

Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the
whole Counsel of GOD

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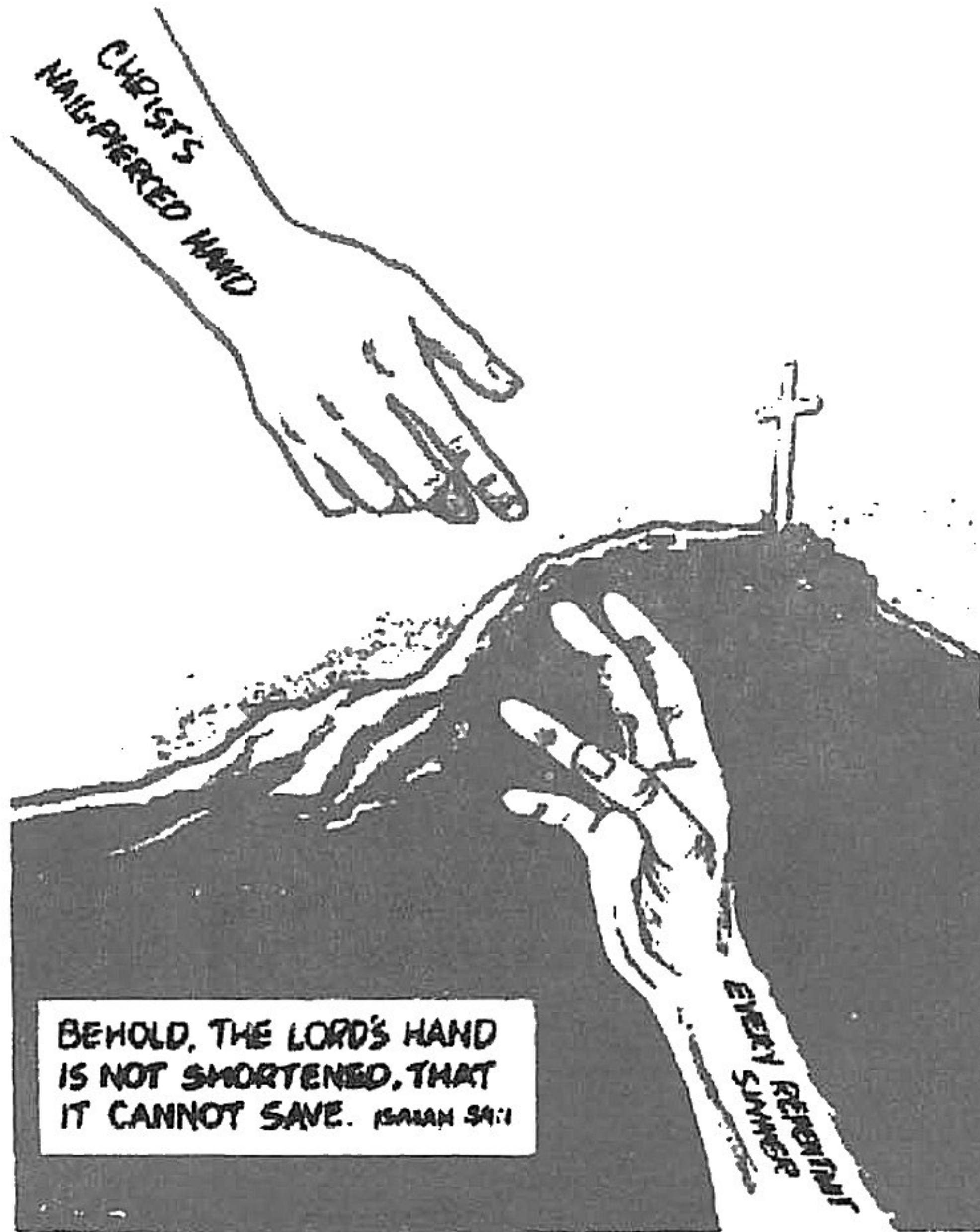
They shall beat
their swords into
plowshares, and
their spears into
pruninghooks:
nation shall not
lift up sword
against nation,
neither shall they
learn war any
more.

ISAIAH 2:4

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"STRETCHED OUT STILL"



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Editor: Gene Hawkins

Definite Sign Posts Of The End!

Gene Hawkins

“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.” Rom. 11:25

Paul penned these words at the very beginning of the Church Age, and though they most assuredly were applicable during those days of yore, they also reach down to our day for an even more pronounced fulfillment, which is coming to pass at this very hour. This tiny God Chosen Nation is under siege at this present time, the cause being that “...**blindness in part is happened to Israel....**”

Paul began his discourse in verse one of this chapter by asking the very pertinent and forthright question: “...Hath God cast away his people?...” He then answers his own query with the solid and unequivocal declaration, “...**God forbid,....**” further asserting that “**God hath not** cast away his people which he foreknew....” V. 2 The overall purpose of this chapter is to explain the “...mystery...” couched in the above text, which is that, “...through their fall (Israel) salvation is come unto the Gentiles,...” This simply means that because God has temporarily suspended His dealings with Israel as a nation during this present Church Age, the Gentiles have now become a priority in His overall purposes for mankind.

The “...blindness in part...” which has “...happened to Israel...” is directly because of their refusal to simply believe God. Note the following accusations against them. “For as ye (Gentiles) in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through **their unbelief**: Even so have these (Israel) also now **not believed**,... God hath concluded them all (Jew & Gentile) **in unbelief**, that he might have mercy upon all.” Rom. 11: 30-32

Thus, the present plight of Israel, along with the entire world, is due directly to unbelief, or man’s refusal to adhere to God’s Word. The apostle specifically asserts above that “God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew...” A summation of such foreknowledge is found in His Divine promise to this Chosen Nation during the long ago days of Moses. “And it shall

come to pass, if thou shalt **hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God**,... that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:" Deut. 28:1 This exaltation of Israel continues with the promise that, "The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself,... And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee.... The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, ...and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; **if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God**,.." Deut. 28:9-13

4 The evidence is quite clear that Israel continues to endure the consequences of her unbelief daily. They are under siege by their enemies, the current "thorn" being Hamas. They are not "**lending**" to other nations, but are rather greatly dependent on powers such as the U.S. to supply arms and monetary assistance. There is no way they may be categorized as "...the head, and not the tail..." of present day national powers. The good news is that Israel will without question occupy such a place when they accept their Messiah and do indeed attain total superiority over all nations of the earth. Hear the testimony of Isaiah which is yet to transpire. "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once?... Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? ...Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: **That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations**;... For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her (Jerusalem) like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye (Gentiles) suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." Isa 66:8-13 Some have concluded that the "...nation born in one day..." took place in 1948, when some national powers recognized Israel as a nation, but that can in no wise be the case, for the above scenario regarding the spiritual contribution of Jerusalem to the rest of the nations, simply did not come to pass. It will only be after Israel as a nation

accepts her Messiah, Christ Jesus, that all nations will be gathered to Jerusalem, wherein they will be nourished and sustained by God. God's promise to them immediately after their exodus from Egypt will finally be fulfilled. "And ye shall be unto me a **kingdom of priests, and an holy nation....**" Ex 19:6

The reality is that Israel must endure much difficulty and abuse by unbelieving Gentile nations before the above prophesied state comes to fruition. Contrariwise, the effects of her "**blindness in part...**" have taken center stage on the entire world scene today. If there has been any evidence of the national leaders calling on the Name of the Lord for deliverance, it has certainly been kept extremely quiet. Israel has vowed to destroy Hamas, and those who are for Israel applaud such a purpose and pray earnestly that God will prosper her even in spite of her unbelief. He does have a long history of such intervention. Hosea's record is plain that, "**...she did not know** that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal." Hos. 2:8 God did this in the very midst of Israel's idolatry, wherein she adopted Baal as her god, and even surrendered to this ungodly idol the very riches with which Divine Power had supplied her. Hosea adds further fuel to this flame as he describes God's conduct toward Israel, once again, **despite** their idolatrous ways. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.... they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images. I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but **they knew not** that I healed them." Hos. 11:1-3

God also provided Israel with great victories over her enemies, even though she remained **largely in unbelief**. One prominent example is illustrated by a powerful Canaanite king after Israel finally went into the land of promise, "And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan,..." Jud. 4:2 Deborah was the judge at that time and confessed Israel's idolatrous ways after their decisive victory. "The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel. **They chose new gods;** then was war in the gates: was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?" Jud. 5:7-8 God had previously instructed Barak through Deborah, "...Hath not the LORD God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take

with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun? And I will draw unto thee to the river Kishon Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and **I will deliver him into thine hand.**" Jud. 4:6-7 God was true to His promise, for Israel "...destroyed Jabin king of Canaan." Jud. 4:24 Will such a scenario be repeated with Hamas?

It has been true down through the ages that there has always been a small believing remnant in the midst of massive spiritual declension, and Paul clearly describes that same pattern at the end of this Church Age, declaring that, "...blindness **in part** is happened to Israel..."

6 Jesus likewise clearly prophesied of this same devastating end time period of trouble for Israel. "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.... For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled....there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Lk. 21:20-24 That prophecy began to be fulfilled in 70 A.D. when Titus the Roman invaded Jerusalem. However, the final declaration of this portion detailing the fact that "...Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," will be completed only during the 7 year tribulation which is just about to begin. All the signs of Jesus' coming begin "mildly" but increase both in frequency and intensity until their complete fulfillment during the devastating era wherein Jesus declared that, "...then shall be great tribulation, **such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.**" Matt. 24:21

The Master also declared, as both a warning and a promise, "...when these things **begin** to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Lk. 21:28 "...these things..." are legion, but one of the most prominent at this hour is the aforementioned unbelief of both Jew and Gentile. Israel is at the forefront as noted above, but God has "...concluded **all** in unbelief..." That malady was greatly evident recently when Senator Chuck Schumer (A Jew) literally railed against Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, accusing him of being

“a great obstruction to peace...” and insisting he be voted out of office. He was severely criticized by a number of his colleagues but the real problem here is unbelief, for men completely disregard God’s decree that only He “...changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings:...” Dan. 2:21 Such “railing” is therefore directly against God, but men seem not to care.

So-called “climate change” is another example of man’s gross unbelief. The primary mantra of the current American regime is that men must dispense with all use of fossil fuels in order to prevent “climate change” and preserve the planet. Emissaries have even been sent to other countries such as China and Russia in effort to persuade them to follow the same ridiculous plan as that implemented in the U.S. Those countries have no intention of doing such a thing, but Gentile unbelief lies at the core of such a demand, due to the fact that only God can control the world’s temperature. “And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to **scorch men with fire**. And men were scorched with **great heat**, and blasphemed the name of **God, which hath power over these plagues**: and they repented not to give **him glory**.” Rev. 16:8-9 Jesus also clearly predicted that “...there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars;...” Lk. 21:25 Such phenomenon, with all the resulting devastation caused by it, is already taking place, and as noted in the above citation, men have absolutely no control over it. They must eventually realize that man will not be able to do **anything** to thwart God’s intent regarding heat or any other judgment coming on this earth! Note further that which will happen with greater intensity during the tribulation period. “The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they (hail and fire) were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.” Rev. 8:7 This destructive hail produces even greater devastation as the tribulation advances. “And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great,” Rev. 16:21 At long last there is evidence here that ungodly men have now learned that these things are indeed beyond their control, for they “...blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail;...”

The above mentioned "...hail..." is declared to be "... about the weight of a talent,..." which some translate to range from 75 to 100 pounds. North Texas News outlets recently reported "baseball" size hail along with tornadoes. Remember once again, these reports are only the **beginning** of what is yet to come, according to God's Word.

8 Man's unbelief of God's Word is also quite evident in his modern display of immorality. Paul sets forth this truth at the very beginning of his letter to the Gentiles at Rome, wherein he describes men, "Who changed **the truth of God into a lie**, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator,.... For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet." Rom. 1:25-27

Isaiah pronounced the following condemnation against those who refuse to believe God's Word in these last days of the Church Age. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" Isa 5:20 These words most assuredly fit in regard to the man's standard of morality at this present hour, and God's people absolutely must not succumb to these "reasonable standards." Only God's Word must be accepted as His path for our lives today.

"...**blindness in part is happened to Israel....**" at this present hour, but God is never defeated, and Paul uses himself as proof of the fact that "...God **hath not** cast away his people,...." Rom. 11:2 "...For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." Rom. 11:1 He also described himself in I Cor. 15:8 "...as of one born out of due time, depicting the fact that he was basically born "**before** the rest of the nation." The Apostle to the Church, thus represents the entire nation of Israel and God's purposes for them. Consider how both follow the same pattern. Saul of Tarsus was an horrible man of unbelief by his own admission in his letter to the Galatians. "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation,

being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.” Gal. 1:13-14 He, like Israel, was in gross unbelief when he engaged in such conduct and was consequently struck down on the road to Damascus. He was temporarily smitten with blindness as is Israel at the present time. **But!**, as God also instructed Ananias, “...he is a **chosen vessel unto me**, to bear my name before the Gentiles,...” Acts 9:15 Just as Paul’s primary ministry was to the Gentiles, so also Israel will one day become head of the nations and lead the same into God’s ways of righteousness. “Thus saith the LORD of hosts; **In those days** it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of **him that is a Jew**, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.” Zech. 8:23 “...In those days...” means days following the horrific days of tribulation from which God had delivered His People. All nations will recognize God’s miraculous ability in preserving them and thus declare “...we have heard that God is with you.” Isaiah likewise adds this commentary: “And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, **to the house of the God of Jacob**; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.” Isa. 2:3

Believers must keep their eyes on Israel, for “...when these things (concerning them) **begin to come to pass**, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.... Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, **know ye** that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.” Lk. 21:28-31 Make no mistake. God is most assuredly beginning His dealings with Israel as a nation once again and He will continue “...until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.” which gives reference to the absolute end of the present Church Age. This Age of Grace will officially end when the 144,000 are caught up to glory around the **middle** of the tribulation week. Rev. 12 Those who would take their place in the Bridal Company must be attentive to the time when these things “...**begin to come to pass**,...” for their promise is that, “....I also will keep thee **from** (out of) the hour (7 years) of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” Rev. 3:10

Bible Landmarks

Troy Hill

Many Bible Landmarks have been removed in these last days. That is, the Modernists have tried to remove them, but I am glad that God's Word will not pass away. God's things will stand — God's Word will not pass away.

Let us note what God has to say about landmarks: "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor's landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it." Deut. 19:14 This was the landmark that should never be removed. The landmark in that time is not exactly like the one we have now, but it served the same purpose. Large stones were placed to divide the fields — the inheritance of the children of Israel of the different tribes and families, and the law was that they should not remove the landmarks. Of course, we have a different land; we are going to the land of Canaan — the spiritual land, and so we have landmarks of a different character, which I will speak about a little later.

10 "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour's landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen." Deut. 27:17 There were curses on anyone that disobeyed the law. Now this word "removed," is the same as our term "claim-jumper." We know what a "claim-jumper" is. There have been men who have tried to take other men's claims and steal their inheritances, and that is what this means here. Under law, there were curses on those who tried to remove their neighbour's landmarks. "Some remove the landmarks; they violently take away flocks and feed thereof." Job 24:2 Here we see that after the landmarks were taken away, the claim-jumpers imposed themselves further and robbed the people of their herds and flocks. They impoverished them and that is being done by the Modernist preachers. We know these things to be the truth.

Many are more prominent than others in removing the landmarks. We have read of some of them and heard of others who removed the landmarks. Many so-called ministers of the Gospel of our days are removing the landmarks of God's Word which has declared, "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." Prov. 22:28. Thanks be unto God, that the truth of God's Word has dated back from the time before God's Word was established. It has come to some in the process of time through

our Lord Jesus Christ. There are many today bound in error. There are many whose eyes are blinded, and they cannot see afar off. How we thank God, these landmarks of ours, given to the Church by revelation, thru the Apostle Paul cannot be removed from us. We stand and defend them to the uttermost.

"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." Eph. 1:11 We learn here where the Christian's inheritance is located. The Old Testament types are wonderful, but thank God, the Christian has some inheritance too. We have landmarks that show our inheritance to us and also how we have a right to it. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance." It is through our Lord Jesus Christ that we have fallen heirs to it. We are glad that it has been provided, not because we are looking for the Lord, nor because we hope to be saved, but because of Christ's death. It was settled long ago that we were to get an inheritance. God has given us everlasting life, and through this everlasting life, there is an inheritance laid up in Heaven for all those who believe. How many people are wasting their time! They refuse to develop their inheritance. Thank God for the privilege of obtaining our inheritance, that is taking hold of it. We must come to Jesus to get our inheritance, for only in Christ have we an inheritance. These things that are laid up in Heaven will never be taken away. We are glad they are not hidden in the ground where they will canker, and where moth and rust doth corrupt. Praise the Lord for this inheritance that we have in Jesus Christ.

11

We rejoice over and again as we take inventory of what we possess in Him. What hope we have! Praise God, it gives us courage to go on. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20:28 Paul here warns the Saints, because he knows what is going to take place. Wolves will enter in among the flock and this is the trait of the wolves — they never spare the sheep. He declares further, "Also of your ownelves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His

grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Acts 20:29

Praise God! These are wonderful verses, and the very things Paul said would come to pass, did come to pass. The landmarks were removed in the Dark Ages. God has given us the Pauline Gospel again. Thank God for this message that Paul defended. During the Dark Ages these things were taken away, but I am glad for those who later were raised up and have been staunch believers in God's Word. They have sent it forth by word of mouth, by testimonies, by writings and many different ways. We refuse to have anything else, because we know where these errors will lead to. Now we know that is not being done. Everywhere today there are masses that have not heard the truth. We see them scattered here and there—passing through, hungry and thirsty and nowhere to go to get fed. We are glad that some have seen the light and are satisfied. They have been loosed from legality and can shout the victory. Praise God for the Truth of His Word!

12 “The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.” I Tim. 4:1-5. We are not surprised, for we see these things actually coming to pass even as Paul declared by the Spirit they would. I don't suppose there ever was a time, like these present days, when there is so much delusion — so much error. It is wonderful to be established in God's Word! It is wonderful to stand for these landmarks and to stand boldly defending them. I gave to Brother Franklin a piece I cut out of a paper sometime ago where a minister left a church because he was preaching the blood of Christ and the people did not want the Truth. Because some leaders have been faithful and willing to stand on God's Word through thick and thin, sunshine and rain, and refuse to let anyone remove these landmarks, we are in the way of blessing, trusting Him on every hand, and are truly making many rich. We are glad tonight for those who haven't been in the way very long, that they

have had others to make the way before them. There is error of every kind —not only in large cities, but in the small towns and in have had others to make the way before them. There is error of the hamlets. People are not rejoicing in the Truth today.

Many are saying there is nothing in the teaching of the blood of Christ. Many have taken away the doctrine of the Holy Spirit ; many have left out the healing of Christ for our bodies. If you let go these landmarks you get a large crowd, but standing for the Truth is worth it all—it is worth everything we have to do. "Cast thy bread upon the waters : for thou shalt find it after many days. " Eccl. 11:1. Thank God, our new man is being built up, He it is that will obtain the inheritance. The old man is being put in the background. We must let loose of him and his things. God gives us grace when problems come. He gives us far more than we let go of in the natural. "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." II Tim. 2:3. A host of these things the Scriptures say are coming to pass. We may be in the minority, but Thank God, it's those that stand for God's Word that are going to be given their inheritance in that day by the Lord Jesus Christ. Some believe in getting saved by the Grace of God, but they do not go on and get the Holy Spirit and they separate from you, if you believe in divine healing, and rejoice in the Holy Spirit and His gifts and power. But why try to soft-soap folk? God's Word is the only thing that will do them any good. These landmarks must not be removed. We intend to stand for them as long as we are here. The Holy Spirit is the earnest of the inheritance. He is a part of the riches that we will later receive. "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein" Jer. 6:16 We like the old paths. They are good enough for us too. "Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken"—V.17. God has set faithful ministers over us today, and God has given us those who know God's Word, who faithfully give it forth, and we are to listen to the sound of the trumpet. Learn to know the sound and then walk in the old paths, even though they might be filled with rocks and thorns. Even when they lead in the way of adversity. Victory is ours, because Victory comes from Christ. If we appropriate His Word it gives us victory again and again.

who have had to stand in the midst of opposition. There have been those who have stood alone for many years, and thank God, now they are getting much fruit after the years. You may not get the applause of the world, and you may not get the appreciation of some Christians, but you will get the great inheritance that God has promised. We would rather stand with the Lord, and stand alone, than to stand with the world, without Jesus Christ. This is not a time to look down. This is the time to strengthen the people of God. "Yet a little while," and the vision will be fulfilled. He that shall come will not tarry." Heb. 10:23 "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised." It is easy to stand and shout when everyone is with you, but how about standing when there is not anyone with you? I am glad that does not mean to hold fast for salvation. That is in God's Hand, but our profession is another thing. We can hold fast to it by faith, and without wavering. Yes, these are the days to stand. We have heard many people in the past say how they were looking for the coming of the Lord, but many of them today are sitting by the wayside. Many have lost the victory, They have

14 lost their first love and do not look for the Lord's coming quite so soon. But it is getting brighter instead of darker. Even though the world is in darkness, we can look at the Lord Jesus Christ and at God's Word. It is different when we see the landmarks of our inheritance and stand boldly for them. Many do not see them, but many do, thank God! We are glad we can see these landmarks and have the privilege of defending the Truth in these evil days.

(Reprint 1942)

COULD THIS BE THE DAY?

Could this be the day of His coming
For which we have waited so long,
The day for which we are living,
The hope that gives us a song?

He's coming in power and glory.
Look up! For He will not delay.
His bride will be caught up to meet Him--
Oh, tell me! Could this be the day?

Beula Clark

THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS

Author Unknown

"...make straight His paths..." Matt. 3:3

Two thousand years ago that trumpet blast was heard, after apparently a period of 400 years of silence on God's part. No prophetic voice was heard to reprove men of their wickedness or to tell them of the love of God for them. There was a famine in the land for the Word of God. Just imagine, not one gospel message in 400 years! What a dark time that was. Then one day, yes, happy day, the above message was heard. John the Baptist, the mighty trumpeter of God was announcing the arrival of the Savior of the world. There was a revival. Those who had ears to hear that voice came out unto him. All the land of Judea came out to be baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Jesus came among them, and He was baptized of John also and identified Himself with that ruined race of men. For three and one-half years Jesus walked among men, healing the sick, loosing men and women from Satanic power and doing good wherever He went. Cruel hands then nailed Him to the tree of shame and the very elements revolted at this treatment of the Son of God. A time of darkness fell once again over all the earth, a different sort of darkness, this time of the elements. But the darkest hour was when God turned His back on His Own Son as He hung on the cross identified with you and me.

15

But soon there will be another voice, another trumpeter announcing the coming again of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. After the silence of these two-thousand years that voice will break forth and call men to repentance and preparation to meet the Lord who will be coming from Heaven with power and great glory. That coming will end the greatest hour of darkness (The Great Tribulation) the world has known since Calvary, and again God will have His faithful ones on the scene, to point to His Son. This will be about seven years after the full overcomers have been secretly taken to Heaven. The light will shine out from Heaven and the Lord Himself will come triumphant and glorious to set up His Kingdom on the earth and a new day will dawn for this world. Heaven will come down into this world of sorrow and pain; and gladness will abound. A lasting happiness will come to the world with Jesus' coming to them. God Himself will dwell with men and they will be His people and He will be their God.

Alpha and Omega

Dr. Vicky Moots

“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” Rev. 22:13

Alpha and Omega are the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet. This is Jesus’ speaking. How can someone who has no beginning or ending be the beginning and the end? He is speaking in relationship to time on earth and to His dealings with us in our lives. I would like to discuss what the Scripture has to say regarding some of the ways in which He is the beginning and the end, the first and the last to us.

Genesis 1:1 reveals the very first beginning: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” We know by John 1:1-3 that Jesus, the Word, was involved in that first creative event, for it states, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

16 Mankind had a physical beginning because of Jesus who created all things by the Word of His mouth. When we are born into this world, we become a part of that earthly creation. When we are born again, we become a new creation, as Paul declares in II Cor. 5:17: “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [creation]: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.” Christ, therefore, is our new beginning; it is “in Christ” that we become new. And at the same time, He becomes the end of our old life, for “old things are passed away.”

Hebrews 12:2 describes for us another beginning and end which is found in Jesus: “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith...” Our faith begins with Jesus, and He is faithful to bring it to completion. He is the Author and Captain of our faith, and He is faithful to lead us through life all the way to the end when we shall see Him face to face. At that point, faith will no longer be needed. He will have brought us by faith to the finish line.

Jesus is always faithful to finish whatever He has started in our life because He is our Alpha and Omega, our Beginning and End. Paul confirms this for us in Phil. 1:6: “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Jesus begins working in

our lives through the Holy Spirit after we are born again, to draw us closer to Him, to conform us into His image. We are changed little by little, from glory to glory. He will continue to perform the work in us until our race is finished, when our life on earth is ended or when He returns. Our part is to allow Him to do the work, to let Him be the Alpha and the Omega to us.

Next, let us take a look at I Cor. 1:30, from which we learn that Christ is the beginning of righteousness: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness..." We have no righteousness of our own outside of Christ. It is only in Christ that we become righteous, as Paul states in Phil. 3:9: "And be found in him [Christ], not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ..." Paul further clarifies this in Rom. 10:4: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The law could only produce self-righteousness through self-works in those who tried to keep it. So, Christ became the end of self-righteousness and the beginning of true righteousness.

Another important way in which Christ in the "First" is related to the resurrection, as we read in I Cor. 15:20: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." The term "slept" refers to believers who have died. If Christ is the firstfruits, then that means that there will be more to follow, who will also be resurrected. This is declared by Paul in vv. 22-23: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive...Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." Paul sums all of this up in Col. 1:18: "And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead..." Because of His resurrection, Christ has brought an end to the sting of death for all Christians. Hallelujah!

And, last of all, because He is Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, there will one day be no more death, as we read in Rev. 21:4: "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..."

*** God gurarantees grace for every thing but our worries.**

REFLECTIONS

... From the Editor

“Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?...”

Job 38:22

God Himself asked this question of Job as He put the finishing touches on a life-changing experience, wherein Satan had been given permission to severely test him. One could only wonder how many of God's people today could answer this question.

The word “...treasures...” literally means “a depository, a treasure house” indicating a storehouse of valuables. This definition would be verified by Shishak King of Egypt when “...he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD,...” during the reign of Rehoboam. Thus, the question must be posed, “What is the value of snow?” God's answer is immediate as He continues asking Job, “...hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?” V. 23

18 This simply means that the hail, associated with snow, becomes a weapon of war, and devastating against an enemy.

One of the greatest “...treasures of the snow...” depicts the very righteousness and purity of Christ. Daniel beautifully portrays this striking image. “I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow...” Dan. 7:9 The disciples likewise looked upon Him clothed in righteous glory on the Mt. of Transfiguration as “...his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.” Mk. 9:3 John also beheld “...one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot,...His head and his hairs...white as snow;...” Rev. 1:13-14

Snow also depicts cleansing, as Isaiah exhorts all men to, “Wash you, make you clean ... Come now,... saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; ...” Isa 1:16-18 David also chimes in with his very personal experience and desire for purity, crying out “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: (pure) wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” Psa. 51:7

Snow's value also lies in the fact that it comes from God, wherewith Job was apparently aware. “God thundereth

marvelously...For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth;...” Job 37:5-6 David likewise possessed such knowledge as he described a number of God’s multiple abilities in his paean of praise recorded in Psalm 147. “Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem;...” V. 12 He then continues, sounding out such praise regarding things that **only** God can do, among which is “...he giveth snow like wool:...”

It is rather intriguing to ponder the reference to snow in Prov. 25 in relation to the fact that snow indeed comes only from God. “As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.” Prov. 25:13 Snow in time of harvest must be seen as reproof, reprimand, or correction. Note Samuel’s response when Israel demanded a king. “Is it not wheat harvest today? I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive...that your wickedness is great,...in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.” 1 Sam. 12:17 The message immediately preceding this reference to “...snow in the time of harvest...” also carries the thought of reproof. “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise **reprover** upon an obedient ear.” Prov. 25:11-12 The subject here is “A word fitly spoken...” and its value is that of “...gold....silver...fine gold...” Furthermore, such words come from a “...reprover...” and would most assuredly be valued by “...the soul of his masters....” (God) as well as by “...an obedient ear.” The snow of correction from God is most assuredly valuable even though it may often come at a most inopportune time to be effective.

19

The value of snow follows this same pattern in Prov. 31, where the virtuous woman proclaims that she “...is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet.” Prov. 31:21 This woman has learned that regardless of the snow of **adversity** which comes her way, there is no reason for fear, because she knows assuredly that all her household are protected by the blood of Jesus.

Finally, Isaiah likens the snow unto the Word of God. “...my thoughts are not your thoughts,...as the heavens are higher than the earth, ...as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, So shall my word be... it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please,...” Isa 55:8-11 Just as the snow comes from God and does not return to heaven, having accomplished nothing, so God’s Word **NEVER** remains neutral. It will always have an effect whether men believe it or not.

GH

CHRIST WHOM WE PREACH

S. O. Sheldon.

"We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." "For the Jews require a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." "For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." "For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God."

20 Christ crucified in weakness; Christ, the King of the Jews!, brought as a lamb to the slaughter. **"In His humiliation, His judgment was taken away; and who shall declare His generation? for His life is taken from the earth."** Weakness? Yes, this is a picture of weakness — a King nailed to a cross, numbered with the transgressors, dying as a criminal, despised and rejected, made a curse, and forsaken of God. That was God's appointed way to redeem mankind; and He surely had to go that way. That is the way to the throne. **"Be wise now therefore, ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth."** Such a stumbling block as this, to come to a throne by the way of a cross. How people have stumbled here; how foolish this has been considered; yes, to the uninstructed and worldly wise it is the worst kind of foolishness; but "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. Where is the wise? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" This King Who was crucified in weakness is some day to be crowned KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS.

This way of weakness, how the people try to dodge it, and try to save themselves from going by the way of the cross; how hard it seems to throw up both hands and admit that "I am weak," even a failure in myself. I am not a king, for I am unable to rule my own spirit. It pleases God for us to take this attitude, and confess that we are helpless, just as helpless as the man who faces death at the hands of the highwayman, when he orders "Hands Up;" how easy then to confess that he is weak and helpless. When facing death, he can do nothing but put up both hands and surrender. So God asks us to willingly surrender, take the place of weakness, and face death by crucifixion voluntarily,

that we too may LIVE BY THE POWER OF GOD.

We preach CHRIST CRUCIFIED; we preach not a Christ in the flesh, not a baby Christ, nor a child Christ, nor Christ the unsandaled Man of Galilee, neither a Christ in Egypt, but only CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

Thus, Paul, determined to know nothing, but Christ and Him Crucified. Hence, in all of Paul's preaching and writing he never mentions even once the birth of Jesus, the early childhood, or young manhood, nor the earthly ministry of Jesus. He says nothing of the miracles, nor the healings wrought by Jesus. He seldom mentions any of the teachings of Jesus. He quotes the "... more blessed to give than to receive," because this expresses the basis of Paul's gospel. If there is one thing that Christendom needs today, surely it is to get a vision of the CRUCIFIED, RESURRECTED, GLORIFIED CHRIST, the living head of the Church, as Paul sets Him forth, no longer in weakness, but mighty to save, and strong to deliver, able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him; for all-power in heaven and in earth is given unto Him.

Surely the dying thief took the place of weakness and while he could do nothing to help himself, yet he throws himself on the mercy of God, and acknowledges Jesus as LORD, and looks ahead to the time when Jesus shall become a king in reality, and asks to be remembered at that time. Jesus did not say "Alright, I will remember you in that day, when I get to be King;" He rather said: "**TODAY thou shalt be with me in Paradise.**" Christ was crucified, died that day, and yet there was a sense in which Christ was alive, and so was the thief. Died, and yet he liveth, and liveth by the power of God. Oh what a life to live. The mighty heavenly dynamite that raised up Christ from the dead is the same power that quickens the dead and causes them to live in Christ Jesus. He was crucified in weakness; but He liveth by the power of God, and because He lives, every believer lives also. "**As He is, so are we in this world.**" It pays to take our place in death with Christ that we may be one with Him in Life.

Adam the first was never a baby; but he came from the hand of the Creator a full grown, intelligent, perfect human being, "A MAN," pure innocent, and the most perfect man that ever lived, humanly speaking; yet he was only FLESH, nothing Divine in him; he needed to be BORN into the family of God, for "He was of the earth, earthy."

Now while Adam was only "flesh," and the "head of the old creation," he was not a savage, he did not evolve, neither did he need to attend school to get an education; hence we read that **"Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field, for God created them and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them; and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof."** Thus, we see that Adam was intelligent enough to name all the living creatures that God created. With all man's boast of learning, evolving (downward), development and wisdom, is there a man living today who could name every fowl, and every living creature on earth, in the air, and in the seas, without having been taught those names? By no means! Then man has not fallen upwards into a higher condition; but sad to say, man has fallen downward, for the nature of the human is to get worse instead of better. Hence, for nearly six thousand years man has continually grown worse and worse.

22 Long, long ago God saw that there was no hope of man improving his own condition, for while God at first had pronounced all of his creation **"Good,"** yea **"VERY GOOD,"** yet the Devil, that OLD SERPENT, spoiled the best, and highest of God's creation, viz: Adam, the head of the human family. Man, and all of his posterity are by nature **"RUINED."** God knew they would be, and He had no confidence in "the FLESH" from the beginning; so He planned to **Make a new man.**

Such a wondrous plan, to make a new man, a man whom the Devil could not spoil; though even this, the Devil tried to spoil, and instead of spoiling, he himself was spoiled. Thus, God is bringing in a NEW CREATION, and the head of this new man is Christ, and this new man lives in the realm of the Spirit.

Christ, the last Adam, the Lord from heaven, was crucified and raised from the dead, and is become the Head of a New Creation. God put away the entire old creation in the death of Christ on the cross. Hence, He refuses to recognize man any longer as descended from Adam; but rather counts the whole race as put to death in the death of His Son at Calvary. Henceforth, God knows no man after the flesh, neither good nor bad; for He has made ONE NEW MAN. And this is the Christ whom we preach.

(Reprint 1920)

COUNTERFEITS

Question: Did you ever see a counterfeit ten dollar bill?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Why was it counterfeited?

Answer: Because a ten dollar bill was worth counterfeiting.

Question: Was the ten dollar bill to blame?

Answer: No.

Question: Did you ever see a scrap of brown paper counterfeited?

Answer: No.

Question: Why?

Answer: Because it was not worth counterfeiting.

Question: Did you ever see a counterfeit Christian?

Answer: Yes. Lots of them.

Question: Why was Christianity counterfeited?

Answer: Because it was worth counterfeiting.

Question: Was Christianity to blame?

Answer: No.

Question: Did you ever see a counterfeit unbeliever?

Answer: No, never.

Question: Why?

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## WATER

In a wilderness He found me—  
Desert land of barren waste—  
Nothing there for my refreshing,  
Naught found I my thirst to slake.

As I languished—faint of thirsting—  
Life's mirages seemed to mock  
When I saw my smitten Savior,  
Water poured forth from the Rock.

Clear as crystal—flowing freely  
From eternal throne above:  
Cleansing—ever satisfying,  
Soundless as My Savior's love

Margaret Keener

## **Seven Graces Of The Holy Spirit**

C. E. Foster

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 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. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." II Pet. 1:5-9

The word translated "...faith,..." is used 242 times in the New Testament. It means persuasion, reliance on Christ for salvation, constancy, belief, fidelity, a living, divinely-implanted principle.

24

"...Add..." is the same word that is translated "minister" in verse 11. It means to furnish besides, to fully supply, to contribute. If we add these graces that Peter names, God will add to us the abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word that is translated "virtue" means manliness, valor, or excellence. It is used in Philippians 4: 8. As we think on these things, we are adding virtue to our faith. The same word sometimes is translated "praises." The fat from all the Levitical offerings belonged to the Lord, and it was burned upon the altar. That speaks to us of the excellencies of Christ, the most precious things of Christ that God fed upon. Christ should fill our vision and we should continually feed upon Him. The virtues of the Lord Jesus Christ will be manifested in our lives to others.

The word, translated "knowledge" means knowledge acquired by learning, by effort, or by experience. We must dig into God's Word and search it out. The word "knowledge" in the second verse means also full discernment, acknowledgment. It is taken from a root word which means to recognize, to become fully acquainted with. When we are first saved and filled with the Holy Ghost, we are acquainted with Him in a way; but there are heights, lengths and depths that we have never known. We must



experience them in order to know them in our lives.

The word "temperance" means self-control, especially masterful. We master everything in our lives that is contrary to God's will. We bring every thought into captivity to the Lord Jesus Christ. It means that we have a governor on us. Power without a governor is destructive. Some folk go wild over the power of God because they have not a governor on them. There is a time to put the stopper in as well as a time to pull the stopper out. Then when we speak, it will be effective. Temperance is illustrated in Prov. 16:32 and 25:28. We should be temperate in all things. To have our own spirit under control is what God wants. If we are troubled with temper, anger, jealousy, or any work of the flesh, we are to add temperance, self-control. If we are under the control of the Holy Spirit, we will control ourselves.

The word, translated "patience," means cheerful, or hopeful endurance, constancy. There are some things we have to endure in the Christian life. Some things we have to suffer. Many of God's people imagine that they ought to be filled with joy all the time and never have anything going wrong, and have nothing to endure. We are to add endurance to our faith, as well as the other things. God leads us to the place where endurance will be cheerful and hopeful. When we know God is getting the glory, we can endure trouble cheerfully. 25

The word, translated "godliness" means piety, especially the Gospel scheme. The same word is translated holiness. It is taken from a root word which means severance, devotedness. It is used also in the 11th verse of the third chapter.

The word "brotherly kindness," means to be fond of the brethren, fraternal affection. That is the fraternity that God loves. In Romans 12:10, we have this word used again, where the Apostle Paul says, "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another."

The word translated "charity" is the same word that is translated "love" so many times. It means love, affection, or benevolence, a spontaneous love flowing out to the people of God. It is love that wants to bless and is free to give gifts to others, that others might be benefitted. We want to notice the results of

this. To those that heed this admonition, there will be glorious results.

It is not only necessary for them to be in us, but God wants them to abound. The word "abound" means to increase, to superabound. They must be practical in our lives. The word that is translated "barren" means idle. You will have plenty to do. You will have plenty of places to witness for Christ. These graces operating in your life will make you to be concerned about others, and at every opportunity you will just want to do what God wants you to do. "Barren" also means useless. To have these graces is a preventative of backsliding. You can never backslide if you add these graces to your lives.

**"Make your calling and election sure."** The word "sure" is the same word used in the 19th verse. It means positive, more, in a greater degree, stable, steadfast, manifest. "Abundantly" means copiously, or richly; the opposite of "scarcely" in 1 Peter 4:18. They who add these graces will have an abundant entrance. They will go through in great triumph. On the other hand, the  
26 people of God that refuse to add these graces will also have the results given of their condition.

The word, translated "blind," means opaque as if smoking, blind physically or mentally. It is taken from a root word, meaning to envelop with smoke, to be proud, self-conceited, slowly consumed without flame, cigarette smoke, or some other evil habit. The reason some are not going on with God, is, they are enveloped with smoke. The way to get rid of the smoke is to get rid of the thing that makes the smoke. High-minded, lifted up with pride, they are making a smoke; but the sad thing is there is no fire. They are slowly consumed without flame. If you get the flame, the smoke will disappear. Smoke blinds, suffocates, darkens, soils, destroys and has a bad odor. We cannot avoid being consumed. But why be consumed into smoke? Get the flame and be consumed unto profit for yourself and for others.

(Reprint 1935)

\* Trust not in the world. It never pays what it promises.

# HIS POVERTY, OUR WEALTH

A. S. Copley

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” II Cor. 8:9

This is one of the most comprehensive verses in the Bible. It confronts us with two extremes — the deep and unwordable poverty of Jesus Christ was the price of our infinite wealth in Christ. Many times I suffer pain in my heart because many of God's ministers do not preach on this text, which is so inexhaustibly full of meaning and meat for us. May we feed upon it together.

The eighth and ninth chapters of Second Corinthians are a symposium on the grace of giving. They are the most complete treatise on this subject in the New Testament. Our text stands in this chapter as a most beautiful and costly jewel of Divine truth. It is the second and basic argument and persuasion for our liberality; for Christ gave Himself up freely for us all. He gave all of Himself.

In II Cor. 9:8, we see another scintillating jewel. The unsurpassed liberality of the assembly in Philippi was the first persuasion which Paul used to stir up the Corinthian saints to fulfill the promises they had made a year before. The Philippians denied themselves and were willing beyond their ability to give. Finally, the apostle gives some sundry points of personal and practical profit that accrue from hilarious giving. He quotes from the Old Testament to confirm his useful teaching on the use of money; then ends the ninth chapter by exclaiming, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift."

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," writes the apostle. Of course, the Corinthians knew; for Paul had preached the Grace of Christ to them. He also adorned the Gospel which he proclaimed by being an example to the flock in every way. We read frequently of the Grace of God in the New Testament, especially in Paul's writings. We see the face of grace and smell her fragrance on every page.

## **What Do We Mean By Grace?**

Grace means that Jehovah lavishes all His wealth on the human family without one iota of merit from them. Indeed, if man's merit were mixed with God's goodness, grace would not be grace. It can only flow upon the undeserving, the helpless, the

ungodly, even sinners. The God of everything, through grace, has redeemed a race of nothings, that He might display His wondrous might and glory. Grace is an attribute of God, which only sin and transgression could call forth. It could never have been bestowed upon the likes of Gabriel, or Michael, or any of their sinless associates, nor even upon Adam before he fell.

Sinful man cannot merit His favor. He cannot earn it with money, by sacrifice, by tears, by repenting, nor by suffering. God bestowed His grace upon man before he knew that he needed it. God's unasked-for and unearned grace provided a perfect sacrifice, whereby only man could be redeemed and saved.

Grace planned the death of the Holy One, the Perfect One, as the only remedy for humanity's dire and dark condition. "Grace redeemed a wretch like me." Jesus Christ, through an un-deserved death, became the channel of our salvation.

28 Hence, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ means that through His abject poverty, redemption was wrought. Do you get that? Poverty was the price of our salvation — the poverty of the richest Man that ever lived. Grace robbed God's Son of all His honor, glory, and wealth in order to save us and make us a new creation. Will you ever again think lightly of Divine grace?

We will more deeply appreciate the poverty of Christ in our behalf, if we know something of His wealth. As the eternally begotten Son of God, we cannot grasp the infinitude of our Lord's wealth. He was "the Word of God:" He was God. He dwelt in the bosom of the Father; that is, He was unspeakably dear to His Father. He was with the Father and the Holy Spirit before the worlds were framed; and through Him everything was made that has been made. He was the direct Agent of all creation. The Son was equal with the Father in power, in authority, in glory, in sharing all the unmeasured wealth of Deity. Hence, Paul wrote of Him saying, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation." He did not seek to be what He was already from eternity. Instead, He voluntarily became the poorest of the poor. The mysterious exchange of His infinite wealth of honor, authority and dignity for abject poverty is expressed in the seven descending statements of Phil. 2:6-8. These are freighted with deepest meaning, and indicate the fulness of the grace of Christ.

1. "He made Himself of no reputation." He literally emptied Himself. He refused to announce the riches of His glory,

and His place as the Son of God. Throughout the Gospels, He is recorded as calling Himself the Son of Man. Even in John's record where His Deity is emphasized, He termed Himself as "the Son of Man." Believers received a revelation that He was God's Son, and demons acknowledged Him to be such; yet He made Himself of no reputation as God.

2. "He was made in the likeness of men." What a coming down! From the likeness of Deity, the Son, of His own free will, took upon Himself the image of humanity. The Creator became a creature. What high fellow among men would stoop like that? Not one. Nay, men always are ambitious to become greater rather than smaller. They are like Satan in that respect.

3. "He took upon Him the form of a servant." This is a step further down. The Son was "in the form of God" from eternity past, but He laid aside that majestic, dazzling, glorious, sublime, unlimited, spiritual form and took instead, an ordinary, homely, limited form of a slave. How poorly we grasp that exchange! What human despot would turn and serve his fellows unless he were compelled to do so? But Jesus let His ear be nailed to the doorpost of His Father's will to be His bondsman forever. Only during His millennial reign will He be equal in authority with His Father. After that, "shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him" -- 1 Cor. 15:28. Such is the condescending mystery of the grace of Christ, that He should assume a lower place than He had with His Father, in order to redeem mankind.

4. "He humbled Himself." Beloved, can you take that in? He had already descended from honor to dishonor, from Deity to humanity, and from Ruler to slave. Nevertheless, we read further, "He humbled Himself." He took still a lower place of His own good will. This is what natural man does last; if in fact, he does it at all. Man may pretend to be pious, but that is not for God's glory. Let us ever bear in mind that the holy Man Christ Jesus humbled Himself. How few believers really learn to imitate Him in this particular. Hence, few saints experience the exaltation to which true humility gives birth.

5. "He became obedient." This was the outward expression of Jesus' humility. As the eternally-begotten Son, He owed obedience to no one any more than did the Father or the Holy Spirit; but being found in fashion as a man and as a servant, He obeyed the behests of His Father. He did nothing of His own accord. He never spoke of (or, from) Himself. John 7:17,18

and 12:49 and 14:10. We cannot comprehend one Person of the Deity obeying the other; but it was as clothed in human flesh that He obeyed. Even this is a great mystery.

6. "Unto death." That is, Jesus was obedient up to, or until death. He did not obey death, but His obedience to the Father plunged Him into the very clutches of death. In the natural, man recoils from death. It is an enemy. By observation, men have learned that death takes them into unknown darkness, whence no one has ever returned. It separates friends without any hope of a reunion. It is shrouded in gloom and despair. Jesus alone yielded to its cold demands in hope, because He knew that He could not be held by its power, but would be raised again. His resurrection affords the only hope of any life beyond death. The hopeful notions of mystics and philosophers are empty fantasies and deceptive myths. Old Testament believers looked forward to a resurrection, because God promised it to them on the ground of the resurrection of the Redeemer. Ours is not a mystic, or philosophic hope, springing from man's brain, or from the teaching of demons. Ours is a living hope, revealed in the Word of God and based upon the resurrection of the Son of God. Hallelujah!

30

7. "Even the death of the cross." This is the final plunge, and one of the greatest into the Master's poverty. Without it, His bowl of poverty would not have been filled to the brim. Had He died an ordinary death, He would still have possessed some wealth, but our redemption would have been impossible. All His immense bowl of riches had to be poured into the mysterious bowl of abject poverty.

Death by crucifixion was the manner of executing the very worst of criminals in that day. Jesus literally took the place of Barabbas, an outlaw, an insurrectionist, a murderer, a thief. No cross was placed there for Jesus, for He deserved none. But, "He was bruised for our iniquities. He tasted death for every man." Every man deserved to die, even as Barabbas. This dark picture appears even darker by the presence of two other criminals dying on crosses on either side of that majestic Redeemer and Conqueror.

Jesus did not die as a martyr; that would not have wrought redemption. He died as a transgressor. He was made "sin for us." He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. He was stripped of all honor and glory as a holy Man and as a great Prophet, because He

hung there as a common criminal. He was suspended between heaven and earth, forsaken by God above, and by men below -- dwelling in no man's land for three hours.

His foes insultingly cried, "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross and save thyself." And, "He saved others, himself he cannot save." They wagged their heads and spit in His holy face, the treatment due to one disdained and cast out forever by the whole world. Holy Justice turned from Him, and He cried, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

Beloved, can you picture it? Nay, none of us can. The innocent, holy Son of Man, had nothing left — no place, no friend, no honor, no glory, no fame, no power, no authority — absolutely nothing left, but death. He hung there physically and morally stripped before men and judicially naked before the court of Divine justice. Indeed, in a moment, He who was once boundless in wealth, became the poorest of the poor. For three cold, relentless, friendless, dark hours, God's dear Son was in direst poverty, until He cried as only the Conqueror could cry,

**"IT IS FINISHED!"**

The original Greek text reads, "It has been finished!" The redemption announced in Gen. 3:15 and figured by Adam's coats of skin, was accomplished. The redemption believed in by Abel and promised to the patriarchs and prophets was fully complete. The whole human race had just been redeemed and a great salvation purchased for all who would believe on Jesus. 31

The Greek word, "teleo" means to "pay a tax due." This is truly wonderful. God levied an enormous tax upon mankind for transgressing His holy law. That tax was "death." Man could not pay that tax and live again. Jesus became that all-sufficient Taxpayer. Hence in exclaiming "Tetelestai," It is finished, He also cried, "Man's tax has been fully paid. He is free, **free!! FREE!**" The grace of Christ put mankind where Divine compassion can forgive him, and Divine justice dare not interfere. Hallelujah, forever!

### **Wealth of Believers**

"He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." Our riches in Christ is a prolific theme. God is eternally satisfied with His Son's work of redemption. The measure of our wealth corresponds with the poverty which the Redeemer endured. Unmeasured was His poverty; likewise, unmeasured is

our wealth. Ephesians, our wholesale house of spiritual supplies, contains "the riches of grace, the riches of the glory, the exceeding riches of His grace," etc. All of Paul's epistles spread out before us like a dazzling panorama all of our possessions in Christ. Now, as seven descending steps made Jesus a pauper; so by seven ascending steps, God highly exalted Him to highest glory. Likewise, the wealth which His poverty purchased for us, comes to us in seven magnificent unfoldings:

1. Justification. This is the first and basic possession. The moment a sinner believes on Jesus, God pardons all his sins and justifies him, or pronounces him righteous. He imputes to him the righteousness of His Son, because He imputed to His Son, the sinner's guilt. What an unthinkable exchange! One moment he is naked before a holy God and the next moment he is clothed with unsullied righteousness.

32 2. Regeneration. This is the second item of unspeakable riches: It is also called the "new birth." As emphatically as the sinner experienced a natural birth once, so by faith in Jesus he experiences a supernatural, spiritual birth. He is born of incorruptible seed, even the Word of God. Now these two blessings, justification and regeneration, occur at the same time. This double experience is commonly called salvation, or conversion.

This salvation brings a threefold change to the sinner who believes. First, a change of relationship. He is turned from a sinner to a saint by imputation. Christ's righteousness is counted over to him. He is no longer treated as a transgressor, but as a righteous man. Second, a change of nature. He is turned from a sinner to a saint by impartation. Christ's holiness is imparted to him. He partakes of the Divine nature. He becomes a holy one. "If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creation. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." II Cor. 5:17

Third, a change of position. "God translates him into the kingdom of His dear Son" -- Col. 1:13. The first two changes demand this one. A justified, holy man, a new creature, cannot live in the dark realm of the devil. Hence, every new born soul is enveloped with the mysterious presence of the Lord. Satan recognized it as "an hedge about Job and his house and about all that he had on every side." Hallelujah! what a Savior! Suddenly the sinner becomes a saint; his darkness gives way to light and the pauper becomes fabulously rich. All is his in Christ, though he is a long time in experiencing it all. Salvation is very wonderful



and glorious, but it is only the beginning of our wealth. Many foolishly stop here and blindly miss 95 percent of what belongs to them in Jesus Christ.

3. The Gift of the Holy Spirit. In the days of the apostles, this item of Divine riches followed immediately after conversion. It should be so today. It is so, where people are properly taught. What a great privilege it is for everyone to be filled with the Spirit of God; and the necessity is as great as the privilege.

4. Divine Healing. Salvation from physical ailments is an important part of the Gospel. Jesus healed people of all manner of sickness and disease, and the apostles perpetuated these supernatural works. A ministry today that fails to cure sick folks is a weak and imperfect ministry. The God of Abraham glorifies His Son Jesus today by Divine healing, even as He did in the days of Peter and the other apostles — Acts 3:12, 13.

5. Sanctification. This, too, is a vital part of the believer's possessions in Christ. I do not refer to the so-called second-work kind of sanctification. It is not the kind that claims to take out the old man root and branch and eradicates inbred sin. But, Paul does outline in Romans 6 that practical sanctification comes by way of death, not by "consecration and extraction. Christ died for us and we died with Him over 1900 years ago. As we agree with the Lord that our old man, or self-life was crucified with Him, He gives our new man the victory. In Christ, we are "not under law," where condemnation reigns, "but we are under grace," where only life and victory reign.

6. Growth in grace and Divine knowledge. Here is more of the believer's treasure. This item is overlooked and neglected by the majority of saints. Paul deplors this neglect when writing to the Galatians, the Corinthians and the Hebrews. Items 3, 4, & 5 are a trinity of treasures absolutely essential to Christian growth. Some people ignore Pentecost, but teach Divine healing. With them there can be no lasting growth. Some emphasize Pentecost, but are weak on trusting God for the body. With them, there can be no progress. Some stand for Pentecost and healing in a measure, but never learn the Bible way to victory over sin. Neither is there growth with them. These three must all live in the same house and have equal rights — Pentecost, Divine healing, and Divine victory over sin. Then, progress is certain and continuous.

As the end draws near, darkness thickens, error increases, indifference steals like an opiate over people, ease and comfort

demand attention, lukewarm friends entice, the zealous loose their fire, hard times oppress and discourage, most people become more and more shallow, few people care for the Truth and our toil seems almost in vain.

But remember, the promise stands firm — "To him that overcometh..." The individual overcomes and will receive an individual reward. Overcomers are not in crowds. Instead, the crowds are being overcome by the things that are named above. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be His God and he shall be my son." Rev. 21:7 That refers to you and me in Christ. What about him who does not overcome? He will be "ashamed before Him at His coming." I Jn. 2:28

34 7. Glorification. This is the last installment of the wealth which Jesus' poverty purchased for us. It will be the finale and climax of our infinite riches. The measure and weight of it will depend upon the measure and depth of our overcoming now. What will be our state? "Like Him." What will be our place? "In the heavens." What will be our title? "Kings and priests unto God." What will be our honor? "In and around the throne." What will be our glory? "The Bride of the Lamb." What will be our remuneration? "I am thy exceeding and great reward," as the Lord said to Abraham — Gen. 15:1.

Let us so run that we may obtain. Then we will see and know and be engulfed with the unspeakable marvels of the grace of Christ and enjoy "the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," which our light affliction is now working out for us, while we look not at the things we can see, but at things eternal.

The reward promised to Philadelphia overcomers is itemized in Rev. 3. A crown is assured to the one who holds fast what he now has in Christ. Then the Lord promises to make him "a pillar in the temple of God." As a pillar, that overcomer shall bear three great, sparkling inscriptions — "The Name of God, the name of the city of God, New Jerusalem, and the new Name of the Holy and True One who dictated the epistle to the Philadelphia Church. Pillars are massive and imposing parts of government buildings. And we may become such conspicuous portions of Jehovah's governmental buildings in the holy city on high by so running that we may obtain.



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| Five Consequences             | Oneness of Christ                | Why am I Not Healed       |

## Books of the Bible

|             |                                     |                  |                       |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Genesis     | Esther                              | Luke             | 1, 2 Thessalonians    |
| Exodus      | Job                                 | John             | 1, 2 Timothy          |
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| Numbers     | Song of Solomon-A.S.Copley          | Romans           | Hebrews, James, Titus |
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I CHRONICLES XVI, 34.

