, and views the relationship as a partial fulfillment of the covenant.”**

**“There can be agreement with Scofield that the blood of Christ is the basis for the new covenant with Israel and any covenant relation which the church may sustain to Christ, for it was not necessary for Christ to die once for Israel and then again for the church. The church, however, cannot be placed under Israel’s covenant. Scofield agrees with Darby fully that the covenant was primarily for Israel and will be fulfilled by them. Any application of it to the church, as the Scofield position holds, does not nullify the primary application to Israel.”**

**“c. The third view is the two-covenant view. This view holds that there are two new covenants presented in the New Testament; the first with Israel in reaffirmation of the covenant promised in Jeremiah 31 and the second made with the church in this age.**



This view, essentially, would divide the references to the new covenant in the New Testament into two groups. The references in the gospels and in Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 10:29; and 13:20 would refer to the new covenant with the church. Hebrews 8:7-13 and 10:16 would refer to the new covenant with Israel, and Hebrews 12:24 would refer, perhaps, to both, emphasizing the fact of the mediation accomplished and the covenant program established without designating the recipients. This view would accept the Darbyist concept that Israel's new covenant is to be fulfilled by Israel alone. In addition it would see the church as brought into relation to God by a new covenant that was established with them."

Mr. Pentecost explains that the two-covenant view holds that there are *two new covenants presented in the New Testament*, and that the references in Hebrews are likewise *divided into two groups*. Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 10:29, and 13:20 *refer to the new covenant with the church*, and Hebrews 8:7-13 and 10:16 *refer to the new covenant with Israel*, while Hebrews 12:24 *"would refer, perhaps, to both"* the church and Israel.

To assert that Hebrews 8:6 is referring to a different new covenant than is referred to in verse seven, and continuing through verse 13, is an unconscionable attempt to maintain the concept that the new covenant is not yet fulfilled to Israel. (When I was a child, there was a game called "hop-scotch", that was enjoyed mostly by the little girls. The design of the game was to draw on the ground two approximately 12" squares placed laterally, with a single square in front of the two squares. Then two more squares, and then a single square. This design was repeated to suit the players. As you hopped through the course it was necessary to land one foot in each square.) This two-covenant view is the result of playing "hop-scotch" through the scriptures. To suggest that the divinely inspired author of the Hebrews' epistle is explaining two separate new covenants when the epistle itself is completely silent on the matter warrants little comment. I would suggest that the reader examine these scriptures for any evidence of two new covenants.

**Mr. Penecost continues:**

**"It is not in the scope of this treatment to attempt to settle the difference of opinion among premillennialists on this question of the relation of the church to the new covenant. It is sufficient here to establish but one point. Regardless of the relationship of the church to the new covenant as explained in these three views, there is one general point of agreement: the new covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34 must and can be fulfilled only by the nation of Israel and not by the church. Since this was a literal covenant made with the physical seed of Abraham, any relationship of the church to the blood required by that covenant can not change the essential promises of God in the covenant itself. Apart from any relationship of the church to this blood, the covenant stands as yet unfulfilled and awaits a future literal fulfillment."**

**The above statement is most revealing of the one point that governs the conclusions at the end of the *reasoning processes* of many of the advocates of**

dispensational thought. “It is sufficient here to establish but one point. Regardless of the relationship of the church to the new covenant as explained in these three views, there is one general point of agreement: the new covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34 must and can be fulfilled only by the nation of Israel and not the church.” For many dispensationlists *there is that “one point” that must survive the scrutiny of God’s revelation to the writers of the New Testament scriptures*. To them the means by which the proponents of these three views explain *the relationship of the church to the new covenant* is of little or no importance as long as they achieve their seemingly sacred “general point of agreement”: “...the new covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34 must and can be fulfilled only by the nation of Israel and not the church.”

Concerning Israel and the new covenant, another bible teacher has written: “The writer of this epistle [Hebrews] says that now we have a ‘better covenant’ and that it is based upon ‘better promises.’ Although you and I as Christians have been made a part of it, God is not through with the nation Israel, and these ‘better promises’ are going to be fulfilled for them in the future Millennium.”

“When you read the Old Testament prophets, you just cannot get away from the fact that God is going to return the children of Israel to their land. (As far as I can see, the present return of the Jews to Israel is not the fulfillment of prophecy.)” J. Vernon McGee, Thru-The-Bible Commentary Series, The Epistles, Hebrews Chapters 8-13, (Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1991, p.22).

Mr. McGee expresses the view that *we as Christians* have been made a part of the new covenant. When he says these “*better promises*” will be fulfilled *to Israel* in the future millennium, he is referring to the “better promises” in Hebrews 8:6. The “two covenant” advocates say that *Hebrews 8:6* refers to the new covenant *with the church*. Obviously there is much confusion among dispensationalists as to how they arrive at their “*general point of agreement*”, which is also embraced by Mr. McGee.

In his statement, “When you read the Old Testament prophets, you just cannot get away from the fact that God is going to return the children of Israel to their land”, reveals *their basis in scripture* for the *futuristic view* for Israel. *This view rests solely in the Old Testament*. The *New Testament scriptures* that have been referenced throughout this paper *explain the present fulfillment* of all the things which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets.

**Recall:**

- *When the Spirit was given on the day of Pentecost, Peter said, “This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel; And it will come to pass in the last days, saith God, *I will pour out of my Spirit on all flesh:*” - Acts 2:16-17. Peter says such outpouring of the Spirit occurred at the time of Pentecost.*

- Peter said that God *has* exalted Jesus to His right hand “to be a Prince and *a Savior*, for to give repentance *to Israel*, and *forgiveness of sins*. And *we* are witnesses of these things; and *so is also the Holy Ghost*, whom God hath given *to them that obey him*”-Acts 5:31-32.
- Paul said that the promises that God made to the fathers, “*God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children*, in that he hath raised up Jesus again...”-Acts 13:32-33.
- Paul, also said, 1) *He is not a Jew* which is one outwardly, and circumcision is not outward in the flesh-Ro. 2:28; 2) Faith is not rendered ineffective *because some Jews do not believe*-Ro. 3:3; 3) God is the God of, *both Jews and Gentiles*, and both are justified by *faith*-Ro. 3:29-30; 4) *They are not all Israel that are of Israel*-Ro. 9:6; 5) *At this present time* there is *a remnant* in Israel according to the *election of grace*, and while Israel *as a nation* has not obtained the promises, *the elect Jews* (those who believe) have obtained them-Ro. 11:5-7; 6) The saints of *the church* at Corinth had the law written, not with ink on tables of stone, but *written in their hearts with the Spirit of God*-2 Corinth. 3:3; 7) He (Paul) was a minister of *the new covenant*-2 Corinth. 3:6; 8) Of the church, He will *be their God*, and they will *be His people*-2 Corinth. 6:16. 9) Moses face shown from *having been in the presence of God*, and he put a veil over his face that the children of Israel *could not see beyond the law to the glory* of God. In Christ, *the veil is removed*. However, for those Jews who do not believe, even at the present time *when the Old Testament is read it is a veil* upon their heart. Even so, if a person *turns to the Lord, the veil will be removed*-2 Corinth. 3:13-16.
- The *Old Testament is also a veil* that obscures from dispensational expositors of scripture the glorious liberty that has been accomplished for Israel by the death, resurrection, and ascension of their Messiah, and the coming of the Holy Spirit-John 7:37-39. (Jesus was addressing the Jews in this passage in John’s gospel). This is *the new covenant*, the “*new and living way*”, that we might enter “*into the holiest* [presence of God] *by the blood of Jesus*”, which “*he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water*”-Heb. 10:16-22. The *dispensational view* that there are two new covenants referred to in the New Testament, one with Israel and one with the church, *applies Hebrews 10:16 to the new covenant with Israel*. (See near bottom of p. 64

and top of p. 65 of this paper). Except for those who play “hop-scotch” with the scriptures, verses 17-22 of this Hebrews’ passage *are speaking to the same covenant* as verse 16, which they say applies to Israel. (See 1st full paragraph on page 65 of this paper).

**When it is recognized** that all that is written in the law, and all that was spoken by the prophets *has been fulfilled in the Person and through the work of the Lord Jesus*, on an **individual basis** to persons who believe, *the Old Testament* ceases to be an impediment that obscures *the glory* expressed *in the New Testament scriptures*. **We read**, “Now the Lord is that Spirit: and *where the Spirit of the Lord is*, there is liberty. But we all, with open *[unveiled]* face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image *from glory to glory*, even as by the Spirit of the Lord”-II Corinth. 3:17-18. The Apostle John said, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and *we beheld his glory*, the glory as of the only begotten of the father,) full of grace and truth”-John 1:14.

**Our great need is to come into the good of what the Apostle Paul prayed for the “saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus” Eph. 1:1.**

**Ephesians 1:15** Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

**16** Cease not to give thanks for you, **making mention of you in my prayers;**

**17** That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the **Father of glory**, may give unto you **the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:**

**18** The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the **hope** of his calling, and what the riches **of the glory** of his inheritance in the saints,

**19** And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

**20** Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in **the heavenly** places,

**21** Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, **not only in this world**, but also **in that which is to come:**

**22** And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him **to be the head** over all things **to the church**,

**23** Which is his body, the **fulness of him** that filleth all in all.

**On page 67 above, we have seen two elements of the new covenant made with Israel fulfilled in the church at Corinth:** 1) The law is written, not on tables of stone, but it is *written in their hearts*-2 Corinth. 3:3; 2) I will *be their God*, and they will *be my people*-2 Corinth. 6:16. These two elements of the new covenant are in Jer. 31:33. Also, Peter says that Jesus has been exalted to be *a Savior* and to give *forgiveness of sins* to Israel, which is an element of the new covenant in Jer. 31:34. *Israel’s salvation is*

*not awaiting Christ's return.* The preceding scripture in Paul's letter to the Ephesians expresses *the meaning*, and is *the realization* of the fourth element of Jeremiah 31:34, "...for they shall *all know me*, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord...". The Spirit that enlightens our understanding is *the "earnest" of out inheritance* in Christ until the "**redemption** of the purchased possession", when the inheritance will be realized *in its fullness*-Eph. 1:13-14. (For detail see pages 18 through 20 of this paper).

**Some additional scriptures that explain this element of the new covenant that "all shall know me" are:**

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

**John 6:45** It is written in the prophets, And they shall be **all taught of God**. Every man therefore that **hath heard**, and **hath learned** of the Father, **cometh unto me**.

**John 8:12** Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, **I am the light** of the world: he that **followeth me** shall not walk **in darkness**, but shall have **the light of life**.

**John 10:2** But he that entereth in by the door **is the shepherd** of the sheep.

**3** To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth **his own sheep** by name, and **leadeth them** out.

**4** And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and **the sheep follow him**: for **they know** his voice.

**5** And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for **they know not** the voice of strangers.

**John 10:14** I am the good shepherd, and **know my sheep**, and **am known of mine**.

**15** As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

**16** And **other sheep** I have, which **are not of this fold**: **them also** I must bring, and **they shall hear** my voice; and **there shall be one fold**, and one shepherd.

**John 17:3** And this is life eternal, that they might **know thee** the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

**Colossians 1:9** For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and **spiritual understanding**;

**10** That ye might **walk worthy** of the Lord unto **all pleasing**, being fruitful in every **good work**, and increasing in **the knowledge** of God;

**1 John 2:20** But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and **ye know** all things.

**1 John 2:26** These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.  
**27** But **the anointing** which ye have received of him **abideth in you**, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same **anointing teacheth you** of all things, and **is truth**, and **is no lie**, and even **as it hath taught you**, ye shall abide in him.

**1 John 5:20** And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us **an understanding**, that we may **know him** that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. **This is** the true God, and **eternal life**.

**1 John 1:5** This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that **God is light**, and in him is **no darkness at all**.

**6** If we say that **we have fellowship with him**, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

**7** But **if** we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have **fellowship** one with another, **and** the blood of Jesus Christ his Son **cleanseth us** from all sin.

**8** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just **to forgive us** our sins, and **to cleanse us** from all unrighteousness.

**Ephesians 5:8** For **ye were** sometimes **darkness**, but **now are ye** light in the Lord: **walk** as children of **light**:

**9** (For the **fruit of the Spirit** is in all **goodness** and **righteousness** and **truth**;) )

**10** Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

**11** And have **no fellowship** with the unfruitful works **of darkness**, but rather reprove them.

**12** For it is a shame **even to speak** of those things which are done of them in secret.

**13** But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by **the light**: for whatsoever doth make manifest **is light**.

**14** Wherefore he saith, **Awake** thou that sleepest, and **arise** from the dead, **and** Christ shall give thee **light**.

**15** See then that **ye walk** circumspectly, not **as fools**, but **as wise**,

**16** Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

**17** Wherefore be ye **not unwise**, but **understanding** what the will of the Lord is.

**In chapter 24 of Luke's gospel, we read that after Jesus was risen from the dead**, He came to where the apostles were gathered and showed them His hands and his feet-v40. And, even then they did not believe that it was Jesus. He then tells His disciples that, what has happened is what He had told them "while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me." When Jesus refers to the things that He had told them when He was with them, He is referring to: **Luke 18:31** Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and **all things that are written by the prophets** concerning the Son of man **shall be accomplished**.

**32** For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully

entreated, and spitted on:

**33** And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.

**34** And **they understood none of these things:** and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

**Even though Jesus had told the apostles** about the things that were going to happen to Him, simply *hearing His words*, or *reading the scriptures*, apart from *God granting to them understanding*, they could not accurately perceive the meaning of the scriptures. Jesus opened their understanding, “that they might understand the scriptures”-Luke 24:45. *It was the Old Testament scriptures that God enabled them to understand.* These men who authored the *New Testament* scriptures are the sole recipients of God’s revelation of the meaning, application, and fulfillment *in Christ* of the *Old Testament* scriptures.

**The Apostle Paul explains to the brethren at Corinth concerning the matter of, understanding Divine things, about which he writes:**

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

**10** But God hath revealed them **unto us** by **his Spirit:** for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

**11** For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

**12** Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

**13** Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

**14** But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

**15** But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

**The Apostle Paul, in the first instance**, is explaining that those to whom God revealed what was proclaimed, and what was written, *which constitutes the New Testament*, was made known to them by the Spirit of God. Paul states that there is a wisdom that is of man, however, that which “we”, (the apostles) speak is taught them by the Holy Spirit. *The things of God are outside the range of man’s unassisted natural comprehension.* The principle of, “*enlightenment*” by the Spirit, which governs one’s understanding of *Divine things*, is applicable *to all* of God’s people. As we have read in 1 John 2:26-27 above, we cannot distinguish between truth and the error proclaimed by the seducers, *but by the “anointing” which we, as God’s children, have received from the Lord.* Herein is the explanation of that which is written by the prophets, “And they shall all be taught of God”.

Those who hear, and also, “of the Father”, learn from what they hear, come to Christ-John 6:45, and then, “continue in the Son, and the Father”-1 Jo. 2:24.

**When we are called unto the fellowship of God’s Son, Jesus Christ our Lord**-1 Corinth. 1:10, we are “dead” (without the knowledge of God), but we are “quicken” (given life)-Eph. 2:1-5. This regenerative action by God *enables us to discern* the things ministered to us by the Spirit, through the scriptures. Rather than living in *the darkness of reasoning* from a fact or facts of scripture to a conclusion, now we can come to recognize *the Spirit’s enlightenment* as we read the scriptures, whereby we *actually see* the meaning of what the scriptures testify to. This is how we realize what Jesus said: “...I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have **the light** of life”-John 8:12. Also, this is hearing the Lord’s voice, that His sheep might follow Him, and be led out-John 10:2-5 of the darkness, which engulfs their beginnings. As we *recognize* that which *is seen, to be the Lord’s enlightenment*, there is *a corresponding recognition* of the darkness of man’s (including and primarily one’s own) *natural reasoning process*, and the *inaccuracy of the conclusions* that attend such reasoning. This is how *we distinguish* the Lord’s voice from the “voice of strangers”, that we might not follow them. It should be noted that, in chapter 10 of John’s gospel, Jesus is addressing the Jews, including Pharisees, and tells them that He has other sheep *that are not of this fold* (Jewry). These other sheep (Gentiles) will hear His voice, and there shall be *one fold*, and *one shepherd*-v16. Jesus is introducing *the Jews* to the coming *transition from the old covenant to the new covenant* wherein *Jew and Gentile*, both *in heaven* and *on earth*, are made one in Christ. *It is such gathering together that is explained by the apostle Paul in chapters 1, 2, and 3 in his epistle to the Ephesians*. (See pages 19-22)

**The Apostle Paul’s prayer and desire** for “the saints and faithful brethren at Colosse”-v2, was that they might be filled with the knowledge of God’s will. Certainly, Paul was not praying for something that cannot be realized by God’s children. It is important to see *how* God’s will is made known to an individual. *It is*



*comprehended by the understanding and knowledge that one comes to through the Spirit's ministry in the scriptures. Based on such understanding and knowledge, the Spirit gives us *wisdom*, not only to recognize God's will in a particular matter, but also, He gives wisdom about how to proceed, or *not proceed* when restraint is needed, in accomplishing His will. As *our knowledge of God increases* by such ministry, we are able to perceive His will *in a broader range of situations* that confront us in daily living.*

Those expositors of scripture who have substituted their own, so called, "literal" interpretation of *Old Testament scripture*, for the *inspired explanation* of such scriptures, by Jesus *in the Gospels*, and by Peter, James, John, and Paul *in Acts and the epistles* have, by the natural use of their mental capacity, reasoned into their view a millennial kingdom of their own design.

**The following is a partial description of their millennial kingdom:**

"The millennial period for both Israel and the Gentiles will also be a time of special ministry of the Holy Spirit. In this period, according to Isaiah 32:15, the Spirit will be poured out from on high.' ...The presence of Christ, the evident power of the Holy Spirit, and the context of the knowledge of the Lord and peace, righteousness and joy will provide a basis for spiritual life in the millennium far more favorable than any preceding dispensation."

"A number of Scriptures also describe the temple worship which will characterize the millennial kingdom. According to Ezekiel, a magnificent temple will be built, and a system of priesthood and memorial sacrifices will be set up. Scholars have not all agreed as to the interpretation of this difficult portion of Ezekiel. Some have felt it impossible to have a system of animal sacrifices subsequent to the one sacrifice of Christ on the cross in the light of New Testament passages stating that the sacrifice of Christ makes other sacrifices unnecessary. Though varied explanations have been given for Ezekiel 40-48 which unfolds these details, no satisfactory explanation has been made other than that it is a description of millennial worship. In any case, it is clear that the sacrifices are not expiatory, but merely memorials of the one complete sacrifice of Christ. If in the wisdom and sovereign pleasure of God the detailed system of sacrifices in the Old Testament were a suitable foreshadowing of that which would be accomplished by the death of His Son, and if a memorial of Christ's death is to be enacted, it would seem not unfitting that some sort of a sacrificial system would be used. While problems remain, it seems clear that Israel will have an ordered worship with Jerusalem once again the center for their religious as well as political life. A new order of priesthood would be required somewhat different than the Aaronic order, and rituals will be observed similar to the Mosaic order but differing in many aspects. In any case, a spiritual life of wonderful depth and reality far beyond anything Israel had known in her entire history will characterize her experience in the millennial kingdom. There will be complete fulfillment of Joel 2:28,29 and blessings unmeasured

**will extend throughout the entire kingdom period.”** John F. Walvoord, *Israel In Prophecy*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962, pp. 125, 126. (Underlining of quoted text is mine)

**Some points of note in the text quoted immediately above regarding the dispensationalist explanation of the millennial period are:**

- The fulfillment of Joel 2:28-29, which was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, was declared by the Apostle Peter to have **occurred on the day of Pentecost**-Acts 2:16-18.
- The writer uses Ezekiel 40-48 as his supportive scripture for the ***building of a temple, a system of priesthood, and memorial sacrifices***. When he refers to some scholars disagreeing with the ***system of animal sacrifices***, it is that some have not ignored the very clear testimony ***of the New Testament scriptures*** that declare Christ’s sacrificial death to ***fulfill the meaning*** of such sacrifices. However, Mr. Walvoord acknowledges that there is ***no satisfactory explanation*** for such ***sacrifices***, but insists that they will be ***included in millennial worship***. Again, dispensationalists have a ***general point of agreement***, which is that ***Israel will be restored to the “Holy Land” on this earth and have a system of worship similar to, but differing from the old covenant system***, even though they cannot present scripture to support it. He continues by saying, “in any case”, which is to say that ***regardless of the fact that there is no satisfactory explanation for animal sacrifices***, ***“it is clear*** that the sacrifices are not expiatory, but merely memorials of the one complete sacrifice of Christ”.
- The writer continues arguing for animal sacrifices in ***his conception*** of a millennial period, which he has not shown with scripture that this ***dispensational conception*** of the 1000 year period even exists. ***He reasons*** that, ***if*** a sacrificial system in the Old Testament was a suitable foreshadowing of Christ’s death, and ***if a memorial of Christ’s death is enacted***, it ***would seem*** not unfitting that ***some sort*** of sacrificial system would be used.

**On page 127 of his book entitled, *Israel In Prophecy*, Mr. Walvoord offers further explanation of conditions in such a millennial period:**

**“Israel’s experience in the millennium will also be one of physical health and freedom from disease. Isaiah 35:5,6 seems to speak of this: ‘Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.’”**

- At Matthew 11:1-6, Jesus provides us with the time of fulfillment of this prophecy by Isaiah: “And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their

cities. Now when John [John the Baptist] had heard in prison **the works of Christ**, he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, **Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?** Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: **The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them**". John was sent to "make ready a people prepared for the Lord"-Luke 1:17, and he knew that the prophets were speaking of things that would be accomplished by Israel's promised Messiah. Further, Jesus' answer makes it quite evident that He knew that, based upon John's understanding of the things spoken by the prophets, John would be satisfied by such an answer. ***This is another example of substituting the dispensational explanation of Old Testament scripture in place of the New Testament explanation,*** which New Testament explanation is, *that Jesus, at His first advent, fulfilled this prophecy by Isaiah.*

**In his book entitled, The Church In Prophecy, pages 158-160, Mr. Walvoord explains the relationship of the New Jerusalem to the "Holy Land" during the 1000 years period.**

**"In Revelation 21-22, a comprehensive prophecy is given concerning the New Jerusalem described as 'the holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband' (21:2). A wide variety of interpretation has been offered by expositors concerning the nature and significance of this revelation."**

**"From a comparison of the dimension and situation of the heavenly city of Jerusalem with the characteristics of the millennial earth in relation to the holy Land, as for instance indicated in Ezekiel 40-48, it seems clear that there will be no city on earth such as the New Jerusalem during the millennial kingdom, as its dimensions far exceed the possibilities of placing it in the Holy Land."**

**In the paragraph immediately above it is concluded that, because *the dimensions of the New Jerusalem* (specified in Rev. 21:15-16), *exceed* the dimensions or characteristics of *the Holy Land*, the New Jerusalem *cannot be on earth* during "millennial kingdom". Mr. Walvoord continues with further demonstration of the unruliness with which the unenlightened mental faculties are capable. Such natural reasoning will again fail to produce the truth of God.**

**"...Though the Scriptures are by no means clear on many of the important factors which would enter into such a decision [concerning when the New Jerusalem was created], attention is called to the fact that, in John 14, Christ promised that He was going to heaven 'to prepare a place for you.' Some have interpreted this as being a specific reference to the creation of the New Jerusalem in heaven as the dwelling place of the saints."**

**"If this interpretation be admitted, there is no particular reason why the New Jerusalem should not be in existence throughout the millennium and suspended**

above the earth as a satellite city. Though this is foreign to our present experience of material things, such a concept is not beyond the realm of possibility. If the heavenly Jerusalem is hovering over the earth during the millennial reign, it would be a natural dwelling-place not only for Christ Himself but, for the saints for all ages who are resurrected or translated and therefore somewhat removed from ordinary earthly affairs. Their position thus close to the earth would permit them to carry on their functions in earth in connection with the millennial reign of Christ and yet would remove them as far as residence is concerned from continuing or mingling with those in their natural bodies and would solve the problem of lack of reference to a dwelling place for resurrected beings on earth during the millennium.”

In attempting to solve, “the problem”, which the writer has created by *the reasoning process*, he then *rationalizes* a situation that is untenable to scripture, which would have *the New Jerusalem hovering over the earth as a satellite city*.

**Question:** Is the above discourse a presentation of *scripture that explains* the relationship between the New Jerusalem and the earth, and also, the attending ministry of residents of the New Jerusalem to those who are, allegedly, inhabiting the earth in their natural bodies? Or, is it some other category of discourse?

**The only passage of scripture in the Holy Bible** that mentions a period of 1000 years *beginning after the return of the Lord Jesus to this earth* is Revelation, chapter 20, in verses 1 through 10. The millennial kingdom referred to in the dispensational exposition is based in verses 4 through 6 which read: **4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.**

**5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.**

**6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.**

**Neither this passage, nor any other New Testament scripture mentions:**

- Future *animal sacrifices*, whether memorial or expiatory.
- A new *system of priesthood* in any way similar to *the Aaronic order*, and *rituals* similar to *the Mosaic order* but differing from it.
- The building of *a magnificent temple during the 1000 years*.
- The New Jerusalem *hovering over the present earth as a satellite city*.

**By ignoring the New Testament explanation** of what was *spoken by the Old Testament prophets*, the advocates of dispensational thought have designed

what they have rationalized, (beginning near the top of page 73 and forward), to be characteristic of a *millennial kingdom*, or *the period of 1000 years* mentioned in verses 4 through 6 in chapter 20 of the book of Revelation.

**In scripture, God's children are declared to be children of light**, of the day, and not of the night and of darkness. However, we are exhorted: "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober"-1 Thes. 5:5-6. Also, we are told that, ***if we walk*** in the light: **1) We have *fellowship***; and, **2) *The blood*** of the Lord Jesus ***cleanses us***-1 John 1:5-9. Further, we are told: "Awake thou **that sleepest**, and arise from the dead, and **Christ shall give the light**. See that **ye walk** circumspectly, not as fools, but **as wise**...Wherefore be ye not unwise, but **understanding what the will of the Lord is**"-Eph. 5:14-17. (See page 70 of this paper).

**These passages of scripture**, and there are other such scriptures, are informing us that, even though we have been called "out of darkness into this marvelous light"- 1 Pet. 2:9, ***walking in the light is our responsibility***. If we so walk, we reap the benefits that are available to us in Christ. **Contrary to the dispensational system of thought, if we sleep** as do those who are not the children of light, **we will suffer severe consequences**. The scripture just mentioned in 1 John 1:5-9 says that, ***if we walk in the light*** as He (God) is in the light, ***the blood of Christ cleanses us*** from all *sin*. In attempting to protect their coveted security proposition, ***that the initial act of faith secures a child of God from any future punishment for his or her sin***, dispensationalists, when confronted with the numerous scriptures such as this passage in 1 John, do not provide ***a direct challenge***, by asserting that also, ***if we walk in darkness the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin, which is their view***. Rather, they will attempt an end run around what the scripture says, of which the following is an example. "If we walk in the light,' that is, if we walk in the light of the Word of God. Dr. Harry Ironside tells of his own confusion of mind relative to this verse. Noticing that the cleansing of the blood depends upon our walking in the light, he read it as though it said, 'If we walk according to the light, the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' He thought it meant that if he was very punctilious about obeying every command of God, God would cleanse him. Then he noticed that it does not say if we walk according to light, but if we walk in the light. The important thing is where we walk, not how we walk." J. Vernon McGee, Thru-The-Bible Commentary Series, The Epistles, First John, (Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1991, p. 27)

**Mr. Ironside was confused because** this scripture contradicted his, **previously learned and embraced**, security concept. Such a maneuver to evade what scripture says is not deserving of comment. However, we might compare the dictionary definitions of the word "in" and the phrase "according to". My dictionary defines "in": "(used to indicate inclusion within space, a place, or limits): *walking in the park*." It defines "according to": "In agreement or accord with."

*Question: Is walking “within the limits of” the light different from, or less precise than walking “in agreement with” the light?*

On page 29 of his book, Mr. McGee continues his explanation of 1 John 1:7:

“Now, suppose you are a child of God, and you are living in sin---but you see it now in the light of the Word of God. Have you lost your salvation? When the light in my study revealed that spot of dirt on my hand, I went and washed it off. And John says, ‘And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ That word *cleanseth* is in the present tense---Christ’s blood just keeps on cleansing us from all sin. You haven’t lost your salvation, but you have lost your fellowship with God until you are cleansed.”

**There are several points in the above comment that should be noted:**

- If as a child of God, you are *living in sin*, have you “lost your salvation”? Have you “lost your salvation” is reference to a concept held in another system of thought that, *if a child of God continues in willful sin, at some point he or she will cease to be in God’s family*. This system of thought views one’s security to be *conditioned on continuing in faith*, and is supported by an abundance of scripture. However, they fail to establish with scripture that *by not continuing in faith one ceases to be a child of God*. In the present discussion, “lose your salvation”, as meaning that one ceases to be God’s child, is not relevant, for scripture says that, “*The Lord shall judge his people*”- Heb. 10:30.
- While the writer uses the example of the light in his study revealing a spot of dirt on his hand, and he went and washed it off, as applicable to *the cleansing of the blood by walking in the light* expressed in 1 John 1:7, his example is applicable, *not to verse 7*, but rather, *to 1 John 1:9* wherein, “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness*”.
- The writer is saying that, if we do not walk in the light, we lose our *fellowship* with God, *but* Christ’s blood “just keeps on cleansing us from all sin”. However, *1 John 1:7* informs us that *two benefits* of God’s grace are realized “*If we walk in the light*”, *fellowship*, and also, *Christ’s blood cleanses us from all sin*. Verse 9 contradicts the writers assertion that even though we are living in sin the blood keeps on cleansing, for *verse 9* says that, “*If we confess our sins*” *God forgives our sins and cleanses us*. *Is confessing our sins merely a meaningless formality*, or is it *a condition* to obtaining forgiveness and cleansing? If we *do not walk in the light* and if, when we sin *we do not confess our sins are these verses in First John informing us that*, as Mr. McGee explains them, *only our fellowship is interrupted?*

**We will view several more passages of scripture that declare “faith”, and the “faithfulness” that always attends faith, to be a condition for realizing the benefits of God’s provision for His children.**

**Colossians 1:21** And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet **now hath he reconciled**

**22** In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

**23** If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

**Mr. McGee’s comment on this passage of scripture:**

“This is not a conditional clause that is based on the future. The *if* that Paul uses here is the *if* of argument. It does not mean that something *shall be* if something else is true; rather it means that something *was* if something else is true. We would say, ‘*Since ye continue in the faith grounded and settled.*’ Paul’s point is that we have been reconciled---it is an accomplished fact. So if you are a child of God today, you will continue in the faith grounded and settled. You will not be moved away from the hope of the gospel which you have heard.” J. Vernon McGee, Thru-The-Bible Commentary Series, The Epistles, Philippians and Colossians, (Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1991, p. 140)

**Again**, we see a typical rephrasing of scripture used by both, dispensational and reform expositors of scripture to maintain an *inaccurate* concept. *Here we are told that the Apostle Paul did not mean “if”, but rather, he meant that which “we” (dispensationalists) would say.* Mr. McGee explains, “We would say, ‘*Since ye continue in the faith grounded and settled.*’ Now that Mr. McGee has corrected what Paul said, we know that, “So if you are a child of God today, you will continue in the faith...” The *conclusion* that “you will continue in the faith” sounds like the “*irresistible grace*” *concept* held by reform theologians, rather than the “*faithfulness is not required*” *concept* generally held by dispensational theologians. *These are the two rationales used to maintain the “unconditional security” concept that is shared by both systems of thought.*

**Hebrews 3: 5**And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

**6** But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

**Mr. McGee’s comment:**

“...Paul had a way of using ‘ifs,’ not as a condition but as a method of argument and of logic. We would understand him better if he had said, ‘*Since we hold fast the confidence.*’ In other words, if we are sons of God and if we are partakers of the heavenly calling, we *will* be faithful and we will hold fast. This is the proof that we are

of God's house." J. Vernon McGee, Thru-The-Bible Commentary Series, The Epistles, Hebrews 1-7, (Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1991, p.59).

**Again we are told** that the writer of the Hebrew epistle, who Mr. McGee has concluded to be the Apostle Paul, *has used a poor choice of words*. Instead of the word "if", the word "since" *would be better understood*. "Dispensational" theologians have difficulty in understanding this, and other scriptures addressing *inheritance in God's kingdom* because they *will not accept* the very clear testimony of scripture, that faith and the faithfulness that always accompanies faith is the condition for inheriting the benefits of God's promises. *Faith is the condition* for receiving the benefits of the Spirit, which is *the "earnest of our inheritance" now*, and for obtaining the ultimate inheritance *when the Lord returns*. The word "if" that is used in verse 6 of chapter 3 of Hebrews is an English translation of the Greek word "**ean**" which means, "a conditional particle; in case that, provided, etc.; often used in connection with other particles to denote *indefiniteness* or *uncertainty*." (Strong's Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible)

**Hebrews 6: 4** For it is impossible for those who were **once enlightened**, and have **tasted of the heavenly gift**, and were made **partakers of the Holy Ghost**,

**5** And have **tasted the good word of God**, and the **powers of the world to come**,

**6** if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

**7** For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

**8** But that which **beareth thorns and briars is rejected**, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

**9** But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

**10** For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

**11** And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

**12** That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

**13** For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,

**14** Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

**15** And so, **after** he had patiently endured, he **obtained the promise**.

**On pages 105 and 106 in his book of Hebrews 1-7 commentary, identified on page 79 of this paper, Mr. McGee comments:**

"This brings us to that passage which has caused as many difficulties as any in the Scriptures. Some consider it the most difficult passage to interpret."

"As we study this section, we are immediately confronted with the amazing fact that generally commentators have *avoided* this chapter. Even such a man as Dr. G.



Campbell Morgan, the prince of expositors, has completely bypassed it in his book on Hebrews. However, when we do come upon the interpretations available and summarize each, we can well understand why men have chosen to remain clear of this scene of confusion because we can get many interpretations.”

**This passage of scripture** is a “scene of confusion” for those expositors of the scriptures who not only embrace but, cling to the concept of “unconditional security”.

**On pages 106 through 108 in his book of Hebrews 1-7 commentary, identified on page 79 of this paper, Mr. McGee continues by identifying some of the many interpretations.**

“The most unsatisfactory of all interpretations is that the Christians mentioned here are Christians who have lost their salvation. That is, they were once saved but have lost their salvation.”

“I want to make it abundantly clear that I believe we have a sure salvation because Scripture is emphatic on this point...”

“There is a second interpretation that has some merit in it. There are those who contend that this is a hypothetical case. ‘If they shall fall away.’ There is only a possibility that this might happen. The writer does not say that it happens, only that it might be possible. Those who contend that this is the correct interpretation say that it is the biggest ‘IF’ in the Bible, and I would agree with them. If I did not take another position on the interpretation of this passage in Hebrews, I would accept this one.”

**In the last sentence of the comment immediately above, the commentator states that *if he did not take another position* on this passage in Hebrews, he would *accept this one*. Such a statement suggests that this passage is not limited to *only one accurate* interpretation, which is the only meaning that expresses the truth. It is suggested that, from among the various interpretations, one can be satisfied with whichever interpretation that he or she deems to be the best interpretation. However, *the passage of scripture has an exact meaning, whether or not, it is understood by its commentators. The following scripture explains God’s provision for discerning the truth expressed within scripture:* “But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as **the same anointing teacheth you** of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and **even as it hath taught you**, ye shall abide in him. And now little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.”-1 John 2:27-28.**

**Mr. McGee continues to comment on additional interpretations of this Hebrews’ passage** on pages 108 and 109 in his book of Hebrews 1-7 commentary, identified on page 79 of this paper.

“The third interpretation points out that in verse 6 that there really is no ‘if’ in the Greek. It is a participle and should be translated ‘having fallen away.’ Therefore these folk have another interpretation, which is that the passage speaks of mere professors, that they are not genuine believers. They only profess to be Christians. Well, I cannot accept this view...”

“There are other expositors who take the position that since the ones spoken of here are Jewish believers of the first century, the warning can apply only to them. At the time Hebrews was written, the temple was still standing, and the writer is warning Jewish Christians about returning to the sacrificial system, because in so doing, they would be admitting that Jesus did not die for their sins. Therefore, those who hold this reasoning say that verses 4—6 apply only to the Jewish Christians of that day and have no reference to anyone in our day.”

“There is still another group which stresses the word *impossible* in Hebrews 6:4. It is impossible to renew them—the thought being that it is impossible for man, but it is not impossible with God. They remind us that the Lord Jesus said that ‘...It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God’ (Matt. 19:24)”

On pages 109 and 110 in his book of Hebrews 1-7 commentary, identified on page 79 of this paper Mr. McGee mentions an interpretation by Dr. J. B. Rowell.

“...His interpretation was the best that I had heard. I give him full credit for it. This is not something that I thought of, although I have developed it to fit my own understanding, of course.”

“The whole tenor of the text [referring to Heb. 6 passage] reveals that he is speaking of *rewards* which are the result of salvation. In verse 6 he says, ‘If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance’—not to salvation, but to *repentance*. Repentance is something that God has asked *believers to do*. For example, read the seven letters to the seven churches in Asia, as recorded in Revelation 2 and 3. He says to every one of the churches to repent. That is His message for believers.”

“So the writer of Hebrews is talking about the *fruit* of salvation, not about the *root* of salvation. Notice verse 9 again: ‘But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that *accompany* salvation [he hasn’t been discussing salvation but the things that accompany salvation], though we thus speak.’ He is speaking of the fruit of the Christian’s life and the reward that comes to him as the result. The whole tenor of the passage is that he is warning them of the possibility of losing their reward...”

The above referenced interpretations of this Hebrews’ passage present, as Mr. McGee mentioned, a “scene of confusion”. Such confusion results when we try to find the meaning of scripture *by applying “rational scientific” method*, which is our best effort to understand Divine things through the *limited capacity* of our *unenlightened natural reasoning faculties*. (See pages 2 and 3 of this paper). While this passage has in view the matter of reward, Mr. McGee does not remove the confusion. Those expositors that embrace and cherish the “unconditional security” concept tend to *separate and divide* scripture into convenient categories of meaning. In explaining this passage of scripture in chapter 6 of Hebrews, *Mr. McGee is separating reward from salvation, and inheritance from reward*.

The scriptures do not separate God’s promises into salvation, reward, and inheritance as separate benefits to be realized independent of one another. Verse 12 of the passage in chapter 6 of Hebrews reads: “That ye be

not slothful, but followers of them who through **faith and patience** inherit **the promises.**” This scripture informs us that we “inherit” *the promises*. Scripture does not separate *the promise of salvation from inheritance, nor does it separate the promise of reward from inheritance*. However, this passage does set forth “faith” and “patience” *as a condition* for inheriting *the promises*. Mr. McGee says of verse 12, (on page 117 in his book of Hebrews 1-7 commentary, identified on page 79 of this paper), “**God has made a lot of promises to us if we are faithful to Him.**” While he acknowledges that faith is *the condition* for receiving the promises, based on his explanation of verses 4 through 9 of this Hebrews passage, he *excludes* “salvation” from the promises referred to in verse 12, but he *includes* “rewards”. (See Mr. McGee’s comment on Mr. Rowell on page 82 of this paper).

**Recall that the promise of salvation is in the new covenant, prophesied in verse 34, of chapter 31 of Jeremiah, which says:** “...for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more”. Salvation is *one* of the God’s promises that is realized in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus, *through faith*. **1 Corinthians 15:1** Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye **have received**, and **wherein ye stand**;

**2** By which also ye **are saved**, **if ye keep in memory** what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed **in vain**.

**3** For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that **Christ died for our sins** according to the scriptures;

**4** And that **he was buried**, and that **he rose again** the third day according to the scriptures;

**Observe that** these *brethren* at Corinth have “received” the gospel, and “stand” in the gospel by which *they* “*are saved*”. While they are Paul’s *brethren in Christ*, by believing the gospel that was preached to them, *their salvation rests on* their “keeping in memory”, which is *continuing to be mindful* of that which Paul had preached to them concerning the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. *Having “believed in vain” does not mean, as some would say, that they did not really believe*. Paul calls them “brethren”, and says that they “*received*” and “*stand*” in the gospel. As Paul had previously informed them in this letter, they were *still* carnal and walked as men, therefore, *being babes*, he had to feed them with milk, and not with meat-3:1-3. Paul is explaining to these brethren that, *while salvation has a point of beginning*, we must *continue* in the faith, *walking* in the provision that the Father has made for us in His Son. *And, on the basis of such faithfulness*, God will keep us by *His power* unto *salvation* that will be revealed “in the last time”, which time is when the Lord returns.

**This aspect of salvation is addressed by the apostle Peter at:**

**1 Peter 1:2** Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

**3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope **by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,**

**4** To **an inheritance** incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven **for you,**

**5** Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed **in the last time.**

**6** Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

**7** That the trial **of your faith**, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, **might be found** unto praise and honour and glory **at the appearing of Jesus Christ:**

**8** Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

**9** Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

**The scriptures provide very clear testimony that** salvation involves a *beginning*, and a *continuation*, both of which are related to the ministry of the Holy Spirit who is the earnest (a measured portion) of *our inheritance now*, until the redemption of the purchased possession-Eph. 1:13-14. In this life we are kept by *God's power*, through *faith*, until the *completed salvation* of our souls is realized, *in the inheritance* that is reserved in heaven for us-1 Pet. 1:4-6. We observe in this passage in 1 Peter that *one's faith* (an inward posture of unwavering devotion and commitment toward the Lord) is *of great value* to God. And, *one's devotion and commitment to the Lord* is what is tested by the trials and temptations that come our way in this life. We can endure these trials *by God's power*, and the *salvation of our souls* at Christ's appearing is "*the end of our faith*" (*continuing* with the Lord in this way)..

**The scripture** does not separate *salvation* of our souls from *inheritance* and *reward*. Colossians 3:24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the **reward of the inheritance:** for ye serve the Lord Christ.

**25** But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and **there is no respect of persons.**

**The reward** is *of the inheritance*. The *completed salvation* of our souls is one of God's promises, and is a reward of the inheritance. These scriptures emphasize the salvation of our souls to be the end result of our faith. We enter into salvation, and become God's child, "...by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; which is shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior"-Titus 3:5-6. This is by God's *grace* whereby we are saved or called "out of darkness into this marvelous light"-1Peter 2:9. **Now** we are positioned in Christ as God's child, that we might, "...work out your own salvation with fear

and trembling, For it is God that **worketh** in you, both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure”-Phil. 2:12-13. This is not referring to either, our **entrance** into salvation by the dead works of the law, or to **maintaining** our salvation by the dead works of the law. Rather, this scripture is admonishing God’s children **to be engaged with God** according to what **He is doing in us** to accomplish His will, which is to transform us into the image of His Son-Ro. 12:1-2; 2 Corinth. 3:17-18. If, as God’s children, we neglect our salvation-Heb. 2:1-3, by not attending to God’s working us, we do not cease to be His child. There are expositors of scripture that would say that this process is not salvation, but rather it is sanctification. **Salvation** is the English translation of the Greek word “soteria” which means, *rescue* or *safety* (phys. or mor.). **Sanctification** is the English translation of the Greek word “hagiasmos” which means, *purification*, i.e. (the state) *purity*. (Strong’s Concordance) **Salvation** is being, by the Spirit, **rescued or delivered from sin**, both from sins **penalty**, and also from sins **power**. **Sanctification** is being **purified or cleansed**, by the Spirit, from the uncleanness **of sin** that is in the flesh. The Apostle Peter addresses this matter: **1 Peter 1:22** Seeing ye have **purified your souls** in **obeying the truth through the Spirit** unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

**Hebrews 10:26** For if **we sin wilfully** after that we have **received** the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth **no more sacrifice for sins**,

**27 But** a certain fearful looking for **of judgment** and **fiery indignation**, which shall devour **the adversaries**.

**28** He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

**29** Of how much sorer **punishment**, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath **trodden under foot** the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an **unholy thing**, and hath **done despite** unto the Spirit of grace?

**30** For we know him that hath said, **Vengeance** belongeth unto me, **I will recompense**, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

**31** It is a **fearful thing** to fall into the hands of the living God.

**This passage** is often, but not always, ignored in the exposition of scripture by both dispensational and reform theologians. **Mr. McGee provides the following comment:**

“...The warning is to the Hebrew believers because many of them were continuing to go to the temple and some were actually offering sacrifices there...”

“...The writer to the Hebrews is telling them that they cannot look to the temple any more, because there is no longer a sacrifice for sin. If a person rejects the truth of Christ’s death for sin, there is no other sacrifice for sin available, and there is no other way to come to God. They are to look to Christ now rather than to the temple. If they refuse to do this, there is nothing left for them but judgment. The Word of God is very expressive in this connection.”

**“If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth.’ This means to go on sinning willfully by offering the sacrifices. It is an attitude toward the Word of God which God calls willful rebellion. There is no more sacrifice in the Old Testament or the New Testament for presumptuous sins.”**

**“...It becomes willful disobedience on the part of those who ‘have received the knowledge of the truth’; to continue with the temple ritual and offering of sacrifices.”** J. Vernon McGee, Thru-The- Bible Commentary Series, The Epistles, Hebrews Chapters 8-13, (Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1991, pp. 60, 61).

**Mr. McGee is dancing around the application of this passage.** Scripture is quite clear, as Mr. McGee indicates, that Christ *“offered one sacrifice for sins forever”*-Heb. 10:12, and that there are *no other offerings* for sin. But Mr. McGee speaks as though *sinning willfully* applies only to *the Jews who believed* while the temple was still standing, and who were going to the temple to offer sacrifices. “For if we sin willfully”, does not limit the application for such willful sinning, **1) to those specific Hebrew believers**, or to *Hebrew believers only*, or **2) to offering sacrifices in the temple**. This scripture says, if *“we”* sin willfully after that *“we”* have received the knowledge of the truth-v26. *“We”* in this passage are persons who *were* sanctified by *the blood* (Jesus’ blood) of *the covenant* (the new covenant)-v29. *“We”* are *His* people-v30. This scripture declares that if *“we”* sin willfully *“we”* are “looking for” or facing fearful *judgment* and *fiery indignation*, by which *“the adversaries”* (of God) will be devoured-v27.

**Mr. McGee**, on page 62 of his above referenced book at the top of page 86 of this paper, provides the following comment on verse 29:

**“This is probably the most solemn statement in the Word of God.”**

**“Wherewith he was sanctified’ refers to Christ, the Son of God. They crucified ‘to themselves the Son of God afresh’ (Heb.6:6). To act as if the death of Christ is inadequate to settle the sin question, and to go on as if He had not died, is to treat the blood of Christ as something you despise. Knowledge creates responsibility. If, after you have heard the gospel. You turn your back on Jesus Christ—my friend, someone ought to tell you that you are going to hell! This is not what I say; it is what God says.”**

**In this comment on Hebrews 10:29**, Mr. McGee declares, without equivocation, that the person who treats Christ in the manner described in verse 29 is “going to hell”. When he states, **“This is not what I say; it is what God says”**, he is declaring that this is *what God says* in this scripture, and also in Hebrews 6:6. Regarding Hebrews 6:6, which states, “...seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh...” Mr. McGee is quoted on page 81 of this paper as saying that ***he cannot accept the view of those folk who interpret this Hebrews 6 passage to be speaking of “mere professors” and “not genuine believers”***. Thus, he interprets Hebrews 6:6 to be addressing “*genuine believers*”, **and it is**. That they are *genuine believers*, and his statement

quoted near the middle of page 86 where Mr. McGee says that those persons referred to in Hebrews 6:6 are going to hell, does not reconcile with his view, as expressed on page 79 of this paper: “So if you are a child of God today, you will continue in the faith, grounded and settled”. Further, by his embracing the unconditional security concept, his reference to *Hebrews 6:6* where *he is quoted* in the paragraph near the middle of page 86 as stating that such persons are *going to hell*, contradicts his statement near *the middle of page 82* of this paper, where he states, “The whole tenor of the text [referring to Heb. 6 passage] reveals that he [the author of Hebrews] is speaking of *rewards* which are the result of salvation.”

**The purpose in pointing out these contradictory statements is not to personally demean anyone**, but to encourage those who are seeking the truth to diligently search the scriptures to prove the accuracy of the scripture commentary that you read and hear, including mine.

**Mr. McGee**, on pages 62 and 63 of his book, identified at the top of page 86 of this paper, **continues with comment on verses 30 and 31 in chapter 10 of Hebrews. The following excerpts are relevant to his application of this Hebrews passage:**

“This is a very interesting verse, and it will be profitable to spend a little time with it. This verse is for Christians and unbelievers also. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God! ...And God wants to put His hand upon you for good, but sometimes He puts a very *heavy* hand upon His children. He chastens them—or as we say, He takes them to the woodshed. I have been to the woodshed. Maybe you have been there, too.”

“However, God’s hand of chastening is altogether different from His hand of judgment. He says ‘Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense.’ God does not take vengeance in a spiteful or vindictive manner. But God is going to *judge* sin, and that is something that needs to be emphasized in our day.”

“This cup of God’s judgment is ahead of everyone ‘who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace.’ My friend, if you despise what Christ has done for you on the Cross, there is nothing ahead of you but judgment. You have no hope whatsoever”

**Mr. McGee begins his comment by saying that** verse 31, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God”, is for *Christians* and *unbelievers* also. He then explains that *the application* to God’s children refers, *not to judgment*, but to “*chastening*”. Strong’s Concordance defines chastening: “*tutorage, i.e. education or training; by impl. disciplinary correction.*” As the definition indicates, the purpose of God’s chastening is to bring His children into His way, which is the way of righteousness-Heb. 12:11. He points out that, “..., **God’s hand of chastening is altogether different from His hand of judgment.**” **He then cites that part of verse 30 which says**, “Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will

recompense”, and continues, “**But God is going to judge sin, and that is something that needs to be emphasized in our day.**” He applies the “vengeance” and “recompense” part of this verse to “unbelievers”. When Mr. McGee says that God is going to judge sin, and this matter should be emphasized in our day, he is exempting “Christians” from such judgment. However, in explaining verse 30, he ignores the part that continues by saying, “The Lord shall judge his people.”

**In the last paragraph of the above quotation of Mr. McGee,** he quotes from verse 29 concerning those “who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and have counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith **he was sanctified**, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace”. He then says that for those who have so treated Christ, “**there is nothing ahead of you but judgment**”, with “**no hope whatsoever**”. However, “*he was sanctified” by the blood of the Son of God,* refers to *a child of God only*. Having been *sanctified by the blood* identifies, *with certainty*, those who will be judged for sinning willfully. *Chastening is not mentioned in this Hebrews passage*, but rather, fearful judgment and fiery indignation, which will devour the adversaries-v27, and punishment-v29.

**Beginning at the top of page 77 and forward to this point,** we have observed the handling, *that is typical of dispensational exposition*, of some of the scripture passages that refute the proposition that *the “initial act of faith”* secures a child of God from any penalty for his or her future sins, throughout eternity. As evidenced in considering this “one act of faith” concept, *there are diverse explanations of a particular passage of scripture* by dispensationalists, however, *their conclusion is unanimous* that one’s security is not conditioned on continuing in faith.

**They rest their case on some of the following scriptures:**

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

**John 5:24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, **hath** everlasting life, and **shall not** come into condemnation; but **is passed** from death unto life.

**John 6:39** And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me **I should lose nothing**, but should raise it up again **at the last day**.

**40** And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and **I will raise him up at the last day**.

**John 10:27** My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

**28** And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall **never perish**, neither shall **any man** pluck them out of my hand.

**29** My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and **no man** is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

**Romans 8:31** What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

**32** He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with



**him** also freely give us all things?

**33 Who** shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? **It is God** that justifieth.

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

**35 Who** shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

**36** As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

**37** Nay, **in all these things** we are more than conquerors **through him that loved us.**

**38** For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

**39** Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, **shall be able to separate us** from the love of God, which is **in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

**This selection of scripture passages** provides us *with hope regarding our future*, and *confidence in the keeping power of God*. There are numerous scriptures that assure us of *the adequacy of the Father's provision* in and through the Person and work of Christ to *completely* and *eternally* deal with the issue of our sin. The scriptures cited on pages 77 through 87 of this paper do not minimize the promises concerning *the divine provision*, but rather, they instruct us concerning *our access to it*. The reader might want to review pages 83 and 84 of this paper where the Apostle Peter informs us that we are "**kept** by the power of God **through faith** unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time"-1 Pet. 1:5. And further, "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls-1 Pet. 1:9. These scripture passages from the gospel of John rest one's security on *faith* or *believing*. Again, that which raises *an apparent* conflict between these two groups of scripture passages is the dispensational view that "the words "believeth" or "believes" refers to the *initial act of faith* through which a person enters into the salvation that is in Christ, and secures God's child from any future punishment for sin.

**The scripture passages cited on pages 76 to top of 88** are *emphasizing* the role of *faith* and *faithfulness* to our security, while **the scripture passages cited on page 88, and on this page 89** are *emphasizing* God's *provision* in and through Christ, and *His power* to keep His children, who believe, safe and secure, to be raised up "at the last day". These two groupings of scripture, while they are expressing *different categories of emphasis* related to the security of a child of God, *have no conflict between them*. Each expression of scripture is *in complete agreement* with every other expression of scripture. Any *apparent conflict* within scripture is because of truth that is *not yet a part of one's knowledge*, or because of *knowledge* that we have *which is inaccurate*. If we are *seeking the truth*, rather than *support for a preconceived conclusion*, we will not embrace only those scriptures that provide a particular emphasis concerning a topic of scripture, and then ignore

or manipulate those scriptures conveying a different emphasis concerning the same topic. We come to understand the truth, concerning a matter such as security, as the Holy Spirit's enlightenment reconciles the scriptures for us.

**An extremely influential advocate of the dispensational system of thought during the late 1800's and the early 1900's, wrote the following:**

**“Some texts are not free from difficulty, but with prayer, careful study, and keeping in mind the important rule to never use a doubtful or obscure passage to contradict a clear and positive one, light will surely come. Do not use an if to contradict a verily--- Heb. 6:6 to contradict John 5:24”.** Dr. C. I. Scofield, Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth, (Findlay, Ohio, Dunham Publishing Company, 1962, p.64).

**There are several significant points to be noted in the above statement by Mr. Scofield.**

- He is making a near blasphemous declaration against the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures when he states that the *inspired revelation* recorded at Heb. 6:6 contradicts the *inspired revelation* recorded at John 5:24.
- Webster's College Dictionary: “Doubtful implies a strong feeling of uncertainty or indecision about something or someone”. Obscure-“(Of meaning) not clear or plain; ambiguous, vague, or uncertain”. Thus, Mr. Scofield's indicating that some passages are “doubtful” or “obscure”, is simply evidence *that he does not understand them. Our lack of understanding* of a passage of scripture *does not require* that the passage of scripture, as the writer implies is not *of equal value* with the passages that *we think* are “clear” and “positive” to us.
- When we arrive at *a conclusion* that rests on what *we consider*, “a clear and positive” scripture, which scripture, *we cannot reconcile* with other scriptures that are relevant to a particular concept, such as *the security* of a child of God, *our conclusion* is certainly premature, and very probably, inaccurate. For example, Mr. Scofield accepted the conclusion that is common for dispensationalists, that the word “believeth” in the, above cited, passages from John's gospel refers to “*an act* of faith”, as opposed to “*a continuing* faith”. Recall that the Apostle Paul, writing *by Divine inspiration* wrote, **Colossians 1:21** And you, **that were** sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet **now** hath he reconciled  
**22** In the body of his flesh through death, to present you **holy** and **unblameable** and **unreproveable** in his sight:  
**23** **If ye continue in the faith** grounded and settled, and **be not moved away** from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;  
You may also recall that, on page 79 of this paper, Mr. McGee corrects Paul by explaining that “**We would say, ‘Since ye continue in the faith**

grounded and settled’.” “We” apparently refers to expositors of the dispensational system of thought.

- When the expositors of scripture refer to a particular passage as being *difficult*, the reader must realize that they view the passage to be difficult *because they do not understand it*. However, their lack of understanding does not, even though it should, prevent them from attempting to explain the passage. For example: Near the bottom of page 75 of this paper, Mr. Walvoord says, “...**Though the Scriptures are by no means clear on many of the important factors that would enter into such a decision...**” (the decision being when the New Jerusalem was created), he then offers what other commentators have concluded regarding *the time of the creation* of the New Jerusalem. He continues by *explaining* the relationship of the New Jerusalem to the earth, such explanation being based on *that very speculative conclusion* of the other commentators regarding the time of the creation of the New Jerusalem. Also, beginning near the bottom of page 80 of this paper, Mr. McGee speaks of *the difficulties* in interpreting Hebrews, chapter 6. After presenting the *diverse* interpretations of this passage by other commentators, he proceeds *to explain* the Hebrew’s passage even though he finds the passage *to have “difficulties”*.

A few other passages of scripture that may appear to be in conflict, one with the other, when we are young in the faith, or when our connection is with a system of theological thought wherein inaccurate concepts are taught.

#### Compare:

**Romans 3:20** Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

With,

**Romans 2:13** (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.)

**Romans 6:14** For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

With,

**Galatians 5:18** But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

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

With,

**Romans 7:12** Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

**13** Was then that which is good made death unto me? **God forbid**. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might

become exceeding sinful.

**14** For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

**Romans 8:30** Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

**31** What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

With,

**Romans 8:16** The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

**17** And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

**The first verse or passage** in each of the above comparisons is one of those, so called, “clear and positive” scriptures commonly presented by bible commentators who are of the dispensational persuasion. For them such scriptures as these are *the complete explanation* for future security, and more particularly, their “one act of faith”, “unconditional” security concept. **The second verse or passage** in the above comparisons is one of those “doubtful or obscure” (to them) scriptures that Mr. Scofield calls *contradictory* to the “clear and positive” passages, and therefore, should not be used to *complete the scripture’s explanation* concerning the future security of God’s children.

**The preceding consideration related to the security of God’s people, has in view the basis upon which we inherit God’s promises that are realized in and through the Person and work of the Lord Jesus.** In scripture, *the particulars of inheritance* commence with God’s *promises* to Abraham. The *promises* are expanded in the *covenant with David* and the *new covenant*. As discussed earlier in this paper, in the Old Testament the covenants with Abraham and David, and also the law as given through Moses, had a *physical and temporal* application to the nation of Israel. *With the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Christ, and the giving of the Holy Spirit, the spiritual and eternal aspects of the covenants with Abraham and David were realized, and the new covenant was instituted with application, first to Israel, and then to the Gentiles.* This last statement concerning the *realization and application* of Old Testament prophecies *is premised on the declarations by the writers of the New Testament that the things spoken by the prophets in the Old Testament are fulfilled, in and through Christ, to Israel in those Jews who believe.* And further, that *the Gentiles* have been *included in these promises* on the same basis as the Jews, *which is faith.* (Acts 2:39; 3:19-26; 5:29-32; 10:38-48; 11:1-4, 15-18; 13:26-39; 26:22-23; Romans 15:8-13, 25-27; Ephesians 2:11-22). *According to dispensational teaching, Israel still awaits*

*fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies, and the Gentiles do not participate in the promises to Israel.* (The reader might review pages 20-23 of paper)

**When God delivered Israel out of the land of Egypt, wherein they were in bondage, He had in view for them another land, the place of their inheritance.** He didn't remove them from Egypt, simply to have them out of Egypt, *which was only **the beginning of their deliverance**.* God was taking Israel to a place where He would dwell with them and bless them. **The following are scriptures that address this matter, plus brief comment.**

**Exodus 3:8** And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land **unto a good land** and a large, **unto a land flowing with milk and honey**; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

**Deuteronomy 12:5** But unto **the place which the LORD your God shall choose** out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto **his habitation** shall ye seek, and **thither thou shalt come**:

**6** And **thither** ye shall bring your **burnt offerings**, and your **sacrifices**, and your **tithes**, and **heave offerings** of your hand, and your **vows**, and your **freewill offerings**, and the firstlings of your **herds** and of your **flocks**:

**7** And **there** ye shall eat **before the LORD** your God, and **ye shall rejoice** in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, **wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee**.

**8** Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man **whatsoever is right in his own eyes**.

**9** For ye are not as yet come **to the rest and to the inheritance**, which the LORD your God giveth you.

**10** But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell **in the land** which the LORD your God giveth you **to inherit**, and when he giveth you **rest** from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety;

**11** Then there shall be **a place** which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your **burnt offerings**, and your **sacrifices**, your **tithes**, and the **heave offering** of your hand, and all your **choice vows** which ye vow unto the LORD:

**Here we are informed that:**

- The land is the inheritance and the place of rest, and that there is no rest outside of the inheritance-vs. 9, 10.
- The Lord will designate a place for His name and His habitation in the land of Israel's inheritance and rest-v5.
- They are to bring all that the Lord has commanded in *offerings, sacrifices, tithes*, and *vows* to the Lord *in this chosen place*-vs. 6, 11.
- In *this place* they will rejoice in the blessing of the Lord-v7.
- In the *land* of their *inheritance* and *rest* they cannot do according to all the things that they did outside of the land-vs. 8, 9.

The children of Israel were to proclaim certain feasts of the Lord when they gathered before the Lord in His designated place, as mentioned immediately above. The feasts and gatherings are addressed in the following scriptures, and there will be brief comment.

### Leviticus 23

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, **Concerning the feasts of the LORD**, which ye shall proclaim **to be holy convocations**, even these are my feasts.

3 Six days shall work be done: but **the seventh day is the sabbath of rest**, an holy convocation; ye shall do **no work therein**: it is **the sabbath of the LORD** in all your dwellings.

**This** is the Sabbath day patterned after the six days of the creation, when *God rested on **the seventh day** from all His work*. Under *old covenant* administration, Israel was to reserve the *seventh day* of the week for a day of *rest* from work. Under the *old covenant administration* this Sabbath day of *rest* from all physical work was a *foreshadowing of the rest* that we can now have *in Christ* under God's *administration of the new covenant*, *by ceasing from out own works*, "as God did from His"- Heb. 4: 9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

**The, above mentioned, "Sabbath of rest" was to be kept on the seventh day of each week, and in the place where a family lived. There are three other feasts that were to be kept, each in its particular season or time of year, and by a public gathering in the place designated by the Lord.**

Lev. 23:4 These are the feasts of the LORD, even **holy convocations**, which ye shall proclaim **in their seasons**.

5 In the **fourteenth day** of the **first month** at even is the LORD's passover.

6 And on the **fifteenth day** of the same month is the feast of **unleavened** bread unto the LORD: **seven days** ye must eat **unleavened** bread.

7 In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

8 But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: **in the seventh day** is an holy convocation: ye shall do **no servile work** therein.

**The Passover** was the first feast in the year, and was "the feast of *unleavened bread*". The fourteenth day of the first month was *the Passover*, when the Lord told the children of Israel to take a lamb or goat *without blemish*-Ex. 12:5, for an offering to the Lord, and place *its blood* on the doorposts of their houses. That night God was going to execute judgment against the firstborn, of both man and beast. As He passed over, *when He saw the blood* on the doorposts, *the firstborn in that house would be spared*. God was ready to

deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt. This feast of *unleavened* bread was to be kept as a memorial, at this time each year, *forever*-Ex. 12:14. **We learn the meaning and significance** to the Lord's people of the *feast of unleavened bread*, under *God's administration of the new covenant*, by the Apostle Paul's explanation at:

**1 Corinthians 5:1** It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

**2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned**, that he that hath done this deed might be taken **away from among you**.

3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning **him that hath so done this deed**,

4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of **the flesh**, that **the spirit** may be saved in the **day of the Lord Jesus**.

6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that **a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump**?

7 Purge out therefore **the old leaven**, that ye may be a new lump, **as ye are unleavened**.

For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

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

**Under the old covenant** the "Passover" feast was a seven day period of *ceremonial observance* as a memorial of the deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt, while under *the new covenant* the "Passover" feast is a *continual observance* of the Lord's delivering us from the penalty and bondage of sin, by *our walking*, not after the flesh, but after the spirit. We keep the feast with *sincerity* and *truth*. Strong's Concordance defines sincerity as, "clearness, i.e. (by impl.) purity (fig.)". **A few scriptures that complement Paul's explanation of how we keep the feast of unleavened bread are:**

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

2 For the law **of the Spirit of life** in Christ Jesus hath made me free from **the law of sin and death**.

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

4 **That** the righteousness of the law might be **fulfilled in us**, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

**Galatians 5:13** For, brethren, ye have been **called unto liberty**; only **use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh**, but by love serve one another.

14 For **all the law is fulfilled in one word**, even in this; **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself**.

15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

16 This I say then, **Walk** in the Spirit, **and ye shall not fulfill** the lust of the flesh.

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: **so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.**

18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

**2 Peter 1:1** Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have **obtained like precious faith with us** through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you **through the knowledge** of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

3 According as **his divine power** hath given unto us **all things** that pertain unto life and godliness, through **the knowledge** of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might **be partakers of the divine nature**, having **escaped the corruption** that is in the world through lust.

5 And beside this, **giving all diligence**, add to your faith **virtue**; and to virtue **knowledge**;

6 And to knowledge **temperance**; and to temperance **patience**; and to patience **godliness**;

7 And to godliness **brotherly kindness**; and to brotherly kindness **charity**.

8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 But he that lacketh these things **is blind**, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that **he was purged from his old sins**.

10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

**1 Peter 1:22** Seeing ye have **purified** your souls in **obeying** the truth through **the Spirit unto** unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with **a pure** heart fervently:

**The second gathering of the people, when they came into the land was the offering of the “first fruits” of the harvest.**

**Lev. 23:9** And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, **When ye be come into the land** which I give unto you, and shall **reap the harvest thereof**, then ye shall bring a **sheaf of the firstfruits** of your harvest **unto the priest**:

11 And he shall wave **the sheaf** before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow **after the sabbath** the priest shall wave it.

12 And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an **he lamb without blemish** of the first year for a burnt offering unto the LORD.

13 And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for **a sweet savour**: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin.

14 And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout



your generations in all your dwellings.

15 And **ye shall count** unto you from **the morrow after the sabbath**, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; **seven sabbaths** shall be complete:

16 Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number **fifty days**; and ye shall offer a **new meat offering** unto the LORD.

17 Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are **the firstfruits** unto the LORD.

**21** And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a **statute for ever** in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

**It should be noted that:**

- The offering of the first fruits of the harvest begins with the *sheaf of the “first fruits”*-v10.
- There will, also, be an offering of a lamb without blemish-v12.
- This offering is a statute *forever*-v14.
- From the day after they brought the sheaf of the first fruits, they were to number seven Sabbaths (49 days). And on *the day after* the seventh Sabbath (*50 days*) they are to offer a *“new meat offering”* unto the Lord-vs15,16.

**Scriptures that explain the meaning and significance, under the new covenant, of the offering of the “sheaf of the first fruits” and the “new meat offering” are:**

**Acts 1:1** The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

2 Until the day in which **he was taken up**, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto **the apostles** whom he had chosen:

3 To whom also he shewed himself alive **after his passion** by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for **the promise of the Father**, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

**Acts 2:1** And when **the day of Pentecost** was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

4 And **they were all filled with the Holy Ghost**, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

**After His death and resurrection**, Christ was seen by the apostles 40 days, and He told them to not leave Jerusalem until they *had received the Holy Spirit* which was promised by the Father. When the “day of Pentecost”,

(meaning *fiftieth* with day being implied-Strong's Concordance), had come the *Father's promise of the Holy Spirit was received. The "sheaf of the first fruits" corresponds to Christ's resurrection, Christ being the "first fruits" of those who are raised from the dead. We read concerning this matter: 1*

**Corinthians 15:22** For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

**Romans 8:29** For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

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

**And then**, on the *fiftieth day thereafter*, the "new meat offering" was offered -Lev. 23:16, and it was *the "first fruits"* to the Lord-v17. This second feast of the "new meat offering" corresponds to *the coming of the Holy Spirit*, under the *new covenant administration* of God's kingdom, to indwell His children, as seen in Acts 2:1-4, above. We also read: **John 7:38** He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

39 (But this spake he **of the Spirit**, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was **not yet given**; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

**John 16:7** Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: **for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come** unto you; but **if I depart, I will send him unto you.**

**Romans 8:23** And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, **waiting for the adoption**, to wit, the redemption **of our body.**

**The "firstfruits of the Spirit"** is the "earnest"-Eph. 1:13,14, or a measured portion, *realized during this age, of the full inheritance* that will be received at the time of the "redemption", or the resurrection of the body *when the Lord returns*. The resurrection of the body is the realization, *within the new covenant*, of the third and *final ceremonial feast* commanded for Israel under God's administering *of the old covenant*. This third feast was referred to as "**feast of ingathering**, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field"-Ex. 23:16. It was also called the "feast of tabernacles" in the following passage:

**Leviticus 23:33** And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

34 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The **fifteenth day of this seventh month** shall be **the feast of tabernacles** for seven days unto the LORD.

35 On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do **no servile work therein.**

36 Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and **ye shall do no servile work therein.**

**This third and final feast**, being the bringing in of the harvest at the end of the year, *foreshadows* the "harvest" or the final *gathering* unto the Lord

Jesus, of God's children in Christ *at the end of this age*, as above mentioned concerning the resurrection of the body. **Some scriptures in the New Testament speaking to this matter are:**

**Mark 13:24** But in those days, after that tribulation, **the sun** shall be darkened, and **the moon** shall not give her light,

25 And **the stars** of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

26 And then shall they see **the Son of man coming in the clouds** with great power and glory.

27 And then shall he send his angels, and **shall gather together his elect** from the four winds, from the uttermost part **of the earth** to the uttermost part **of heaven**.

**1 Thessalonians 4:13** But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep **in Jesus will God bring with him**.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto **the coming of the Lord** shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16 For **the Lord himself** shall **descend from heaven** with a shout, with the voice of the **archangel**, and with **the trump** of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them **in the clouds**, to meet **the Lord** in the air: and so shall we ever be with **the Lord**.

**Revelation 14:12** Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that **keep the commandments** of God, and **the faith** of Jesus.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die **in the Lord** from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may **rest** from their labours; and **their works** do follow them.

14 And I looked, and behold **a white cloud**, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the **Son of man**, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, **and reap**: for the **time is come for thee to reap**; for the **harvest of the earth** is ripe.

16 And he that sat on **the cloud** thrust in his sickle on the earth; and **the earth was reaped**.

**It is important to note that the three old covenant feasts**, the "Passover" or the feast of "unleavened bread", the "feast of Weeks" or of "Firstfruits", and the feast of "Tabernacles" or of "Ingathering" *have their meaning and significance realized in and through the Lord Jesus who, by His death, is mediator of the new covenant*-Heb. 9:15. Previously (on pages 45 through 49 of this paper), we have considered *the transition* from the old covenant to the new covenant, in which there were changes in the *priesthood*, the *sacrifices* and *offerings*, *Jerusalem*, the *house*, and the *nation*. Everything of the old economy was an "example" and "shadow"-Heb. 8:5, 10:1; a "testimony"-Heb. 3:5; a "figure"-Heb. 9:9,24; and a "pattern"-Heb. 9:23. Just as **these** physical

and temporal realities of the Old Testament had their spiritual and eternal realities fulfilled in and through Christ, so also *the land*, as a physical and temporal *inheritance* wherein Israel could have *rest* from their enemies, has its spiritual and eternal reality fulfilled in and through Christ. We have considered (middle of page 56 through top of page 60 of this paper) how God's promises to Israel are realized in "a remnant according the election of grace"-Ro. 11:5, and as a geopolitical nation among nations, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded"-Ro. 11:7. **In the following passage of scripture, it is explained how the Jew's relationship to the land as their inheritance and place of rest was a testimony of the inheritance and rest that is available, in Christ, to God's children in this age:**

**Hebrews 3:1** Wherefore, holy **brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling**, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;  
2 Who was **faithful** to him that appointed him, as also Moses was **faithful** in all his house.  
3 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.  
4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.  
5 And Moses verily **was faithful** in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after:  
6 But Christ as a son over **his own** house; **whose house** are we, **if** we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope **firm unto the end.**  
7 **Wherefore** (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,  
8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:  
9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works **forty years.**  
10 Wherefore I was grieved with **that generation**, and said, They do alway **err in their heart**; and they have **not** known my ways.  
11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)  
12 Take heed, **brethren**, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of **unbelief**, in **departing from** the living God.  
13 But exhort one another **daily**, while it is called To day; lest any **of you** be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.  
14 For we are made **partakers of Christ**, **if** we hold **the beginning** of our confidence stedfast unto the end;  
15 **While it is said**, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, **as in the provocation.**  
16 For **some**, when they had heard, **did provoke**: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.  
17 But **with whom** was he grieved forty years? was it not **with them that had sinned**, whose carcasses **fell in the wilderness?**  
18 And **to whom** swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?  
19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

**Some points to take note of in the above passage of scripture:**

- This scripture is addressed to “brethren” who are “*partakers* of the heavenly calling”-v1.
- Moses’ house was *a testimony of the, then future house* that is Christ’s own, and “we” brethren who are partakers of the heavenly calling constitute Christ’s house—“if” we hold fast *unto the end*-v5, 6.
- Those in Israel who came out of Egypt, *whose hearts erred*, “roam (from safety, truth or virtue)”-Strong’s Concordance, and were *hardened*, “(fig.) render stubborn”-Strong’s Concordance, did not know the ways of the Lord-v10. *Such a heart condition is equated with “unbelief”*-v19. And, because of “unbelief” they did not enter into the *place of their inheritance* and *rest*-vs. 11, 18.
- We, “brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling”, are warned that we, too, can err *in our heart*, which is “unbelief”, and *thereby depart* from the living God-v12.
- We too, can be deceived by sin-v13. And, such deception occurs simply *by justifying our preferences* through *the reasoning process*. For an example, many of the children of Israel *justified their refusal to obey God* and enter the land at Kedesh-barnea, *by reasoning* that their wives and children would be a prey-Numbers 14:3,31. They were viewing their ability to possess the land in terms of their own strength, rather than the Lord’s.
- We are “partakers”, meaning a “participant i.e. (as a noun) a sharer;”-Strong’s Concordance, of Christ, and again, our sharing in the provision that is in Christ is *contingent on our holding “the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.”*-v14.

**Our purpose in considering the feasts and offerings, and the land**, is to see the New Testament explanation of how that which is *physical and temporal* in God’s administering of the old covenant can continue “*forever*” in His administering of the new covenant. However, such purpose tends to be obscured by the prominence in scripture *of the inviolate truth*, beginning in the Garden of Eden, and continuing through the last chapter of the book of Revelation, which is the truth that *continuing in faith is the condition*, and *not an option*, for participating in the “earnest of our inheritance” *now*-Eph. 1:13,14, and the fullness of the inheritance *at the time of the “redemption [resurrection] of the body”*-Ro. 8:23. As we continue, chapter 4 of the Hebrews’ epistle explains that the “*rest*” spoken of in the Old Testament was *an example*, and *a foreshadowing* of a “rest” that is available to God’s children *now*, in Christ, *on the same basis, being faith*, that the temporal and physical “*rest*” in the “land” was available to the children of Israel. The

*present “rest” is realized by walking after the Spirit, the earnest of our inheritance, as opposed to walking after the flesh with the works (our own), which proceed from the wisdom and energy of the flesh.*

**Hebrews 4:1** Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem **to come short of it.**

2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

3 For we which have believed do **enter into rest**, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter **into my rest:** although **the works were finished** from the foundation of the world.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And **God did rest** the seventh day from all his works.

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into **my rest.**

6 Seeing therefore **it remaineth that some must enter therein**, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, **harden not your hearts.**

8 For if Jesus [marg. Joshua] **had given them rest**, then would he not afterward have spoken **of another day.**

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

10 For **he** that is entered into his rest, he also hath **ceased from his own works**, as God did from his.

11 **Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest,** lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of **soul and spirit**, and of the **joints and marrow**, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

**The comment preceding this scripture** identifies most of the points relevant to this consideration, however, the following comments may add further clarity.

- **Had Joshua given them rest**, “then he would not afterwards have spoken of another day”-v8. When Joshua led the children of Israel into the land of Canaan we are informed at: **Joshua 21:43** And the LORD gave unto Israel **all the land** which he sware to give unto their fathers; and **they possessed it**, and dwelt therein.

44 And the LORD gave them **rest** round about, **according to all that he sware unto their fathers:** and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand.

45 **There failed not ought** of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; **all came to pass.** Thus, God did give the children of Israel “rest” under Joshua’s leadership. As mentioned above, this was a temporal and physical “rest” which served as an example of a future “rest” **that remained** to be realized in and through the Person and work

of the Lord Jesus. The “*rest*” ***that remained*** is in Christ for those who walk after the Spirit in the “dispensation of the fullness of times”-Eph. 1:10. Also, the “*rest*” that is “***forever***” is realized in the future: “Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* **they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.** And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may **rest from their labours;** and **their works** do follow them.”-Rev. 14:12,13.

- **The matter of ceasing from our own works is a process of learning and salvation.** As indicated in verse 12 of the Hebrews’ passage, ***the Word of God is indispensable*** in this process, and it is used by the Holy Spirit to ***enlighten our understanding*** that we might discern ***what is of God***, and ***what is not***, regarding our words, thoughts, and deeds. The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit-Eph. 6:17. **As our mind is renewed,** we can, by ***Divine enabling (grace)***, put off the “old man”, and put on the “new man”-Eph. 4:20-24.
- **The place of this “rest” is in the Lord Jesus.** And, it is realized by **abiding in Him**-1 John 2:24-28.

**This examination of the “dispensational” system of thought, by placing it under the scrutiny of the scriptures, and particularly the New Testament scriptures, brings us to that explanation of the return of the Lord Jesus. Some of the dispensational claims related to the Lord’s coming are:**

1. That the Lord comes ***twice***, first He comes **before** the “***Great Tribulation***” to gather together His church, both the living and the dead. Next, He will come **after the tribulation** to establish an ***earthly*** kingdom.
2. That the Lord’s coming **for His church** is “***imminent***”, that is, He might come ***at any moment***. And, this “any moment” coming has been the expectation of the church ***from the time of its inception***.
3. That the “Day of the Lord” ***begins*** at the time of His coming **for the church** and the **commencement of the tribulation period**, and it extends to **the end** of the “***millennium***”.
4. That the tribulation period is the time when **God’s wrath is poured-out** on the earth.
5. That ***the present earth and heavens*** will be dissolved and pass away, and ***the “new heavens” and the “new earth”*** will be established **at the end** of the “***millennium***”, which they say, is also **the end of the “Day of the Lord”**, and **the beginning of the “Day of God”**. And, that the “Day of God” is **the beginning of the “eternal state”**.

When reading commentary concerning this “pretribulational rapture” view, the points are not discussed as selectively as they are identified in the above-mentioned claims. Therefore, quotations from such commentary will contain an intermingling of these claims.

Mr. Walvoord identifies 1 Corinthians 15:51-58, and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11 as the primary supportive scriptures for the Lord’s coming for His church *before* the “tribulation”-item 1 above. “Though the translation of the living church is expressly taught in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 and implied in numerous other passages including John 14:3, its formal exposition was undertaken by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:51-58. This passage and 1Thessalonians 4:13-5:11 are the two classic passages on the rapture of the church and constitute its major exposition.” John F. Walvoord, The Church In Prophecy, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1964, p.93)

The following scripture texts are those that Mr. Walvoord refers to as “classic passages on the rapture of the church”, first:

1 Corinthians 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

**In this passage some points to be noted are:**

- In this passage, the Apostle Paul *is emphasizing* that when the Lord comes there will be *bodily resurrection* of both the dead and the living. “We shall not all sleep, but we shall *all be changed*.”-v51 “For this *corruptible* must put on *incorruption*, and this *mortal* must put on *immortality*”-v53. (The reader might read chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians for context, which is explaining the resurrection of the body).
- Resurrection will occur “in a moment”, “at the last trump”, for the trumpet shall sound.
- This passage does not mention, either directly or indirectly, the time of the Lord’s coming. The passage gives no indication of the time relationship, nor any other relationship, between the Lord’s coming and the “tribulation”.



**On page 97 of his book, *The Church In Prophecy*, identified on page 104 of this paper, Mr. Walvoord provides the following commentary on this passage in 1 Corinthians, chapter 15:**

**“It was, of course, no secret that when Christ would come back to earth to establish His kingdom there would be living people on earth at the time who would be numbered among the saints. This, of course, was anticipated in Old Testament prophecies concerning his second coming, but no rapture is ever indicated in these prophecies. The new truth which is here being revealed relates to an earlier coming of Christ, preceding the tribulation. Saints living on earth at the time of the rapture will never die physically, but instead will experience an instantaneous change from their present bodies to bodies that are suited for the presence of God. This transformation is the translation of the church and parallels the resurrection of the dead in Christ.”** (Underlining mine)

**In the above comment, Mr. Walvoord states, “The new truth which is here being revealed relates to an earlier coming of Christ, preceding the tribulation.”** (Underlining mine) In the last item above on page 104, it was noted that in this passage in 1 Corinthians, there is no mention of either, *the tribulation* or *the time* of this event. In fact, the coming of the Lord is not directly stated in this passage. That this event is when the Lord comes is specifically declared earlier in this chapter 15, which provides additional details concerning the coming of the Lord Jesus. *It is most important to recognize that often, there are several or many passages of scripture explaining any one concept or event revealed in the Scriptures.* This is certainly true with both, the “coming” of Christ, and also, the “security” of God’s children as previously considered in this paper. (Regarding “security”, see pages, top of 77 to middle of 92)

**On pages 105 through 107 of his book, *The Church In Prophecy*, Mr. Walvoord provides further comment, that it is necessary to move the rapture of the church forward, and thus, to precede the “tribulation”.**

**“A most significant fact is often overlooked in 1 Corinthians 15:51-53 in that the passage states plainly, ‘We shall all be changed.’ In the consideration of the problem of the time of the rapture, many have followed the conclusion that the translation of the church is somehow to be identified as a part of Christ’s coming to establish His kingdom on the earth. This is known as the post-tribulation rapture view as opposed to the pretribulation rapture teaching which holds that the translation takes place some years before Christ returns to establish His kingdom. In the simple expression, ‘We shall all be changed,’ there seems to be decisive evidence that the rapture must be distinguished from the second coming of Christ to the earth. In fact, it demands that there be a considerable time period between these two events.”**

**“Those who hold the premillennial interpretation of Scripture are, therefore, faced with an insuperable problem if they attempt to accommodate this with the post-tribulational idea. If all the wicked are put to death and if all the saints are translated, it leaves no one in their natural bodies to populate the millennial earth. Hence, the simple fact that everyone will be transformed who believes in Christ on**

**the occasion of the rapture of the church makes it necessary to move this event forward and leave a sufficient time period between the rapture and Christ's coming to establish His kingdom to raise up a whole new generation of saints from both Jews and Gentiles to populate the millennial earth." (Underlining mine)**

**It should be noted that Mr. Walvoord appeals to the expression, "We shall all be changed" for support in this passage of scripture that the Lord's return consists of two comings. He says that *this expression* is "decisive evidence", and that, "*in fact*", it demands "a considerable time period between these two events". *However*, "We shall all be changed" is decisive evidence of *only one thing*, we shall *all* be changed. "*In fact*", the expression demands nothing related to *the time* when the Lord comes, unless *the dispensational premise*, that flesh and blood *can, and will*, inherit the kingdom of God, *is accurate*. Chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians, verse 50 informs us, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood **cannot** inherit the kingdom of God." This verse is contextually related to the statement, "we shall all be changed"-v51. Also, recall that Jesus told Pilate, "... My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence"-Matt. 18:36. As has been in evidence throughout this entire study paper, expositors of dispensational thought do not hesitate to ignore the "literal" meaning *of New Testament scriptures*.**

**Mr. Walvoord is not accepting these declarations by both, Jesus and the Apostle Paul, and *reasons* that, "if all the wicked are put to death and if all the saints are translated, it leaves no one in their natural bodies to populate the millennial earth. Hence, the simple fact that everyone will be transformed who believes in Christ on the occasion of the rapture of the church makes it necessary to move this event forward and leave a sufficient time period between the rapture and Christ's coming to establish His kingdom to raise up a whole new generation of saints from both Jews and Gentiles to populate the millennial earth." *Such reasoning leads to a conclusion that is in conflict with the direct testimony of scripture*. (The reader might review pages 1 through 3 of this paper)**

**In comment on page 97 of his book ,The Church In Prophecy, Mr. Walvoord states concerning the trumpet referred to in 1 Corinth. 15:52, "This trump is to be identified with the trump of God in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and is not to be confused with other trumps that deal with other issues such as the trumps of the angels in the book of Revelation or the trump gathering all the elect in Matthew 24:31." In chapters 8, 9, and 11 of the book of Revelation there are seven trumpets that will be sounded when the seventh seal of judgment is opened. As Mr. Walvoord indicates, these trumpets deal with another issue. However, we will examine the passages of scripture in both, 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4, and Matthew, chapter 24. **First, we will view the passage in 1 Thessalonians 4, which contains verse 16, and, that in****

conjunction with 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11, this being what Mr. Walvoord holds to be one of the two “classic passages on the rapture of the church and constitutes its major exposition”.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 5:1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

**Again, in this passage we will note some of the points relevant to an examination of the dispensational premillennial view regarding the coming of the Lord.**

- 1) Paul expresses concern that the brethren might know that those *who sleep* (or who have died) *in Jesus* prior to His coming, “God will bring with him”-4:13-14.
- 2) When the Lord comes, it will be with *a shout*, with the voice of the archangel, and the trumpet of God-4:16.
- 3) The dead in Christ will rise *first*, and those who are *alive* at His coming will be caught up together with them in the clouds and meet the Lord in the air-4:16-17.

- 4) The brethren at Thessalonica *already know* that the “day of the Lord” will come as *a thief*, -5:2, unexpected by those who sleep-5:6
- 5) While *the world* will be saying peace and safety, sudden destruction will come upon them unexpectedly.-5:3-4. (This sudden destruction is the “*wrath of God*”-Rev. 19:15, and the “*wrath of the Lamb*”-Rev. 6:16-17.)
- 6) Paul tells the brethren that they are children of light, and, that day *should* not overtake them as a thief. Therefore they must *watch*, and *not sleep* as do others-5:5-7.
- 7) They are *not* appointed *to wrath*, but rather, *to salvation*. So, when the Lord comes, as Paul told them in the passage in chapter 4, whether they are alive or dead, they will *live together* with the Lord-4:17; 5: 10. In this they can comfort one another-4:18; 5:11.
- 8) ***Relevant to this consideration, it is especially noteworthy that the “Great Tribulation” is not mentioned in this 1 Thessalonians passage, but the passage does mention the day of “wrath”-5:9.*** God’s wrath will bring sudden destruction-5:3, on the inhabitants of the earth who are saying peace and safety when the Lord comes.

**The following are comments by Mr. Walvoord regarding this passage of scripture in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11 from his book, The Church In Prophecy, identified on page 104 of this paper.**

**In support of the concept of “imminency”, that the Lord could return at any moment, Mr. Walvoord writes on page 85 of his book, “In his discussion of the doctrine of the rapture, he [the apostle Paul] states that he does not need to write to them concerning the times, that is, the general times, or the seasons, that is, the particular times which relate to the coming of the Lord. This is in contrast to 1 Thessalonians 4:13 where he states that he does not want them to be ignorant concerning the details of the prophecy concerning the rapture. Here he tells them that they already know the facts concerning the times and seasons, namely, that the coming of the Day of the Lord is imminent.”**

**In this comment, “that they already know”, is referring to verses 1 through 3 of chapter 5 of 1 Thessalonians. Mr. Walvoord says that the Apostle Paul is telling the brethren at Thessalonica that they already know that the “*Day of the Lord*” is “*imminent*”, the “*any moment*” idea. However, verse 2 says that what they “know” is that the *Day of the Lord*, “so cometh as a thief in the night”. “As a thief” does not suggest that the “Day of the Lord” might come at “*any moment*”, but that it will come unexpectedly, (people will be saying peace and safety-v3), to those *who sleep*. In verse 4, the Apostle Paul says that the brethren are *not in darkness* that that day *should* overtake *them* “as a thief”. Those who are in Christ can know the indications that the Day of the Lord is near, if we do not sleep, as do others. **As we continue this examination, we****

will view scriptures in the context of, “as a thief”, which address the coming of the Lord, the Day of the Lord, and the Day of God.

Also, Mr. Walvoord says that *Paul’s statement*, that he does not need to write to them concerning the times related to the coming of the Lord, is *in contrast* to his not wanting them to be ignorant concerning, “the details of the prophecy concerning the rapture”. Paul is *not contrasting* the coming of the Lord with the rapture. However, Mr. Walvoord is. Paul is treating the coming of the “Day of the Lord” at 1 Thess. 5:2 *as the same event as the coming of the Lord* in verses 14-17 of chapter 4. Further, *Paul does not say* that he does not want them to be ignorant “concerning the details of the prophecy concerning the rapture”. *What Paul does say* is that he does not want them to be ignorant “concerning them which are asleep”-4:13, which is only one detail. In this passage of scripture, 4:13 through 5:11, Paul is not contrasting anything. This is another instance of an expositor of dispensational thought maneuvering or manipulating scripture to support *a preconceived*, but *inaccurate* concept. In this case it is an effort to protect their unscriptural claim of two comings of the Lord, separated by: the period of *tribulation*; the *day of wrath*; a portion of the *day of the Lord*. And, as we will see, (beginning at the top of page 110, to middle of page 113), the day of wrath, and the day of the Lord begin with the coming of the Lord, immediately *after* the tribulation.

On page 88 of his book, *The Church In Prophecy*, Mr. Walvoord gives an explanation of 1 Thessalonians 5:5, which reads, “Ye are all the children of light, and children of the day: we are **not** of the night, nor of darkness”. In verse 6 the passage continues, “Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober”. Mr. Walvoord says, “Christians are described as living in the light of divine revelation and the grace of God. In the latter part of the verse the apostle includes himself when he states, ‘we are not of the night, nor of darkness.’ They have the wonderful position of living in the daylight rather than in the night of unbelief and ignorance.”

Mr. Walvoord tells us that, this scripture describes Christians as “*living*” in the light. However, verse 5 does not describe “Christians” as “*living*” in the light, and in verse 6 they are exhorted *to watch*, which is essential for “*living*” in the light. He continues by saying that “**they have the wonderful position of living in the daylight...**” As God’s children we are positioned in Christ, and thus, we have access to the light that is in Him. How we live in relationship to, either, divine light or natural darkness is not our position, but rather, it is our inward state, which is expressed by our manner of living. This is the basis for the exhortation in verse 6 for us to *not sleep*, but *to watch*. That God’s children can and do sleep is evidenced in Eph. 5:14, “Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that  **sleepest**, and arise from **the dead**, and Christ shall give thee light”.

This scripture is addressed to the Lord's people who are of the church at Ephesus. Also, recall 1 John 1:5-9, regarding "walking in the light", and "walking in darkness". (See pages 77 and 78 of this paper)

**On pages 85 and 86 of his book, the Church In Prophecy, identified on page 104 of this paper, Mr. Walvoord discusses the "Day of the Lord" in terms of its nature and its timing.**

**"The expression, 'The Day of the Lord,' is a common one in both the Old and New testament and seems to refer to that extended period of time in which the Lord will deal directly with human sin in various forms of divine judgment. The Old Testament commonly speaks of the Day of the Lord as a period characterized as 'a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness' (Joel 2:2), 'when all the inhabitants of the land tremble' (Joel 2:1), when there will be warfare and destruction of the land (Joel 2:3-9), and when 'the earth shall quake...; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining' (Joel 2:10). As Joel explains, 'The day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?' It is, therefore, the period of divine judgment preceding the return of Christ to the earth. ...From these various passages, it has been concluded that the Day of the Lord includes not only the time of tribulation subsequent to the rapture but also the entire thousand-year reign of Christ on earth." Underlining mine.**

**We will examine Mr. Walvoord's comment regarding the time period of the "Day of the Lord", he says: 1) It is a period of divine judgment *preceding* the return of Christ *to the earth*; 2) The Day of the Lord *includes* the time of *tribulation* subsequent *to the rapture*; 3) It extends over the entire *thousand-year* reign of Christ on earth.**

**Mr. Walvoord's comment draws primarily from Joel's prophecy.** However, he does not mention verses 30 and 31 in chapter 2, which is central to understanding *the time* when the Day of the Lord *commences*, v 30-"And I will show **wonders in the heavens** and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke." v31- "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come".

**In the New Testament, Jesus explains to His disciples the precise timing of these celestial events related to the sun, the moon, and the wonders in the heavens and the earth.**

**Matthew 24:1** And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

**2** And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, **There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.**

**3** And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, **the disciples** came unto him **privately**, saying, Tell us, **when** shall these things be? and **what shall be the sign of thy coming**, and **of the end of the world?**

**4** And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

**5** For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but **the end is not yet**.

**Notice particularly in verse 3, two questions by the disciples.** What shall be the sign: 1) of thy coming? 2) and the end of the world? These questions are answered by the next passage in Matthew chapter 24.

29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and **then** shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send **his angels** with a great sound **of a trumpet**, and they shall **gather together** his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all **these things**, know that it is near, even at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

35 **Heaven and earth shall pass away**, but my words shall not pass away.

**This passage, in context of “as a thief”-vs34-44, answers these questions:**

1. **What shall be the sign of the Lord’s coming---**Immediately after the tribulation, the sun will be darkened, the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven and the powers of heaven will be shaken. Then will be the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds. These happenings in the sun, moon, and stars are the sign of the Lord’s coming.
2. **What will be the sign of the end of the world---**“So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, [the signs described in verse 29] know that it is near, even at the doors”-v33. “Verily I say unto you, This generation [the generation that sees these things] shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled”-v34. “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away”-v35. Thus, heaven and earth will pass away, related in time to the Lord’s coming.
3. **When will the “Day of the Lord” come---**in Joel 2:31 we read, “The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come”. Jesus informs us at Matthew 24:29 that these celestial events with the sun and the moon occur “immediately after the tribulation of those days”. The literal

meaning of these scriptures is that the Day of the Lord comes ***“immediately after the tribulation”***, not *when* the tribulation *begins*, as claimed by expositors of the dispensational, pretribulational system of thought. For example, another advocate of this system of thought voices the same view of the “day of the Lord” as Mr. Walvoord: **“The Day of the Lord is a period which begins with the Great Tribulation and goes through the millennial reign of Christ. That is a theme in the Old Testament.”** J. Vernon McGee, Thru-The-Bible Commentary series, THE EPISTILES, First and Second Thessalonians, (Published in Nashville, Tennessee, by Thomas Nelson, Inc., p. 85).

**At page 88 of his book of commentary on First and Second Thessalonians, identified above, Mr. McGee offers another scripture from 1 Thessalonians, chapter 5, verse 9 for support of the pretribulational claim that the church will not go through the tribulation.** This verse reads, “For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ”. Mr. McGee comments: **“God hath not appointed us to wrath’—that ought to be clear even to amillennialists, but for some reason they miss the point. God hasn’t appointed us to the day of wrath, the Great Tribulation. It is a time of judgment, and the church is not going through it because Christ bore our judgment.”** Also, Mr. Walvoord, on pages 90 and 91 of his book, The Church In Prophecy, comments on 1 Thessalonians 5:9: **By way of summary of what the apostle [Paul] has been discussing in the preceding verses of this chapter, he concludes in verse 9, ‘For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.’ This is a categorical denial that the church will go through the tribulation which is described as a day of wrath (Revelation 6:17)”**

**It is common practice for expositors of scripture** to present a conclusion based on one or two verses of scripture. However, to understand the relationship, if any, of the “day of wrath” to the “tribulation” it is necessary to view *the context* of Revelation 6:17, and also, to *compare it* to other relevant scripture.

**Revelation 6:**12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great **earthquake**; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

15 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that



sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

**In verses 1 through 11 of chapter 6 of Revelation**, the *first five seals* are opened. The events of the *first four seals* are described. Seals *one* through *four* cover the judgments of the Great Tribulation. When the *fifth seal* is opened John saw those who had been slain “for the word of God and for the testimony which they held”-v9, being killed during the events of the *first four seals*. Those who were slain were saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth”-v10. And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled”-v11. (For some detail, see page 27 through the middle of page 29 of the study paper entitled, Book Of Revelation, on this website).

**Back to the passage in Revelation 6:12-17**, note the following points that are particularly relevant to the time of the day of wrath.

1. When the sixth seal is opened: The **sun** became black; The **moon** became as blood; The **stars** of heaven fell to the earth. These are the *same* celestial happenings described at Matthew 24:29, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the **sun** be darkened, and **moon** shall not give her light, and the **stars** shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken”.
2. We observe *the same shaking*, in both the Matthew and Revelation passages, when the stars fall from heaven, and heaven departs as a scroll when it is rolled together-Rev.6:13-14.
3. The people on earth were hiding in dens and rocks from the face of Him that *sits on the throne* and from the wrath of the Lamb. The day of His wrath *had come*, and *the time* is after the tribulation.

**The testimony of scripture is clear and direct that** the day of wrath referred to in 1 Thessalonians 5:9 commences immediately after the tribulation, as opposed the pretribulationist claim that it *is* the period of tribulation. The declaration in 1 Thessalonians 5:9 that God has not “appointed us to *wrath*” *offers no support* for the claim that the church is exempt from the period of the *tribulation*, for these are two separate events. **The wrath of God and the Lamb** is poured out on them that **dwell on the earth** when the Lord comes with His armies, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

**The following scripture describes the Lord’s coming:**

**Revelation 19:7** Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and *his wife* hath made herself ready.

8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in **fine linen, clean and white**: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they **which are called** unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See *thou do it* not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called **Faithful and True**, and in righteousness he doth **judge** and **make war**.

12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called **The Word of God**.

14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in **fine linen, white and clean**.

15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and *he treadeth* the winepress of the fierceness and **wrath of Almighty God**.

16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto **the supper** of the great God;

18 That ye may eat the flesh **of kings**, and the flesh **of captains**, and the flesh **of mighty men**, and the flesh **of horses**, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh **of all men**, both **free and bond**, both **small and great**.

19 And I saw **the beast**, and **the kings** of the earth, and **their armies**, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against **his army**.

20 And the **beast** was taken, and with him the **false prophet** that **wrought miracles** before him, **with which** he **deceived** them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These **both** were cast alive **into a lake of fire** burning with brimstone.

21 And **the remnant were slain** with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

#### **Some points to be noted are:**

1. The Lord brings His armies with Him. They are clothed in ***fine linen, white and clean***-v14, as is the Lamb's wife-vs7-8, which clothing is the ***righteousness of the saints***-v8. Additional references to those who come with the Lord---
  - a. "...and they that are with him ***are called***, and ***chosen***, and ***faithful***"-Rev. 17:14.
  - b. "...at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with ***all his saints***"-1 Thess. 3:13.
2. When the Lord comes He will "***smite the nations***", and tread the winepress of the ***wrath of God***-v15. This is the wrath referred to at 1 Thessalonians 5:9.
3. The ***beast*** and the "***kings of the earth***" ***were gathered*** together ***to make war*** against the Lord and His army-v19. This event ***corresponds to***

Revelation 16:14-16, where “the spirits of devils” come out of the mouths of the “dragon”, the “beast”, and the “false prophet” *to gather* the “kings of the earth”, and the “*whole world*” to the “battle of the great *day of God* almighty”-v14. This battle of the “*day of God*”-v14 is “*Armageddon*”-v16, and occurs when the Lord comes “as a *thief*”-v15. “Blessed is he that *watcheth*”-15. This is the same event and time as 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11. In this 1 Thessalonians passage, the Lord comes *with His saints* who have died in Christ, and *gathers* those who are alive, together with them in the clouds”-4:14-17. This coming is “as a *thief*”5:2, and at a time when those who  *dwell on the earth* consider things to be *at peace* and *safe*, however, with the Lord’s coming there will be “*sudden destruction*”, and those who are *not watching* will *not escape*-5:3,6.

4. There is a destruction, called the “supper of the great God”-19:17, in which “*all* men, both free and bond, both small and great” are killed-19:18. The “remnant” (“*remaining ones*”—Strong’s Concordance) were slain with the Lord’s sword that “proceeded out of his mouth”-19:21. This scripture is informing us that *there will be no survivors* when *God’s wrath* is poured out on those *who dwell on the earth*, just as was declared at 1 Thessalonians 5:3, “and they shall *not escape*”. Advocates of the dispensational system of thought say that there are *needed* some *escapees* to populate (*their reasoned concept* of) an elaborate “millennium” on this earth, having a “magnificent temple” with “sacrifices” (some even say animal sacrifices-page 73), and “with Jerusalem once again the center of their [Israel’s] religious as well as political life”. (See bottom of page 73 through page 76 of this paper). See the middle of page 106, where Mr. Walvoord says that, “if all the wicked are put to death and if all the saints are translated”, it is “*necessary to move this event forward*”, the event being the rapture of the church, and this, so that there will be people in their natural bodies to populate the “millennial earth”. *Expositors of scripture cannot, properly, move anything anywhere to accommodate a preconceived conclusion*. If one’s presuppositions *conflict* with that which Jesus and the apostles have spoken in the New Testament scriptures, it is *the presupposition, not the scripture* that needs adjustment.

**In the preceding pages**, we have examined *the claims* that: **Claim 1)** The “day of the Lord” *commences* when the “great tribulation” *begins*, *allegedly* seven years prior to Christ’s coming to gather His elect, and judge the inhabitants of the earth. **However**, the scriptures cited from the middle of page 110 through the top of page 112 declare that the “day of the Lord”

*commences* “immediately *after*” the tribulation; **Claim 2**) The “day of wrath” commences when the “great tribulation” begins, both consisting of the same judgments. *However*, the scriptures cited, beginning near the top of page 112 through page 115 declare that the “day of wrath” *commences* with the coming of the Lord “immediately *after*” the tribulation.

**Mr. Walvoord, in his book, The Church In Prophecy**, identified on page 104 of this paper, introduces another claim that is necessary for the survival of a “millennium” *envisioned* within the dispensational system of thought. *Not only is it contended* that the “day of the Lord” extends *to the end* of, that concept of the 1000 years period, but also, that the “*day of God*” spoken of in 2 Peter 3:12 begins *at the end* of the “millennium”, at which time, they say the present heaven and earth will pass away and a new heavens and a new earth will be created. Mr. Walvoord writes, “In the perspective of the Thessalonian church, they were living in the day of grace, the present dispensation in which God is gathering out both Jew and Gentile to form one body of the church. When the rapture occurs, this work of God will be brought to its close and the Day of the Lord will begin. Though some of its major events would not take place immediately, the period in general would extend from the rapture until the end of the millennium. This in turn would be followed by the Day of God according to II Peter 3:12,13 beginning with the destruction of the heaven and the earth with fire and the creation of a new heaven and a new earth. The destruction, therefore, predicted by Peter in II Peter 3:10 as occurring in the Day of the Lord actually is the boundary between the Day of the Lord and the Day of God. Putting these facts together the prophetic perspective therefore is for three general periods, the first the day of grace or the present age, next the Day of the Lord or the Day of Jehovah from the rapture to the end of the millennium, and then the Day of God or the eternal day”.

(Underlining is mine)

**We will view the passage in II Peter, chapter 3 to determine** if it is “according to Peter” that the “Day of God” *follows* the “Day of the Lord”, and further, whether or not, the “Day of God” is **at the end** of “the millennium”.

**II Peter 3:3** Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9 The Lord is not slack concerning **his promise**, as some men count slackness; but is **longsuffering** to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; **in the which** the **heavens** shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the **earth** also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the **heavens** being on fire shall be dissolved, and **the elements** shall melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for **new heavens** and a **new earth**, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

15 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

**We will consider this passage in II Peter** with reference to *the question* presented by the “scoffers”, then Peter’s *answer* to the question, and Peter’s explanation of the *circumstances* and *events* related to *his answer* to the question.

1. The *question* is, “Where is the promise of his coming-v4?” The question is concerned with only one thing that the Lord *promised*, His coming.
2. In answering the question, Peter explains that the delay in fulfilling the *promise* of the Lord’s *coming* is because of His *longsuffering* to us, that we repent and not perish-v9. However, Peter assures his readers that the “day of the Lord” *will come*, and that *His coming* will be “as *a thief*” in the night-v10.
3. In verse 10, Peter also informs us concerning *an event* that will occur when the Lord comes, which event is that the “*heavens* shall pass away”, and “the *earth* also”, and “the *works* that are therein” will be burned up. Mr. Walvoord says of verse 10, “**The destruction, therefore, predicted by Peter in II Peter 3:10 as occurring in the Day of the Lord actually is the boundary between the Day of the Lord and the Day of God**”. Mr. Walvoord is saying that “the destruction” of heaven and earth is not when the “day of the Lord” *comes*, *as declared by Peter*, but rather, that the destruction is when the “day of the Lord” *ends*, which according to dispensational thought, is at *the end* of the 1000 years. As clearly evidenced on pages 110 through the middle of 115 of this paper, *the coming of the “day of the Lord”, and the commencement of the “day of wrath” are both related as to time, and to events that occur, to when the Lord comes, which is “immediately after the tribulation”*.

4. It is most important that Peter's explanation for *the promise* not having been fulfilled, and also, that his explanation of such a *major event* occurring does not move our focus from *the question* presented which is, when is the promise of His coming going to be realized.
5. Peter writes in verse 12, referring "to them that have obtained like precious faith with us"-v1, "*Looking for and hasting*" ("...by impl. to *await eagerly*"---Strong's Concordance) "*the coming of the day of God*", *wherein* heaven and earth will be destroyed. In verse 13, Peter encourages them according to His *promise* to look for a *new heavens* and a *new earth*. In verse 14, he reminds them that in looking for such things, to be diligent to be "found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless". And this, *when He comes, not 1000 years after the Lord comes*. This admonition in II Peter 3:14 for diligence that they might be found *blameless* is proclaimed in other passages of scripture, *all related in time to the Lord's coming*, for example:

**1 Corinthians 1:7** So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the **coming** of our Lord Jesus Christ:

8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be **blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ**.

**1 Thessalonians 3:13** To the end he may stablish your hearts **unblameable** in holiness before **God**, even **our Father**, at the **coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints**.

**1 Thessalonians 5:23** And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved **blameless** unto **the coming** of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**1 John 2:28** And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and **not be ashamed** before him at his **coming**

**Revelation 16:15** Behold, **I come as a thief**. Blessed is he that **watcheth**, and **keepeth his garments**, lest he walk **naked**, and they see **his shame**.

6. Mr. Walvoord also writes, "**This in turn** [the "day of the Lord", ending after the "millennium"] **would be followed by the Day of God according to II Peter 3:12,13 beginning with the destruction of the heaven and earth with fire and the creation of a new heaven and a new earth**". **Questions:** Do verses 12 and 13 in II Peter chapter 3 say *anything* about the "day of God" *following* the "day of the Lord"? Also, does this passage say anything about the *1000 years*? *The answer to both questions is an obvious, no.*  
**Verses 12 and 13 inform us that** when the "day of God" *comes*, heaven and earth will pass away, and there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

However, does the “day of God” come at the end of the 1000 years as contended by dispensational advocates, or is the “day of God” when the Lord comes and pours out His wrath on the earth and it’s inhabitants?

**Revelation 16:12** And **the sixth angel poured out his vial** upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

13 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**.

14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto **the kings of the earth** and of **the whole world**, to **gather them** to the battle of that great **day of God** Almighty.

15 Behold, **I come as a thief**. Blessed is he **that watcheth**, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

16 And **he gathered them together** into a place called in the Hebrew tongue **Armageddon**.

**This passage of scripture** informs us that the “*day of God*” is related to *the time* of the Lord’s *coming* “as a thief”. It is related to the time when *the beast* and the *false prophet* gather the “*kings of the earth*” to the battle of *Armageddon*. This passage in Revelation chapter 16 is the same event as at Revelation 19:19, which informs us: “And I saw **the beast**, and the **kings of the earth**, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.” This scripture is in the context of when *the Lord comes* and “smites the nations”, and “treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and *wrath* of Almighty God”-Rev. 19:15. Also, in Revelation 19, and verse 20, *the beast* and *the false prophet* are cast into the “lake of fire”, and *this is related to the Lord coming*. The *dispensational claim* that the “day of God” *begins* at the *end* of the 1000 years is clearly and unequivocally refuted by these passages of scripture.

**It should be noted that** the scriptures cited above, not only, *do not suggest* a coming of the Lord Jesus before the tribulation, they *refute* every dispensational claim made from *verses or passages of scripture* in an effort to “*move this event forward*” (see beginning near the middle of page 105, and the middle of page 106 of this paper) so that there will be people “*in their natural bodies to populate the millennial earth*”. The dispensational *arguments* to “move the event forward” have been:

1. *The “day of the Lord”* and the “tribulation” begin at the same time.

However, Joel 2:31 says, “The **sun** shall be turned into darkness, and the **moon** into blood, **before** the great and terrible day of the Lord come”. Matthew 24:29 says, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the **sun** be darkened, and the **moon** shall not give her light, and the **stars** shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken”. Thus, the “day of the Lord” *comes after* the “tribulation”.

2. *The “day of wrath” and the “tribulation” are the same event, covering the same period time. However, Revelation 6:12,13, and 17 say, “And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth...For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” (See Matthew 24:29 in item 1 above). Thus, the “day of wrath” comes after the “tribulation”.*
3. *The “day of God” begins at the end of the millennium when the heavens and earth are destroyed, and the new heavens and new earth are created. However, Revelation 16:14-16 says, “For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth unto **the kings of the earth** and of **the whole world**, to gather them to the battle of the great **day of God**, Almighty. Behold, **I come** “as a **thief**,” Blessed *is* he that **watcheth**, and **keepeth** his garments, lest he **walk naked**, and they see **his shame**. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue **Armageddon**.” Thus, the “day of God” is related *in time* to the Lord’s **coming** in judgment on those who dwell on the earth.*

**The scriptures presented**, beginning at the top of page 110 and forward to the present page, reveal these dispensational **arguments based on their interpretation of scriptures** to be absolutely groundless. This leaves dispensationalists with *the argument* that they need a pretribulational coming of the Lord. **However**, the above scriptures have established *the time* of the dissolution of the present heavens and earth, and the creation of a new heavens and a new earth *to be related to the time of* the “day of the Lord”, the “day of wrath”, and the “day of God”, all three events referring *to the time when the Lord comes to gather* to Himself His people, and *pour out His wrath* on the inhabitants of the earth.

**After the Lord Jesus returns**, within the dispensational system of thought there is envisioned a kingdom on the present earth that will continue for 1000 years. This envisioned “millennial kingdom” is described as a kind of replica of God’s kingdom in the Old Testament, including:

- “Temple worship” in a “magnificent temple” that “will be built”.
- “A system of priesthood and memorial sacrifices will be set up”.
- “...Israel will have an ordered worship with Jerusalem once again the center for their religious as well as political life”.

**This ceremonial and ritualistic program**, supposedly, will have an anointing of the Spirit explained as, “...a spiritual life of wonderful depth and reality far beyond anything Israel had known in her entire history will characterize her experience in the millennial kingdom”. “There will be complete fulfillment of Joel 2:28,29...” (See page 73 of this paper for a



dispensational explanation of the “millennial kingdom”). This passage in Joel’s prophecy declares *the outpouring of the Spirit* on all flesh. **We read:**

**Joel 2:28** And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will **I pour out my spirit**.

**Peter says that** this prophecy by Joel was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost.

**Acts 2:16** But **this is that** which was spoken by **the prophet Joel**;

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

**This adamant insistence, within the dispensational system of thought, that Israel’s future inheritance is the land of Canaan on this present earth, with earthly Jerusalem being the seat of religious and political life was not the hope of Abraham or the Old Testament saints who died in faith.**

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

9 **By faith** he **sojourned** in the land of promise, as in **a strange country**, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 **For** he looked for **a city** which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

**Abraham** is referred to as a “*sojourner*” in the land of Canaan, and he viewed that land as a “*strange*” country-v9. “Sojourned” is defined—“to dwell *near*, i.e. *reside as a foreigner*”. “Strange” is defined—“*another’s*, i.e. not one’s own; by extens., *foreign, not akin, hostile*”. (Both word definitions are from Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible.) Abraham was looking for “a city” that was not built by the hand’s of men, but rather, a city built by God-v10. He understood that the earthly land of promise was only a temporal inheritance, and that God had in view an inheritance made in heaven. Abraham understood this, even without the benefit of the detailed explanation of such an inheritance that is revealed in the New Testament.

**Not only did Abraham** recognize the true nature of the inheritance, so also, did all of those Old Testament saints who died in faith.

**Hebrews 11:11** Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

13 These all died **in faith**, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were **persuaded** of them, and **embraced** them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

14 For they that say such things declare plainly that **they seek** a country.

15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

16 But now they desire **a better** country, that is, **an heavenly**: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

**As with Abraham, those in the Old Testament who died in faith** understood that God's promises of future inheritance, which came through the prophets, would not be realized on the present earth. They viewed themselves as "strangers and pilgrims on the earth"-v13. Even though they dwelled in the land of Canaan, they realized that God had prepared for them something better, and that it was heavenly-v16. While they did not receive the promises, they *saw them* as future, and *embraced them* and were *persuaded of them*-v13. **And God**, not being ashamed of these people who were faithful, even unto their death, for they "died in faith", "*prepared for them a city*"-v16.

**This passage continues** by describing many examples that demonstrate the faith of the saints who lived during God's administration of His kingdom under *the old covenant*. Then this passage in the Hebrews epistle concludes:

**Hebrews 11:39** And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

**While these faithful people received the earthly and temporal inheritance** in the land of Canaan (see Joshua 21:42-45; II Samuel 7:1; 1 Kings 4:20-25; 5:4; 8:56), they could not receive the promise of eternal inheritance, or be *made perfect* (complete) apart from us, and, apart from that better thing that God had provided *for us*. The following scriptures speak of the "*better thing*" that God would provide for us, and *without which* no one could be *perfect* or *complete*:

**Hebrews 8:6** But now hath **he** obtained **a more excellent** ministry, by how much also **he** is the mediator of **a better** covenant, which was established upon **better** promises.

**Hebrews 9:6** Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God.

7 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, **not without blood**, which he offered **for himself**, and for the errors **of the people**:

8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all **was not yet made manifest**, while as the **first tabernacle** was yet standing:

9 Which was **a figure** for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service **perfect**, as pertaining to the conscience;

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

**Hebrews 10:9** Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He **taketh away the first**, that he may **establish the second**.

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the **body of Jesus Christ** once for all.

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can **never take away sins**:

**Hebrew 12:22** But ye are come unto **mount Sion**, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are **written in heaven**, and **to God** the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to **the blood** of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

**It would be beneficial to read chapters 8-12 of the epistle to the Hebrews**, however, the verses cited inform us that the “*better thing*” that God has provided *for us* in this, the “dispensation of the fullness of times”-Eph. 1.10, is *the new covenant*, instituted *by the death* of the Lord Jesus, and which is now being mediated by Him-8:6; 9:15; and 12:24. **Also, we are informed that:**

1. It is *within the new covenant* that God has provided *redemption* from their transgressions, for those who lived under *the old covenant*-9:15, and who “*died in faith*”. The sacrifices offered under the law were a “*figure*” Heb.-9:9 of the offering of the body of Christ. Those sacrifices and offerings *could not take away sins*-Heb. 10:11, and therefore, they *could not* make those who did that service before the Lord *perfect*-Heb. 9:9. However, offering of the body of Christ, once for all, does take away sins, and can make men perfect (or complete)-Heb. 10:9-14.
2. The promises that the Old Testament saints, who died in faith, could see “afar off”, and were “persuaded of”, and “embraced”, but “having not received” were *within the new covenant*.

3. With Christ's instituting of the new covenant *by His death*, and His mediating of the new covenant at the right hand of the Father, saints who lived their lifetime under God's administering of the old covenant are *now* made perfect or complete *with us*-12:23, and *both, through God's provision within the new covenant*.
4. When we come to Christ, we come to, 1) *The city* of the living God, the *heavenly Jerusalem that Abraham and the Old Testament saints, who "died in faith", were looking for*; 2) The spirits of those who have been *made perfect*; 3) The church of the firstborn, the firstborn being Christ; 4) *God* the judge of all persons; 5) Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and the *benefit* of His blood.

The scripture in Hebrews provides additional details to the Apostle Paul's explanation in chapters 1 through 3 of Ephesians of how, in the *present* dispensation, God is gathering "together into one all things in Christ, both which are *in heaven*, and which are *on earth; even in him; In whom we have obtained an inheritance..."-1:10-11. Also, the Apostle Paul speaks regarding the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named"-3:14-15. During the present age the Holy Spirit is the "earnest of our inheritance *until* the redemption of the purchased possession"-Eph. 1:13-14. Concerning the "redemption of the purchased possession", we read at Romans 8:22-23, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body". Thus, we learn that *the indwelling Holy Spirit is the "first fruits", awaiting the full harvest of our inheritance at the time of bodily resurrection*.*

The passages of scripture in chapters 8 through 12 of Hebrews, and the passages in Eph. 1:10-11; 2:11-3:15 provide direct testimony of God's purpose to gather *together, "in Christ", all people*, which are in heaven and on earth, and who were and are *of faith*. The following comment by an **advocate of dispensational thought** rejects and ignores such clear and unequivocal explanation by the Apostle Paul and the writer of the Hebrews epistle, that those who died in faith in the Old Testament have been made perfect or complete with us "in Christ": "The expression, "the dead in Christ," is used in the Bible only to refer to saints who lived in the period beginning at Pentecost. The term is never used of Israel or the Gentile believers in the Old Testament, nor is it ever used of saints in the tribulation time, though Christ representatively died on the cross for all men with a special view to the salvation of the elect. The church enjoys a special relationship embodied in the phrase, "in Christ," which is a result of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13). It is this relationship which makes the church a distinct body of saints and marks the

**limits of the inclusion of the resurrection that is in view in I Thessalonians 4:16.”** John F. Walvoord, *The Church In Prophecy*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Dunham Publishing Company, 1964, p.81).

**It is important to observe that**, in making such a firm and emphatic statement concerning who is, and who is not *“in Christ”*, Mr. Walvoord did not cite *one scripture* that supports his conclusion. The two referenced passages in I Corinthians and I Thessalonians do not indicate *the limits* as to who is *“in Christ”*. However, the scriptures referenced on pages 122 and 123 of this paper do inform us as to who is *“in Christ”*. And, *it is not limited to those who “lived in the period beginning at Pentecost”*.

**The indwelling Holy Spirit is the “earnest”, or a measured portion, of the eternal inheritance**, whereby God’s children are *“an habitation of God through the Spirit”*-Eph. 2:22. When the inheritance is received in its fullness, *the New Jerusalem*, to which we have come when we come to the Lord Jesus who mediates the new covenant, *is the dwelling place* of God with His people. The New Jerusalem as the *full and eternal inheritance* is described and explained in the book of The Revelation.

**Revelation 21:1** And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, **I make all things new**. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

6 And he said unto me, **It is done**. I am Alpha and Omega, **the beginning and the end**. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of **the water of life** freely.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and **I will be his God**, and he shall be my son.

8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is **the second death**.

9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, **the holy Jerusalem**, descending out of heaven from God,

11 Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

12 And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the **twelve tribes of the children of Israel**:

13 On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

14 And the wall of the city had **twelve foundations**, and in them the names of the **twelve apostles of the Lamb**.

22 And I saw **no temple** therein: **for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it**.

23 And the city had no need of **the sun**, neither of the **moon**, to shine in it: for the glory of **God did lighten it**, and the **Lamb is the light** thereof.

24 And the nations of them which **are saved** shall walk **in the light of it**: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

25 And the gates of it shall **not be shut** at all by day: for there shall be **no night there**.

26 And they shall bring the glory and honour **of the nations** into it.

27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing **that defileth**, neither whatsoever **worketh abomination**, or **maketh a lie**: but they which are **written in the Lamb's book of life**.

**Revelation 22:1** And he shewed me a pure river of water **of life**, clear as crystal, proceeding **out of the throne of God and of the Lamb**.

2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there **the tree of life**, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the **healing of the nations**.

3 And there shall be **no more curse**: but **the throne** of God and of the Lamb **shall be in it**; and **his servants** shall serve him:

4 And they shall see his face; and **his name shall be in their foreheads**.

5 And there shall be **no night** there; and they need **no candle**, neither **light of the sun**; for **the Lord God giveth them light**: and they shall **reign** for ever and ever.

6 And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto **his servants** the things which must **shortly be done**.

7 Behold, **I come quickly**: **blessed is he that keepeth** the sayings of the prophecy of **this book**.

8 And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

9 Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which **keep the sayings of this book**: worship God.

10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for **the time is at hand**.

11 He that is **unjust**, let him be unjust still: and he which is **filthy**, let him be filthy still: and he that is **righteous**, let him be righteous still: and he that is **holy**, let him be holy still.

12 And, behold, **I come quickly**; and **my reward is with me**, to give **every man** according as **his work shall be**.

13 **I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last**.

14 **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.

15 For **without** are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things **in the churches**. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him **that is athirst** come. And **whosoever will**, let him take the water **of life** freely.

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man **shall add** unto these things, God **shall add unto him the plagues** that are written in this book:

19 And if any man shall **take away** from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall **take away his part out of the book of life**, and out of **the holy city**, and from **the things which are written in this book**.

20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, **come**, Lord Jesus.

**The following is primarily the comparing of the, above cited, scriptures in the book of Revelation with other passages of scripture. Such a comparison provides a perspective of the relationship between these scriptures regarding their common subject matter, and their common occurrence in time. There will be some comment concerning such relationship between referenced scriptures.**

**Revelation 21**, verses 2,9 and 10 inform us that the “holy city, new Jerusalem” *comes down* out of heaven-v2. The New Jerusalem is described as “*a bride adorned for her husband*”-v2, and as “the *bride, the Lamb’s wife*”-vs9-10. **Other scripture referring to the Lamb’s wife are:**

**Revelation 19:7** Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and **his wife** hath made herself ready.

8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in **fine linen, clean and white**: for the fine linen is **the righteousness** of saints.

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called **The Word of God**.

14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

**This scripture is in the context of *when the Lord comes*. Notice that:**

1. The *time* of the marriage between the Lamb and His wife *has come*.
2. The *Lamb’s wife* is clothed in *fine linen, clean and white*.
3. The *armies* that the Lord brings with Him are clothed in *fine linen, white and clean*.

4. The *fine linen* that is clean and white is the righteousness of *the saints* who are *the Lord's armies* that come with Him.

**The Apostle Paul writes to the church at Corinth:**

**II Corinthians 11:2** For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have **espoused you to one husband**, that I may present you as a **chaste virgin** to Christ.

3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

**In this passage of scripture** we are informed that the church has been *espoused* to her *husband*, which is Christ, and *that* she may be **presented** to Him as a *chaste virgin*.

**The 144,000 referred to in chapters 7 and 14 of the book of Revelation are identified with the New Jerusalem. Concerning the 144,000 we read:**

**Revelation 14:1** And I looked, and, lo, **a Lamb** stood on the **mount Sion**, and with him an **hundred forty and four thousand**, having his **Father's name** written in their foreheads.

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

3 And they sung as it were **a new song** before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are *virgins*. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

5 And in their mouth was found **no guile**: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

**Some points to be noted are:**

1. The 144,000 are on *mount Zion*, and with *the Lamb*. However, this is not the earthly Zion.
2. The *Father's name* is written in their foreheads.
3. They are redeemed *from the earth*.
4. They are not defiled, for they are *virgins*.
5. They *follow the Lamb* wherever He goes.
6. They are redeemed *from among men*, being the "*first fruits*" unto God and the Lamb.
7. They are *before the throne* of God.

**At Hebrews 12:22-24** we have read that when we, in this age, come to Christ who is the mediator of the new covenant, we have come to *mount Zion* and to *the heavenly city*, the *New Jerusalem*. Also, we have come to the spirits of just men *made perfect*. On pages beginning at the bottom of page 120 through the top of page 124 of this paper, there are referenced scriptures that inform us that, while those who "*died in faith*" in the Old Testament



could see the promises “*afar off*”, and *embraced* them, they *without us* could not be *made perfect* (or complete), for God had prepared some *better thing for us*. That better thing is *the new covenant* instituted by the death of the Lord Jesus. When the new covenant was realized, those who “*died in faith*” in the times of the Old Testament were *made perfect with us “in Christ”*. As the Apostle Paul has explained in chapters 1 through 3 of the Ephesians epistle, “in the dispensation of the fullness of times”, God has gathered “together in one all things *in Christ*, both which are *in heaven* and which are *on earth*, even *in him*”.

**Further, we read concerning the New Jerusalem:**

**Revelation 22:3** And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

**Revelation 21:12** And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are **the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:**

13 On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them **the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.**

**In Revelation chapter 14, referenced above, we are informed that the 144,000 had *the Father’s name* written in their foreheads-v1, as do God’s servants who are in the New Jerusalem-Rev. 22:4. Also, the 144,000 are *before the throne* of God-v5, which is in the New Jerusalem-Rev. 22:3. In the New Jerusalem there are twelve gates having written on them *the names of the twelve tribes of Israel*. The previously referenced scripture passages from the Hebrews’ epistle inform us that those who “*died in faith*” during the Old Testament times *inherit the promises*. Also, in the New Jerusalem there are twelve foundations having on them *the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb*. Thus, we see identified with the New Jerusalem, both, *the saints who lived during the times of the Old Testament, and “died in faith”, and those who are of faith in the present age*. **Romans 4:13** For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.**

14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, **faith** is made void, and the promise made of none effect:

15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to **all** the seed; not to that **only** which is of the law, but to that **also** which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of **us all**,

Again, we are informed that the *promise of inheritance* will be realized, *not on the basis of being a physical descendant of Abraham*, but on the same basis that Abraham received the promise of inheritance, which is **through faith**. And, this applies to all people, whether Jew or Gentile, who lived both, during the times of the Old Testament and of the New Testament. *Such persons of faith are “the bride, the Lamb’s wife”*. In Revelation chapter 21 and at verse 3 we are informed that “*the holy city, new Jerusalem*” is God’s *dwelling place* with men. They shall “*be his people*”, and He will “*be their God*”. This is the realization of God’s *full thought* concerning the promise of a “new covenant” with Israel, as spoken by the prophet Jeremiah in chapter 31, at verse 33, But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will **be their God**, and they shall **be my people**.

At the first advent of the Lord Jesus and His sending of the Holy Spirit, the “earnest of our inheritance”-Eph. 1:13-14, this new covenant promise was realized in measure as explained at, II Corinth. 6:16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will **be their God**, and they shall **be my people**.  
 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,  
 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

In the present age, God’s dwelling with His people is explained, Ephesians 2:22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

**With the introduction of the New Jerusalem as the eternal inheritance, we are told regarding the New Jerusalem:**

1. There is “pure river of water *of life*”, proceeding *out of the throne* of God and of the Lamb-Rev. 22:1.
2. On either side of the river was the “*tree of life*”-Rev. 22:2.
3. There is *no temple* in the New Jerusalem-Rev. 21:22.
4. There is *no need* for *the sun* or *the moon* to shine in the New Jerusalem because *the glory* of God and of the Lamb *is its light*-Rev. 21:23; 22:5. Recall that, related to the Lord’s coming, the present heavens and earth will pass away, and there will be a new heavens and a new earth. (Concerning the time of the passing away of the present heaven and earth and there being a new heaven and a new earth, see pages 110-111, and 116-120 of this paper).
5. The *throne* of God and of the Lamb are in it, and His *servants will serve Him*-Rev. 22:3. Those who came out of “great tribulation”, and the 144,000 are referred to as God’s “servants”-Rev. 7:3, 4, 14 and 15.

**Within the explanation of the New Jerusalem in Revelation chapters 21 and 22, we observe that:**

1. The scenes and events in these two chapters are things related in time to the coming of the Lord-22:7,12.
2. These things are addressed to the Lord's *servants*-22:6, and to the *churches*-22:16. The book of Revelation is addressing *the churches*-Rev. 1:4,11.

**Revelation 21:7** says, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things". The dispensational system of thought contends that God's children are "*overcomers*", **not by living** victoriously *in the Divine provision* that is available to each individual in and through the Person and work of the Lord Jesus, but only by virtue of their *being positioned in Christ* who is the only one who can and did "*overcome*". **This claim is expressed in the following comment:**

**"Presently there is only one perfect Overcomer. He could say, 'I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne' (Revelation 3:21). All other overcomers are such by virtue of their position in Him. Jesus said, 'Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world' (John 16:33). I am so glad that our Lord Jesus Christ has overcome the world because I know that I never could."** Lehman Strauss, *The Book of Revelation*, (Loizeaux Brothers, Neptune, New Jersey, 1964, p. 109).

**Revelation 3:19** As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and **repent**.  
20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

21 To **him that overcometh** will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

**Mr. Strauss says, "I am so glad that our Lord Jesus Christ has overcome the world because I know that I never could", and further, "All other overcomers are such by virtue of their position in Him", which is to say that, no person can actually live victoriously over the influences of sin from within, and the devil and the world from without. He is ignoring the testimony of the immediately above referenced scripture, that God's child who overcomes, even as He overcame, "will be granted to sit with me in my throne". This scripture does not say, as Mr. Strauss suggests, that Christ's overcoming is imputed to, or put to the account of such child, and *thereby*, he or she "will be granted to sit with me in my throne". Overcoming is not just a matter of one's position in Christ, which *position* makes one's overcoming *attainable*, but overcoming involves one's victorious *inward state* resulting from walking after the Spirit and not after the flesh, and then, the outward performance that proceeds from such an inward state.**

**We will continue by viewing scripture in the book of Revelation that explain the matter of, “he that overcometh”.**

**Revelation 2:7** He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto **the churches**; To him that **overcometh** will I **give to eat of the tree of life**, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

**Revelation 22:11** He that is **unjust**, let him be unjust still: and he which is **filthy**, let him be filthy still: and he that is **righteous**, let him be righteous still: and he that is **holy**, let him be holy still.

12 And, behold, **I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.**

13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

14 **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.

15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

**It is significant that** those who *overcome* will be given “to eat of the tree of life”-Rev. 2:7. And, “blessed are they that *do his commandments that* they may have right *to the tree of life*”-Rev. 22:14. This is clear and unequivocal declaration by scripture that “he that overcometh” *refers to* “they that do his commandments”.

**Revelation 2:10** Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, **that ye may be tried**; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, **and** I will give thee a crown of life.

11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto **the churches**; He that **overcometh** shall not be hurt **of the second death**.

**This scripture** informs us that one must “*be faithful*” unto death to be given the crown *of life*. This scripture equates *faithfulness* to *overcoming*, and also, receiving the “crown *of life*” to not being hurt by “the *second death*”. We will consider the matter of not being hurt by “the second death” on pages 164 and 165 of this paper.

**Revelation 2:18** And unto the angel **of the church** in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;

19 I know **thy works**, and **charity**, and **service**, and **faith**, and thy **patience**, and thy **works**; and the last to be more than the first.

20 Notwithstanding **I have a few things against thee**, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce **my servants** to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and **them** that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he

**which searcheth the reins and hearts:** and I will give unto every one **of you** according to **your works.**

24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon **you none other burden.**

25 But that which ye have already **hold fast till I come.**

26 And he that **overcometh** and **keepeth my words unto the end,** to him will I give power over the nations:

**The brethren at Thyatira** are serving the Lord faithfully and patiently, except for some of His servants, who are being *seduced* by false doctrine and practices-v20. It should be noted that it is the Lord's servants that are being seduced. And, except they repent of their deeds, they will be severely judged-vs22-23. However, the rest of the brethren at Thyatira are exhorted to ***hold fast*** what they have ***until the Lord comes.*** Also, it is significant that ***overcoming*** is related to ***keeping the Lord's words unto the end.*** ***For we will be judged by His words,*** as **Jesus said,** "He who rejects me, and does not receive **my words,** has that which judges him—**the word** that I have spoken will judge him in the last day"-Jn. 12:48. (Also, see 1 Cor. 15:1-2). **The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy,** "Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. **Continue in them** for **in doing this** you will **save both yourself and those who hear you**"-1 Tim. 4:16. ***The Lord's servants who are being seduced are not overcoming and, except they repent, will not be rewarded with inheritance to have power over the nations.***

**Revelation 3:1** And unto the angel of **the church** in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works **perfect** before God.

3 Remember therefore how thou **hast received and heard,** and hold fast, and repent. **If therefore thou shalt not watch,** I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

4 Thou hast **a few names** even in Sardis which have **not defiled their garments;** and they shall walk with me in white: for **they** are worthy.

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

6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto **the churches.**

**The dispensational argument is that** where such fatal deficiencies exist within the church, as with those who have defiled their garments, these persons are professing to be Christians, but are not. **On page 118 of his book entitled, The Book Of Revelation, Mr. Strauss writes,** "The promise is threefold. First, the overcomer is to receive; '*white raiment.*' It is his new garment whereby he shall be known for his purity and righteousness. This is the final robing of all saints, not a special garment for a preferential few. There were those in Sardis who

had defiled their garments. They might have professed to be Christians but they had not been clothed in Christ's righteousness. They shall in no wise enter heaven."

In the comment, "This is the final robbing of all saints, not a special garment for a preferential few", the writer is ignoring or rejecting the significant truth of scripture that God's children *can depart* from the Lord *through unbelief*. We read: Hebrews 3:12 "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. 13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end".

Mr. Strauss also says that those who had defiled their garments had not been clothed in Christ's righteousness. He is suggesting that they defiled their garments, which garments he says they did not have. *This scripture is clear that of those who constitute the church at Sardis, some have defiled their garments, and a few have not*. Those whose works are unacceptable to the Lord are exhorted to, "**Remember** therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee". These folks are exhorted to *hold fast*, but to what? They are told *to hold fast* to that which they had "received"-3:3, of course. *Except they repent*, they will not have kept "His commandments"-22:14, nor have held fast what they had received "unto the end"-2:26, which is *essential* to overcoming. It is those *who "overcome"* that will be "clothed in white raiment", and whose names will not be blotted out "of the book of life". The dispensational system of thought does not even consider the *fact* of scripture that *those of the Lord's children who do not keep the Lord's commandments, and hold fast His words unto the end, and therefore, are not overcoming, will be blotted out of the "book of life"*. We read:

Revelation 22:19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from the things that are written in this book*.

In fact, some expositors of the Scripture so cherish *their concept*, "*the initial act of faith* secures from any future punishment for sin", that in Rev. 22:19, they change the word "book" of life to "tree" of life. **This is evidenced in the following comments:**

"Let anyone who considers detracting from the meaning of the words of The Revelation, or refusing to believe that these things written therein will literally come to pass, *and that shortly*, reflect carefully upon the words, 'God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: God shall take away his part from the tree of life and out of the holy city'. Fearful thought!" William R. Newell, The Book Of The Revelation, (Moody Press, Chicago, 1935, p. 367). (Underlining mine)

**“2. Concerning the textual options in Revelation 22:19, I am in agreement with the editors of the NASB and NIV who chose the reading “tree of life” rather than “the book of life”. Other verses in Revelation that refer to “the book of life” are 3:5; 20:12, 15; 21:27.** Charles F. Stanley, *Eternal Security*, (Published in Nashville, Tennessee, by Oliver-Nelson Books, a division of Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers, 1990, p. 183).

**The word “book”** in “book of life” at Revelation 22:19 is the English translation of the Greek word *biblos*, meaning “prop. The inner *bark* of the papyrus plant, i.e. (by impl.) a *sheet* or *scroll* of writing”. (Strong’s Concordance) This Greek word, “biblos”, and its diminutives are the only Greek words translated book in the New Testament. Also, in the New Testament, “book” is the only English translation of the Greek word “biblos”. Thus, “biblos” is never translated “tree” in the New Testament. **Regarding who may, and who may not, enter into the New Jerusalem, we read at Rev. 21:27**, “And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but **they which are written in the lamb’s book of life**”.

**The word “tree”** in “tree of life” as used in the book of Revelation is the English translation of the Greek word *xulon*, meaning “*timber* (as fuel or material); by impl. a *stick*, *club* or *tree* or other wooden article or substance”. (Strong’s Concordance). Other English translations in the New Testament of the Greek word “xulon” are: staff, stocks and wood.

**It is quite evident that** to translate the Greek word “biblos” in Rev. 22:19 to mean “tree” is inconsistent with, and a contradiction of its use throughout the New Testament. The word “biblos” refers to a “sheet or scroll of writing”, while the Greek word “xulon” refers to “timber” such as a “stick, club or tree”, specifically a “wooden article or substance”.

**Mr. Newell issues a warning** concerning the seriousness of “detracting” from the words of the book of Revelation, and then, unhesitatingly does just that. How one can do such a thing may be explained at Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-6; 1 Timothy 2:14.

**Additional scriptures regarding the matter of, “he that overcometh” are:**

**Revelation 3:10** Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

11 Behold, **I come** quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

12 Him **that overcometh** will I make a pillar **in the temple** of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

**It should be observed that**, “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience”, *not because one is “born again”*, God will keep His child from the judgment

that will come upon the world. This judgment is the Lamb's wrath, the time of which, we have previously considered. Further, it should be noted that one's crown *can be lost* if he or she does not hold fast what they have. Also, "he that overcometh" will have written on him the "name of my God", and the "name of *the city* of my God, which is *the New Jerusalem*". At Rev. 22:14, we are informed that, "they that do his commandments" *may enter in* through the gates of the city. Thus, they that have the name of the city, New Jerusalem, written on them are "they that do his commandments". Again, *overcoming is equated with keeping God's commandments*.

These scriptures in the book of Revelation identify and limit as overcomers, those: 1). Who keep God's commandments-2:7 with 22:14; 2). Who are faithful unto death-2:10; 3). Who keep God's words unto the end-2:26; 4). Who have not defiled their garments-3:10-11.

**On page 110 of his book, Mr. Strauss provides additional comment:** "...Faith in Christ did not merely make us God's children, but overcomers as well. The day we trusted Christ was a day of victory, the day we overcame the world. 'Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that *believeth* that Jesus is the Son of God?' Not merely certain ones among believers, but all of them. From the very moment of our conversion we were overcomers. 'This is the victory that overcometh the world'---even our fighting? No! 'Even our faith'. Since our blessed Lord overcame the world, must we fight the battle all over again? How foolish! Rather do we trust Him who by His death and resurrection has won the battle for us."

**In the above comment, Mr. Strauss's argument that, the day we trusted Christ was the day we overcame the world, rests on the premise that "the initial act of faith" through which we come to the Lord Jesus *renders each and every promise of God effectual to each of His children*. While it is through the "initial faith" that one becomes God's child, the passages of scripture cited, beginning on page 131 of this paper, clearly rests *our overcoming* of the sin that permeates the carnal nature, wherein lies man's attraction to the world, on our continuing in faith. The essential elements identified by scripture, and listed in the first full paragraph above, which characterize "he that overcometh", require a continuing in faith to the very end of one's life on this earth. From the beginnings in Genesis to the conclusion of God's revelation to man in the book of The Revelation, continuing in faith and the faithfulness that always accompanies it, is shown and declared to be the condition for present and future participation in the provision and promises of God. Because of unfaithfulness, Adam and Eve were removed from the Garden of Eden, and denied access to the "tree of life"-Gen. 3:22-24. Death ensued, just as God said it would. Recall that in Rev. 22:14, "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**." Also Rev. 22:19,**



“And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

In his comment on page 136 of this paper, Mr. Strauss says, “From the very moment of our conversion we were overcomers. ‘This is the victory that overcometh the world’---even our fighting? No! ‘Even our faith’. Since our blessed Lord overcame the world, must we fight the battle all over again? How Foolish! Rather do we trust Him who by His death and resurrection has won the battle for us.”

On page 131 of this paper, Mr. Strauss comments, “I am so glad that our Lord Jesus Christ has overcome the world because I know that I never could”. These comments suggest that God’s child cannot in this life, experientially participate in the victory that the Lord Jesus has wrought, and to attempt to do so would require our *unsuccessfully* “fighting” or struggling against our carnal inward state that we inherited as descendants of Adam. The accuracy of these conclusions, that are typically dispensational, will be examined with the scriptures.

In writing to Titus, the Apostle Paul encourages Titus concerning the purpose and function of the grace of God, and also, *the purpose* for which the Lord Jesus gave Himself for us.

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

12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a **peculiar people**, zealous of good works.

15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

**In this passage of scripture** we are informed that:

1. The salvation that God brings forth by His grace is a comprehensive salvation. It is salvation, not only from the penalty of sin, which receives great emphasis from the advocates of dispensational thought, but also, God has purposed, by His grace, to give us salvation from *the power* of sin within, and by which sin, His child can be overcome.
2. Salvation from the power of sin involves God’s exercise of His grace *by teaching us* that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly by denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, which is to deny the *desires, interests, and other propensities* that are naturally active within. Scripture refers to this inward activity as the flesh. God’s work of grace includes the renewing of the mind -v12, that we might know what is of God and what is not. It is quite clear that with God’s enlightenment of one’s understanding the individual has *a*

*responsibility* to deny or turn from the activity of the flesh-v12, which activity is sin. *Such turning from sin is our part in the matter of “overcoming”*, which Mr. Strauss, on page 131 of this paper said, he “never could”.

3. God has purposed that His children *be partakers* of His provision for overcoming sin, while “in this present world”v12.
4. Christ *gave Himself* for us, not only to free us from the penalty of sin, but also, to redeem or rescue us from all iniquity, and *to purify* or make us clean for Himself-v14.

A **passage of scripture** that explains the *real issue* that confronts every child of God *soon after* they have been delivered “from the power of darkness”, and have been translated “into the kingdom of His dear Son” is in the seventh chapter of Paul’s epistle to the Romans.

**Romans 7:6** But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

7 What shall we say then? **Is the law sin? God forbid.** Nay, I had not known sin, **but** by the law: for I had not known lust, **except the law had said**, Thou shalt not covet.

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

9 For **I was alive** without the law once: but when the commandment came, **sin revived**, and **I died**.

10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

**In these verses** we are informed that before we came to Christ, we were *dead* to the law, that is to say, we were *unaware* of its message concerning sin, but now, in Christ, we are delivered from the law that we might serve in newness of spirit-v6. Does such deliverance from the law to serve in newness of spirit suggest that the law is sin, or that there is something wrong with the law? “God forbid”. For it is *by the law* that we become aware of sin. For example, by the law we become aware that we should not “covet”-v7, (“to set the heart upon, i.e. long for...”)- Strong’s Concordance. When we become aware that it is sin to indulge the natural desires of the heart, particularly toward the world and the things in it, we recognize all manner of “concupiscence” (or desires), to be *active* within-v8. Before knowing that this inward activity is sin, we are alive (or comfortable) with ourselves, however, with such newly discovered knowledge of sin, we die (or are condemned with a sense of guilt and emptiness)-v9.

**Romans 7:11** For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, **deceived me**, and by it **slew me**.

12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

13 Was that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. **But sin**, that it might appear

sin, working death in me by that which is good; **that sin** by the commandment might become **exceeding sinful**.

14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

**Verses 11 through 14 provide the proper conclusion** that God's children should come to concerning *the law* and its antagonist, which is *sin*. The law is "holy", "just", and "good"-v12. The culprit that produces in us the experience of "death" (an inward emptiness and guilt, instead of life and peace) is not the law, but rather, it is sin-v13. The "good" and "just" law is the vehicle with which the Spirit brings us to see that our natural inward state is dominated by sin. **The following scriptures well describe what is meant by the terms, "carnal" and "flesh" when used in reference to sin,** Ephesians

2:3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were **by nature** the children of wrath, even as others.

4 But God, who is **rich in mercy**, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by **grace** ye are saved;) Also, **1 John 2:15** Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For **all that is in the world**, the **lust** of the flesh, and the **lust** of the eyes, and the **pride** of life, **is not** of the Father, **but is** of the world.

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

**Much of that** which *naturally works in us* in the form of interests, desires, and other propensities, prior to being spiritually enlightened, as explained in the, first above, referenced scripture passage in Romans, chapter 7 seems so innocuous and acceptable. *The issue* for us before our heavenly Father, and the Lord Jesus is that *the world*, and *the things* in it, provide *our worth-while-ness for living*, rather than *the things that are of God and His kingdom*.

Numerous scriptures provide evidence that *such divided interests and affections constitute an arrangement that the Lord will not relate to*, neither *in time* or *in eternity*. We are so informed in verse 17 above, where it is declared that "he that *doeth* the will of God *abideth for ever*". **That the Lord will not relate to us, if and when, we have such divided interests is**

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

6 **But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering**. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

7 **For let not** that man think that he shall receive **any thing** of the Lord.

8 A **double minded man** is unstable in all his ways.

**As we continue in Romans chapter 7, those who are inwardly disposed to please God, which inward disposition is faith, learn that their natural**

**interests, desires, and other propensities hinder their performing God's will.**

**Romans 7:15** For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

16 If then **I do that** which **I would not**, I consent unto the law that **it is good**.

17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

18 For **I know** that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for **to will** is present with me; but **how to perform** that which is good **I find not**.

19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For **I delight** in the law of God after the **inward man**:

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is **in my members**.

24 O wretched man that I am! **who shall deliver me** from the body of this death?

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with **the mind** I myself serve the law of God; but **with the flesh** the law of sin.

**After realizing that “the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin”-v14, I find** that, inwardly, I “delight in the law of God”-22, but I do not find the means to perform according to it-v18. We discover that when we would do God's will as expressed in His law, there is “another law” that is active within, which *opposes* and *prevails* against God's will, which we are minded to do-v23. Thus, the question, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death”-v24? The answer is, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord”-v25. We are now aware of, and delight in *the law of God*, which is “holy, and just, and good”, yet, *with the flesh* we are serving *the law of sin*-v25.

**The Apostle Paul continues in Romans chapter 8** by explaining God's provision for deliverance in and through the Lord Jesus.

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

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from **the law of sin and death**.

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

4 **That** the righteousness of the law might **be fulfilled** in us, who walk not after the flesh, but **after the Spirit**.

**This passage of scripture, and there are others, is the Apostle Paul's immediate response** as to *how* God will deliver from the overcoming power of *sin in the flesh*, and also, from the *guilt* and *condemnation* that accompanies such defeat. God's provision for our overcoming of sin is *the delivering power of the Holy Spirit*-v2, which power rests in the Person and

work of the Lord Jesus-v3. When Christ came in the “likeness of sinful flesh”, and experienced death on the cross, He condemned every desire, and interest, and any other activity within our *carnal nature*, and we must, and **by *the enabling power of the indwelling Spirit***, can “deny” the ungodliness that proceeds from it. Our deliverance (salvation) from the “law of sin and death” (the flesh) is accomplished, ***not by struggling inwardly against sin***, but rather, by ***relying on*** the Divine provision of the Spirit ***to stand against*** the natural desires and interests of the flesh. This scripture, also, declares that ***God’s purpose*** in making such an all-sufficient provision for His children is, “That the righteousness of the law might **be fulfilled in us, who walk** not after the flesh, but **after the Spirit**”-v4. ***And, the guilt and condemnation ceases when we walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit***-v1.

**Expositors of the Scriptures, who embrace the dispensational system of thought, hold a different perspective, particularly with reference to verses 23, 24 and 25 of chapter seven of Romans, and also of verse one in chapter eight.** Zane Hodges, in his book entitled “Absolutely Free”, quotes from a comment by another scholar, “**With his ‘mortal body’ the Christian lives in an order where death reigns. *It is here---in his mortal body---that the Christian must carry on his battle against the flesh and death* [italics added]. Here we find additional light on 7:23 where Paul speaks of a ‘law in his members’ which is at war with the law in the Christian’s mind. Perhaps we can now see better why Paul longs for deliverance from ‘this body of death’ (7:24).” “See Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1949), pp.326-27.”**

**In this comment, which Mr. Hodges seems to endorse, Mr. Nygren is contending that the struggle that the Apostle Paul describes in the seventh chapter of Romans is a battle that the Christian necessarily is engaged in *throughout ones sojourn on this earth*.** By Mr. Nygren’s statement, “**Perhaps we can now see better why Paul longs for deliverance from ‘this body of death’**”, he is interpreting the Apostle Paul’s statement as referring to ***the resurrection of the body*** when the Lord returns. This is the same interpretation of the “struggle” described in chapter seven of Romans that is implied by Mr. Strauss in his comment on page 131 of this paper, “**I am so glad that our Lord Jesus Christ has overcome the world because I know that I never could**”, and also, **All other overcomers are such by virtue of their position in Him**”.

**The dispensational interpretation of Romans 8:1**, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”, is that the reference to “no condemnation” refers to ***no future*** judgment for ***the future*** sins of those who are God’s children. In this regard is the following comment by Mr. Scofield, known for the Scofield Reference Bible, “**1. The SINS OF BELIEVERS HAVE BEEN JUDGED,---Time, A. D. 30. Place, the cross. Result, Death for Christ, Justification for the Believer.**” As support for the

*once for all judgment* of the sins committed by God’s children, he then cites a portion of Romans 8:1, along with several other scripture passages, “**There is therefore now NO CONDEMNATION to them that are in Christ Jesus. Rom. 8:1.**” C. I. Scofield, *Rightly Dividing The Word of Truth*, (Dunham Publishing Company, Findlay, Ohio, 1962, pp. 29,30). **Further, it is contended within dispensational thought** that the portion of verse 1, “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”, is not in the best manuscripts. As has been observed numerous times in this study paper, dispensational expositors do not hesitate *to re-phrase the New Testament text*, by using terms or phrases conveying a different meaning than that of the scripture text, to evade the scriptures refutation of their cherished concepts, especially the future restoration of the geopolitical nation of Israel to the land of Canaan, and also, their security proposition that *the security* of God’s children is *not* conditioned on their continuing in faith. But, to use terms or phrases that are *not in the scripture text*, which convey the same meaning as the scripture text *is quite acceptable*. In Romans 8:1 they have exercised greater boldness than is required to inaccurately *rephrase* scripture, here they have *deleted* scripture that undermines their explanation of verse 1.

**Concerning Rom. 8:1**, note that in the words, “There is *therefore now*”, “therefore” relates verse 1 to the description in chapter 7 of the wretchedness or misery experienced by God’s child who is struggling in the flesh to perform according to the newly discovered will of God. In Rom. 8:1, the Apostle Paul is explaining that the condemnation of wretchedness and guilt “*now*” *ceases by walking after the Spirit*, as opposed *to walking* after the flesh. Paul, in verse 2, explains that *the Spirit frees* (or delivers) us from the “law of sin” which is “in our members”-7:23. He continues by explaining that the law “is weak through the flesh” and offers no assistance in the matter of performing-8:3. However, *the righteousness* that the law makes known to us is fulfilled in us, “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”-8:4. There is *no suggestion in the context of Romans chapters 7 and 8* that reference to “who shall deliver me from the body of this death” *has in view the Lord’s coming and bodily resurrection. Nor does the context limit the phrase, “no condemnation”, to refer only to the matter of eternal judgment*. Thus, in Rom. 8:1 that portion of the text, “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”, *is essential to Paul’s explanation* of how we, “*now*” *at this time*, are delivered or made free from the guilt and condemnation experienced because of our natural inability to perform.

**The following are additional passages of scripture explaining that God’s children can overcome the sin that is in the flesh by walking after the Spirit.**

**Romans 8:11** But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies **by his Spirit** that dwelleth in you.

12 Therefore, **brethren**, we are debtors, not to the flesh, **to live after the flesh**.

13 For if ye **live** after the flesh, **ye shall die**: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

**This passage in Romans chapter eight** informs us that *the indwelling Spirit* will make our bodies alive to God-v11, and no longer a liability. Therefore, **we are not bound** by the demands of the flesh-12, so if we live after the flesh, **it is by our choice**, and our experience **will be death and not life**-13. As we have read in Rom. 8:2, the Spirit will free us from the law of sin and death (the deeds of the body). (On the matter of death or of God's children being dead, see Eph. 5:1-18).

**Galatians 5:16** This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are **contrary** the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

18 But if ye be **led of the Spirit**, ye are **not under the law**.

**Galatians 5:22** But **the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 Gentleness, self-control: **against such there is no law**.

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us **also walk** in the Spirit.

**Notice that** the *way of the Spirit* and the *way of the flesh* “are contrary the one to the other”, so to walk after the Spirit, **will necessarily** require substantial changes in our way of living-17. However, the reality of life in the Spirit, and **this is eternal life**, provides substantial benefits **while on this earth**, far in excess of the pleasures and gratifications realized when living after the flesh. Such carnal pleasures and gratifications do not compare with the “fruit of the Spirit”-22-23. **Paul also informs us of another truth**, But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law”-v18, for when “the fruit of the Spirit” fills one's inner life, and with its *outward expression* by words and deeds, **there is no law against it**-23.

**Advocates of the dispensational system of thought** emphasize the scripture that reads, “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are **not under the law**, but under grace”-Rom. 6:14. Mr. Scofield, on page 39 of his booklet entitled, Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth, identified on page 142 of this paper, **comments**:

“4. The believer is not under the Law.

The 6<sup>th</sup> of Romans, after declaring the doctrine of the believer's identification with Christ in His death, of which baptism is the symbol (verses 1-10), begins with verse 11, the declarations of the principles which should govern the *walk* of the believer—his rule of life. This is the subject of the remaining twelve verses; verse 14 gives the great *principle* of his deliverance from—not the *guilt* of sin, that is met by Christ's blood, but—the *dominion* of sin; his bondage under it.”

‘For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are *not under the law, but under grace*’.”

Mr. Scofield is correct that the point of verse 14 is that we are delivered from the dominion of sin by God's grace, which grace is in and through the Person and work of the Lord Jesus. But also, deliverance from the guilt of sin is by God's grace. However, advocates of dispensational thought seem to ignore the scripture that informs us that, “But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law”-Gal. 5:18. *While we are not under the law, but under grace, if we walk after the Spirit, it is equally true that we are not accessing God's grace, but that we are under the dominion of sin, and the condemnation of the law, if we walk after the flesh.* Such is the testimony of the scriptures referenced in Paul's epistles to the Romans, and to the churches of Galatia, on page 143 of this paper. This is the meaning of, “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live”-Rom. 8:13. Dispensational thought deviates from scripture by denying the truth of scripture, that it is by *continuing* in faith, that both, the cleansing benefit of Christ's blood, and the benefit of salvation from the dominion of sin in the flesh are effectual to God's child by His grace. And, *His grace wherein we stand in Christ, is accessed by faith*-Rom. 5:1-2, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: **By whom also** we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

**The Apostle Paul provides additional explanation of what is involved in “walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”.**

**Ephesians 4:17** This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 **But ye have not so learned Christ;**

21 **If so be** that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 **That ye put off** concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.



On page 137 of this paper the referenced scripture in Titus, chapter 2 informed us that the grace of God that brings salvation-v11, *teaches us* that we should live righteously by **denying** ungodliness and worldly lusts, and that, in this *present* world-v12. **In the passage of scripture in chapter 4 of Ephesians, we are given further explanation on how this transforming process is accomplished.**

1. Prior to being made alive in Christ-Eph.2:1, our *understanding* was darkened, as relates to *Divine* things, and thus, we were alienated from the life that is in God-Eph. 4:18. Such lack of understanding suggests, the need to be taught by the grace of God-Titus 2:12, and also, why transitioning from living after the flesh to living after the Spirit involves the “renewing” of our mind-Eph. 4:23.

2. When we hear the Lord, and are taught by Him, as the truth is in Him, *we will understand* that our *former behavior*, which was governed by our natural interests and desires, must be “put off”-Eph. 4:22. And, that old way must be replaced by what we will learn, as our mind is renewed, to be the Lord’s way for His children-Eph. 4:24.

On pages 49 and 50 of his booklet entitled, **Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth**, identified on page 142 of this paper, Mr. Scofield makes the following comment regarding the troubling experience described in chapter 7 of Romans, “The 7<sup>th</sup> of Romans is a record of the conflict of the regenerate man with his old self, and is, therefore, intensely personal. ‘I would’, ‘I do not,’ ‘I would not,’ ‘I do,’ is the sad confession of defeat which finds an echo in so many Christian hearts. In the eighth chapter the conflict still goes on, but how blessedly impersonal! There is no agony for Paul is out of it; the conflict is now between ‘flesh’—Saul of Tarsus—and the Holy Spirit. Paul is at peace and victorious.” In his comment, Mr. Scofield says that “the conflict” *continues*, and then presents Paul’s peace and victory, as a mental maneuver whereby he is relieved from a sense of responsibility for the activity of his sin by impersonalising it, as being the Spirit’s problem, and not his own. The Apostle Paul, in Romans 8 is explaining that “the conflict” ceases when we recognize that *deliverance* from the works of the flesh is realized, and thus, it is an *experiential reality* by walking “not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”-Rom. 8:2-4. As expressed in Eph. 4:20-24, *we actually* “put off” the “old man”---(the works of the flesh), and “put on” the “new man”---(the way of the Spirit). The Spirit’s *progressive* enlightenment of our understanding to discern between the activity of the flesh, and the ministry of the Spirit is accompanied by strength through the Spirit to, in actuality, live free from carnal influences within, and thus, do God’s will, to the extent of our knowledge of both, such *carnal influences* and *God’s will*.

**Another passage of scripture addresses this matter of what God is about doing, and what we should be engaged in when we are called “unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord”-1 Corinth: 1:9:**

**Philippians 2:12** Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always **obeyed**, not as in my presence only, but now **much more** in my absence, **work out your own salvation** with fear and trembling.

13 For **it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do** of *his* good pleasure.

**Regarding this passage of scripture**, on page 55 of his booklet, Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth, identified on page 142 of this paper, Mr. Scofield comments, “**Let it be observed, in reading this much-abused text that the believer is not exhorted to work *for* his own salvation but to work *out*, in service and testimony, what God works in him**”. While dispensationalists are very quick to respond to any mention, in the same sentence, of the two words “salvation” and “works”, Mr. Scofield is quite correct that this scripture is not exhorting the believer to “work for his own salvation”. However, this scripture is not exhorting the believer to work out, “***in service and testimony***”, what God works in him. There is no common or similar meaning between the Greek word translated “salvation”, and the Greek words translated “service” and “testimony”. ***This scripture*** in Philippians plainly states, ***to be obedient in the matter of working out your own “salvation”***, and with “fear and trembling”, which suggests that ***it is a matter that should be understood, and taken seriously***. In Philippians 2:12, “obeyed” is the English translation of the Greek word “hupakouo” which means, “*to hear under (as a subordinate), i.e. to listen attentively; by impl. to heed or conform to a command or authority: (Strong’s Concordance)*”. When we come to the Lord Jesus, it is ***by the Father drawing us*** to His Son-John 6:44, (See 1 Pet. 1:2). And, ***after we have come to Christ***, as the scriptures referenced on pages 136 and forward make so clear, ***our salvation from sin in the flesh has just begun***. God **continues to work in us**, “both to will and to do” that which pleases Him. ***Paul is exhorting the brethren at Philippi to continue to obey by working out, or attending to God’s saving work in them***. This is neither, struggling to overcome sin, nor is it finding relief from such a struggle by deceiving oneself that the struggle is between the “old me” and the Holy Spirit, not the “new” me, which is Mr. Scofield’s explanation, on page 145 of this paper, for Paul’s resolving “the conflict” described in Romans, chapters 7 and 8. But rather, it is ***by attending to what God, through the Spirit’s ministry, is doing in us that we relate to the living God*** (see 1 Corinth 7:35). So **attending upon the Lord** is essential to **learning from Him**, and such learning, **accompanied by obedience** is how God’s children: 1) ***Walk after the Spirit***-Rom. 8:4; 2) ***Walk in the light***-1 John. 1:7; and 3) ***Live by faith***-Rom. 1:17. These ***three expressions*** of how

one's *interactive relationship* with God is maintained are necessarily *coexistent*.

**The following scripture presents a specific aspect of God working in us, which aspect is essential to the interactive relationship between God and His children:**

**Colossians 1:7** As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;

8 Who also declared unto us **your love in the Spirit**.

9 For **this cause** we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might **be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding**;

10 That ye might **walk worthy of the Lord** unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every **good work**, and **increasing in the knowledge of God**;

**The Apostle Paul's prayer** for the saints and *faithful brethren* at Colosse-v1 was that they might be *filled* with *a knowledge of God's will*. It should be noted that *such knowledge is comprehended in terms of spiritual understanding* (understanding granted by the Spirit's ministry through the scriptures), and *wisdom*. And, such knowledge of God's will was essential that they might *walk worthy* of the Lord; be fruitful in every *good work*; and, that they might *increase* in the knowledge of God. *That which makes any work good in God's sight is that it is, in fact, God's will*. An example of the *distinction between "works" and "good works"* is seen in *Abraham's effort* to produce the son *that God had promised to him*. With the passage of time, a wife that was barren, and at Sarah's suggestion, Abraham had a son by Sarah's handmaid, Hagar-Gen. 16:1-4. Abraham's son by Hagar was named Ishmael. Abraham pleaded with God to accept Ishmael as the promised son. However, God said that Sarah would bear the son and his name would be called Isaac-Gen. 17:18-19. Abraham, apart *from knowing* God's will regarding *the means* by which God would accomplish *His will* of providing a son to Abraham, moved according to *his own natural wisdom*, which never involves works that are good or acceptable to God. We can preach, teach, and write bible study papers, but, apart from *spiritual discernment* that it is God's will, such works *will not be rewarded*, just as He would not accept Abraham's, well intentioned, but *carnally initiated* works to produce the son that *God willed* for Abraham. **The following are a few of the scriptures emphasizing that there are no options for, or acceptable alternatives to, knowing and doing God's will:**

**Acts 13:22** And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

**John 7:17** If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

**1 Peter 4:1** Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;  
2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but **to the will of God.**

**Romans 12:2** And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that **ye may prove** what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, **will of God.**

**Matthew 12:48** But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

**Matthew 7:21** Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

**1 John 2:15** Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

**Hebrews 13:20** Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

**Dispensational thought holds to a very narrow application of the words “saved” and “salvation”,** which is evidenced in the following comment by Mr. Scofield on page 57 of his booklet entitled, Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth, identified on page 142 of this paper. **He comments:**

**“The New Testament Scriptures contain a doctrine of salvation for the *lost*, and a doctrine of rewards for the faithful services of the *saved*; and it is of great importance to the right understanding of the Word that the student shall comprehend the distinction between these. What that distinction is may be seen by carefully noting the following contrasts:”** He then quotes the following scriptures that declare

“salvation” to be a gift: John 4:10; Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17; Rom. 6:23; and Eph. 2:8,9. Mr. Scofield continues, “**But in contrast with the freeness of salvation, note that, REWARDS ARE EARNED BY WORKS**”. He then quotes the following scriptures which declare that rewards are, in fact, earned by works: Matt. 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:7,8; Rev. 22:12; 1 Cor. 9:24,25; Luke 19:17; 1 Cor. 3:11-15; and Rev. 2:10.

**That “salvation” is a gift of God’s grace, and not of ourselves is fully supported by the New Testament scriptures.** However, the dispensational system of thought departs from the testimony of scripture by *limiting* the *need* for “salvation” to those who are not God’s children, and this, by limiting the *scope* of “salvation” to what occurs when one is “born again”.

**The following scripture presents “salvation”, not as a one-time event only, but as a continuing work of God on the behalf of His children.**

**1 Peter 1:2** Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, **through** sanctification of the Spirit, **unto** obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

**3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto **a lively hope** by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

**4** **To an inheritance** incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, **reserved** in heaven **for you**,

**5** **Who** are kept by the power of God **through faith** unto **salvation** ready to be revealed in **the last time**.

**6** Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through **manifold temptations**:

**7** That the trial of **your faith**, being **much more precious** than of gold that perisheth, though **it** be tried with fire, **might be found** unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

**8** Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, **yet believing**, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

**9** Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

**In this passage of scripture**, verse 2 explains that we enter into salvation through the sanctifying (or purifying) work of the Spirit, and obedience -- “*attentive hearkening*, i.e. (by impl.) *compliance* or *submission*”-Strong’s Concordance. With our “attentive hearkening” or “submission” to the Spirit’s ministry *on our behalf*, **we come into the benefit of the blood of the Lord Jesus**. In this scripture, “obedience” is used as equivalent to “faith” or “believing”. And also, it is through our “attentive hearkening”, or “submission” to the Spirit’s ministry within us that **we continue in the benefit of the blood of the Lord Jesus-1 Jn. 1:7-9, and of the purification of our souls-1 Pet. 1:22**. Recall, at Phil. 2:12 Paul exhorted the brethren *to be obedient* in the matter of “working out” their “own” salvation **on the basis of**

God working in them. In verse 5 of 1 Peter chapter 1, we are informed that we are “kept by the **power of God through faith** unto **salvation** ready to be revealed **in the last time**”. Thus, God keeps us, on the basis of our faith, to the time when we will be **saved** unto the inheritance reserved in heaven. While now **our faith** is being tried, the end of our faith is the salvation of our souls-1 Pet. 1:9. **Our faith**, which is being tried that *it* “might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ”, **certainly is not the initial act of faith, or “attentive hearkening”, whereby we came unto “the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ”**-1 Pet. 1:2.

**Also, that men are rewarded according to their works is fully supported by the New Testament scriptures.** However, the Colossians passage referenced on page 147 of this paper informs us that “good” works (works favorably regarded by God) are performed by discerning His will, both, as to the end to be achieved, and the means of achieving it. Recall that Abraham moved according to his own will and wisdom, which was according to the flesh-Romans 9:7-9; Gal. 4:22-23, to produce the son that God promised to Abraham. With God, the end does not justify the means. The Spirit does not anoint the flesh. The Spirit’s ministry is to grant understanding and wisdom to know, and enabling to do God’s will. (See pages 147 and 148 of this paper regarding knowing and doing God’s will).

**Something that seems to escape dispensational thought**, is the significant distinction between God’s child who “lives by faith”-Heb. 10:38, “walks after the Spirit”-Ro. 8:4, “walks in the light”-1 Jn. 1:7, whereby God’s will is known, and occasionally sins by taking matters into his or her own hands (as did Abraham), or acts out according to some other carnal motivation, and God’s child who lives according to the desires, interests, and other propensities of the flesh, with limited knowledge of God’s will. The person who is walking in the light, when made aware, whether by conscience or other means, of such a departure from the way of the Lord, readily confesses their sins (or agrees with the truth of the matter), and continues in the good pleasure of the Lord-1 Jn. 1:9. However, God’s child who is deceived and denies his or her sins, walks in darkness-1 Jn. 1:6-8, and not having forgiveness, is guilty before the Lord. The passage in 1 Jn. 1:6-9 is clear testimony that Christ’s blood is effectual for us if we walk in the light, and if, when we sin we confess our sins. The dispensational claim is that Christ’s blood “just keeps on cleansing us”, and if we are living in sin, only our “fellowship with God” is affected. (For a more comprehensive consideration of this passage in 1 John 1:6-9, see pages 77 and 78).

**In the paragraph immediately above**, the first mentioned state of God’s child is an example of one who understands, and embraces the Apostle Paul’s

answer to the question posed at Ro. 7:24, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” The second mentioned state of a *child of God* is an example of one who either did not understand, or would not accept Paul’s answer that deliverance is obtained by not walking after the flesh, but after the Spirit”-Ro. 8:1-4. *This world provides the desires and interests of the flesh with many gratifications.*

**The dispensational system of thought does not reconcile with another truth in scripture, which truth is attested to in the following passage:**

**Romans 2:11** For there is no respect of persons with God.

12 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;

13 (For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)

16 **In the day** when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ **according to** my gospel.

**In verse 13**, the Apostle Paul says that it is not those who simply *hear* the law, but it is those who *do* the law that shall be justified. “Justified” is the Greek word “*dikaioo*” and is defined-“to render (i.e. show or regard as) just or innocent”, and “just” is the Greek word “*dikaios*” and is defined-“*equitable* (in character or act); by impl. *innocent, holy* (absol. or rel.)”- Strong’s Concordance. Verse 14 begins with the word “For”, which relates it, by way of explanation, to verse 13. Paul’s statement in verses 14 and 15 introduces the key element for understanding that it is “the doers of the law who shall be justified”. That those (Gentiles) who have not the law do “by nature” (by partaking of the Divine nature-2 Pet. 1:4) the things contained in the law shows the work of the law “*written in their hearts*”. The law “written in their hearts” is the realization of an element *of the new covenant* at Jeremiah 31:33. The law is “*written in their hearts*” by *the Holy Spirit’s ministry* to those who “walk not after the flesh, *but after the Spirit*, whereby “the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us”-Ro. 8:4.

**The Apostle Paul writes at Romans 1:16-18**, “16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness”.

When Paul speaks of “salvation” to every one that “believeth”, clearly he is *not limiting* salvation to the inception of life, nor believing to the beginning (an act) of faith. In verse 17, we are informed that the righteousness of God is revealed “*from faith to faith*”, for the “just” (or innocent) “shall *live* by faith”. Both of these scripture passages from the Romans’ epistle, explaining that “*the just shall live by faith*”, and that “*the doers of the law shall be justified*” are *in the context of*, “In the day *when God will judge* the secrets of men by Jesus Christ”, and “*according to my gospel*”-2:16. We “*hold the truth in unrighteousness*” by honoring God with our lips, while our hearts are occupied with, and we live according to the desires, interests, and other propensities of the flesh. These scriptures are explaining that God’s children are “justified” or innocent in God’s sight, who “do *by nature* the things contained in the law”-2:14, and that, by having the law “*written in their hearts*”-2:15. *Those who are justified or innocent in God’s sight, are so, by “walking after the Spirit”, living “by faith”, and walking “in the light”*, and as previously mentioned, these three expressions of one’s manner of walking or living *always coexist*. Recall that, “*if we walk in the light*”, and when we sin, “*if we confess our sin*” the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin and unrighteousness-1 Jon. 1:7-9.

The Apostle Paul continues his explanation of, “*the doers of the law shall be justified*”. At Romans 2:25 we read: “For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.” The apostle Paul is explaining that *what is outward in the flesh, according to the letter of the law, is not acceptable to God*, but rather, *keeping the righteousness that the law speaks of is what pleases Him*. Verses 26 and 27 continue, “Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be **counted for circumcision**?” “And shall not uncircumcision **which is by nature**, if it **fulfil the law**, judge thee, who **by the letter and circumcision** doest **transgress the law**?” Again, Paul is explaining that what matters to God is that *the righteousness of the law be fulfilled in His people*. While the circumcised person is *keeping the letter* of the law by being circumcised in the flesh, and transgressing *the meaning* of the law *by living after the dictates of the flesh*, his being circumcised *outwardly* does not render him *right or innocent* before God.

Paul then explains the circumcision that gives a Jew acceptance with God.

**Romans 2:28** For he is not a Jew, which is one **outwardly**; neither *is that* circumcision, which is **outward in the flesh**:

29 But he *is* a Jew, which is **one inwardly**; and circumcision *is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter*; whose **praise is** not of men, but **of God**.



In these verses, Paul continues his emphasis that it is the inward state of His child that determines their acceptance with God. That which is outward in the flesh, according to the letter, does not fulfill the righteousness of the law. But rather, being circumcised of heart, in one's spirit, receives praise of God. Paul informs us that, "For with the heart man believes unto righteousness"-Ro. 10:10.

**The Apostle Paul informs us** in Romans 3:19, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God". This scripture says that the law is addressing those who are under the law, that the world may become guilty before God. **Paul, also, explains in his letter to the churches of Galatia**, "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"-Gal. 5:13-14. And again, "*This I say then*, **Walk in the Spirit**, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh"-Gal. 5:16. And further, "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law"-Gal. 5:18.

**It was noted in the above comment**, that Romans 3:19 says that the law is addressing those who are under the law. In Galatians 5:18 we are informed, that those who are led of the Spirit are not under the law. And, while we are called unto liberty, Paul is exhorting the brethren in the Galatian churches to *not use this liberty* as an occasion (or opportunity) *to serve the flesh*. Our liberty is realized by *walking after the Spirit*, whereby we are made free from the desires of the flesh-Gal. 5:16; Ro. 8:2. If we have a good conscience, and also knowledge of the law, and walk after the flesh, our conscience condemns us-Ro. 8:1, 12-13. However, if we have an insensitive conscience-Titus 1:13-16; 1 Tim 4:1-2, and are comfortable in walking after the flesh, we are *not justified or innocent*, but rather, we are guilty before God-Ro. 3:19. Recall that the "*doers of the law shall be justified*"-Ro. 2:13, for they have the law "*written in their hearts*". But those who, walking after the limited resources of the flesh, and are thereby trying to keep the letter of the law will not be justified in God's sight.

**We read at Romans 3:20** "Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." The righteousness of God which is by faith is *witnessed* by the law and the prophets. The Apostle Paul is explaining by the scriptures beginning on page 151, and then forward, that the righteousness of God which is by faith, is not an outward effort in the flesh to keep the letter of the law, but rather, it is an inward matter of having the law "*written in their hearts*", and *expressed by*

*what we do*. Paul writes, “Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by **faith**, and the uncircumcision **through faith**. Do we then **make void the law through faith**? God forbid: yea, we **establish the law**.”-Ro. 3:30-31 Paul is explaining that **the law *bears witness* to *God’s righteousness***-Ro. 3:21, and that, **through one’s faith, the *Spirit of grace* performs that righteousness *in their heart***. Thus, **faith establishes the law**-Ro. 3:31, and the **“doers of the law shall be justified”**-Ro. 2:13. Recall that, “with the heart man believes **unto righteousness**”-Ro. 10:10.

**Zane C. Hodges, a prominent advocate of the dispensational system of thought, and also of “Non-Lordship” salvation, comments on Romans 2:6, “Who will render to every man according to his deeds”, and 2:13, “(For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.”** The comment is in the context of a debate against “Lordship” salvation, for which John MacArthur is a prominent advocate. Mr. MacArthur’s, Reform Theology, is not being embraced in this paper. **Mr. Hodges’ comment:**

**“Moreover, in handling Romans 2:6 and 13, MacArthur forgets that these texts must be read in the light of Paul’s exposition in Romans 3 and 4, and especially in light of a statement like this:**

**‘Therefore by the deeds of the law *no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin [Ro 3:20; italics added].’***

**“In Romans 2:6 and 13 Paul was stating the *principle* upon which people will be judged in the final judgment. He was certainly *not* affirming that there will actually be people who *are* justified by the law! His point in 2:13 is a warning against thinking that merely hearing the law could be a basis for acceptance before God (as the Jews were tempted to think: Ro 2:17). Only ‘doers of the law’ would be justified. But in Pauline theology, there were no such people (Ro 3:19-20)!”** Zane C. Hodges, *Absolutely Free*, (Dallas: Redenci’ on Viva, 1989, p. 217).

**In his comment, Mr. Hodges indicates that** Romans 2:13 must be read in light of Romans 3 and 4, and especially Romans 3:20, “Therefore **by the deeds of the law** shall **no flesh** be justified in his sight...” Of course this is true. However, his comment shows that Mr. Hodges does not recognize **how the Apostle Paul *reconciles* Romans 3:20 with 2:13** which reads, “(For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but **the doers of the law** shall be justified”. Mr. Hodges then says, **“In Romans 2:6 and 13 Paul was stating the *principle* upon which people will be judged in the final judgment.”** This also, is true. But then he says that Paul was certainly not saying that, “there will actually be people who will be justified by the law”. **He reasons that**, if this were so, “only the ‘doers of the law’ would be justified”. He concludes that, **in Paul’s theology**, “there were no such people” (who were doers of the law), **even though Paul said** that “the

doers of the law shall be justified”. *He is attempting to impose dispensational theology on the Apostle Paul.* The result of his reasoning process is that Mr. Hodges *perceives Romans 2:13 as being contradictory to Romans 3:20*, and he then does what is typical of dispensational advocates by rejecting Romans 2:13. However, according to Paul’s explanation of both verses, there is *no contradiction* between them, and indeed, *two passages of scripture that were given by Divine inspiration cannot have a contradiction between them.* (See pages 90 through middle of 92).

**Mr. Hodges continues his comment:** “It should be kept in mind that, of course, every unsaved person will have ‘his day in court.’ For unsaved people, judgment *will be* according to their works (Rev 20:12). But the result of a judgment by works is a foregone conclusion: condemnation (Rev 20:15).”

“By contrast there is no such thing as a judgment for the believer to determine whether he goes to heaven or hell. Indeed the verdict of acquittal has already been rendered (justification). And our Lord Himself said:

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life (Jn 5:24; italics added).

**Mr. Hodges uses this scripture to support the proposition that,** with *finality*, the *verdict* for the child of God has already been rendered, which *is justification*. He rests such a conclusion on an assumed fact that is not in evidence in the cited scripture, John 5:24. The *assumed fact* is that the word “believes” refers to “*an act*” of faith, which *initial* and *singular* “act” of faith secures God’s child from any future judgment for his or her future sins. And, that this is complete salvation. However, the word “believes” does not require or even suggest a singular “act” of faith. *The John 5:24 passage does not say, and “believed”, as an act that occurred in the past.* The Apostle Paul writes, Col. 1:21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet **now** hath he reconciled  
22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight:  
23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and **be not moved away** from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;  
And, “*brethren*” can and do depart from God *through unbelief*-Heb. 3:12-14. This *does not mean* that one ceases to be God’s child, *but that*, one is not working out *their own* salvation, by attending to the Lord’s working in them to accomplish His will and good pleasure-Phil. 2:12-13. (For discussion on this point, see pages 77 through top of 80)

In the above referenced scriptures in Romans, chapters 2 and 3, Paul is explaining the same concept being expressed in James' epistle at:

**James 2:20** But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the alter?

22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

23 And the scripture **was fulfilled** which saith, **Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness**: And he was called the Friend of God.

24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

**When James says, "faith without works is dead",** he is explaining that faith is necessarily accompanied by faithfulness to do God's will. James then brings forth Abraham as an example. When God expressed *His will* for Abraham to go with Isaac to the land of Moriah and offer him on an alter, "**By faith** Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac..."-Heb. 11:17. *Faith* was Abraham's *inward posture of devotion and commitment to God*. And, knowing God's will in this matter, *he did it*. Abraham was "justified" or innocent before God *by his works* of offering Isaac. Had Abraham not offered Isaac, he would have failed in the matter of faith (his *devotion and commitment to God*), and he would not be "justified" or innocent in God's sight. Clearly, James is explaining *the relationship of faith* to the only works that are "good" in God's sight, which is *doing His will*. This is in complete agreement with Paul's explanation of how it is that the "doers of the law shall be justified.

**James declares that,** when Abraham offered Isaac on the alter, "the scripture was fulfilled" which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness". James is referring to the scripture at Genesis 15:6, which statement was made *many years prior to the time* when Abraham offered Isaac. Recall, that when Abraham offered Isaac, God said, "because thou hast done *this thing*, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son", and He confirmed by an oath the *earlier* promise that He would *bless Abraham*, and that He would *multiply his seed*. (See pages, bottom of 11 through top of 13). James is explaining that Abraham's faith, which was imputed to him for righteousness, had fulfillment in his faithfulness in the offering of Isaac, which was *the final test of his faith*, according to the record of scripture.

**James is presenting Abraham as our example that** those who are "just" (or innocent before God) "shall live by faith"-Ro. 1:17. Also, the writer of the

epistle to the Hebrews is exhorting brethren-Heb. 6:11-14 that *we inherit* God's promises *through diligence and faith*, and again Abraham is our example. **We read:**

**Hebrews 6:9** But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, **though we thus speak.**

10 For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

11 And we desire that every one of you do shew **the same diligence** to the full assurance of hope **unto the end:**

12 That ye **be not slothful**, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

13 For when God **made promise to Abraham**, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,

14 Saying, Surely  **blessing I will bless thee**, and  **multiplying I will multiply thee.**

15 And so, **after he had patiently endured**, he obtained the promise.

**Mr. Hodges, in his conclusion of what he has written in one of the chapters of his book, page 63, writes:**

**“For now, however, it is sufficient to observe that the Bible predicates salvation on an act of faith, not on the continuity of faith. Just as surely as regeneration occurs at a point in time for each individual, so surely does saving faith.**

**That is why, in the case of Abraham, the moment of his justification is historically fixed. It is in the precise historical circumstance described by the context of Genesis 15 that we read: ‘And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness’ (Ge[n]. 15:6).**

**So, according to the biblical record, it was on this occasion---and on this occasion only---that Abraham was justified by faith. The statement of Genesis 15:6 is utterly unique in the scriptural account. Nothing like it is to be found anywhere else in the inspired narrative of the patriarch’s life.” Zane C. Hodges, Absolutely Free, (Dallas: Redenci'on Viva, 1989, p. 63). (Underlining mine)**

**In the first paragraph, Mr. Hodges declares *his conclusion* concerning “faith” and “salvation”. It is that salvation rests on “an act” of faith, and not on continuing in faith. And, that salvation relates only to the penalty of sin, and is complete when regeneration occurs. It is accurate to say that regeneration and faith do occur at a point in time. However, this point in time is *the beginning* of both, faith and salvation. **In the second paragraph, concerning Abraham, he declares that, “the moment of his justification is historically fixed”. By this declaration, Mr. Hodges is reading something into the statement in Genesis 15:6 that it *does not* actually say, and that it *may not* mean. For *scripture* informs us that it was “by faith” that Abraham obeyed when called to go to the land of promise-Heb. 11:8, which was *prior to* the statement in Genesis 15:6. Mr. Hodges is assuming, *as fact*, something that *is not in evidence* in the statement in Genesis 15:6, and it is *an*****

*assumption* that would require that *Abraham's faith, prior to* the time referred to in Genesis 15:6, *did not justify him*. In the third paragraph, Mr. Hodges says, "according to *the biblical record*", it was "on this occasion *only*" (referring to Genesis 15:6) "that Abraham was justified by faith".

The inaccuracy of this conclusion is revealed by a broader examination of the "*biblical record*", quoted at the top of page 156. In James chapter 2, verses 20 through 24, we are informed that the Genesis 15:6 passage, "And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness", was also fulfilled, (years later), when Abraham offered Isaac on the alter. James is showing that *enduring faith continues to justify*, or to be imputed for righteousness. Thus, *the one "act" of faith concept utterly fails when placed under the scrutiny of relevant scriptures*.

At the top of page 155 of this paper, Mr. Hodges was quoted as saying, "For unsaved people, judgment *will be* according to their works (Rev 20:12). But the result of a judgment by works is a foregone conclusion: condemnation (Rev 20:15). By contrast there is no such thing as a judgment for the believer to determine whether he goes to heaven or hell". In this statement, Mr. Hodges concludes that while the "unsaved" will be judged according to works, this is the reason for their condemnation. And, that there is no such judgment for the "believer". He forgets that the person who is condemned *already*, is so condemned, because he or she does not believe on God's Son, and for the person who is not condemned, it is because they believe on the Son of God-Jn 3:18. Being judged according to one's works means that a person's works determines: the *degree of punishment* for those who are condemned for *their unbelief*; and, the *nature and extent of reward* for those *who believe*. Mr. Hodges, in presenting the dispensational system of thought, *does not accept* the testimony of scripture, that God's children *who*, 1) do not "continue in the faith"-Col. 1:21-23; 2) "waver" or are "double minded" when their faith is being tested-James 1:3-8; and, 3) do not hold "*the beginning* of our confidence steadfast *unto the end*"-Heb. 3:14; are "departing from the living God" *through "unbelief"*-Heb. 3:12.

On page 217 of his book, *Absolutely Free*, Mr. Hodges continues the claim that, "There is no final judgment at all for the believer if by that we mean a 'judicial examination' to determine his eternal destiny. Eternal life is already possessed by the believer as an irrevocable free gift (see chapter 5). Of course, the believer must give an account of his Christian stewardship at the judgment seat of Christ, but that is another matter (Rom 14:10-12). Even if his works are burned, he is still saved! Thus Paul could write:

If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but *he himself will be saved*, yet so as through fire (1 Co[r] 3:14-15; italics added)."

**In the comments by Mr. Hodges on page 158 of this paper**, he contends that the result of a judgment of works condemns the person so judged. And, that such a judgment can only apply to the “unsaved”, but not to the “believer”. He says that the “believer” must give account for “Christian stewardship” at the “judgment seat of Christ”, but that is “another matter”. “Even if his works are burned, he is still saved”. He then cites 1 Cor. 3:14-15: “If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but *he himself will be saved*, yet so as through fire.”

**Some relevant points to be noted are:**

1). Mr. Hodges highlights “*he himself will be saved*”. However, he neither highlights, nor comments on how this child of God will be saved, which is “through fire”. In this context, and according to the next two verses, “fire” refers to judgment. Also, Mr. Hodges ignores the next two verses, 16 and 17, which read, “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy which temple you are”. This additional scripture explains that being saved “through fire” involves *more than loss of reward for failing in “Christian stewardship”*. Because the child of God has defiled the dwelling place of God’s “holy” Spirit, *He will subject that child to personal destructive judgment.*

2). Another scripture passage that addresses the matter of judgment of God’s children for their sin is at, **Hebrews 10:23** Let us **hold fast** the profession of our faith **without wavering**; (for he is faithful that promised;)  
24 And let us consider one another to provoke **unto love** and to **good works**:  
25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.  
26 **For** if we **sin wilfully** after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, **there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins**,  
27 But **a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.**  
28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:  
29 Of how much **sover punishment**, suppose ye, shall he be thought **worthy**, who hath **trodden under foot the Son of God**, and hath counted **the blood** of the covenant, wherewith **he was sanctified**, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto **the Spirit of grace?**  
30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, **I will recompense**, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge **his** people.  
31 It is **a fearful** thing to fall into the hands of the living God.  
This passage of scripture is a clear and unequivocal declaration that God’s children who do not *hold fast their faith without wavering-v23*, but *sin wilfully-v26 after* they were “sanctified” by the blood of the covenant-v29 are facing a certain fearful expectation of “judgment and fiery indignation

that will *devour* the adversaries”-v27. *The Lord* will “judge *His* people” in a fearful judgment-vs30-31. As Mr. Hodges noted, they will be saved. But, they will be saved “through fire”-1 Cor. 3:15, (judgment and fiery indignation that will devour [God’s] adversaries)-see item 1) above.

3). Rather than the “judgment seat of Christ” being only a matter of judging our “Christian stewardship” to determine rewards for service, we read at 2 Cor. 5:10-11, “For we must **all** appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that **each one** may receive **the things** done in the body, according to what **he has done**, whether **good** or **bad**. Knowing, therefore, **the terror of the Lord**, we persuade men...”. **Item 2)** above explains why the Apostle Paul, **knowing the terror of the Lord**, was persuading men. This, the advocates of dispensational thought, who insist that God’s children are exempt from His system of justice, are not doing.

4). The “judgment seat of Christ” where “all” must appear to receive, or be judged, according the things (works) that each has done, whether good or bad, is the same judgment explained at Romans chapter 2, “5 But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are **treasuring up** for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 6 who ‘*will render to each one according to his deeds*’: 7 **eternal life** to those who by **patient continuance in doing good** seek for glory, honor, and immortality; 8 but to those who are **self-seeking** and do not obey **the truth**, but obey **unrighteousness—indignation and wrath**, 9 **tribulation and anguish**, on every soul of man **who does evil**, of the Jew first and also of the Greek: 10 but **glory, honor, and peace** to everyone **who works what is good**, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 11 For there is **no partiality** with God. 12 For as many as **have sinned** without law **will also perish** without law, and as many as **have sinned** in the law will be judged **by the law** 13 (for not the hearers of the law *are* just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified: ...16 **in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.**” (NKJV)

**While under the old covenant** judgment was implemented *very soon*, under *the new covenant* men are *treasuring up* for themselves judgment-v5 that will be rendered in the day when God will judge *the secrets of men by Jesus Christ*-v16. This judgment includes *the reward of eternal life* to those who *patiently continue in doing good*-v7, and *indignation and wrath* to those who are “*self-seeking*” and *do not obey* the truth-v8. This judgment *includes those* who will receive “indignation and wrath”, *along with those* who will enter into *the eternal* inheritance of life. God will render to *every person* according to their deeds-v6, and *will not show partiality* toward anyone-v11.

5). Another scripture explaining that each person receives that which they deserve is Colossians 3:23-25, “23 And whatsoever **ye do**, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24 Knowing that **of the Lord ye shall receive** the reward of **the inheritance**: for ye serve the Lord Christ. 25 **But** he that **doeth wrong shall receive** for the **wrong which he hath done**: and there is **no respect of persons**”. From the Lord, some will receive “the reward of the inheritance”, while others will receive for “the



wrong which they have done”. Contrary to dispensational thought, God does not show preference to those who are “born again”, *by exempting them from His system of justice*, according to which He will ultimately achieve the integrity of His eternal kingdom. In dispensational thought, that “we are born again” is very similar to the, “we are the children of Abraham” attitude, that was held by some Jews. (See John 8:31-36; Matt. 3:8-10) Both claims are and were true, however, the previously referenced scriptures, and the scriptures that will be cited as we continue, clearly evidence that both claims are and were foundations on which the Lord’s children can and must build to inherit the promises that are in Christ.

6). The knowledge that comes with being born of the Spirit (regeneration), and the additional knowledge that is available to those who are “born again”, places us under an elevated level of accountability to God, as we are informed at, **Luke 12:40** Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

41 Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?

43 Blessed is **that servant**, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

46 The lord of that servant **will come** in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is **not aware**, and will **cut him in sunder**, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47 And **that servant**, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with **many stripes**.

48 But he **that knew not**, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. **For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.**

**The servant** of the Lord who is faithful in doing the will of the Lord will be blessed when the Lord **comes**. However, **that servant** who, knowing the Lord's will, and did not prepare himself, neither did according to his will, will have “his portion with the unbelievers”, and will be **beaten with many stripes**-vs46-47. Also, the degree of punishment will be commensurate with the knowledge that the Lord’s servant possesses-v48. This last point provides further meaning to James chapter 3 and verse 1, “My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, **knowing that** we shall receive **a stricter judgment**”. The scriptures that are referenced, beginning on page 158, and forward, may be summarized by the Apostle Paul’s declaration in Galatians chapter 6, and verses 7, 8, and 9, “**Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.** For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap

**corruption**, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while **doing good**, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”

**The time when God will judge** “every person” according to their works, whether their works are good or bad, is related to *the Lord’s coming*. And as evidenced in the cited scripture passages, some will inherit *everlasting life*, and others will receive *corruption, fiery indignation* and *wrath*.

**The following are additional scriptures that identify the time when God will judge all persons according to their works:**

**Revelation 22:10** And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

11 He that is **unjust**, let him be unjust still: and he which is **filthy**, let him be filthy still: and he that is **righteous**, let him be righteous still: and he that is **holy**, let him be holy still.  
12 And, behold, **I come quickly**; and my reward is with me, to give **every man** according as his work shall be. ***The time of judgment is when the Lord comes, and includes every person-v12, the unjust and the righteous-v11.***

**Revelation 11:16** And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

17 Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, **and art to come**; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, **and hast reigned**.

18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and **the time of the dead, that they should be judged**, and that thou shouldest **give reward** unto **thy servants** the prophets, and to **the saints**, and **them that fear thy name**, small and great; and **shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth**. The *time* is when the Lord **comes** and **reigns**-v17, and **the judgment** is of **the dead**, consisting of reward for the Lord’s *servants*, the *saints*, those that **fear** His name, and the destruction of those which **destroy** the earth-v18. Note that **this is a general judgment of the dead**, including those who are **rewarded**, and those who are **destroyed**.

**2 Timothy 4:1** I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge **the living** and **the dead** at **His appearing** and **His kingdom**. The *time* that the **living** and the **dead** will be judged is when the Lord **comes**. The **dead who are “in Christ”**, He will bring with Him, and the **living who are “in Christ”** will be caught up to be with Him-1 Thess. 4:16-17. Those living on the earth, who are not in, or abiding **“in Christ”**, will be killed as God’s wrath is poured out on the inhabitants of the earth-Rev. 19:17-21.

**Matthew 25:31** When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he **sit upon the throne** of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered **all nations**: and he shall separate them **one from**

**another**, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on **his right hand**, but the goats on **the left**.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his **right hand**, Come, **ye blessed** of my Father, **inherit the kingdom** prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ...

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into **everlasting fire**, prepared for **the devil and his angels**: ...

46 And these shall go away into **everlasting punishment**: but the righteous into **life eternal**. The *time* of this judgment is when the Lord comes and sits on His throne-v31. The righteous will inherit life eternal in God's kingdom-v34, while the unrighteous will go into everlasting fire-v41, where the devil will be cast at the end of the 1000 years-Rev 20:9-10. The place of punishment is in *the lake of fire* where the beast and the false prophet will be cast when the Lord comes-Rev 19:20.

**Revelation 20:11** Then I saw a **great white throne** and **Him** who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found **no place for them**.

12 And I saw **the dead**, small and great, standing before God, and **the books** were opened. And **another book** was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And **the dead** were judged according to **their works**, by the things which were written in **the books**.

13 The **sea** gave up the dead who were in it, and **Death and Hades** delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, **each one** according to **his works**.

14 Then **Death and Hades** were cast into **the lake of fire**. **This is the second death**.

15 And **anyone** not found written in **the Book of Life** was cast into **the lake of fire**. NKJV

**Again, we see the Lord seated on His (great white) throne**. It should be noted that in this account of the judgment, the “old heavens” and the “old earth” pass away. While this passage of scripture does not mention a “new heavens” and a “new earth”, the time of these events was previously considered on pages 116 to the top of 120 of this paper, and *these events were determined to occur in relation to the Lord's coming*. **Further points of note are:** 1). This is a judgment of *the dead*; 2). The works of each one will be judged by *the things* written in the books; 3). The “*Book of Life*” was also opened; 4). The location of the dead was “*in the sea*”, and in “*Death and Hades*”; 5). Those who were in “*Death and Hades*” were cast into *the “lake of fire”*, which is the “*second death*”; 6). The dead in each of the two locations were delivered up to have their works judged, but only “Death and Hades” (“anyone not written in the Book of Life”) were cast into the “lake of fire”; 7). *It is a proper inference that anyone found written in the “Book of Life”, those delivered up by the sea, entered into everlasting life in the kingdom, as declared by the above referenced passages of scripture regarding those who are right in God's sight.* (See item 4, page 160; Galatians 6:7-9 on bottom of page 161 and top of page 162; Matthew chapter 25 and referenced verses on bottom of page 162 and top of page 163).

**Proponents of the dispensational system of thought** often place **the time of the judgment** before the “great white throne” at **the end** of the 1000 years period. They, also, claim that **only** the “wicked dead” are the subjects of this judgment. There is **no indication** within this passage of scripture that this judgment of the dead relates only to the “wicked dead”. However, **this passage of scripture provides significant indication** that the dead includes those whose names are written ***in the “Book of Life”***, and, who were given up **by the sea** to have **their works judged**.

**Also, accounts in scripture** explaining ***the time*** of the judgment of the dead relate such judgment to ***the Lord’s coming***. In this chapter 20 of the book of Revelation, **that which John saw** in verses 1 through 3 concerning the binding of Satan and the casting of him into the bottomless pit occurs, **as relates to the time, to the coming of the Lord**. The events that ***John saw*** concerning those who sat on thrones reigning with Christ **begin, as relates to time, to the coming of the Lord, and continue** through a period of 1000 years. At ***the end*** of the 1000 years period, Satan is released and leads a final rebellion against the saints and the “beloved city”, at which time fire comes down from heaven and devours Satan’s followers, and then the devil is cast into the “lake of fire” where the “beast and the false prophet” were cast **at the time of the Lord’s coming**-Rev. 19:20. **That which John saw** concerning the judgment before the “great white throne” is **another and separate** event that does not necessarily occur after the 1000 years which ended with the release of Satan from the bottomless pit-v7. That, which John saw in chapters 21 and 22 of the book of Revelation are things related, as to time, to the Lord’s coming.

**It is important to recognize that the events that John saw often do not occur in the order in which he saw and recorded them. For instance:**

- 1). Accounts of the Lord’s coming are recorded at, Rev. 1:7; 14:14-16; 17:14; 19:11-21; 21:1-2, 9-10; 22:7,12,20.
- 2). Accounts of Babylon’s fall are recorded at, Rev. 14:8; 17:15-17; 18:2, 20-24; 19:1-3.
- 3). Accounts of the wrath of God and of the Lamb being poured out on the earth are recorded at, Rev. 6:12-17; 8:1-9:21; 14:17-20; 15:1, 5-16:21; 19:11-21.

**The 1000 years (the millennium) is often referred to by expositors of the dispensational system of thought. *This system of thought envisions a millennium* wherein, either or both, ***David and/or Christ*** reign from a “***magnificent temple***” that will be rebuilt ***in earthly Jerusalem***, and in ***the ancient land*** that was inherited by Israel. Also, that the physical nation of Israel will worship God ***by a system of memorial sacrifices*** (some say animal**

sacrifices), administered by a priesthood similar to the order of the priesthood of Aaron, and rituals similar to the Mosiac order. *The New Jerusalem will hover over “the land” because the dimensions of the New Jerusalem exceed the size of the land. And, it is reasoned that the New Jerusalem being so situated would be a convenient arrangement as a residence for both, Christ and the resurrected saints to perform their functions without mingling with those persons who are, **allegedly**, in their natural bodies on the earth.* (See pages 73 through the middle of 76 for details). **This millennial period is recorded only once in the Scriptures at:**

**Revelation 20:4** And I saw **thrones**, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for **the witness of Jesus**, and for **the word of God**, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

5 But the rest of the dead lived not **again** until the thousand years were finished. *This is the first resurrection.*

6 Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but **they** shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall **reign** with him a thousand years.

**It is significant to note, that in this passage of scripture there is no mention of persons living in their natural bodies, but the inhabitants are persons who have been resurrected.**

1). They sat upon thrones-v4---“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches”-Rev. 3:21-22.

2). Judgment was given to them-v4---“And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron...-Rev. 2:26-27.

3). Some of the inhabitants had been beheaded for their testimony of Jesus and for the word of God-v4---“And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were **slain for the word of God**, and for **the testimony** which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge **our blood** on them that dwell on the earth?”-Rev. 6:9-10.

4). The persons who live and reign with Christ for this 1000 years period are blessed, being in the first resurrection-v6---“And the Lord said, Who then is that **faithful** and **wise** steward, whom his lord shall **make ruler** over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? **Blessed is that servant**, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath”-Luke 12:42-44.

5). The second death, which is in the lake of fire, has no power over these persons who are in the first resurrection-v6---“...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life”-Rev. 2:10. “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the

Spirit saith unto the churches, He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death”-Rev. 2:11.

**6). The rest of the dead** (those who did not live and reign with Christ during the 1000 years) lived not again (this word “lived” is the English translation of the Greek word “Anazao” meaning, “to recover life”-Strong’s Concordance) until the 1000 years was ended---“if anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but **he himself will be saved**, yet so as **through fire**. Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God **dwells in you**? If anyone **defiles** the temple of God, **God will destroy him**. For the temple of God **is holy, which temple you are**”-1 Cor. 3:14-17. (NKJV)

**Revelation 21: 7** “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. 8 “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is **the second death**.” (NKJV)

**According to the dispensational system of thought**, all who are “born again” will be in the “*first*” resurrection. However, the scriptures referenced from page 165 and forward provide clear testimony that, from within the Church, God’s children *who overcome* sin and the world will be in the “*first*” resurrection. While expositors of dispensational thought insist that *all persons who are “born again” are “overcomers”*, the numerous, previously referenced, passages of scripture provide clear and unequivocal testimony to the contrary. Review of pages 132 through 136 of this paper to refresh one’s recollection on this point might be beneficial.

**The following scripture gives a clear and concise statement by the Apostle Paul on the matter of attaining to the “first” resurrection:**

**Philippians 3: 8** Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the **righteousness** which is from God **by faith**; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death. 11 **if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead**. 12 **Not that I have already attained**, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, **I do not count myself to have apprehended**; but one thing I *do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead. 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (NKJV)

**This is clear testimony by the Apostle Paul**, that he had suffered the loss of all things (all credentials that he possessed according to the law) that he might “gain Christ” and “the righteousness which is from God by faith”. Paul sought to know Christ in terms of His resurrection, His suffering, and by being

conformed to His death. And this, that *“if by any means”*, he may *“attain to the resurrection from the dead”*. He *presses forward* that he might lay hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of him, which is *resurrection from the dead*. Paul is applying to himself that which the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews is encouraging those brethren to do. “And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end. That you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself. Saying, ‘*Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you.*’ And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.”-Heb. 6:11-15

**A proponent of dispensational thought commented on Paul’s statement in Philippians 3:11 as follows:** “If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.’ When Paul uses the word *if* he is not expressing a doubt about his participation in the Rapture. Rather, he is affirming that he will have part in it with great joy.” J. Vernon McGee, Thru-The-Bible Commentary Series, THE EPISTLES, PHILIPPIANS and COLOSSIANS, (Published in Nashville, Tennessee, by Thomas Nelson, Inc. 1991, p.76).

**Again**, we observe a readiness to rephrase a clear and plain statement of scripture to agree with the preconceived and inaccurate concept, “an act” of faith secures for eternity. Thus, Mr. McGee is explaining for us that, “if by any means”, does not actually mean, “if by any means”, but rather, *it “confirms”* that Paul’s attaining to the resurrection of the dead *is sure and with great joy*. The word “if” in Phil. 3:11 is the Greek word “ei pos” which means, “if somehow”. (Strong’s Concordance)

**Let us continue with the matter of the Apostle Paul’s attaining to the resurrection from the dead by viewing the following scripture:** “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica...”-2 Tim. 4:6-10.

**In this scripture**, Paul declares that his death is near. He had **finished** or completed the course that God set before him, and he had **kept** the faith to the *end of this life*. Now he is sure of receiving the promised inheritance, and of attaining to the resurrection from the dead. Sadly, however, Demas, Paul’s “fellowlaborer”-(Philem. 24), “having loved this present world” was not finishing his course, nor keeping the faith. *The scriptures that are referenced provide strong evidence concerning who is in the “first” resurrection, and who “lived not again until the thousand years were finished”*.

## **Outline Of Topics Considered Within This Study Paper, Including Page Numbers.**

1. Brief introduction—pages 1-3.
2. Divisions within the Divine program according to the Dispensational System of thought---bottom of page 3 through middle of page 6.
3. The Covenant with Abraham-Conditional vs. Unconditional---middle of page 6 through the middle of page 13.
4. Covenant with David, citing II Samuel 7:8-26, and comment---bottom of page 13 through top of page 15.
5. New Covenant-citing Jeremiah 31:33-34 and comment; Ezekiel 36:25-28 and comment; Joel 2:28-32 and comment---middle of page 15 to near bottom of page 16.
6. Who is the Seed of Abraham---bottom of page 16 to middle of page 18.
7. Are God’s covenants of promise to Israel realized at the first advent of Christ or when Christ returns. If at the first advent, are the Gentiles included in such covenants of promise---middle of page 18 to top of page 73.
  - Kingdom-is it a physical, geo-political kingdom, or is it a spiritual kingdom---bottom of page 38 to near bottom of page 41.
  - Moses’ house is a testimony of Christ’s house-bottom page 41 past middle of page 43.
  - The earthly Jerusalem and the heavenly Jerusalem---near bottom of page 43 to bottom of page 44.
  - Changes accompanying transition from the old covenant to the new covenant---bottom of page 44 to bottom of page 49.
  - Dispensational thought denies that the new covenant with Israel is in effect in this age---bottom of page 49 to top of page 53.
  - Character of the new covenant---middle of page 53 to middle of page 55.
  - Time of fulfillment of the new covenant, in which God provides a Savior to Israel, and explanation of Romans 11:26-27---middle of page 55 through middle of page 63.
  - Relationship, if any, of the Church to the new covenant-middle of page 63 to middle of page 68.
  - That “they shall all know Me” is an element of the new covenant prophesied at Jeremiah 31:34---middle of page 68 through top of page 73.



8. Description of the “millennial kingdom” according to Dispensational thought---Top of page 73 through page 76.
9. God’s children are, and can be responsible for faithfulness to their relationship with God---top of page 77 to bottom of page 92:
  - 1 John 1:7-9---top of page 77 to bottom of page 78.
  - Colossians 1:21-23---bottom of page 78 to near bottom of page 79.
  - Hebrews 3:5-6; 6:4-15; 10:26-31---near bottom of page 78 to middle of page 88.
  - Some prominent scriptures in which the unconditional (an act of faith) security concept of Dispensational thought seeks support, and comment---middle of page 88 to near bottom of page 92.
10. The ceremonies, rituals, and feasts prescribed by God under the old covenant were to be performed in *the land*, the place of Israel’s inheritance and rest, and are fulfilled in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus, and the coming of the Holy Spirit pursuant to the new covenant---bottom of page 92 to middle of page 103.
11. What is the time relationship of the coming of the Lord to: the Day of the Lord; the Day of Wrath; and the Day of God---middle of page 103 through the middle of page 121.
12. Abraham and the other Old Testament saints who “died in faith” were not anticipating a future inheritance on the present earth---middle of page 121 through top of page 125.
13. The full inheritance is explained in the book of Revelation---near top of page 125 to near top of 131.
14. Are all of God’s children “overcomers”, or are “overcomers” those who are faithful to do His commandments unto the end---near top of page 131 to near top of page 138.
15. God has made adequate provision for the overcoming of sin and the world to be the present experience of every child of God---near top of page 138 to near top of page 151.
16. The Apostle Paul explains the complete agreement between Romans 2:13, and Romans 3:20---near top of page 151 to top of page 162.
17. The time when the Lord will, without partiality, judge every person according to his or her works is related to His coming---top of page 162 to near top of 165.
18. Those persons who are in the first resurrection reign with Christ for 1000 years and are not hurt by the second death. Who lives not again until the 1000 years are finished---near top of page 165 through 167?









